

# РЕЗЮМЕТА

на научните публикации и трудове

на гл. ас. д-р Крум Христов Христов от катедра „Икономика“ при АУ-Пловдив, които не повтарят представените за придобиване на ОНС „доктор“, покриващи националните минимални наукометрични изисквания за придобиване на академичната длъжност “доцент”, в област на висше образование 3.0 Социални, стопански и правни науки, професионално направление 3.8 Икономика, научна специалност „Икономика и управление (селско стопанство)“, във връзка с конкурс, обявен в ДВ, бр. 99/21.11.2025 год.

I. Научни публикации, реферирани и индексирани в световноизвестни бази данни с научна информация:

I.1. Научни публикации, реферирани и индексирани в SCOPUS:

1. Atanasov, D., B. Ivanova, R. Beluhova-Uzunova, M. Shishkova, K. Hristov, S. Sharipov, and I. Khasanov, 2023. **Regional transformations in Bulgaria and challenges for sustainable development**. In E3S Web of Conferences, vol. 386, p. 05002. EDP Sciences, 2023., SJR 0.18

**Abstract:** Structural changes in rural areas are a widely discussed topic. During the transition to a market economy, Bulgarian agriculture underwent major reforms, and after the country’s accession to the EU, sectoral transformations became even more significant. Political and socio-economic changes have influenced agricultural production, organizational structures, and market performance. These processes have played an essential role in the development of rural areas.

The aim of the study is to assess the impact of structural changes in Bulgarian agriculture on the transformation models of rural areas and to provide recommendations for balanced development. The analyzed period reveals considerable shifts. The agricultural sector remains polarized and dominated by a few main subsectors—grain and oilseed crops. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) does not contribute to balanced and sustainable development; instead, it deepens existing disparities.

In the new programming period, the potential for reshaping the CAP is significant and highly variable. In Bulgaria, it is necessary to implement a new conceptual framework—

a local model tailored to regional specificities could help address some of the key challenges.

**Some of the study's findings include:**

1. Significant structural transformations in the agricultural sector intensified after EU accession, turning the country into an exporter of low value-added raw materials, while sectors such as vegetable growing, fruit growing, and viticulture have lost competitiveness.
2. A severe crisis in livestock farming. The sector has failed to adapt to new conditions, leading to a sharp decline in meat and milk production.
3. Unbalanced impact of the CAP. Despite financial support, the Common Agricultural Policy deepens disparities between regions and types of farms.
4. Regional differences. Northern Bulgaria dominates in grain production but has a lower GDP per capita. Southern Bulgaria should focus on traditional subsectors such as vegetable and fruit production.
5. Need for a new model. Sustainable development requires local policies focused on value-added production, social capital, innovation, and tackling depopulation.

2. Sadłowski, A., R. Beluhova-Uzunova, Rositsa, J. Popp, D. Atanasov, B. Ivanova, M. Shishkova, **K. Hristov** 2022. **Direct Payments Distribution Between Farmers in Selected New EU Member States**. *Agris On-Line Papers in Economics & Informatics*, 14(4), 97-107, ISSN 18041930, **SCOPUS Q2 SJR 0.27**

**Abstract:** The study aims to identify the degree of direct payments concentration in selected Central and Eastern European Member States (compared to the entire EU) and outline perspectives and recommendations for the next programming period. The spatial scope of the study includes Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Bulgaria. The time scope covers the period 2009 – 2019. The survey indicates that the payments distribution in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, and to a lesser extent in Poland, is highly unbalanced. The analysed countries used the redistribution instruments, optional for the Member States, which were introduced by the 2013 CAP reform, to a moderate extent, in order to ensure a more even funds distribution between the beneficiaries. It cannot be ruled out that instruments ensuring a more even funds distribution would be politically easier to introduce at the EU level than at the national level. Nevertheless, also in the next financial perspective, in line with the subsidiarity principle, this issue is left to the Member States.

### **Some of the outcomes of the study are:**

1. Despite the opportunities provided by the CAP, after 2013, the unbalanced funds allocation under the First Pillar helped the further development of large holdings;
2. The CEE countries did not utilize the potential of available instruments to support small and medium-scale farmers;
3. The excessive concentration of agricultural production systems causes strong pressure on natural resources.
4. The new CAP, 2023-2027, is orientated towards greening, digitisation and young farmers. There are no serious changes in the direct payments schemes, which could contribute to further polarization.
5. The convergence of support level between farmers and between Member States is lagging behind. Subsidiary principle and related to that Member States decisionmaking will determine the opportunities for more balanced and fairer financial support distribution.

### **I.2. Научни публикации, реферирани и индексирани в Web of Science:**

1. Beluhova-Uzunova, R., Shishkova, M. and **Hristov, K.**, 2024. **Challenges and opportunities for organic farming post 2023**, Scientific Papers. Series "Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and rural development", Vol. 24 ISSUE 2, PRINT ISSN 2284-7995, 175-182.

**Abstract:** The Farm to Fork Strategy related to the Green Deal targets sets ambitious goals highlighted in the Action Plan for organic agriculture. It is linked to the objective of 25% of the agricultural land under organic farming by 2030. However, most EU Members lag behind the indicator, which is raising various questions about implementing the developed strategies and plans. The study aims to observe trends and changes in organic farming with a particular focus on Bulgaria and outline prospects post-2023. The analysis shows an increase in the share of organic UAA in almost all Member-States. In Bulgaria, there are variations, and the share is decreasing in 2021 compared to 2020. The EU emphasizes the importance of organic farming for the food system. Organic farms are eligible for support from several measures for 2023-2027 as a part of national strategic plans under the CAP. On the other hand, implementing the measures has to be efficient and well-targeted to achieve the EU's ambitions

2. **Hristov, K.**, Beluhova-Uzunova, R., Atanasov D., Lavchiev, S., Mrankov, G., 2024. **Green deal and solar energy-prospects for Bulgarian rural areas.**, Scientific Papers Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development Vol. 24, Issue 2, 2024 PRINT ISSN 2284-7995, E-ISSN 2285-3952

**Abstract:** Renewable energy is essential for the EU Green Deal objectives and decarbonization of the EU energy system. Solar energy has been one of the fastest-developing renewable energy sources in recent years. In addition, solar energy can play a vital role as a driver of the sustainable development of rural areas. Their untapped potential and opportunities can help achieve EU and national renewable energy targets. The paper aims to observe trends in the contribution of solar energy in the EU and Bulgarian energy mix and outline prospects in rural areas. The analysis shows that Bulgaria is one of the countries where the transition to green energy is challenging. In the past ten years, there is a significant growth in the share of wind and solar energy, but the country is starting from a low base. The data show a change in the energy mix in Bulgaria. For the last ten years, solar energy share increased. However, the country's dependence on fossil fuels is exceptionally high. It is impressive that more than 80% of fuel sources of electricity are formed from coal, which is pointed out as one of the most significant sources of pollution. However, there are positive trends and links between renewable energy and rural development. When designing future policy, the Member States should consider the needs of rural areas, especially those related to climate, energy plans, and funding of different projects.

3. Beluhova-Uzunova, R., Shishkova, M. and **Hristov, K.**, 2023. **Regional dimension of changes in Bulgarian agricultural structure.**, Trakia Journal of Sciences, Vol. 21, Suppl. 1, pp 159-166, 2023 ISSN 1313-3551 (online), doi:10.15547/tjs.2023.s.01.028

**Abstract:** Agriculture is an important sector in Bulgaria, especially in the rural areas where it is considered a source of income and employment. Bulgarian agriculture has changed substantially over the past ten years, which has led to a transformation in production, farm, organizational and sectorial structure. The aim of the paper is to observe the regional differences in Bulgarian farm structure and outline main prospects for the next programming period, 2023-2027. The survey reveals a significant decline in the number of holdings in parallel with the decreased role of small farms. By contrast, the importance of large holdings is increasing. There are different patterns of

agricultural transformation in the regions of Bulgaria. While large extensive producers dominate North Bulgaria, there is more balanced agricultural development in the South part of the country. The new CAP 2023-2027 is directed to more ambitious objectives related to climate, innovations and convergence. The subsidiarity principles could help Bulgaria to overcome some of these challenges if the agricultural policy is better targeted and oriented towards intensive sectors and more balanced and sustainable rural development.

4. Beluhova-Uzunova, R., Shishkova, M. And **Hristov, K.**, 2023. **Bulgarian agricultural structure and prospects Post-2023**. Scientific Papers Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture & Rural Development, 23(2). pp. 75-82, PRINT ISSN 2284-7995, E-ISSN 2285-3952 – WEB OF SCIENCE

**Abstract:** The CAP 2013 reform aimed to achieve ambitious goals - more equality in the distribution of financial support, better targeting and „greening” of direct payments. The aim of the study is to outline the changes in Bulgarian agricultural structure and to formulate recommendations for the post-2023 period. The results show that in Bulgaria, during 2010-2020, the number of agricultural holdings decreased by 64%, and the farm structure was seriously transformed. The trends of land concentration and polarization are continuing, although the European and national policy priorities are directed at overcoming the imbalances and differences. These land concentration processes are accompanied by accumulating a significant share of direct payments in large holdings. The transformations in farm structure could lead a significant challenge in the context of future Bulgarian agricultural development, food security and livelihood in rural areas. The flexibility and subsidiarity proposed by the CAP allow the EU Member-states to set their priorities and direct financial support to crucial sectors according to national specifics. However, financial aid should be better targeted, and the capping and payments reduction need to be more efficient

5. Beluhova-Uzunova, R., Shishkova, M., **Hristov, K.**, 2022. **Socio-economic challenges for regions and agriculture in the new Member-States**. Scientific Papers Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural development, 22(2), pp.89-96.PRINT ISSN 2284-7995, E-ISSN 2285-3952, WEB OF SCIENCE

**Abstract:** The regional inequalities in the EU are an essential part of policy agenda and public discussions. The new Member-States remain in the group of "lagging regions" that includes low-income areas facing a number of challenges. Agriculture is a crucial sector in most of these regions, and it is seen as a major source of local employment and income. The survey aims to present the characteristics and the implication of regional disparities and outline recommendations for more balanced development. The study shows that divergence is growing at a national, regional and local level. Regions are experiencing low growth, high unemployment rate, social exclusion and poverty. However, it can be concluded that many of the regions have unexplored potential. In order to address the disparities, then policymakers should focus on the regions` specific features. The regional programs should be directed to their unique characteristics and challenges. In this regard, the implementation of targeted support should be associated with coordination and cooperation between different stakeholders.

6. Beluhova-Uzunova, R., Shishkova, M., **Hristov, K.** 2022. **Family farming in the context of global challenges**, Scientific Paper Series, Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural development, 21(2), pp. 71-80, PRINT ISSN 2284-7995, E-ISSN 2285-3952, WEB OF SCIENCE

**Abstract:** The current challenges related to the Covid-19 pandemic raise concern regarding security and sustainability of the global food system. As family farming plays a crucial role in the European agricultural sector, its support and development are vital to ensuring food sovereignty and security, including rural areas. It is the predominant farm model which accounts for more than 90% of the number of holdings and is considered as a main source of income and employment for rural population. In the context of global health crisis it is important to focus the attention on the issues and opportunities that family farms face. The aim of the study is based on an analysis of the observed trends in various aspects of family farming, to discuss the effects of Covid-19 and to highlight the strategies for the development of these agricultural production systems. The paper compares Bulgarian family farming with other EU member states. The survey indicates that although family farms dominate in the EU agricultural structure, they face number of challenges such as access to resources, financial aid, low competitiveness and investment activity.

7. Beluhova-Uzunova, R. and **Hristov, K.**, 2020. **Models for balanced development of Bulgarian rural regions in the context of CAP post-2020**, Trakia Journal of Sciences, Vol. 18, Suppl. 1, pp 491-497, 2020, ISSN 1313-3551 (online) doi:10.15547/tjs.2020. s. 01.080

**Abstract:** The development of rural regions and rural disparities are main issues in the European Union regional policy. The topic continues to be an object of serious discussion among policymakers and scientist. Agriculture plays an important role in rural areas and contributes to generating employment and income. In the past decades, the CAP is reforming and changing to address the challenges in the EU rural regions. The aim of the study is based on the socio-economic analysis of the rural regions in Bulgaria to formulate opportunities for more balanced and sustainable development. The paper observes possibilities and prospects for the rural areas in Bulgaria in the context of the CAP post-2020. The study reveals that depopulation and marginalization of rural regions remain major issues in Bulgaria. Therefore the implementation of territorial and local model should dominate in Pillar II for the 2014-2020 programming period. These approaches could stimulate transformations and transition to sustainable regional development. In order to maximize the potential of the Pillar II funding, the national regional policy also should be reviewed.

8. Beluhova-Uzunova, R., Shishkova, M., **Hristov, K.**, 2020. **The Common Agricultural Policy Post 2020 – Farmers perception and Policy Implication**. Scientific Papers Series-Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development 20, no. 2 (2020): 61-68.PRINT ISSN 2284-7995, E-ISSN 2285-3952, WEB OF SCIENCE

**Abstract:** The Common agricultural policy post 2020 is still under consideration and discussion among Member-states, farmers' organizations and other stakeholders. The purpose of the survey is to analyse Bulgarian farmers' perceptions and attitudes towards the CAP and to outline the prospects for national implementation in the 2021-2027 budgetary period. The paper is based on a survey covering 74 Bulgarian farmers from all regions of the country. The study applies the comparative, historical and statistical methods of analysis. The results indicate high expectation for income stabilization and support in bigger farms, while there are some variations and negative trends in smaller holdings. The national priorities for 2014-2020 period are directed in

favour of high value-added crops and livestock sector. Bulgaria also implements measures as Redistributive payments, Coupled support and Small farmers' scheme. However, the financial support allocation is not giving the expected results and the structural imbalances remains. The national policies should be revised and the implementation of the CAP post 2020 in Bulgaria should have better targeting and more equal distribution.

9. **Hristov, K.**, Beluhova-Uzunova, R., Shishkova, M. 2019. **Competitive advantages of Bulgarian sunflower industry after the accession into the European Union.** Scientific Papers: Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture & Rural Development, 19(2), pp 197-202, PRINT ISSN 2284-7995, E-ISSN 2285-3952, WEB OF SCIENCE

**Abstract:** The Common agricultural policy post 2020 is still under consideration and discussion among Member-states, farmers' organizations and other stakeholders. The purpose of the survey is to analyse Bulgarian farmers' perceptions and attitudes towards the CAP and to outline the prospects for national implementation in the 2021-2027 budgetary period. The paper is based on a survey covering 74 Bulgarian farmers from all regions of the country. The study applies the comparative, historical and statistical methods of analysis. The results indicate high expectation for income stabilization and support in bigger farms, while there are some variations and negative trends in smaller holdings. The national priorities for 2014-2020 period are directed in favour of high value-added crops and livestock sector. Bulgaria also implements measures as Redistributive payments, Coupled support and Small farmers' scheme. However, the financial support allocation is not giving the expected results and the structural imbalances remains. The national policies should be revised and the implementation of the CAP post 2020 in Bulgaria should have better targeting and more equal distribution.

10. Beluhova-Uzunova, R., **Hristov, K.**, Shishkova, M. 2019. **Small farms in Bulgaria – trends and perspectives.** Agricultural Sciences/Agrarni Nauki, 11(25), 59-66, ISSN/ISBN 2603-4638 (print) 1313-6577 (print), WEB OF SCIENCE-CABI

**Abstract:** Small farms play a significant role in the rural regions of the European Union. They contribute to food security, create and foster biodiversity and provide local employment. In Bulgaria, the agricultural structure is dominated by small farms, which

represent more than 86% of all holdings. The aim of the study is to outline the main trends and changes in Bulgarian small holdings for period 2010-2016 and to highlight the future prospects and opportunities after 2020. In the study are applied comparative, historical and logical methods of analysis. The results indicate that the share of small holdings in the utilized agricultural area and generated standard output is declining. On the other hand, they concentrate the highest share of the agricultural labour force and remain mostly family business. Although the current schemes under Pillar 1 provide financial support for small holdings, some of the measures are ineffective and unequal. Some of the schemes of the CAP post 2020 should be revised in order to become more effective, fairer and better orienteered.

11. Beluhova-Uzunova, R., **Hristov, K.**, Shishkova, M. 2018. **Structure of Bulgarian agriculture 10 years after the accession to the EU.** Scientific Papers Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development 18, no. 2 (2018), pp 29-34 PRINT ISSN 2284-7995, E-ISSN 2285-3952, WEB OF SCIENCE

**Резюме:** After the Accession to the European Union the Common agricultural policy become an important factor for the development of Bulgarian agriculture. Despite the positive changes in the sector, the agrarian production in the country is characterized by low competitiveness and efficiency. The aim of the study is based on the analyses of the structural changes in Bulgarian agriculture to formulate conclusions for the effect of the ten years membership on the sector. The paper outlines the transformations in agricultural production, farm structure and trends in trade with agricultural products. The study indicates that there are significant problems related to productivity and value added over the past 10 years. The main challenges are associated with structural and sectorial imbalances, uneven distribution of financial support, polarization and overconcentration in the sector.

12. Beluhova-Uzunova, R., **Hristov, K.** and Shishkova, M., 2017. **Young farmers in Bulgaria-challenges and perspectives.** Agraren Universitet Plovdiv-Nauchni Trudove/Scientific Works of the Agrarian University-Plovdiv, 61(2), pp.37-46., ISSN 1312-6318 (Print), ISSN 2367-5845 (Online)

**Abstract:** Over the past decades, there has been a deterioration of the age structure in the agricultural sector and an insignificant share of young farmers. The negative trends in recent years raise concerns about the future food security and

competitiveness of the agriculture. The purpose of the survey is based on the analysis of the structural changes of young farmers to draw conclusions and recommendations on the possibilities to increase their role and importance in Bulgarian agriculture. The research approach includes various methods: analysis, synthesis, deduction and induction. Applied are a comparative, monographic, abstract-logical, graphical method, method of analytical groups, a method of average values, statistical methods of research and analysis. The study indicates that there is a number of challenges that have to be overcome. Negative processes not only in Bulgaria but almost in all EU Member States, require consistent and targeted action in order to support young producers and increase the attractiveness of farm activities.

13. Beluhova-Uzunova, R., D. Atanasov, **K. Hristov**, 2017. **Analysys of Direct Payments Distribution in Bulgarian Agriculture**, Trakia Journal of Sciences, Vol. 15, Suppl. 1, pp 282-287, ISSN 1313-3551 (online) doi:10.15547/tjs.2017.s.01.051 , EBSCO

**Abstract:** Direct payments are the main component of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). They form approximately 76% of CAP budget in the programming period 2014-2020. The main purpose of the study is to outline the opportunities and challenges for Bulgarian agriculture, based on the analysis of direct payments distribution. The Lorenz curve, as the most widely used measure of inequality, is applied in the paper to surveying the disparities in the direct payments distribution. The results of the analysis show highly uneven distribution of the direct support across Bulgarian farms. The Lorenz curve indicates that payments are accumulated mainly in the larger-scale farms, thereby generating problems for small holdings and structural imbalances. The allocation of EU funds has impacted on the level of investments, productivity and economic efficiency of Bulgarian agriculture. In the programming period 2014-2020 the EU has an effort to reduce disparities through a mixed system of financial supports and aids. The 2013 CAP aims at decreasing the degree of inequality in the distribution of payments through two mechanisms - degressivity/capping and the redistributive payments. The impact of these instruments will not be visible until the Commission publishes its next report which will give information on the distribution of payments made to farmers in 2015, the first year of implementation of these reforms. Theoretically, Bulgaria could benefit from the new regulations in terms of overcoming structural imbalances. The concentration of direct payments in the period 2007-2013

caused significant polarization in Bulgarian agriculture. In the new period CAP is more flexible and allows Member States to use different measures regarding the specifics of the countries. Strong political will is needed in order to direct the financial support to priority sector with high value added in order to reduce regional and structural differences.

14. **Hristov, K., 2013. Measure 141 "Supporting semi-subsistence farms undergoing restructuring" RDP (2007-2013) – problems and possible solutions,** Trakia Journal of Sciences, Vol. 11, Suppl. 1, pp 290-295, 2013, ISSN 1313-7069 (print) ISSN 1313-3551 (online)

**Abstract:** Measure 141 "Supporting Semi-Subsistence Farms Undergoing Restructuring" is one of the few measures of the RDP for 2007 – 2013 targeting small agricultural producers. Their participation in the measure, however, is very low, so most of the funds remain unused. The purpose of this article is to identify the problems that are hindering the participation of farmers in this measure and to offer opportunities for overcoming these problems in the next programming period (2014 – 2020). This aim is achieved by detailed analysis of the procedure for applying, implementing, and reporting of activities under the measure. A survey among farmers in the Plovdiv region applying for support under the measure was performed. Crucial moments in the attempts of farmers to receive support under the measure are examined and recommendations for more successful implementation in the next planning period are proposed.

15. **Hristov, K., 2011. Institutional problems small farms face when applying for assistance under the Rural development program 2007-2013.,** Trakia Journal of Sciences, Vol. 9, Suppl. 3, pp 83-87, 2011, ISSN 1313-7069 (print) ISSN 1313-3551 (online)

**Abstract:** Small farms represent about 95% of all farms in the country. They employ almost 90% of the workforce in agriculture and therefore are a key factor for sustainable rural development. There are a number of measures aimed at small farms in European and national schemes for agricultural support. The practice shows that small farmers' participation in the existing aid programs is not sufficient, and EU funds rarely reach the potential beneficiaries. The purpose of this article is, following the analysis of opportunities and results achieved by applying various support measures

for farmers, to propose alternatives for future development. This aim is achieved by: first, the opportunity for small farmers to apply for support to the Rural Development Program 2007 - 2013 are assessed; second, restrictions impeding their participation in support schemes are defined; third, reactions of the small farmers to these restrictions are analyzed; and finally, alternatives for changing the measures' design considering the specifics of small farmers are proposed.

### **II.3. Научни публикации, реферирани и индексирани в други бази данни:**

1. **Hristov, K.**, Beluhova-Uzunova, R., 2023. Opportunities for development of family farming in South central region Agricultural University – Plovdiv, Scientific Works, vol. LXV, book 1, 2023, DOI: 10.22620/sciworks.2023.01.013

**Abstract:** Family farms play an important role in the rural areas of the European Union and Bulgaria. They are a key factor for food security and increasing vitality and competitiveness. The Yuzhen Tsentralen region is the region with the largest number of farms and the most balanced structure of agriculture. Therefore, the study observes the changes in various characteristics of agricultural holdings in this area. The aim of the paper is to outline the changes and trends in family farming in the Yuzhen Tsentralen region, to highlight challenges and opportunities for development in the new programming period 2023-2027. Based on the analysis, it can be summarized that there is a higher concentration of utilized agricultural area and economic size in large structures, while small family farms disappear and struggle to develop and realize their potential. The Yuzhen Tsentralen region emerges as a region with a more balanced structure and importance role of intensive crops and livestock. In this regard, it is necessary to prioritize them and preserve your importance. Family farms remain the main source of income in rural areas. Therefore, agricultural policy should consider their vital role and propose measures and financial support for their different needs and development models.

2. Atanasov, D., R. Beluhova-Uzunova, **K. Hristov** 2021. **Socio-Economic Dimensions of Regional Differences in Bulgaria.** AGRIBUSINESS AND RURAL AREAS – ECONOMY, INNOVATION AND GROWTH, CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS, 2021, issue 1, pp.213-220, EconPapers DOI: 10.36997/ARA2021.213, Google Scholar

**Резюме:** Regional disparities are the subject of various discussions in the EU Member - States. The aim of this study is, on the basis of analysis of main socio-economic indicators, to observe trends in the regional development of Bulgaria and to draw conclusions and recommendations associated with overcoming regional imbalances. The study indicates serious regional differences that affect the quality of life and do not correspond with the European Union approach of convergence and balanced and sustainable economic growth. In order to overcome these challenges, it is necessary to optimize the implemented instruments of cohesion and regional policy. In this regard higher coordination between sectoral policies and better interaction and integration between government and local authorities should be achieved.

## **II. Monograph**

Hristov, K., 2025. Impact of structural changes in the agricultural sector on the development of rural areas in Bulgaria, ISBN 978-954-517-337-0, Academic Publishing House of the Agrarian University, 2025

### **Abstract:**

The agricultural sector in Bulgaria is undergoing dynamic changes that significantly influence the development of rural areas. In the context of global challenges such as climate change and demographic shifts, the restructuring of agriculture is gaining strategic importance. EU policies play a key role by promoting new management models and sustainable development, making the topic both relevant and important. This study analyzes these changes, focusing on the opportunities and challenges, the implementation of innovations, and the role of environmental standards. The monograph explores the mechanisms for balanced regional development and emphasizes the need for targeted adaptation measures. The practical value of the research lies in the recommendations for the effective application of CAP instruments in Bulgarian agriculture and rural areas.

### **Structure and Main Findings**

The monograph consists of three main chapters and a conclusion:

Chapter One: Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of Structural Changes

This chapter examines the key factors driving the restructuring of agriculture—economic, social, and institutional. It analyzes the relationship between structural changes and farmers' strategies in a dynamic market environment. The influence of

agricultural transformations on the local economy, employment, and social infrastructure is also discussed.

#### Chapter Two: Agricultural Restructuring – Sectoral and Structural Analysis

An economic analysis of farm restructuring is presented, covering: The dynamics of agricultural transformations in the national economy; Food security and Bulgaria's integration into international markets; Specialization of agricultural production and structural transformations of farms. The findings reveal a trend toward production concentration and a decline in the share of small farms. A regional analysis is also included, highlighting differences across rural areas.

#### Chapter Three: Institutional Changes and Opportunities for Balanced Development

This section explores key institutional reforms and their impact on rural areas. Emphasis is placed on: The role of the CAP and political support instruments; New regulations and environmental requirements for the 2023–2027 period; Digitalization and modernization of the agricultural sector.

The chapter outlines strategies for balanced regional development and proposes integrated approaches for combining agricultural policy with local economic development policy.

### **III. Published book based on a defended dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" or for the award of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences"**

Hristov, K., 2023. Opportunities for the development of family farms, UCHI Plovdiv Publishing House, ISBN 978-619-91910-2-6, p.272, Book published on the basis of a dissertation, 2023

#### **Abstract:**

Family farms are the core of European agriculture in terms of their number, as well as in the area they cultivate and the gross product they provide. They are an important element in the European model of agriculture and a key factor in the diversification of production. They play an important role in the food security and help to increase the vitality of the rural economy. Family farms are strongly motivated to pursue a long-term environmental policy. Sustainable and balanced rural development could be achieved only through the successful development of family farming. After Bulgarian membership in the EU the access of farmers to financial support plays an important role for their development. In order to predict the effect of different types of agricultural

policy instruments on the activity and development of family farms, it is necessary to study their characteristics and expected behavior.

**The main thesis of the study:** Family farms have limited opportunities for development and low access to support. The institutional environment in which they operate provides poor support for farms.

The aim of the dissertation is based on analysis of the state and challenges faced by family farms in Bulgaria after accession to the European Union to outline opportunities for their development and to identify effective ways for their support.

In order to achieve the aim, the study includes various methods of research. Information is collected through three main approaches. (1) For clarifying the general characteristics of agriculture and the place of family farms, statistical data from NSI, Agrostistics Directorate of MAF and Eurostat is used. (2) The collection of data from individual farms is carried out through a survey. (3) For wider identification of relationships and dependencies, the participatory observation method is used. Data processing and analysis are performed using the case study, cluster analysis and regression analysis methods.

**Structure of the study:** The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters and conclusions with a total volume of 270 pages. The first chapter covers the theoretical foundations of family farms. It is based on a variety of theoretical considerations related to the behavior of family farms. The importance family farms have for rural development has been explored. The behavior of different types of family farms has been commented. The main prerequisites for the sustainable development of family farms are discussed and the factors influencing the access of the farms to support are studied.

Empirical studies on the issues of access of family farms to support are presented in the second chapter. A historical overview of the development of agriculture and family farms in Bulgaria has been carried out. The structure of agriculture and farming is presented. For the purpose of thorough analysis and tracking of the peculiarities and behavior of farms, they are grouped in three ways. First, the farmers are grouped according to their personal characteristics. The second group is based on the characteristics of the farms. The third group combines the individual characteristics of the farmers with the characteristics of their farms. The access of surveyed farms to direct support and investment support has been studied.

In Chapter Three, on the basis of the study conducted, guidelines for the development of family farms are proposed. Proposals have been made for changing the CAP at EU level to comply with the characteristics and peculiarities of family farms. Recommendations are made for changes in the implementation of the policy at a national level, for the more successful participation of family farms. Changes in the institutional environment have been recommended to alleviate the administrative burden on family farms.

**Main findings of the study:** On the basis of the survey conducted, several main conclusions can be made regarding the possibilities for development of family farms in Bulgaria: (1) Restricted access to support; (2) Severe institutional environment; (3) Insufficient trust in the system; (4) Limited opportunities for the development of family farms.

**Key recommendations of the study:** A severe policy change is needed for the successful development of Bulgarian family farms and rural areas in the following direction: (1) The reactions of the different types of farms to the policy have to be taken into account; (2) Institutional environment for family farms has to be improved; (3) Strengthening the social element of policy; (4) Limiting the support – only to the smallest and to those in need; (5) Using public funds for improving the social and economic conditions for life and business in rural areas; (6) Bottom-up approach for support at a local level; (7) Strengthening the positions of the National Agricultural Advisory Service at a local level. In order to comply with policy needs and particularities of family farms, it is first necessary to change our vision of the place and the role of family farms and agriculture in rural areas of the country. It must be long-term oriented towards finding the balance between increasing the competitiveness of agriculture on the one hand, and rural development on the other hand. If we want to have viable and sustainable rural areas, we must have a policy focused on the development of family farms. Without these farms, without these families there will be no rural areas at all.