

Navigating Administrative Challenges and Economic Vulnerabilities in Natural Disasters: Insights from the Galați County Flooding Case

Toader Radu Stefan

*National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Faculty of Public Administration,
Bucharest, Romania*

Văduva Florin-Eugen

*National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Faculty of Public Administration,
Bucharest, Romania*

Abstract: Natural disasters such as flooding impose significant challenges on both local and central administrations, demanding immediate action, resource mobilization, and strategic coordination to mitigate damages and support affected populations. This paper investigates the administrative pressures associated with natural disasters, focusing on the case of the 2023 flooding in Galați County, Romania. The study aims to analyze governance mechanisms, the economic stress faced by rural residents, and the implications for sustainable disaster management policies.

The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies to explore the intersection of administrative actions, socio-economic impacts, and resilience-building strategies. Previous studies highlight the vulnerability of rural populations in Galați County to natural hazards, emphasizing the necessity of improved disaster risk management frameworks (Zaharia & Ioana-Toroimac, 2016; Romanescu & Nistor, 2011). Moreover, the economic fragility of these communities is amplified by pre-existing disparities, with rural incomes significantly below the national average, further exacerbating the stress caused by such disasters (Gavriletea, 2017).

In addition, the analysis reveals that the 2023 floods presented a dual challenge: while immediate damage required rapid administrative intervention, long-term resilience-building efforts were constrained by budgetary and infrastructural limitations (Stângă & Bănuț, 2016). The role of public perception and community engagement is also explored, demonstrating that local populations often perceive administrative responses as inadequate, particularly in rural areas where infrastructure gaps are more pronounced (Comănescu & Nedelea, 2016).

This paper argues for a proactive administrative framework that integrates pre-disaster mitigation efforts, such as improved infrastructure and public awareness campaigns, with post-disaster support systems tailored to local socio-economic conditions (Török, 2018). Furthermore, it underscores the need for policy shifts toward adaptive governance models, enabling faster mobilization of resources and enhanced inter-agency collaboration.

This case study contributes to the academic discourse on public administration under crisis conditions and offers practical recommendations for policymakers to strengthen resilience in flood-prone regions.