

## **ROMANIA'S FOOD AND RELATED CONSUMPTION PATTERNS ALONG ITS PRE-ACCESSION AND INTEGRATION TO EU**

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The paper aims to observe and identify any patterns related to the food and related consumption in Romania during its pre-accession period and integration to the European Union. Since the consumption is related primarily to the number or the volume of consumers, their active or inactive professional status, their income variations these elements will be considered before looking at any changes in purchase and consumption. Reading the variations and eventual trends in these first steps will help understanding the changes induced by or influencing at their turn the internal migration at regional level and the active involvement in economic activities of people and companies leading to generation of income. The income availability is regarded as the central factor aside the availability in influencing the opportunity and the purchase/consumption. Equally the lack of sufficient income all the way to poverty and severe material deprivation are taken into account and analysed. The acquisition by purchase of food and related stuff is analysed by monthly averages at individual and household level. One important category to observe is represented by the monthly consumption of bread and pastry since old knowledge places this category among the important ones, Romania being among the first in Europe when it comes to annual bread consumption per capita. Further the share of foodstuff and livestock, alcohol and tobacco are analysed as contribution to the total imports along the last programming period. The reason for not going behind that boundary is given by the transitory harmonisation after the EU accession that might distort the observations. Overlapping the sum of findings, including the monthly average net income allow the drawing of the current consumption patterns and the general profile of the average consumer. No radical changes are observed by activity categories: employees, self-employed, retired, unemployed and farmers. All categories follow a relative uniform increasing path leading to the consumption growth, with explainable not significant variations. The analysis is concluded for all and every category of consumers taking into account their age, occupational status and the region of residence. The average consumer profile

indicate less activity leading to income growth (as an individual choice), systematically increased earnings and spending and increased consumption of all categories of foodstuff and related products. The consumption patterns and the expenditure are far from reflecting the benefits of the structural adjustments performed during the pre-accession and the integration to EU and their positive impact, these evolutions resulting rather from the opportunity, the availability and the proximity all generated by the open common market.