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Concerns Regarding the Activity of Social-Economic Forecasting in Our Country

The working out framework and the forecasting concept in the Socialist Republic of Romania are characterized by continuity, by filtering the today trends, the progress elements which the present outlines, through a profound mechanism of integrating the man in his double hypostasis — as active participant and immediate beneficiary of creation process —. The forecasting activity is part of the general programme for building up the manysidedly socialist society, thus achieving the correlation between the short-term management and long-term management for a 4—5 year plan horizon.

The forecasting activity is a large field of social experiment as regards the promotion of the most democratic forms of managing the social-economic life.

The forecasting activity outlines the valances of the ecological factor and takes into consideration the close correlation individual-society environment — with a view to assuring an economic growth according to the growth of wellfare.

1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

At present Romania traverses a new qualitatively superior stage in her economic and social development, which brings out her steady and long-term advance along the road she embarked upon leading her to a new multilaterally developped society she has been building up, and which is subordinated to a socio-human finality while complying with the socialist ethics and assets.

The idea of aggregation, of coupling growth with social development and progress, is obvious both in the sphere of conceptual coherences and in the very formulation of the strategy of the socio-economic development

and of the social changes and innovations, to say nothing of the economic, social, political and institutional structures all of which are subordinated to the socio-human finality. The coherence proper to the conception in the management of development and progress comes out both in the institutional and instrumental plans.

Progress is not limited to its economic component, although the latter plays a decision role. That is the reason by, global planning which above all, has in view the *ensemble* of the social progress machinery, plays a specific role viz it integrates the economic subsystem within the process involving growth, development and progress, by fully engaging in the action the social apparatus of delineation and decision-making.

a. *Plan-forecasting relationship*

The harmonious and all-round process of the *economic and social* development assumed by the Romanian society as a whole, finds expression in the advanced concept of *single national plan*, which is based on the ensemble of requirements implied by the development along various stages looked upon in terms of socio-human finality, of a multilaterally developing man, who tends to live in an environment in full agreement with his own aspirations and relies on a consumption model complying with a new ethos.

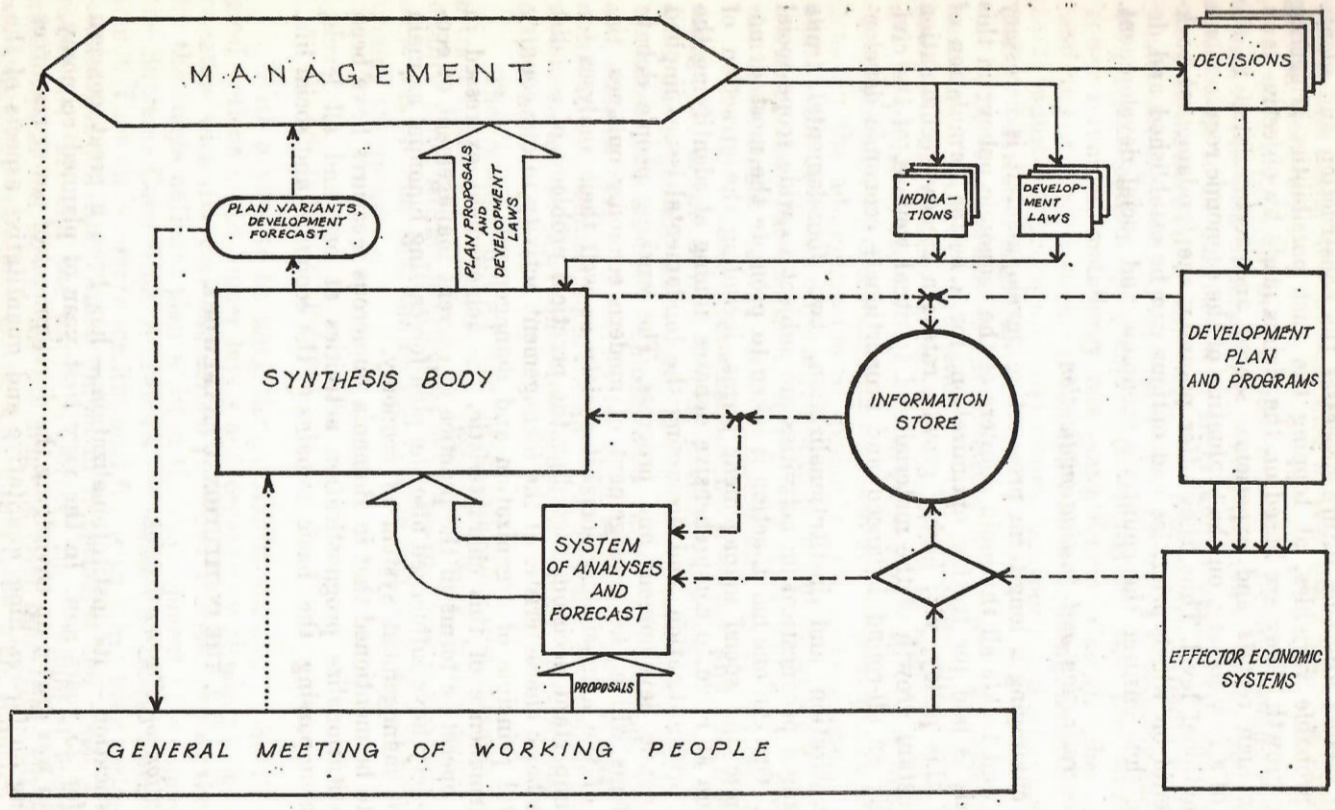
The plan in its capacity as envisaged model of the general economic system maps out the main direction and trends of the economic development which can be corrected so as to constantly keep pace with the requirements of development.

Prognostication is a requisite stage of long-term planing, offering these guidelines for the economic and social growth which are essential prerequisites for the substantiation of the economic policy options.

The solutions that are to be found to the major and far-reaching issues — the development of science and technology, row material and power resources, the training of personnel, the structural changes occurring in the social and economic life — have made it imperative to undertake a number of prognostication studies, and to integrate the five-year plans within long-term wider scopes covering 10—20 and area 25 years. The close of 1975 saw the simultaneous endorsement by the country's legislative forums of the outlines for Romanian's long-term put on development and of some far-reaching national programmes strething up to 2000 and 2010 concerning the conservation and growth of the lands, the improvement of hydrographic areas, the territorial systematization and the population prognostication by 2000.

The 1976—1980 five year plan for Romania's economic and social development is a more detailed conceptual component of the far reaching outline mapped out by 1990, and formulaties the main targets of the construction drive provided for the ongoing stage.

The cybernetic scheme (Fig. 1) factures the plan-prognostication interrelatedness and bring out into hold relief the fact that prognostication is the job of the political and social managing bodies that various decisions are being made which are then turned into plans; the latter in their turn are broken down on that tasks and targets are set to the executing bodies. All these results are an optimization of the economic management as a whole.


MANAGEMENT
DECISIONS
PLAN VARIANTS, DEVELOPMENT FORECAST
PLAN PROPOSALS AND DEVELOPMENT LAWS
INDICA-TIONS
DEVELOP-MENT LAWS
SYNTHESIS BODY
INFORMATION STORE
DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND PROGRAMS
SYSTEM OF ANALYSES AND FORECAST
PROPOSALS
EFFECTOR ECONOMIC SYSTEMS
GENERAL MEETING OF WORKING PEOPLE
order (plan, laws, programs).
projects of plans, forecasts and development programs
information
proposals resulted from working people's discussions

Therefore the prognostication studies aim, above all, at evidencing the essential factors affecting future processes the construction and identification of probable variables, at topping the vast possibilities triggering an economic growth. They are based on the claims made by objective laws, on the Romanian results and experience scored and accumulated in the building up of a new society, on the evaluating of the economic requirements at an international level. Thus, they offer planning the fundamental background material on which priorities and options can be established and decisions made thus ensurer the country's economic and social development.

b. *Democratization and Institutionalization*

When envisaging a long-term prospective development it is necessary to approach and tackle all the main pointers of the economic policy; in this way the basis is laid for further optimization, for a better formulation of the goals of this policy, viz: higher growth rates; a steady accumulation policy; a constant growth of the material and spiritual welfare, of the civilization level; an all-round balanced and proportionate economic development.

Democratization and institutionalization, two foundamental traits of the Romanian prognostication activities are subject to wide scope social experiments. On the one hand, action is taken to promote the most democratic economic and social management forms, including the atraction of the population at large to comprehensive debates aiming at identifying the "essence" of prognostication, and discussing the fundamental issues implied by socio-economic development and progress. The working people debate of the problems which the management of modern economy outlines, the building up of the manysidedly socialist society as well their analyses for making the important decisions regarding the practical problems of socialist building, is a basic characteristic of the management activity in our country a fundamental principle of organization and management.

The permanence of this characteristic, the achievement expressed in efficient and operative forms in the practice of current management of economy and society have influenced also the plan-forecasting binomial as main component of management system of economy.

It has to be mentioned that in Romania numerous measures have been taken to institutionalize prognostication activities at one and all levels, practically encompassing the basic domains of the economic and social life.

2. THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

a. *Evolution of Prognostication*

Prognostication — its institutionalization — has been a great concern in Romania for 25 years now. In the very first year of planned economy, a ten-year plan was drawn up envisaging the development of power resources while sketching on far-reaching qualitative and quantitative aspects of the building up of the power groundwork for Romania's economy; in 1969 the

Romanian legislative bodies approved a 10-year outline for Romania's economic and social development and 15-year outline for the expansion of the power resources.

1971 witnessed the establishment of a Central Commission which was assigned the task of formulating pronostications; thus prognostication activities were to be carried out in an organized way. Prognostication activities were circumscribed to examining the prospective variants of the socio-economic development, of the ways and means of expediting the formulation of prognostication by branches (rowmaterials and production materials, power resources, metallurgy mechanical engineering the chemical industry, lambring and wood working, the light, food, building materials and building trade industries agriculture, silviculture, transports and telecommunications), and by territorial organization.

The examination and formulation of the probable evolution of some domains of utmost importance for the economic and social development has been undertaken in variants according to selective modular criteria, and by problems viz: the population growth and the use of labour resources, the population's living standards; science and technology: communal management; the administration of dwellings; the socio-economic development and territorial systematization; health care and social security; culture and learning; the barnessing of waters; the conservation and preservation of the environment; the evolution of social structures; societal organizations.

The 28 existing commissions by branches and problems comprised some 2500 members from among executives, experts of ministries, general economic organizations, industrial centrals, enterprises, research and design institutes, educational establishments, public organizations. Prognostication commissions were also set up for each of the county as they were to foreshadow the complex socio economic expansion to be assured by the respective counties, to carry on a well-grounded policy of territorial distribution of productive forces.

The membership of the prognostication commissions which could attract other specialists to the respective work teams point to the high quality prognostication activities undertaken, to their democratic character as it was obvious that the people at large was consulted in problems conditioning the future.

b) *The context at present*

With a view to bringing the substantiation and formulation of strategical options on to higher levels and organically blending long-term prognostication with five-year and annual plans, while consolidating the role played by the single national plan whithin the development plan implementations, the Supreme Council for Romania's Economic and Social Development was found. Thus an adequate institutional framework has been assigned to prognostication activities, which unfold in 15 specialist departments i.e.: the row materials, fuel and the power resources; the mechanical engineering and metallurgical industries; the building material industries; silviculture, and woodworking; consumer goods, agriculture; the food industry and water harnessing and manegement; transports and telecommunications; foreign

economic relations and international cooperation; science and technology, environmental protection; standard of living; home trade, tourism, services rendered to the population; demography, labour force, social securities, health care; education, learning and culture; territorial systematization and socio-economic development; financies; national defence.

The Supreme Council has the following tasks in connection with prognostication:

— to formulate macro-economic prognostications which, clustered in a single conception, are to foreshadow the long-term economic and social development in keeping with the benefits of modern science and technique, the objectives of the building up of a multilaterally developed socialist society;

— to guide and coordinate prognostication by branches, subbranches and products and at the territorial level, by ministries and other central and local bodies, research and design institutes, educational establishments.

— to bring up-to-date long-term prognostication so as to keep steady pace with the country's economic and social development claims, with economic charges and with the advance in science and technique on a world scale.

— to organize and carry out prognostication at all organizational levels.

The forecasting works, a direct emanation of the ample activity carried out by the Higher Council of Economic and Social Development in Romania, is the main framework of working out the unique national plan of country social-economic development for five-year plans.

Recently, the unique national plan of social-economic development of the Socialist Republic of Romania for 1976—1980 period, was presented to be discussed and approved by the Grand National Assembly, after synthetizing the whole experience of the socialist building and the proposals for the social-economic development of the country resulted from the vast analyses and debates with the working people of the plan-design figures.

This represents a temerary but scientific clarsightedness of the future a profound scientific investigation of directions, dynamics and coordinates of our country development in the social-economic plan.

This entire activity, plan conception, statistical line and tactic orientations, the concrete modalities of action with a view to achieving the forecastings and the plan, bears the stamp of the vast conception and organizational activity, of the strong personality of President Nicolae Ceaușescu who with a high competence and large political vision assures the substantiation of the vast programme for building up the manysidedly socialist society.

c) *An all — embracing outlook*

The prognostication studies undertaken in Romania go deep into the trends of economic growth and the social transformation that will have been brought to life by the end of this millenium covering:

— the rapid, multilateral and most effective increase in the productive potentialities of industry, agriculture, and other branches of the material production, an essential factor ensuring the steady growth of the national revenue and the progress of society on the whole.

— the permanent modernization of production, the large-scale introduction of mechanization, automation and cybernetics, qualitative change in science and technology.

— an intensive and effective participation in international trade, the widening of foreign economic collaboration and cooperation, the rapid growth of exports and their steady pattern improvement;

— the constant increase in and improvement of labour force and the rapid growth of labour productivity.

— a judicious territorial distribution of productive forces so as to create most favourable conditions for the expanssion of each and every area of the country and for the growth of the working class in one and all counties throughout the country.

— the judicious and systematic territorial organization, the establishment of urban centres, the scientific organization of communes and villages.

— all of which will gradually bring the village closer to the town.

— an equitable ratio to be obtained between the accumulation and consumption funds so as to secure for a systematic socialist reproduction on an enlarged scale and at higher rates in parallel to a steady rise in the people's living standard on the basis of the ever-growing consumption fund.

3. THE PROGNOSTICATION SYSTEM

An extremely complex prognostication system is being under way in Romania in terms of spheres of activity problems and territorial distribution.

a) Prognostication studies by spheres of activity. These studies examine alternative solutions for the expansion and diversification of row materials, fuel and power resources required by the future development of the economy by the management capitalisation of resource, the better used to be given to waste and the ever more extansive use of substitutes. They have in view the probable evolution of some world resources, the trends towards substitution some natural row materials and renewing technologies that bring about radical changes in the use of various new materials.

The relevant studies keep account of the larg-term national economic requirements, of the necessity of turning to better account the country's resources, promoting scientific research, incessantly assimilating the latest gains of the technical and scientific revolution better specializing and organizing productions, furthering international economic cooperation.

b) Prognostication by problems. These studies approach wide-scope aspects of interest for all the spheres and sectors of activity: The probable evolution of numerous domains — such as population and labour force resources and their relevant changes, scientific resource and technological improvement their prospective application in production included, evolutive trends in the world market — are given thoughtful examination, and variants are devised for each solution.

Prognostication regarding the organization and management of society ranks among the most complex prognostications related to the social pattern and the problems facing a long-term societal organization Such prognostication is to define guideliness for the improvement of organization

and management activities, evidence the changes and improvement to occur in the country's social and economic structure and in the production relations. The relevant studies are to outline the stages that will bring physical work closer to the intellectual work.

Prognostication of the territorial and locality systematization brings its focus to bear on the examination of the ways and means of improving and organizing a systematic socio-economic expansion of the localities, communes, and villages of Romania, with an eye to the future homogenization of Romanian society as a whole.

c) Territorial prognostication. As pointed out by President Nicolae Ceauşescu, territorial prognostication is a "unitary and farreaching concept", whose goals are a higher degree of civilization for one and all localities, the abolishment of population migration to bigger towns the harmonious development of the social structures, and life full quality in working and living conditions, territorial homogenizations, the giving up the gaps existing between counties. The studies on raw materials on labour force, present production capacities, on the development trends of various branches and sub-branches, a number of variants will be devised for the economic and social development of the counties, the improvement to be worked on their pattern so as to judiciously distribute the productive forces, to ensure a higher-grade turning to account of natural resources, an increasing use of human — labour-force — and productive potentials, a higher material and cultural living standards. Moreover, the relevant studies make it their aim to find ways and means and identify solutions to territorial systematization, and distribution and town planning.

d) Prognostication of higher living standards. As far as the population's higher material and cultural living standards are concerned, prognostication maps out the evolution of the population's incomes and consumptions, the changes that will occur in the requirements of goods and services. Prognostication studies should find solutions closely related to the educational, cultural, artistic activities, as well as with these related to tourism, health care, housing, public utilities, individual and public-run transport, the expansion of the trading network, socio-cultural constructions, complex environmental factors made conspicuous by territorial systematization and organization.

e) The macroeconomic prognostication. The macroeconomic prognostication holds an important plane as, in a unitary conception it foreshadows the country's development as a whole, encompassing the most important domains of social life, the evolution of population and demographic phenomena material production the social productivity of labour, scientific research the training of cadres, the international development, the formation and use of the national income, the objectives involved by the population's high material and cultural living standards.

f) The demographycal prognostication. Likewise, there is wast concern in Romania with demographical prognostication. Thus, relevant prognostication have been put forward up to 2000; they are based on the idea that *economic development goes hand in hand with the increase in the number of population.*

g) Prognostication of ecological balance. A number of prognostication studies have already been turned into *national programmes.* Mention should be made of the national programmes for the conservation and expansion of areas under forests in the 1976—2000 period; for the territorial systematization; for the melioration and management of water resources. The ecological preoccupations derived from development find expression in prognostication on the ecological balance.

At present, all the above-mention prognostication studies are state documents and it devolves upon state executive bodies in Romania to implement the tasks under them.

4. COORDINATES OF PROGNOSIS

The Programme for the building up of the multilaterally developed socialist society and the gradual transition to communism and the guiding lines for Romania's economic and social development up to 1990 — are brilliant tokens of the investigation and foreshadowing of the country's future. Underlying all this are a thorough knowledge and a creative use of the economic laws governing social construction under the specific concrete and practical conditions prevailing in Romania, which brings into strong relief the main elements of Romania's economic and social prognostication.

a) The implementation of economic growth in keeping with a steady rise in the global welfare is a main characteristic of Romanian prognostication. The relevant studies on the economic growth up to 1990 aim at ensuring higher living standards, higher levels of civilization for the Romanian people at large, full satisfaction of the material and spiritual needs, the creation of best conditions for the moulding and shaping of a new kind of man, highly trained and qualified, boasting extensive learning and wide-scope thorough knowledge.

b) Great flexibility stands for another feature of the economic and social prognostication. The latter is made imperative by the powerful dynamism characteristic of Romanian economy, by the high rate assimilation of the benefits of the contemporary scientific and technical revolution.

This flexibility of prognostication brings out the latter's capacity of steadily adjusting itself to the ever-renewing and ever-changing economic and social realities, and of its being continuously perfected and bettered. It should be mentioned that, in kthis respect, the prognostication studies and surveys are not only an abstract attempt and an interplay of figures, but a dynamic component of an economic organization, an active instrument for the investigation of the future, a fertile field of economic and social experiments.

c) Prognostication studies rely on a system of modern techniques. In view of the paramount importance of prognostication studies for economic planning, it is necessary to expand their field of investigation, to take into account all the complex factors affecting the respective fileds, and always have in view the requisite ever higher quality of the relevant studies. No wonder then, that great attention is being given to modern investigation methods, to electronic data processing computation techniques to the latest

analysis instruments offered by economic cybernetics and the information theory.

d) Prognostication should, above all, aim at integrating Romania in the world flow of material and spiritual assets, which is characteristic of Romanian prognostication activities. It is noteworthing that Romania's prognostication activities unfols in the spirit of the envisaged new international economic and political order, to whose formulation and substantiation President Nicolae Ceaușescu has brought an essential contribution. Consequently, prognostication studies approach the world economic problems in the light of equity, a prerequisite of the promotion of international relations, of a speeder economic growth of the developing countries, of the removal of any kinds of barriers standing in the way of international cooperation, of concentrated development, in other words, concentrated efforts should be made by the developing countries themselves, while bring assisted by the developed countries.

5. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND PROGNOSTICATION

Romanian scientific research looks behind on long-standing traditions as far as prognostication is concerned, as testified to by a wide and diversified relevant network. First and forement, the chair of economic cybernetics within the Economic Sciences Academy in Bucharest headed by Academician and professor Manea Mănescu, has directed its research work and the respective prognostication to economy to production surveys.

At present the chair boasts a team of specialists in problems raised by prognostication. For five years now a course on economic and social prognostication has been run which is included in the curriculum of various departments of the Academy for Economic Sciences, to say nothing of periodical prognostication courses run as part of occurrant education programmes for the personnel engaged in economic activities, whose aim is to train specialists in the field of prognostication.

It is not less worth mentioning that excellent results have been obtained by the *Scientific Seminar of Economic and Social Prognostication* set up within the economic cybernetics chair of the Academy of Economic Sciences, headed by Academician and professor Manea Mănescu. The Seminar concentraits higher education teaching staff, researchers, specialists from synthesis organization, ministries, economic centrals and units highly concerned with economic and social prognostication. The topics of the seminar centre round a system of cybernetical and economic models for the prognostication of Romania's economic growth, in keeping with the economic and national outlines and the objectives of the completion of the multilaterally-developed socialist society and the transition to communism and round a global cybernetical and economic model envisaging a new economic order a juster and better world. A number of studies have already been undertaken by complex, inter-disciplinary teams on an integrated system of cybernetical and economic models for the prognostication of the long-term economic growth, of territorial organization and the rise in the material wealth and welfare of the nation.

It is a fact that the institutional research network in the field of prognostication is extremely varied. For instance, there is a scientific seminar within the "Stefan Gheorghiu" Academy for social and political sciences, while deals with research into the future and debates on the prognostication with regard to the world economic development in the light of the concept of a new international economic and political order. The Research Institute for Planning and the Centre for Computation, the Information Theory and Cybernetics Related to Planning attached to the State Planning Committee as well as the Plan-Synthesis Board of this committee have been concerned with working out of some macroeconomic prognostication studies. The University in Bucharest has organized a laboratory for the theory of systems related to prognostication, with special attention being given to the applications of Box-and Jenkins-type prognostications. Not less important prognostication results have been achieved by the Commercial Research Institute in research into the dynamics and evolution of consumption in the domestic market, by the Institute for International Market Research in the investigations made in Marketing studies and research into the international market trends, by the Institute for Financial and Monetary Research in the prognostication of money and coin movements.

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Prognostication is well-represented in Romania and is sure to assume a great development as testified to by the effective use of prognostification studies in the practice of the national economic management and planning. There is a growing interest in and concern with prognostication evident in many countries throughout the world.Important potentials, governamental institutions, international organization and research institutes have been concentrating on a scientific investigation of the future, so that on this basis, variants should be established which should govern decision-making and a speedier economic and social progress. The closer collaboration unfolding between specialist institutes and teams from various countries, the increased cooperation developing in the relevant exchanges of information and pooling of experience the establishment of special reciprocal and prompt information means — are certain to bear fruit, that is to make the efforts in the field of prognosis made by various countries more effective, to bring fruitfull results in the attempts to discover and identify the main trends and problems raised by the world economic development, and implement the requisite measures while finding most adecquate solutions.

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PREOCCUPATIONS CONCERNANT L'ACTIVITE DE PREVISION ECONOMIQUE ET SOCIALE DANS NOTRE PAYS

L'élaboration et la conception de la prévision en R.S. de Roumanie se caractérisent par la continuité, par la filtration des tendances actuelles des éléments du progrès, par le mécanisme d'intégration de l'homme dans sa double hypostase de participant actif et de bénéficiaire immédiat du processus de la création. L'activité de prévision est une partie intégrante du programme général d'édification de la société socialiste développée de façon multiforme, réalisant ainsi la corrélation entre la direction à terme court et la direction à long terme, pour un horizon de 4—5 quinquennats. Cette activité costitue un vaste expériment social sur la promotion des formes de direction de la vie économique et sociale, les plus démocratiques.

L'activité de prévision met en valeur les valences du facteur écologique et vise la corrélation étroite individu-société-milieu, afin d'assurer une croissance économique en concordance avec l'augmentation du bien-être.

О ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ ПО ОБЩЕСТВЕННО-ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКОМУ ПРОГНОЗИРОВАНИЮ В НАШЕЙ СТРАНЕ

Концепция и общие принципы разработки прогнозурования в база разработки и концепт о прогнозе в Социалистической Республике Румынии характеризуются последовательностью, селекцией нынешних тенденций элементов прогресса, глубоким механизмом включения человека в своём двойном качестве — активного участника и непосредственного потребителя творческого процесса. Деятельность прогнозирования включается в общую программу строительства всесторонне развитого социалистического общества, осуществляя, таким образом, сочетание краткосрочного управления с долгосрочным управлением, на период 4—5 пятилеток. Деятельность прогнозирования предоставляет широкое поле для социального эксперимента по выдвижению самых демократических форм управления общественно-экономической жизнью.

Деятельность по прогнозированию использует достоинства экологического фактора и имеет ввиду тесное сочетание индивидуум-общество-среда в целях обеспечения экономического развития в соответствии с ростом благосостояния.