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Albania's agricultural economy: Transformation, opportunities and challenges for modern agricultural enterprises

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► **Abstract.** The European agricultural market is currently in a state of uncertainty – climate change, military operations on arable land and the partial blocking of traditional grain export routes have changed the usual food security balances and brought the world closer to the risks of global hunger. The study aimed to provide recommendations for the development of the Albanian agricultural sector, considering the current situation and the historical background of the country's agriculture. Using such methods as statistical analysis, induction, classification, comparison and synthesis, the dynamics of development of both the Albanian economy as a whole and the specifics of its agricultural sector in the period from 1992 to 2022 were investigated. Modelling and generalisation methods were also used. The study obtained and analysed statistical information from previous years on such a basic economic indicator as gross domestic product and studied the dynamics of agricultural field crop production and the structure of their crops. Separately, the volume of Albania's foreign trade in the agro-industrial complex was analysed in terms of imports of agricultural products, exports, and the balance of these two indicators. The elasticity of private farms was assessed and steps to reform the national assortment policy were proposed. These recommendations were developed considering the Albanian specifics of the relatively small average land area of rural households. In addition, the result of the work is the development of proposals for joint farming and the creation of a national unique trade advantage in the agricultural sector, which will have an economic effect in foreign markets. The practical significance of the study lies in an objective assessment of the current economic situation in the Albanian agro-economy and the development of several recommendations that may be useful to representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Albania

► **Keywords:** agriculture; land fragmentation; unique selling proposition; private farms; market niche; medicinal plants

► Introduction

In the current environment of instability in the European food market, the food independence of each country is becoming extremely important. Therefore, Albania should reassess the capabilities of its agriculture and integrate into the updated balance of supply and demand for agricultural products – both at the European level and in the context of the threat of global hunger.

According to the international platform Statista, the share of Albania's agricultural sector in gross domestic product (GDP) is around 19% (Albania: Distribution of gross..., n.d.). Despite state-level support for the agricultural sector in recent years and agricultural land occupying about a quarter of the country's area, the share of agricultural products has remained almost unchanged from 2013

to 2023. At the same time, the European Commission notes the outflow of human capital from rural areas, lack of skills in quality product promotion, and limited average land-holdings – ten times smaller than in the European Union (EU) – among the challenges faced by Albania's agricultural sector (Agriculture in the enlargement countries, n.d.).

The problems and achievements of the local agro-industrial complex have repeatedly been the subject of research by the Albanian scientific community. For instance, Z. Sinaj *et al.* (2023) analysed the impact of state aid and the level of remuneration of employees in the industry in the process of identifying ways to improve the efficiency of agricultural enterprises in Albania. As such, to increase the productivity of agricultural enterprises in the country,

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it was proved that significant mechanisation of production and the spread of forced irrigation technologies for arable land are needed.

Important analyses of the issue in the context of climate change and the global sustainable development movement were conducted by A. Maho *et al.* (2023). After analysing long-term statistics on climate indicators such as temperature and precipitation in the Albanian region of Korça, the authors made recommendations for changes in crop cultivation technology. In particular, since it has been proven that adjusting the sowing dates directly affects the modification of the phenological periods of plants, a whole calendar of more suitable periods for each crop was created.

In general, solving any technical problems of the agro-economy loses its meaning if the basic contradictions in the land market are not eradicated. L. Mukli (2022) investigated the challenges faced by the country in the egalitarian land reform inherited from post-communist Albania. Considering the farmer as the central economic figure in the organization of land work, the author proved that young non-local farmers are more inclined to sell their land than to use it for its intended purpose, as they see no prospects in this business.

Thus, in addition to purely economic factors, the land market in Albania is also influenced by traditional practices. E. Zhllima *et al.* (2023), in their study of gender gaps in land ownership and inheritance, determined that societies in small provincial towns often disregard legal grounds for ownership, violate women's rights, and rely on customary laws. Such archaism hurts both the social and economic development of the village.

M. Osmani *et al.* (2022) also devoted their study to the failures of Albania's economic policy concerning agricultural policy. Analysing examples of unsuccessful government intervention in resource allocation, the authors noted the rather low socialisation of Albanian villagers and their lack of skills in unbiased collective activity. The authors suggest that the way out of this situation is to accelerate the process of Albania's integration into the EU.

I. Tomorri *et al.* (2022) also believe that Albania's future lies in increasing its competitiveness in international markets. In their opinion, it is necessary to introduce value chains in rural areas with the distribution of functions according to the conveyor principle. This measure should create strong market linkages between individual actors and stimulate an increase in the productive base of smallholders.

Thus, the issues of land reform and the economics of the agricultural sector in Albania have been widely studied in the scientific community, but without considering the challenges to global food security that occurred in 2022-2023. These challenges include, in particular, the large-scale war in Ukraine, the fight against terrorism in the Middle East, epidemic threats. The study aims to formulate economic recommendations on the key areas of development of Albania's agro-industrial complex and modern agricultural enterprises.

► Materials and Methods

In the process of conducting this study, such methods as statistical analysis, classification and synthesis were used.

Moreover, the comparison method was used to compare Albania's performance over the years in terms of such an important economic indicator as gross domestic product. These data were considered in the dynamics, which made it possible to obtain a more objective and informative assessment of the country's economic development. As part of the theoretical study, the analysis method was also used to assess the agro-economic indicators of the previous five years, including the volume of vegetable production, considering the share of each crop, the area sown with field crops and the yield per hectare. Separately, the data on the structure of crops in the period from 2018 to 2022, the last year for which there are currently processed and systematised statistics, were systematised and combined using the synthesis method.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent quarantine restrictions in 2020 and 2021 on food exports and imports from and to Albania was also assessed. Using the analysis method based on data obtained from the portal of the Albanian Institute of Statistics, the general trend of the trade balance for the two years of forced isolation of producers and consumers, as well as for comparison, for the two previous years (2018-2019) and one subsequent year (2022), as the finalised statistics for 2023 are not yet available.

The materials used for this study included, in addition to the above, operational and archival data from The World Bank, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Albania, current laws and regulations, in particular, Law No. 9817 "On Agriculture and Rural Development" (2007), as well as the annual reference publication Albania in figures (n.d.). Furthermore, by applying the induction method, data on key competitors in the region were identified and summarised for such crop groups as olives, grapes, and cereals. The analysis method was used to assess the prospects of the relevant areas of the Albanian agro-industrial complex in the competition and the expected result in terms of increasing the economic benefits of the country's agricultural activities.

The key problems and obstacles faced by the Albanian agricultural economy were identified and listed using the classification method. These include, in particular, the average size of land holdings in private households, the low level of communication between farmers within communities, the lack of quality strategic planning, the deliberate self-removal of local authorities, including elected ones, from solving the problems of local farmers. Furthermore, using the modelling method, based on the data obtained and the relevant conclusions, the further development of the agricultural business in Albania was modelled and described. By analysing the current situation in the European agricultural market, the economic niches that Albanian farmers and professional officials should focus on were identified. Furthermore, using the method of generalisation, recommendations on assortment policy were formulated, considering the potential unique competitive advantages (UCAs) that Albania can take advantage of.

► Results

The collapse of the communist system in Albania, which was completed in 1992, and the transition to market

mechanisms have provided an opportunity for the country's economic development. The dynamics of the gross domestic product have changed several times over the

three decades of post-communist development, demonstrating different stages of economic growth in the country. GDP figures by year are shown in Figure 1.

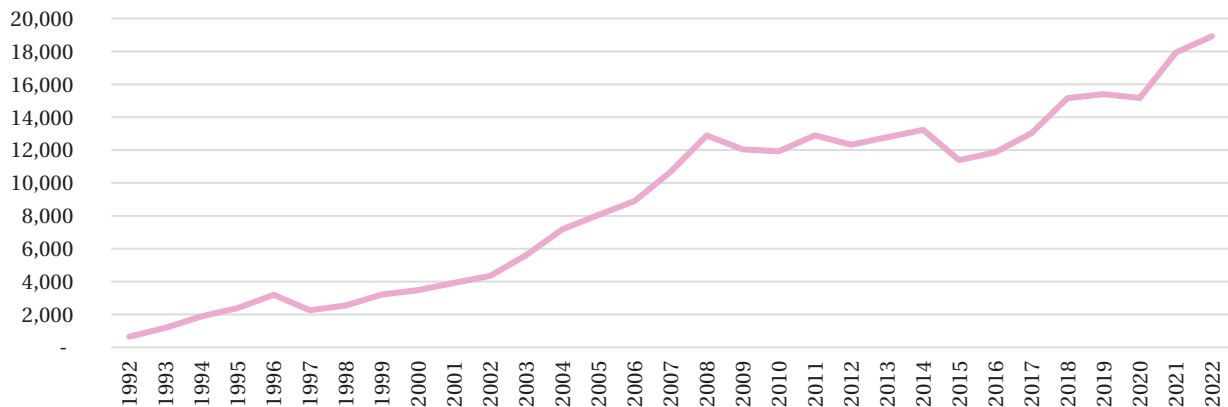


Figure 1. Albania's GDP by years, million USD

Source: compiled by the author based on the data from GDP (current US\$) – Albania (n.d.)

According to the chart, after the collapse of the USSR and the end of the so-called “socialist bloc”, Albania's economy was in a catastrophic state, with GDP in 1992 amounting to only USD 652 million. However, thanks to its domestic potential and the assistance of developed European economies, the country managed to demonstrate strong growth in the following years, which continued until 2008. In the period from 2008 to 2016, there was a certain stabilisation of economic indicators and slight fluctuations in GDP. However, starting in 2017, a noticeable economic recovery resumed, and over the

next six years, the gross domestic product grew by almost one and a half times. Since the share of agriculture in Albania's economy is consistently around 19%, it can be concluded that the agricultural sector has seen a similar growth of 146% in six years (Albania: Distribution of gross..., n.d.). It becomes clear which categories of agricultural products accounted for this growth after analysing the key indicators of agricultural development from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Albania. In particular, the volume of field crop production by year is shown in Figure 2.

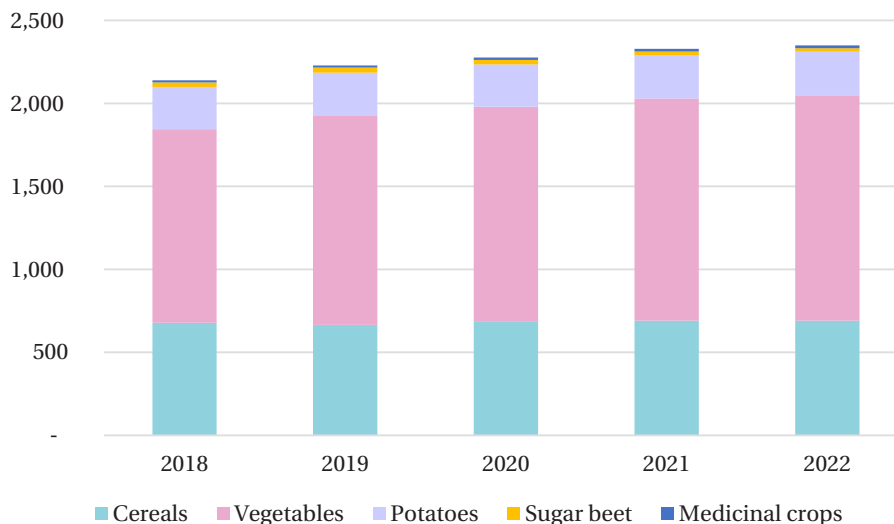


Figure 2. Production of agricultural field crops, thousand tonnes

Source: compiled by the author based on Agriculture and fishery (n.d.)

As can be seen from the histogram above, each of the main categories of field crops is seeing an increase in production volumes, which ultimately leads to an increase in the total figure. The success of the Albanian agro-industrial complex in growing medicinal crops deserves special attention – although the difference between 12.5 thousand tonnes in 2017 and 16.43 thousand

tonnes in 2022 is not very noticeable concerning the total production of field crops, this category is growing by 31%, which is a very high figure. To understand whether the increase in agricultural output is due to quantitative or qualitative growth, it is also necessary to analyse the dynamics of the amount of sown area for these crops. This is shown in Figure 3.

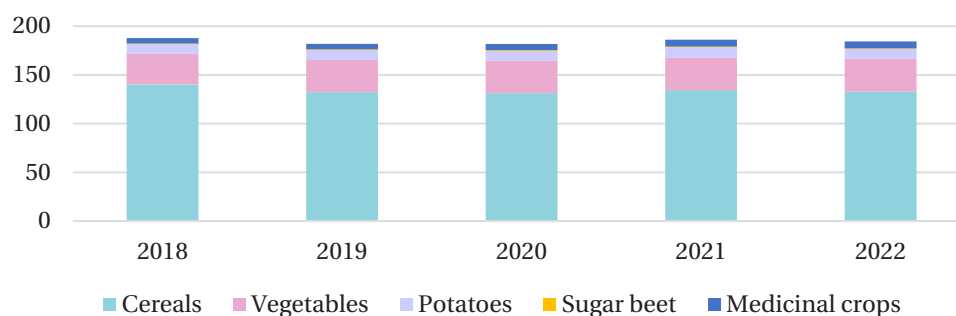


Figure 3. Structure of field crops, thousand ha

Source: compiled by the author based on Agriculture and fishery (n.d.)

Analysing the structure of field crops in the context of production indicators, it is possible to conclude that the Albanian agricultural sector has chosen a more progressive, intensive path of development and additional yields and profits are not due to the addition of new arable land, but to a more efficient and technological approach. It is worth considering changes in agriculture through the prism of foreign economic activity.

Since no country can provide itself with its domestic production of the entire existing range of agricultural products, certain products will inevitably be purchased abroad. Accordingly, in this case, not only absolute exports, and imports but also their balance is an important indicator of the economic viability of the industry. The relevant indicators for Albania are shown on Figure 4 and Table 1.

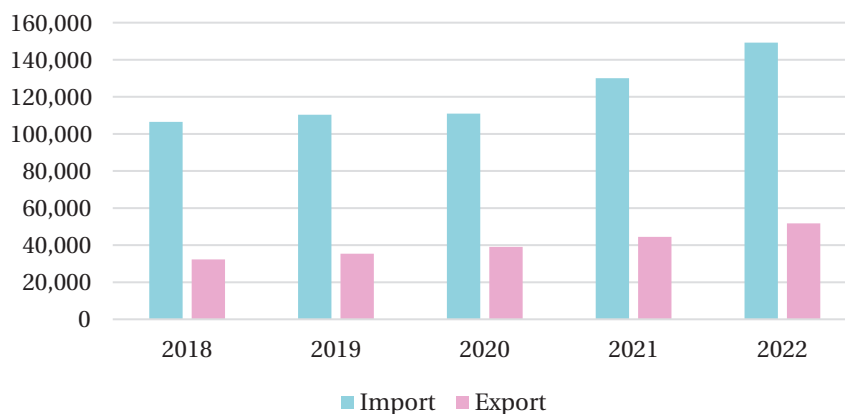


Figure 4. Albania's foreign trade in the agricultural sector, million Albanian leks

Source: compiled by the author based on International trade in goods (n.d.)

Table 1. Albania's foreign trade in the agricultural sector, million Albanian leks

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Import	106,508	110,365	110,927	130,017	149,225
Export	32,334	35,374	39,050	44,469	51,715
Balance	-74,174	-74,991	-71,877	-85,548	-97,510
Share of exports in foreign trade	30%	32%	35%	34%	35%

Source: compiled by the authors based on International trade in goods (n.d.)

As can be seen, despite the growth in imports of agricultural products into the country, the balance of supplies abroad and to Albania has remained almost unchanged over the past five years, with a ratio of approximately 1 to 3. An important aspect of this study of Albania's foreign economic activity is the fact that the trends in agricultural trade between 2018 and 2022 were not affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which was active in the middle of this period. As can be seen from the graph in Figure 4, imports and exports have an almost linear positive trend, with no deviations in 2020 and 2021. This fact concludes

that the agricultural sector is not heavily affected by the restrictions imposed by the coronavirus pandemic and that due to its specific nature, agriculture remains a consistently profitable industry with guaranteed effective demand even in times of forced isolation in society.

Attempts to develop Albania's unique agricultural trade offer that would allow it to compete in the region have not yet had the desired result, due to the relatively small amount of arable land, which, in turn, is objectively limited by the size of the country itself. For example, Albania's olive production, according to the Institute of

Statistics, varies between 130-160 thousand tonnes, while market leaders Spain and Greece supply 8 and 3 million tonnes on average per year, respectively – 50-20 times more. The situation with grapes is similar: in 2022, Albania was able to grow and supply 211 thousand tonnes of this product to the market, ranking only 38th in the world ranking, according to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (Crops and livestock products, n.d.). At the same time, the leaders of the European ranking, Italy and Spain, supplied 8 and 6 million tonnes respectively in 2022, which is again 40-30 times more. As for grains, the production volumes of countries with huge arable land – France and Ukraine – which are leaders on the continent, leave Albania no chance of at least regional influence in the cereal market.

However, the search for opportunities to strengthen its influence on the European agricultural market continues. In particular, in recent years, medicinal and aromatic plants have become increasingly popular in the world, and Albania is one of the leading countries in the production of this still relatively exotic category. According to experts, the production of medicinal and cosmetic plants by Albanian enterprises already generates about EUR 18 million for the budget. At the same time, it is important to understand that growing and shipping low-processed raw materials is a fairly simple option that does not unlock even a small fraction of the industry's potential. The economic effect will be multiplied by building a systematic production of essential oils from medicinal and aromatic plants – and this is where Albania, with some help from national or European programmes, could become a leader and a true trendsetter. The potential for elasticity of private farms is evidenced by the following facts, for example, in greenhouses in just two prefectures – Berat and Fier – almost 80% of all vegetables were grown in 2022, and pomegranate production increased by 45.13% in just one year across the country, and by as much as 214% in Vlora prefecture (Albania in figures, n.d.). This demonstrates the willingness and ability of Albanian farmers to develop in the right direction, and it is only necessary to set this benchmark for them and implement a support programme.

The current situation at the level of individual small and medium-sized rural households is quite complex. As mentioned above, Albania is the anti-rating leader in terms of the average size of private plots, at 1.26 hectares. To generate a guaranteed systemic income from such an area, it is necessary to unite small households into joint management and introduce proven technologies for efficient land use. However, the vast majority of Albanian household owners are not ready for radical change, and communication within the community is traditionally limited. This is a particular concern in the context of the industry's future qualitative transition to the so-called "Agriculture 4.0" format, which will be based on the three principles of sustainable intensification – people, production, and planet – and which is inevitable according to professional futurists. At the same time, the fragmentation of Albanian society, which has persisted throughout the thirty years of post-Soviet development, negatively affects the realisation of the potential in the agricultural sector. In addition, among the chronic problems of the

Albanian agricultural sector, experts also note the lack of skills in promoting their products among ordinary farmers, limited access to cheap credit, extremely poor availability of modern equipment and technologies and, consequently, low labour productivity. In addition, as already mentioned, the rural sector in Albania is traditionally characterised by a low level of both vertical and horizontal cooperation, which significantly reduces the social capital of potential joint projects.

The responsibility for this state of affairs lies primarily with the government, which has failed to ensure the required level of agricultural management and to create conditions for the effective operation of the agro-economy for three decades. It is the government that should guarantee the conditions for the development and transfer of technology, improve the investment attractiveness of the industry, and create the necessary targeted financial support programmes for farmers. Such financial support can be either in the form of subsidising prices for certain crops or in the form of cancelling export duties on certain products to stimulate their sales in foreign markets. Thus, the solution to the problems and challenges faced by small and medium-sized farms in Albania lies in good governance. Responsible non-governmental organisations that have the necessary powers and credibility among farmers can lead the creation of joint farms. These structures can also act as a guarantor of fair distribution of the results of joint labour on conditionally united land plots. However, it is important to consider the social trauma inflicted on Albanians and residents of Eastern Europe by the former communist regime. Any suspicions of land expropriation or the formation of "new collective farms" should be calculated in advance and preventively addressed at the stage of developing the communication strategy. In addition, since the target audience of the project has pronounced signs of a traditional psychological structure, where personal trust is of great importance, it is necessary to involve well-known people as speakers, not political, but rather from artistic and cultural circles – famous artists, pop figures, bloggers popular among middle-aged people.

As a pilot programme for reforming the new agricultural culture, it would be advisable to involve small and medium-sized farmers in the cultivation and processing of medicinal and cosmetic plants – as was found above, this is a relatively free niche in the European market and Albania can occupy it. Extensive information support through popular information channels (state television, radio, YouTube) and the establishment of mobile points of reception and primary processing of raw materials in the regions will demonstrate to farmers effective support from the state and the existence of an agro-industrial development programme. After the successful implementation of the first programme – during one harvesting season – farmers will be convinced of its effectiveness and will begin to trust the state more in further steps to develop the industry, in particular, in projects for joint project use of temporary unification of several small land plots.

In general, when formulating an information policy towards local farmers, it is necessary to recognise the failure of previous attempts to convey intentions and ideas of joint farming to rural communities. The small fragmentation of private land plots in Albania requires a special

approach to creating targeted messages. The key idea of such messages should be to reassure opinion leaders about the guarantees of inviolability of private property and to explain in detail, in language understandable to the target audience, how the procedure for common land use will work and what economic benefits private households will receive from it. Albania's building of its agricultural strategy from scratch will paradoxically give it an advantage over other, more established agricultural markets, as the country's agro-industrial complex will not need to destroy the remnants of the previous one to integrate into the new way of life of the fourth agricultural revolution.

► Discussion

As can be seen from the study results, Albania's agro-economy can have a significant impact on the food balance in the modern world, where the risks of global hunger are increasingly being voiced. In general, the development of the agro-industrial complex and the challenges for modern agricultural enterprises are a topic of research by the global scientific community.

For instance, S.O. Araújo *et al.* (2021) considered the possibilities of the fourth mode of agriculture, which was discussed in this paper, as a guaranteed way to meet the needs of the world's population with food. By analysing existing trends in the industry through a semi-automated analysis of numerous scientific publications, the authors presented a project of cloud architecture that could serve to further develop agricultural systems. D.C. Rose *et al.* (2021) conducted a similar study on the conditions of intensification that should bring Agriculture 4.0 closer. They proved that human capital is the most important element of the future agricultural system. The authors suggest investing in it by engaging people in agricultural innovation systems to create a renewed agro-economic system. Similar conclusions were drawn in this paper, as economic benefits from reforms can only be achieved by maintaining contact with farm owners and workers, and by explaining the issues to them in a language they understand.

J. Aschemann-Witzel *et al.* (2021) discussed the future challenges to the food sector and the solutions that can be offered by plant-based foods. After a detailed analysis of global factors and trends that predict the possibility of food shortages on the planet, the strengths, and weaknesses of food companies, including European ones, were identified. As noted in this study, the agricultural market tends to specialise, and only those participants who find their unique niche in time to gain leadership will receive the maximum economic benefit. It is worth noting the view of Albania's agribusiness from the perspective of foreign experts. A group of Czech researchers D. Imami *et al.* (2021) studied the peculiarities of strengthening the vertical coordination of Albanian farmers through the development of agricultural cooperatives, which is the kind of strengthening of ties between individual farms that was discussed in this paper. As such, it was proved that the development of joint projects involving farmers not only reduces the cost of crop production but also helps build mutual trust.

Given the many common factors between the agro-industrial complexes of Albania and Montenegro – geographical, historical, market conditions – the experience

of agricultural market development in this country is quite informative. D. Zejak *et al.* (2021), in search of examples of sustainable management of crop production in rural areas, highlighted the experience of some Montenegrin regions in raspberry cultivation. The optimal growing conditions provided by the mountainous terrain result in high and high-quality yields that allow for the planning of industrial cultivation of this berry in the future. This specialisation in monoculture has much in common with the ideas of systematic cultivation of medicinal plants in Albania proposed in this paper. Excessive fragmentation of land plots, as mentioned above, is also common in other countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. M. Gorgan & M. Hartvigsen (2022), who studied the peculiarities of such land distribution, concluded that a coherent national land policy and the introduction of a land bank to consolidate it are needed. The establishment of such an institution could be useful for Albania as well.

M. Biczkowski *et al.* (2021), who studied the impact of agro-economic development programmes on the example of rural Poland, conducted a correlation analysis of the relationship between the number of implemented projects and the economic growth of certain regions (counties). As such, the authors proved that in regions where agriculture is historically deeply rooted, the agro-economy experiences significant growth, while representatives of areas with fewer farms, on the contrary, are looking for alternative ways to earn money in other sectors. Accordingly, it is worth using this experience and not trying to attract people unaccustomed to such work to agribusiness. However, for Albania, the experience of its closest neighbours, the Balkan countries, is more valuable. E. Erjavec *et al.* (2021), who studied agricultural policy in the Western Balkans, formulated the key principles of agricultural policy harmonisation and invented schemes for classifying agricultural policy measures. A similar work, but in the context of promoting the green economy, was carried out by A. Licastro & B.S. Sergi (2021) using the SWOT analysis matrix, which formed the influence of internal and external factors on the development of the agro-industrial complex of four Balkan countries, demonstrating a direct link between the success of a country's European integration and its environmental policy. In the context of its European integration movement, Albania should consider this correlation.

How the cooperation of individual farmers helps to solve economic issues, which was also discussed in this paper, was the subject of a study by O. Gava *et al.* (2021). Using the example of another Balkan country, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the authors proved the successful contribution of joint farming to improving market positions and helping the collective transition to growing a new crop (in this case, berries) to overcome economic problems. The new important challenges facing the agricultural sector, mentioned in this study, were also described by G. Malorgio & F. Marangon (2021). The decline in natural resources caused by human error and unjustified aggressive actions can lead to the collapse of the global economy and a deep crisis. The authors insist that the inclusion of the concept of sustainability in food production and consumption is necessary at this stage, and the uniqueness of the trade offer and the specialisation

of regions in certain crops can guarantee sustainability in the agricultural market.

The market of medicinal plants, which is proposed in this study to be a specialisation of the agricultural sector in Albania, has many features. K.S. Rao *et al.* (2022) exploring the methods of improving the quality of this specific product category, considered the steps leading to an increase in added value and methods that can increase farmers' profits. I. Taghouti *et al.* (2022), in turn, analysing the global supply chain of medicinal and aromatic plants in the Mediterranean region, identified several problems related to certification and labelling of products, market changes, laboratory testing, and processing of raw materials. Summing up, the authors state that the relative "exoticism" of this market, on the one hand, opens up great opportunities for new leaders, and on the other hand, it contains the risks of a still unbalanced system. The industry's challenges include the lack of a stable institutional and legislative framework, high accountability to national health ministries, and low consumer awareness. All of this should be considered when making the final decision to encourage Albanian farmers to adopt the new assortment policy.

The impact of European regulations on different categories of botanical products on the nomenclature of medicinal and cosmetic plants was studied by A.R. Bilia & M. do Céu Costa (2021). Using the example of five product categories – St. John's wort, valerian, ginkgo, ginseng, and green tea – the authors investigated the complexities of national certification and categorisation of products, which can vary significantly from country to country and, accordingly, affect the profit margin of producers. Thus, the authors identified a systemic problem with the compatibility of rules and working conditions, which should be considered when entering the European market for medicinal plants.

To sum up, the agricultural business is quite promising from an economic point of view, but it has many peculiarities and limitations. Given the fragmentation of the Albanian land market, it is necessary to consider the experience of both the global agricultural sector and neighbouring Balkan countries when formulating its long-term strategy.

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► Conclusions

Albania's agricultural economy is at a favourable moment for reform, and it is up to the government and ordinary small landowners to take advantage of the changing balance in the European agricultural sector. As the Albanian agro-industrial complex has not been able to build its development strategy for more than thirty years of independence, the country's great agricultural potential, due to its mild climate and coastal location, has not yet been realised.

To overcome this situation, a nationwide programme is needed to explain the current situation and possible prospects to the population. Historically, the mentality of Albanian villagers has been such that, in addition to the physical fragmentation of land, there is a certain social atomisation of society – vertical and horizontal ties in local communities are rather weak and people are not used to implementing joint projects together, even when there is an obvious economic benefit. The state information company could change this attitude and establish transparent and secure mechanisms for the temporary pooling of land plots in a common-use regime with clear algorithms for the distribution of economic benefits from the sale of crops. This project should also focus on a balanced product mix policy and select crops for the reform of the Albanian agro-industrial complex that would become a unique trade offer for the country and take advantageous positions in the solvent foreign economic market of the EU. Such trade items could be medicinal and essential plants, the demand for which is not fully met at this stage.

The launch of such a national project will be able to restart the Albanian agricultural economy and attract additional investments from European partners. A separate competitive advantage of such a reform could be a system of mobile points for receiving raw materials from farmers and their further primary processing. The principles of operation of such mobile stations and the calculation of their profitability could be the subject of further study.

► Acknowledgements

None.

► Conflict of Interest

None.

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Аграрна економіка Албанії: трансформація, можливості та виклики для сучасних сільськогосподарських підприємств

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► **Анотація.** Європейський аграрний ринок наразі перебуває у стані невизначеності – зміна клімату, військові дії на орних землях та часткове блокування традиційних маршрутів експорту зерна змінили звичні баланси продовольчої безпеки та наблизили світ до ризиків глобального голоду. Метою дослідження було надання рекомендацій щодо розвитку аграрного сектору Албанії, враховуючи поточну ситуацію та історичні передумови розвитку сільського господарства країни. За допомогою таких методів, як статистичний аналіз, індукція, класифікація, порівняння та синтез, було досліджено динаміку розвитку як економіки Албанії в цілому, так і специфіку її аграрного сектору в період з 1992 по 2022 роки. Також були використані методи моделювання та узагальнення. У ході дослідження було отримано та проаналізовано статистичну інформацію за попередні роки щодо такого базового економічного показника, як валовий внутрішній продукт, а також вивчено динаміку виробництва сільськогосподарських польових культур та структуру їх посівів. Окремо було проаналізовано обсяги зовнішньої торгівлі Албанії в агропромисловому комплексі в розрізі імпорту сільськогосподарської продукції, експорту та сальдо цих двох показників. Було оцінено еластичність приватних фермерських господарств та запропоновано кроки для реформування національної асортиментної політики. Ці рекомендації були розроблені з урахуванням албанської специфіки відносно невеликої середньої земельної площі сільських домогосподарств. Крім того, результатом роботи є розробка пропозицій щодо спільного ведення сільського господарства та створення національної унікальної торговельної переваги в аграрному секторі, що матиме економічний ефект на зовнішніх ринках. Практичне значення дослідження полягає в об'єктивній оцінці поточної економічної ситуації в агроєкономіці Албанії та розробці низки рекомендацій, які можуть бути корисними для представників Міністерства сільського господарства та розвитку сільських територій Албанії

► **Ключові слова:** сільське господарство; фрагментація земель; унікальна торгова пропозиція; приватні фермерські господарства; ринкова ніша; лікарські рослини