ACCESSING EUROPEAN FUNDS THROUGH PROJECTS - A MODERN SOLUTION FOR THE ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY MEASURES

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Abstract: *The article will illustrate the existing connection between the need for sustainable development of any organization and the opportunity to access European funded projects that can provide funding lines for much of the activities through which the organization can actually implement social responsibility measures. The purpose of this research aims at checking by what degree the use of european structural funds through structural development projects is influencing the sustainable development of organizations, especially for social responsibility and environmental protection actions. The authors propose the use of european structural funds as solution for supporting the sustainable development of organizations. The developed econometric model was validated and the results of the research have confirmed the hypothesis of the research. These results were interpreted at the end of the research paper.*

Keywords: *sustainable development, social responsibility, European funded projects, project management*

Introduction

The modern, knowledge-based society, the unprecedented development of information and communication technologies, the internet, the innovation and research - development have led to a strong development and diversification of the business environment, the emergence of new business models, the economic growth of organizations, the increase of their productivity and their competitive advantage, the efficient use of natural resources, etc. However, the strong technological development of the organizations and the increase of their competitiveness have resulted in a negative impact on the environment and local communities resulting in: the pollution of some important life factors (water, air, soil), increased consumption of important natural resources for the quality of life and limited in scope (forests, water, green space), a large quantity of production

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residues that directly affect the environment, living standards and occupational safety for their own human resourses or for those of the community. There is a strong relationship of any organization with the local community in which it operates and which can generate a good or bad consistent effect [1]. This relationship of the organization of any type and size with the environment and the society in which it operates has been in the attention of researchers, scientists, economists and specialists in various fields of activity, of specialized international or regional bodies that have established guidelines, directives or measures binding on the organizations, meant to reduce their negative impact on the community or the environment through concrete actions in the social, cultural, educational and health field, through effective involvement in the life of the local community and the environmental protection. These are the social responsibility measures that organizations have to implement in the community life or in the environment in which they operate, in order to ensure a sustainable development.

The article will illustrate the existing connection between the need for sustainable development of any organization and the opportunity to access European funded projects that can provide funding lines for much of the activities through which the organization can actually implement social responsibility measures. Under these circumstances one can identify the simultaneous and beneficial existance within every modern organization of both classic management [2,3] that has to adapt on the spot to the new requirements and expectations of modern society, together with project management type specific for each of the projects implemented within the company. Through these projects, the organization can implement a series of social responsibility actions simultaneously with organization's competitivity growth and the growth of its sustainable development.

Thus, organizations can access and implement European funded projects which, well-selected, can contribute either to their own technological development, increase their competitiveness, or to the practical implementation of social and environmental responsibility measures. Taking into account that most companies implement these measures mainly through volunteer activities, this means that an external organization funding for a certain well-planned, monitored and project-driven social or environmental responsibility objective will lead to a considerable stimulation thereof, to the success of social responsibility measures implementation by accessing European funded projects and other funding (government, cross-border, etc.). This connection will be analyzed and demonstrated by linear regression statistical models. The purpose of this paper is to essentially stimulate accessing european structural funds by organizations, in order to help them to achieve sustainable growth and competitivity. For this purpose, data regarding approved payments for implemented european structural funds projects [4] and regarding gross medium wage and number of passengers using local public transport, as offered by Romanian National Statistics Institute, were collected, studied and analysed through descriptive methods and then through statistical regression methods.Thus were defined the hypothesis of the research, the

correlation models were developed, the correlation was tested and the final results confirm the fact that there is a direct and positive link between the paid amounts for implemented european structural funds projects and de sustainable development indicators mentioned before. This essentially represents a greater possibility to implement the social responsibility actions through financing provided by european structural funds. The novelty of the study consists in scientifically proving the dependence between the above mentioned sustainable development indicators that define the implementation of social responsibility actions and the financing through european structural funds, defining in this process the role and motivation for accessing european funded projects by sustainable growth seeking organizations.

In order to do that, our paper is structured in the following order: in the first chapter we present the "*sustainable development*" concept, in the second chapter we present aspects in relation with "*social responsibility*" of the organizations as a part of sustainable development as well as the european funded projects' role in the development of organizations, and in chapter 3 we present the reseach methodology and results' interpretation. At the end of our paper we presented the conclusions of the research.

1. Sustainable development

The sustainable development issue has been studied by researchers, economists, specialists in the field since 1972, and international bodies such as the World Commission on Environment and Development, known as the Brundtland Commission, have defined the concept of sustainable development as "the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" [5].

This was followed by a series of actions from other international or regional bodies such as: The United Nations Conference regarding Environment and Development [6] that officially aknowledged the need to include economic development and environment protection within sustainable development objectives; the European Commission [7] in Hanover, and then United Nations Summit for sustainable development from 2002 [8] have set binding conditions for the sustainable development of organizations at international level and believe that sustainable development must make a balance between the economic and social progress, so that the technological development of the organizations do not affect the healthy development of the society and the environment in which they operate, to include poverty elimination and environmental protection actions at global level.

The concept of sustainable development thus binds the economic, competitive development of an organization by its social and environmental responsibility, conditioning its very existence on the global market [9].

The European Commission has defined the concept of social responsibility of the organizations "as a contribution of the enterprises to the sustainable development" [10].

The European Council adopted in June 2001, in Goteborg, the European Strategy for Sustainable Development [11] and in 2006 the Renewed Sustainable Development Strategy for an Enlarged Europe, aiming at alternative solutions for maintaining the quality of life of present and future generations. The Commission gives a new definition of the concept of social responsibility of a organization as "the companies' responsibility for the impact they have on society" [12]. There are also the requirements of the European Commission through the European Strategy on social responsibility of the organizations, which being forced to implement social responsibility measures, can considerably contribute to sustainable development, increased competitiveness and a good management of all the resources they have, while protecting the environment and the community in which they operate.

As a result, Romania has developed its own strategy [1] in 2008 and has determined that it is absolutely necessary to address sustainable development for all organizations in order to ensure economic development while improving the quality of people's lives and social cohesion, environmental and natural resources protection, which are virtually exhaustible.

In 2017, the Department for Sustainable Development [13] was established in Romania. It has the responsibility for coordinating and controlling the implementation of sustainable development objectives by all organizations at the national level. Large companies are required to carry out and publish annually, in accordance with the transparency and free access to information principles, a Report on the implemented social responsibility measures. As these reports are public, as one can search the internet one can discover that, out of the many companies that are registered and operating in Romania, only a small proportion of them have published in recent years such a report (fewer than 200 companies). This does not necessarily mean that only these organizations have implemented social responsibility or environmental protection measures, but only that there are organizations that have not drawn up the report or have drawn up but have not made this report public (on the Internet). That is why we believe that it would be useful to have a sustained campaign to inform about the necessity and the obligativity of drawing up and then publishing a report on social responsibility by all organizations. The publication of this report would be beneficial to the various organizations, to their promotion and image in local communities, in order to provide information on the activities developed for the welfare of the community or for the environmental protection, to improve the working and living conditions, children education, stopping the dropout rate, etc.

2. Social Responsibility and Accessing European-funded Projects

Under the current conditions, the main objective of any organization is to respond as quickly and efficiently as possible to changing business needs, effectively

ensuring the efficient exploitation of the existing resources and investments, along with the requirements of a sustainable development that is absolutely mandatory nowadays and with the implementation of social responsibility codes (CSR), as required by the European Commission through the European Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy [12]. The social responsibility of an organization is practically a contract between the company and the business environment, an investment made by various organizations for the welfare of the community in which they operate. It is defined by the European Commission as a "concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis" [14], the organization thus becoming responsible towards the community and the environment in which it operates. This includes practically the individual whose living, health and safety conditions are the main concern, the environment and the community in which they operate must be protected and transformed by organizations in a transparent way. But in order to be able to implement social responsibility measures, an organization, regardless of its type and size, needs to be developed economically, be competitive on the global market, be able to implement advanced technologies in its own field of activity, modern ecological marketing tools by which the organization and its products be promoted, the use of biodegradable and recycled components in manufacturing processes [15], coupled with professional communication, information through all modern means of communication (including YouTube), that should support the construction and promotion of an appropriate brand [16].

On November 1, 2010, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) established the Corporate Social Responsibility norms in the ISO 26000 standard, built as a social responsibility guide for all organizations. It presents a series of social responsibility measures that organizations can take to mitigate the negative impact they have on their own human resources, the environment and the local community [17]. The standard classifies the social responsibility measures in 7 major categories [18]: Organizational governance; Human rights; Labour practices; Environment; Fair operating practices; Consumer issues; Community involvement and development.

The sustainable development approach by all organizations is systematically linked to the need for them to implement social responsibility measures, environmental protection measures, to get involved in the community life in order to improve the living conditions, work, education, culture, health and safety in work [19], etc.

During the past 10 years, the Romanian companies as well as others abroad have shown that in every successful organization were working, simultaneously, both day to day or “current” activities, under direct supervision from organization’s management, as well as temporary activities organised as “project” based activities, under direct supervision from project managers rather than

organizational management, many of them funded by european structural funds. Those 2 forms of management can coexist in an organization, during implementation period of the projects, providing both management, monitoring and control of the production processes, as well as supplementary activities aimed at providing an efficiency boost for organization, contributing to environment protection or community protection, improvement in living, education, health or security conditions for people. Taking these into consideration, an organization with modern management that works mainly through projects that are temporary and limited in time, have well defined and measurable objectives and precise indicators for evaluating the successful ending of such project [20] will permanently adapt to change demands, will reorganize itself, specialize and diversify its activity in the same time [21], while experiencing increased efficiency. Following increasing importance of implementing european funded projects by different organizations, the Ocupational Code in Romania included new occupations for specialists in this field, such as [22]: project manager (242101), IT project manager (251206), public-private partnership project manager (242112), structural funds accession expert (242213) and so on.

The European Commission defined a *„project"* as: *a series of tasks aimed towards achieving a set of clear and specific objectives, in a predefined timeframe, using a predetermined budget* [23]. These objectives can be defined by organizations in order to temporary supplement their main activity purpose, to serve implementation of social responsibility requirements or even technological development without affecting its own budget for its production processes. European Commission promotes more and more project based actions, through financing and stimulation of project implementation in every field of activity. As a direct response to these, many organizations have accessed various European (or governmental, applied research, etc.) projects to help with the implementation of social responsibility activities in order to cope with the economic competition under conditions of sustainable development such as: improving human resources in high technology (including IC&T technologies), stopping dropout rate, modern training methods, waste recycling measures, alternative energy technologies, forecasting energy consumption [24] and then the use of intelligent metering instruments, measures to prevent risks and occupational diseases, to ensure health and safety at work [25,26], etc. The beneficial effect of European funded project has led, within various organizations, to an extended work on projects and their developing, even resulting in the emergence of a new type of organization - *the project-based organization* [21].

This involves the simultaneous existence within the organization of two forms of management: the "classical management" of the production processes and the "project-based" management, which interact, complement each other to achieve the overall objectives of the organization, while achieving the objectives of the project or projects implemented within the organization.

For the organizations in Romania [1], some areas are mandatory for the implementation of social responsibility measures, as follows:

- respect for human rights - particularly important, covering both the public and the private sector;
- ensuring decent working conditions, equal opportunities, non-discrimination or harassment of any kind, without forced labor or abuse, health and safety at work, decent pay, right to strike, child protection etc .;
- environmental protection, by reducing the negative impact on the environment, through the efficient exploitation of natural resources, which are not unlimited, by endowing and using innovative technologies within the organizations, which reduce the emissions of pollutants, exploitation residues, allow new solutions, production alternatives, collection and handing over for the recycling of waste resulting from its own activity, etc .;
- measures to prevent and combat corruption, which can constitute a major obstacle to sustainable development;
- responsibility for the supply chain, which requires compliance with all quality requirements on the product distribution chain;
- the protection of the local community, which it can influence through activities to support education, reduce dropout rate, help those living in poverty, improve living conditions at home, work, school, hospitals, cultural organizations, etc.

Analyzing along with the specified measures, the typology of European-funded projects, it is clear that they are built with funding lines defined as to support all measures that organizations can take to actively promote social responsibility within communities or the environment [27], but also to support the introduction of the latest and most advanced manufacturing technologies, IC&T technologies, advanced software products, integrated IT systems in all areas: economic, social, cultural, education, health, governance, leisure, etc. The guidelines state that, through all the themes approached for funding in European projects, the use of funds accessed by means of European projects actually leads to the implementation of sustainable development measures.

In the Implementation Final Report [28], through the POSDRU projects implemented within Priority Axis 1 - "Education and professional training in support of economic growth and the development of a knowledge based society" there were approached and financed a certain number of projects aiming "access to education and quality initial professional training" for children in gymnasium and high school, then improving the quality in higher education and doctoral programs, training of teaching staff, improving their digital competences, as well as continuous professional training for the improvement or specialization of the human resources according to the new technologies requirements.

Priority Axis 2 "Correlating lifelong learning to the labor market" is intended for support measures to prevent and combat dropout rate, as well as funding for access

to continuing professional training programs that can improve the organization's relationship with the community in which it operates, with its own human resource, whose competences and practical skills are constantly improved and adapted to the new technological, environmental, legislative, IT or field-specific requirements. Priority Axis 5 concerns the development and implementation of active employment measures for both employers and employees, and Priority Axis 6 "Promoting social inclusion" concerns concrete actions to improve the access of vulnerable groups to the labor market, promoting equal opportunities in the labor market (regardless of gender, ethnicity, people with special needs, etc.). It can be noticed that all the themes approached and funded are practically social responsibility measures that organizations should try to implement within their own communities in which they operate or for their own human resources, which will be more prepared, more adaptable to changes in skills required in different positions, and organizations will be more prepared to introduce new highly specialized technologies, more human resource and environmentally friendly, will be able to increase work productivity and product quality, be more competitive and sustainable at the same time. The same thing can be seen in all other European funding programs. What do all these mean?

In fact, it means that it must be in the interest of any organization to access as many European-funded projects as possible from those that fit their own field of activity and the development strategy they have adopted, so that with the implementation of some social or environmental responsibility measures, it would have the funding to support its own activities, process automatization and / or informatization, ensure work safety, improve the human resource, increase its income. Moreover, the european funded structural development projects have within their structure compulsory rules regarding actions towards sustainable development; as such, they are involved in sustainable development of an organization, of environment or communities. It is therefore noticed that a management that is smart, flexible and adaptable to the new challenges of sustainable and competitive development of organizations will promote, support and stimulate, through any means of communication, the access and implementation of European projects for various areas of interest. European projects have their own "project" management, which monitors, acts and corrects the activities, controls and ensures the quality of the products, with the respect of the allocated terms and resources [29]. The project management administrates the human, financial and communication resources of the projects with maximum efficiency, bears the full responsibility for successfully conclusion of the projects and communicates permanently with the organizational management. The project manager identifies any risk that may arise in running the project, evaluates and removes it as soon as possible [30], to avoid later major expense, it mediates conflicts, manages the changes, motivates the staff involved, is responsible for the successful completion of the project.

Throughout this time, the project manager collaborates and communicates with the organizational manager, finds effective solutions to all issues that have arisen. Thus, instead of voluntary actions or voluntary contracts concluded for the implementation of social responsibility measures, the organization will be able to use funding by means of projects (European, governmental or other), i.e. an external funding to the organization, to implement these measures, all of these being beneficial for the organization, for a part of its own human resource used within these projects and even for the local community or the environment.

4. Research methodology and findings

It is well known that a model of economic process is "a theoretical construct made in order to approximate reality" [31]. The paper will use statistical research and it will construct linear regression models in order to verify the existence of a correlation between the funding obtained through the projects developed in Romania and various sustainable development indicators, as they were established and defined by Romanian National Institute for Statistics in the Romanian Statistical Yearbook. For this, we need to identify which variables are considered and which are the relationships between these relevant variables to form the basis of building a model. Then the series of data that present the evolution of the economic or social phenomenon taken into account are presented. Thus it was taken into account the data on the amounts authorized for payment on the European funded projects from May 2007 to May 2017 [4] and the data on the repayments in RON, by counties and years (Figure 1) was selected and centralized.

Studying the statistical yearbooks and the database of the National Institute of Statistics (INS), the sustainable development indicators, with values per counties and years were taken into account, such as:

a) the average gross monthly nominal wages per county and year (CTGMLUN)
b) the local public passenger transport (in thousands of passengers), per county and year (VALPASG).

These variables will be processed by means of the Eviews 7 software product.

a) **MC1** - A linear regression model that verifies whether there is a correlation between the *Average gross monthly nominal wages* (CTGMLUN) and *Total Authorized Payments on European-funded projects between 2007- May 2017* (PLCTG).

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Row Labels	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Grand Total
ALBA	1698583.83	3334144.67	54387716.8	171688493	261594398	290808746	298702742	349558826	241767503	2624207.67	1676165361
ARAD		1535154.51	39102789.5	70598383.3	168908432	221066657	167482530	130514887	252341020	3977831.93	1055527684
ARGES		4407720.32	31426149.2	68737264.2	192937778	312502625	253208022	419259867	354627024	37103.38	1637143553
BACAU		1848657.65	47856732.4	83532371.3	172092666	284453527	223602173	315865727	240164501	559011.43	1369975367
BIHOR		5130824.22	44096097.3	95824459	133706854	202792872	263517919	620740820	489763645	2647788.98	1858221280
BISTRITA-NASAUD		585384	30926835.4	94623956.6	126300460	123042619	136421540	268967894	155628111	1283337.2	937780137
BOTOSANI		398409.49	32937054.2	97431661.8	191371764	174040180	136263759	160361385	140705985	3126785.48	936636984
BRAILA	1547630.94	11542777.7	44474626.7	124830633	141172060	201897820	154170261	196234076	127325374	374264.79	1003569523
BRASOV		17151627.1	52559488.1	126261009	174127780	310728528	374404257	478005478	338368322	7524371.25	1879130860
BUCURESTI	5806936.34	221008075	502456484	2878560060	2771329569	7605189345	8095251443	4590645669	8984565107	44237882.2	3.5699E+10
BUZAU		133180.73	36030907.7	60551926.7	90855005.1	176598831	212887842	220634516	193269804	33396.47	990995409
CALARASI	1988235.34	4771843.03	69645928.6	146558632	151806635	136984530	83021433.9	125547349	76046174.3	6199.94	796376960
CARAS-SEVERIN		1286212.89	1389810.3	27693413.9	45260774.8	69841793.8	91522105.8	125979086	163275740	1174197.5	527423135
CLUJ	2061217.5	28821842.7	135419468	381715005	495346204	802987487	504930644	716452311	538816570	5146294.92	3611697043
CONSTANTA		1757468.07	31779450.9	378658637	236359885	746047070	612151942	636414289	414443205	72040.58	3057683988
COVASNA		413298.04	3706310.42	56130953.2	46894293.9	64899941	109702389	175721101	190049941	2365161.6	649883389
DAMBOVITA		2121079.83	38698804.6	166085616	260754406	390818793	325954448	245558139	274736250	34055380.3	1738782917
DOLJ	2111985.68	31725508.7	127052540	216878234	282468765	479303556	462066503	535884570	555554162	4851509.86	2697897333
GALATI		1874738.12	41866699.6	96069438.8	118995227	235800929	358769094	339618920	147083861	504554.32	1340583461
GIURGIU	1164161.95	4878838.96	18492454.8	77337476.7	145600666	117181667	58432875.4	65694198	92549736.1	328913.97	581660988
GORJ		15784178.9	48538168.2	63000029.8	106813382	112768091	93035648.5	73989112.8	112736931		626665541
HARGHITA		2139507.73	40218434.1	64056140.5	74654848.2	74781504.1	149899448	266457505	177940374	2685567.02	852833328
HUNEDOARA		2219025.1	23162580.1	115901957	167763802	282662923	268667125	487800833	338759024	52002449.6	1738939718
IALOMITA		3849676.08	9990230.64	36210871.2	16062248	19682237.5	23814450.4	45926952.4	50808331.5	108496.4	206453494
IASI		10229159.6	59472539.9	217964279	392888042	625950063	743577751	694484459	711610189	419014.4	3456595497
ILFOV		347753.66	26542914.5	74841498.2	115924345	279158043	415064147	627514709	344396770	1834283.64	1885624463
MARAMURES		1529429.44	29774337.8	70634642.8	96750822.1	219003366	197550846	365595335	367248742	2559711.97	1350647233
MEHEDINTI			46570535	82246020.8	89097740.2	90858663.9	53672153.3	103828417	120644818	583273.69	587501622
MURES		15090375.5	55942534.3	72356962.7	137880544	369246698	264782312	266537824	225726062	7695721.59	1415259034
NEAMT	3694026.98	4876445.99	59674963.3	141621449	182112955	235163825	217518368	199671755	164005479	30857445.2	1239196714
OLT		2966054.55	31758162	74221467	170735685	248313880	145015188	119572778	132726876	2315523.67	927625615
PRAHOVA		959777.82	28762616	93715227.1	158006605	204399264	385509543	470434985	444327976	4014429.93	1790130425
SALAJ		1250669.48	18829537.6	71453473.4	92211901.3	88387008.5	80103311.3	111040272	64353908.1		527630082
SATU MARE		1916262.1	9558254.86	23336999.7	62301014.2	111228800	178073917	190961732	230891052	142834.77	808410867
SIBIU		3986984.91	92895377.5	148092276	207693051	438102791	395673318	415596172	238194587	21300.55	1940255859
SUCEAVA		6185905.04	72108914.8	122458014	144578558	145130488	239628720	402042542	258482993	765945.48	1391382079
TELEORMAN		1429490.39	63250336.7	148276822	157438176	161488022	125244431	154542402	93762983.1	869789.35	906302454
TIMIS	3105104.3	7592482.45	24440716.5	253605247	290729555	541825247	405192866	572518539	362181864	3201072.49	2464392693
TULCEA		12406961.2	105102744	122234891	133429862	89878228.2	193851906	137379880	140425741	33712.36	934743926
VALCEA		5035417.52	23921972.4	69460249	125839221	143487181	197430386	407536750	239946776	1907843.17	1214565796
VASLUI		1607955.78	38276706.9	50763069.1	75370669.8	120514297	95887089.8	132454872	105096648	2710914.16	622682222
VRANCEA			42699692.9	90552284.1	122316531	305164781	141039010	147996080	132958547	199047.41	982925973
Grand Total	**23177882.86**	**446130299**	**2335798617**	**7626771495**	**9328483178**	**1.7854E+10**	**1.7933E+10**	**1.7112E+10**	**1.9028E+10**	**229858611**	**9.1917E+10**

Fig 1.Amounts authorized for payment on European funded projects between 2007-May 2017.

Source: Financing contracts reimbursements [4]

It has to be mentioned that the data taken into consideration included as well the data for year 2017 (table no.1), as there were data corresponding to this period on the *Average gross monthly nominal wages* [32]. This sustainable development indicator, defined by the INS in the "Knowledge Society and Economic and Social Development" category, is taken into account in order to show whether payments made on European funded projects directly affect the wages of those communities. We obtained a series of 383 values, out of which 10 were excluded.

Table no. 1. Average gross monthly nominal wages

	An/(RON)	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
1	Alba	1243	1506	1545	1692	1683	1746	1818	1976	2193	2434	2849
2	Arad	1271	1521	1639	1689	1755	1831	1925	2052	2304	2508	2909
3	Arges	1346	1713	1858	1966	2021	2123	2267	2449	2683	2858	3207
4	Bacau	1361	1685	1791	1733	1720	1761	1857	2001	2182	2399	2814
5	Bihor	1086	1351	1393	1459	1492	1541	1589	1785	1929	2159	2584
6	Bistrita-Nasaud	1190	1442	1492	1475	1508	1570	1641	1742	2041	2180	2506
7	Botosani	1161	1390	1501	1477	1472	1539	1668	1850	2026	2161	2608
8	Braila	1203	1494	1580	1532	1585	1606	1727	1851	2014	2179	2567
9	Brasov	1320	1639	1788	1777	1898	2013	2045	2207	2457	2779	3190
10	Buzau	1162	1479	1571	1564	1605	1687	1779	1821	2047	2265	2629
11	Calarasi	1114	1408	1509	1449	1530	1608	1703	1862	1982	2241	2688
12	Caras-Severin	1111	1397	1543	1587	1577	1656	1678	1820	1994	2254	2584
13	Cluj	1489	1772	1882	1897	2012	2153	2287	2535	2763	3182	3636
14	Constanta	1428	1736	1894	1821	1932	1956	2047	2167	2403	2586	2938
15	Covasna	1036	1290	1378	1419	1465	1512	1604	1730	1926	2121	2541
16	Dambovita	1331	1573	1664	1723	1717	1813	1939	2041	2168	2397	2776
17	Dolj	1327	1644	1777	1737	1840	1889	2018	2129	2310	2521	2947
18	Galati	1331	1636	1696	1728	1800	1844	1967	2169	2262	2396	2773
19	Giurgiu	1246	1557	1717	1712	1695	1702	1831	1948	2143	2387	2806
20	Gorj	1553	2032	2025	2083	2114	2188	2219	2424	2466	2577	2955
21	Harghita	1081	1322	1458	1382	1431	1455	1543	1713	1895	2092	2489
22	Hunedoara	1262	1546	1656	1641	1632	1766	1794	1917	2101	2206	2618
23	Ialomita	1170	1444	1524	1539	1575	1651	1695	1869	1991	2171	2613
24	Iasi	1333	1680	1781	1806	1841	1880	2048	2265	2473	2666	3215
25	Ilfov	1668	2126	2332	2375	2570	2742	2695	2874	3134	3275	3602
26	Maramures	1101	1359	1407	1389	1417	1570	1590	1765	1893	2158	2604
27	Mehedinti	1372	1695	1757	1795	1774	1771	1874	2036	2123	2236	2617
28	Municipiul Bucuresti	1908	2507	2506	2721	2902	3022	3148	3338	3687	3995	4497
29	Mures	1265	1508	1623	1680	1711	1804	1902	2064	2250	2554	2926
30	Neamt	1190	1394	1462	1488	1520	1537	1650	1752	1887	2182	2585
31	Olt	1279	1608	1713	1660	1670	1809	1900	2149	2245	2425	2834
32	Prahova	1380	1772	1894	1899	1925	2076	2125	2329	2530	2694	3094
33	Salaj	1208	1421	1537	1504	1541	1574	1659	1812	2040	2196	2605
34	Satu Mare	1171	1375	1415	1438	1517	1573	1746	1837	2013	2275	2662
35	Sibiu	1320	1659	1766	1836	1917	1964	2123	2232	2510	2815	3188
36	Suceava	1164	1452	1502	1506	1547	1560	1712	1856	2040	2189	2594
37	Teleorman	1118	1469	1519	1539	1570	1609	1708	1829	1964	2207	2587
38	Timis	1405	1767	1834	1923	2034	2158	2324	2499	2809	3196	3514
39	Tulcea	1245	1491	1599	1710	1752	1738	1897	2019	2185	2348	2775
40	Valcea	1233	1549	1586	1621	1698	1758	1779	1835	1976	2214	2555
41	Vaslui	1091	1398	1486	1446	1416	1526	1597	1780	1877	2211	2588
42	Vrancea	1148	1413	1467	1468	1467	1548	1641	1774	1972	2137	2486

Source: *INS database, Wages [32]*

We note:

y = CTGMLUN; x = PLCTG

We propose an econometric model of simple linear regression such as:

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

Replacing these the result is:

$$CTGMLUN = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * PLCTG + \varepsilon$$ where:

- CTGMLUN represents the *Average gross monthly nominal wages* and this is considered the dependent variable;
- PLCTG represents *Total amounts authorized for payment on European funded projects between 2007-May 2017* and this is considered the independent variable (in RON);
- ε – is the random error variable (residue);
- β_0, β_1 are the parameters of the regression model.

The regression line is: $\hat{y} = b_0 + b_1 * x,$ **(2)**

where: b_0 estimates the parameter β_0 , and b_1 estimates the parameter β_1.

Using the least squares method we calculate the parameter values. For the simple linear regression model constructed the following values are obtained:

b_0 = 1901.029435 b_1 = 6.52045169E-07

So, $\hat{y}$ = 1901.029435 + 6.52045169E-07*x

or CTGMLUN = 1901.029435 + 6.52045169E-07 * PLCTG

Estimations of simple linear regression model parametres MC1 using the least squares method provided by Eviews 7 in table no. 3. Data distribution within data series shows the abnormality of its distribution (Table no.2). The probability from Jarque-Bera probability is 0%, lower than the significance threshold of 5%, so the null hypothesis for normal distribution is rejected, Kurtosis >3, Skewness >0 with an asymetrical distribution oriented to the right side.

Table no. 2. Data regarding data distribution in data series according to variables

	CTGMLUN	PLCTG	RESID
Mean	2032.444	1.52E+08	3.07E-13
Median	1897.000	1.10E+08	-134.6197
Maximum	4497.000	1.24E+09	1731.615
Minimum	1378.000	6199.940	-545.2537
Std. Dev.	497.4381	1.69E+08	437.9541
Skewness	1.273576	1.976019	1.364959
Kurtosis	5.055140	8.829095	4.681463
Jarque-Bera	170.9390	770.8192	159.7648
Probability	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000
Sum	778426.0	5.68E+10	1.17E-10
Sum Sq. Dev.	94523865	1.06E+19	71351016
Observations	383	373	373

Source: Results from processing with Eviews 7

Table no. 3. Estimations of simple linear regression model parametres using the least squares method in MC1 model

Dependent Variable: CTGMLUN ; Method: Least Squares				
Included observations: 373 ; Excluded observations: 10				
Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	1901.029	30.57936	62.16708	0.0000
PLCTG	6.52E-07	1.35E-07	4.845676	0.0000
Adjusted R-squared	0.056988	S.D. dependent var		451.6006
S.E. of regression	438.5440	Akaike info criterion		15.01014
Sum squared resid	71351016	Schwarz criterion		15.03117
Log likelihood	-2797.392	F-statistic		23.48058
Durbin-Watson stat	1.074492	Prob(F-statistic)		0.000002

Source: Results from processing with Eviews 7

Test for the validity of the regression model [33] has to be operated:

- the null hypothesis is determined: H_0: the model is not valid.
- the alternative hypothesis is established: H_1: the model is valid;
- the test F is calculated:

By testing the validity of the regression model, it is found that $F_{calculated} = 23.48058$. So, $F_{calculated} = 23.48058$ (Figure 3). Then we compare $F_{calculated}$ for k = 1 and a significance threshold α = 5% with: $F_{\alpha;\ k;\ \ n-k-1} = F_{0.05;\ 1;\ 371} = 3.86665$; These are calculated using Excel:

$F_{0.05;\ 1;\ 371}$ = FINV(0.05,1,371) = 3.86665 ; It is noted:

$F_{calculated} = 23.48058 > 3.86665 = F_{0.05;\ 1;\ 371}$

prob(F-statistic) = 0.000002 <0.05 $\Rightarrow$ So, the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected at a significance threshold of 5% and the alternative is accepted, so the ***MC1 model is valid***.

The estimated value of the determination ratio (R-squared) $R^2 = 0.059523$ shows that in the constructed model the variation of the independent PLCTG variable values explains 5.95% of the variation of the CTGMLUN dependent variable.

In **conclusion**, in the case of the MC1 model, for a significance threshold of 5%, *the model is valid* and the variation of the independent PLCTG variable values explains 5.95% of the variation of the dependent CTGMLUN variable. The line slope b_1 = 6.52E-7 shows that if the value of the independent variable (PLCTG) changes by RON 1,000,000, then the CTGMLUN dependent variable changes in the same way, on an average of RON 1901.089 in the same way. In other words, there is a correlation that shows that the amounts paid for projects accessed by organizations in different counties positively influence the gross wages of local community's members in order to increase them.

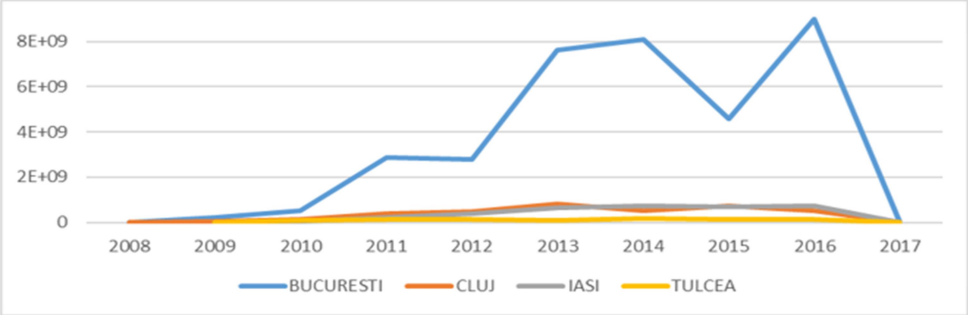

Figure 2. Chart on the evolution of authorized payments for 2008-2017

The graphical representation shows the high level of projects accessing in Bucharest Ilfov area (figure 2), compared to the largest cities of the country (Iasi, Cluj).

b) **MC2** - A linear regression model that verifies whether there is a correlation between *Local Public Passenger Transport* (PASAG) and *Total Authorized Payments on European-funded projects between 2007 and May 2017* (VALPASG).

The total data included as well the specific data for year 2017 (table no. 4), as there was data corresponding to this period on the *Local Public Passenger Transport* [34]. We have taken into account this sustainable development indicator, defined by the INS in the "Transport" category, in order to show whether payments made on European funded projects directly affect the public passenger transport within those communities. We point out that in this model we took into account the amount authorized for the payment of cumulated projects for Bucharest and Ilfov, as the data regarding the passengers were incorporated in those for Bucharest. We obtained a data series with 374 values, out of which 5 were excluded.

Table no. 4. Local public passenger transport thousands of passengers

Judet/An	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Alba	8004	7875	20801	21557	7808	5772	5466	5394	5395	5973
Arad	32869	22273	23255	21382	23620	19764	21338	18236	16971	15765
Arges	25832	25534	25735	22752	25465	27286	26648	26759	27443	31654
Bacau	25187	13665	11809	10320	10864	10043	8729	8535	8522	8472
Bihor	67790	58999	58816	58357	55143	52217	53288	47223	48156	47447
Bistrita Nasaud	3127	3545	3513	3768	3886	3977	3884	4313	4308	4170
Botosani	3531	3543	2371	2563	3074	3059	3098	2795	2517	2451
Braila	41568	47070	44451	39458	31599	32268	33152	35653	35191	32878
Brasov	64076	58382	59099	54539	52587	49206	49147	44695	76050	100030
Bucuresti	972671	966267	969585	939750	929203	914907	962076	778731	619066	606779
Buzau	4890	4435	5584	5439	4985	4114	5779	5257	6191	5553
Calarasi	3170	3927	5449	1301	2983	1784	837	594	544	1783
Caras-Severin	9305	6463	6369	6118	6814	5857	5268	5528	5879	5925

Cluj	155141	157049	168184	165718	160035	176828	187933	201161	202941	203665
Constanta	78947	72823	64648	58845	56907	55167	54271	55118	54768	52593
Covasna	1306	1443	2005	1326	1420	1311	1617	1521	962	860
Dolj	117848	60464	58368	50837	38386	52231	57902	56660	58922	68213
Dambovita	2573	3573	7321	1502	1722	1394	2030	2394	3200	3740
Galati	63678	53841	48312	45329	39227	38699	39464	39488	49965	56424
Giurgiu	2083	2001	833	896	1289	1780	1240	1233	1238	1250
Gorj	4403	5870	3124	4942	5105	4347	4160	4274	4729	4075
Harghita	233	290	356	404	421	457	446	453	456	488
Hunedoara	6485	4220	3415	3648	2936	2747	2818	1989	2450	1926
Ialomita	3531	3209	3100	3436	4492	2169	2103	2191	1904	1865
Iasi	124734	138648	133281	133221	131733	142973	137952	149814	153774	164573
Ilfov	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	224
Maramures	31680	29422	20264	17141	18875	21727	25060	28923	28355	28417
Mehedinti	2942	2666	1590	1238	1003	763	576	475	289	207
Mures	33231	33125	33341	36808	37422	38400	40413	42429	49923	48679
Neamt	8080	5238	4625	3444	4426	4580	4516	4397	4042	4599
Olt	2885	2303	2540	3240	4885	5256	1423	1602	4082	4430
Prahova	78858	81419	82792	83019	83702	82241	261050	285441	151356	117992
Salaj	13459	12764	12588	12096	11743	12051	11979	11900	11962	13190
Satu_Mare	7930	7135	5553	7018	7021	7010	7999	7990	7799	7839
Sibiu	42325	49956	51890	37591	40771	37750	37777	40046	40365	39665
Suceava	11598	12210	11090	11482	10240	10900	10617	10039	12630	13760
Teleorman	1725	1231	1378	1439	1344	1484	1377	889	815	772
Timis	91970	106471	141327	101402	75190	77413	73471	71964	160321	163284
Tulcea	5558	5306	5186	4017	2879	4217	3849	3614	3392	3077
Vaslui	4723	7104	6487	5387	5557	5391	5051	5310	6508	7552
Vrancea	3370	3267	2973	3062	3130	2969	2656	2616	2550	2476
Vilcea	4159	4578	3792	3925	4184	4562	3956	3997	4142	3171

Source: INS database, Transport [34]

Notes: y = PASAG; x = VALPASG

Similarly, to MC1 the simple linear regression econometric model MC2 is developed and, replacing these, the result is: $\mathbf{PASAG = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * VALPASG + \varepsilon}$ where:

- PASAG represents *Local Public Passenger Transport*, expressed in thousands of people and this is considered the dependent variable;
- VALPASG represents *Total amounts authorized for payment on European-funded projects between 2007 and May 2017* and this is considered the independent variable (expressed in RON);
- ε – is the random error variable (residue);
- β_0, β_1 are the parameters of the regression model.

The regression line is: $\hat{y} = b_0 + b_1 * x$, where:

b_0 estimates the parameter β_0, and b_1 estimates the parameter β_1.

The parameter values are calculated using the least squares method. For the simple linear regression model constructed the following values are obtained:

b_0 = 16958.45962 ; b_1 = 0.0001396990996 ; So, $\hat{y}$ =16958.45962+0.0001396990996*x

or PASAG=16958.45962+0,0001396990996*VALPASG

Estimations of simple linear regression model parametres using the least squares method in MC2 model, Eviews 7 in table no. 6.Data distribution within data series shows the abnormality of its distribution (Table no. 5). The probability from Jarque-Bera probability is 0%, lower than the significance threshold of 5%, so the null hypothesis for normal distribution is rejected, Kurtosis>3, Skewness >0 with an asymetrical distribution oriented to the right side.

Table no. 5. Data regarding data distribution in data series according to variables

	PASAG	VALPASG	RESIDE
Mean	45563.06	2.41E+08	2.58E-11
Median	7018.000	1.12E+08	-18182.62
Maximum	972671.3	8.98E+09	954901.6
Minimum	207.2000	6199.940	-185781.8
Std. Dev.	132745.1	7.97E+08	100665.0
Skewness	6.074809	8.836813	7.027826
Kurtosis	41.39952	86.71781	61.18848
Jarque-Bera	24940.34	114086.0	55095.71
Probability	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000
Sum	16812767	9.00E+10	8.87E-09
Sum Sq. Dev.	6.48E+12	2.37E+20	3.73E+12
Observations	369	374	369

Source: Results from processing with Eviews 7

Table no. 6. Estimations of simple linear regression model parametres using the least squares method in MC2 model

Dependent Variable: PASAG ; Method: Least Squares
Included observations: 369 ; Excluded observations: 5

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error		t-Statistic	Prob.
C	16958.46	5527.562		3.067982	0.0023
VALPASG	0.000140	8.48E-06		16.46769	0.0000
R-squared	0.424931		Mean dependent var		45563.06
Adjusted R-squared	0.423364		S.D. dependent var		132745.1
S.E. of regression	100802.0		Akaike info criterion		25.88511
Sum squared resid	3.73E+12		Schwarz criterion		25.90631
Log likelihood	-4773.803		F-statistic		271.1847
Durbin-Watson stat	0.452079		Prob(F-statistic)		0.000000

Source: Results from processing with Eviews 7

By testing the validity of the regression model, it is found that $F_{calculated} = 271.1847$
So, $F_{calculated} = 271.1847$ (Figure 6). Then we compare $F_{calculated}$ for k = 1 and a significance threshold $\alpha = 5\%$ with: $F_{\alpha;\ k;\ n-k-1} = F_{0.05;\ 1;\ 367} = 3.866921$
We calculate this using Excel: $F_{0.05;\ 1;\ 367}$ = FINV(0.05,1,367) = 3.866921; It is noted:

$F_{calculated}$ =271.1847 > 3.866921= $F_{0.05;\ 1;\ 367}$
prob (F-statistic) = 0.000000 <0.05 ⇒ So, the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected to a significance threshold of 5% and the alternative is accepted, so ***the MC2 model is valid***.

The estimated value of the determination ratio (R-squared) R^2 = 0.424931 shows that in the constructed model the variation of independent VALPASG variable values explains 42.49% of the variation of the PASAG dependent variable.

In **conclusion**, in the case of the MC2 model, for a significance threshold of 5%, *the model is valid*, and the variation of independent VALPASG variable values explains 42.49% of the variation of the PASAG dependent variable. The line slope b_1 = 0.0001396990996 shows that if the value of the independent variable (VALPASG) changes by RON 10000, then the PASAG dependent variable changes in the same way, on an average of approximately 17000 passengers/year in the same way. In other words, there is a correlation that shows that the amounts paid for projects accessed by organizations in different counties influence in the same way the local public transport of the local communities.

5. Conclusions

We have shown that any organization, of any type and size, operating on the global market, in the knowledge-based society, besides the economic development of its own business, besides the competitiveness of its efficiency with which it uses all the resources and ensures the quality of the products or services provided, has to implement a range of social and environmental responsibility measures. This means ensuring sustainable development, a development that does not negatively affect the community and the environment in which it operates but, on the contrary, helps to protect the community and the environment, the welfare and the labour security of its own human resources, and all this occurring in a more transparent way. Many organizations implement social responsibility measures through actions and / or voluntary contracts, trying to contribute either to improving living, education, health, work conditions, their own human resources, their families or local communities, or to contribute to the environmental protection, waste collection, recycling, water, soil, air pollution, the introduction of new, innovative technologies in order to obtain new types of energy, new techniques and modern marketing tools, etc.

There is a wide range of actions that fit into the typology of those that can be implemented in order for an organization to "achieve" social responsibility. On the other hand, a multitude of "projects" with European non-reimbursable funding or other types (government funding, cross-border or even research projects) can be accessed and won by various organizations. We have shown that all the funding lines of these types of projects focus on actions that are socially or environmentally responsible. We also state that the introduction of new, innovative and performing

technologies is part of social responsibility measures, as they directly influence the organization's impact on the environment and the community, either by providing better, safer, healthier conditions or by reducing pollutant emissions and residues, either by attracting new highly specialized human resources or by other beneficial effects on the community.

Therefore, an organization whose management will stimulate the access to European-funded projects will provide its own financing for both its own development, resulting in competitiveness on the global market, as well as for the implementation of social responsibility measures. It is not easy; the organizational management will coexist with the managers of the projects currently in implementation, who are responsible for the successful completion of the respective projects. In this case we are talking about the ability of the general manager to communicate, to ensure good conditions for the projects, to collaborate with the project managers in order to ensure their good running and completion.

In order to convince how important it is to access non-reimbursable funds through European projects for organizations of any type, the correlation between the amount of payments made for projects (amounts authorized for payment) during 2007-2017 and the sustainable development indicators for which data by years and counties is available was demonstrated in this research.

Therefore, it was scientifically demonstrated that the amounts received for the projects at county level influenced in a positive way the sustainable development indicators that were taken into consideration: the average gross monthly nominal wages for local communities (in RON); - the local public passenger transport (in thousands of passengers).

As a result, the value increase of these project payments is basically found in the rise of the average gross wages, which is beneficial for all members of the community, but especially for those actually involved in implementing the respective projects. Concerning the public transport, the project payments are seen in the increase of the number of passengers in local public transport, which is especially beneficial for environment, which means either the transport was improved so more passengers use the public transport, or more citizens need to travel more, are more active, as they are involved in the implementation of these projects.

If it was proven how beneficial the European projects are for both the organization and the community or the environment in which it operates, and considering the great difference in accessing these projects in different counties (Bucharest vs. Iasi county, Cluj county, etc.) as can be seen in the chart in figure no. 2, it means that all types of projects, the benefits they bring, as well as the additional training of some specialists in the field (project managers, experts in accessing structural funds, IT project managers, etc.) must be promoted more consistently. The latter must become the specialists to find the idea that corresponds to a real need of a

community, to write the project accepted by an organization, then to coordinate its implementation until it is successfully completed.

The paper has scientifically proven, in this way, a role and motivation for accessing european funded projects and the need to stimulate their use at all levels. Instead of voluntary activities that usually see a limited application, the organization will be able to use european funding through projects in order to achieve these same social measures, that will prove beneficial for organization, for organization's internal existing workforce that will be used in implementing these projects, as well as for the local community or environment. The research can be expanded in order to determine the correlation between the values of these amounts paid for projects with other very important sustainable development indicators, such as: research and development expenditure, education, dropout rate, water treatment plants, environmental protection investments, waste recycling enterprises, health, tourism, etc.

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