



UNIVERSITATEA DE ȘTIINȚE AGRONOMICE ȘI MEDICINĂ VETERINARĂ DIN BUCUREȘTI

FACULTATEA DE MANAGEMENT
ȘI DEZVOLTARE RURALĂ

Doctoral School: Engineering and Management of Plant and Animal Resources
Doctoral Field: Engineering and Management in Agriculture and Rural Development

RESEARCH ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF BUFTEA CITY, ILFOV COUNTY

drd. CHIURCIU (FIRĂȚOIU) Andreea-Roxana
Doctoral Supervisor: Prof. univ. dr. MĂRCUȚĂ Liviu

Introduction

The doctoral thesis "RESEARCH ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF BUFTEA CITY, ILFOV COUNTY" wishes to present the reality of Buftea city, respectively the degree of development of the city, as they are perceived by the local population, but also to describe the projections regarding the implementation measures of the local development strategies.

The paper will be structured in two distinct parts: a theoretical part and a part of own research, based on questionnaires and case studies, applied at the population level.





Part 1

Part I aims at the bibliographic study of the materials regarding the city of Buftea, aspects that will contribute to the creation of a Monography of this city. Thus, aspects regarding the definition, structure, and functions of Buftea will be detailed, highlighting the characteristics of this area.

Aspects regarding the historical evolution, development policies, relief conditions, climate, soil, vegetation, and fauna that characterize this area will be treated, continuing with the brief presentation of the eight component districts of Buftea.

The social and economic characteristics of the studied area will be highlighted by a system of indicators that will make it possible to outline the image of human resources, economic activity, and industrial potential.

The main indicators analyzed refer to the following aspects:

- human resources and social infrastructure;
- the structure of the land fund;
- structure of arable land by crops;
- the size of agricultural holdings;
- total and average crop yields of the main agricultural crops;
- animal production;
- the tourist and industrial potential of the area.



Part 2

In the second part of the doctoral thesis will be presented the personal research undertaken within the city of Buftea. Also, using the questionnaire applied in Buftea, which will be translated and updated with the new information concerning the other cities chosen, a comparison between Buftea and two other similar cities from the European Union will be conducted in Piastów, Poland, and Botevgrad, Bulgaria.

The methodological system provides data collection and processing, analysis of results, and formulation of conclusions and proposals by specific methods and procedures: S.W.O.T. analysis, sociological survey based on questionnaire, comparison, analysis of specific indicators, statistical processing of data etc.



Main objectives

- analysis of the investments made in the last period related to the technical infrastructure of the city, in terms of the benefits of the local community;
- conducting a survey with a written questionnaire to highlight the positive and negative aspects regarding the degree of technical equipment of the city, social priorities etc., as perceived by the inhabitants of Buftea;
- analysis of the perception of the locals of Buftea on the implementation of regional development projects;
- a description of the recommendations on the objectives and implementation measures of the local development strategies.

These aspects will be achieved systematically, and the results will be presented by different methods (monographic method, diagnostic analysis, comparison method and specific indicators).



“Buftea, a green and clean city”

An analysis of the strengths and weaknesses, respectively of the possible opportunities and threats will be carried out, which will be the basis for the elaboration of a strategy for sustainable development of Buftea. Thus, the regional priorities and the measures to be taken to achieve the strategic objectives will be able to consider the S.W.O.T. analysis carried out at the level of the territory, population, and economic activity in the city of Buftea.

The development model of the city will consider its specificity and the opportunities found following the multidisciplinary analysis carried out, and the results will lead to a general objective — the development and efficiency of the researched area.

In order to carry out this study, I contacted the actors involved in the socio-economic development of the city of Buftea and obtained their support for the implementation and conduct of these studies.

Annual
Reports



Doctoral Study

1. Defining the concept of sustainable development and its role in economic growth
2. General presentation of the city of Buftea, Ilfov County
3. Research on the possibilities of sustainable development of the city of Buftea, Ilfov County
4. Comparative analysis of sustainable development strategies in Romania, Poland, and Bulgaria

1. Defining the concept of sustainable development and its role in economic growth

- Sustainable development represents a paradigm of progress that harmonizes economic advancement with the preservation of environmental resources and the promotion of social equity.
- Its significance for economic growth lies in shifting the traditional growth model — frequently centered on the intensive exploitation of natural capital — toward a model that internalizes ecological constraints and social inclusiveness.
- By fostering investments in green technologies, circular economy practices, and human capital, sustainable development ensures that economic expansion is resilient, diversified, and capable of maintaining long-term productivity.
- Thus, it underpins not merely quantitative growth, but qualitative progress that enhances well-being within ecological limits.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

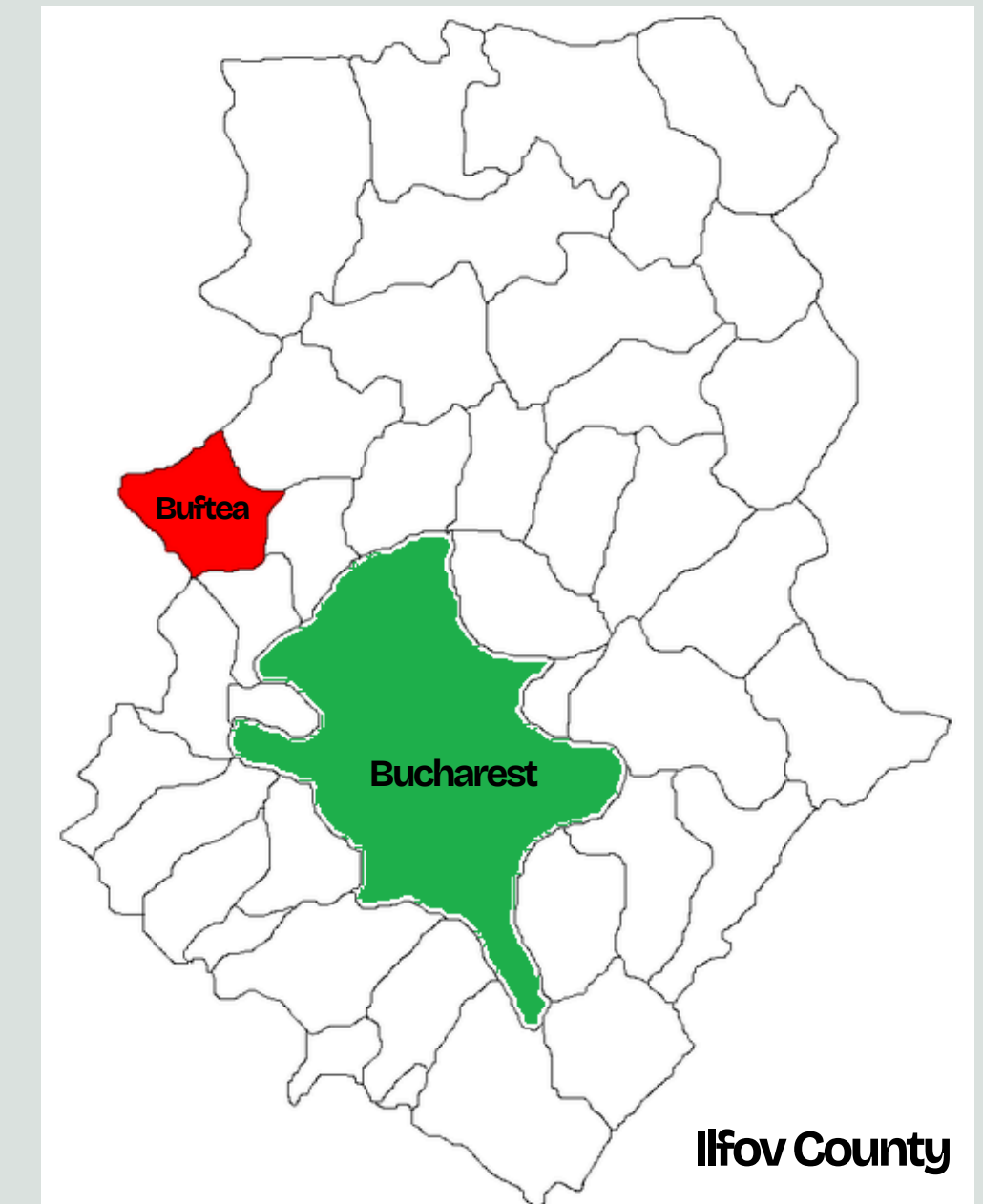
(Our Common Future, Brundtland Report, 1987)



Primăria
Oraşului
Buftea

2. General presentation of the city of Buftea, Ilfov County

- The city of Buftea, located in Ilfov County, Romania, lies approximately **20 km northwest of Bucharest**, benefiting from proximity to the capital's dynamic economic and infrastructural network. Buftea is an urban locality with a population of around **22,000 inhabitants** (according to the most recent INS data), known historically for its industrial facilities and the renowned Buftea Film Studios, a major landmark in Romanian cinematography.
- The city's territory is characterized by a mixed land use structure: residential zones, industrial sites, and substantial green areas, including lakes and forests that provide ecological services and recreational spaces.
- Buftea also holds administrative relevance as a local hub within Ilfov County, possessing educational institutions, healthcare services, and emerging commercial activities that support its socio-economic profile.





3. Research on the possibilities of sustainable development of the city of Buftea, Ilfov County

- This research seeks to identify and evaluate the possibilities for sustainable development in Buftea, considering the interplay between its socio-economic structure, natural capital, and existing urban infrastructure.
- The potential for incorporating renewable energy systems (solar installations on public buildings), improving waste management effectiveness, and encouraging sustainable mobility through better public transportation connectivity to Bucharest are some of the important aspects being examined.
- Additionally, the study investigates opportunities for revitalizing industrial sites into multifunctional spaces that support both economic diversification and environmental remediation.
- Stakeholder consultations, local policy analysis, and comparative benchmarks with similar European towns aim to substantiate practical pathways for Buftea to align with sustainable urban development principles.



4. Comparative analysis of sustainable development strategies in Romania, Poland and Bulgaria

- The comparative analysis focuses on how Romania, Poland, and Bulgaria — three Eastern European countries with shared post-socialist transformation trajectories — have formulated and implemented sustainable development strategies.
- It examines national policy frameworks, institutional mechanisms, and funding instruments (notably EU Cohesion Policy allocations) dedicated to fostering green transitions and social cohesion.
- Special attention is given to local adaptations of these strategies in small and medium-sized urban centers analogous to Buftea, Piastów (Poland), and Botevgrad (Bulgaria). The analysis highlights both convergences, such as reliance on European structural funds for sustainable infrastructure, and divergences, for instance in the pace of adopting circular economy models or urban climate adaptation plans. This cross-country perspective offers insights into transferable practices and policy gaps that can contribute to Buftea's local sustainable development agenda.

Education - KEY component of sustainable development in Ilfov county. Case study Buftea area

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The International Conference "Agricultural Economics to Support Agriculture 2024" 29-30.10.2024 Sofia, Bulgaria



Education

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN ILFOV COUNTY: A CASE STUDY OF BUFTEA AREA

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Abstract

This article examines the demographic evolution of Ilfov County during the period 2020–2024, with a particular emphasis on Buftea area, situating its dynamics within broader regional and national trends. The case study draws upon data sourced from the official websites of Buftea City Hall and the National Institute of Statistics, employing a set of demographic indicators including total population, age and sex structure, birth rate, and natural increase. Findings indicate that Buftea has experienced a sustained population growth over the past two decades. This demographic expansion can be attributed to both a positive natural increase and significant migration inflows, primarily driven by the town proximity to Bucharest, enhanced connectivity through road infrastructure, and the appeal of newly developed residential areas. The age distribution reveals a substantial proportion of young and economically active individuals, alongside evidence of a moderate aging process. Furthermore, the sex ratio remains relatively balanced, with no marked disparities between male and female cohorts. These demographic features underscore Buftea's considerable socio-economic development potential, positioning it as an attractive place for investment and residential settlement within Ilfov County.

Keywords: Buftea area, demographic evolution, population growth, birth rate, natural increase.

Demographic Trends



Comparison of Buftea's and Piastow/Botevgrad's sustainable development plans



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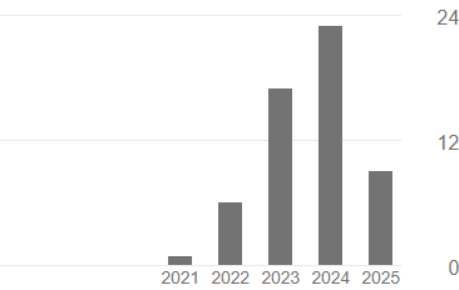
agriculture rural development sustainble development agricultural economics ecology

FOLLOWING

Cited by

	All	Since 2020
Citations	56	56
h-index	5	5
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<input type="checkbox"/> TITLE	CITED BY	YEAR
<input type="checkbox"/> Study on The Production and Marketing of Pineapples Worldwide Andreea-Roxana Firatoiu, Irina-Adriana Chiurciu, Liviu Marcuta, Aurelia ... Proceedings of the 37th International Business Information Management ...	11	2021
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4 To be Published

DYNAMICS OF AGRICULTURAL VEGETAL PRODUCTION IN ILFOV COUNTY, ROMANIA. CASE STUDY FOR BUFTEA AREA

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Abstract: The paper analyzes the evolution of vegetal production in Ilfov county, with case study for Buftea area, in the period 2015-2021. For this purpose, the cultivated areas and the productions obtained in the main categories of cereals and vegetables are presented. Similarly, the evolution of the areas occupied by orchards and vineyards, flowers and ornamental plants is analyzed. In 2021, the largest areas in the county were cultivated with wheat - 23,398 ha, corn - 15,501 ha, sunflower - 11,454 ha and rapeseed - 10,524 ha. For the studied period, there were increases in the areas cultivated with wheat, corn, rapeseed, green peas, green beans, eggplant, dry onions, peppers, alfalfa, watermelon and yellow. Apart from barley, oats, soybeans, potatoes, tomatoes, dried garlic, white cabbage, alfalfa and clover, there were production increases for the other crops analyzed.

• Introduction

Ilfov County is part of the Bucuresti-Ilfov Development Region, NUTS 2, according to Annex I of EC Regulation no. 1059/2003. It can be said that it surrounds the city of Bucharest which is included in the same region. It has an area of 1,583 km², that is why it is considered the smallest county in Romania and has as neighbors the counties of Prahova, Dâmbovită, Giurgiu, Călărași and Ialomița. The location of Ilfov County in the Romanian Plain / Campia Romana has permitted the cultivation of cereals and vegetables here, with a series of vegetable and flower basins that supply the capital Bucharest being recognized at national level. The city of Buftea ranks 4th, in terms of number of inhabitants, after Popești-Leordeni, Pantelimon and Bragadiru and it covers an area of 54.87 km².

• Material and method

To carry out this study, statistical data taken from the National Institute of Statistics (INS) were used. To capture the trends in the evolution of agriculture in Ilfov County, a series of indicators were analyzed and a wide range of specialized materials were consulted. The main indicators analyzed in this study are: the areas cultivated and the productions obtained for wheat, corn, sunflower, rapeseed, vegetables, especially tomatoes, eggplants, dried onions, cabbage as well as the areas occupied by orchards in bearing, flowers and ornamental plants, vineyards in bearing. The indicators of this study were analyzed for the period 2015-2021.

The data related to the Buftea area were provided by the Buftea City Hall, being taken from the declarations reported annually by the producers.

• Conclusions

Agricultural lands represent approximately half of the total area available in the Buftea area, and the arable lands have the largest share of them, 2,528 ha.

The area of Buftea does not have a large share in the agricultural production of Ilfov county, here are cultivated mainly cereals, wheat being the main crop encountered.

• Results and discussions

In Ilfov county agriculture has an important presence in the economy of the county, although, as it will be seen, it does not have an important share in the national economy.

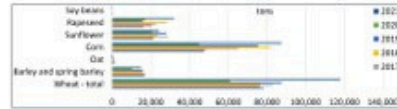


Fig. 1 Productions obtained from the main agricultural crops in Ilfov county (tons)

Source: INS

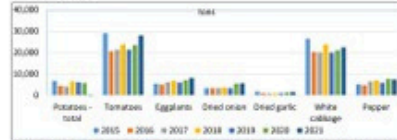


Fig. 2 Productions obtained from the main vegetables cultivated in Ilfov county (tons)

Source: INS

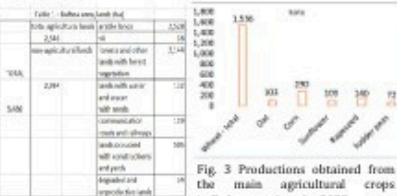


Fig. 3 Productions obtained from the main agricultural crops in Buftea area(tons) - 2022

Source: INS

Acknowledgement: This paper was co-financed by University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest during the PhD program, for the study entitled "Research on the sustainable development of the city of Buftea, Ilfov county / Cercetări privind dezvoltarea durabilă a orașului Buftea, județul Ilfov".



Abstract

The paper analyzes the evolution of vegetable production in Ilfov county, with a case study for the Buftea area, in the period 2015-2021. For this purpose, the use of the land fund in Ilfov county and in the Buftea city area and the cultivated areas and the productions obtained in the main categories of cereals, oleaginous and proteinaceous plants are presented. In 2021, the largest areas in the county were cultivated with wheat - 23,398 ha, corn - 15,501 ha, sunflower - 11,454 ha and rapeseed - 10,524 ha. For the studied period, there were increases in the areas cultivated with wheat, corn, rapeseed, alfalfa and fodder peas, as well as in the production of wheat, corn, rapeseed, sunflower, peas and fodder beans. On the arable surface related to the city of Buftea, which represents 2.57% of the total of Ilfov county, insignificant amounts of wheat, corn, oats, rapeseed, sunflower and fodder peas were obtained. The statistical data available on the INS website and data provided by the Buftea City Hall were used.

Conclusions

The city of Buftea has a significant potential for economic development, attracting investors and developers interested in its location close to Bucharest and the existing infrastructure. The diversification of economic sectors is an advantage for the city in terms of its development.

Agricultural lands represent approximately half of the total area available in the Buftea area, and the arable lands have the largest share of them, 2,528 ha.

The area of Buftea does not have a large share in the agricultural production of Ilfov county, here are cultivated mainly cereals, wheat being the main crop encountered.

DYNAMICS OF AGRICULTURAL VEGETAL PRODUCTION IN ILFOV COUNTY, ROMANIA. CASE STUDY FOR BUFTEA AREA

The paper analyzes trends in livestock populations and animal agricultural production in Ilfov County, with a case study focused on the Buftea area during the period 2017-2022. The findings reveal significant changes and challenges in this sector. By 2022, notable decreases were observed across nearly all livestock categories, with the exception of bee families, which recorded a 6.25% increase in numbers. The most dramatic decline was in pig herds, which fell by an alarming 81.59%, reflecting broader issues such as disease outbreaks (e.g., African swine fever), economic pressures, or changes in agricultural practices. Other livestock categories, including cattle, sheep, goats, horses, and poultry raised for meat or eggs, also experienced significant reductions, highlighting a major contraction in livestock farming activities.

The statistical data available on the website of the National Institute of Statistics and the data provided by Buftea City Hall were used for the elaboration of the article.

The livestock sector in Ilfov County suffered a significant decline between 2017 and 2022 with a marked reduction in livestock and the production of meat, milk and eggs. The decline in pigs was the most severe, followed by cattle and poultry, while the beekeeping sector remained relatively stable. These declines can be the result of economic factors, health (or changes in market demand). The situation suggests the need for recovery measures and support to stabilize and revitalize livestock production in the county.



THE ROLE OF THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF BUFTEA CITY, ILFOV COUNTY

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Abstract: The article analyzes the evolution of the business environment in Buftea, Ilfov County, during the period 2019–2023, highlighting its role in supporting sustainable local development. The number of economic agents increased from 1,247 in 2019 to 1,385 in 2023, with the vast majority (around 94%) being micro-enterprises with 0–9 employees. The city's turnover reached 2,893 million lei in 2023, up from 1,943 million lei in 2019, while profits rose from 123 million lei to 278 million lei. However, a slight decline in the workforce was recorded, with 4,316 employees in 2023. Economic activity was mainly concentrated in wholesale and retail trade (26.6%), information and communication (12.7%), and construction (12.3%). Overall, the business environment in Buftea had a positive impact on local economic sustainability by increasing revenues and promoting economic diversification.

Introduction: The city of Buftea, holds a special place in the county's structure due to its economic development and historical monuments that reflect past events. Since 1990, the local economy has undergone significant changes, including the construction of modern industrial halls, the establishment of various businesses, and the opening of numerous important private enterprises. The natural soil resources of Ilfov County and the Buftea area have created favorable conditions for the development of agriculture-a vital sector in times of global geopolitical and economic instability. Over the past decade, the number of active companies in Buftea has increased, each contributing positively to the city's and county's socio-economic development. Additionally, regional innovation systems play a key role in ensuring economic growth and sustainable local and regional development.

Material and method: The study is based on the analysis of statistical data series for the period 2019–2023, with the aim of evaluating the dynamics of the business environment in the city of Buftea, Ilfov County. The analysis focused on key economic variables such as the number of active economic agents, turnover, net profit, workforce distribution, and the structure of enterprises by economic sectors, according to the national classification system (CAEN). The data used in this research were collected from official sources, including the National Institute of Statistics and regional economic reports, and were subsequently processed and presented in the form of graphs and tables to facilitate the interpretation of trends and economic relationships.

Results and discussions:

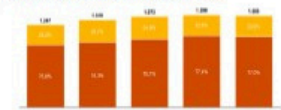


Fig. 1 Number of economic agents in the city of Buftea, in the period 2019-2023

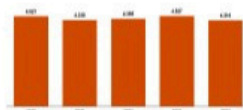


Fig. 2 Number of employees of economic agents in the city of Buftea, in the period 2019-2023

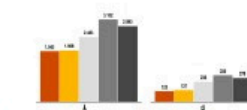


Fig. 3 Turnover (A) and profit (B) recorded by economic agents in the city of Buftea, in the period 2019 - 2023 (million lei)

Between 2019 and 2023, Buftea's economy experienced moderate growth (+2.7% in the number of economic agents), maintaining a high level of business activity (77% of firms with positive turnover). However, the persistent presence of inactive firms highlights the need for support measures to boost economic performance. Trade remains the dominant sector, followed by manufacturing and construction, all showing slight declines. Emerging sectors such as IT, transport, and professional services are growing but still marginal, the economy is heavily dominated by micro-enterprises (94%), indicating a dynamic yet fragile business environment, due to the lack of medium and large companies, while the number of firms increased, total employment declined slightly, suggesting possible automation, efficiency gains, or job insecurity; from 2019 to 2022, turnover and profit increased significantly, but 2023 saw a reversal, with an 8% drop in turnover and a 10% decrease in profit, pointing to potential economic slowdown, most revenues are generated by a small number of medium and large firms in trade and industry, which poses a structural risk in the absence of broader economic diversification

Conclusions: The analysis of the business environment dynamics in the city of Buftea during the 2019–2023 period reveals a general trend of economic consolidation, marked by an increase in the number of active economic agents, overall turnover, and profitability. The data confirm that the business environment plays a crucial role in supporting sustainable local development by contributing to increased public revenues, stimulating investment, and generating added value. In this context, it is essential to continue implementing local public policies that support entrepreneurship, innovation, and public-private partnerships, in order to strengthen a dynamic and sustainable urban economy in Buftea.

Acknowledgement:

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THE ROLE OF THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF BUFTEA CITY, ILFOV COUNTY

THE CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RURAL AREA IN ILFOV COUNTY. CASE STUDY FOR BUFTEA AREA

THE CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RURAL AREA IN ILFOV COUNTY. CASE STUDY FOR BUFTEA AREA

Andreea Roxana Firăţoiu¹, Liviu Mărcuţă², Elena Soare³, Irina-Adriana Chiurciu⁴

Abstract

The article analyzes the development of the most important tourism economic statistical indicators during the period 2015-2021, in Ilfov county, which is part of the Bucharest-Ilfov Development Region, and in the Buftea city area, a component of the mentioned county. Ilfov stretches around Bucharest and is the smallest county in Romania. In the city of Buftea, located in the western part of Ilfov county, there are some tourist attractions with national importance, which are points of attraction for national tourists and also from abroad. To achieve the aim, the authors analyze a series e a series of indicators, available for Ilfov county and also for Buftea city area, such as: the total number of tourist reception structures; the existing tourist accommodation capacity, arrivals of tourists and overnight stays in tourist reception structures, by types of tourist reception structures. During the analyzed period, tourism performance registered a downward trend in Ilfov county, despite the rich resources and accommodation infrastructure it has. The article proposes some solutions for the revitalization of this important sector, which can contribute to the evolution in the EU standards of the rural area in Ilfov County.

Key words: Buftea area, Ilfov County, rural area, tourist reception structures

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- 4 Irina-Adriana Chiurciu, corresponding author, Ph.D., Lecturer, Faculty of Management and Rural Development, University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest, 59 Marasti Boulevard, District 1, 011464, Bucharest, Romania, Tel/Fax: +40-21-318.04.65, e-mail: chiurciu.irina@managusamv.ro

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Conclusions

Ilfov County is known for the many natural and man-made tourist attractions, both of local and national interest, located on its territory. In the area, picnic-type agreement trips or short-term trips for visits to monuments or monasteries are practiced in particular. In the Buftea area, surrounded by lakes and forests, the development of tourism involving sports competitions (for example, sport fishing) could represent a solution for the development of this rural area.

The utilization of existing historical ensembles in new modern tourism projects will attract both pupils, students, and people passionate about history, as well as tourists interested in new concepts. The development of new packages of services in tourism and related to tourism, taking into account the requests of the public, addressed both to the inhabitants of the capital and to those from the country or abroad, will attract tourists of all ages and categories to the area, which will contribute to increasing the level of living in the countryside.

Case Studies

Cities where I am applying the survey

- 2 Erasmus short mobilities for conducting in-person surveys in Poland and Bulgaria
- I am sharing the questionnaire online through local Facebook groups until October 2025.
- My goal is to collect 200+ responses for each location, ensuring representation across different age groups.





UNIVERSITATEA DE ȘTIINȚE AGRONOMICE ȘI MEDICINĂ VETERINARĂ DIN BUCUREȘTI
**FACULTATEA DE MANAGEMENT
ȘI DEZVOLTARE RURALĂ**

Chestionar despre dezvoltarea durabilă a Orașului Buftea

Stimate respondent la sondaj,

Mă numesc Andreea-Roxana Firățoiu (Chiurciu), și sunt doctorandă la Universitatea de Științe Agronomice și Medicină Veterinară din București, România, Facultatea de Management și Dezvoltare Rurală. Teza mea de doctorat se intitulează „Cercetări privind dezvoltarea durabilă a municipiului Buftea, județul Ilfov”.

Pentru a asigura buna înțelegere a nevoilor locale și a caracteristicilor orașului Buftea, aplicarea acestui studiu de caz reprezintă un proces de consultare a comunității locale, în cadrul căruia invităm cetățenii, societatea civilă din Orașul Buftea, să își exprime opinia referitor la stadiul actual de dezvoltare și la măsurile viitoare pentru dezvoltarea acestuia.

Timpul de completare al fiecărui chestionar este de aproximativ 20-30 minute, dar contribuția dumneavoastră poate avea un impact semnificativ pe termen lung asupra dezvoltării Orașului Buftea!

<https://forms.gle/PmZv1HyJEdDtPe2b7>



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Ankieta na temat zrównoważonego rozwoju miasta Piastów

Szanowny respondentzie ankiety,

Nazywam się Andreea-Roxana Firățoiu (Chiurciu) i jestem doktorantką na Uniwersytecie Nauk Agronomicznych i Medycyny Weterynaryjnej w Bukareszcie, Rumunia, Wydział Zarządzania i Rozwoju Wsi. Moja praca doktorska, której promotorem jest prof. dr Mărcuță Liviu, nosi tytuł „Badania nad zrównoważonym rozwojem Buftei, powiat Ilfov”. W mojej pracy porównam miasto Buftea w Rumunii z dwoma innymi miastami z Unii Europejskiej - jednym w Polsce, Piastów i jednym w Bułgarii, Botewgrad. Miasta te mają podobne cechy pod względem liczby ludności, odległości od stolicy i przemysłu do mojego miasta badawczego - Buftei. Podczas badań w Polsce wpierać mnie będzie jako opiekun naukowy dr hab. Anna M. Klepacka, prof. Instytutu Rozwoju Wsi i Rolnictwa Polskiej Akademii Nauk w Warszawie.

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Анкета за устойчиво развитие на град Ботевград

Уважаеми респонденти на анкетата,

Казвам се Андреа-Роксана Фиръцою (Кюрчу) и съм докторант в Университета по агрономически науки и ветеринарна медицина в Букурещ, Румъния, Факултет по мениджмънт и развитие на селските райони. Докторската ми дисертация, ръководена от проф. унив. д-р Маркуца Ливиу, е озаглавена „Изследване на устойчивото развитие на Буфтя, окръг Илфов”. В дисертацията си ще сравня град Буфтя от Румъния с два други града от Европейския съюз - един в Полша, Пястов, и един в България, Ботевград. Тези градове споделят сходни характеристики по отношение на населението, разстоянието от столицата и индустрията с градът избран в Румъния, който изучавам - Буфтя.

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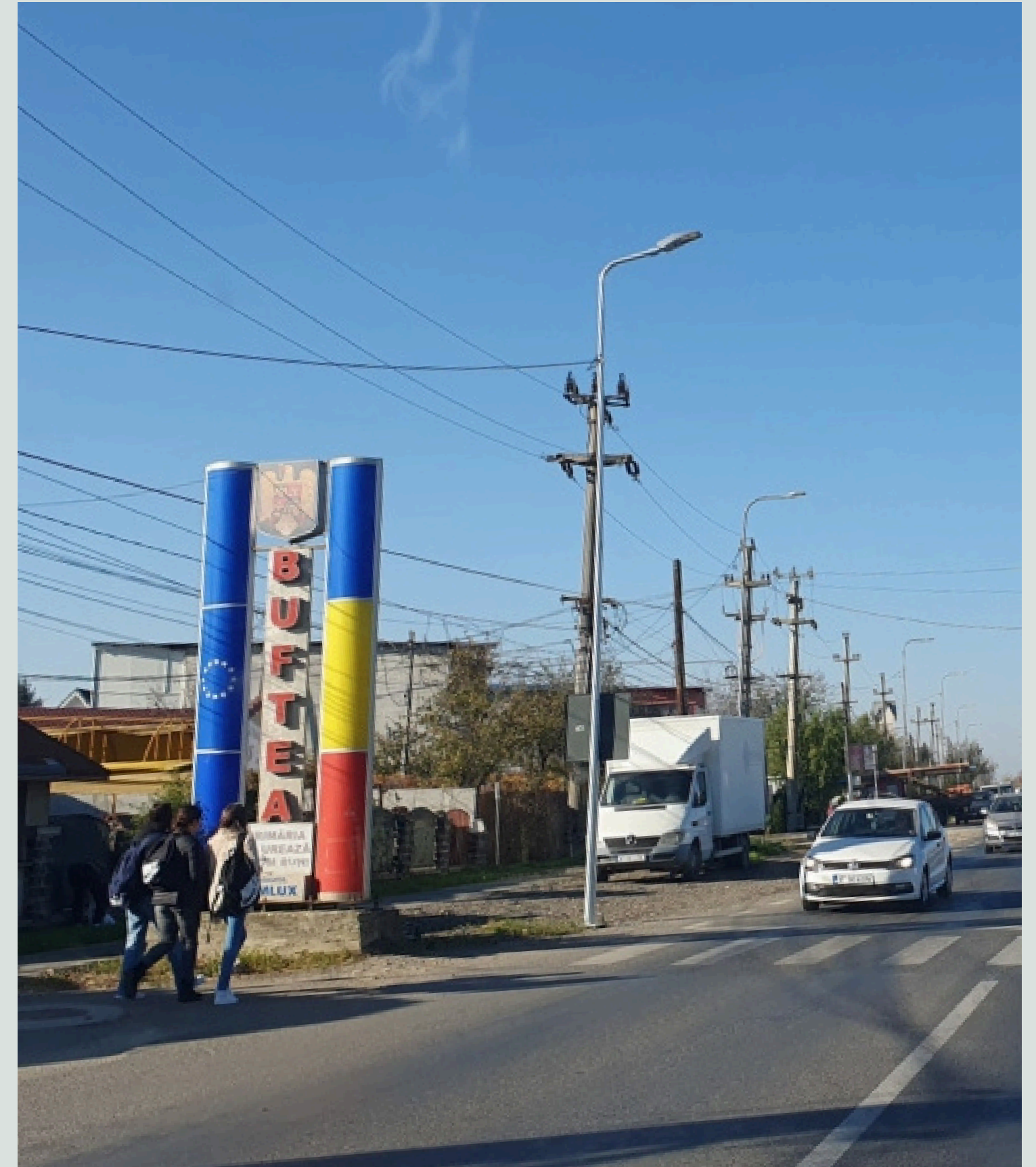
3 surveys

- To ensure a thorough understanding of local needs and characteristics, this case study is a community consultation process in which we invite citizens and civil society to express their opinions on the current stage of development and future development measures for their city.
- Completing each survey will take approximately 20-30 minutes, but every contribution can have a significant impact on the development of the city in Romania—Buftea!

The problem: What are you solving? Why did you choose this topic?

The core problem addressed in this doctoral research is how to operationalize sustainable urban development (SUD) in medium-sized towns situated within the sphere of influence of a capital city, exemplified by Buftea. Despite its proximity to Bucharest and its location within Romania's most economically dynamic region (the Bucharest-Ilfov area generates ~28% of national GDP, Buftea struggles with challenges typical for peri-urban settlements: unequal socio-economic development, environmental pressures, and insufficiently integrated planning.

The topic was chosen because Buftea serves as a micro-laboratory for studying the interplay between local development dynamics and overarching EU strategic goals. Furthermore, the choice to compare Buftea with Piastów (Poland) and Botevgrad (Bulgaria) allows identification of transferable policy practices relevant for towns across Eastern Europe facing similar post-industrial and demographic transitions.



Scientific novelty / innovation (what new you will bring for your science sub-field?)

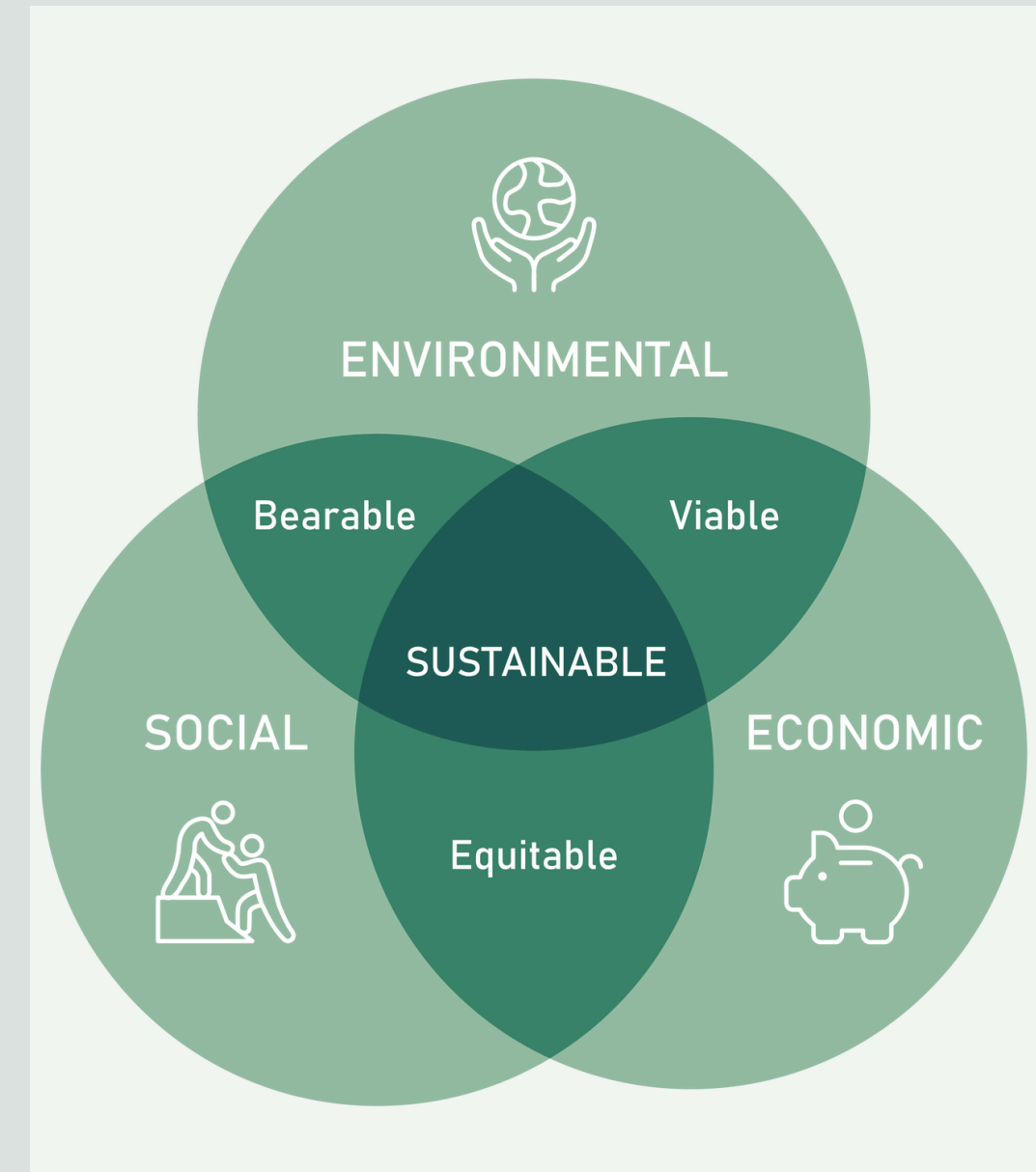
- Performing a multi-criteria comparative analysis between Buftea and two similar European towns (Botevgrad and Piastów), using socio-economic, environmental and local governance indicators.
- Developing an integrated set of local indicators for assessing sustainable development in small and medium towns, tailored to Romanian specificities and harmonized with European standards (e.g, Urban Audit, SDG indicators).
- Conducting a direct sociological survey (through questionnaires) to evaluate residents' perceptions of sustainable development, adding a qualitative and participatory dimension to traditional statistical analysis.
- Bringing a methodological and applied contribution to the field of urban sustainable development management.



Practical significance (what exactly your solution will improve from a society's point of view?)

The practical significance of this research lies in:

- Providing a rigorous diagnosis of the current level of sustainable development in Buftea, compared to similar European towns, which can guide local authorities in prioritizing investments and programs.
- Offering a model of good practices inspired by Piastów (Poland) and Botevgrad (Bulgaria), which can be adapted and implemented in Buftea to improve green infrastructure, public services, and citizen participation.
- Increasing public awareness by directly involving residents in the survey, thereby strengthening the social dimension of sustainable development.
- This study may contribute to improving urban quality of life and creating a sustainable framework for local economic development.



Object of the study (the broader area or field within which the subject of the study exists)

The object of the study is urban sustainable development as an interdisciplinary field that combines economic, social, environmental, and public administration sciences, aiming at the balanced improvement of urban quality of life.

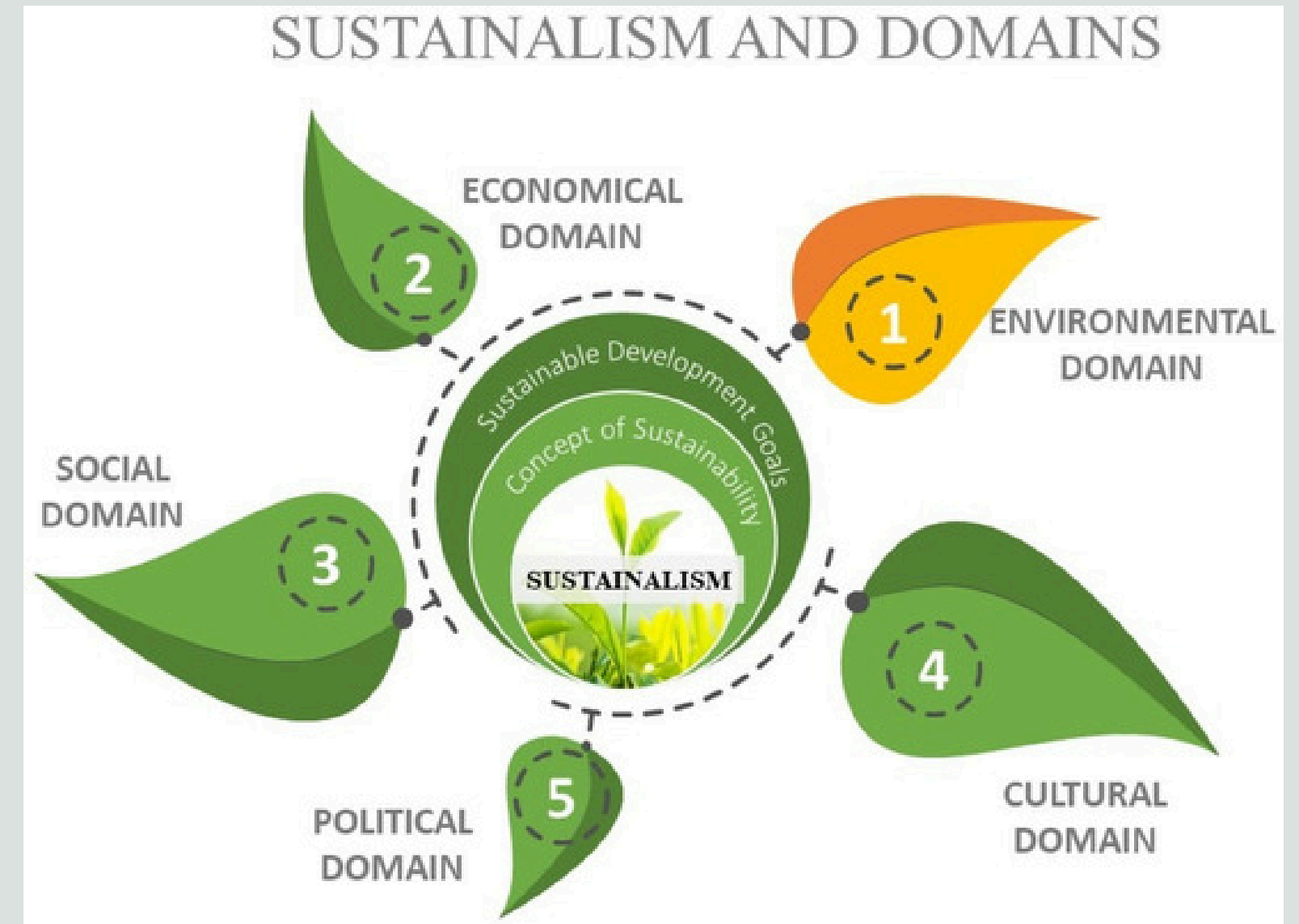
Subject of the study (the primary focus or phenomenon under investigation)

The concrete subject of this study is assessing the level and prospects of sustainable development in the town of Buftea in a comparative perspective with Botevgrad and Piastów, focusing on:

- economic, social, and environmental indicators;
- residents' perceptions of sustainable development;
- relevant administrative good practices.

Materials and methods (how you conducted the study so that others could replicate it)

- Documentary analysis of local, national and European strategies on sustainable development.
- Collection and processing of secondary statistical data from official sources: Romanian National Institute of Statistics (INSSE), Eurostat, National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria, Statistics Poland.
- Conducting a questionnaire-based survey on a sample of residents from Buftea and the comparison towns (through collaboration with Erasmus+ partners in Botevgrad and Piastów), addressing perceptions on local sustainable development.
- Multi-criteria comparative analysis, using methods of scaling and normalization of indicators, correlations, and graphical interpretations.
- A SWOT methodology adapted for urban sustainable analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats from the perspective of sustainable development.



Discussion (interpretation of the results to put them in broader context)

Preliminary results!!!

- The research results reveal that Buftea has significant potential for sustainable development due to its proximity to Bucharest but faces challenges in green infrastructure and community services compared to Piastów.
- The survey indicated a moderate awareness of the concept of sustainable development among residents, but also a strong openness to local green initiatives.
- In comparison, the similar European towns showed more advanced integration of sustainable development objectives into local policies, especially in waste management and sustainable transport, aspects that can serve as benchmarks for Buftea.
- These findings fit into the broader context of the EU's efforts to reduce territorial disparities and promote resilient smart towns.

Conclusions (what you have concluded so far?)

The study led to the following preliminary conclusions:

- Buftea is at an intermediate stage of integrating sustainable development principles, showing good performance on the economic dimension but gaps in green infrastructure and community engagement.
- The comparison with Botevgrad and Piastów allowed for the identification of concrete areas for improvement, such as expanding urban green spaces and strengthening sustainable mobility.
- It is necessary to develop an integrated local plan for sustainable development, grounded in objective data and active citizen participation.
- The research highlights the importance of international collaboration (e.g., through Erasmus+) in exchanging good practices for small and medium-sized towns in Eastern Europe.



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In memoriam

Thank You!

FIRĂȚOIU (CHIURCIU) Andreea-Roxana

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