

DO EU GRANTS HAVE AN IMPACT ON PROFITABILITY, SOLVENCY AND BALANCE SHEET STRUCTURE OF PRIVATE COMPANIES? AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS ON ROMANIAN COMPANIES

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Abstract: *In the European Union's budget, significant amounts of funds are allocated to financing various development programs in the member countries. After the 2004-2007 enlargement, these facilities became essential instruments for supporting the new EU members. However, the results obtained vary greatly from one country to another, thus we see an orientation of the scientific community to analyzing and quantifying the impact that these non-reimbursable financing programs have on the economic environment and the attempt to explain the existing discrepancies. However, there is no consensus in the scientific literature, we find both articles that support the existence of a clear contribution of these non-reimbursable funds to supporting economic growth, and articles that conclude that European investment subsidies do not have the expected effects and the entire process of granting them should be reconsidered. Starting from this division of the scientific literature and from the fact that there are not many studies on this subject in Romania, in this paper we carried out an empirical analysis of a set of companies that benefited from non-reimbursable funds, in order to identify the changes that occurred at the enterprise level. Our analysis focuses on the annual financial statements, wanting to see if the absorbed European funds have effects on the profitability and balance sheet structure of the beneficiary enterprise. The results obtained show that there are some slight differences between the profitability indicators calculated for the two groups, but there are no notable improvements in balance sheet stability indicators. The absence of a notable impact on profitability indicators is slightly problematic, suggesting that accessing these non-reimbursable financing also involves certain additional costs that occur during the project monitoring period.*

Keywords: *European grants; economic development; profitability; solvency.*

JEL Classification: F63; H25; P33; F15

1. Introduction

The enlargement of the European Union from 2004 to 2007 represented a new chapter in its evolution, being a major challenge for its regional development policies. To the new members, the European Commission awarded non-repayable financial aid to stimulate their economic growth and reduce the gaps within the European community. The results recorded by the beneficiary regions were, however, very varied. This represented an incentive for the academic community to study the effects that European funds have in different development regions. (Dumčiuvienė &

Adomynienė 2014) We thus find that there are more and more analyses on this subject, but the results and conclusions of these studies are very varied. (Wostner, 2008) The first step in this research is to distinguish the main types of approaches used by researchers, thus we can distinguish two large categories of studies, macroeconomic (most often based on econometric analyses) and microeconomic (most often based on entity-level analyses). By analyzing the results of the studies, we can classify the authors into three categories, those who identify positive effects, those who identify conditional positive effects and those who do not identify positive effects.

The research conducted by Janos Varga and Jan in't Veld represents an example of an econometric approach, using the QUEST III model, they highlighted that funds allocated by the European Union lead to increased productivity and production capacity of private enterprises. (Varga & Veld, 2009) In an article published in 2017, Sabina Žampa and Štefan Bojnec conclude that European investment subsidies lead to increased financial performance of beneficiary firms, leading to sustainable economic growth. (Žampa & Bojnec, 2017) Another econometric analysis of primary sector enterprises published in 2008 shows that European investment subsidies have a positive impact on technology transfer, facilitating the implementation of new technologies. (McCloud & Kumbhakar, 2008)

Among the researchers who believe that European investment funds have a positive effect, but are conditioned by various aspects, we can mention Martin Reiner who, in an article published in 2003, concludes that European funds support economic growth, but there must be a stable macroeconomic environment. (Reiner, 2003) A similar conclusion is reached by authors Sjef Ederveen, Henri L.F. Groot and Richard Nahuis, who state that the benefits of funds allocated by the European Union are conditioned by the efficiency of the institutional system in the member state. (Ederveen, Groot, & Nahuis, 2002) The importance of the institutional system is also highlighted in a paper published in 2025 that analyzes the volume of funds absorbed at the level of Bihor County. (Moș, Nicula, & Alboi, 2025) Other authors condition the positive effects on the quality of the selected projects, practically emphasizing the system of institutions that manage European investment programs. (Becker, Egger și Ehrlich 2018) Other researchers considers that the impact generated is dependent on the value of the non-refundable financial aid received. (Šelebaj & Bule, 2021)

During the literature review process, we also identified a number of authors who argue that grants allocated to private beneficiaries do not have a notable impact on economic development. In an article published in 2001, Frank Barry, John Bradley and Aoife Hannan argued that only grants allocated to public infrastructure projects led to sustained economic growth. (Barry, Bradley & Hannan 2001). A similar prioritization of public projects appears in a study published in 2025, which analyzes 10 countries in Central and Eastern Europe. (Moldovan, 2025) A similar view is expressed in an article published in 2013, which finds that private enterprises tend to behave irrationally when it comes to accessing non-reimbursable funds, proposing projects that aim to maximize the value of the subsidy, rather than responding to a real need of the enterprise. (Jureviciene & Pileckaitė, 2013) In 2025, another study highlighted a similar conclusion, identifying companies that, after implementing projects with non-reimbursable financing, recorded decreases in productivity. (Millot, Rawdanowicz, Sauvage, & Lieshout, 2025) In an article published in 2023, László Kállay and Tibor Takács found that only 10% of companies that benefited from European funds recorded notable improvements in performance indicators. (Kállay

& Takács, 2023) A 2013 study on primary sector enterprises found that only in certain countries did European subsidies have a positive impact on economic productivity. (Rizov, Pokrivcak, & Ciaian, 2013) Similar results were reported in 2018, following a study on a data set from 213 EU regions from 2004-2014, with the authors highlighting mixed effects of investment subsidies. (Garrone, Emmers, Olper, & Swinnen, 2018) (Garrone, Emmers, Lee, Olper, & Swinnen, 2019) A study conducted in Latvia in 2018, by Konstantins Benkovskis, Olegs Tkacevs, and Naomitsu Yashiro, shows that European funds addressed to enterprises lead to an increase in turnover and the number of employees, also having an effect on productivity, but only in the short term. (Benkovskis, Tkacevs, & Yashiro, 2018) A similar study conducted on Czech firms, indicates that European subsidies for private investments have had an effect on increasing labor productivity, but no notable changes are observed in terms of production or implementation of new technologies, thus suggesting that the effects are limited and a rethinking of the project evaluation and selection process is necessary. (Dvouletý & Blažková, 2019) At the Romanian level, a study published in 2023, by Ana-Maria Opria, Lucian Roșu and Corneliu Iațu, analyzes, through econometric methods, the impact that European LEADER funding has on economic growth, concluding that there are limited effects on the economic growth, the most notable contributions are the creation of new jobs and supporting local businesses. (Opria, Roșu, & Iațu, 2023)

2. Study hypotheses and methodology

Given that there is no consensus in the scientific literature and that there are not many analyses conducted on companies that have benefited from non-reimbursable financial aid in Romania, we consider it appropriate to address this issue. In order to see what impact this support instrument has had on Romanian companies, we want to analyze several indicators based on their annual financial statements. In this study, we propose two hypotheses: *H1 Firms that benefited from non-refundable financial aid register higher profitability than firms that do not benefit from these support instruments. This hypothesis is based on the idea of the cost of capital, when a firm receives non-refundable financial aid, it practically has access to a much cheaper source of financing compared to the alternatives (bank credit, financial leasing, operational leasing, etc.). The lower cost of capital should ensure higher profit rates. H2 Firms that benefited from non-refundable financial aid have a more stable balance sheet structure; This hypothesis also is based on the idea of the reduced cost of financing, which should lead to much greater balance sheet stability.* To test the two hypotheses, we propose to analyze a series of companies that have benefited from non-reimbursable financing for investments, comparing their financial results with those of a control group, consisting of companies that did not benefit from this facility. An important problem for this analysis is represented by possible interferences, when it comes to profitability or balance sheet structure the field of activity of a company can have a great impact, certain sectors of activity tend to register, inherently, higher profitability or require larger investments in assets. Thus, to test the defined hypotheses, we chose a financing line within which only several CAEN codes are eligible and the effect of interferences is minimal. The financing line on which we did the present study is sub measure 4.1 "Investments in agricultural holdings" from the National Rural Development Program 2014-2020 (financed by the European Union through the Common Agricultural Policy), which is mainly

addressed to companies operating in the primary sector. In order to build our groups of companies that we will analyze, we consulted the selection reports for this sub-measure (from the website of the - Agency for Financing Rural Investment www.afir.ro) from the 2015 session (we chose the first session, because we want to have as long a time horizon as possible for the analysis) and we identified 313 projects that were eligible and selected for financing and 227 ineligible, withdrawn or projects that were not selected for financing. From the total of these projects, we eliminated those promoted by entities without legal personality (PFA, II, IF) because they keep simpler accounting records that do not require annual financial statements (Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Account, etc.). Of the total of 540 projects identified in the selection reports, 261 were promoted by entities with legal personality, which prepare annual financial statements, 170 with projects selected for financing (these companies will constitute Group 1) and 91 with ineligible, withdrawn or projects that were not selected for financing (these enterprises will constitute Group 2 - the control group).

After building the groups of enterprises that we are going to analyze, we proceeded to build a database with their annual financial statements centralizing public data from the website of the Ministry of Finance of Romania (www.mfinante.gov.ro) and the National Trade Register Office of Romania (<https://www.onrc.ro>) for the period 2010-2024. The call for projects was in 2015, so our analysis focused on the period 2016-2024, but to ensure that the two groups of enterprises are comparable and the differences that would be identified can be attributed to non-reimbursable financing, we used a difference-in-difference approach, thus we calculated the six indicators defined below for the period 2010-2015 (the pre-project period) for the two groups of enterprises. For the pre-project period no statistically, representative differences were identified. Another factor that could affect our results is the case of enterprises that win a project, but for various reasons do not implement it, so we analyzed the evolution of fixed assets for enterprises in group 1, to ensure that the investment project was successfully implemented, 91 enterprises were eliminated because the evolution of their assets was not in accordance with the value of the selected project. Extreme values were eliminated from the data series using the interquartile range (IQR) method, using a coefficient of 1.5, so that the data series subjected to analysis presented a normal distribution. (Pintilescu, 2022)

3. Case Study

To test hypothesis H1, we will comparatively analyze a series of profitability indicators on the two groups of enterprises: net profit margin = net profit/turnover x 100, return on equity = net profit/equity x 100 and return on assets = net profit/total assets x 100. To test hypothesis H2, we will analyze a series of three solvency and balance sheet structure indicators: global debt ratio = total debt/total assets x 100, equity solvency = equity/total assets x 100 and financial leverage = total debt/equity; (Tabără, Horomnea, & Toma, 2005)

3.1. Net Profit Margin

The first indicator that we will analyze is the Net Profit Rate, this being a key indicator used in describing the profitability of a company. Practically, in order to validate the H1 hypothesis, the values of this indicator obtained for the companies in group 1 should be significantly higher than those obtained for the companies in group 2 (the control group). After determining the quartiles, respectively the interquartile distance, we proceeded to eliminate the extreme values. We then proceeded to perform an

analysis of the obtained data series. As we can see in Figure 1, the series has a normal distribution, the average being 17.266%, most of the values being positive. It is worth noting that from the analysis of the graphic representation we find that there are also enterprises that recorded losses during the analyzed period. We would be tempted to believe that not only the enterprises that did not benefit from investment subsidies could record losses, but from the analysis of the comparative graph we find that both groups have recorded negative values (Figure 1 - right).

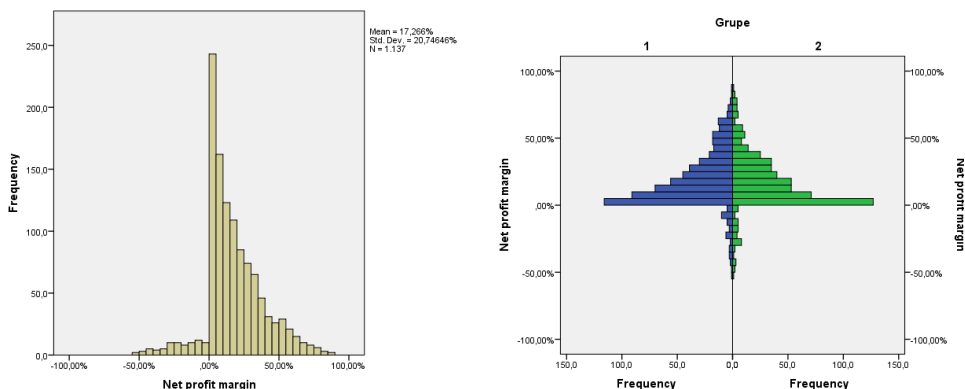


Figure 1 – Distribution of Values by subgroups Net profit margin

Source: author's calculations based on data from www.mfinante.gov.ro

From the graphical analysis we find that the two distributions have similar shapes, which would suggest that there are no notable differences between the groups. Determining the arithmetic means for the two groups we find that group 1 has an average value of 18.0354%, and group 2 16.4062%, the difference between the groups being only 1.6292 percentage points. Group 1 registers a higher value than group 2, but the difference is quite small, to test whether the difference is statistically representative, we applied an independent sample t test using the SPSS program (Table 1).

Tabel 1 – Independent sample t test - Net profit margin

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Net profit margin	Equal variances assumed	,171	0,679	1,322	1135	0,186	1,62923%	1,23202%	-0,78807%	4,04652%
	Equal variances not assumed			1,323	1122,072	0,186	1,62923%	1,23177%	-0,78760%	4,04605%

Source: author's calculations based on data from www.mfinante.gov.ro

The test results indicate that the difference between the groups is not statistically representative Sig. <0.05 (Table 1). The period that we analyzed was 2016-2024, in order to have a broad picture, we repeated the analysis on two sub-periods 2016-2020 and 2021-2024 to see if there are differences, the first period for short effects

and the second for medium term effects. The results obtained for these sub-periods are similar, in the short-term, group 1 registers a higher profit margin by 1.8268 percentage points, and in the medium-term, group 1 has an average value higher by 2.4714 percentage points, in both cases the difference were not representative according to the performed t-tests. So, from the perspective of this indicator, the stated hypothesis is partially confirmed, companies that benefit from non-refundable financial aid register a slightly higher profitability, but further analysis are needed.

3.2. Return on equity

The second indicator we analyzed in this study was Return on equity. Similar to the previous indicator, we would expect that the companies in group 1, which benefited from non-refundable financial aid, would register higher values than the control group. After determining the quartiles, we proceeded to eliminate the extreme values, obtaining a series of data with a normal distribution (Figure 2), which will allow us to apply several statistical tests. In the case of this indicator, we note that negative values are also recorded, even for the group of companies that benefited from non-refundable financial aid. The arithmetic mean of the global series is 27.485%, and from the graphic analysis of the shape of the two distributions, we note that there are differences, within group 1 there tend to be fewer companies with values in the 0%-5% range (Figure 2).

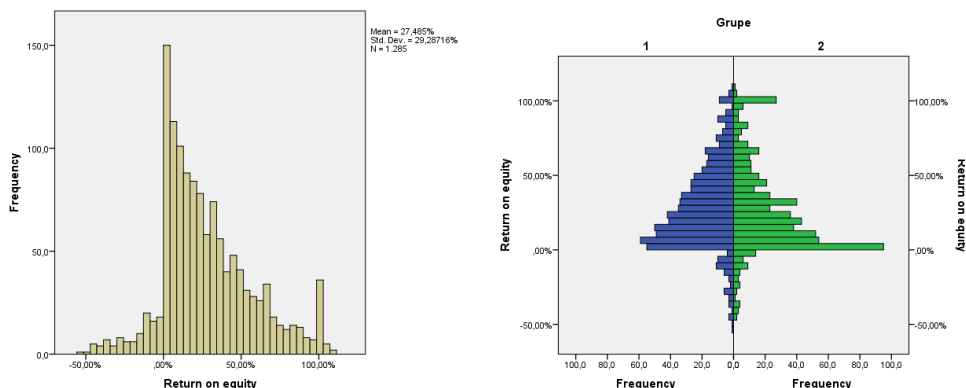


Figure 2 – Distribution of Values by subgroups Return on equity

Source: author's calculations based on data from www.mfinante.gov.ro

Continuing the analysis by subsets, for group 1 we obtained an average value of 28.1930%, and for group 2 (the control group) an average value of 26.6238%. We thus observe that the value for group 1 is higher than the value for the control group, but the difference is again small, only 1.6692 percentage points. In order to be able to decide on the first hypothesis of this study, we proceeded to apply an independent sample t test using the SPSS to see whether the difference between the means of the two groups is statistically representative or not.

Table 2 – Independent sample t test - Return on equity

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Return on equity	Equal variances assumed	1,668	0,197	1,021	1283	0,307	1,66927%	1,63482%	-1,53795%	4,87648%
	Equal variances not assumed			1,019	1260,965	0,308	1,66927%	1,63840%	-1,54502%	4,88355%

Source: author's calculations based on data from www.mfinante.gov.ro

The test results (Table 2) indicate that the difference is not statistically representative (Sig. >0.05). A similar analysis was also conducted on sub-periods 2016-2020 to test for short-term effects and 2021-2024 to test for medium-term effects. The results we obtained are similar to those of the period 2016-2024, in both cases group 1 registered a higher value of 1.3326 percentage points, respectively 2.4189 percentage points, but the t-tests did not indicate a statistically representative difference, thus we partially accept hypothesis H1.

3.3. Return on assets

The third indicator that we analyzed in order to test hypothesis H1 was Return on assets. And in this case, for the hypothesis H1 to be accepted, the companies in group 1 should register values higher than the control group, and the difference between the groups should be statistically representative. In accordance with the established working methodology, we proceeded to determine the quartiles and subsequently eliminate the extreme values, using the interquartile distance method with a coefficient of 1.5, thus obtaining a series with a normal distribution. The average value at the level of both groups is 6.0521%. From the perspective of the graphical analysis of the distributions between the two groups of companies, we did not observe notable differences (Figure 3). Subsequently, we proceeded to calculate the averages for the data subsets, thus for group 1 we obtained an average value of 6.2076%, and for the control group 5.8733%.

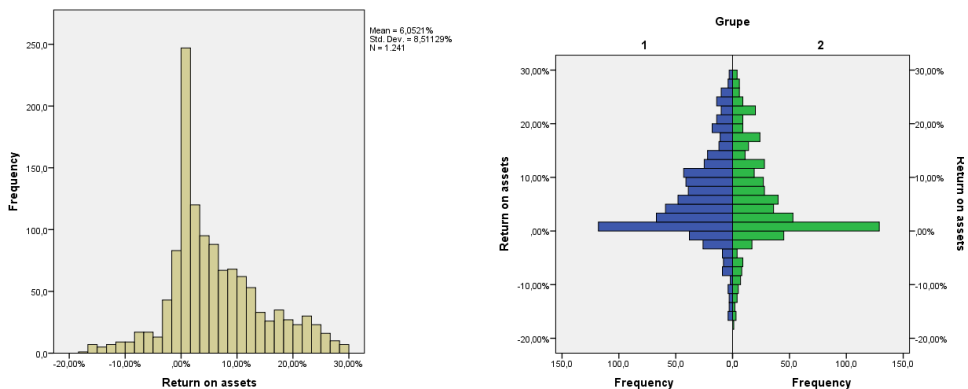


Figure 3 – Distribution of Values by Subgroups Return on assets

Source: author's calculations based on data from www.mfinante.gov.ro

In the case of this indicator too, we find that the analyzed group has a higher value than the control group, but the difference is only 0.3343 percentage points. We then proceeded to apply a comparison of means test, to see if the difference is statistically representative (Table 3).

Tabel 3 – Independent sample t test - Return on assets

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Return on assets	Equal variances assumed	3,258	0,071	,690	1239	0,490	0,33433%	0,48451%	-0,61622%	1,28488%
	Equal variances not assumed			,687	1188,950	0,492	0,33433%	0,48672%	-0,62060%	1,28926%

Source: author's calculations based on data from www.mfinante.gov.ro

Additionally, we also conducted a test on sub-periods in order to see if there are any short-term or medium-term effects. For the period 2016-2020 the difference between the groups is 0,4% (similar the previous result) but for the 2021-2024 period, group 1 has a return on assets greater with 1,278%, so the difference in the medium term is slightly higher than in the short term. For both the subperiods the results of the t test did not identify any representative differences between the two groups). The results for this indicator partially confirm the first hypothesis of this study, the differences between the means of the two groups are under 0,5% in the short term and not statistically representative, but the differences seem to change in the mid term period that we analyzed

3.4. Gearing ratio

To test the second hypothesis of this study, we proceeded to analyze a set of balance sheet structure indicators, the first of which was the gearing ratio. Given that the companies that benefited from projects received investment subsidies, we would expect to observe lower values of this indicator, compared to the control group. According to the established working methodology, we proceeded to calculate the quartiles, the interquartile distance and then to eliminate the extreme values, obtaining a series with a normal distribution and an average value of 47.5047%. Dividing the series into the two analyzed groups, we find even from the analysis of the histograms that there are notable differences between them (Figure 4 - right). The average for group 1 is 44.7962%, and for group 2 50.5712%. The fact that at the companies that benefited from non-refundable financial aid, the Gearing ratio is lower by 5.775 percentage points would lead us to the conclusion that the hypothesis is confirmed.

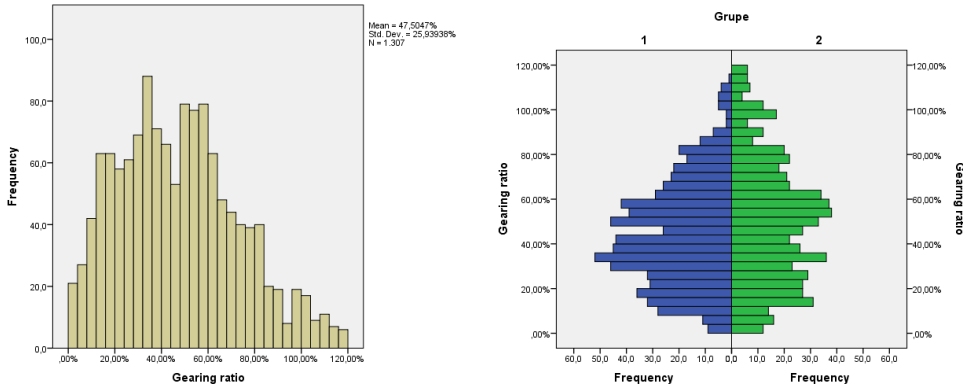


Figure 4 – Distribution of Values by subgroups Gearing ratio

Source: author's calculations based on data from www.mfinante.gov.ro

Next, we proceeded to apply an independent sample t test using SPSS to see if the difference is statistically representative.

Table 4 – Independent sample t test - Gearing ratio

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Gearing ratio	Equal variances assumed	20,967	0,000	-4,040	1305	0,000	-5,77496%	1,42940%	-8,57914%	-2,97078%
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,996	1198,072	0,000	-5,77496%	1,44516%	-8,61028%	-2,93964%

Source: author's calculations based on data from www.mfinante.gov.ro

The difference between means of 5.775 percentage points is statistically representative (Sig.<0.05) (Table 4). To see if the difference manifests itself differently in time, we proceeded to the analysis two subperiods 2016-2020 and 2021-2024. The results obtained show us that the difference is representative only in the short term, for the second period 2021-2024 the difference between the groups is only 1.8816 percentage points and it no longer is statistically representative, which would lead us to validate hypothesis H2 of the study, there is a clear positive effect only in the short-term.

3.5. Solvency Equity

The second balance sheet stability indicator that we analyzed was Solvency Equity. After determining the quartiles and eliminating extreme values, we obtain a normal distribution. From the graphical representation of the values, we find that the shapes of the two histograms are different, which indicates that there are differences between the values of the two sub-groups (Figure 5).

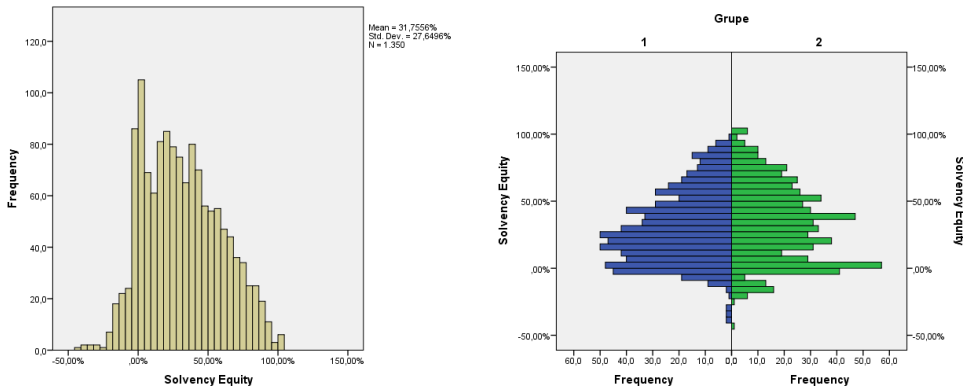


Figure 5 – Distribution of Values by Solvency Equity Subgroups

Source: author's calculations based on data from www.mfinante.gov.ro

We then proceeded to determine the average values, for group 1 30.3890%, and for group 2 33.2361%. The difference between groups of 2.8471 percentage points. In order to be able to definitively decide on hypothesis H2, we proceeded to apply an independent sample t test, using the SPSS (Table 5), to see if the difference is statistically representative or not.

Table 5 – Independent sample t test - Solvency Equity

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Solvency Equity	Equal variances assumed	7,425	0,007	1,892	1348	0,059	-2,84719%	1,50482%	-5,79923%	0,10486%
	Equal variances not assumed			1,886	1313,431	0,060	-2,84719%	1,50980%	-5,80906%	0,11469%

Source: author's calculations based on data from www.mfinante.gov.ro

However, the test results indicate that the difference is not representative (Sig.>0.05). In order to see if the effect manifests itself differently over time, we performed similar analyses on two subperiods 2016-2020 and 2021-2026 to see if there are differences in the short or medium term. For the first sub-period, the difference between the groups is 4.2638 percentage points in favor of the control group, the difference being representative according the the t-test, and in the medium-term the difference between the groups is 1.8434 percentage points, the t-test indicating it as unrepresentative, so from the perspective of this indicator, hypothesis H2 is not validated, in the short-term the companies that have benefited from European projects have a decrease in solvency, but the difference decreases in the medium term.

3.6. Financial Leverage

The last balance sheet stability indicator analyzed is financial leverage, given that investment subsidies ensure a capital infusion at the level of beneficiary companies, we should observe differences at the level of the two analyzed groups.

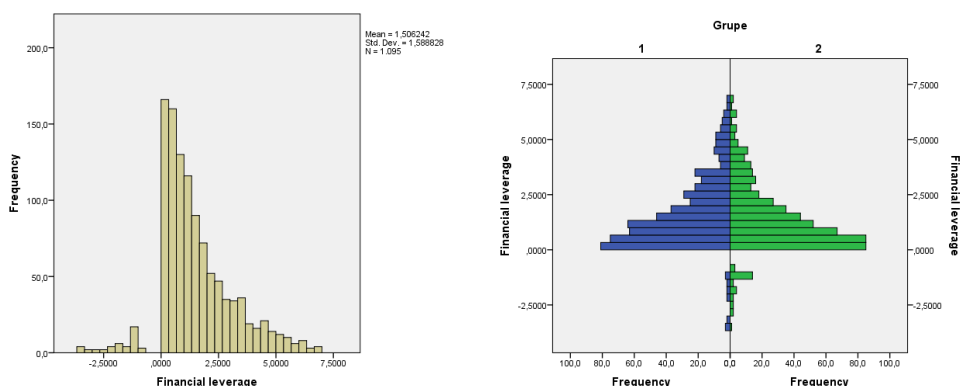


Figure 6 – Distribution of Values by Financial Leverage Subgroups

Source: author's calculations based on data from www.mfinante.gov.ro

After eliminating the extreme values using the interquartile method, we proceeded to the comparative analysis of the two groups of companies (Figure 6). For the group of companies that have received non-refundable financial aid, we obtained an average value of 1,629928, and for the companies in the control group, which did not receive investment subsidies, an average value of 1,378655, the difference between the groups is notable (18,23%).

Table 6 – Independent sample t test - Financial Leverage

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Financial leverage	Equal variances assumed	1,699	,193	2,623	1093	0,009	0,2512735	0,0957829	0,0633345	0,4392126
	Equal variances not assumed			2,625	1092,794	0,009	0,2512735	0,0957162	0,0634651	0,4390819

Source: author's calculations based on data from www.mfinante.gov.ro

The difference between the groups is statistically representative, as indicated by the independent sample t test (Table 6), the Sig. value being below the 0.05 threshold. The financial leverage values indicate that both groups of enterprises predominantly use borrowed capital to finance their activities, with values exceeding 1. The higher level of financial leverage obtained by companies in group 1 indicates that they are more financially exposed, assuming greater risks compared to companies in group 2. This situation can be explained by the fact that the projects involve a percentage of private co-financing (between 15% and 50% of the project value depending on the size of the enterprise), which is most frequently obtained from bank loans. Analyzing the two subperiods 2016-2020 and 2021-2024, we find that the difference between the groups is representative only in the short term, in the medium term the difference between the groups is on average smaller, not being classified as representative according of the t-tests. Thus, from the perspective of this indicator, hypothesis H2 is rejected, the companies that benefit from projects with non-

reimbursable financing being exposed to a higher financial risk than the companies in the control group.

4. Conclusions

Following the analyses and tests applied, we can conclude that Hypothesis H1 is partially validated, in the case of all profitability indicators that we analyzed the companies from group 1 tended to record higher values of profitability, but the differences were not statistically representative according to the independent sample t test that we performed. In order to definitively validate the H1 Hypothesis we need to extend the volume of data that we considered.

Regarding the second hypothesis, stated in this study, we can conclude that it is refuted, one of the three indicators that we analyzed presented clear positive influences in the short term, that can be attributed to the EU funded projects, but the other two indicator presented clear negative influences in the short term, the control group recorded a more stable balance sheet structure and less exposure to financial risks. This aspect could have several implications, on the one hand it could support the idea, stated by some authors, that private enterprises do not behave rationally when it comes to non-reimbursable financing, promoting over-sized and overvalued projects that meet the eligibility criteria rather than meeting the real needs of the company. On the other hand, the lack of a clear notable impact on profitability could be explained by the fact that non-reimbursable financing involves assuming certain commitments that generate additional costs (for example, creating and maintaining jobs, or respecting certain environmental conditions). The fact that these costs are not correctly assessed, indicates a poor quality of the project evaluation process, that is not oriented towards assessing the quality of the business plan but rather towards compliance with certain program result indicators.

The main limitation of this study is the volume of data considered, practically within this study we analyzed a single call for projects, the one from 2015 for the measure 4.1 of the PNDR 2014-2020, in the future we will proceed to expand the volume of data considered, analyzing subsequent sessions as well. Another limitation of this research is the exclusive reliance on t-tests, in future research we will try to incorporate a regression analysis with appropriate control variables.

Another aspect that we want to study in future research is the impact that European investment subsidies have on the productivity of beneficiary enterprises, which would allow us to have a broader picture of the changes that occur at the microeconomic level.

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