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The European Union Budget: Financing Options for Member States [Bugetul Uniunii Europene. Opțiuni de finanțare pentru Statele Membre] (Brenda-Andreea Piuaru, Bucharest: Universitară Publishing, 2024)

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Among the current research interests of scientific researcher Brenda-Andreea Piuaru, from Transilvania University of Brașov, is the issue of European funds [1–3]. In her view,



“The European Union budget represents a central piece of the European integration mechanism and an essential driver of economic and social progress within the community. Over time, the contributions and benefits of Member States from this budget have become topics of major interest in the European public debate. In an increasingly dynamic and unpredictable global environment, the EU budget is no longer merely a matter of public accounting but a strategic tool for ensuring the Union’s stability and growth” [4]. This perspective underpins her work, *The European Union Budget: Financing Options for Member States* (Bugetul Uniunii Europene. Opțiuni de finanțare pentru statele membre, Universitară Publishing House, Bucharest, 2024), which examines the financial

mechanism of the European Union starting from the theoretical foundations of public finance. Initially (Chapter 1), the author provides a clear perspective on the integrated functioning of national and European budgets, with a particular focus on modern methods of budget planning and execution. Given that topics of this nature also fall

within our research interests—either directly or tangentially [5–13]—we highlight that this approach and the clarifications offered hold special importance for understanding institutional budgetary mechanisms. Subsequently (Chapter 2 – Methods for Budget Formation), the work analyzes in detail the main approaches used in budget management: (i) Classical Methods: the automatic method, the increment/decrement method, and the direct evaluation method; (ii) Modern Methods: cost-benefit analysis, planning-programming-budgeting, management by objectives, zero-based budgeting, and the rationalization of budgetary options. The middle chapter (Chapter 3) explores the specificities of the European Union budget, offering an overview of its historical evolution and its particularities compared to national budgets. This chapter covers: (i) The evolution of the EU budget; (ii) Budget structure: the multiannual financial framework, the annual budget, and its management and execution; (iii) Budgetary revenues and expenditures. Chapter 4 focuses on financing options available to Member States, including grants, subsidies, trust funds, and public procurement. Finally, Chapter 5 analyzes the main financial components of the 2014–2020 and 2021–2027 periods, as well as the NextGenerationEU program, structured as follows: (i) Major funds within the 2014–2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (including ERDF, ESF, Cohesion Fund, and others); (ii) Initiatives under the 2021–2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (such as the Just Transition Fund and ESF+); (iii) Instruments dedicated to economic recovery under NextGenerationEU.

The work represents a valuable resource for understanding the fundamental tools in the post-pandemic economic recovery process, offering a comprehensive perspective on investment opportunities that contribute to strengthening the shared future of the European Union and its Member States.

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