



21-22 May 2026

LOCAL ACTION GROUPS IN ROMANIA (2007–2027): A COMPARATIVE LEADER/CLLD ANALYSIS

Aurelia Ioana CHEREJI*¹, Irina Adriana CHIURCIU*², Ioan jr. CHEREJI¹, Andreea -
 Rxana Firătoiu², Cristina Maria MAERESCU¹

¹ University of Oradea, Faculty of Environmental Protection, Oradea

² University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Bucharest, Faculty of Management
 and Rural Development

Abstract: This study analyzes the evolution of the Romanian LAG network across three programming periods: 2007–2013, 2014–2020, and 2023–2027. The number of selected LAGs increased from 163 to 239 and 246, while LEADER funding grew from ~€370M to ~€650M, followed by consolidation at ~€500M.

• Introduction

Local Action Groups (LAGs) are public-private partnerships implementing Local Development Strategies under the LEADER/CLLD approach, financed through CAP Pillar II. In their governance structure, the public sector holds a maximum of 49%, while the private sector and civil society hold at least 51%, ensuring community interests prevail.

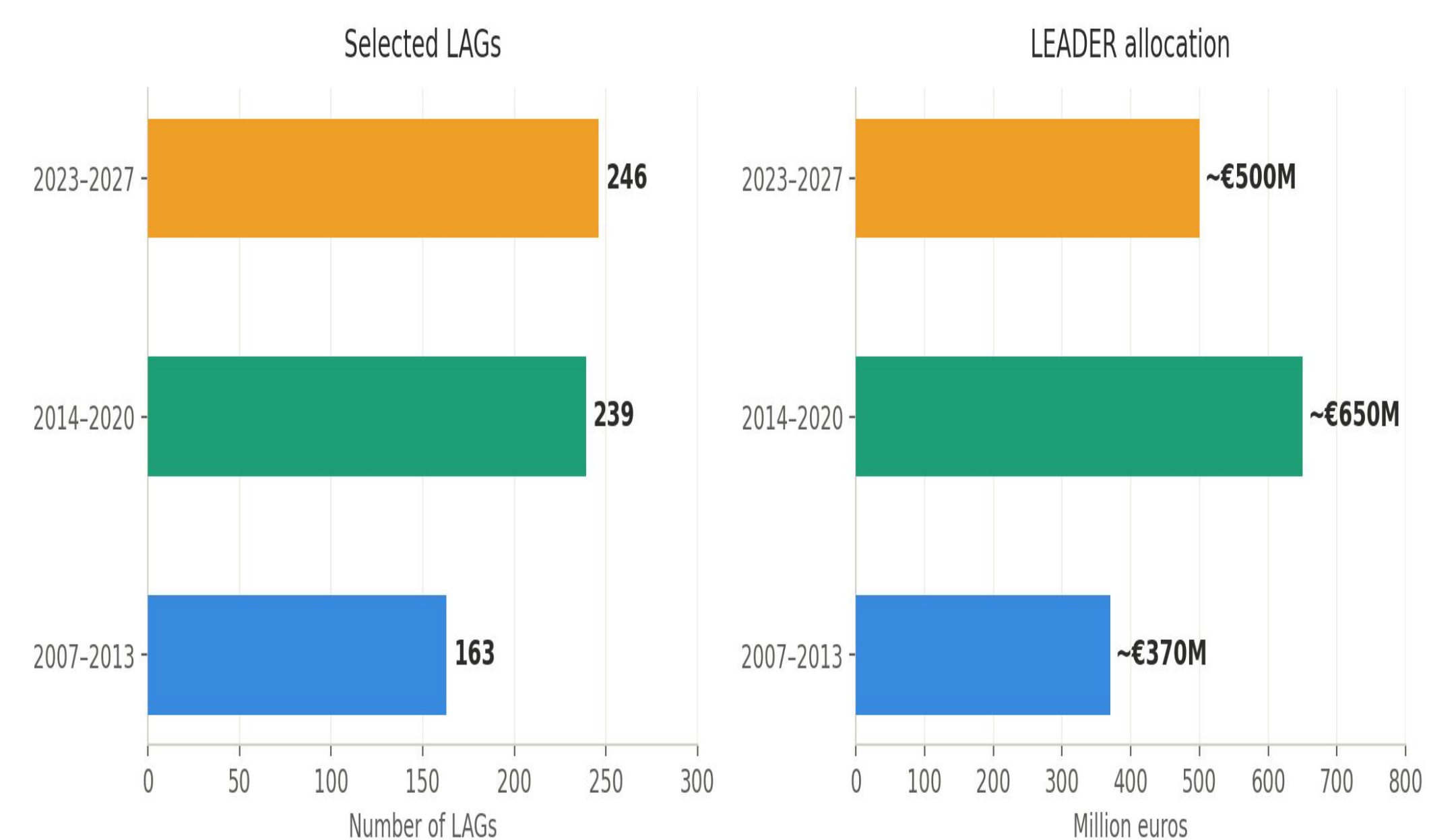
• Material and method

The research involved the analysis of specialised studies, European and national regulations on the LEADER/CLLD approach, as well as official documents published by MARD and AFIR. Data on the number of LAGs, financial allocations, and territorial distribution were processed and comparatively interpreted across the three programming periods. The local development strategies of high-performing LAGs in Romania were also examined, in order to highlight the evolution of the LAG network and the corresponding financing mechanisms

• Results and discussions

The analysis reveals a significant expansion of the Romanian LAG network, both numerically and financially, across three consecutive programming periods, as illustrated in the figure no.1.

The territorial distribution of LAGs highlights the dominance of the North-East Region, accounting for 17.89% of the total number of LAGs in Romania, followed by the North-West Region with 15.45%. In contrast, the Bucharest–Ilfov Region records the lowest share (7.32%), mainly due to its limited eligible rural area and high level of urbanization.



Source: Own processing based on MARD, AFIR and FNGAL data

Development Region	Multi-fund LAGs	Mono-fund LAGs	Total LAGs	Share of Total (%)
North-East	40	4	44	17.89
North-West	35	3	38	15.45
Centre	24	4	28	11.38
West	25	0	25	10.16
South-East	22	2	24	9.76
South-West Oltenia	29	2	31	12.60
South Muntenia	34	4	38	15.45
Bucharest–Ilfov	0	18	18	7.32
Romania (Total)	209	37	246	100.00

• Conclusions

The Romanian LAG network shows progressive institutional maturation across three programming periods. The Northeast Region consistently recorded the highest number of active LAGs and fund absorption rates, followed by the Northwest Region, which ranks second nationally in the current cycle. The current programming period (2023–2027) introduces territorial continuity requirements and multi-fund strategies - integrating EAFRD, ERDF, ESF+.