



# Journal of Intercultural Management and Ethics

## JIME

ISSN 2601 - 5749, ISSN-L 2601 - 5749

published by

Center for Socio-Economic Studies and Multiculturalism

Iasi, Romania

[www.csesm.org](http://www.csesm.org)

---

**TABLE OF CONTENT**

Editorial.....	3
Julian Warter	
Duality Leadership at Atkinsrealis: From an Execution to Exploration and Growth Culture...	5
Fons Trompenaars, A. James Cullens	
The New Inquisition: Woke and Cancel Culture Vs. Western Societies .....	27
Thomas D. Zweifel	
The Ethics of Sustainable Development Reflected in the Financial Reporting of Companies. Case Study at Romanian Post .....	44
Aurelian Virgil Băluță	
The Role of Management Accounting in the Application of the Economic Ethics Judgment .....	57
Mihaela Bebeselea	
Dialogue and Diagnosis .....	63
Mircea Gelu Buta	
Beyond the Bedroom: Exploring Gender and Relationship Status Variances in Hypersexuality: Ethical Implications and Recommendations .....	67
Paula Pricope, Tudor-Daniel Huțul, Adina Karner-Huțuleac	

# THE ETHICS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REFLECTED IN THE FINANCIAL REPORTING OF COMPANIES. CASE STUDY AT ROMANIAN POST

Aurelian Virgil Băluță, PhD  
„Spiru Haret” University, Romania  
E-mail: achizitii@spiruharet.ro.

## Abstract

The article includes research on a relatively new field, the ethics of sustainable development. Among the current peculiarities of the ethics of sustainable development is responsibility at the company level. It is mentioned in the article how the dynamics of the importance of sustainable development issues has also determined the passage of this ethical responsibility of companies to a new stage. A new chapter of financial reporting has emerged, the one for sustainable development. In this context, in the form of a case study with a determined degree of representativeness, the sustainable development component of the financial report of a large state-owned company in Romania, the Romanian Post, is analyzed. The relevance of the information and conclusions from that report, analyzed in the study, are validated by including the methodology and data sources used. The areas of sustainable development in which the company's activities may have implications, the policies and due diligence procedures used for sustainable development through investments or operational ones, the use of the ISO system in the field of environment and sustainable development by the company, the organizational measures and financial instruments used by the company in the field of sustainable development, the important indicators on sustainable development are presented and analyzed.

**Keywords:** sustainable development, ethics for all the people, corporative management, business model, due diligence policies.

## 1. The importance of the problem

The issues of sustainable development have come to the attention of interdisciplinary research since the 8th decade of the twentieth century. Over time, it became increasingly important, the area of research being expanded. In the course of this expansion of research on sustainable development, the importance of the ethical issues of sustainable development has been identified and deepened. Policies and projects aimed at sustainable development are no longer a simple solution based on pragmatism, but incorporate ethical aspects of relations between generations, between peoples, between continents, between social categories.

The ethical importance of sustainable development can also be supported by the attention paid to this subject by the social doctrine of the various churches. For the social doctrine of the Catholic Church, for example, environmental protection is treated as a major problem of faith in today's world. Themes such as man and the universality of things, the crisis in the relationship between man and the environment, the common responsibility for the environment, including the implications of the environment on the division of goods, are elements of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church (Mărtinică, 2006, pp.282-302). At the same time, their institutional documents mention the common and universal duty to respect a common good, but also the responsibility that present generations have towards future generations (John Paul II, 1991, pp.843, 840).

As a result of the new approaches to the environment, large financial reporting rules have been established for companies to cover sustainable development issues, and in the future a rigorous report on this issue will be mandatory, with its own auditing mechanism. The financial reports prepared on the basis of these new legal provisions are a source of information that shows what is actually happening at the main actors in the economy. More specifically, by reading the component dedicated to sustainable development (called the non-financial section) of the company's financial reports, we find out how the high ethical principles of sustainable development are or are not a concrete reality. Even before the application of the new European rules on sustainability reporting by companies, opinions emerged that drew attention to the problems they raise during audit engagements (Indyk, 2023). The people hope that the performance of companies, including with the help on accounting and auditing tools will do a step to a perfect society, how was described in 20th century (Galbraith, 1997, pp.77-83).

In this context, I draw attention to a research in which a case study was included on how to reflect the ethical norms of sustainable development in financial reporting. It is a large state-owned company in Romania, the Romanian Post National Company. According to the reporting rules of large companies in the European Union, the Romanian Post has the obligation to issue the annual Non-Financial Statement dedicated, among other things, to sustainable development.

The article thus brings into the area of research an ethical theme with collective implications on a very large scale, the one related to sustainable development. In this way, the transition takes place from ethical issues of limited interest to a theme that interests all humanity, present and future. At the same time, the frequent approach in ethics based on abstract elements is overcome, by shifting the emphasis from observation to concrete elements, but having a connection with important principles. Through this article I hope that a small step will be taken in the direction of expanding quantitative research methods applied in ethics.

## **2. The current state of knowledge and research on the problem**

An important stage of the research was represented by the studies of the Club of Rome or those elaborated under their influence (Peccei, 1984). In the European Union, the issue of sustainable development began to be taken into consideration as early as the twentieth century by identifying the unitary nature and the dangers of pollution transfers from one environment to another (Duțu, 1997, p.119). There was a growing international concern for the environment and sustainable development, the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference of 1975 and the Stockholm Conference of 1972, but also the bodies established at that time under the aegis of the UN (Sion, 1990, pp.94-100) proved the ethical value of environmental problems and their ability to transcend not only national borders, but also but also the ideological ones of the Cold War.

In the context of concerns for the ethics of sustainable development, a new model of economy was developed, in which the environment had a distinct place and represented an important parameter. Particularizations of this type of model have appeared at the national level (Constantinescu, 1973). For the current stage, it is worth mentioning the international agreements under the aegis of the United Nations or the European Union norms that have determined the emergence of a new generation, global models of sustainable growth of the economy. In addition, the complexity of ethical issues regarding sustainable development has generated the extension of attention from the global level (Giabo, 1983) to regions or administrative subunits (Răboacă, 2006), localities (Burduja, 2024) or firms.

Through their ethical component, sustainable development issues are considered as part of a mandatory transformation of our lives. The phrase green revolution as it appears in the literature is not exaggerated. It is evident that the stage in which climate problems were treated as one of the theories or models of economic growth has been overcome (Todosia, 1994). The new trends in management already proved that it is possible to have in the same time understanding of natural resources and the increase of turnover. (Drucker, 2004).

A step forward was represented by the conceptual-theoretical unification of the problems of social development with those of the environment and sustainable development (Aminu & Reza, 2019). The concept of sustainable human economic development, with details on the desirable progress model, the measurement of economic and social progress according to this concept, but also the awareness of the community on this new paradigm (Angelescu et al., 2000, pp.474-495) represented an important reference. From that moment on, the ethics of sustainable development had clearly formulated theoretical foundations.

Both in the theory of general ethics (Singer, 2006, pp.288-301) and in his developments on rulers, the idea that the rights of each of us, individual or collective, should not violate the rights of others, has clearly emerged. Ethics focused on the issue of sustainable development considers respecting the rights of future generations to a clean natural environment. Development is therefore a process in which the interests and rights of successive generations or of peoples in different territories intersect. Under these conditions, research in different particular fields of ethics has generated the evolution of a current of general ethics, called normative ethics. One of the particular forms of this normative ethics is the ethics of sustainable development, which prescribes the rules of social dynamics for a better life for those of today without violating the rights of those of tomorrow.

The correlation between natural resources and man's survival potential has been analyzed since the 18th century based on hypotheses related to the capacity to produce food (Malthus, 1789, pp.20-21). In addition to the famous law of population and attention to human needs regarding agricultural land, that study also emphasized an aspect of great validity today, the ability of human reason to calculate distant consequences (Strat, 2023, pp.537-560). It was precisely this capacity that determined the emergence of major changes in the science of food production that majorly corrected the human-environment correlations estimated in the 18th century. This same capacity of man generated international normative acts (UN) or confederation (of the European Union) with an impact up to at the turn of the 21st century.

For a long time efficiency was viewed in opposition to equality (Vosganian, 2001). That theory is no longer applicable under the conditions of policies oriented towards sustainable development. They simultaneously tend towards both equality and efficiency. In this sense, the concepts of social efficiency and ecological efficiency were launched and formalized. Linked to such concepts having an important ethical component, the entire policy of sustainable development at the global or community level is thought.

The need for communication, evident in any process, was well formulated for the context of sustainable development (Drăgan, 2007): <Communication involves a debate on the necessary paths to be taken, social mobilization and the identification of possible solutions. It is necessary to better understand the significance of climate change in the social-cultural context in which we live, what opportunities and what barriers exist in ensuring a sustainable development>. It is in this context that the obligation of companies to issue reports on sustainable development that they make public must be understood, thus answering legitimate and important questions of the people. For management, new concepts like "Green supplier" (Chunguang & Sarkis, 2022) may be part of the trend to sustainable development. The development of research in the social and environmental field connected to

the performance of companies has made it necessary to have both explanatory syntheses (Hassan & Kouthy, 2019) and strictly necessary conceptual delimitations (Korodi, 2008)

### **3. The position of sustainable development ethics issues in the financial reporting system**

The experience of the corporate environment indicates that the main environmental aspects considered in due diligence policies and procedures can be:

- the use of raw materials and natural resources (energy, water, gas, fuel, etc.);
- air emissions (thermal plants, motor vehicles);
- spills into water, soil;
- emitted/generated energy (heat, radiation, vibration);
- damaged equipment;
- waste generated.

The main impacts on the environment can be:

- consumption of raw materials and natural resources;
- air, water, soil pollution;
- noise pollution, contamination;
- degraded landscape.

In certain situations, corporate managerial practice tends to go beyond the stage of reporting compliance with legal requirements and enter into sensitive substantive issues, such as connecting managers' bonuses, compensation or other variable income to the environmental impact of companies' activity and social aspects. This reality can be highlighted on all the meridians of the globe ( Wasiuzzaman, 2019). The trends of international accounting and auditing confirm the connection between management and social and environmental problems ( Leventis, Kang & Watson, 2024). The concept of "green revolution" and the need „to change the future" in a globalized world is part of the dreams in 21st century (Thomas, 2010).

### **4. Corporate management in sustainable development issues at the Romanian Post**

According to the applicable accounting law, the non-financial statement of the administrators of Romanian Post is part of the set of documents representing the financial statements of the company for the financial year 2023, so it is a component of the mandatory financial reporting. The non-financial statement completes the administrators' report for the year 2023. Together, the two documents give an objective picture of the main aspects of interest to the legitimate users of the Financial Statements of Romanian Post.

The purpose of the non-financial statement is to inform the legitimate users of the financial statements of Romanian Post regarding the following aspects:

- The business model and the risks attached to it
- The parameters of the main business lines, their risks, policies to combat business line risks, relevant performance indicators
- Diligence policies and procedures adopted by Romanian Post in the direction of development
- Implications of the operations of Compania Națională Poșta Română S.A. in the field of environment. Carbon footprint management by Romanian Post
- The policies of the Romanian Post in the field of health and safety at work, social, labor relations and the avoidance of acts of corruption.

Through its structure, the Non-Financial Declaration addresses all ethical issues required by European norms: environmental, social, business risks. Chapter V "Diligence policies and procedures adopted by Romanian Post" is particularly interesting for the ethical issues of sustainable development. towards sustainable development". It includes sections on

strategic objectives of due diligence policies and procedures in 2023, investment due diligence policies and procedures, operational due diligence policies and procedures, other types of due diligence policies and procedures. All this can lead to a new business model of Romanian Post in which the ethics of sustainable development has an important word.

For the ethics of sustainable development, chapter VI "Implications of the operations of Romanian Post" is also applicable in the field of environment. The management of the carbon footprint by the Romanian Post". It includes sections in which are presented the areas of sustainable development in which the company's activities may have implications, the important indicators regarding the environment and sustainable development specific to the company's activities, measures taken by Romanian Post for keeping activities with environmental impact under control.

At the same time, the non-financial statement for the year 2023 of the company aims to make the transition to the much more complex reporting system established according to the reporting rules of the European Union (EU Regulation 852, 2020; EU Regulation 2178, 2021; EU Regulation 2139, 2021) and the national rules compliant with these community provisions ( O.M.F.P. 85, 2024) having a term of application in the following years.

## **5. Case study representativeness for ethical issues of sustainable development**

The Romanian Post is a Romanian legal entity that has undergone organizational transformations specific to Eastern European states during the transition period (G.D. 371, 1998). The previous name was the Autonomous Authority of the Romanian Post. The history of the Romanian Post as an organization is 160 years old. Over time it has operated under different institutional names, but the main object of activity has remained mainly the same. By its size, the Romanian Post is one of the largest companies in Romania in several chapters: number of employees, national coverage with work points, fixed capital value, turnover, total assets. The case study refers to a company in the process of modernization and digitalization, of alignment with the management standards of multinational companies (Memorandum 20, 2022). It is a strategic reorganization, including by taking over the elements of corporate ethics.

The main activity consists in the administration, development, operation of postal services, including cooperation with similar foreign organizations according to the conventions of the Universal Postal Union. The Romanian Post has exclusivity on the territory of Romania for the Universal Postal Service (activity regulated by a public authority) and for the distribution of cash pensions (activity managed by the Romanian Government through the specialized Ministry). The representativeness of the case study is thus related to companies that have a vision for the future in their core business field, including those connected to international value flows.

The National Company Posta Romanian S.A., apart from the business lines in which it holds exclusivity (universal postal service and cash pension distribution), participates in the free market of postal services as a competitor, according to national and EU rules (GEO 13, 2013). In addition, it also carries out other collateral activities, necessary for the profitable realization of its main object of activity. Under these conditions, the case study is representative of both state-owned companies and those operating on competitive markets. Also, the case study is representative of the areas with a dynamics above the national average, including restructuring processes.

From the point of view of the organization and functioning norms, the National Company Posta Romanian SA applies the general provisions of all companies (Law 31, 1990), but also the specific ones regarding the governance of public companies (G.E.O. 109, 2011). These elements help the case study to be representative from the point of view of

financial reporting for the sector generically called "companies" or businesses, with the specific particularities for state-owned companies.

The National Company Posta Romanian SA understood to be among the promoters of the sustainability and sustainable development policies of the European Union and Romania. Being of major importance for Romania, the company acted in the spirit of the Romanian Government's strategy documents regarding sustainable development (Law 57, 2017; G.D. 877, 2018; G.D. 1215, 2023). Moreover, the company believes that it must act in good faith for the implementation in its activity of all the commitments assumed by Romania internationally in the field of sustainability (The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development A/RES/70/1, 2015). The case study will therefore contain a positive approach, in the sense of showing what can be done in the field of sustainable development ethics. The study will be able to represent a model of the necessary link between legal obligations, voluntary ethical norms and the concrete action of companies that think positively in this field.

## **6. Methodology and data sources of financial reporting on sustainable development**

The non-financial statement for the financial year 2023 is based on data from the statistical, accounting, technical and commercial information system of the Romanian Post. The data included in the Non-Financial Statement of the Directors are made available to the Board of Directors by the executive management of the Romanian Post. Some of them were subject to approvals by the Board of Directors or Briefings submitted by the executive management to the Board of Directors. The responsibility for the data entered in the declaration belongs to the executive management of the Romanian Post, but also to the employees who have in the Job Description attributions regarding the collection, processing and reporting of the respective information.

The risks of the business model related to the environment and sustainable development must be included in the Risk Register developed by the company's management. The data on energy consumption must be consistent with the statistical reports prepared by the company according to national and EU rules. The information presented on the carbon footprint resulted from the technical data of the vehicles provided and the distances traveled by different types of vehicles according to the company's internal records, which are subject to internal controls and external audit.

## **7. Areas of sustainable development in which the activities of the Romanian Post may have implications**

The first stage of the management process of an organization in the field of environment and sustainable development is the identification of the segments of interest on which its activities have an impact. The Romanian Post is part of the generic branch called services whose impact in environmental deterioration is unanimously accepted by specialists as low. The production component of the Romanian Post is secondary and has a small share, being the subject of separate records and reporting. However, the management of the Romanian Post paid great attention to environmental issues. From the analysis of the processes carried out in the Romanian Post, the following flows of its core activities (postal services) to the environment resulted:

- Carbon dioxide emissions from energy consumption
- Carbon monoxide emissions
- Household garbage
- Nitrogen monoxide emissions
- Drinking water consumption.

Of these, carbon dioxide emissions, household garbage and drinking water consumption are subject to monitoring. Emissions of nitrogen monoxide or carbon monoxide cannot be monitored due to the lack of technical standards for the activities of the National Company Posta Romanian S.A. As soon as such standards are in place, those emissions will be properly monitored. In order to have a picture of pollution at the microeconomic level, standards are needed for all sources of pollution.

In addition to the main flows to the environment mentioned above, secondary and occasional flows generated by the company's activities have been identified. The category of secondary flows to the environment includes those generated by the company's secondary printing production activity. These secondary streams consist of: Waste paper, Aluminum scrap, Wood waste, Iron waste from scrapping operations, Waste electrical and electronic equipment resulting from dismantling. In the category of occasional flows are those determined by the operations of scrapping fixed assets and inventory objects. Such operations did not have a regular character in the Romanian Post. According to the existing procedural norms, all the materials resulting from the scrapping process are recovered through specialized and authorized companies. We can therefore accept the hypothesis that there are no significant flows to the environment or, if such flows do, they are not harmful.

## **8. Due diligence policies and procedures for sustainable development through investment**

The investment activities undertaken by the Romanian Post during 2023 aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. refurbishment of post offices by equipping them with postal machinery and equipment;
2. reconfiguration and retooling of the car fleet;
3. modernization and arrangement of the existing post offices and bringing them to a standard of endowment and operation as high as possible;
4. the expansion of the number of computerized postal subunits;
5. Improving the working conditions offered to staff, including the environment.

Relevant for investment due diligence policies and procedures is, among others, the budget category "Fleet". It is worth mentioning for their potential to support modernization the projects regarding the acquisition of over 500 new vehicles through financial leasing for replacement and additional car fleet of different capacities. Thus, the replacement of the used car fleet took place, with high consumption and implications on the carbon footprint. The budget investment category "Procurement of machinery, postal equipment and new software" can also be mentioned. Investments in this budget category had the following objectives in 2023: quality, increased speed, reliability and high efficiency. The refurbishment of postal services to European standards will implicitly lead to attracting new customers and diversifying the offer of services to the population. Within this category, projects worth over 1 million euros were completed. The operational and logistics strategy for the following years considers:

- o Investments in the automation of sorting and the modernization of operational processes, namely the construction (including the equipment) of a Transit Center in Bucharest and the equipping of the Cluj-Napoca Transit Center with sorting equipment;
- o The further development of the car fleet of Romanian Post to ensure the exploitation of opportunities in the national and cross-border Courier/Parcel/Express sector;
- o IT&C development of Romanian Post by expanding the VPN network, improving and streamlining operational and commercial activities, as well as front and back office equipment; this means savings of non-renewable resources on the entire value chain of services provided by the company;

Diversification of the products and services offered and migration to the online environment under security conditions;

- o The purchase of modern equipment and other logistical resources to ensure the delivery of competitive services, which will reduce energy consumption for the user;

Entering new business areas;

- o The implementation of a new Hardware, Software and Communications platform using modern technologies in order to meet the requirements for the modernization of the current services offered by the company, as well as for the development of new services.

## **9. Operational due diligence policies and procedures for sustainable development**

Operational due diligence policies and procedures for sustainable development take into account the forecasts already outlined on the market of services from the own portfolio.

- o Increasing the degree of computerization of the network of postal subunits and implicitly the degree of accessibility to the entire portfolio of financial services in all postal subunits implies the close correlation between the policies in the investment field and the operational ones (to define new types of services) and to prepare the staff. Increasing the degree of computerization causes an important reduction in resource consumption, including those that have an influence on the carbon footprint.

The need to increase the degree of access to financial services of the population, including in rural areas through post offices, implies a good connection between the IT systems of the company and those of financial institutions, possible only through the new digitalization stage of the activity.

Diversification of money transfer channels increasingly implies the availability of making money transfers via the Internet or through mobile phone applications, to the detriment of cash payments. On the one hand, this represents a restriction of the range of services practiced by Romanian Post. At the same time, the company can integrate into the new modern flows, covering niche needs or requirements of well-defined target groups. All this can only be achieved within a new business model based on added value and low consumption of resources, a model generating an ever smaller carbon footprint.

The flow from business idea to implementation has been greatly reduced, which has enabled the rapid operationalization of opportunities arising in the development of due diligence policies in the field of sustainable development. The priority circulation of documents in digital format and the reduction or elimination of the circulation of paper documents is one of the main components of increasing the speed of decision-making within the company. However, this has an important impact in reducing paper consumption, an element of the sustainable development strategy.

The policies adopted in order to achieve the operational objectives included several categories of actions. First of all, there was the diversification of the service portfolio and the development of new projects. This included in 2023 the development and implementation of the "Post of the Future" project, but also the implementation of the "Post Box" project. At the same time, the increase in the quality of services was recorded, which also ensured the increase of the added value for the user and the reduction of his consumption. The internal reorganization into business centers facilitated the optimization of internal flows, including the reduction of bureaucracy and its specific consequences on sustainable development already mentioned.

## **10. The use of the ISO system by Romanian Post in the field of environment and sustainable development**

In the Romanian Post, the implementation, maintenance and continuous improvement of the Environmental Management System took place starting in 2013, in accordance with the requirements of the ISO 14001 standard. The Environmental Management System aimed to:

- protecting the environment by preventing disruptive factors as the most effective action solution in the direction of sustainable development, according to the established principles in environmental management (respecting the principle of the priority of preventive measures)

- minimization of those harmful factors on the environment that could not be neutralized;

- minimizing the potential harmful effects of environmental conditions on the company, among those that could not be neutralized;

- rigor in fulfilling compliance obligations;

- continuous improvement of environmental performances, expressed in absolute and relative values, compared to national or branch environments;

careful control of how the company's activities/services are designed, produced, distributed, consumed and disposed of using the life cycle perspective

- avoiding that the impact on the environment is unintentionally transferred elsewhere within the life cycle of the company's activities/services;

- obtaining financial and operational benefits, including image, which may result from the implementation of technological alternatives based on sustainable development;

- communication of information about the environment to relevant interested parties.

According to the already established principles of management formulated by Fayol (Dearlove & Crainer, 2003, pp.81-82), the Environmental Management System is based on advanced concepts, achieving the efficiency-ethics correlation: planning, effective action, control, feed-back, process resumption. In the planning stage of the ISO procedure, the environmental objectives and processes necessary to obtain the results in accordance with the company's environmental policy are established.

Within the Romanian Post annual programs are established that include environmental objectives, deadlines, means of achievement, responsibilities and managers. The environmental objectives must be consistent with the environmental policy, measurable, monitored, communicated and updated, as appropriate. The responsibility for achieving the environmental objectives rests with all company departments. In the actual action stage of the ISO procedure, the processes are implemented as planned. The concordance between what was planned and what was achieved is confirmed by people outside the operational departments of the project, which ensures managerial rigor. In the control stage of the ISO procedure, processes are monitored and measured against the environmental policy, including new legal requirements or those freely assumed by the company. All environmental objectives and operating criteria are related to the results obtained.

Apart from the mandatory environmental reports, there are numerous other internal mechanisms for verifying the status after each stage in which measurable indicators appear. Through the feedback obtained, the management of the company undertakes new actions for the continuous improvement of the processes, primarily those of sustainable development. A portion of the actions taken in 2023 are the result of feedback from the actions taken in previous years.

The Romanian Post was engaged in 2023 in ensuring the protection and conservation of the environment by:

- compliance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements regarding the environment;

- saving natural resources;

- identifying potential risks, anticipating the consequences and taking them into

account;

- technological modernization and measures established to reduce emissions in water - air - soil;
- increasing the degree of waste recovery and recovery, appropriate management regarding their collection, recovery and disposal operations.

#### **11. Organizational measures and financial instruments in the field of sustainable development**

Romanian Post took a series of organizational measures to achieve the objectives of sustainable development and control of activities with an impact on the environment. The organizational measures used to keep activities with environmental impact under control were represented by:

- centralization of noxious emissions into the atmosphere from all stationary sources of the company;
  - strict compliance with the legislation through sanitation contracts, household waste collection contracts, through the recovery of waste paper, cardboard, plastic, tires, etc.;
  - outsourcing maintenance and service contracts for taking over used oils and tires;
  - monitoring of falling within the normal limits regarding the damages for each individual vehicle, with group centralization of these values and careful statistical analysis of them;
  - reducing the carbon footprint by training and raising the awareness of each employee who can reduce their own consumption of paper, electricity and water
  - self-control over the use of the service vehicle through normative or participatory budgeting methods;
  - maintaining selective waste collection solutions at the level of all company offices;
  - environmental performance monitoring against the requirements of the regulations identified at the company level;
- the training and evaluation of employees in all environmental departments is carried out according to an annual training program, in order to make them aware and responsible;
- methods of recognition and non-financial reward of employees, including through the internal publication < The postman >.

The financial instruments used to control activities with environmental impact were represented by:

- ensuring the necessary resources for the continuous improvement of the effectiveness of the Environmental Management System
- the allocation of resources to reduce the environmental impacts generated by the specific activities of Romanian Post
- running special programs in accordance with the applicable international standards
- the use of financial leasing as a form of financing in addition to some investments, with lower implications on the degree of indebtedness of the company.

Within Romanian Post it was decided to develop, implement and develop the "Green Mail" program, in accordance with the Green Deal Strategy of the European Union regarding decarbonization, through the implementation of projects aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The specific objectives of the project aim at solving the main problems and defining sustainable benefits in the sense of greening and modernizing the Romanian Post:

- reducing the energy consumption and emissions of the Romanian Post buildings, relying more and more on renewable electricity, thus improving the energy efficiency of each individual building;
- introduction of ecological vehicles through the " Used car" Program, reduction of CO2

emissions to 0 by 2050 and fuel consumption during postal delivery services.

There was also the implementation of the "No Paper/ No pen" Program for the purpose of digitizing the Romanian Post. This Program involves the replacement of paper with the digitized system, which will mean a reduction of carbon emissions by up to 50% in 2030 and by up to 100% by 2050.

Romanian Post was one of the first companies to align with European policies regarding the reduction to zero of net greenhouse gas emissions, by purchasing electric vans in 2020, and electric bicycles in 2022. In addition, the annual renewal process of the van fleet with Euro 6 Diesel engines is still ongoing. In 2023, the intensive use of non-polluting equipment took place to ensure their profitability and generate the desired positive effects on the carbon footprint.

Through the development of a procedure regarding the preparation of the "Environmental Management Program, Objectives and Targets", the methodology for identification, planning, control of the processes carried out within Romanian Post was established, the responsibilities of the departments involved in identifying, monitoring and measuring environmental performance related to the activities carried out by Compania Națională Poșta Română S.A. Organizational conditions are thus created for the fulfillment of the general and specific environmental objectives assumed in accordance with the corporate management standards applicable now.

Romanian Post has in its program a series of measures with a combined impact on energy efficiency and sustainable development. Among such measures considered are:

- a) Thermal rehabilitation of the walls and roof of own buildings (walls, windows, terraces, etc.) and related installations, including thermal plants
- b) Adjustment of engine operating parameters
- c) Use of trailers to supplement the load and thereby optimize fuel consumption
- d) Purchase of charging stations for electric vehicles
- e) Purchase of new vehicles with electric propulsion.

## **12. Important indicators on the environment and sustainable development**

The most important indicators regarding the environment and sustainable development of the Romanian National Post Company are: electricity consumption, thermal energy consumption, natural gas consumption, gasoline consumption, diesel consumption in the car park, diesel consumption in thermal power plants, LPG consumption, firewood consumption.

Regarding the energy consumption related to the car fleet of Compania Națională Poșta Română S.A. calculate the carbon footprint by the direct method. For the other categories of energy consumption, only relative data are available at the level of development of the information system of 2023. The vast majority of the indicators included in the Non-Financial Statement for 2023 show positive dynamics, with values higher than the national averages where such values are available.

As a result of the diligence policies carried out, the vast majority of the dynamics of the sustainable development indicators included in the non-financial statement of the Romanian Post for the year 2023 show a positive trend, with values higher than the available national averages.

## **Conclusions**

The ethics of sustainable development is a field of research in which respect for the interests of all people, from present and future generations, is pursued. The current state of sustainability ethics accountability is about reporting by large firms on how their activities

impact the environment and climate change. Reporting on sustainable development is a component of mandatory financial reporting.

From the data of the case study, it emerged that a large company, even if it is in the process of restructuring, can pay attention to the issues of sustainable development without affecting the accounting profit. The measures that can be taken by companies recommend to be grouped according to the investment, operational and organizational components. The advantages of the ISO system can also be exploited in the design of due diligence policies on sustainable development.

The Romanian Post is a positive example, where responsibilities towards sustainable development were part of the development strategy. This example can be followed both substantively, in terms of the measures taken in 2023, and from the point of view of the transparency of reporting ethical issues of sustainable development.

## References

- Aminu, H., & Reza, K.(2019). Critical Literature Synthesis of Social and Environmental Performance and Disclosur Relationship: A Review of Empirical Studies. *International Journal of Auditing and Accounting Studies*, 1(1).
- Angelescu, C. et al. (2000). *Economics*, V-th edition. Editura Economică. pp.474-495
- Burduja, S. (2024). *The plan for Bucharest*. Editura Litera.
- Constantinescu, N.N. (1973). *Economics of a protection the nature*. Editura Politică.
- Chunguang ,B. & Sarkis, B.(2022). *Green supplier development: analytical evaluation using rough set theory*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2010.01.016>
- Drăgan, G. (2007). Components of sustainable development energy-environment.In *Energy, Environment, Economy, Resources, Globalization* (pp.29). AGIR Publishing House.
- Drucker, P.F.(2004). *Management of the future*. Editura ASAB.
- Galbraith, J.K.(1997). *The perfect society. On the order of the day: the good of man*. Eurosong & Book.
- Dearlove, D., & Crainer, S. (2003). *Guru in business. The 54 Most Important Thinkers in Management*. Meteor Press.
- Duțu, M. (1997). *Community environmental law*. Editura Economică.
- EU Regulation No. 852 (2020)
- EU Regulation No. 2178 (2021)
- EU Regulation No. 2139 (2021)
- G.E.O. No. 109 (2011)
- G.E.O. (Government Emergency Ordinance) No.13 (2013)
- Giabo, D. et al. (1983). *Let's get out of the age of waste*. Editura Politică.
- G.D. No. 371 (1998)
- G.D. No. 877 (2018)
- G.D. (Government Decision) No. 1215 (2023)
- Hassan A, & Kouthy, R. (2019). Critical Literature Synthesis of Social and Environmental Performance and Disclosure Relationship: A Review of Empirical Studies. *International Journal of Auditing and Accounting Studies*, 1(1).
- John Paul II. (1991). *Centesimus Annus*. AAS, 83.
- Indyk, M. (2023). Do financial statement auditors recognise ESG views as a key issue?. *Financial Audit*, XXI, 2(170), 232-240
- Korodi, A. (2008). Environmental protection-sustainable development-scientific foundations. In *Energy-Environment. Components of sustainable development, National Symposium*. Editura Academiei Române & Editura AGIR.
- Law No.31 (1990)

Law No.57 (2017)

Leventis, S., Kang, H., & Watson, L. (2024). Literature reviews exploring international aspects of accounting, auditing and taxation. *Journal of International Accounting, Auditing and Taxation*, 56, 10037

Mărtinică, I. (2006). *The Social Doctrine of the Church. Compendium*. Volume II. Editura Universității București.

Malthus, T. R. (1789). *An essay on the principle of population, as it affects, The future improvement of society with remarks on the speculation of Mr.Godwin, M.Condorcet and other writers*. J.Johnson, N.St.Pauls, Church-Hard.

Memorandum No. 20/12513 (2022).

O.M.F.P. (Order of the Ministry of Finance of the Government of Romania) No. 85 (2024)

Peccei, A. (1984). *The Club of Rome: Agenda for the End of the Century*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20071008015616/http://www.clubofrome.at/peccei/files/agenda.pdf>

Răboacă, G. (2006). *Sustainable development of Vâlcea County*. Editura Fundației România de Măine.

Singer, P. (2006). *Treatise on Ethics*. Editura Polirom.

Sion, I.G. (1990). *Ecology and international law*. Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică.

Strat, I. (2023). *Complete Treatise on Political Economy*. Institutul Friederich von Hayek România.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development A/RES/70/1 (2015)

Thomas, L. F. (2010). *Warm, flat and crowded. Why we need a green revolution and how we can change the future in a globalized world*. Editura Polirom.

Todosia, M. (1994). *Economic doctrines*. Policromia.

Vădineanu, A., & Vădineanu, R.Ș. (2004). Sustainability of Development: Interpretation and Operationalization. In *Energy-Environment. Components of sustainable development*, National Symposium. Editura Academiei Române & Editura AGIR.

Vosganian, V. (2001). *The message of the Romanian right, Tradition and modernity*, Editura Nemira.

Wasiuzzaman, S. (2019). Impact of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Disclosure on Executive Compensation: Evidence from Malaysia. *International Journal of Auditing and Accounting Studies*, 1(1).