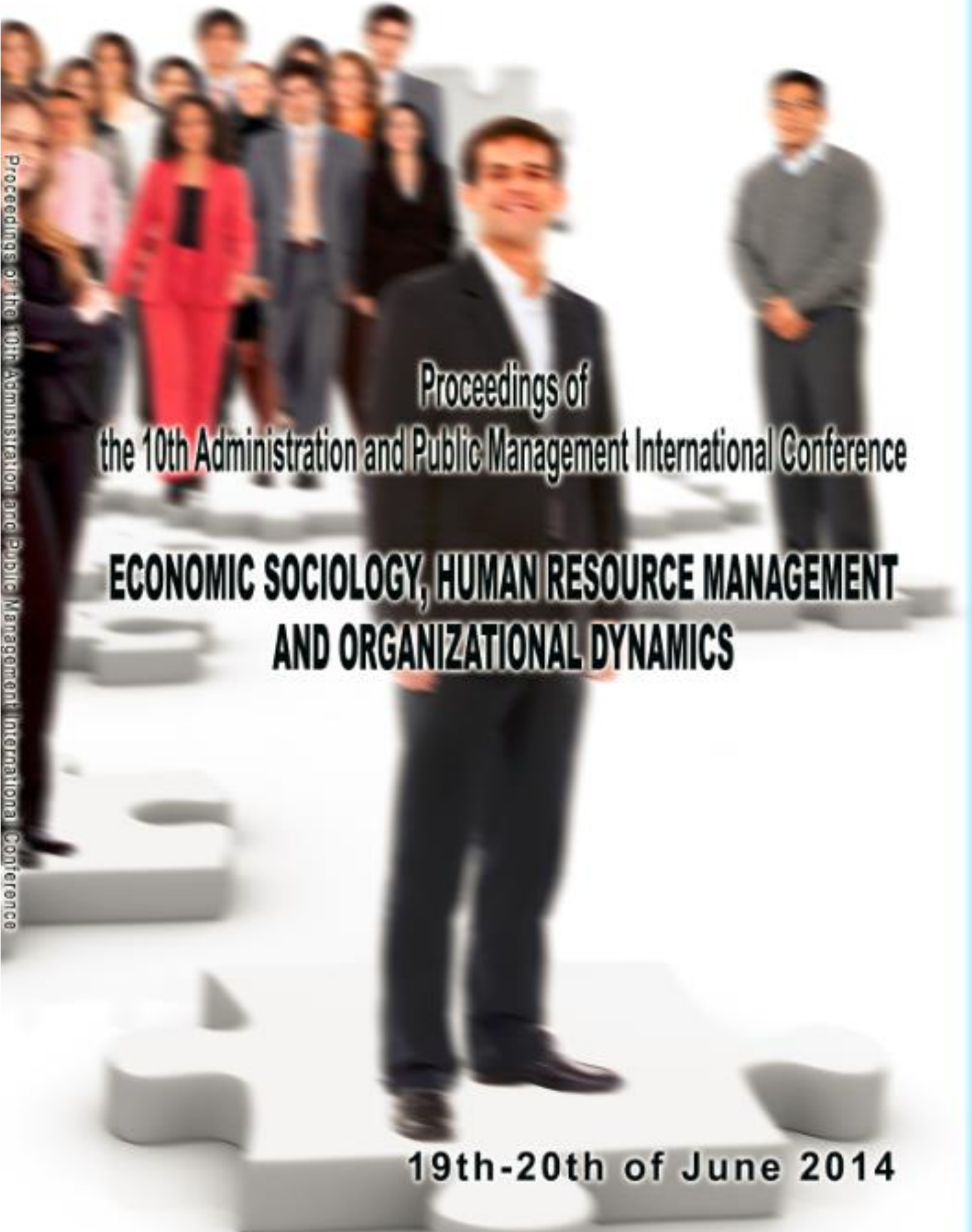
BUCHAREST UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMIC STUDIES
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# Proceedings of the 10th Administration and Public Management International Conference

# ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY, HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS

19th-20th of June 2014

Proceedings of the 10th Administration and Public Management International Conference

BUCHAREST UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMIC STUDIES
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# "ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY, HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS"

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# TEXTILE PRODUCTION, FASHION DESIGN, AND THE LANGUAGE OF CLOTHES IN THE 19TH CENTURY CAPITALIST SOCIETY

# PRODUCŢIA DE TEXTILE, DESIGNUL VESTIMENTAR ŞI LIMBAJUL HAINELOR ÎN SOCIETATEA CAPITALISTĂ A SECOLULUI AL XIX-LEA

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***Abstract***
The main objective of this paper is to explore and describe women's textile culture in the Victorian epoch, the language of cloth, and the craft of dressmaking. My analysis complements the growing literature on the social consequences of fashion, the elasticity and refinement of women's proficiency in dress culture, and the composition of female subjectivity in Victorian fiction. The findings of this study have implications for women's fluency in dress culture, the social relevance of clothing, and the longevity of needlewoman in Victorian literature..

***Keywords*:** textile, fashion, dress, Victorian, seamstress, femininity

**JEL CODES: L67; J16**

***Rezumat***
Obiectivul principal al acestui articol este de a explora și descrie cultura textilă a femeilor din epoca victoriană, limbajul pânzei și măiestria în croitorie. Analiza mea completează literatura în creștere cu privire la consecințele sociale ale modei, flexibilitatea și rafinamentul competenței femeilor în cultura îmbrăcămințiii, și compoziția subiectivității feminine în ficțiunea victoriană. Concluziile acestui studiu au implicații pentru fluența femeilor în cultura vestimentară, relevanța socială a îmbrăcămințiii, și longevitatea cusătoreselor în literatura victoriană.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** textile, modă, rochie, victorian, croitoreasă, feminitate.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Victorian women were required to practice proficiency in 'dress culture' – the interconnected crafts of designing and construing fabric and household textiles, using education in cloth (sewing and decoding dress) and education in print (reading and writing). Textile culture typified the intricacy of women's multitudinous literacies. Women writers asserted needlework and writing as women's activity (craft with the needle might establish a personality). Incessantly debating the jargon of print and the one of fabric, Victorian women authors utilized twofold literacy as a kind of command, a means of society, and a measure of women's dissimilarities. Proficiency in dress culture was particularly gendered as a kind of womanly knowledge in Victorian social tradition (muliebrity demanded fluency in interpreting cloth). Plain needlework incorporated designing clothes, mending, and darning, while on the contrary fancy sewing applied to knitwork, crocheting, embroidery, and lace-making (Bayles Kortsch, 2009). From the early 1840s via the end of the century fictions concentrated on women gaining their living by needlework (a current working-class heroine is the dressmaker): a leading character earning her living by stitching was something common for the Victorian reading public. Writers highlighted specific features of the status of the needlewoman to make her illustrative for the needy. Reducing the price of cloth, the industrialization of the textile sector (Popescu, 2014a; 2013a; 2012) assisted middle-class women in pursuing the caprices of fashion. The dressmaker was a person to whom the Victorian reading public could react without bias. Individuals encountering a woman stitching in fiction could empathize with the personage. For numerous feminine readers the dressmaker would set off the awareness that they could unquestionably be positioned in an identical situation. The responsibilities of a needlewoman shifted from plain seaming to cutting and fitting, and ultimately to supervising and training. (Alexander, 2003)

## 2. WOMEN'S TWOFOLD PROFICIENCY IN PRINT AND DRESS CULTURE IN THE VICTORIAN EPOCH

In Braddon's 1864 novel, The Doctor's Wife, the principal female character, Isabel, dressing, reading and stargazing before the mirror, self-consciously enacts the articulation and image of the protagonist in the Victorian novel. Isabel's status as a literary participant in the fiction is established both by her position as a reader and as a character. Via a process of reading, cogitating and self-fashioning, she restyles herself into a paragon of feminine decency. Standing before her mirror, book in hand and reflection in front of her, Isabel weighs up her subjectivity. The figure of Isabel expounding on the relative reverie or verity of her presence, dress and standing before her mirror links the processes of reading, dressing and reflecting. The representation of Isabel reading before the looking-glass is a

metaphor for literary self-awareness in the fiction. In her function as reader, she ponders on the fictionality of the principal female character as a literary concept. Dressing and dressing-up enable the Victorian woman to adjust herself for the aim of complying with or surpassing the paradigmatic representations of muliebrity and heroine-ship (Seys, 2014, pp. 177–200). Victorian girls employed samplers to duplicate and familiarize themselves with the letters of the alphabet: the Victorian scheme of training girls in alphabetic proficiency synchronously taught embroidery, being composed of a discrete vocabulary. Literacy in dress culture entailed the capacity to read and to write in the given language, Victorian girls being instructed how to interpret cloth and recognize stitches and the models into which the latter could be organized. Mastering to read fabric and design enabled girls to set about writing with that cloth, creating their own textile items. Textiles were traditionally constituents of a girl's birthright, joining her when she went to her husband's household. Girls had to know how to interpret fabric for the aim of creating or decorating textile objects, grasping the features of different stitches and seams and the characteristics of various types of cloth, becoming able to fashion and carry out their own creations, to construe the social relevance of fabric, and to demand it as their legitimate inheritance (Bayles Kortsch, 2009).

Isabel is utterly knowledgeable of the literary relevance of the fabrics and clothing she wears. Staring without success at her conceptualization in the mirror, Isabel covers the fictional and the real, by that desiccating her own literary reveries and those of the Victorian reading public. In the looking-glass, Isabel redesigns the "material" of reality just as she reconstructs her plain stuff dresses. Via introspection and redesigning, Isabel surpasses her inferior status as an item of reading and the stare by evolving into a representative in her own image and narrative. The mirror is a symbol of elevated self-awareness and subjectivity for Isabel, enabling her to eclipse the fantastic and sensual representations of Victorian women as principal female characters and readers, and advance beyond them into self-determination. Isabel confronts corruption and temptation and, by starting to accept and deal with the perennial kinds of femininity reproduced in the looking-glass, rises above them and attains independence as a reader (Seys, 2014, pp. 177–200). A fictional personage can predicate operation within the story space. The circumstances of the historical space can be expressed by the writer in the story space. Increased consciousness, particularly the knowingness that one's private existence is associated with the political area, is required for feminist predications of intervention. Spoken word is best constituted by instants in discussion in which personages undertake rival tenets about the cultural function of women (predication of woman's intervention frequently happens in instants when the female character can intensify counteraction to language that seeks to classify and denigrate her). Concrete action is to the highest degree expressed by the narrative scheme of description of personages'



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undertakings (the manner for women to alter their subservient status is via action). (Youngkin, 2007) (Table 1)

TABLE 1 - WOMEN'S TEXTILE CULTURE IN THE VICTORIAN PERIOD

| Author/ novel/ year | Women's fluency in dress culture |
|---|---|
| Elizabeth Gaskell, *Mary Barton* (1848) | Needlework clicks along as an incessant unnoticed undertaking to the more moving scenes of the novel. |
| Margaret Oliphant, *Kirsteen* (1888) | Needlework is a shared endeavor carried out with other women at home. Dressmaking is an art, whereas the seamstress is an artist, entailing the capacity to read and act according to present patterns, and the aptness to see beyond and through them to relevant likelihoods: it may be an art to be pursued by upper-class women, or plain toil, the degrading slog of working-class dressmakers, serving as a metaphor for a specific type of writing. |
| Sarah Grand, *The Heavenly Twins* (1893) | Women who imitate the most recent fashions (including tight-lacing) are working- or lower middle-class, typified as the casualties of mass consumerism. Class distinctions establish dress selections just as they regulate how drastic one can manage to be. |
| Sarah Grand, *The Beth Book* (1897) | Dress culture can assure women financial autonomy, creative display, a scheme to be concerned with the poor people, and social resistance. The most successful social militants employ dress culture to design a genuine self (women's rights policy is the activity of upper-class women). The endeavor of becoming a self-fulfilled craftsman and the effort of amending social inequality cannot be attained as individual objectives. Needlework and clothing a self change into a manner of stitching and dressing a better society, dress and sewing provide manners to oppose and reconstruct patriarchal community, and women must employ their personal domestic crafts for the public good (the link between needlework, reading, and writing is found to be a beneficial one). Disciplined areas of needlework bring about the stuff for writing. Embroidery supplies the instruments of creativity, a type of relaxing and productive background sound for the creativity. The dual task of altering community and producing beauty is essentially the property of women. Dress culture permitted women to reconcile the breach between personal and public labor fairly. The fundamental if baseless self-determination comes in dropping dress culture completely. |
| Gertrude Dix, *The Image-Breakers* (1900) | Novels can most precisely display the difficulties of both late Victorian society and utopianism. Natures that advance complete proficiency in fabric and in print tend to attain realization and autonomy, identifying chances to select |

| | |
|---|---|
| | their own channels of self-expression, to support financially for their own necessities, and to give out of their supplies to other individuals. Female readers perceive clashing representations of themselves in the mirror – a bricolage of feasible manners to undergo and convey late Victorian womanly identity, allowing the images of other women and the tense connections among them. |
| Olive Schreiner, *From Man to Man, or, Perhaps Only* (1926) | Needlework is a fertile, inventive undertaking, functioning as a metaphor for women's incapacity to communicate in the public space. Needlework performs a diversity of roles, and these images operate together to produce a bricolage of meaning, and constitutes an intrinsic component of the pattern and ceremony of domestic responsibilities (the needle generates a kind of writing the masculine sphere cannot decode). Women's proficiency in dress culture is a type of womanly knowledge, imagination, and power. Speech reflects the undertaking of needlework, the latter entailing taking particular pieces of cloth and sewing them together. Similar to stitches and seams, words and sentences unite together happenings, notions, and individuals. Needlework carries out the practical and metaphorical goal of determining a chance for discussion among the female personages, and furnishes a foundation of knowledge by which they interpret each other: it supplies a peaceful space for philosophical meditation and mental struggling, stimulates energetic inactivity, and discloses secrets. Twofold literacy did not supply similar experiences for women authors or readers (garments denote and establish identity). |
| Ella Hepworth Dixon, *The Story of a Modern Woman* (1930) | Reproduction and needlework are related to working-class women's asinine toil, the requirements of the body overriding those of the reason. Working-class dressmaker stitches automatically, lacking attentiveness, imagination, or choice. The needlewoman is a symbol of the persecution of upper-class women who employ 'feminine schemes' and 'artifices' to navigate patriarchal community. The act of needlework is either slog or pastime, the dissimilarity residing in the class status of the woman who does it (women interpret each other's garments). |

Adapted from Bayles Kortsch, 2009

## 3. THE GENDER POLITICS OF VICTORIAN GARMENTS

The garments one is dressed in and the manner one sits in them is a conventionalization of the figure that signifies one's gender. Women's garments remained detailed and extremely decorative during the



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19th century (their clothing undoubtedly certifies to moneyed women's ornamental function). Women's extremely decorative garments distinguished the wealthy woman's sphere from the one of drudgery, associating her with relaxation and luxury, and enabling her visibly to carry out both her gender and class peculiarities. Garments act as a signifying scheme that displays an individual's gender, class, and social status. In the 1840s, the widespread Gothic style dress was typified by a long waist and boned bodice. Prevailing garments were tight and form-fighting via the 1870s and 1880s. Beliefs of body representations in fiction are far less blatant than in narratives that definitely seek to persuade women to dress in specific types of dresses or corsets (the corset was an established item of women's clothing) (Krugovoy Silver, 2004).

Fashion was a scheme for women to be fond of womanliness as a separate item of ocular pleasure, was determined by a woman's capacity to educate her taste and adjust her particular style to unsteady group policies (Popescu, 2014b; 2013b; 2013c), and proved its partisans' self-control by evidencing their capacity to accommodate their bodies and needs within the limitations set by strict dress codes (restrictive clothing stood for the willpower and relaxation of the woman of rank). Victorian mothers considered fashion periodicals to rig out themselves and their daughters in the current modes. By pursuing fashion conventions, women grasped to adjust their figures to a social matrix. The most noticeable satisfaction Victorian fashion provided to women was analyzing other women and being examined by them. Women's publications supplied broad sharing for the fashion representations that affected joint taste. The most thriving women's publications both constituted the most recent fashions and inculcated women household skills. Manufactured by women, for them, fashion plates requested a female look for conceptualizations that put women, their figures, and the items that beautify them on display. The reification of female bodies in fashion plates improved the subjectiveness of the women who perceived them (Marcus, 2007).

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The implications of the developments outlined in the preceding sections of this paper suggest a growing need for a research agenda on women's literacy in dress culture, the material culture of dress and sewing, and popular culture's images of the seamstress in the Victorian community. This paper seeks to fill a gap in the current literature by examining the employment of dress to fashion femininity, fictional portrayals of the seamstress, and needlework's function as the archetypal marker of Victorian femininity.

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ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF HUMAN RESOURCE IN ROMANIAN SECONDARY SECTOR

# ANALIZA EVOLUȚIEI RESURSELOR UMANE ÎN SECTORUL SECUNDAR ROMÂNESC


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***Abstract***
The secondary sector, composed of industry and construction, contributes about 43 % to the GDP of Romania. This sector employed less than 28 % of the total workforce employed at national level and labor productivity, calculated by GDP per employee, is above average, but not particularly high in absolute terms. Decrease in the number of employees in the secondary sector was mainly caused by the decline of manufacturing and extractive. Cities that have suffered severe forms of industrialization come predominantly from small towns category. The areas most affected by unemployment are located in counties with a high degree of industrialization before 1990, but have suffered in recent years a strong industrial decline.
The paper presents the analysis of the workforce engaged in the



***Keywords*:** secondary sector, industry, construction, decline, employee

**JEL CODES:** E24, J21



***Rezumat***
Sectorul secundar, care are în componența sa subsectoarele industrie și construcții, contribuie cu aproximativ 43% la PIB-ul României. În acest sector sunt angajați peste 28% din totalul forței de muncă de la nivel național, iar productivitatea muncii, calculată în funcție de PIB pe locuitor, este peste medie, dar nu foarte mare în termeni absoluți. Scăderea numărului de angajați din sectorul secundar este în principal cauzată de declinul industriei prelucrătoare și al industriei extractive. Orașele care au suferit diferite forme de industrializare, provin în special, din categoria orașelor mici. Zonele cele mai afectate de șomaj sunt situate în județele cu un grad înalt de industrializare înainte de 1990, dar care au suferit în ultimii ani un puternic declin industrial.
Lucrarea prezintă analiza forței de muncă angajate în sectorul secundar, precum și evoluția acesteia în timp. Este evidențiată distribuția șomajului, care este corelat cu declinul industriei și construcțiilor, identificându-se, în același timp, zonelor și orașele afectate de creșterea șomajului.



***Cuvinte cheie:*** sector secundar, industrie, construcții, declin, angajat

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Romanian industry contributes about one third to the country's GDP, in this sector being engaged a fifth part of the total nationally workforce employed, thus surpassing the EU27 average. This various subsector comprises both mining and primary processing industry and branches of production and public services. In this sector are generally active above average sized enterprises. Labour productivity, calculated according to GDP per employee is above average, but not very high in absolute terms, reflecting the focus on less advanced forms of production with low added value. Romania, in 2008-2009 was above the average of other countries on this indicator.

Constructions in Romania are more developed than in most EU countries. Thus, the number of active companies in this field and contribution to GDP is around 9%, while the labor force employed in this sector has a lower weight, which indicates an above average level of labor productivity. In the years 2008-2009 in construction subsector were recorded values of index works superior of the European average.

## 2. ANALYSIS OF THE SECONDARY SECTOR IN ROMANIA

Crisis that was confronted the global economy has negatively affected industrial production in Central and Eastern Europe, by default Romania. Labour productivity in industry, in recent years in Romania has been constantly decreasing, being well below the EU average.

In 2011, industry and constructions, the two subsectors of the secondary sector contribute about 43% to Romania's GDP and employment rate in this sector was 2.364 million people, respectively 28.3%.

The labor market in Romania was concentrated around a few cities that were in economic growth, a trend that will probably continue in the future. The largest number of people employed in constructions (over 1.000 employees), registered in municipalities such as: Alba Iulia, Arad, Pitesti, Bacau, Oradea, Brasov, Braila, Cluj Napoca, Constanta, Craiova, Iasi, Baia Mare, Piatra Neamt, Targu Mures, Suceava, Botosani, Galati, Ploiesti, Satu Mare, Timisoara, Bucharest, and so on, from which more than 10.000 employees in cities like: Brasov, Cluj Napoca, Iasi, Ploiesti, Timisoara, Bucharest. Counties where construction activity was poorly represented, recorded a small number of employees, were those located in the south of the country: Mehedinți, Dolj, Teleorman, Olt, Braila, Tulcea.

Regarding **industrial activity**, counties with a large number of employees (over 20.000) were: Arad, Bihor, Brasov, Cluj, Constanta, Dolj, Galati, Iasi, Prahova, Sibiu, Valcea. The smallest number of employees in industry was recorded in counties like Giurgiu, Ialomita and Calarasi.

In 2011, compared to 2002, industry was characterized by decreasing the number of employees, while in construction has been a positive trend in terms of their number.

Generally, the decrease in the number of employees in the secondary sector is due to the decline of manufacturing and extractive, aspect that prevailed in the small towns, that have suffered in recent years a strong industrially involution.

**Manufacturing** contributes greatly to economic growth and job creation, being subsector that recorded the highest number of employees both in Romania and European level. The contribution of the sector remains significant even the number of employees has declined significantly after 1990. The most important branches of Romanian manufacturing in terms of the number of employees and turnover (about 25%) are: food and motor vehicles industries .

**Mining** is very less important in terms of turnover and employment rate, both at European and national level. Mining can confer a competitive advantage in manufacturing, providing direct raw material, without additional costs arising from the transport of other countries and from the long transit time.

In 2011, a significant percentage of industrial employees registered in low-technology industries such as the food industry in the counties Calarasi, Ialomita and Ilfov; textile industry in Botosani, Calarasi, Vrancea, Braila; wood processing industry in the counties of Harghita, Brasov, Maramures, Bistrita Nasaud; manufacturing of motor vehicles in counties: Arges, Arad, Bistrita Nasaud, Caras Severin, Hunedoara, Timis; metallurgical industry in the counties of Galati, Dambovita, Olt etc.

The **construction sector** includes the following subsectors: providing building products and materials, organizing construction activities works and plumbing works, rental construction equipment and machine and professional services.

In constructions predominates very small number of employees firms. In Figure 1 it is noted that in 2010 the largest share was recorded in the category of 0-9 employees, situation not very different in present.

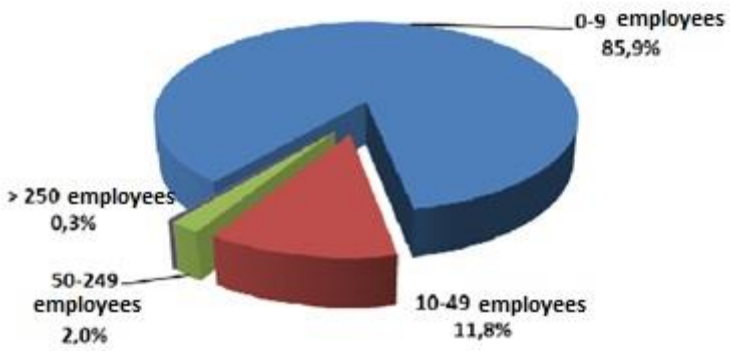



**FIGURE 1.** STRUCTURE OF ACTIVE CONSTRUCTION FIRMS BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2010

Source: INS, INCD URBAN-INCERC

Number of companies that has worked in the construction industry and consequently the number of employees, increased in 2011. In some counties (Hunedoara, Mehedinti, Covasna, Braila, Constanta), the increase was till 100%, but in a big number of counties, the increase was till 200%, for example in: Satu Mare, Maramures, Timis, Caras Severin, Mures, Sibiu, Valcea, Gorj, Dolj, Braşov, Prahova, Buzau, Ialomita, Calarasi , Tulcea, Botosani, Iasi, Neamt, Bacau and Vaslui. There were counties that have risen over 200%, for example: Bihor, Arad, Salaj, Cluj, Alba, Bistrita Nasaud, Suceava, Harghita, Vrancea, Galati, Arges, Dambovita, Olt, Teleorman, Giurgiu and Ilfov.

Due to the decrease in the number of companies and therefore in the number of employees working in industry during 2002-2011, was affected vast majority of counties (Satu Mare, Maramures, Bistrita Nasaud, Cluj, Mures, Sibiu, Valcea, Arad, Hunedoara, Caras Severin, Dâmboviţa, Teleorman, Calarasi, Ialomita, Braila, Botosani, Iasi, Neamt, Bacau, Covasna). There are counties where the number of firms increased (Bihor, Salaj, Alba, Timis, Gorj, Dolj, Olt, Arges, Brasov, Prahova, Harghita, Suceava, Iasi, Galati, Vrancea, Buzau, Prahova, Giurgiu, Tulcea, Constanta ), the largest increase being in Ilfov county.

Employment in industrial sector declined significantly in the Western region, especially in industrialized counties: Hunedoara and Caras-Severin, especially because of massive layoff employees in mining and metallurgical sectors. Coal basin Valea Jiului (Aninoasa, Petrosani, Uricani, Petrila, Lupeni, Vulcan) was strongly affected by the massive restructuring in industry.

During 1999-2011, the number of employees in industry in the Central Region decreased by 42%, the industrial branches most affected by restructuring being machine building industry, metallurgical and



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chemical industry, mining (Alba 46,4%, Brasov 57,1%, Harghita 39,4%, Mures 32%, Sibiu 29,2%, Covasna 26.4%).

Bucharest municipality has the highest number of people employed in industry and in the growth poles, Timisoara records the highest number of employees, followed by Cluj, Brasov, Craiova etc., Bucharest doesn't have a leading position. Then comes the sectors of water distribution and waste, energy supply and on the last place is mining. The highest percentage on mining is in Bucharest, Ploiesti, Constanta (Figure 2)

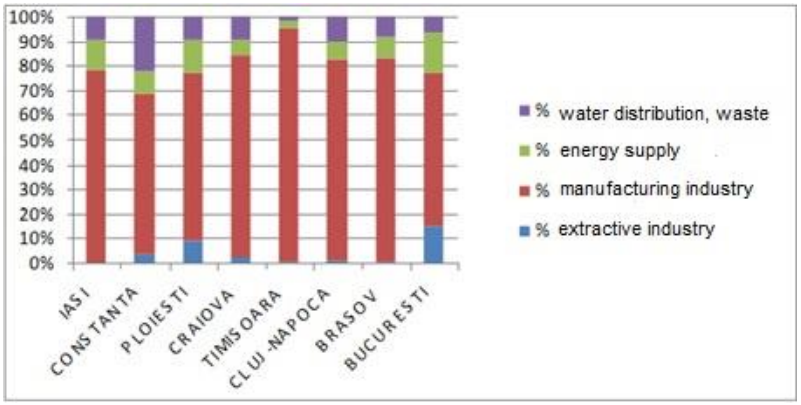



**FIGURE 2.** DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN INDUSTRY ON SUBSECTORS IN BUCHAREST AND GROWTH POLES CITIES

Source: ONRC data processing

The situation of employment on activity sectors is as follows: in the great number of growth poles cities, most people work in the tertiary sector, excepting Timisoara. The highest values are recorded in Bucharest and Constanta. The secondary sector ranks second position, and primary sector ranks last position (Figure 3).

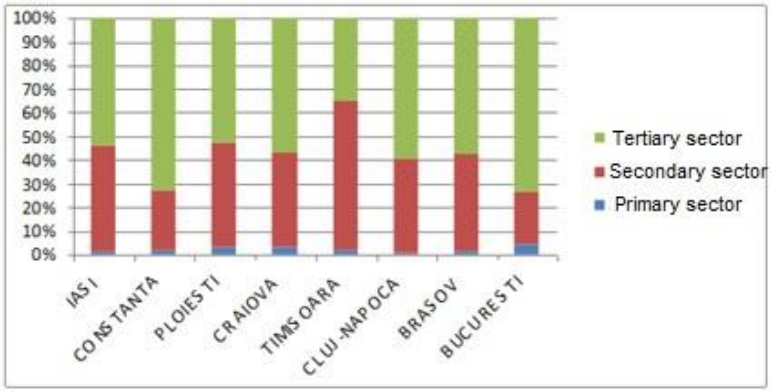



**FIGURE 3.** DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES BY ACTIVITY SECTORS FOR BUCHAREST AND GROWTH POLES CITIES

Source: ONRC data processing

We can be said that at the Bucharest and **growth poles**, between the two branches of secondary sector - industry and constructions, most employees are employed in the industrial sector, especially in manufacturing industries, although this sector ranks the second place in order of preferences, most of the employees choosing tertiary sector to work.

At the **poles of development,** between the two branches of the secondary sector - industry and construction, the most employees are employed in industry, especially in manufacturing industries, secondary sector is on par with tertiary sector, in order of preference for job.

At the **poles of regional importance**, it is found that most employees are employed in the secondary sector, followed by the tertiary sector, and on the last place, with a very small proportion, is situated primary sector (Figure 4)

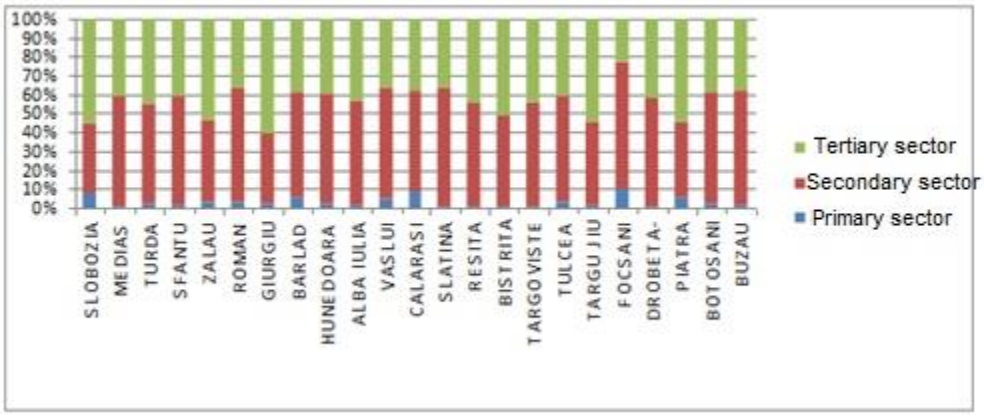



**FIGURE 4.** DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN INDUSTRY SUBSECTORS FOR CITIES POLES OF REGIONAL IMPORTANCE

Source: ONRC data processing

At the **poles of regional importance**, most of the employees is employed in the industry, standing on top Buzau, Bistrita, Slatina, Medias, Targoviste, Tulcea, Drobeta Turnu Severin etc. In construction the number of employees is reduced. However, on the first places are situated Buzau, Drobeta Turnu Severin, Piatra Neamt, Targoviste, etc. (Figure 5)



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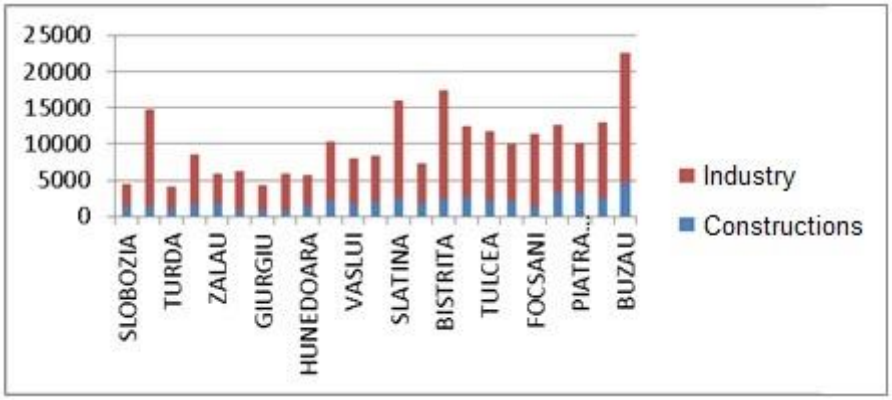



**FIGURE 5.** DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES ON ACTIVITY SECTORS FOR POLES OF REGIONAL IMPORTANCE CITIES

Source: ONRC data processing

Regarding the distribution of the number of employees on industrial subsectors, at the poles of regional importance too, we find that most works in manufacturing, followed by the water distribution and waste, and in a very small proportion are those who work in the field of energy supply. A special situation is encountered in Medias, where the percentage of those working in the mining is very high (Figure 6).

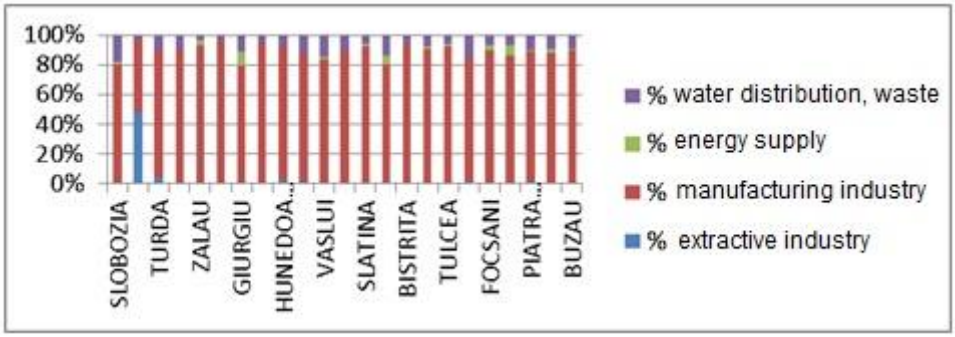



**FIGURE 6** - DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN INDUSTRIAL SUBSECTORS FOR CITIES OF REGIONAL IMPORTANCE POLE

Source: ONRC data processing

Thus, on the **regional importance pole**, it appears that most of the employees are working in the industrial sector, especially in manufacturing industries, although this sector is situated approximately on the same position as third sector in order of preference of employment. A small proportion of employees work in the primary sector in several centers of regional importance: Focsani, Calarasi, Slobozia, Barlad, Vaslui etc. In construction, occupancy is low.

At the **poles of local importance**, the largest number of employees are employed in industry, standing out in particular: Mioveni, Petrosani, Mangalia, Sighisoara, Lugoj, Campina, Onesti, Reghin etc. A small

number of employees work in construction, especially in Miercurea Ciuc, Campina, Alexandria, Onesti etc. (Figure 7)

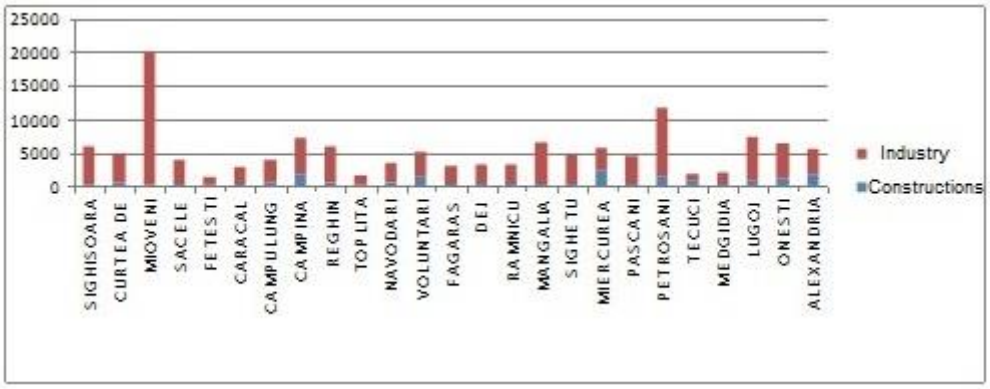



**FIGURE 7.** NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN INDUSTRY AND CONSTRUCTION ON LOCAL IMPORTANCE POLES

Source: ONRC data processing

By sectors, it is found that most employees are employed in the secondary sector, followed by the tertiary sector, and the last is primary sector (Figure 8)

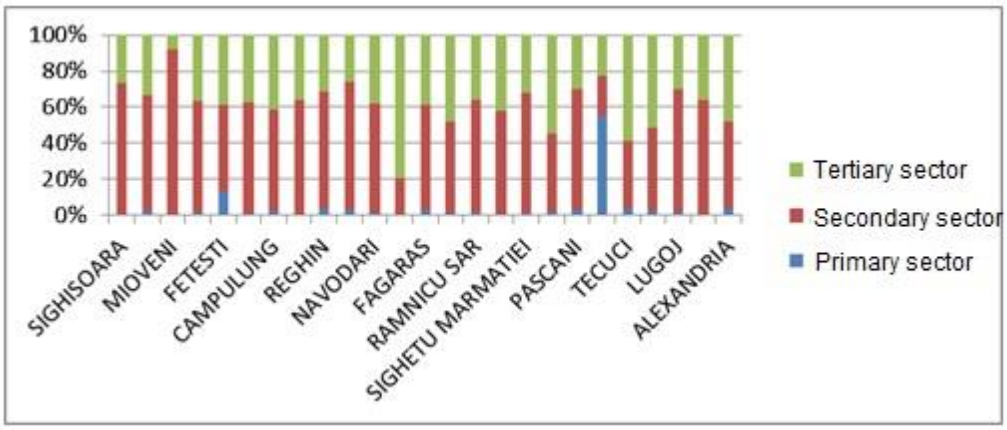



**FIGURE 8.** DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES ON ACTIVITY SECTORS FOR POLES OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE CITIES

Source: ONRC data processing

Regarding the distribution of employees number on industrial subsectors, it appears that most work in manufacturing, followed by sectors of water distribution and waste, and energy supply. A special situation is encountered on the pole of local importance Petrosani, where most of the employees work in mining. (Figure 9)



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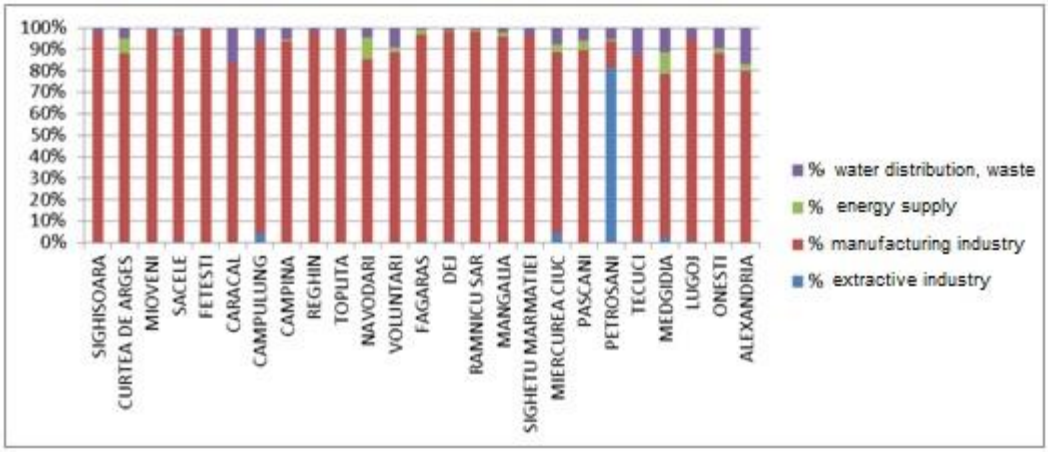



**FIGURE 9.** DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES ON SUBSECTORS FOR CITIES-LOCAL IMPORTANCE POLES

Source: ONRC data processing

Concluding, at the local importance poles, it is found that between the two branches of the secondary sector - industry and construction, most employees are in industrial sector, especially in manufacturing industries, although this sector occupies approximately the same position as tertiary sector in order of preferences of employees. A small proportion of employees works in the primary sector in several poles of local importance: Petrosani, Feteşti, Reghin, Campulung, Alexandria, Topliţa etc.

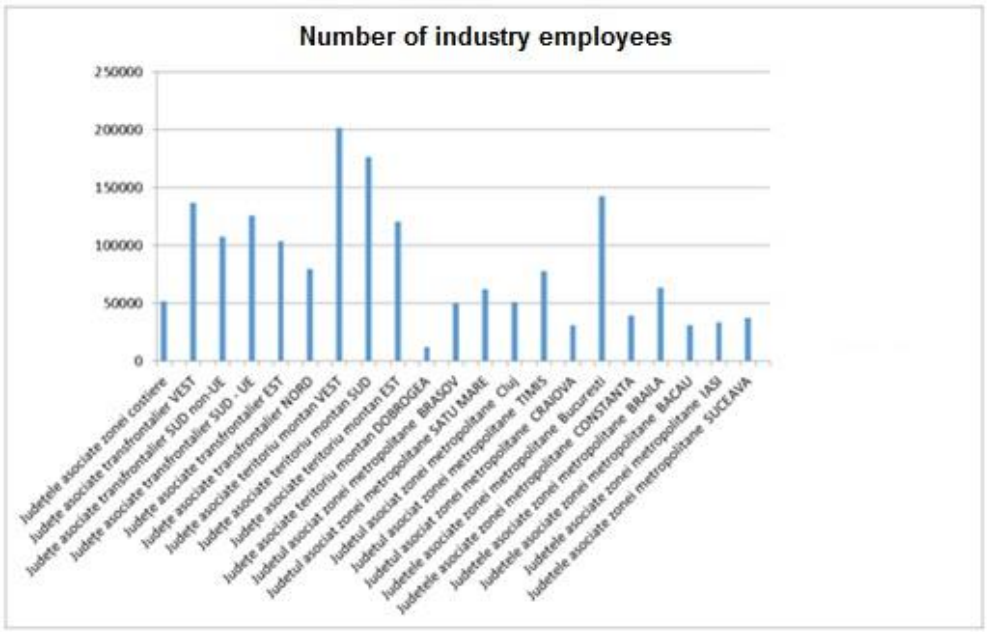



**FIGURE 10.** DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN INDUSTRY BY TYPE OF AREA

Source: INS data processing

At the counties level, the highest number of employees which work in industry, is recorded in the counties associated of Western mountain territory, followed by counties associated of Southern mountain territory and those associated to Bucharest metropolitan area (Figure 10).

The lowest number of employees in industry is recorded in the counties associated of Dobrogea mountain territory, 60% lower than the counties associated of metropolitan areas of Craiova, Bacau, Iasi, respectively 70% than the counties associated of metropolitan areas of Constanta and Suceava.

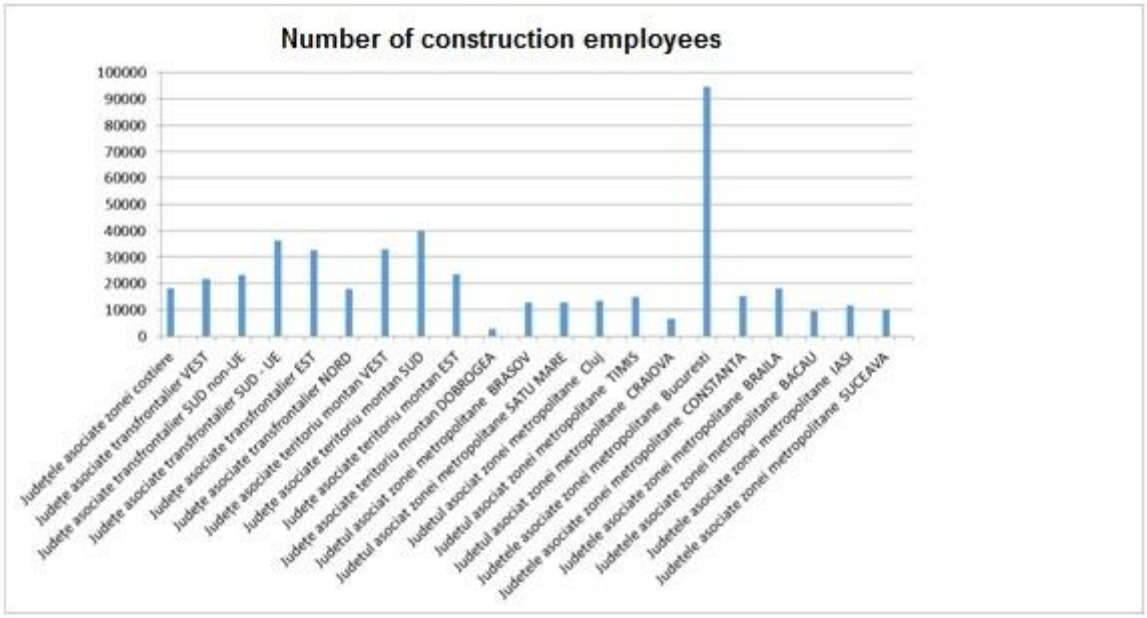



**FIGURE 11.** DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN CONSTRUCTION BY TYPE OF AREA

Source: INS data processing

Counties associated to Bucharest metropolitan area record the greatest number of employees in construction, significantly higher than other areas (Figure 11). Over 30.000 employees are registered in the counties associated to Western and Southern mountain territory, respectively Eastern and Southern-EU border counties associated, with about 60% less than in Bucharest metropolitan area.

Counties associated to Dobrogea mountain territory, metropolitan areas Craiova, Bacau, Iasi, Suceava retain unfavorable position in terms of number of employees in construction, reaching a level as low as the industry.

Regarding the evolution of the number of employees in construction in 2011 compared to 2002, we can say that there have been positive developments, the largest in the counties associated to metropolitan areas of Bucharest and Satu-Mare, followed by Northern border counties associated, Eastern mountain territory and county associated to the metropolitan area of Brasov. The lowest level of growth was



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recorded in the counties associated to metropolitan area of Bacau, followed by counties associated to metropolitan area of Constanta and Craiova, mountain areas of Dobrogea and costal areas.

Compared to the situation in the construction sector, the industry is characterized by a decrease in the number of employees in 2011 compared to 2002. A significant decrease was recorded in the counties associated to metropolitan areas of Bacau, Iasi, Suceava and Eastern border counties associated.

Even in a general context characterized by instability in the industry, some areas have seen an upward trend. The highest level of increase in the number of employees in industry was recorded in the county associated to the metropolitan area of Craiova, followed by the counties associated to metropolitan area of Constanta, Southern non-EU border counties associated, Western and coastal area.

## 3. THE LABOR FORCE ENGAGED IN THE SECONDARY SECTOR

In 2011, in Romania there were 8.365.500 persons employed in economic terms, of which 2.364.700 persons were employed in the secondary sector, representing 28,3%. Employment rate by subsectors is as follows: 17,9% in manufacturing, 7,3% in construction, 1,5% in water supply, cleaning, waste management and remediation activities, 0,8% in mining and 0,8% in the production and supply of electricity, thermal energy, gas, hot water and air conditioning.

All Romanian regions have a significant industrial component, the highest concentration of employment being in the Northwest and Central regions (Table 1). Mining is concentrated in the South-West, Southern areas, and the fewest employees are in Bucharest-Ilfov, North-West and South-East areas. Manufacturing has the most employees in the North-West and Central areas, and the fewest in the South-West area. The remaining industrial subsectors have a uniform distribution of the workforce in the regions.

Construction sector has a greater labor concentration in Bucharest-Ilfov area, but are distributed in other parts of the country in a relatively uniform manner.

**TABEL 1.** REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES IN THE SECONDARY SECTOR (THOUSANDS)

| Regions | NV | Center | NE | SE | SM | BI | SV | V | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Industry | 269,6 | 272,3 | 200,3 | 188,5 | 254,7 | 178,6 | 157,7 | 232,1 | 1753,8 |
| Mining | 3,8 | 7,6 | 4,8 | 4 | 11,8 | 3,7 | 18,9 | 10,2 | 64,8 |
| Manufacturing | 244,7 | 243,2 | 172,7 | 156,2 | 218,9 | 143,8 | 114,3 | 201,2 | 1495 |
| Production and supply of electricity, thermal energy, gas, hot water and air conditioning | 6,4 | 6,9 | 7 | 10,4 | 7,3 | 12 | 13,2 | 7,8 | 71 |
| Water supply, cleaning, waste management and remediation activities | 14,7 | 14,6 | 15,8 | 17,9 | 16,7 | 19,1 | 11,3 | 12,9 | 123 |
| Construction | 71,3 | 66,4 | 72,3 | 78,5 | 68,7 | 149,8 | 56,8 | 47,1 | 610,9 |

Source: INS, 2014

A significant problem of labor force in the secondary sector is the low share of highly skilled labor in manufacturing, reflecting the predominance of sectors that require low-skilled and labor-intensive usage (eg. textile or processing of agro-food products). However, increasing the share of highly qualified labor force since 2006 suggests a continuous transition towards a knowledge-based economy and an increase in work requiring middle and high skilled.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

Evolution of secondary sector employment is in accordance with the economic changes that Romania crossed. The period 1990-2000 was a difficult period, of economic decline, when the economic restructuring process was accompanied by an appreciable restriction or closure of existing production capacities, the most affected economic sectors being mining, chemical and non-ferrous metallurgy. This fact was reflected in the decline of employment rate. From 2000-2001 the economic climate has improved, economy restarted its growth, and the years 2006-2008 brought economic growth and the increasing of employment rate of the population. Economic and financial crisis that began in the second half of 2008 had a negative impact on the level of investments both foreign and domestic, some foreign companies withdrawing or reducing their presence and lowering the employed population.

Analyzing the territorial distribution of labor, it notes the South West area, with the lowest number of employees in the secondary sector. The year 2008 saw growth in the number of persons employed in industry and construction in all regions, bringing massive restructuring period immediately following the obvious economic consequences.

Rural areas and small towns are facing with a shortage of secondary sector activities. In these areas there are significantly higher proportion of people who are exposed to poverty and social exclusion, particularly in the North-East, South-East, South-West Oltenia and South Muntenia. Over 71% of the poor population of Romania live in rural communities.

Monoindustrial areas affected by industrial restructuring are facing with major economic problems, labor migration, aging and depopulation emphasized. The isolated settlements located in the highlands and along the Danube corridor has the same negative demographic trend, mainly due to the geographical characteristics that limit access to jobs. The former mining towns are at a turning point. Some of them will have to refocus to other economic sectors, while for others mining can be continued starting with massive investments in new technologies.

Romanian industry faces with problems regarding not yet identified resources, the difficult promote on the foreign and internal market, the dependence of certain areas of a single industry.



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Economic and social development in certain areas of Romania depends largely on industrial sector restructuring in recent years with significant adverse effects in these territories.

The construction sector, along with other sectors of the Romanian economy, continues to be sensitive to national economic fluctuations, according to the results achieved in recent years.

Legislative and economic instability are the main factors that influence significantly the construction sector.

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# THE IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRISIS ON HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR - AT A GLOBAL, EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL LEVEL

***Abstract***
Probably the most affected segment of the labor market during the current financial crisis is the human resources in the public sector. In the next few decades, the EU will face a continuing trend of reducing and restructuring of human resources employed in this sector, along with inherent socio-economic changes related to the aging of the population and the massive migration of the European population from relatively underdeveloped states to developed ones. Unfortunately, we're talking about a very broad sector which is also very important for the proper functioning of the economic, financial, social and administrative national governments. Of course, the most serious and direct signals come from the area of health, education and social protection but at least as important and serious are the central administrative, regional and local areas; national security and defense; internal public order and more. The effects of this trend are obvious: significantly reduced working capacity, high risks of obsolescence of employees, inferior performance and productivity along with the increase in working time and loss of know-how. In this context, HRM in European public services should play a more important role, through the effective use of skills and competencies of current and future workforce.

***Keywords*****:** financial crisis; economic recession; human resources; public sector; public services; HRM (Human Resources Management)

**JEL CODES:** A00

# IMPACTUL CRIZEI ECONOMICO-FINANCIARE GLOBALE ASUPRA MANAGEMENTULUI RESURSELOR UMANE DIN SECTORUL PUBLIC - LA NIVEL MONDIAL, EUROPEAN ŞI NAŢIONAL

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***Rezumat***
Probabil cel mai afectat segment al pieţei forţei de muncă în actuala perioada de criză financiară este cel al resurselor umane din sectorul public. În următoarele câteva decenii UE se va confrunta cu o tendinţă continuă de reducere şi restructurare a resurselor umane ocupate în acest sector de activitate, în paralel cu schimbările socio-economice inerente, aferente îmbătrânirii demografice şi migraţiei masive a populaţiei europene din statele relativ subdezvoltate spre cele dezvoltate. Din păcate vorbim despre un sector extrem de larg şi mai ales deosebit de important pentru buna funcţionare a vieţii economice, financiare, sociale şi administrative a guvernelor naţionale. Desigur cele mai grave şi directe semnale vin din zona sănătăţii, educaţiei şi protecţiei sociale-dar cel puţin la fel de importante şi de grave sunt zonele administraţiei centrale,regionale şi locale; securitatea şi apărarea naţională; ordinea publică internă şi multe altele.
Efectele acestei tendințe sunt evidente: capacitate de lucru mult redusă, riscuri mari de uzură morală a angajaţilor din acest sector, performanță și productivitate inferioară în detrimentul creșterii sensibile a timpului de lucru și pierdere de know-how. În acest context, HRM în serviciile publice europene trebuie să joace un rol mult mai important, prin utilizarea eficientă a abilităților și competențelor forței de muncă actuale și viitoare.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** criza economica, recesiune economica, resurse umane, sector public, MRU(managementul resurselor umane)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The occurrence, development and perpetuation of the current global financial and economic crisis has a main triple interpretation: Realists claim that if economically high developed countries enter a crisis, for various reasons, it will automatically affect emerging economies. Conspirators support the idea that these countries, through their economic and financial policies, induce and invoke a worldwide crisis. Skeptics do not believe in a crisis, but rather just an alarmist consumer behavior; a behavior that ultimately may lead to a real crisis. Perhaps each of the three interpretations have their share of truth and untruth or exaggeration. However, once an extended and long lasting global crisis has appeared, how should HRM react?

## 2. THE DOMINANT CHARACTERISTICS OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN TIMES OF CRISIS

In terms of human resources management, the most famous instrument in times of crises is mass layoffs in various forms, more or less discrete. This super simplistic maneuver dramatically lowers costs but, unfortunately, it also reduces the performance of employees who remain, due to low morale or putting them in new posts with which they are unfamiliar and in which the pressure for success is immense. What is painful, however, is the fact that this dysfunctionality is only the direct, tangible and immediately visible effect, the so called tip of the iceberg above the water surface. Much more serious is the fact the medium and long term effect consists of total government destabilization of the budgets for social protection and pension funds, especially in the well-known and widely accepted context of demographic aging in the civilized areas and in the medium and highly developed economic areas of the world.

Either way, the most susceptible to change and crises are human resources. They consume the most, produce the most, are very easily demotivated in difficult situations or they adapts easily. The economic crisis of recent years has forced the HR specialists to change their remuneration strategy in order to succesfully motivate people in the company and attract new talent with relatively small budgets (Baubion, 2013). Currently, the main challenges for human resources specialists are: increasing employee performance with the same costs, discovering talent within the organization, lack of strategies and decreased employee satisfaction. These objectives can be achieved by providing opportunities for career development, a total remuneration package, a competitive salary, performance bonuses, flexible working hours and other benefits. Presently, the idea of having a stable career in a company and a total remuneration package, motivates most employees. Companies should invest in studies which evaluate

employees' motivation in order to learn about their true needs and desires, depending on age, personality and professional development: health care, holidays abroad, service car etc.

With the recession and slowdown manifestation of social development, there have been a number of major and irreversible social and economic changes in the European economy (Boin, 2012). The influences of these changes have manifested in all areas of activity, in a greater or lesser extent. Obviously, the major influence has been and still is the reduction of costs, which involve financial, human and material resources, necessary to conduct current activities.

## 3. CHARACTERISTICS OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR DURING THE CRISIS

Economic crisis period impacts greatly countries, governments, societies andorganizations. Human resource management and human resource management functionsare also affected by the economic crisis period (Ştefănescu and Dărăbăneanu, 2011). In the public sector, the reduction of these costs, especially those with human resource, requires addressing this issue in the future from the perspective of developing this resource, which should take into account the same effects (results), but with less effort (costs). The main challenge is to reduce the specific efforts of human resources (training, continuous education, motivation and development) to a substantial degree but to avoid the reduction of the quality of human resources and the results of their workm socialy, politicaly and especially economicaly.

Starting with 2008, along with the global financial crisis, human resources in all fields were affected. The most significant impact of the crisis was on the public sector, where a large numbers of people were laid off and a part of the extra bonuses were stopped (Kanellopoulos, 2012). Therefore, significant adjustments were made for expenditures of any kind. In this context, human resources have been affected according to Figure 1.

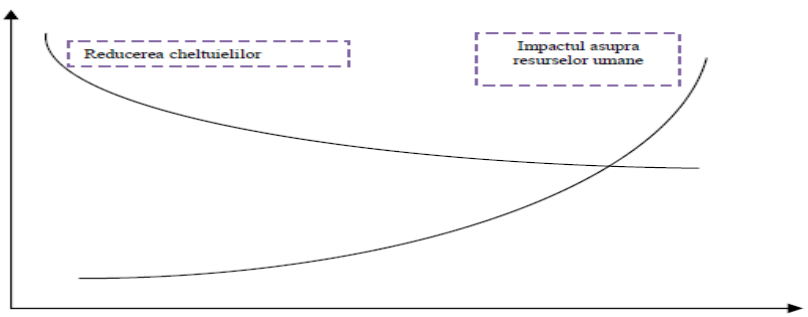



**FIGURE 1.** THE IMPACT OF SPENDING CUTS ON HUMAN RESOURCES



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*Source:* Kanellopoulos, 2012

As can be seen from Figure 1, as the level of public sector spending was reduced, the (negative) impact on human resources was also amplified exponentially. This can be explained primarily by expenditure components which have been reduced:

- Direct Reduction - Reduction of salaries and bonuses granted to personnel, based on the results obtained in the work. Reducing these benefits affects human resourcesdirectly and indirectly. The direct influence is the reduction in its power to meet the needs of a certain desired level. Indirect influence is represented by the fact that the individual's hope and optimism are diluted, as he obviously observes that, both currently and in the near future, his expectations become infeasible. If hitherto, he had hope that he could do more things more and be better, from then on his expectations are reduced and he hopes to, at least, maintain a certain social level.
- Indirect reduction - reducing other types of expenditure in the public sector, which affects the quality of activities. Reduction of costs, for example consumables, requires more attention on the use and exploitation of these resources in institutional practice. This entails attention from human resources on these details and obviously decreased attention on the main functional act. Therefore, the chance of having a high level of quality employment decreases along with job satisfaction; human resources are required to manage details that can be unpleasant for those specialties. Here we give the example of the significant increase of the documents that need to be filled by public sector human resource activities, documents which take the form of reports of different types, which entail reducing actual working business hours.

In these circumstances, human resources are forced to make additional efforts, for example to work harder just to show that they are more necessary or useful to the system than their peers. Because of this, the level of competition is quantitatively exaggerated and individuals try to demonstrate their usefulness by making the extra effort which can be measured in overtime. However, this is not advantageous to the system because focusing on workload, working hours and amounts in general actually entails lesser quality and associated elements. In time, we will reach a quality deficiency which will generate additional higher costs with a negative impact on system performance.

## 4. THE PARADOX OF CRISIS OF VALUABLE AND TALENTED PERSONNEL IN A WORLD STIFLED BY THE SEVERE SHORTAGE OF JOBS

Economies continue to recover from the global recession and financial crisis that has stifled growth worldwide and brought forth a new problem - a specific problem for the Age of Human Resources. Worldwide demand for labor as a whole, even with acute demographic aging, is not focused on

personnel problems due to the mobility by the exodus of young people and adults from economically weak and often overcrowded countries. But what tends to become a major issue is the lack of specialists that affects the worldwide labor market. In this era of Human Resources, the vital engine for economic growth is human capital, those "assets" wgich enter and leav daily from the company office (Smit, 2012).

Given that companies find it increasingly difficult to hire talented people needed for business in order to get ahead, the differentiating factor between success and failure will be the ability to attract the best specialists. We are now in a full crisis of talent. Over a third of employers said they can not find needed talent within their organizations, according to ManpowerGroup Talent Shortage Survey 2012, according to Figure 2.

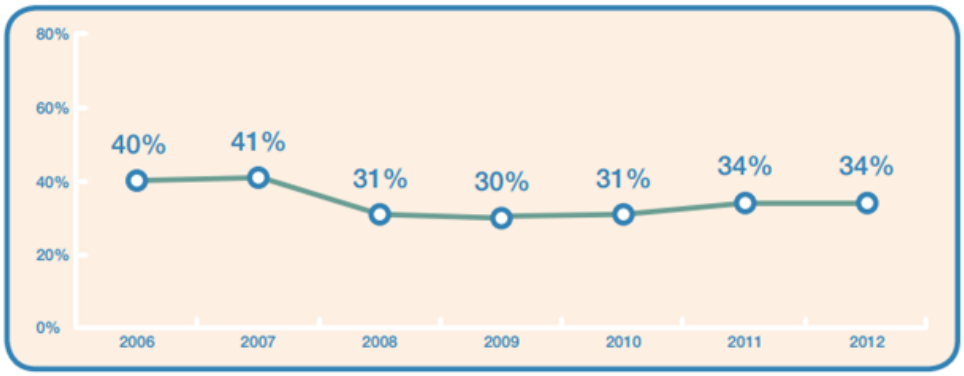



**FIGURE 2.** THE PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS WHO HAVE DIFFICULTY FILLING OPEN POSITIONS, AT GLOBAL LAVEL

Source: MANPOWERGROUP, 2012

The problem is acute and it occurs worldwide. India and Brazil are two of the fastest growing global economies and 48% and 71% of employers in these countries have trouble finding the right candidates.

In the US and Australia, two strong and mature economies, 49% and 50% of employers fail to identify talented staff they need in order to stimulate the progress of the companies they represent. In Europe, where labor has a high level of education and unemployment, finding talent is relatively easy, though, even here, some employers find it hard to find the people they need. In Germany, 42% of employers said they had difficulty in finding competent candidates.

The peak of the talent crisis manifests itself, somewhat interestingly, in Japan - a country with a high population density and a high level of economic development, rated as the third largest economy in the world, where the deficit reaches a huge percentage, namely 81%. In contrast, Ireland stands with a tiny percentage of only 2%.



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The graph of global talent shortage - Figure 3 - expressed by the percentage of employers who have difficulty filling key positions, highlights a reality which is almost incredible: in a period which created a real psychosis in the difficulty of obtaining a job, the ratio employer / employee seems very unbalanced in favor of the employer.




**FIGURE 3.** THE PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS WHO HAVE DIFFICULTY FILLING OPEN POSITIONS

Source: MANPOWERGROUP, 2012

In the Human Resources Age, the power of human potential is the engine that propels companies ahead and offers a competitive advantage in the global market. Lack of talent is an old problem, yet one that many employers are very familiar with. Quite ironically, at the same time, there is a new problem: Resignation seems to have taken hold of all employers in the world and it threatens to derail business plans in the coming years.

Top Companies will count on HR directors, because they will identify and recruit the talent needed to sustain the company's development, even in cases where the competition on that certain talent will increase. In the information age, marked by the evolution of IT, employers who effectively adopt the latest technologies and integrate them into the current work will evolve well before of their competition. Employers who hold top positions in sectors in which they operate are aware that in the era of Human Resources, employees' intelligence and their level of cooperation within groups will help their companies in the face of competition. HR directors must give up this resignation and realize that - although the main stakeholders will not be affected this year by the scarcity of talent - they will certainly be affected in the next year or two. Romania's integration in the European Union (EU) imposes new

requirements of human capital, creating new challenges for the sector. At this time the Romanian economy requires a competitive workforce with new skills and qualifications (Stanef, 2014).

Developing a dedicated workforce strategy that is adapted to future employment needs and then implementing it will be the key element of HR managers with which they will overcome the crisis and shortage of talent in order to lead organizations to success. In Figure 4 are shown the main implemented strategies which address the scarcity of talent.

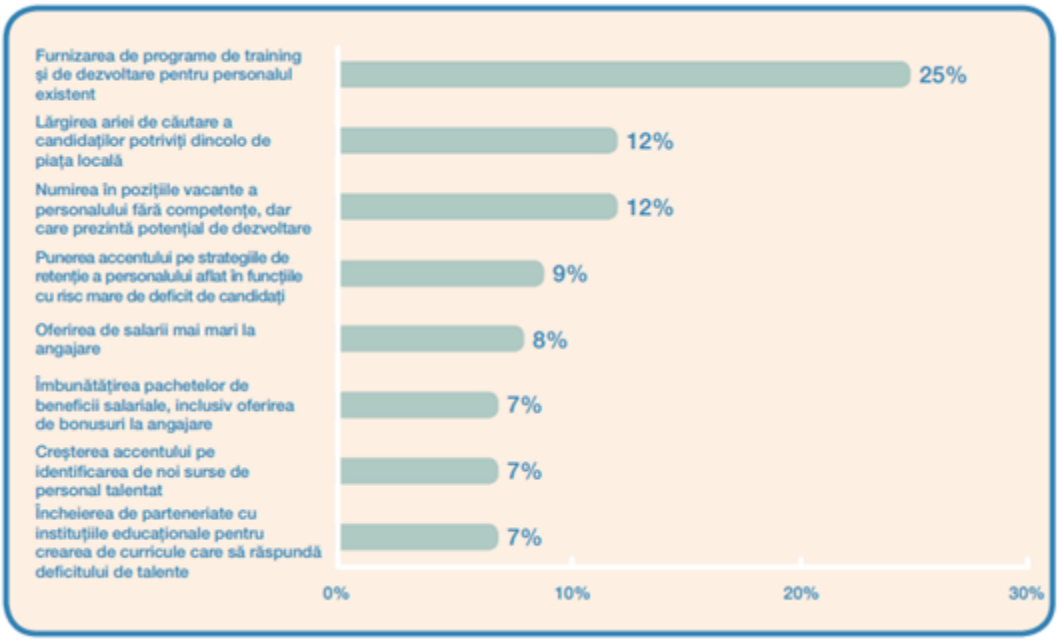



**FIGURE 4.** STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS THE SCARCITY OF TALENT, AT GLOBAL LAVEL

Source: MANPOWERGROUP, 2012

## 5. THE ART OF HUMAN RESOURSES OF MANAGEMENT-PROBABLY THE STRONGEST FACTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GROWTH AND PRODUCTIVITY OF COMPANIES IN THE NEAR FUTURE

Increasing mobility of talented employees globally, especially among developing countries, creating a talent crisis, mobilizing all the depatments of human resources focus its resources to tackle it shows the latest study by Adecco Institute of UK. Lack of talent affect global companies and undertake practical HR departments to create a new series of development opportunities and bonuses to motivate and retain the most talented employees, the study by Adecco Institute in the UK, among the 5,000 human resources specialists. Success in talent management and its absence in a company will become an important factor and differentiator in the global market while jobs.



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The new role of human resource management is the result of the convergence of three trends: globalization, demographic change and crisis talent, "says Donna Murphy, Managing Director of the Adecco. In developed countries, globalization has increased the demand for skilled labor force strong, while the demand for unskilled workers has declined drasticly at the same time. This was particularly noticeable in the countries of Western Europe, where the number of older workers has increased. In the next 10 years, the average age of most employees in Europe will be the first time more than 40 years, the study said. Also, the number of employees in the United States with an age above 55 years will increase by 47% over the next eight years highlights study. However, while demand for talented employees has increased considerably decreased demand. Such companies have increasingly faced more competition in attracting and retaining the best candidates.

While in the past, business success was assured that competitiveness between clients in the future it will depend on the successes achieved in the competition for the most qualified employees. This shortage of talented candidates will position HR management as one of the strongest factors responsible for the growth and productivity of the company. Sow, to meet these challenges, HR departments will have to replace strategies that take effect in the short term strategies to bring long-term results, "added Murphy. According to the study, media sustainability strategies implemented by specialists in human resources is one year and one month. In addition, most organizations are unprepared for the exodus of knowledge and expertise resulting from maturing workforce and retirement subsequent to its exit, especially if the Baby Boom generation.

More than a third of HR managers surveyed said they are currently experiencing problems due to lack of necessary skills in recruiting future employees, while a fifth said they already have problems in recruitment for IT positions due to lack of qualifications of candidates for positions open for competition. "Multinationals will begin to look increasingly international labor market to satisfy the appetite of having the most talented employees. New technologies have managed to dismantle existing boundaries and geographical distances years ago. Talents can be located and attracted regardless of location", said Wolfgang Clement, Chairman of the Adecco Institute and former economy minister in Germany. These changes will alter the challenges in managing people and talent, "he added. Competitive skills will mean finding suitable strategies to retain, motivate, prepare and attach to the company to which they belong (Vintiša, 2010). Talent management will become a differentiating factor among companies, the study highlights the Adecco Institute.

## 6. THE SHORTAGE OF APPROPRIATELY QUALIFIED PERSONNEL IN ROMANIA

Construction companies and hotels-restaurants that had vacancies for more than three months. For these sectors are growing, there is a high demand for skilled labor force, which can not satisfy the

market entirely. Sectors of electricity, gas, water and manufacturing also face a lack of qualified personnel. Workforce crisis is due, in fact, unattractive working conditions (starting rates exceed those staff input in these companies). And no shortage of personal services sector. Small firms in the service sector is struggling to withstand the market. They provide jobs less attractive, so that records high employee turnover. Lack of appropriately qualified personnel is invoked by representatives of 83% of companies face the problem of vacancies. Just over 7% dint representatives of the companies admitted that they found appropriate person job requirements, but they refused employment. These companies come exclusively from the manufacturing and "other" category (mainly the services sector), where remuneration packages are less attractive.

One of the biggest challenges of the labor market is on coverage among companies need managers who now come to Romania or do business in the local market. Finding the most appropriate mix of managerial and technical skills (which, in certain industries, are required at the top level management) is one of the most difficult tasks. In Romania there are talented managers, but not enough to cover market requirements. At the moment, the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary are preferred by investors, so many investment opportunities still avoid us. It is possible that EU accession bring us at least 30% more investment per year, which translates in terms of human resources, in many more jobs that will be covered by valuable people. As the battle is fierce to attract the best people in the market, the remuneration packages add zeros to the candidates. From this perspective, it is estimated salary increases for managers and specialists, increases the more spectacular as is the niche or specialized. Wage increases may reach up to 30%, depending on the freedom that it will allow companies and in setting wage scales.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

If the overall problem of shortage of qualified personnel and talent-value becomes every year more and more deep, it is expected that the public sector especially in emerging economies, it should reach unimaginable dimensions. Over time in this area, probably qualified personnel or acceptable average value could reach large deficit. This is because in addition to the progressive aging, migration extends to geopolitical areas with strong economic development. All this while the value, usefulness and effectiveness of education and vocational education and they mostly public-sector components are much real quality time on a regressive trend. Obviously, all this adds the last drop: remunerative packages staff fragile and low socio-economic area in which, in times of crisis, apply the most drastic reductions in quantitative and qualitative measures on human resources.



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PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL OF CIVIL SERVANTS. SUSTAINABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT

# EVALUAREA PERFORMANŢELOR PROFESIONALE ALE FUNCŢIONARILOR PUBLICI. SUSTENABILITATE ŞI DEZVOLTARE


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***Abstract***
Evaluation of staff performance management is one of the activities that organizational objectives are achieved. Evaluation activity is a complex process with profound implications for organizational and personal objectives. Creating resorts for the full manifestation of skills, knowledge institutional officials, practicing a system of performance evaluation demonstrates its utility by reporting benefits for organization and its people. This paper proposes analysis of tools usability and evaluation methods of civil servants in some public institutions from North East Region in order to identify the level of professional performance. The study is useful because many theorists' opinions expressed on professionalism degree of civil servants, how they fail to fulfill the job responsibilities assigned by contributing to the achievement of this fundamental mission of serving the public interest.



***Keywords*:** performance, civil servants, evaluation, professionalism

**JEL CODES:** M12, M53, H83



***Rezumat***
Evaluarea managementului performanței personalului este una dintre activitățile prin intermediul cărora sunt realizate obiectivele organizaționale. Activitatea de evaluare este un proces complex, cu implicații profunde pentru obiectivele organizaționale și personale. Crearea unui cadru pentru manifestarea deplină a competențelor și cunoștințelor de specialitate ale funcționarilor, prin practicarea unui sistem de evaluare a performanței demonstrează utilitatea și beneficile pentru organizație și oamenii săi. Lucrarea propune o analiză a instrumentelor utilizare și a metodelor de evaluare a funcționarilor publici în unele instituții publice din Regiunea de Nord-Est, în scopul de a identifica nivelul de performanță profesională. Studiul este util pentru că în opiniile multor teoreticieni este analizat gradul de profesionalism al funcționarilor publici, modul în care aceștia nu reușesc întotdeauna să îndeplinească responsabilitățile atribuite sau să contribuie la realizarea misiunii fundamentale de a servi interesului public.



***Cuvinte cheie:*** performanță, funcționar public, evaluare, profesionalism

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Performance evaluation is the primary concern of human resource management performed in order to find out the extent to which employees of an organization successfully meet their specific duties and responsibilities of job they hold. Evaluation is considered to be a necessary task to develop a specialized tool for managing human factor. The concept of performance evaluation, which bears the name of assessing results or employee appreciation, experienced over time a number of definitions issued by specialists, each complementing or adding new meanings more diversified and complex process. As is shown in literature, public organisations are required to adrees a range of goals, some of which may be in conflict (Boyne et al., 2005) and one of the most important is to deliver the best goods and services to the citizens which means that the authorities must be oriented to performance management and the multiple dimensions.

In a broad sense, performance evaluation is an action or a specific type of cognitive activity through which an evaluator considers a person or estimated performance against the standards set, as well as mental representation, its own system of values or his own conception of the performance achieved (Manolescu et al., 2007). Evaluation can be defined as an operation of the regular work of collaborators .a balance to discuss with them the progress and the necessary measures to be taken in the future. Definition adds the notion of evaluation a number of additional elements such as: is a process that is done in writing and repeated with a certain periodicity, representing a commitment to employee being evaluated, but also for the carrying out the assessment; is a review of the work, its performance being made in relation to the standards imposed by the hierarchical chief; allows an estimate of future opportunities to evolve; discussions involving personal evaluation enabling the exchange of views between assessed and evaluated to openly discuss on the matters set out in the evaluation form. Evaluation activity takes the form of standardized procedures aimed at obtaining information in a managerial hierarchy system in relation to the professional conduct of employees. It features some of the work off as follows: the valuation methods used are related to the organization's policy regarding its way of doing business, to operate and to guide their employees; assessment methods are carried out according to certain standards, to try to avoid negative consequences caused by the evaluators, using written documents or audio-visual; use reliable information that is accurate assessments; the collection of information and achievement of performance evaluation is directly related to the management hierarchy; professional behavior plays an important role in the evaluation process and therefore should not be influenced by emotional ties established between assessed and evaluated. Many employees understand the concept of having a negative evaluation since the focus is on their performance

evaluation which welcomes often possible problems or errors. For this reason it is necessary that the evaluation process detail the importance of this activity: investment in human resources; development and planning; performance improvement and development. The local authorities have the mission to create systems and networks of labour at European level, which encouraged them to be expansionist, entrepreneurial and truly international (Popescu, 2011).

The performance measurement is defined as an action, a process of cognitive activity in which a person's performance is related to a certain predetermined standard, as well as mental representation, its own system of values or with his own conception ordinary performance (Stanciu et al., 2003). Performance evaluation within an organization is an important aspect of human resource management as assessment must be interpreted in terms of professional development and dynamism while professional development must be understood as an ongoing process and not "as a simple event" occurred in the life of the employee (Pânişoară and Pânişoară, 2005). The authors were concerned that over time the development of the concept of performance evaluation also identified the reasons why an organization should conduct this work, namely to identify the level of performance of each employee in order to find the elements that need to be improved . This provides the basis of a reward system based on individual performance to determine the measures to be taken in respect of employee training. Also, another reason is to draw attention to the performance of staff in order to establish a fair system of reward and also to identify potential employees for promotion.

The performance is a key requirement in a society increasingly fierce competition from day to day. Performance evaluation is a crucial component in the overall system management and human resources management system in particular. Performance appraisal is a necessary process on the one hand each institution, and on the other hand their employees that aims to enhance the professional skills and labor productivity growth. Professional performance analysis is the starting point in making decisions related to staff by identifying needs for implementation of programs and professional training courses (Bercu, 2013). Creating and implementing a system for evaluating employee performance means a change in mood which causes a significant change in management culture. The HR managers must assume the role of consultants that allocates attention and increased importance of the training and retraining of staff. The process of performance evaluation based on specific characteristics of the place where, of what is sought by making them and the methods used. Positive aspects of work performance evaluation of an institution, and the people are identified only if the evaluation is done fairly and equitably.



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## 2. IMPLICATIONS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS OF CIVIL SERVANTS

The main goal regarding the need to assess the activity of civil servants is the need to identify problems related to the institution in connection with work done and services provided to citizens and the recognition performance of the institution and performance results every civil servant in part is a close and direct relationship, the two can not be considered separately. Thus, by achieving a certain standard of work performance of employees, the institution concerned carries out its objectives. Following the evaluation of the performance of civil servants, the management authority shall have a some information which enable it to act to improve conditions and work processes, redistribution of tasks among employees who have certain capacities efficient implementation of duties, relocation resources related to priorities or establishment of training programs aimed at improving civil servants to perform new tasks or difficult.

Performance appraisal process are subject to all civil servants, including those who have a special status, if the evaluation / certification thereof is not regulated by other laws (Manolescu et al., 2007). The issue involves both the performance evaluation considerations practicalities of how it should be done, and how philosophical considerations about the rationale or reason to be performed.

Professional performance evaluation exercise on the official concerned a strong emotional and psychological impact as it is forced to relate both to itself and to the staff working in operating end result of the evaluation is the classification of the official concerned in a good times, both for him and for the organization, aiming at straightening highlighting weaknesses and strengths it sometimes happens that the employee under evaluation result to feel more like a penalty, although in reality this has a different meaning.

Performance evaluation is an important part of the performance management system performance management concept is a means by which results can be achieved by ensuring optimal individual and organizational performance and directing its objectives and standards within clearly defined beforehand. This means addressing performance management in a systematic framework of management by objectives. Performance management means linking objectives and needs assessment and ascent, with their continued performance and evaluation, as well as guidance counseling Performance Management covers all formal and informal methods and techniques adopted by the organization and its managers to increase efficiency and effectiveness of individual and organizational (Dodu and Tripon, 2000).

Performance appraisal is required for both the organization and the staff evaluated. On the one hand, by assessing public official is the extent to fulfill the duties of the position they occupy or how well the

institution's management believes that the employee rated respected within the organization objectives imposed on the other hand, the evaluation process allows management to have information on the results obtained by each official in part.

The performance of each individual is closely correlated with the performance group, subdivision and organizational performance, so the quantity and quality of individual results obtained influence the performance level of subdivision to which it belongs and hence the performance of the public official authority. Performance evaluation proves the need for a series of actions: managerial decisions of transfer, promotion, professional development; informing employees on how management understands the strengths and weaknesses; establishing individual and group contribution to the objectives of the public authority; remuneration decisions activity; identifying needs for the implementation of training programs at every public official subdivision and partly within the institution; providing feedback on a regular basis by both the evaluator and the civil servant assessed vis-a-vis the problems of organization performance. Individual performance of civil servants is closely related and have a direct influence on the performance of the institution as a whole, so these two processes can not be considered independent of each other. By achieving individual performance objectives are achieved strategic default public institution. Performance appraisal procedure aims to increase organizational performance through individual performance of civil servants, motivating them and encouraging them to improve their work results.

The purpose of performance evaluation is clear from the definition of this activity, namely to determine the performance of its duties according to an employee's position it occupies. Following the completion of the evaluation process detach skills, abilities, skills each employee. However, the main purpose by the public institution is the formation of a professional corps of civil servants to provide quality services to meet the needs and interests of citizens.

If civil servants' performance evaluation is done for providing financial rewards according to performance individually identified, they are granted according to criteria established by the National Agency of Civil Servants (NACS) criteria called performance criteria that classify degrees of within a particular category of functions annually in each public institution, department heads are required to complete performance evaluation sheets of subordinate employees in the last 12 months of work. As a result of analyzing the work done in the last year, the official public is denoted by one of ratings: exceptional, very good, good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory outcome of the assessment requires decisions to be taken, namely: maintaining the former position, promotion or demotion marks obtained by each



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employee contributes to management's decision public institution when, for various reasons, it is necessary to reduce the number of existing posts.

There is a methodology for evaluating the performance of civil servants regulated by law (GD No. 611/2008) which establishes general follow for:

- ensure objectivity in the evaluation process by linking the goals set to be achieved and the extent of compliance in practice;
- ensure consistency between the work of civil servant and the requirements to be met for public office;
- establishment of a package of rewards that motivate civil servants whose work led to obtaining a good result from the application of the evaluation process in order to boost permanent increase performance at work;
- determining the training needs of employees to improve the quality work done by achieving objectives to be met.

In this regard, performance evaluation methodology includes a series of actions: annual determination by NACS performance criteria to be achieved by civil servants, the fulfillment of objectives against which performance evaluation is done each individual. Performance criteria are approved by Order of the Minister of Public Administration, until 15 December of the current year for the following year, as published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I. Performance evaluation procedure is performed by a permanent assessor to plug job civil servant.

Following the results, the evaluator determines future directions to be followed in taking measures to promote employee or dismissal.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research sought to identify tools and methods to achieve performance evaluation of civil servants in public institutions in the North-East and analyze the whole process of performance evaluation

The specific objectives are considered:

OS1: clear identification of the methods of carrying out performance evaluation in public institutions analyzed;

OS2: identification of civil servants satisfaction regarding how their performances are evaluated;

OS3: identifying the extent to which the results of the performance evaluation have effects on professional development

The hypotheses formulated based on general and specific objective are:

H1: In public institutions analyzed purely formal assessment methods are not suitable specificity of civil servants;

H2: Officials are not satisfied with the way in which the performance appraisal;

H3: civil evaluation results are applied to punish or promotion according to officials of the institutions analyzed.

The study is useful because many opinions expressed by theorists on the professionalism of civil servants, how they fail to fulfill the job responsibilities established by contributing to the achievement of this fundamental mission of serving the interest of public administration public. Applied research is conducted in public institutions in the North-East (the mayors of 4 cities and 7 villages), as are the institutions where citizens come to solve various problems, officials are the ones who should follow and to people perceive behind resolve civil offices as professionals if their problem is careful and timely resolved and, conversely, by showing unprofessionalism, if the result is negative or request their timely intervention. Applied research is based on a questionnaire survey method, in view of obtaining pertinent and relevant information about the perception of the performance appraisal of employees in the institutions analyzed questionnaire is a technique and, accordingly, an investigative tool consisting of a set of written questions and, possibly, images and graphics are applied directly or through self-determines the persons surveyed responses to be recorded in writing.

The questionnaire was applied by the process of self-management for public servants do not have to fill the place, the application giving them complete freedom of free time they have available. The questionnaire consists of 14 items had direct contact with officials of the institutions examined during normal working hours, participation is voluntary. Throughout administered questionnaire was applied rules of ethics and research ethics. Research sample was represented by 116 civil servants. Out of 116 civil servants, only 80 responded to the questionnaire, representing a rate of 68.96%.

## 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

With the analysis of results from the survey can be seen whether the objectives have been met. Thus, the first objective pursued was to clearly identify the tools and methods to achieve performance within the institutions analyzed (Q 3). Responses revealed that the method of performance appraisal used at



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the institution where the work is to evaluate the objectives, a common method that focuses on assessing performance in relation to the achievement of predetermined objectives; process requires permanent monitoring of the objectives of the senior. Based on the evaluation results will be set new goals. This confirms that the institution's employees are thoroughly familiar with how their performance evaluated 80% of respondents answered that the department in which they work no longer applies and other methods, while only 20% said they were evaluated and other methods.

The second objective of the research sought to identify the degree of satisfaction of public servants with regard to how they are assessed performance (Q 7, 8, 9, 10). By centralizing the responses received, it appears that the general attitude towards performance evaluation process applied within the institutions is one of dissatisfaction, most of the respondents were of the opinion that the annual assessments are made subjectively (58%). Also, employees do not trust the fairness of the evaluation process (53%) and do not think it reflects correctly the performance evaluation results (53%).

Through questionnaire was fulfilled and objective number 3, namely establishing the correlation between the results of performance evaluation and professional development of those effects evaluated. Because only a percentage of between 1% -25% have been promoted or demoted from his position after the performance evaluation process, the choice of respondents in this respect (20%), one can deduce that the promotion and relegation depend more than otherwise than solely the grade obtained for the achievements.

The investigation has gone from three assumptions, the first of which is that the institutions analyzed, methods and assessment tools are not adapted strictly formal and specific activity of public officials. The responses in the questionnaire come to refute this hypothesis, 85% of respondents believing that the valuation methods used within the institution correspond to their activities.

Another hypothesis from which we started was the idea that employees are dissatisfied with the way they performed their performance. This hypothesis is confirmed by the answers given by the respondents, most of them believe that there are objective assessments and the results do not reflect the real situation existing.

A third hypothesis implies that evaluation results are applied to promote or sanction civil servants is confirmed, supported by answers to questions 13 and 14 that 80% of sample, nobody was promoted or contrary, relegated, so that others are the criteria by which this is done.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The performance evaluation is one of the main activities of the Human Resources Department as the evaluation system has influence on other activities of human resource management: fairness in rewarding staff, determining training needs and professional development, professional development, employee motivation.

The authors were concerned that over time the development of the concept of performance evaluation also identified the reasons why an organization should conduct this work, namely to identify the level of performance of each employee in order to find the elements that need to be improved . This provides the basis of a reward system based on individual performance to determine the measures to be taken in respect of employee training.

Performance appraisal, subject to fairness in achieving it, is useful both for the institution as a whole and for each employee, as it facilitates identification of weaknesses, strengths and needs training.

Public institutions, by their nature, functions to provide services that the state is obliged to give them some citizens increasingly demanding. For this reason, setting clear goals to be achieved, and careful planning of human resources is of particular activities. Powers of employees and their performance is relevant elements guaranteeing the provision of quality services at the highest level. This confirms the influence professional performance on proper functioning of the organization. The main goal regarding the need to assess the activity of civil servants is the need to identify problems related to the institution in connection with work done and services provided to citizens and the recognition results.

Civil servants are assessed, whether they want it or not, every year to determine the state of preparedness that is. Since the performance evaluation proves useful only when applied and implemented correctly, it should be applied responsibly and competently, by competent people for people who tend constantly to perfect the work they perform. Periodic assessment of the accomplishment of the duties causing the employee to realize how important the quality of work in the institution and the results of the evaluation report and submit effort to focus the interest to eliminate anything that he would prevent to evolve professionally. Theoretical and practical training in public administration must be considered in the training of its action, starting from the multilateral and specialized work in public administration, determined character and differentiated professional training.

Through applied research proposed theoretical correlation on the form and application of the evaluation process of the real situation existing employees practiced in the public institutions in Romania in the North-East. From the results of research found that this process, although extremely important within



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each institution irrespective of the nature of their business, not receiving due attention from those who are responsible for achieving them. Employees, in spite of being aware of the importance of the quality of their work, are dissatisfied with the approach by those in a position to assess the performance, accusing the lack of objectivity and fairness. Approaching the wrong attitude, it hinders the purpose for which it is necessary to assess the performance of civil servants, namely the formation of a professional corps of officials to provide quality public services. For this reason, it is recommended to increase the focus on the quality of work performed by a proper assessment by providing permanent feedback and motivate employees to achieve the desired results. Only through effective management of human resources and thus ensure the success of an organization 'professional growth of each individual.

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## HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

# RESURSE UMANE ÎN SECTORUL PUBLIC

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***Abstract***
Human resources in the public sector is a complex and current topic. In analyzing this topic, the sociologic perspective allows us, starting from the interactions between actors and the system, to identify and analyze new social relations, formation of identities – individual and collective; the practices of actors, the bottlenecks hindering the harmonization of new social factors and the factors favorable to the transformation of the public sector into a dynamic sector. The analysis of the two components in interaction allows us to expand it to the contemporary experience of work, which is the one of permanent tension between actors and work on the one hand and between work and work conditions on the other hand.In different terms, what differentiates or connects actors at work and their conducts as concerns work situations. This tension is generated by the existence of an ambivalent relation between, on the one hand, the independence of actors, work participation and, on the other hand, the oppression and constraint.
Work in the industrial age was central and considered the fundamental social relation grounding it. In the post-industrial age, we are witnessing a fundamental mutation of the purpose and value of work, which generates discarding logics at the level of human resources (the rift between actor and system).

***Keywords*:**actor, system, interactions, alienation,instrumetalization.

**JEL CODES:**A14

***Rezumat :*** Resursele umane interpretate din perspectiva sociologică reprezintă o temă de mare actualitate. Analiza sociologică sesizează tensiunea care există între actori și experiența contemporană a muncii. Conceptul de muncă în societatea postmodernă a cunoscut transformări importante: numeroși sociologi printre care Meda, Wieviorka și Touraine susțin că munca nu mai reprezintă o valoare fundamentală pentru actorii subiecți.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** competență, resurse umane, sociologie, actor, sistem, alienare, muncă.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the present context, the world is facing an unprecedented crisis and the entire society is undergoing major changes whose dynamics exceeds the mechanisms of social, economic and politic control by which states legitimate their action.

Identifying their limits and finding new solutions becomes a priority.

The issues of general interest to society should be treated with great care to ensure continuity and avoid any turmoil that can dramatically influence the worldwide system.

In all countries, regardless of their socio-political and economic system, there are problems that are reflected in the social life - phenomena such as unemployment, social exclusion and alienation occurring increasingly frequently.

According to Alain Touraine, we are witnessing a "decline of the social or the disappearance of societies" generated by the radical dissociation between economy and social life.

The traditional functions of capital - loans and investment - have changed, the capital, having greater autonomy, has become more volatile than labour.

The author writes that the break between the Actor and the System gives rise to a new type of conflicts. Regarding the contemporary experience of work, theorists have noticed these issues coming up with proposals for their correction.

Touraine defines work starting from society and from “its capacity to transform itself” (Touraine, 1973, p. 7); “society is able to act on itself, to transform through its work; it is the work” (Touraine, 1973, p. 8).

Basically, work expresses the “relation of men with their accomplishments”, “a principle to direct their conducts”, “the individual valuing their creation, claiming its acknowledgement as product of their activity and not as things”.

Alain Touraine considers that the term of human resources is inappropriate, advocating for individuals – actors and their capacity to transform into subjects (Touraine, 2013).

Another interesting matter is the one of the work’s purpose and value, matter analysed by Dominique Méda (1998) from the perspective of its “negative centrality” in the post-industrial society and by Michel Wievioka based on the principle of recognition.

Thus, (Méda, 1998) argues in her book, "Le travail, unevaleur en voie de disparition" (Work – a disappearing value) the need to "reinvent work" by replacing its traditional forms (paid work) and the economic rationality with forms of social responsibility allowing individual and collective growth in the organization.

According to such perspective, the different distribution of social goods, based on a new principle of work distribution in terms of income, statute, social protection system, becomes the prerequisite of equal access to work.

Michel Wieviorka points out that the "purpose of work" is built in the relation between employees, organizers, managers and those obtaining material and symbolic benefits from their action (Wieviorka, 2013). The relation has an ambivalent nature based on the permanent tension between two elements: emancipation and alienation or autonomy and constraint, which for an employee lead to exhaustion and sufferance.

As Wieviorka, Zarifian deems that the mutations we are witnessing in terms of work make us reconsider its competence and to see it as a society problem.

In agreement with (Zarifian, 2009), the mutation we are witnessing is the one of "work's return in the individual (le travail qui fait retour dans les travailleurs).

## 2. HUMAN RESOURCES AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN INTERACTION

The topic approached hereby aims to analyse the interaction between the two elements from a sociological perspective.

We consider that such approach offers some perspective as regards the logics of actors' action in transforming the system through mobilizing personal capacities and experience.

To identify the factors of malfunction that may occur in the operation thereof, we will highlight some of the characteristics of the two components and in the end we will analyse them together to identify their possible interactions and effects.

Human Resources are defined as all persons who work for a company, administration or organization.

Human Resources, without being a professional sector, are a transverse activity present in all sectors of activity.

The public sector is defined as all activities carried out directly by a public authority (State, local and territory communities under their control) in order to meet needs of national interest.



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Human Resources employed in the public sector can be influenced in their work by various factors.

Among these factors, Competence is analysed in terms of mobilization of the employees' personal capacities and experience, which capacity generates new social relations based on initiative and undertaking of responsibility. Thus, competence becomes the fundamental element in the management of human resources.

For competence marks the transfer from the "logic of workplace" (work was defined outside the employee) to the "logic of function" – works is defined by saviors, savoirs-faires and savoirs-etre held by the individual and has larger contents than "savoirs et savoirs faire", mobilizing the actors' intelligence and initiative (Zarifian, 1999).

Analysing the concept of competence, the author emphasizes the role of "contextualized competences", which are "how employees face professional situations".

For this author, "contextualized competences" are competences applied in a professional situation and represent the "practical relation of the individual to a situation" (Zarifian, 1999, p.68).

By undertaking responsibilities, the employees also undertake the consequences arising from the actions carried out towards both themselves and the services' beneficiaries, carrying their professional activities in a "field of responsibility".

By mobilizing their competence, knowledge, the employees mobilize "networks of actors" – of power or prestige – within the company or work "around the same situations" and "share challenges" in "fields of responsibility", as built (Zarifian, 1999, p. 70).

According to Zarifian, the contemporary model of competence is one of a new approach of qualification and the two notions are not opposed or in opposition.

Qualification means to qualify people in terms of what is expected from them; behind such qualification being criteria such as salary amount, career evolution, etc.

For this new type of competence, we are witnessing a fundamental mutation at the level of the work's organization as regards the actors' responsiveness at all hierarchical levels.

Such ability to react is permanent and must face unforeseeable situations, work unknowns in order to not break the continuity of activities – goods and services – and to protect against delays.

This involves an increasing flexibility by polyvalence and a mobilization of poly-competences which are considered the fundaments of the new productive model.

Today we do not focus only a single type of activity or job with a single specialization. Employees are requested to intervene – whatever their hierarchical position and by mobilizing several type of savoir-faires acquired by training or professions – to answer the unknowns of the professional activity.

Moreover, the insufficiency of professional human resources and the existence of mismanagement lead to strained relations, conflicts between different categories of employees and organization or service in which they are affected.

Michel Lallant (2007) in his Work - A Contemporary Sociology, claims in the name of competitiveness flexibility, quality, customer-or beneficiary-, responsibilities are increasingly put in the charge on individuals. They have to arbitrate between different logics frequently contradictory – observance of deadline or concern for work well done.

This creates a social relationship based on the tension between the individual and organization induced by the mechanisms of the corporate culture.

Another form of pressure occurs between the employee and labor and is caused by the assessment of the employee's employment by the organization's management.

On the one hand, the institution is the one which, by its mechanisms of performance assessment – bonuses and promotions – officially acknowledges merits.

On the other hand, in the same organization, we are witnessing confusion generated by the assessment criteria. The logic of merit applies to individual performance that operates through the logic of rationalization by objectives.

In other words, we distinguish and reward the one who has been performing and employees routinely show their adherence to this rule.

At the same time, we witness the pressure between equality and merit in the evaluation of work.

The confusion generated by the objective-oriented management is due to the fact that the invisible part of work is not evaluated and to the logic of quotas. The logic of quotas refers to the number of people chosen in advance for bonuses, promotions, rewards. According to this logic, how is individual performance recognized, based on which criteria?

The performance itself appears unclear, as it is infinite and the determination of its limit - where it starts and where it ends - becomes random.



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On the one hand we have the speech on merit, reward, effort, implication; on the other hand logic of quotas serves to predefine a number of persons entitled to a certain promotion, bonus or position.

If an individual is selected, it is not because they are performing, but due to an inverse assessment mechanism: I have been selected because I fit the quotas.

Merit is replaced by quota or the predefinition of the number of people who will have access to privileges or positions, becoming prevailing and generating pressure.

At the individual level, even if the employee defines themselves as performing, in reality it is their performance which will be evaluated.

The criteria will be different from those of merit and the importance of diplomas, prestige and seniority will be the new prevailing criteria in assessment, thus generating the rift between work and reward.

The perception of work by actors has a positive dimension - initiative, autonomy and participation and a negative one - obedience, pressure, strain, stress, etc.

Moreover, the perception on the relation between work and one's self causes paradoxes at individual level.

This creates an ambivalent relation which in some cases has paradoxical effects: pleasure and involvement on the one hand, wear and detachment on the other hand.

In some cases, the discrepancy between what they do, what they can do and how they do lead to work under pressure.

Limitless commitment at work is internalized by employees and their alienation from a imposed one becomes an integrated one based on the illusion that professional achievement corresponds entirely to the self-realization as subject.

Work is organized according to objectives – constraints are set, the employees must meet them, and these objectives are increasing from year to year.

Some sociologists argue that this type of objective-oriented management leads to rupture between real work and prescribed work.

A characteristic of Human Resources is the dynamism influenced by many interacting factors.

Globally, we exemplify the globalization of trade exchanges, financial globalization, spatial integration and technological mutations (new technologies); at society level, political, legal, economic, educational

and health aspects; at organizational level, harmonization of the objectives prescribed and individual satisfaction through work avoids alienation effects;

In the Public Sector, we notice differences related to structure, size and management from one country to another depending on their specificity.

These differences are caused by a number of factors such as: historical traditions, socio-political and economic system, institutional culture, individual and collective mentality, population living standards.

We have listed only some of the influencing factors, being able to say that the Public Sector is characterized by structural heterogeneity and homogeneity of administrative practices in countries of institutional tradition.

By comparison, in former communist countries, we notice an inconsistency in the exercise of administrative practices, the performance being poor in relation to beneficiaries.

Given the strategic nature of the Public Sector, an important aspect is to anticipate the assessment and monitoring of risks which can lead to the occurrence of institutional bottlenecks on short and medium term and, in case of expansion on long term, they affect society as a whole.

An important factor in avoiding malfunctions in terms of administrative practices in terms of quality public services is the professionalization of human resources.

In countries with strengthened democracy and market economy, these malfunctions have been reported noticed and thus, reforms and actual measures have been implemented at structural level.

For instance, in France where the public sector accounts for almost 25% of the active population compared to a European average of 15%, public institutions of high education have been established since 1872 to train high public servants and superior officials for public careers.

In France, "the mandatory path" is training senior officials in specialized agencies.

We can mention the National School of Magistracy (ENM), the School of Advanced Studies in Public Health (EHESP), the Institute of Political Sciences (Sciences Po) and the School of High Administration (ENA).

When E. Boutmy (established the Free School of Political Science, the European higher education was a wide site where competition between academic models was very sharp.

According to Rigaud (2007) while merit and competition were replacing birth rights and wealth in terms of access to high positions, while social sciences were becoming autonomous and the sciences of the



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State were structured to meet the needs of the modern and bureaucratic Nation-States, the need to create Schools of Public Studies became imperative.

In 1883, the economic and financial sections and the general section (public law and history) were established and in 1893 the economic and social section for training future diplomats and high officials.

In the institutional history of this School, there naturally occurred the importance of the collective memory of the institution-depositary of the French national history of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Established in 1945, the National School of Administration (ENA) is part of "Grandes Ecoles" and its mission was to "democratize" the access to the state public function.

Today, it ensures the selection and initial and continuous training of French high officials and international officials, offering its graduates access to management and leadership positions in French public positions.

ENA trains its students for a double mission – expertise in all essential domains of the public action and public management. Obviously, such matters are not entirely solved, but through constant surveillance the system works coherently.

In the East-European countries, given the lack of institutional tradition and culture, we notice malfunctions at the level of management – over-sizing of employees; excessive bureaucracy; overlapped structures to coordinate and control similar objectives; lack of transparency; corruption; mafia-like networks attempting to seize activities generating high economic profit.

Tributary to the practices mentioned above, the staff operating in the public sector acts inertial many cases, not being able to adjust to their current work tasks.

In Romania, the mission to train staff from the public sector is ensured mainly by SNSPA and ASE.

## 3. ISSUES IN APPROACHING THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Both in the Private Sector as well as the Public Sector, goods and services are produced, budgets and staff problems are approached to reach objectives.

The difference occurs in the nature of objectives - in the Public Sector, the objective is to meet the general interest and the private sector is about profitability and profit.

Differences also exist in terms of Human Resources.

The Public Sector, the greater security of jobs due to the status of the public administration (recruitment, compensation, advancement, career, etc.) is the symbol of neutrality and equal opportunities, while these issues are less obvious in the Private Sector.

In compensation, the private sector's wages better reflect personal involvement.

In legislative terms, job occupancy or appointment of officials is made according to criteria established institutionally.

In the private sector, employment is determined differently by each company according to its objectives, which can be changed at some point in order to maximize profit.

The public sector turns out to be however essentially based on legal rationality while the private sector is rather based on managerial rationality (Chevalier and Lochak, 1982).

The attempts in the second half of the 20th century to implement private management in the public sector without taking into account its particularities proved inadequate.

With the emergence of New Public Management, the aim has been to modernize the public sector through performance management.

The introduction of this type of management in the public sector has been driven by the European political will to replace the welfare's previous forms considered inefficient with forms of private management based on objectives of efficacy, quality and cuts of public spending.

These objectives were found in the contents of all reforms to modernize the European Public Sector.

The introduction of this type of management requires the State to clarify its role and missions and to define those that can be provided directly or by delegation.

According to Braun (2001), "almost all examples foreign to the French reality show a net correlation between the reduction in size and the missions of the State and its reform able to achieve significant success".

Thus, the management methods that have traditionally been used in the private sector have spread and implemented in the public sphere under the name of the New Public Management.

The introduction of market logic in the public sector has led to the emergence of new notions such as flexibility, effectiveness, efficiency, governance and evaluation of competences.

Public management as opposed to administrative culture focuses on product, results and performance, which can be obtained through proper management of staff, resources and programs.



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The New Public Management, having a transversal nature, is manifested in several areas: strategy, finance, marketing and Human Resources.

So far, the introduction of this management in France has happened recently (2000) and with certain slowness caused by two important factors.

The reduction of the number of public servants started only in 2003 and the process accelerated in 2007 through the reduction of staff in the state public administration.

The organic law concerning the laws of finance to obtain better control of expenses and increase of managers' responsibility (LOLF) enacted on August 1st, 2001, came into force only in 2006.

For administrations, LOLF meant its orientation to a process of modernization and management through performance; for public servants, it meant a clarification of their mission, contributing to the discharge of services and for the beneficiaries of public services, it meant an increase of the services' quality in terms of public services.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The worldwide society is experiencing an extremely rapid and complex development. Thus, the particularities of human resources in the public sector must be taken into account. In terms of theories, there are differences in the approaches regarding the analysis, instruments and methods.

Given the complexity of this topic, an interdisciplinary approach is surely the one which can offer solid solutions. Theoretic models do not entirely foresee the effects of their implementation in the social life and they must be corrected permanently, adjusting them to constant changes.

The management and administration models which have proven successful in certain sectors, expanded to the public sector, should take into account its particularities and the impact they could cause.

The human factor plays a decisive role which exceeds the bureaucratic procedures and institutional rules.

The system's efficiency and performance cannot reflect the individual in its subjectivity or entirety.

The instrumentalization of the individual having as consequence the blur of creativity leads, in society, to conflicts and tensions which cannot be controlled at some point.

Sociologists analyse the individual through their subjectivity and the theorists of the management and administration of human resources analyse through performance indicators.

The perspective on human resources should be a systematic one which allows the identification of interactions between the two elements.

Theorists must realize that the individual is a priority.

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# EMPLOYEE SELECTION METHODS IN ROMANIA: POPULARITY AND APPLICANT REACTIONS

# METODE DE SELECŢIE A ANGAJAŢILOR ÎN ROMÂNIA: POPULARITATE ŞI REACŢII ALE APLICANŢILOR

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***Abstract***
This study assessed the prevalence of, and applicants' reactions to 21 different employee selection methods. Past studies on this topic have focused mainly on countries in Western Europe. This research investigated a sample of 142 Romanian respondents using a postal survey. The most popular selection methods used by Romanian organizations were found to be CVs, ability tests and interviews. In contrast, applicants most favor work-samples, followed by ability tests, interviews, CVs and personality tests. Their perception of astrology, graphology, personal contacts and modern selection instruments, was negative. These results are similar to those reported from studies in other countries suggesting that Romanian job candidates do not differ greatly in their reactions to these selection methods from their European counterparts. The study shows that Romanian employers predominantly use selection methods that are perceived positively by candidates.

***Keywords*:** selection methods, Romania, human resources

**JEL CODES:** O15, C52

***Rezumat***
Studiul analizează prevalența și reacțiile aplicanților la 21 de diferite metode de selecție. Studiile anterioare în acest domeniu au fost focusate în principal pe țările din Europa de vest. Cercetarea de față analizează un eșantion format din 142 de respondenți din România folosind chestionare transmise prin poștă. Rezultatele studiului arată că cele mai populare metode de selecție utilizate de organizațiile din România sunt CV-urile, testele de abilitate și interviurile. Pe de altă parte, aplicanții preferă probele de muncă, testele de abilitate, interviurile, CV-urile și testele de personalitate și au o percepție negativă față de utilizarea astrologiei sau grafologie în etapele de selecție. Utilizarea contactelor personale și a metodelor moderne de selecție sunt de asemenea percepute negativ. Rezultatele cercetării sunt similare cu cele raportate în studii aplicate în alte state europene, sugerând faptul că aplicanții români nu diferă foarte mult de omologii lor din vestul Europei în privința preferințelor legate de metodele de selecție. În plus, studiul arată că angajatorii români folosesc cu predominanță metode de selecție percepute în mod pozitiv de către candidați.

**Cuvinte cheie:** metode de selecție, România, resurse umane.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Past studies on selection methods have been conducted from the perspective of the organization and have focused on method popularity, comparing national and international usage, predictive validity, reliability, and utility. However, there has been an increasing interest in applicants and their reactions to the selection methods used on them (Chambers, 2002) mostly because they are increasingly seen as a significant and powerful 'actors' in the selection process (Nikolau and Judge, 2007). Moreover, nearly all of these studies have looked at Western Europe, and ignored East European practices. This study focuses on Romania and investigates not only the prevalence of selection methods in that country, but also job applicants' reactions to those methods. This is only the second such study to be conducted in this country.

Personnel selection methods have undergone major changes in recent decades because of technological advances and changing opinions about selection criteria. Skills shortages have been growing throughout Europe at all levels in recent years (Holbeche, 2009). Information on these matters is important for local employers and for companies planning to invest in a particular country. According to Eurostat data, at the present time, Romania has a lower unemployment rate (7.3%) than the EU28 average rate (10.8 %), as well as a negative net migration rate (-0.24) among the workforce (CIA World Factbook, 2014). Therefore, employers cannot risk engendering negative reactions among job applicants towards their selection methods as this may reduce the already limited applicant recruitment pools. Employers are encouraged to use selection methods that are both valid and favorably perceived by job applicants. Knowledge of universal and country-specific reactions is therefore particularly useful for international companies that must implement selection systems and manage the reactions of applicants in multiple countries (Ispas et al, 2010).

## 2. HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

### *2.1 Popularity of Selection Methods in an International Context*

Many studies have investigated the popularity or prevalence of selection methods in different countries. These include both country surveys and meta-analyses based on previously published studies. These show that that CVs, interviews and references are the most popular methods, and are therefore dubbed 'the classic trio' (Levy-Leboyer, 1990) or the 'traditional triad' (Cook, 1991). Nevertheless, the results show that each country has its own particular pattern of preferences for selection methods. The popularity studies in different countries have shown contradictory results for several reasons. First, a

strong correlation has been found between the size of the companies surveyed and the range of methods used. Usually, the selection process in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) only involves simple and cheap methods such as CVs, interviews and references. Unsurprisingly, researchers of these companies have reported lower figures for the usage of the more complex, more time-consuming or more expensive methods. Second, large companies allocate substantial budgets for selection, and hence will more often use expensive assessment centers as well as personality and cognitive testing. In addition, Shackleton and Newell (1991) found that the use of methods within a country has changed over time. Finally, the selection method research data from each country was collected using different research designs and methods, and was based on widely differing samples and response rates (n = number in sample; rr = response rate), making inter-country comparisons difficult or even impossible.

Smith (1991) and Shackleton and Newell (1991; 1994) (n1=73 and n2=166 with rr1= 61% and rr2=22% respectively) observed important differences between European countries in terms of the selection methods used. Assessment centers were frequently only used in the UK, Germany and Netherlands. French and Wallonian companies preferred graphology but, like German companies, they did not use references. However, their samples were rather small compared to the other studies. Smith and Abrahamsen (1992) also investigated the selection methods prevalent in Europe, but their secondary analysis of international data led them to conclude that the pattern of selection was very similar in all countries. Shackleton and Newell (1994) responded by suggesting that these authors had ignored the frequency of method use and had simply observed whether a method was in use or not.

Using a Price Waterhouse Cranfield survey (n=15,000, rr=20%), Brewster and Hegewisch (1994), confirmed that there were major differences between countries in terms of selection methods popularity. Their results suggested that graphology was only popular in France, and that psychometric tests were rarely if ever used in Germany. Biodata was widespread in Scandinavian and Iberian countries, but less often used in Anglo-Saxon Europe. In terms of modern selection methods, Straus et al. (2001) or Emmot (2003) found that approximately 30% of all British companies used telephone interviews and webcam-based interviews. By 2010, the usage of these had risen to 50% (CIPD, 2010). About 1% of all companies started to use video CVs.

The past studies therefore suggest that selection patterns differ between countries although application forms/CVs, interviews and references are prevalent worldwide. While psychometric tests were used only in some parts of the UK, work-samples, cognitive and personality tests were popular in almost all of northern Europe. Biodata on the other hand was more often used in southern Europe, some parts of Scandinavia and Flemish Belgium. Assessment centers were widely used only by British (but not

Scottish), Dutch and German firms. Graphology was common only in the French-speaking world. Telephone interviews and videoconferences have become popular in the UK. Based on this these studies, this research hypothesized that Romanian companies would opt for the 'the classic trio' of selection methods, and would therefore share the pattern of other European countries.

*H1:'The classic trio' is the most popular selection tool in Romania.*

The majority of past studies of selection method popularity have been conducted in the UK. Beside the 'traditional triad', British employers have shown a preference for modern techniques such as assessment centers, personality tests and ability tests. This pattern is very similar to the Dutch one. However, in Scotland, companies tend to prefer unstructured interviews and almost never use assessment centers. French companies have also been regularly researched and all the studies have found that graphology is one of the most popular methods there, surpassing even references. Their pattern of selection method use is similar to that of Belgium and Israel. Germany is the third most researched country and has constantly been compared with the first two. In addition to CVs and interviews, German employers frequently use assessment centers, work-samples and personality testing, while rarely using references or psychometric tests. Except for their preference for unstructured interviews, Italian and Swiss companies have the same German usage profile. Scandinavian and Iberian countries have been found to share a preference for biodata, but only the former group of countries uses work-samples and GMA tests.

In Romania (and elsewhere in Eastern Europe), there is a paucity of existing research into selection methods. This is partly due to the past communist regime making it difficult to conduct, and almost impossible to publish results, in international journals; and partly to employers in post-communist countries being reluctant to reveal their HR practices. Ispas et al.'s (2010) is the only study so far, that has investigated the selection process in Romania. It examined fairness reactions to 10 selection methods based on a sample of 240 Romanian employees.

### *2.2 International Job Applicants' Reactions to Selection Methods*

How have job applicants reacted to the different selection methods used by organizations? Over the last twenty years, studies such as those of Chambers (2002) and others, have addressed this question of what "attitudes, affect, or cognitions an individual might have about the hiring process" (Ryan and Ployhart, 2000: 566). The answer is important for several reasons. First, if selection methods are perceived as unfavorable, applicants may criticize or withdraw from the hiring process and reduce the applicant pool; they may legally challenge the company; or else choose not to re-apply or cease to remain a customer (Hausknecht et al., 2004). As the selection process usually creates the first



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encounter between applicants and the employer, reactions may influence not only the applicants' decisions at the time, but also their post-encounter perceptions and attitudes. It has been shown that companies which did not pay attention to applicants' reactions, experienced important negative consequences, including smaller applicant pools and reduced public trust in the organization concerned (Ispas et al., 2010). The existence of social networking sites has increased the impact and speed with which an individual's negative hiring experience can be communicated to others. However, Elkins and Phillips (2000) observed that if a selection decision was in the candidate's favor, then the method was likely to be viewed as fair and favorable. Similarly, if the selection decision went against a candidate, the method was likely to be viewed as unfair and unfavorable.

The most used model for assessing applicants' reactions to selection methods was developed by Steiner and Gilliland (1996). It rated selection methods on the two criteria of process favorability and procedural justice. The former, which is used in the current study, refers to respondents' views concerning the effectiveness of a selection method in identifying qualified people for the job. The latter relates to their perceptions of the fairness of the method itself, and was not studied here. Researchers exploring candidates' reactions to selection methods have used different samples (job applicants in actual selection settings, employees and students) and different research designs (evaluating reactions before and/or after selection). While the majority of these studies were conducted in the USA, applicant reactions research has also been conducted in European countries which provide a comparison for this study.

Anderson, Salgado and Hülsheger (2010) analyzed 38 studies published between 1996 and 2010 (n = 8,974) that assessed applicant reactions in 17 countries and found great similarities. They reported a three-tier clustering of overall favorability perceptions – most preferred (work-samples, interviews), favorably evaluated (CVs, cognitive tests, references, biodata, personality tests) and least preferred (integrity tests, personal contacts, graphology - except for France). Previously, Hausknecht et al. (2004) analyzed 86 samples (n= 48,750) and reported similar results.

There has also been a long debate concerning how modern and traditional selection methods are viewed by candidates. Kroeck and Magnusen (1997) found that traditional face-to-face interviews were preferred over webcam-based interviews. Strauss et al. (2001) (n = 59), Ployhart et al. (2002), Chapman et al. (2003), Anderson (2003) and Donaldson (2004) all confirmed this preference. Chan and Schmitt (1997) and Reynolds et al. (2000) observed that candidate reactions to multimedia tests were mostly favorable. Mead (2001) also reported that 80% of all respondents preferred online personality tests. Furthermore, Salgado and Moscoso (2003) found equivalence between written and online

personality tests, with a slight preference for the latter. Since very few studies on this topic have been published between 2004 and 2011, it is possible that these preferences might have changed in the recent years due to advances in technology.

Knowledge of both general trends and country-specific reactions is useful for multinational companies which implement selection systems worldwide. For this reason, a review of international research on this topic is now presented. With regard to France, Steiner and Gilliland (1996) compared the fairness reactions to various selection methods using two student samples from France and the USA. The results showed that interviews, work-samples and CVs were perceived positively in both samples but integrity tests were rated negatively. Graphology was seen more favorably in France, due to its extensive use. For Germany, Marcus (2003) studied the reactions of 213 German students. In line with previous findings, participants rated interviews, work-samples and CVs favorably, and had relatively negative reactions to personal contacts and graphology. In Greece, Nikolaou and Judge (2007) examined applicant reactions using two samples of 158 employees and 181 students (rr = 41%). Interviews, CVs and work-samples were again the most favored selection methods. Personal contacts, integrity tests, and graphology received the lowest ratings. Students demonstrated more positive attitudes towards ability, personality and integrity tests than did employees.

In Iceland, Jónsdóttir and Hafsteinson (2008) used a modified Steiner Gilliland model on 239 Icelandic students. Interviews, work-samples, CVs and references were rated most positively, followed by personality and integrity tests. Least preferred were personal contacts and cognitive ability tests (CATs). The latter represents a notable difference between Iceland and other European countries. In Italy, Bertolino and Steiner (2007) examined the applicant reactions of 137 Italian students. Work-samples were the most favorably rated, followed by CVs, ability tests, interviews and personal references. Biodata and personality tests received slightly negative ratings, and integrity tests, graphology and personal contacts were perceived most negatively. In the Netherlands, Anderson and Witvliet (2008) replicated Steiner and Gilliland's work on 167 students. Results were similar to other countries from Europe and North America showing a preference for interviews, CVs, work-samples and biodata. The least popular methods were graphology, integrity tests, personality tests and references, in ascending order.

In Romania, Ispas et al. (2010) examined the reactions of 240 employees (rr = 60%) finding that they rated work-samples, interviews, ability tests and CVs favorably. In contrast, the use of the technique of graphology, and the practice of selecting candidates on the basis of their ethnic background or through personal contacts, was viewed negatively. Moscoso and Salgado (2004) examined differences in



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applicant reactions in Spain (n=125) and Portugal (n=104). Interviews, CVs and work-samples were rated most favorably; and integrity tests and graphology were perceived most negatively in both countries. A few, slight variations in rankings were noticed here, with ability tests and personality tests being rated more positively than elsewhere, but the general pattern remained remarkably similar. In Turkey, Bilgic and Acarlar (2010) used a simplified version of the Steiner and Gilliland model assessing only three selection methods. The 154 Turkish students that they studied (rr = 84%) judged interviews most favorably.

While there are many British studies into selection method popularity, those on applicants' reactions to selection methods are limited. In 2004, Donaldson (n =154; rr = 37% ) found significant differences between recruiter and student reactions, with recruiters generally rating all methods positively except for unstructured interviews; and students rating structured interviews and in-tray tests most favorably, and online testing and telephone interviews least favorably. In her second study, Donaldson found negative reactions towards graphology. Patterson et al. (2011) (n = 23,855; rr = 59%) assessed candidate reactions to selection practices in postgraduate medical training and found medical assessment centers to be the most favored method.

Philips and Gully (2002) tested applicants' reactions using two American and Singaporean samples. In both countries, interviews, work-samples and CVs were rated most positively, while personality tests and graphology were rated most negatively. Similar results were obtained by Anderson and Witvliet (2008). All these studies show that applicants' reactions to selection methods are very similar. In every country, participants tended to prefer CVs, interviews and work-samples; and psychometric tests (except for integrity tests) were also perceived favorably. On the other hand, integrity tests, personal contacts and graphology (except for the French sample) were perceived negatively.

In their Romanian study reported earlier, Ispas et al. (2010) focused only on the traditional selection methods proposed by Steiner and Gilliland in 1996. Therefore, there is a gap in the research because their sample did not include job-seekers or students and modern selection methods were not evaluated. Based on all these facts, this study hypothesized that the Romanian respondents would rate selection methods in a similar manner. In addition, it hypothesized that the current sample would prefer modern selection methods over traditional ones.

*H2: Respondents rate interviews, CVs and work-sample favorably.*

*H3: Respondents rate graphology, personal contacts and integrity tests unfavorably.*

*H4: Respondents tend to favor modern selection methods.*

## 3. METHOD

### *3.1 Participants*

A total of 292 questionnaires were sent in 2011 to both employees and job-seekers using the databases of a human resource recruitment and selection company. Respondents received the questionnaire either electronically or as a hard copy, along with instructions on how to return them anonymously. No financial compensation was given. A total of 142 replies were received (response rate = 48.6 %).consisting of 64 job-seekers and 78 full-time employees. The majority of the sample was female (63%), and 71% were within the 18 and 26 year age range. Half of the respondents had between 0 and 3 years of professional work experience; 20% had no experience; and 5% had over 10 years of experience. While 53% of all respondents had not applied for more than two jobs in the past two years, 12% had made more than 51 applications. Most answers were gathered from the northern and the western parts of Romania and from Bucharest. In the central and southern areas of the country, the response rate was lower.

### *3.2 Procedure*

This study used a cross-sectional self-reported survey. This type of design primarily describes a phenomenon or documents its characteristics. Because it is cross-sectional, data is collected at one point in time from a sample selected to represent a significant population. The survey was chosen not only to facilitate information gathering and hypothesis testing, but also because most previous studies used this method to produce coefficients and ratings that could be generalized at a country level thereby permitting comparisons. The data collection method used in this survey involved a closed-question, self-administered postal questionnaire. It was judged that the research questions were sufficiently precise and unambiguous that respondents would not require the presence of an interviewer. This decision was also influenced by Steiner and Gilliland's (1996) recommendation that all studies assessing selection method prevalence and process favorability should use closed-question questionnaires in order to facilitate comparisons.

The survey used a modified version of the Steiner and Gilliland (1996) model. The number of selection methods investigated was increased from 10 to 21 (modern techniques, assessment centers, and structured and unstructured interviews were some of the methods added). The questionnaire was translated into Romanian by a native Romanian speaker. The translation was verified by a second independent native Romanian speaker. Based on the recommendations given by Steiner and Gilliland, a description of each selection method was attached to the questionnaire. The first draft of the



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questionnaire was piloted on ten respondents. Based on the feedback received, the scoring for the last three questions was changed from a 7-point to a 5-point Likert scale, due to the limitations of the initial one. Respondents suggested that their answers could be more accurate if they had more than three intermediary answers. They explained that they wanted to give a high mark for CVs. However, they did not want to give a 5 – the maximum, but at the same time, they judged 4 to be too low. They requested an additional option between the medium choice–3 and the minimum / maximum choice of one out of 5.

### *3.3 Measures*

The first items of the questionnaire were related to sex, age, employment status, professional experience and the number of jobs the respondent had applied for in the past two years. A question asked participants to indicate whether or not they had experienced different selection methods in the past. Finally, process favorability (i.e. how much they liked the selection method) was assessed by asking participants to rate each selection method in terms of effectiveness and fairness, using a 5-point Likert scale (from 1='strongly disagree' to 5='strongly agree').

### *3.4 Data Interpretation*

The data collected was analyzed using a statistics software program. Based on the results of the statistical frequency distributions, the hypotheses were supported or rejected. In addition, parametric and non-parametric tests were used to present the correlations between variables and mean comparisons. Firstly, the study checked the consistency of each process favorability item, by calculating the Cronbach alpha coefficients. Afterwards, the frequency distributions were used for all the items of the survey in order to find the actual number of observations and the percentage falling within each range. For the scale items, the study used the Friedman test (non-parametric) in order to compare ratings of process favorability across the selection methods used. Furthermore, using the Independent-Samples T-test, the study looked for any correlations between responses and sex or employment status. Finally, in order to identify differences in preferences between employees and job-seekers, the study followed Moscoso and Salgado's (2004) guidelines and used the Cohen d effect-size measure.

## 4. RESULTS

The results are reported in relation to each of the four hypotheses being tested in turn.

*H1:'The classic trio' is the most popular selection tool in Romania'*.

This hypothesis proposed that in Romania, CVs, interviews and references - the so-called 'classic trio' would be the most popular selection tools. Table 2 shows the results and compares them those

reported in the literature review. In contrast to the previous Romanian study, the results show that these three techniques are widely used in Romania and therefore hypothesis H1 was supported (see Annex I). CVs were the most common method (90.8%), followed by ability tests (72.5%), structured and unstructured interviews (69.7% and 67.6% respectively), personality testing (64.1%) and references (62.7%).

The study also examined possible differences in responses between employees and job-seekers. Using on the Pearson's chi-square test, the study found that answers were mostly not related to the employment status. Company employees gave similar answers to job-seekers. The only significant influences were those observed in relation to ability tests, telephone and unstructured interviews and references (more employees were tested with these methods, compared to job-seekers, $p<.05$). Nevertheless, the Phi and Cramer's V tests showed that the effect was only medium ($V<.30$). In addition, there were no correlations with sex, except for numerical testing (56.2% males were tested with this method compared to only 38.2% females) and references (73.6% males vs. 56.2% females).

*H2: Respondents rate interviews, CVs and work-sample favorably.*

The results of two process favorability questions were averaged together to obtain a single process favorability index. The Cronbach α coefficient for this index, across all participants and all selection methods was .922 suggesting a relatively high internal consistency. However, references ($\alpha=.654$) and especially ability tests ($\alpha=.501$) had lower values than the level accepted by researchers for reliability coefficients (.700). While the former has a marginal internal consistency, the latter might be considered unacceptable by some researchers, due to its poor reliability. After creating the index, the results were transformed from a 5-point Likert to a 7-point Likert scale, based on the method suggested by Dawes (2008). This re-scaling procedure was suggested after piloting the survey but was also necessary in order to compare the current results with those obtained from previous studies which used a 7-point scale. The results are presented in Table 3.

The one-way ANOVA tests showed that ratings differed across the 21 selection methods ($\chi^2=134.512$, $df=20$, $p<.01$). Work-samples, interviews and CVs were found to be the four most favored selection methods (See Annex II). Therefore, hypothesis H2 was supported. However, it should be noted that while structured interviews were among the top four methods used, the unstructured interviews were in the top eight. Comparing job-seekers' preferences for selection methods with those of the employee group, it was found that the former favored the top three ranked methods (CVs, ability tests, structured/unstructured interviews); whereas the latter, favored these same three methods, but in a



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slightly different preference order (ability tests CVs, personality tests, structured/unstructured) interviews.

*H3: Respondents rate graphology, personal contacts and integrity tests negatively.*

Although personal contacts and graphology were the most negatively perceived methods, integrity tests were rated somewhat positively (just below psychometric tests and assessment centers). Therefore, hypothesis H3 was rejected. While this was the case for job-seekers, employees favored integrity tests even more than they favored unstructured interviews.

*H4: Respondents tend to favor modern selection methods.*

Online testing, telephone interviews and webcam-based interviews (defined as modern selection methods) were found to be three of the most unfavored methods. Only graphology, personal contacts and astrology were rated more negatively. This response was similar for both employees and job-seekers. As a result, hypothesis H4 was rejected. Mean comparisons were also carried out (using the Independent-Samples T test) in order to explore possible correlations between process favorability answers and sex or employment status of respondents. For the former, the study found statistically significant results for two of the 21 selection methods, while for the latter there were only three cases. More specifically, females tended to perceive biodata ($F=.440$, $t=2.337$ ($n=111$), $p<.05$) and assessment centers ($F=1.022$, $t=2.759$ ($n=119$), $p<.01$) more positively than males. In the second case, employees tended to perceive unstructured interviews ($F=2.268$, $t=2,273$ ($N=126$), $p<.05$) and ability tests ($F=2.910$, $t=2.11$ ($n=126$), $p<.05$) more positively and biodata ($F=.337$, $t=-2.217$ ($n=111$), $p<.05$) more negatively than job-seekers. To confirm the small differences between employees and job-seekers, the study followed Moscoso and Salgado's (2004) guidelines and investigated the effect sizes of these differences using the Cohen's d effect-size measure. In most cases, the differences were small ($.02<d<.41$) according to Cohen's (1977) rule with biodata ($d=.417$, $r=.204$) and unstructured interviews ($d=.404$, $r=.198$) demonstrating the largest differences between employees and job-seekers. For telephone interviews ($d=.020$, $r=.010$), verbal testing ($d=.011$, $r=.01$) and graphology ($d=.021$, $r=.010$) differences were found to be minimal.

## 5. DISCUSSION

This paper reports the prevalence of, and the applicant reactions, to job selection methods. The first hypothesis investigated the prevalence of selection methods in Romania. The results showed that 'the classic trio' was the most popular combination, in line with other European countries. The Romanian results, when compared with those of much researched west European countries show similarities and

differences. Compared to France (Shackleton and Newell, 1994), graphology was hardly used; (52.0% vs. 4.2%); assessment centers were half as popular (59% vs. 34%); but references were much more prevalent (39% vs. 63%). When compared to other countries, the Romanian selection practices were closest to the German and Italian models. The only major difference was the Romanian preference for personality tests, which was lower in Germany. It should be noted though that previous international research studies in this field had investigated fewer selection methods (typically only 9-10) and had gathered data from companies rather than from the applicants themselves (employees / job-seekers).

In terms of selection methods prevalence, the results differed from those obtained by Ispas et al (2010) - the other Romanian study. Of all the selection methods analyzed, only graphology and biodata had similar figures. However, for CVs (91% vs. 38%), interviews (69% vs. 39%) and ability tests (73% vs. 27%), there were significant differences between the samples. This can be explained by the fact that Ispas et al (2010) only used blue-collar employees and because the average age of their sample was higher. Nevertheless, when the data was filtered to obtain a similar 26-60 year-old employee sample, the results showed even greater differences (74% for interviews, 97% for CVs and 81% for ability tests). The results show that, compared to employees, the job-seekers were selected more often using modern techniques than traditional ones. In terms of the prevalence of selection methods, the results showed that online testing (37%) and webcam-based interviews (18%) were still not widely used in Romania. Nevertheless, 42% of all job-seekers said that they were evaluated, at least once, through online tests. The results also show that psychometric tests and assessment centers are not common in Romania However, many of the components of the latter are being widely used (e.g. personality tests, 64%, verbal, numerical and abstract testing, 38-50%).

The next three hypotheses were related to process favorability. In contrast to the prevalence of selection methods, these results showed a significant similarity to the other Romanian study. The only differences were that the participants from the current sample rated biodata more negatively (4.30 vs. 5.23) and graphology more positively (2.63 vs. 1.33). Due to the similarities of the two studies, results for the more commonly used selection methods can be generalized at a country level. Therefore, in terms of process favorability, it can be suggested that Romanians tend to rate work-samples, ability tests, structured interviews, personality tests and references most positively, and personal contacts and graphology most negatively. Nevertheless, for the other 11 selection methods, further research needs to be undertaken in order to identify a trend. The results also showed that all modern selection techniques (telephone interviews, webcam-based interviews and online testing) were perceived rather negatively by respondents. Only personal contacts were favored less. This is surprising given that 71% of all respondents were under 26 years old.



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The results of this study of selection methods in Romanian can be compared with those obtained by previous researchers in other countries. Several notable differences emerge. Firstly, Romanians provided significantly higher process favorability ratings for all methods relative to their counterparts in the other countries. Anderson, Salgado and Hülsheger (2010) in their meta-analysis of 38 independent samples gathered from 17 countries that assessed applicant reactions found lower overall favorability for all 10 methods. While differences were small with respect to personal contacts, graphology and biodata, the current Romanian sample rated ability, personality and integrity tests much higher. For example, the third hypothesis (H3), that, *Respondents rate graphology, personal contacts and integrity tests negatively)* was rejected because integrity tests were rated much more positively in Romania than in any other country (4.77 vs. 3.69). A comparison of these Romanian results with those from other countries, as well as the results concerning the prevalence of methods, suggest that Romanian HR practices are most similar to those of Germany (Marcus, 2003). There were also similarities to the Greek, Portuguese and Dutch samples. The French results however, were very different. In terms of rankings, there were significant differences between Romania and all other countries. The 2010 meta-analysis and the Dutch study had the most similar rankings. The Portuguese rankings of selection method popularity were totally different from the Romanian ones.

## 6. RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

### *6.1 Implications*

The current findings have important implications for companies operating in Romania and for those that are planning to invest in the country. First, potential employers should not be concerned that Romanian job candidates will react substantially differently to the most frequently used selection methods than job applicants from other European countries. The results show that applicants' reactions in Romania vary only marginally from the overall favorability pattern. The study also has implications for future research. In order to obtain a favorable reaction from candidates to the selection process, and therefore to the organization itself, employers should select candidates using work-samples, ability tests, interviews and CVs. Additionally, they should avoid using modern techniques (e.g. telephone interviews, webcam-based interviews and online testing), personal contacts and graphology. These conclusions do not represent a problem for Romanian organizations as the findings show that while the favored selection methods are already in widespread use in the country, the unfavored ones are rarely used. The only exception to this generalization concerns the work-samples tests which appear to be under-utilized (46.1%) although they were found to be amongst the most favored of all the 21 analyzed methods. The findings concerning ability, personality and psychometric tests are encouraging because these selection

methods have a high predictive validity. On the other hand, graphology and personal contacts are methods that are rarely used in Romanian organizations; are perceived unfavorably by candidates, and have low validity scores. Future researchers might usefully assess selection methods relevance from an organizational perspective.

### *6.2 Recommendations*

In order to elicit a favorable reaction from applicants to the selection process, and to by extension, to the recruiting company itself, all non-native employers in the country should use those selection methods that Romanian candidates perceive to be fair and useful. As in other European countries, these methods include work-samples, ability tests, interviews and CVs. In addition, these companies should use assessment centers and psychological tests more often because candidates rate these methods positively. On the other hand, French and Flemish companies especially should be careful if they plan to use graphology in Romania, because applicants perceived this method negatively. In addition, all employers should try to avoid personal contacts and delay the introduction of modern techniques in the selection process. These results are very similar to those obtained in the previous Romanian study (Ispas et al., 2010) that assessed applicant reactions to selection methods, and are also comparable to the ones reported by Anderson, Salgado and Hülsheger (2010) in their meta-analysis based on studies from 17 countries. Therefore, until a further study suggests otherwise, it can be argued that this is the current trend in Romania. In conclusion, this study carried out in Romania demonstrated that cross-cultural differences related to applicant reactions to selection methods are very small between European countries. It found that Romanian employers use selection methods that are both positively perceived and which are valid.

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**ANNEX I**

TABLE 1. SELECTION METHODS PREVALENCE IN DIFFERENT EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

| | Combined sample | Employees | Job Seekers | RO* 2010 | UK 2010 | SWISS 2010 | IT* 2007 | SCOT** 1999 | FR** 1994 | DE*** 1994 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CVs | 90.8% | 92.3% | 89.1% | 38.3% | | 99.6% | 61.9% | 4.75 | | |
| Ability tests | 72.5% | 83.3% | 59.4% | 27.1% | 39.0% | 18.6% | 49.6% | 1.34 | 69.9% | |
| Structured interviews | 69.7% | 73.1% | 65.6% | 38.8%* | 69.4% | 99.4% | 69.1%* | 3.91 | 100%* | 3.91 |
| Unstructured interviews | 67.6% | 79.5% | 53.1% | | 41.8% | 71.3% | | | | |
| Personality tests | 64.1% | 69.2% | 57.8% | 17.5% | 25.6% | 32.0% | 40.3% | 1.19 | 64.4% | 1.30 |
| References | 62.7% | 74.4% | 48.4% | 47.5% | 71.5% | 89.1% | 54.7% | 4.17 | 39.0% | 4.65 |
| Application forms | 60.6% | 61.5% | 59.4% | | 59.6% | | | 1.91 | 98.0% | 4.77 |
| Telephone interviews | 52.8% | 62.8% | 40.6% | | | | | 1.91 | | |
| Verbal testing | 50.0% | 52.6% | 46.9% | | 28.2% | | | | | |
| Work-samples | 46.1% | 47.4% | 44.4% | 60.8% | 19.3% | 23.5% | 46.8% | 2.62 | | |
| Numerical testing | 45.1% | 51.3% | 37.5% | | 28.2% | | | | | |
| Biodata | 40.8% | 47.4% | 32.8% | 46.7% | 27.3% | 12.7% | 40.3% | | 19.1% | 1.07 |
| Psychometric tests | 38.7% | 37.2% | 40.2% | | | | | | 50.0% | 1.35 |
| Abstract testing | 38.0% | 44.9% | 29.7% | | | | | | | |
| Online tests | 37.3% | 33.3% | 42.2% | | | | | | | |
| Assessment centers | 34.0% | 39.7% | 27.0% | | 17.3% | 26.3% | | 1.00 | 59.0% | 1.87 |
| Integrity tests | 30.3% | 34.6% | 25.0% | 13.3% | | | 16.5% | | | |
| Webcam-based Interviews | 18.3% | 14.1% | 23.4% | | | | | | | |
| Personal contacts | 7.3% | 9.3% | 5.5% | 14.6% | | | 46.8% | 2.36 | | |
| Graphology | 4.2% | 5.1% | 3.1% | 4.6% | 2.0% | 15.8% | 5.0% | | 52.0% | 1.06 |
| Astrology | 1.4% | 1.3% | 1.6% | | | | | | | 1.00 |

*The study evaluated fairness reactions and interviews were not differentiated in structured or unstructured;

**Companies used this method at least once;

***Mean scores of usage from 1 (not used) to 5 (always used)

**ANNEX II**

TABLE 2. MEAN PROCESS FAVORABILITY RATINGS FOR SELECTION METHODS BY COUNTRY

| | N | α | Combined Mean | Standard Deviation | Employees | Job-Seekers | 2010 Meta-analysis*** | RO 2010 N=240 | TR** 2010 N=154 | NED 2008 N=167 | IT 2007 N=139 | GR 2007 N=339 | ES 2004 N=125 | PT 2004 N=104 | DE 2003 N=213 | FR 1996 N=117 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Work Samples | 128 | .722 | **6.01** | 1.24 | **5.89** (1.33) | **6.16** (1.13) | **5.38** (.55) | **6.28** (1.04) | | **5.10** (1.11) | **5.15** (1.29) | **4.80** (1.39) | **4.93** (1.51) | **4.90** (1.44) | **5.34** (1.20) | **5.26** (1.19) |
| Ability Tests | 126 | .501 | **5.78** | 1.15 | **5.98** (1.08) | **5.55** (1.20) | **4.59** (.36) | **5.68** (1.58) | | **4.15** (1.35) | **4.43** (1.43) | **4.34** (1.32) | **4.15** (1.18) | **4.13** (1.59) | **4.10** (1.17) | **4.21** (1.36) |
| Structured Interviews | 128 | .759 | **5.47** | 1.38 | **5.32** (1.42) | **5.65** (1.33) | **5.22*** (.11) | **5.75*** (1.52) | **5.04*** (1.34) | **5.08*** (1.11) | **4.33*** (1.27) | **5.32*** (1.20) | **4.99*** (1.08) | **5.35*** (1.30) | **5.67*** (.99) | **4.56*** (1.19) |
| CVs | 137 | .727 | **5.27** | 1.47 | **5.14** (1.54) | **5.42** (1.38) | **4.97** (.00) | **5.60** (1.59) | | **4.68** (1.05) | **4.50** (1.30) | **4.73** (1.25) | **4.90** (1.18) | **5.18** (1.33) | **4.85** (1.13) | **4.54** (1.19) |
| Personality Tests | 126 | .762 | **5.19** | 1.34 | **5.26** (1.34) | **5.11** (1.36) | **4.08** (.27) | **5.27** (1.93) | **3.86** (1.37) | **4.42** (1.13) | **3.77** (1.36) | **4.17** (1.37) | **4.05** (1.08) | **4.13** (1.32) | **4.18** (1.09) | **3.96** (1.35) |
| Verbal Testing | 121 | .791 | **5.02** | 1.40 | **5.04** (1.35) | **5.01** (1.47) | | | | | | | | | | |
| References | 131 | .654 | **5.01** | 1.50 | **5.04** (1.46) | **4.98** (1.55) | **4.36** (.20) | **5.33** (1.65) | | **4.34** (1.25) | **4.25** (1.23) | **3.86** (1.39) | **3.54** (1.49) | **3.94** (1.49) | **4.91** (1.21) | **4.12** (1.10) |
| Unstructured Interviews | 126 | .756 | **4.98** | 1.60 | **5.29** (1.37) | **4.65** (1.77) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Assessment Centers | 119 | .707 | **4.95** | 1.50 | **4.89** (1.55) | **5.03** (1.47) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Psychometric Tests | 121 | .815 | **4.95** | 1.48 | **5.03** (1.41) | **4.86** (1.58) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Numerical Testing | 119 | .768 | **4.81** | 1.32 | **4.88** (1.26) | **4.73** (1.41) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Integrity Tests | 115 | .698 | **4.77** | 1.46 | **4.82** (1.40) | **4.72** (1.56) | **3.69** (.36) | **5.11** (2.01) | | **3.26** (1.43) | **3.07** (1.48) | **3.52** (1.47) | **3.22** (1.36) | **3.85** (1.57) | **3.64** (1.28) | **2.54** (1.24) |
| Abstract Testing | 111 | .733 | **4.34** | 1.50 | **4.44** (1.41) | **4.21** (1.62) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Application Forms | 127 | .702 | **4.32** | 1.44 | **4.28** (1.45) | **4.37** (1.44) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Biodata | 111 | .780 | **4.30** | 1.63 | **3.99** (1.54) | **4.66** (1.67) | **4.28** (.28) | **5.32** (1.72) | | **4.24** (1.12) | **3.72** (1.35) | **4.23** (1.18) | **3.90** (1.23) | **3.99** (1.29) | **3.20** (1.27) | **3.91** (1.31) |
| Webcam-based Interviews | 116 | .812 | **3.76** | 1.44 | **3.55** (1.35) | **4.00** (1.52) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Telephone Interviews | 130 | .706 | **3.41** | 1.43 | **3.40** (1.53) | **3.43** (1.33) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Online Testing | 117 | .767 | **3.33** | 1.56 | **3.23** (1.48) | **3.45** (1.65) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Personal Contacts | 25 | .852 | **2.71** | 1.77 | **2.85** (1.83) | **2.50** (1.76) | **2.59** (.25) | **3.00** (1.96) | | **3.04** (1.37) | **2.99** (1.82) | **3.35** (1.58) | **2.22** (1.32) | **2.80** (1.84) | **2.62** (1.51) | **2.92** (1.67) |
| Graphology | 102 | .780 | **2.63** | 1.38 | **2.65** (1.34) | **2.62** (1.43) | **2.33** (.18) | **1.33** (.83) | | **1.95** (1.06) | **2.27** (1.39) | **2.04** (1.28) | **2.09** (1.20) | **2.89** (1.75) | **1.90** (1.10) | **3.23** (1.62) |
| Astrology | 106 | .886 | **1.75** | 1.20 | **1.69** (1.13) | **1.82** (1.29) | | | | | | | | | | |

*interviews were differentiated in structured or unstructured;
**the sample was converted from a 7 point scale;
***meta-analysis into reaction generalization over 17 countries (Anderson, Salgado and Hülsheger, 2010)

**ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SERVANTS' PERCEPTION ON LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICES IN ROMANIA**

# ANALIZA PERCEPŢIEI FUNCŢIONARILOR PUBLICI ASUPRA SERVICIILOR PUBLICE LOCALE DIN ROMÂNIA


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***Abstract***

The aim of this study is to disclose civil servants' perception on local public services in Romania. In this respect, the article exposes the conceptual framework regarding the local public services and their role in the sustainable development of the society. Furthermore, the study reveals the analysis of the responses of the civil servants regarding the local public services in Romania.



***Keywords*:** public services, civil servants, public administration, sustainable development.

**JEL CODES:** H70, L80, L88.



***Rezumat***

Obiectivul acestui studiu este acela de a analiza percepţia funcţionarilor publici asupra serviciilor publice locale din România. În acest sens, articolul reliefează cadrul conceptual al serviciilor publice locale şi evidenţiază rolul acestora la dezvoltarea durabilă a societăţii. În continuare, studiul prezintă analiza răspunsurilor funcţionarilor publici referitor la serviciile publice locale din România.



***Cuvinte cheie:*** servicii publice, funcţionari publici, administraţie publică, dezvoltare durabilă

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Local public services meet the specific needs of local and regional communities. The normal operation of any community may be achieved if there are ensured some specific activities of general interest, such as, for example, water, heat, gas distribution, sanitation, etc. These activities which meet the general interest must be provided by the local authorities on the basis that they respond to the citizens who have elected them to represent their interests.

Today, there is a strong need of efficient and effective local public services both for businesses and for citizens. The civil servants are the ones who may improve the way in which public services are delivered to the clients. Hence, this study explores civil servants' perception on local public services in Romania, derived from the analysis of empirical data collected through a questionnaire created and applied by the author. First of all, the article exposes the conceptual framework regarding the local public services and their role in the sustainable development of the society. Furthermore, the study reveals the analysis of the responses of the civil servants regarding the local public services in Romania.

## 2. BACKGROUND

Developments in contemporary society reveal that the performance and the success of the economy are depending on the extent to which the variety of modern methods and techniques specific to management science is put into practice.

Local communities in Romania and other European Union Member States have the mission to ensure local public services to meet the permanent and temporary needs of residents. The character of these needs has proven to be over time unlimited. Therefore, the development of public services and their diversification have been favoured by the general progress of the society, which led to new needs of the population. The public power has tried to satisfy these needs due to reasons related to general interest.

The social pillar within the sustainable development concept has gained more recognition in the recent years. A shift was observed from the so-called traditional social themes such as education, employment, toward emerging themes such as governance, sense of place, social capital and networks. In light of this change the sustainability debate is often linked to urban environments and communities (Neamţu, 2012, p.125). Local authorities have the difficult task of managing sensitive and complex issues of local communities. The public authority ensures the management of financial resources and their use based on electoral programs, as well as on surveys, so as to create a convergence of the

strategic objectives with the immediate or future needs of local communities. Ensuring local government capacity to develop economic and social reform measures and to meet the requirements of citizens mainly depends on the development of local public services consistent with similar structures in the European Union countries.

There is a confrontation between the financial resources which are typically deep limited, and the needs for public services, whose character is unlimited. The local communities are often put in a position to look for financial resources, using loans, when necessary, as an alternative to financing public services and local development. Public policy considerations are becoming more relevant especially in time of financial crisis, thus making of decisions should manage the balance between short-term financial tasks and medium ones. In Romania, even it is created a institutional framework for support effective policy management, their execution is limited (Nicolescu et al., 2011, pp. 157).

The existence of the democratic state has generated profound changes for Romania in the organization of public administration, at both central and local level. Local communities have increasingly strengthened local autonomy. Nevertheless, the need of a good management practice to meet the general interest of the citizens requires efforts to identify concrete ways to improve the management of local government.

The expansion of public tasks and a larger degree of complexity augments the significance of *good* management (i.e. the concept of good administration, good governance, sound governance, co-governance, collaborative governance) in the public administration (Pečarič, 2013, p. 126).

The Romanian local public administration is rather centralized and more under the control of central authorities (Androniceanu, 2011, p. 64). The legislation has created the appropriate framework to ensure the stability of employment in the public administration regardless of political changes. However, unfortunately, regardless of legal guarantees, the political changes led to many changes among civil servants, especially in the case of leadership positions (Andrei et al., 2012, p.5).

The aim in the European Union is that by 2015 European public administrations to be "recognised for being open, flexible and collaborative in their relations with citizens and businesses. They use e-government to increase their efficiency and effectiveness and to constantly improve public services in a way that caters for user's different needs and maximises public value, thus supporting the transition of Europe to a leading knowledge-based economy" (European Commission, 2010, p. 4).

Focus of development of efficient and high quality IT technologies, is the most significant strength, assuring sustainability to the organization, and focuses on obtaining high revenue and profit will be the



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most powerful methods to handle the crisis. In time of crisis it is marked that the Government establishes commitments of realistic and accessible policies in a sure macro environment, to ensures an adequate budgeting, assure a frame of measures which include efficient targets, but in Romania there is no formal process for establishing the priorities, which could be linked to the macroeconomic environment, the annual legislative plan is not comprehensive or proiritized effectively (Nicolescu et al., 2011, pp. 75)

There are many challenges of public administration's management, related to the problems of urbanization, industrialization, sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness of the public services delivered to the citizens (Teşu, 2012a, p. 61).

The recent measures undertaken in the aftermath of the economic crisis by most European governments have shown that equal access to and affordability of public services are no longer considered as untouchable rights. The economic crisis has clearly exposed the weaknesses of European welfare states and the need for reforms, but the direction most European governments are going is utterly short-sighted. Not only does it call the universality of public services, one of the underlying foundations of the European social model, into question, but it is also likely to significantly affect the future of Europeans' well-being (Dhéret, 2011).

Local governments can improve not only decision intelligence to locate and tackle social problems, but also democratic responsiveness by designing public services customized to citizens' needs and demands (Lim, 2010, p. 29).

Invested by citizens with public authority through democratic voting, local authorities must provide public services of the highest quality and utility in order to ensure the sustainability of local government which they have assumed with responsibility to the voters.

Improving public administration's management is possible if it is based on a coherent strategy, which may take into account the economic, social, and environmental problems that need to be solved in the near future (Teşu, 2012b, p. 61).

## 3. CIVIL SERVANTS' PERCEPTION ON LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICES

In order to examine civil servants' perceptions regarding the local public services within District 2 of Bucharest a questionnaire was developed and applied. The questionnaire used was construed based on a five-level Likert scale of increasing intensity where 1 indicates very dissatisfied and 5 designates very satisfied. The questionnaire was applied during November 2011 on a sample of 175 subjects,

obtaining valid responses from 150 subjects. The sample was based on a population made up of employees from District 2 of Bucharest (331 persons). The sample is representative in terms of its structure, which was established in view of official statistics on the structure of the civil service in Romania.

Regarding the civil servants' view on the extent to which they are satisfied with the services provided to citizens by the institution in which they work, the results show that most of them are satisfied. According to their responses, 23% of civil servants are very satisfied with the services provided to citizens by the institution in which they work, 52% were satisfied, 14% are indifferent, 6% are dissatisfied and 5% very dissatisfied (Figure 1).

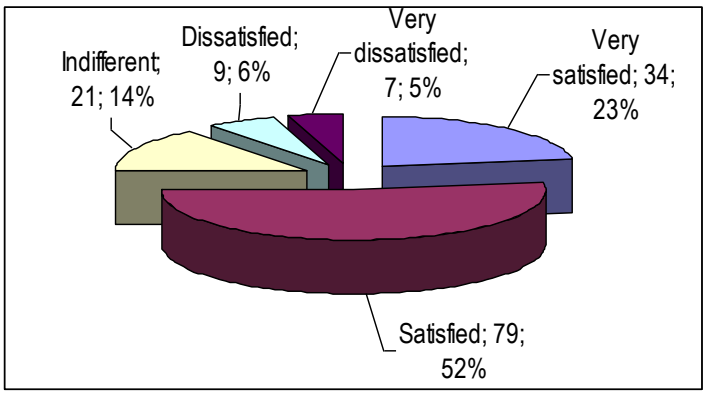



**FIGURE 1**. CIVIL SERVANTS' VIEW ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEY ARE SATISFIED WITH THE SERVICES PROVIDED TO CITIZENS BY THE PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN WHICH THEY WORK

Source: Authors' calculations.

In order to identify civil servants' opinion on the extent to which they are satisfied with the current state of public services the subjects were asked to evaluate 30 public services (Figure 2).

According to the performed study, the civil servants are *very satisfied* with the current state of the following public services: civil (marital) status (33; 22%), civil protection (23; 15%), cadastre and land resources (23; 15%), security service provided by community police (21; 14%), and personal data records public service (20; 13%). The last in the rankings of public services of which the subjects are very satisfied are the following public services: traffic management (10; 7%), public passenger transport service (7; 5%), and maintenance, repair and operation of roads (7; 5%).

The civil servants surveyed are *satisfied* with the current state of the following public services: advertising permissions public service (69; 46%), civil (marital) status public service (67; 45%), civil protection (65; 43%), personal data records public service (59; 39%), authorizing the entrepreneurship and SME support (57; 38%). The last in the rankings of public services of which the subjects are



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satisfied are the following: public passenger transport service (23; 15%), heat distribution public service (22; 15%), maintenance, repair and operation of roads (22, 15%).

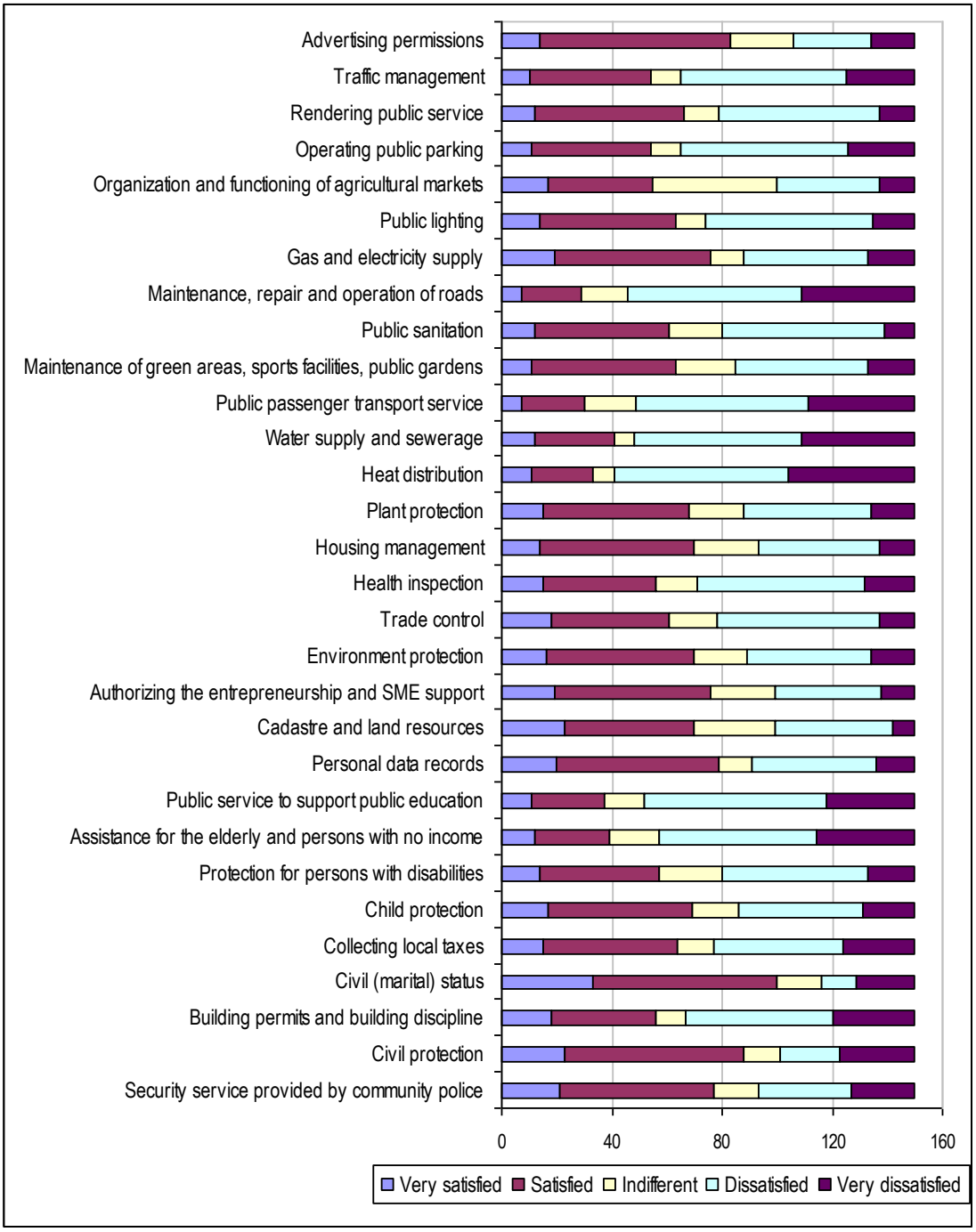



**FIGURE 2**. CIVIL SERVANTS' OPINION ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEY ARE SATISFIED WITH THE CURRENT STATE OF 30 PUBLIC SERVICES

Source: Authors' calculations.

Analysing the responses received we may disclose that the civil servants interviewed are *indifferent* (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) about the current state of the following public services: the organization and functioning of agricultural markets (45; 30%), cadastre and land resources (29; 19%), advertising permissions public service (23; 15%), authorizing the entrepreneurship and SME support (23; 15%), housing management (23; 15%), protection for persons with disabilities (23; 15%). Last but not least, the civil servants interviewed are indifferent about the current state of the following public services: building permits and building discipline public service (11; 7%), heat distribution (8; 5%), water supply and sewerage (7; 5%).

The subjects surveyed are *dissatisfied* with the current state of the following public services: public service to support public education (66; 44%), maintenance, repair and operation of roads (63; 42%), heat distribution (63; 42%), public passenger transport service (62; 41%), public health inspection service (61; 41%), public lighting (61; 41%), operating public parking (61; 41%), and water supply and sewerage (61; 41%). The last in the rankings of public services of which the subjects are dissatisfied are the following public services: advertising permissions public service (28; 19%), civil protection (22; 15%), and civil (marital) status public service (13; 9%).

According to the performed study, the civil servants are *very dissatisfied* with the current state of the following public services: heat distribution (46; 31%), maintenance, repair and operation of roads (41; 27%), water supply and sewerage (41; 27%), public passenger transport service (39; 26%), assistance for the elderly and persons with no income (36; 24%), public service to support public education (32; 21%). The last in the rankings of public services of which the subjects are very dissatisfied are the following public services: authorizing the entrepreneurship and SME support (12, 8%), public sanitation service (11; 7%), and cadastre and land resources public service (8; 5%).

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

This study has explored civil servants' perception on local public services in Romania, derived from the analysis of empirical data collected through a questionnaire created and applied by the author.

The main conclusion of this study is that there are many public services of which the civil servants are very satisfied or satisfied, such as: civil (marital) status, civil protection, cadastre and land resources, security service provided by community police, personal data records public service, advertising permissions public service, and authorizing the entrepreneurship and SME support. However, there are also many public services of which the civil servants are very dissatisfied or dissatisfied, such as: heat distribution, maintenance, repair and operation of roads, water supply and sewerage, public passenger



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transport service, assistance for the elderly and persons with no income, public service to support public education, public health inspection service, public lighting, operating public parking.

Strengthening the administrative capacity for service quality management, timeliness and evaluation is a key element in improving the efficiency of public services. The analysis of the current state has identified a concern of the citizens regarding both the speed and quality in the provision of public services and the lack of citizen (customer) focus by the local public authorities. The service delivery must be based on standards and measurable targets so as to evaluate the the real performance. Improving customer service policy may be applied to all actors within the local public administration.

In addition, the training and skills development of civil servants involved in the provision of public services and in the management of public institutions may lead to improving administrative transparency. They may provide to the general public more information on the activity of the local public administration.

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# THE INFLUENCE OF THE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIOR ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

# INFLUENŢA COMPORTAMENTULUI CONTRAPRODUCTIV AL ANGAJAŢILOR ASUPRA PERFORMANŢEI ORGANIZAŢIONALE


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***Abstract***
This study investigates the influence of the counterproductive work behavior on the organizational performance. The objective of this paper is to demonstrate the link between human resource's job satisfactions and the overall growth of an organization.
The role of human resources is crucial for any organization. The behavior of the employees affects the organizations either in a negative or in a positive way. In other words, the employee's behavior is considered very important in the life of organizations due its clear effects on obtaining performance.
The work environment has a significant influence for both individuals and organizations because it determines the success and the urge for continuation..



***Keywords*:** counterproductive work, human resources management, organizational climate, organizational performance, economic growth.

**JEL CODES:** E24, J24, J28 O15



***Rezumat***
Lucrarea prezintă influența comportamentului contraproductiv al angajaților asupra performanței organizaționale. Obiectivul acestui studiu este expunerea legăturii dintre satisfacția oferită de locul de muncă angajaților, corelată cu creșterea per ansamblu a organizației.
Rolul resurselor umane este crucial pentru orice organizație. Comportamentul angajaţilor poate avea atât efecte pozitive, cât şi negative. Cu alte cuvinte, comportamentul angajaţilor este considerat a fi extrem de important pentru organizație, datorită legăturii directe cu performanța.



***Cuvinte cheie:*** comportament contraproductiv, managementul resurselor umane, climat organizațional, performanță organizațională, creștere economică



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

When it comes to measuring an organization's performance, there are two major aspects to deal with. First is the economic approach, focused mainly on budgets, costs, investment and mainly profit, while the second approach is concerned with the behavioral and sociological aspects that affect the success of the organization. While the economic approach can be controlled with rules and improved with strategies, the behavior of the human resources involved in the organization, at all levels, takes more than that to function at a proper level and to contribute for the betterment of the organization.

The goal of this paper is to identify the reasons why people, especially employees, might engage in counterproductive behavior, and then to find solutions to help organizations to cope with this problem, by maximizing the satisfaction of the people who are part of it.

Each task, in particular, or job, in general, involves distinct activities and different levels of responsibility, so, accordingly, each employee will perceive his work as more or less meaningful or satisfactory.

The following Job Characteristics Model was developed by Hackman and Oldham, in 1976. It is commonly used as a support to measure how a job characteristics influence job outcomes, with accent on job satisfaction (Hackman and Oldham, 1976).

The model states that there are five core job characteristics:

1. Skill variety
2. Task identity
3. Task significance
4. Autonomy
5. Feedback

Every job has, more or less, these characteristics. The challenge is to match them with the one who is doing it. Why is this important? It is important because the person will adjust the moods according to these characteristics and this will affect the job result.

When inside an organization, employees want to draw attention on certain aspects that make them unsatisfied or "attempt to resolve injustice within the organization they might engage in CWB as a form of protest" (Kelloway et al., 2010). This kind of conduct is dysfunctional, because individuals "willfully

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commit acts that have the intention of harming organizations or people within them" (Kelloway et al., 2010).

There can be many forms of counterproductive work behavior, "from difficult personalities that damage team cohesion to employee theft that undermines your organization's financial well-being" (Kelloway et al., 2010).

The most frequent CWB are an offensive behavior against co-workers, physical or verbal aggression, sabotage, theft, work done improperly on purpose and withdrawal (coming late, absence and turnover). The most important characteristics of CWB are the willingness of a certain behavior and the intention of a harmful result.

## 2. PREVENTING CWB – WHAT CAN BE DONE?

One solution would be that offered by Stan Mack in his article on smallbusiness.chron.com - limited access to online activities (Mack, 2014). But this could prove itself a counterproductive solution, given the fact that small breaks for an online routine almost everybody has are a necessity, and the lack of that might increase the level of frustration.

For such a solution to give optimal results, a change of mentality is needed. People should be taught to use breaks for leaving their chair or even desk for a few minute, to go out or engage in a relaxing activity.

There are also good practices for preventing employee turnover, not only restrictions. Research based on companies from United Stated and Germany highlighted "7 *people-centered practices:*

1. *Job security (to eliminate fear of layoffs).*
2. *Careful hiring (emphasizing a good fit with the company culture).*
3. *Power to the people (via decentralization and self-managed teams).*
4. *Generous pay for performance.*
5. *Lots of training.*
6. *Less emphasis on status (to build a "we" feeling).*
7. *Trust building (through the sharing of critical information)."* (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2012).

Importantly, these factors are a *package* deal, meaning they need to be installed in a coordinated and systematic manner—not in bits and pieces (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2012).

One of the most efficient ways to prevent unethical behavior in an organization is showing appreciation for the employees when their work is done properly or when they are giving their best. Muhammad Adeel Anjum and Anjum Parvez put forward, in their paper "Counterproductive Behavior at Work: A Comparison of Blue Collar and White Collar Workers", a good perspective regarding two different categories of people engaged in organizational activities. "White collar jobs include performing the non-manual work; that is dealing with information, not the things. These jobs demand specialized experience and rigorous education. Blue collar jobs, on the other hand, involve performing the manual work which requires physical involvement and efforts." (Adeel and Anjum, 2013). This is the main reason why white collars might look for the intrinsic aspects of their job – the meaning of what they are doing, the degree of autonomy they benefit of, the higher purpose of their actions, a goal – while blue collar jobs holders are known to value more the material benefits (rewards and the security of their job), but it will never harm making them feel appreciated as individuals – this might encourage them to lose those habits that damage the company – as stealing, half-done jobs, coming late at work etc.

This might be one of the most proficient ways to ensure the loyalty of the employees. And it is know that a loyal employee will try to accomplish given tasks on a daily basis – this will be for sure translated in profits for the company, either in form of money, or in better results.

Organizational culture is always to be taken into account. The profit that the company has is, partly, a result of this specific way of doing things. Human resources mission is very important - when hiring someone, by paying attention to the individual values of the future employee, to see if those match with the organization's values, they'll save a lot of future costs for the company.

It is also known that when a task is completely in the hand of one employee, there are increased chances of unethical or counterproductive behavior. The solution is to create system very well balanced, where tasks are divided or, at least, checked by one other person – paying attention not to make things more complicated, unnecessary.

## 3. FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO CWB

"Revenge is not always an immediate and impulsive reaction to a situation but rather involves a complex interplay of cognition and emotion over time" (Spector et al., 2013).

Being in an emotional state and having an affective disposition are two very different things. It is vital to make the distinction between the impacts a transitory mood has, compared to the possibility of counterproductive work behavior when we talk about long-term emotional experience – because some persons are more liable to negative emotions than others. This takes us again to the utmost importance



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of HR while hiring a new person, for making sure that the person has real chances to become a part of the already built collective. Variables as self-control (the capacity to see the long-term consequences of one's behavior), emotional stability (capacity to control or avoid major behavior changes, in the same external circumstances), self-esteem (capacity to consider yourself worthy of getting the benefits from a good job you have done), agreeableness (capacity to make yourself pleasant for the other you have to work or be with) are of major importance when a new person is brought in an already-shaped environment. If a new employee lacks most of these characteristics, the chances he feels intimidated or unable to join amplify, frustration might appear and increase and all this will affect his productivity and, on a longer term, the company's profits – they might need to divide his tasks or even to find someone else to do the job properly.

Some of the early traits of counterproductive behavior are work anxiety, poor health symptoms, withdrawal behavior – the employee comes to work, but has the intention to quit, along with hostility, aggression and sabotage.

According to Performance Group International Ltd. (2014), "*75% of employees have reportedly stolen from their employer at least once. Estimates also indicate that 33% to 75% of all employees have engaged in behaviors such as fraud, sabotage, and voluntary absenteeism".*

A survey carried out on Nurses by the UK National Health Service Community Trust indicated that 38% of respondents had experienced workplace bullying, while 42% of respondents had witnessed workplace bullying. Healthcare professionals are the second largest occupational group to report problems associated with bullying, behind teachers. However bullying is not only confined to these sectors; it is prevalent across a wide variety of industries.

Two studies, both from 2010, indicated that more than half of the American adults were confronted with bullying at work, either being the target, either being a witness, and that 10% out of 12.000 people, in 24 countries asserted that they have been harassed, either physically, or sexually in the environment where they work.

Another one of the most toxic behaviors towards employees is abuse by a supervisor. This will definitely trigger a sense of intimidation or humiliation in the employee which further bring a feeling of being undermined, which leads to an increased chance to manifest counterproductive behaviors, sometimes aimed at their co-workers (Tepper et al., 2008).

Yves Morieux, director of the Boston Counsulting Group Institute for Organization in the global People & Organization practice area, considers cooperation a basis for avoiding frustration and CWB arise. When

communication is not at its best, the employees will have "to compensate with super individual efforts for the lack of cooperation" (Morieux, 2013).

Another good practice he suggests companies should implement is *"increase the total amount of power. Give everybody the power to make decisions and make them aware of the risks, so they are willing to cooperate and solve the task"* (Morieux, 2013).

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The losses caused at organizational level through this kind of practices (CWB) are massive. Efficiency is a common goal, which expands on the shoulders of every individual involved in every activity of the company. As it is said, a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, and any kind of CWB will affect the capacity and power of the overall organization. Every time a department will have to redo a task, to check someone's actions, to provide material goods earlier than planned, to find a new strategy to synchronize a team or a person with the team, the company will lose in terms of efficiency. Every time an employee comes late at work or doesn't come at all, delays actions that could solve the concrete tasks, doesn't improve or apply all the knowledge he or she has, the company will lost in terms of efficiency. If it's about products, they will deliver later or under the standard quality, if it is about organizational environment, it won't be proper for work at the highest level, if it is about the profit, there are no chances that it won't be affected, and by this, we mean decrease.

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# CHANGE OF THE ORGANISATION CULTURE – THE MAIN DRIVER FOR IMPLEMENTING COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS

***Abstract***
More and more companies across the Middle East consider vital for their success to streamline their human resources processes and one area of particular focus is the development and implementation of competency frameworks. The purpose of this research is to show that regardless of the type of organisation, the change of the organisation culture is the main driver for implementing competency frameworks. The study was conducted by analysing the interviews of business leaders from companies that decided to implement competency frameworks across their main human resources processes. The companies are from government and private sectors in United Arab Emirates and Oman. They conduct their businesses locally or regionally across a wide range of industries and have a very diverse workforce in terms of size, nationalities and qualifications. Many business leaders consider, as Peter Drucker said, that "Culture eats strategy for breakfast". Therefore, if a company wants to be successful, it is essential to develop a relevant competency framework and embed it in the human resources processes for supporting its strategy and achieving its business objectives.

***Keywords*:** organizational culture, change, competency frameworks

**JEL CODES:** M10, M12, M14

# SCHIMBAREA CULTURII ORGANIZAŢIEI – PRINCIPALUL FACTOR DETERMINANT AL IMPLEMENTĂRII CADRELOR DE COMPETENŢE

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***Rezumat***
Din ce în ce mai multe companii din Orientul Mijlociu consideră vital pentru succesul lor direcționarea procesului resurselor umane, iar una din aceste direcții constă în dezvoltarea și implementarea cadrelor de competențe. Scopul acestei cercetări este de a arăta că indiferent de tipul de organizație, schimbarea culturii organizației este principalul factor determinant pentru implementarea cadrelor de competență.
Metodologia studiului a constat în analizarea interviurilor managerilor unor companii din sectorul public și privat din Emiratele Arabe Unite și Oman, care au decis să implementeze cadrele de competențe în cadrul proceselor de resurse umane. Studiul s-a realizat in firme care isi desfasoara activitatea la nivel local și regional, într-o gamă largă de industrii și care au o forță de muncă foarte diversă în ceea ce privește mărimea, naționalitatea și calificările.
Mulți oameni de afaceri sunt de acord cu afirmatia lui Petër Drucker conform căreia "cultura este strategia pentru micul dejun". Prin urmare, orice companie care dorește să aibă succes este esențial să dezvolte un cadru relevant de competențe în procesele de resurse umane pentru a sprijini strategia și atingerea obiectivelor.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** cultura organizațională, schimbare, procesele de resurse umane, cadrul de competențe.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Creating and fostering an organizational culture focused on performance that in the same time will determine employees' motivation and engagement is an ongoing challenge for business leaders. Culture has been accepted as a "fact of organizational life" by managers and has become an integral aspect of many organizational development programs (Balthazard and Cooke, 2004,p.2).

In the literature, different authors emphasized the importance of organizational culture: It can support linkages between technology adoption and organizational growth (Chatman and Jehn, 1994), it can be a critical success factor in manufacturing strategy (Bates *et al.*, 1995) and play a crucial role in determining the success or failure of mergers and acquisitions (Weber *et al.,* 1996).

More and more companies across the Middle East have a well-defined strategic direction, a clear vision, mission, values and strategic objectives and consider vital for their success to align the organisation culture to the strategy. Currently, it can be observed that one area of particular focus for many companies is the implementation of competency frameworks and streamlining human resources processes.

Bartram *et al*. (2002) considered the competencies as "sets of behaviors that are instrumental in the delivery of desired results". Dubois (1993) developed a systematic approach to improving individual workers' performance as part of an overall strategy for organizational change. Frameworks were provided for conceptualizing and implementing exemplary training practices. In addition, steps in achieving the practices and pitfalls to avoid were outlined.

If we consider the culture of an organisation as defined by Robert A. Cooke (1988) "the shared beliefs and values guiding the thinking and behavioral styles of members or the behaviours that members believe are required to fit in and meet expectations within their organization" and the competencies "as sets of behaviours that make a person to be successful in a certain job", than competency frameworks could impact directly on the organizational culture determining it in many aspects.

However, the organizational culture is determined not just by the competencies, but also by the values, policies, systems, norms, beliefs and other collective behaviours. Therefore, the culture impacts on how employees see performance and how they interact internally in the organisation and externally, with clients and external stakeholders.

When a competency framework is embedded in the human resources processes, even though this is not the only variable, it supports the organisation to set and communicate the expectations not just in terms of the output but also in terms of behaviour, knowledge, skills and abilities. This is likely to help to

determine an organizational culture that will recognise and strive to achieve performance and in the same time respect the values of the organisation that are cascaded down from the top leadership through competencies.

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that regardless the type of the organisation, development and implementation of competency frameworks aim to align the organizational culture to company strategy to support its vision, mission, values and strategic objectives. Once the culture is aligned to the strategy, the priority and focus change to further streamlining the human resources processes.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted by analysing the data from a questionnaire that was administered to senior human resources managers and C level executives from 14 companies and from the interviews conducted with business leaders of 10 companies that developed and implemented competency frameworks.

*The questionnaire:* The questionnaire (Annex 1) was automated and administered in June 2014 and investigated if a competency framework is implemented in companies that have operations across Middle East in a diverse range of industries. The number of employees range from 25 to 40,000 and their head offices are in Middle East, India, South Africa, Malaysia, Pakistan and Bermuda.

No significant correlation could be established between the implementation of competency frameworks and the industry where the company activates, the number of employees or location.

TABLE 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF COMPANIES THAT COMPLETED THE QUESTIONNAIRE

| | Country | Industry | Approx. no. of employ | Competencies in place |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | UAE | Logistics | 25 | Yes |
| 2 | Jordan | Telecommunication | 150 | Yes |
| 3 | South Africa | Healthcare | 154 | Yes |
| 4 | Malaysia | Services | 200 | Yes |
| 5 | Pakistan | Pharmaceutical | 900 | Yes |
| 6 | India | Real estate | 1000 | Yes |
| 7 | India | Retail | 2000 | Yes |
| 8 | India | Biotech | 3500 | Yes |
| 9 | Qatar | Construction | 4500 | Yes |
| 10 | South Africa | Research | 130 | No |
| 11 | Bermuda | Insurance | 1400 | No |
| 12 | UAE | Multiple industries | 3000 | No |
| 13 | Pakistan | Manufacturing | 5000+ | No |
| 14 | India | Banking | 40000 | No |



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From the 14 companies that were invited to respond to the questionnaire, 9 companies have competency frameworks implemented and 5 do not have.

Most of the respondents from companies where a competency framework is implemented answered focusing more on the benefits and the impact that competencies have on the human resources processes in the company. The main benefits and also drivers considered by the respondents are: a better management of the performance, recruitment and talent management. Answers also mentioned as one of the drivers the link between performance and rewards and the need of a competency culture where there are clear standards in place for rating competencies across diverse processes and regions to ensure internal equity and consistency.

Respondents from the companies that do not have a competency framework implemented yet, focused on the need for alignment as the main driver. They saw the change from a higher level and considered the impact on the achievement of the overall strategy of the company.

*The interviews:* The interviews were conducted in the period 2011 – 2014 with the business leaders from companies that developed and implemented competency frameworks. The discussion was focussed on gathering information about the company and its need for competency framework across the main human resources processes.

The companies are from government and private sectors in UAE and Oman. They activate locally or regionally across a wide range of industries and have a very diverse workforce in terms of size, nationalities and qualifications.

TABLE 2. COMPANIES THAT DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS AND THEIR BUSINESS LEADERS PARTICIPATED IN THE INTERVIEW

| | Company | Country | Industry | Approx. no of employ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sharaf DG | UAE | Retail | 1000 |
| 2 | Al Ghurarir University | UAE | Higher Education | 250 |
| 3 | Azadea Group | UAE* | Retail | 7000 |
| 4 | Private Property Management | UAE | Facilities Management | 200 |
| 5 | Oman Footbal Association | Oman | Sports | 110 |
| 6 | Nawras | Oman | Telecommunications | 800 |
| 7 | Oman Broadband Company | Oman | Telecommunications | 247 |
| 8 | The KEF Company | UAE** | Multiple industries | 1000 |
| 9 | Liwa Group | UAE | Retail | 1300 |
| 10 | Topaz Engineering | UAE | Heavy Engineering | 800 |

*Head Office in UAE and regional offices and operation in Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, KSA, Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Romania
** Head Office in UAE and regional offices and operations in India

The interview guide (Annex 2) was developed to include questions related to the business strategy and how the competency framework can support the achievement of the vision. Even though it was not strictly followed in order to accommodate interviewees schedule and interests, the interview provided critical data to understand the organisation culture and how this needs to change so the competencies developed will fit this purpose.

Most of the companies interviewed have a strategy defined and KPIs cascaded to the departments. Although most of the times the strategy was not communicated consistently across the organisations, departments were clear about their goals and what they have to achieve.

All the business leaders interviewed before the development of the competency framework specified that they want to better define the employer brand and reduce the employee turnover which especially in the United Arab Emirates is an important area of focus due to the specificities of the job market. i.e. in Retail companies attrition rate is generally above 20%. In order for the companies to attract and retain the employees, all the business leaders consider it is vital to put in place processes that will ensure the values of the organisation are cascaded down to the individual. The characteristics of the organisation culture that were mentioned most across all the interviews are: respect, diversity, fairness, integrity, transparency and performance.

The companies interviewed expect that after the implementation of a competency framework in their main human resources processes, the desired behaviours will be encouraged systematically to be displayed and the organisation culture will be streamlined towards the values of the organisation.

## 3. CONCLUSIONS

Human resources professionals and business leaders that completed the questionnaire and interview consider implementation of competencies as very important for streamlining the human resources processes in their companies. The drivers for this initiative is generally related to encouraging behaviours that will impact on the organisation culture, changing it to better support the strategy of the company.

Even though the need of alignment between the strategy and the organisation culture support embedding of the competency framework in human resources processes and practice however, not all the businesses understand the need of a formalised approach on how employees shall behave to be successful.



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**Annex 1**

QUESTIONNAIRE

Development and Implementation of Competency Frameworks

**Demographic questions**

**[G1Q00001] The questions below are about your role and your company.**

Please write your answer(s) here:

- Designation _____
- Department _____
- Company _____
- Total no. of employees _____
- Industry _____
- Country _____

**[G1Q00002] Do you have a competency framework in place in your company? ***

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

**[G2Q00001] When the competency framework was developed and implemented?**

***Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:***
*Answer was 'Yes' at question '2 [G1Q00002]' (Do you have a competency framework in place in your company?)*

Please write your answer here:

_____

_____

**[G2Q00002] Across which areas of HR is the competency framework implemented?**

***Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:***
*Answer was 'Yes' at question '2 [G1Q00002]' (Do you have a competency framework in place in your company?)*

Please choose **all** that apply:

- ☐ Recruitment
- ☐ Performance management
- ☐ Succession planning
- ☐ Career development
- ☐ Training and development
- ☐ Other: _____



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**[G2Q00003]What were the drivers for implementing a competency framework in your company?**

***Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:***
*Answer was 'Yes' at question '2 [G1Q00002]' (Do you have a competency framework in place in your company?)*

Please write your answer here:

**[G2Q00004] What are the main three (3) benefits of implementing a competency framework?**

***Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:***
*Answer was 'Yes' at question '2 [G1Q00002]' (Do you have a competency framework in place in your company?)*

Please write your answer here:

**[G3Q00001] Do you think a competency framework would be useful to be implemented in your company? ***

***Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:***
*Answer was 'No' at question '2 [G1Q00002]' (Do you have a competency framework in place in your company?)*

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

**[G3Q00002] What benefits do you think the implementation of a competency framework would bring in your company?**

***Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:***
*Answer was 'Yes' at question '7 [G3Q00001]' (Do you think a competency framework would be useful to be implemented in your company?)*

Please write your answer here:

**[G3Q00003] Does your company plan to develop and implement a competency framework? ***

***Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:***
*Answer was 'Yes' at question '7 [G3Q00001]' (Do you think a competency framework would be useful to be implemented in your company?)*

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

**[G3Q00004] What are the drivers for the development and implementation of a competency framework?**

***Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:***
*Answer was 'Yes' at question '9 [G3Q00003]' (Does your company plan to develop and implement a competency framework?)*

Please write your answer here:

**[G3Q00005] On what areas of HR would the competency framework be implemented?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**
Answer was 'Yes' at question '9 [G3Q00003]' (Does your company plan to develop and implement a competency framework?)

Please choose **all** that apply:

- ☐ Recruitment
- ☐ Performance management
- ☐ Succession planning
- ☐ Career development
- ☐ Training and development
- ☐ Other: _____

**[G3Q00006] What stops your company from developing and implementing a competency framework?**

***Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:***
*Answer was 'No' at question '9 [G3Q00003]' (Does your company plan to develop and implement a competency framework?)*

Please write your answer here:

**[G3Q00007] What makes a competency framework not useful to be implemented in your company?**

***Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:***
*Answer was 'No' at question '7 [G3Q00001]' (Do you think a competency framework would be useful to be implemented in your company?)*

Please write your answer here:

**[G4Q00001] Additional Comments**

Please write your answer here:

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**Annex 2**

INTERVIEW GUIDE

**Competency Framework Development**

**Extract from the Business Leaders Interview Guide**

## Introduction

- Tell us something about yourself

## Nature of the Business

- What are the core activities?
- What are the products and services?

## Strategy

- What can you tell us about the Company's strategy? Did you set the Company's long-term goals / objectives? Have your departments set any KPIs?
- How does the overall strategy impact departments?
- How is the strategy communicated?

## Market Position

- Who are your key competitors?
- How does the Company want to compare against its peer companies?

## Employer Brand

- What would attract people to come work for the Company?
- Why should people come work for the Company?
- What are the key differentiators as an employee?

## Culture & Climate

- How would you describe the culture of your Company? (E.g.is the communication open and honest?)
- What type of culture is the Company trying to embed / drive?
- Do employees feel motivated to do a good job? Explain why.
- Do people trust each other?
- Do you feel people are encouraged to develop and achieve? How?
- Are the policies fair?
- Is it a good place to work? Explain why

## Competencies

- What drove this initiative, to develop and implement a competency framework?
- What behaviours would make a person successful in your company? How is this supporting the organisation culture?
- What would make a person fail in your Company?
- What would you change? In what way / with what expected outcome?

# SOCIAL NETWORKS - KEY TOOL USED BY EMPLOYEES FOR PROMOTING THE IMAGE OF BUCHAREST MUSEUMS

***Abstract***
Social networks are a strong instrument for promoting for free the image of a product, service or organization. The present study is aimed at determining the impact of social networks on attracting tourists to big museums of Bucharest city. Thus, the research carried out reveals that museum employees use social platforms for promoting the image of the institutions they represent, posting several information about (1) permanent or temporary exhibitions, (2) additional services (movie evenings, concerts etc.), (3) special events (A Different Kind of School, Museums Night, etc.). The study proves that museums' presence on social networks can positively influence visitors' number.

***Keywords***: museums, image, visitors, promotion, Internet, social networks

**JEL CODES: L32, L82, M37.**

# REŢELELE DE SOCIALIZARE - INSTRUMENT CHEIE FOLOSIT DE ANGAJAŢI PENTRU PROMOVAREA IMAGINII MUZEELOR BUCUREŞTENE

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***Rezumat***
Reţelele de socializare constituie un bun instrument de promovare gratuită a imaginii unui produs, serviciu sau organizație. Studiul de față și-a propus să determine impactului acestora asupra atragerii vizitatorilor spre marile muzee ale Municipiului Bucureşti. Astfel, cercetarea a evidențiat că angajaţii muzeelor utilizează platformele de socializare pentru promovarea imaginii instituțiilor pe care le reprezintă, postând aici informații despre (1) expozițiile permanente și temporare, (2) ofertele lor adiționale (serii de filme, concerte etc.), (3) evenimentele specifice pe care le derulează (Școala Altfel, Noaptea muzeelor, etc.). În final, studiul a demonstrat că prezența muzeelor pe reţelele de socializare poate influenţa pozitiv creșterea numărului de vizitatori.

**Cuvinte cheie:** muzee, imagine, vizitatori, promovare, Internet, reţele de socializare.

## 1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A socialization network is a network of people that share common goals, such as a network of students, politicians, doctors etc. On social networks people worldwide "meet" to rapidly communicate to each other, share various activities, emotions, communicate simultaneously to various groups of people, see each other, or even hear each other. Sometimes, socialization networks from the web are also called „social networks" (Aguenza, 2012, p. 22).

In the last 50 years, Internet and online communities have revolutionarily changes the way people interact to each other, both from an economic as well as social point of view and have offered the possibility to communicate in real time, overcoming distances and involving lower and lower costs. Social networks[1]:

- Have become and *integrant* part not only of our *personal life,* but also of the *business environment* (Mansfield-Devine, 2008). Thereby:
  - *in Europe,* approximatively 90% of Internet European users[2] frequently use social media and over half of them access a social site on a daily basis[3] (Racareanu, 2012);
  - according to studies, *in Romania,* approximatively 50% of the Romanian Internet users access social media on a daily basis (ordinarily Hi5, LinkedIn or Facebook), whereas over 75% of them use social networks to show their dissatisfaction with private companies' products or services (Racareanu, 2012).
- Have several characteristics*:* (1) accessibility, (2) rapid and exponential increase in the number of users[4], (3) provision of instruments that enable the interaction between service users, (4) exceptional commercial exploitation and (5) tendency of offering free services (because they

[1] On Internet there are several social networks such as: My Space, Hi5, Myvip, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, Netlog, Badoo, Google+, Pinterest etc., but by far the most known is Facebook. This website had over 600 million of unique users/day in 2012, according to a study carried out by Pingdom.com, which revealed that Facebook was followed by Qzone (China) with 45 million of unique users/day, Twitter (35 million of unique users/day), Odnoklassniki (Russia) (17 million of unique users/day), Orkut (de la Google) (11 million of unique users/day), LinkedIn (9 million of unique users/day), Flickr (approx. 3 millions/day), Myspace (2 million/day), Hi5 (1,5 millions/day) (Pescaru, 2012).
In the business environment, Facebook is a useful network in order to attract fans, receive feedback from consumers and build a brand image, Twitter is used for attracting fans and for communication, while LinkedIn helps finding business partners and consolidating brand or company image.

[2] It is anticipated that, by the end of 2014, the number of users will reach approx. 107.4 million persons.

[3] Among users, over 45% have expressed their discontent related to private companies` products or services through comments posted on social networks.

[4] Twitter has increased with 700% in one single year, reaching over 10 million users; in The United Kingdom, the increase rate was 974%.

include publicity materials that render businesses profitable) (European Economic and Social Commitee, 2009).

- Represent *the most rapid and efficient method to distribute information, promote products and increase the number of potential clients.* Thus, in Romania, in 2011, 69% of companies have made use of promotion through Facebook[5] and discussion forums (43%), according to a GfK Romania study (Ziare.com, 2012). In these circumstances, marketing on social networks appears to be the natural step all organizations should make, no matter their nature, public or private. The reason is simple: people like socializing and tend to privilege other people`s opinions than what they see in a traditional advertise (Lee, 2013, p. 7).
- *Significantly influence consumers` behaviour.* The results of a study carried out by PwC indicate that 55% of online buyers, that were part of the survey, were influenced, in their decision to buy, by information provided by the online environment. On the other side, companies are aware that they must attract clients to online platforms, as the number of responders that visited social networks due to personalized promotions raised from 9% in 2012 to 21% in 2013.
- *Represent a marketing, sales and corporate communication opportunity,* according to a study made by Rentrop & Straton group (2012).

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The present study has three main research objectives:

- Analysing the way the use of online social networks by employees of the most visited museums in Bucharest[6] contributes to creating / improving organizations` brand image;
- Determining the impact of networks use on increasing museums` visitors' number.

### *2.1. Hypotheses and variables*

The hypotheses that underpin the present research are:

[5] In 2012 already existing and well positioned channels, such as Facebook, LinkedIn or YouTube have witnessed a slight increase, but also a more intense interest for a larger scale use of Twitter and independent blogs (increase of 8%, respectively 6%). Thus, Twitter has become interesting for 19% of companies, while campaigns on independent blogs for 27% of companies (Ziare.com, 2012).
[6] We used the number of visitors in 2013, according to statistics.



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*1. Museum employees use in their activities social platforms, Facebook being the most popular one among museums' personnel.* In order to operate this hypothesis we identified the following variables:

- the frequency users connect to Internet in order to use social networks;
- social networks on which subjects have accounts and that they currently use;
- social networks subjects use most frequently;
- the frequency users post information on social networks;
- respondents age;
- the museum in which the respondents work (museum of origin).

*2. Employees use social networks to promote museums` image.* The variables used were:

- main reasons for which users access online social networks;
- type of information posted on social networks.

*3. Promoting museums on social networks can determine an increase in the number of visitors.* The variable corresponding to this hypothesis is: benefits brought by the use of social networks.

### *2.2. Research method*

In this phase we present the main arguments that have led us to the choice of the research methods, as well as the way we used them within our research.

**Investigated population:**

- individuals, living in Bucharest, over 18 years of age;
- professional profile: employees of Bucharest museums;
- sampling characteristic: online social networks users.

**Sampling:**

- ***Sample characteristic:***
  - *stratification* (sex, age, education level, position within the institution (management/ execution) and museum of origin);
  - *probabilistic selection* (at the level of the questioned person).

- ***Sample validity:*** information related to the number of employees of each museum is mentioned on the museums` websites.
- ***Sample volume:*** 96 employees from 6 museums, holding both management and executions positions.
- ***Period of data collection:*** 7 February - 5 April 2014.
- ***Method for data gathering:***

1. *Survey is a specific method for direct research*, which has a scientific foundation that allows obtaining and collecting primary data through a questionnaire[7] (data gathering instrument) administered to a representative sample of respondents (Balaure *et al.*, 2002). The questionnaire we used was:
   - directly applied (on telephone or through direct interview), but also indirectly (electronically send, on email, to be filled in by respondents);
   - is a semi-structured questionnaire, that contains 2 sections: (1) *respondents profile* and (2) *gathering information related to the three hypotheses of the study;*
   - contains closed (11) and open (2) questions;
   - information gathered through questionnaire was processed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).
2. *Documents analysis* (physical and online format), consisting in activity reports of the analysed museums, as well as official statistics of the Ministry of Culture. Thus, according to official reports, published on the websites of the six museums, the number of visitors' evolution can be seen in Table 1.

**TABLE 1.** NUMBER OF VISITORS EVOLUTION IN THE SIX ANALYSED MUSEUMS BETWEEN 2008 - 2013

| Year / Visitors | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **"Grigore Antipa" National Museum of Natural History** | 115.000 | Temporarily closed | | 90.300 *(Sept – Dec)* | 117.500 | 119.200 |
| **National Museum of Art of Romania (NMAR)** | 98.000 | 99.500 | 105.600 | 105.800 | 107.100 | 109.000 |
| **National Village Museum "Dimitrie Gusti" (NVMDG)** | 102.800 | 103.250 | 103.500 | 107.000 | 109.300 | 111.000 |
| **National Museum of the Romanian Peasant (NMRP)** | 74.000 | 73.200 | 74.100 | 75.800 | 76.000 | 77.400 |

[7] The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain sincere and objective answers to all questions, which were designed and addressed in order to lead to reaching the research objectives (Brace, 2008).

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **National Museum of Romanian History (NMRH)** | 67.000 | 66.500 | 65.700 | 67.200 | 69.000 | 71.000 |
| **Municipal Museum of Bucharest (MMB)** | 50.200 | 50.000 | 50.400 | 50.250 | 51.150 | 54.300 |

*Source:* data processed from the museums` activity reports, 2008-2013

According to Table 1, the number of visitors has registered an ascending trend in the analysed period of time. The questionnaires administered to respondent's tried to reveal to what extend social networks have contributed to the process of attracting museum visitors.

All six museums hold a Facebook[8] account, which is the most popular social network among users. MNTR and MNSDG also hold a Twitter account.

The most „familiar" with Facebook are "Grigore Antipa" National Museum of Natural History (15.064 likes), MNSDG (7.746 likes) and MNAR (6.418 likes), all of them holding an account since 2008. Correlating this information with the evolution of visitors` number presented in Table 1, we could be entitled to consider museums promotion on this specific social network had a contribution to this phenomenon.

Also, special events, such as Museums` Night, were intensively promoted through social media, especially Facebook and Twitter.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the present study we chose to analyse the most relevant questions that lead to the hypotheses demonstration.

*The profile of the respondents was:*

- 34,4% males and 65,6% females;
- 37% of the respondents aged between 36 and 55 years of age, the rest of them were distributed as follows: between 25 and 35 years: 33%, over 55 years: 21%, under 25 years: 9% (figure 1);

[8] However, on MMB and NMRH websites there are no links directing to the official page on Facebook.

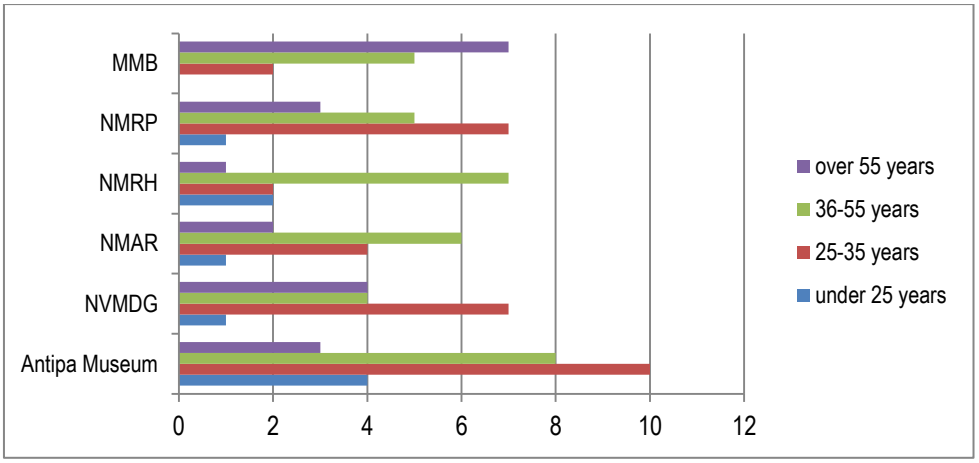



**FIGURE 1.** DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO AGE AND MUSEUM

As Figure 1 shows, Antipa Museum leads among institutions with young employees (approx. 80% of them are less than 36 years old), while at the opposite side MMB has approximatively 14%.

- 76% of the respondents hold higher education degrees, 24% have medium qualification;

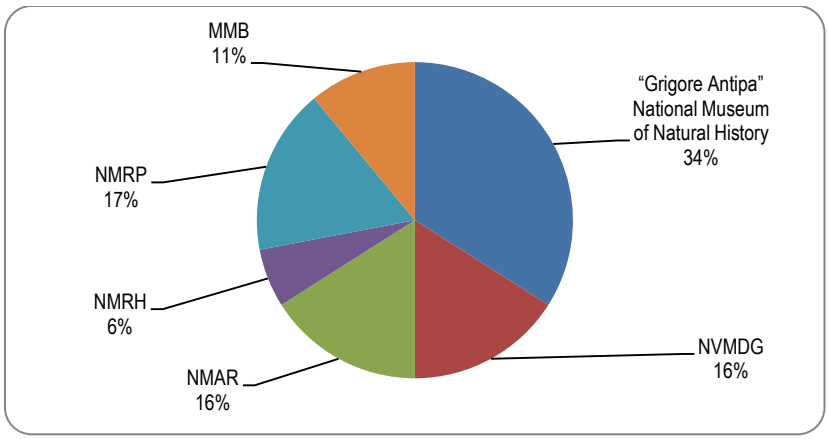



**FIGURE 2.** DISTRIBUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION DEGREE MUSEUM EMPLOYEES

Figure 2 reveals that "Grigore Antipa" National Museum of Natural History is the institution with the highest rate of employees holding an academic degree, one possible explanation being the fact that employees are young, as shown in Figure 1. Between the rest of the analysed institutions there are no major differences.

- 11,6% of the respondents have a management position, while 88,4% have execution positions;
- the distribution of the respondents according to the museum of origin, is the following:
  - "Grigore Antipa" National Museum of Natural History: 25%;

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- National Village Museum "Dimitrie Gusti" (NVMDG): 17%;
- National Museum of the Romanian Peasant (NMRP): 17%;
- Municipal Museum of Bucharest (MMB): 15%;
- National Museum of Art of Romania (NMAR): 13.5%;
- National Museum of Romanian History (NMRH): 12.5%.

The following section will focus on analysing the most relevant questions that were targeted at demonstrating the hypotheses.

**Hypothesis 1:** *Museum employees use socialization platforms in their activity, Facebook being the most popular one.* This hypothesis was verified through answers obtained to the following questions:

- *91.3%* of the respondents declared they *use social media* in their activity, while 8.7% said they do not use such instruments during their work programme[9].
- As for *the frequency users connect to Internet to use social networks,* respondents declared (figure 3):
  - Daily or almost on a daily basis (6-7 times per week): 41.7%;
  - 3-5 times per week: 25.2%;
  - 1-2 times per week: 27.2%;
  - Do not know: 5.9%.

[9] The reasons for not using social networks invoked by museum employees were:
- Not familiar with (55.6%);
- Does not represents my job`s duty (42.7%);
- Not informed about the benefits of using social networks (63.1%);
- Don`t find them useful; Consider them a waste of time (22.4%).

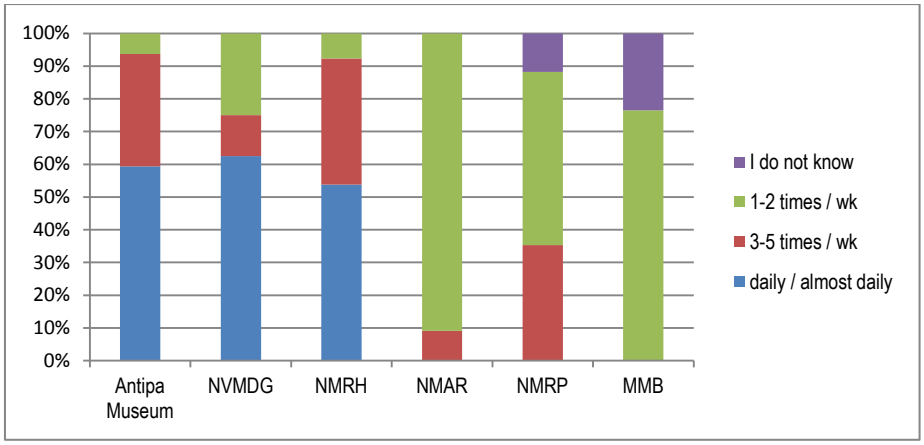



**FIGURE 3.** FREQUENCY EMPLOYEES CONNECT TO SOCIAL MEDIA

Figure 3 shows that "Grigore Antipa" National Museum of Natural History employees, MNSDG and MNIR connect daily or almost daily to social networks. Employees working in these three museums predominantly said they use social networks approximatively 1-2 times every week.

Figure 4 confirms what we all know: *young people* (under 25 and between 25-35 years of age) *use much more social media that people from other age category*. This result confirms that employees from analysed museums are a segment of population with the same characteristics than the rest of the population, fact that validates the hypotheses of already existing research in the field.

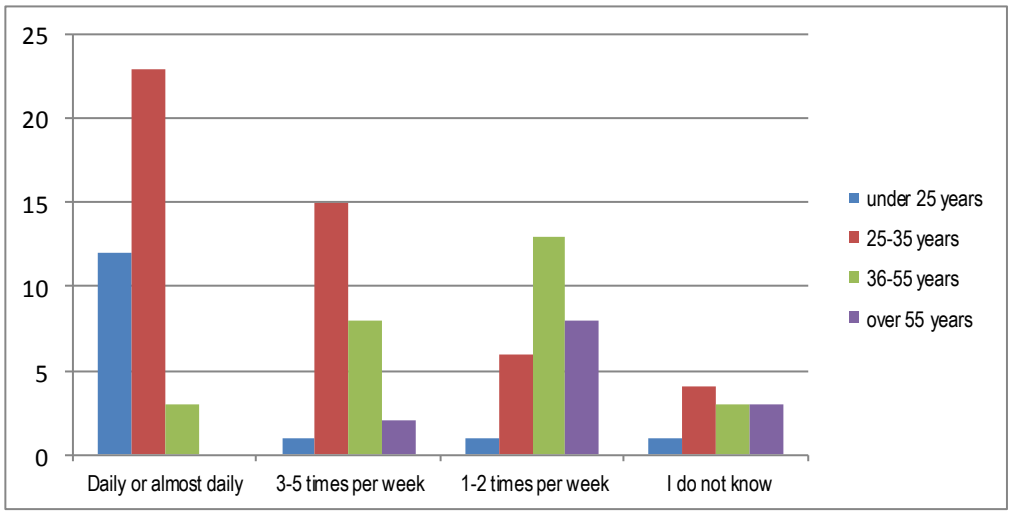



**FIGURE 4.** STRATIFICATION ACCORDING TO RESPONDENTS AGE

- As for *social media where the institution has (ever) / had an account /profile and that is most often used,* the analysis demonstrated that *Facebook is the socialization platform with the highest capacity of generating loyalty* (97%).



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After analysing the answers to these questions, **Hypothesis 1 is confirmed.**

**Hypothesis 2:** *Employees use social networks in order to promote museums` image.* This hypothesis was verified with the answers obtained to the following questions:

- *The main goals/reasons for which users connect to social media* are:
  - Promotion of the institution (75.6%);
  - Recruitment (6.9%);
  - Communication / client relationship (17.5%).

According to Figure 5, the main goal for which employees connect to social networks is promoting the image of the institution. This fact is valid especially for employees that use social media on a daily basis or 3-5 times per week. This correlation helps confirm **hypothesis 2.**

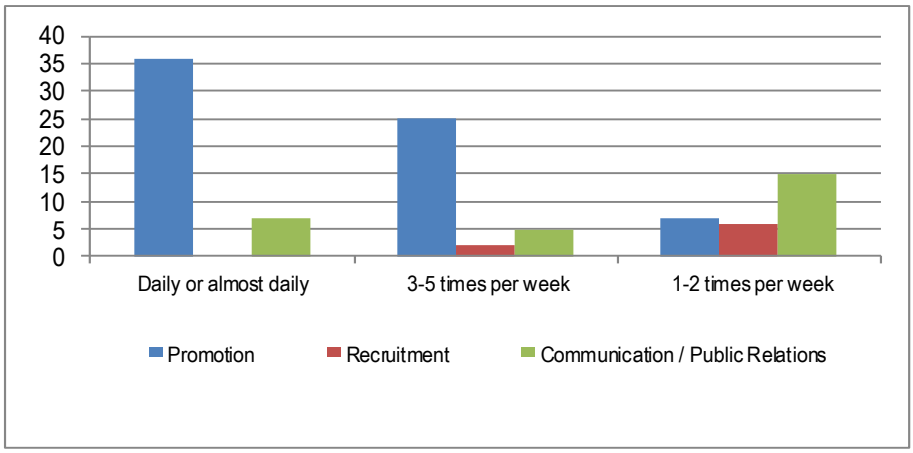



**FIGURE 5.** CORRELATION BETWEEN TIME SPENT USING SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE SCOPE FOR USING SOCIALIZATION PLATFORMS

- *The period of time for which employees have promoted the image of the museum using social networks* is presented in table 2 and figure 6.

**TABLE 2.** PERIOD OF TIME FOR WHICH EMPLOYEES HAVE PROMOTED THE IMAGE OF THE MUSEUM USING SOCIAL NETWORKS

| | |
|---|---|
| More than 5 years | 21.3 % |
| 3 – 5 years | 44.7 % |
| 1 - 3 years | 20.2 % |
| Less than 1 year | 13.8 % |

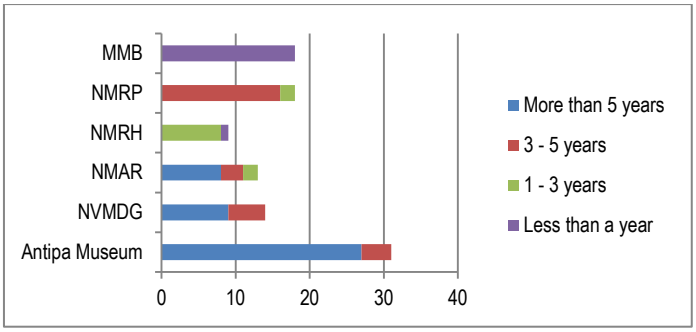



**FIGURE 6.** STRATIFICATION ACCORDING TO THE MUSEUM OF ORIGIN

According to figure 6, employees from "Grigore Antipa" National Museum of Natural History, NMAR and MNSDG have been using social networks for more than five years to promote the image of the museum among visitors. The correlation of information from Figure 6 with results gathered after documents` analysis, leads us to the conclusion that this activity has positively influenced the number of visitors evolution in the above mentioned museums (see Table 1), as well as the number of virtual visitors on Facebook (according to information gathered using the document analysis method).

Most MNTR respondents declared to be using social networks for 3 - 5 years within the activity of promoting the museum`s image and it seems that this fact had also had a positive effect on attracting visitors (according to statistics published on the official website).

- Regarding the *frequency of posting,* 41,7% of the respondents claimed to post on a daily basis, 27,2% every week and 9,7% every month. Analysed data reveals that employees that declared to connect daily/ almost daily on social networks, post information with the same frequency on such platforms. Therefore, it appears that "Grigore Antipa" National Museum of Natural History, MNSDG and MNIR employees are very active on socialization platforms and post information every day to promote the image of their institution.

- *Information* posted on social networks is about:
  - Permanent exhibitions (42.6%);
  - Temporary exhibitions (79.8%);
  - Additional services (movie evenings, concerts etc.) (45.7%);
  - Particular event (A Different Kind of School, Museums` Night etc.) (51.3%);
  - Participation of the museum to international events (10.6%);



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– Images and videos from various exhibitions (17%);

– Contests and promotions (11%).

**The second hypothesis** - *Museum employees use social networks to promote institution`s image* – **is partially confirmed** because social networks are used for over five years to promote the institution and employees daily connect and post information only in three of the six museums analysed in the present paper ("Grigore Antipa" National Museum of Natural History, MNIR and MNSDG). However, using the document analysis method we identified that other museums have also created (although quite recently) a page on Facebook – the most popular social network.

**Hypothesis 3**: *Promoting museums on social networks determines an increase in the number of visitors.*

- According to Figure 7, respondents consider that using social networks has as *major benefit the attraction of new visitors*, aspect on which both management and execution personnel agree. The second major benefit identified by respondents is *gaining visitors` loyalty*.




**FIGURE 7 .** CORRELATION BETWEEN BENEFITS FROM USING SOCIAL NETWORKS AND POSITION HELD BY RESPONDENTS

Interviewed managers consider that the main benefits brought by online social networks are:

- creating a positive image - 62.3% of the respondents;
- informing clients - 59.9% of the respondents;
- gaining new clients – 50.7% of the respondents;
- using online questionnaires - 50% of the respondents;

- relaxing employees – 48.9% of the respondents;

**The last hypothesis** – *Promoting museums on social networks positively influences the number of visitors* - **is also verified** based on document analysis and official statistics published by the analysed organizations in their official reports. Correlating statistics with resulted presented in figure 7, which highlight employees` perception on benefits of using socialization platforms, we can conclude that the third hypothesis is also true.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The research goals were achieved as ***all three hypotheses were verified***. In table 3 we synthetically present the conclusions of our study.

**TABLE 3.** SYSTEMATIC RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

| Systematic research conclusions | Highest percentage obtained |
|---|---|
| Period of time in which employees promoted museum`s image on social media: *3-5 years* | 44.7% |
| Highest connection frequencies: *6-7 times per week* | 41.7% |
| Frequency of posting information on social networks: *daily* | 41.7% |
| Most popular social network: *Facebook* | 93.2% |
| Scope for using social networks: *promotion* | 75.7% |
| Main information posted on social networks: *temporary exhibitions* | 79.8% |
| Main reasons for not using social networks: *"Not informed about the benefits related to social networks use"* | 66,7% |
| Benefits related to social networks use: *gaining visitors loyalty* | 31.6% |

At the end of our research, museum employees became more aware of the importance social networks play in promoting their organization and even brought proposals for raising museum`s visibility on social media:

- training all employees in order to become familiar with using social network platforms;
- appointing one employee responsible with managing and updating social platforms;
- outsourcing such activities to a specialized company;
- creating an online marketing department within the organization.



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# STEPS TOWARDS A NEW RENEWABLE ENERGY PUBLIC POLICY IN ROMANIA

# PAŞI SPRE O NOUĂ POLITICĂ A ENERGIEI REGENERABILE ÎN ROMÂNIA

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***Abstract***
This study investigates the steps towards a new renewable energy public policy in Romania, with an eye to reveal the main actions and measures needed. Therefore, this study reveals firstly the key arguments for changing the public policy in the field of renewable energy, and secondly, the core directions and measures for a modern policy in the field of renewable energy. The results of this study may be helpful for further research regarding the adjustment of the renewable energy public policy.

***Keywords*:** public policy, state, renewable energy, services.

**JEL CODES:** Q42, M10, O33, O44, R11

***Rezumat***
Studiul investighează paşii spre o nouă politică a energiei regenerabile în România, cu scopul de a evidenţia principalele acţiuni şi măsuri necesare. Tocmai de aceea, în cadrul studiului sunt reliefate argumentele majore pentru schimbarea politicii publice în domeniul energiei regenerabile, precum şi direcţiile de acţiune şi măsurile esenţiale ale unei politici moderne în domeniul energiei regenerabile. Rezultatele acestui studiu ar putea fi utile pentru cercetări viitoare privind ajustarea politicii publice a energiei regenerabile.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** politică publică, stat, energie regenerabilă, servicii

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the steps towards a new renewable energy public policy in Romania, with an eye to reveal the main actions and measures needed. Therefore, this study reveals firstly the key arguments for changing the public policy in the field of renewable energy, and secondly, the core directions and measures for a modern policy in the field of renewable energy.

The research was conducted using evidence provided by articles such as research papers, conceptual papers, and literature reviews. The research question was answered by analyzing and evaluating published sources, and by interpreting and reorganizing concepts. Answering the research question was difficult, due to the variety of approaches, concepts and definitions found in the literature.

## 2. ARGUMENTS FOR CHANGING THE PUBLIC POLICY IN THE FIELD OF RENEWABLE ENERGY

Currently, there are serious concerns regarding the threats against the natural environment, but in reality, despite the rhetoric, most of these threats are continued and amplified.

Despite the various crises experienced by the world economy in the last forty years, there has been no real debate on the choice of resources, but there was a waste of resources, as a consequence of the economic, social and cultural needs of our times. Humankind must increase its concerns about his destiny taking into account the requirements of sustainable development, of people prosperity and of the proper functioning of national and world economies.

Nowadays there is more and more acknowledged the fact that renewable energy can make a major contribution to the economic development, and consequently, the public authorities are involved in the implementation of various renewable energy projects. For instance, in Romania, as well as in Member States of the European Union renewable energy sources have a large potential (Păceşilă, 2013). The European Union and its Member States have established different objectives and targets for renewable energy, expressing this way their ambitions and technological priorities (Lean and Smyth, 2013; Gawel *et al.*, 2014).

World history has shown that there is a huge amount of connections, of high complexity, between the way people behave, the choices they make and the natural world in which life takes place. Throughout recent history, the effects of people's choices on the planet have expanded from local to regional and to global scale. In this context, the debate regarding the public policy in the field of renewable energy has

involved many actors (companies, public authorities, civil society, etc.) that are playing an essential role in managing the change of the public policy.

The governments are involved in the issues of the energy sector through partial ownership or control imposed by the legislation (Zamfir, 2013). The way to apply public policies, the regulation and rules play an important role in the use and cost-effective exploitation of renewable energy (Hernandez Moreno, 2009: 138).

Energy policy and existing regulations play an important role in fostering regional projects for the production and use of energy from renewable sources. Moreover, there are various public mechanisms to support renewable energy developed in order to reduce the risks and the payback periods for the investors (Zamfir, 2013). An investment in renewable energy can recover today faster than before (Pîrlogea, 2012, p. 22). In order to become competitive, an organization should be able to create competences that generate positive effects through innovation (Corboş and Popescu, 2013). In this context, the policy makers have to analyze and to select the technology to be used, the renewable resource to be exploited, the way to decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and the mix of resources in order to exploit more renewable ones (Pîrlogea and Cicea, 2011, p. 81).

Nevertheless, the competition on the energy market may be hindered by the vertically integrated companies which operate on this market and have access to the distribution network. A company that controls the distribution network, and is also a player on the electricity market could be interested and could have the ability to impose terms and conditions relating to the access to that network in order to reduce the competition on the competitive energy market (Corboş, 2011: 72).

In addition, another way in which the state's role is crucial is the need for strong and effective state intervention in order to maintain ecological equilibrium, to ensure a reserve of resources as long as possible and to respect regeneration cycles of energy resources (Zamfir, 2013).

In the beginning of 2014 Romania has reached the target regarding the share of renewable energy in the final energy consumption established for 2020. Hence, there is a need of changing the support system for developing renewable energy in Romania, which can be explained by two arguments. Firstly, the development of renewable energy has a negative impact on users' budgets, because it leads to a large increase of the bills they need to pay. The reason for this is that the cost of the green certificates given to the producers which are selling them to the suppliers is finally transferred to the end user. Therefore, the larger the number of green certificates, the heavier the burden of costs to clients. Secondly, the development of renewable energy beyond a certain limit has a negative influence on the security of its integration into the grid.



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## 3. DIRECTIONS AND MEASURES FOR A MODERN POLICY IN THE FIELD OF RENEWABLE ENERGY

There is a new vision in addressing the energy issue in general and renewable energy issue in particular. The sector should no longer be seen as an objective in itself, but rather as a factor contributing to the overall economic efficiency and development, as well as to the increased social welfare.

In this context, the policies and strategies should be assumed by the state, and seen as priorities, especially in establishing, supporting and implementing investment projects on key areas of the economy (Vlăsceanu, 2014: 30). However, the role of the state in managing the energy sector is nowadays more diverse and profound. Although its actions do not automatically lead to the removal of all imbalances, there is a need for the policy makers to analyze the situations of the energy market in terms of cost-benefit correlations, social equity principles and environmental protection.

Currently, in our society there is a crisis of values (i.e. quantity vs quality, materiality vs spirituality, egocentricity vs altruism, etc.) that might have a solution in rediscovering the forgotten values and applying them in everyday life in order to solve some demographic, economic or even environmental issues (Potcovaru, 2013: 20). Business ethics must rely on applicable principles, not on abstract ones, offering moral solutions to the problems encountered (Georgescu, 2013: 29).

Today, more than ever, we need an "attitude towards nature which must be based on harmony, not on conquest" (Mesarović and Pestel, 1975: 154-155), because only this way we could put into practice what is already admitted in theory, namely that people is an integral part of nature. In this sense, the civilization should be defined not as a stage or phase of the societies, or as a culmination of the societies, but as a kind of relationship, with the natural environment, rearranged by civilizing impulse, to meet people requirements (World Energy Council, 2003: 18). The question is whether these human needs are exaggerated or if they will be exaggerated in their evolution, exceeding the safety limit of our natural environment.

The steps towards a new, modern renewable energy public policy in Romania may include the intervention in order to: (1) ensure universal access to modern public energy services for the population and companies; (2) maintain ecological equilibrium; (3) protect the environment; (4) ensure energy security; (5) ensure a reserve of resources and (6) respect regeneration cycles of energy resources.

A modern policy in the field of renewable energy should take into account new ways of providing services and a new culture of energy services, as well as new methods and techniques of designing

and managing modern energy services in order to respond to the actual needs of the clients and of the society. Furthermore, the there is a need to invest in research and development services in the field of renewable energy, taking into account the technological maturity of renewable energy. Last but not least, there is a need for further reductions in cost and improvements in performance, reliability, and safety of renewable energy technologies in order to replace more emissions-intensive alternatives.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

This study has revealed the key arguments for changing the public policy in the field of renewable energy, as well as some directions and measures for a modern policy in the field of renewable energy. These changes are based on a new vision in addressing the energy issue in general and renewable energy issue in particular. The values and the attitude towars people, society, and environment should change if we want to move towards a prosperous future. Business ethics, social equity principles, economic development, social welfare, and environment protection, are only some of the landmarks of such an idealistic future.

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HUMAN RESOURCES AND SOCIAL SERVICES DEVELOPMENT AT LOCAL LEVEL IN ROMANIA

# DEZVOLTAREA RESURSELOR UMANE ŞI A SERVICIILOR SOCIALE, LA NIVEL LOCAL, ÎN ROMÂNIA


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***Abstract***
In general, the economic development is based on human resources, so at central and local level, there must be concerns and responsibilities regarding the quality of skilled labour and the increase of its capacity to adapt to the environmental changes. This study is an analysis of the issue of ongoing professional development and promoting employment in the context of sustainable local development. The expected results, obtained after the analysis at the local level (Arad Municipality – the city of the same name became an important regional metropolis in 2020), will reflect some of the specific measurements, which will need to be implemented in the next period, in terms of human capital development and social services in the current economic crisis, even felt in Romanian economy.



***Keywords*:** sustainable local development; continous professional training; learning throughout life; promoting employment

**JEL CODES:** H83, J21, J64, O15



***Rezumat***
Dezvoltarea economică, în general, are la bază resursa umană, astfel că la nivel central, cât și local, trebuie să existe preocupări și responsabilități în materie de calificare a forței de muncă și creștere a capacității de adaptare a acesteia la schimbările de mediu. Studiul de față reprezintă o analiză privind problematica formării profesionale continue și promovarea ocupării forței de muncă, în contextul dezvoltării locale durabile. Rezultatele așteptate, obținute după efectuarea analizei, la nivel local (Municipiul Arad - orașul cu același nume devenind o importantă metropolă regională, în 2020), vor reflecta câteva dintre măsurile concrete, ce vor trebui aplicate, în următoarea perioadă, din perspectiva dezvoltării capitalului uman și a serviciilor sociale, în condițiile crizei economice actuale, resimțită și în economia românească.



***Cuvinte cheie:*** dezvoltarea locală durabilă; formarea profesională continuă; învățarea de-a lungul întregii vieți; promovarea ocupării.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization and the continuous introduction of new technologies attracts the necessity to ensure educated and competitive human resources. Only a flexible and highly skilled workforce will be able to react to the constant changes occurring in the labor market. Strategic approach to human resources development is a requirement in the era of globalization. Most researches agree that the strategic development of human resources involves systematic and formal processes, which need to be adapted to the existing needs at the organizational level (Manole *et al.,* 2011, p. 207). At the same time, this development can help the management of organizations to improve their management of operational capabilities, respectively all competences and specific abilities which enables better management of the existing crisis and prevents future ones (Wang, Hutchins & Garavan, 2009).

We can say that, at present, training of employees becomes essential. If decades ago, young graduates gained a profession based on the knowledge accurired in schools, today the stock of knowledge, aptitudes, professional abilities, accumulated over time, become outdated very quickly. The existance of employees who are not longer able to professionally keep up with the changes occuring in the conduct of activities is a major issue for managers (Manole *et al.,* 2011, p. 208).

In this context, the Romanian public administration reform in the period 2008 – 2013, focused on two directions: one horizontal (cross – sectorial) referring to human resources, simplifying administrative processes and enhancing public policy; other vertical, of depth, focusing on accelerating the decentralization process (Manole, 2009, p. 241).

From the point of view of the cross – sectorial direction, the strengthening and development of human resources segment had a leading role. Thus, the change in the personnel management involved the following components: improving the recruitment and selection of personnel; better planning of professional careers (introduction of flexible career models); improving professional training (training programs at all levels); promoting rewards in relation to performance and level of responsibility, in order to eliminate inefficient actions and increasing accountability and sensitivity to civil servants, across the policies adopted (Manole, 2009, p. 241).

Therefore we can say that education and continuous professional training have been and remain critical elements of which the development, in general, and that at the local level, in particulare, should take into account. But to tackle the issue of continious professional training and promoting employment in the current economic downturn, we felt the need to define three concepts: regional, local and sustainable development.

## 2. REGIONAL, LOCAL AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

According to specialists, regional development, as a form of local development, represents a set of central and local policies of the public administration authorities, drafted to improve the economic performance of some geographic areas, congregated in „development regions" (Matei, 2004, p.64). It should be understood in the context of regional development, the place and role of local development, partnership development and typology of relationships at various levels of government (Matei, 1998, p.95).

Local development, the second concept, from the point of view of specialists represents, the development process, mainly economic, in a particular region or administrative unit that increases the quality of local life. Local development aims to economic prosperity and social welfare by creating a favourable business environment, along with community integration of vulnerable groups, using endogenous resources, private sector development (Parlagi, 2004, p.86).

Local development diversifies and enriches activities on a given territory by mobilizing existing resources and energies in the area. Result of the efforts of a population, local development means the implementation of a project of economic, social and cultural means. This transforms a nearby space into an active help space (Frege, 1991, p.57).

In the current economic crisis, the development of the public sector requires the adaptation and implementation of a new model of local development, which requires the removal of the old paradigm and accepting innovative approaches, in which citizens are not only beneficiaries of the community development, but also co-participants in deciding on future development milestones (Popescu, 2011, p. 148).

At the same time, it requires rethinking the structure, from the point of view of their flexibility, both at central and local level, but also limitation of the government decision involving citizens and groups, community representative, in the decision-making process (Popescu, 2011, p. 148).

Regarding the third concept – sustainable development – we can say that it seeks reconciliation between two fundamental goals, namely the need for economic and social development, and environmental protection and improvement. Thus, the development based on the actual generation's needs which facilitates future generations with the execution of their needs is sustainable development (Ionașcu, 2003, p.12).



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In this context, Strategy Europa 2020, approved in March 2010 by the European Council, is a new strategy for jobs and growth, based on consolidation and on a better coordination of the economic-social policies depending on clear objectives (Table 1) set based on the following priorities (COM, 2010): Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy, and Inclusive growth (term used for the first time in official European documents): 'fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion; empowering the people by a higher level of occupation; investment in the increase of competencies; modernizing the labor markets and empowering people by developing their skills throughout the lifecycle with a view to increase labor participation, formation and social protection, supporting the citizens in the administration and anticipation of changes and in constructing an inclusive society' (Cace et. al., 2013, p.11).

TABLE 1: HEADLINE TARGETS OF STRATEGY 2020

| |
|---|
| – An economic headline: employment rate: 75% (of the population aged 20-64); |
| – An technological headline: '20×20×20' trinomial: 20% decrease of the greenhouse gas emissions (compared to 1990), 20% higher energy efficiency, or 20% decrease of energy consumption, 20% increase of the renewable sources of energy within the gross final energy consumption; |
| – A social headline: 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty (25% decrease of the people running the risk of poverty); |
| – An educational headline: share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation (aged 30-34) should have a tertiary degree; |
| – A headline general support for development: 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&D. |

Source: COM, 2010

According to the National Strategy for Sustainable Development in Romania (SNDD)[1], (which is based on the EU Strategy for Sustainable Development), sustainable development is not one of the possible options, but the only reasonable prospect of becoming national, resulting in establishing a new development paradigm through confluence of economic, social and environmental factors. The strategy specifies that accurate assessment of the status and trans of human capital development in the medium and long term, are of fundamental importance for designing realistic prospects of a sustainable model of development, in all its essential components: economic, socio-cultural and environmental.

## 3. ONGOING PROFESSIONAL TRANING AND LIFELONG LEARNING CONCEPT

In general, organizations that have a proper philosophy about professional training, understand to work in a field where competitive advantage is achieved only with the help of high professional and moral quality

[1] See National Strategy for Sustainable Development in Romania, horizons 2013-2020-2030 (http://www.mmediu.ro/beta/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2012-06-12_dezvoltare_durabila_snddfindromana2008.pdf)

employees. For this it is necessary investing in the organization's human resources, and in developing their skills and knowledge (Manole, 2006, p.148).

Also there are other reasons why training is one of the elements of "outpost" of human resources management: aims to develop human potential, helps individuals to "grow", both professionally and in terms of socio-cultural factor. These aspects are nothing more than a result of socio-economic and cultural changes of the whole world, with repercussions on the training activity (Manole, 2006, pp.146-147).

According to specialists (Bennett,1990, pp.47-48), there are certain advantages resulting from the use of training, which have a significant effect on the organization's economic activities and increasing global and individual efficiency, such as: improved performance at the individual, team and organizational level in terms of results (outputs), quality, speed and overall productivity; increasing membership and involvement of employees in the organization's activities by encouraging them to participate in setting organizational goals and objectives; improvement of operational flexibility by widening the area of professional skills for the employees; developing a positive organizational culture, for example results orientated and continuous performance based.

According to experts (Louart, 1994, pp.133-134), the training activity must meet certain requirements to be a viable investment, such as: to focus on solving problems and to eliminate the cause of disruptions; to be directly linked to performance; to be geared towards obtaining obvious and efficient results; to be aimed at continuous improvement of personnel; to assume a strategic approach.

Currently, the education and continuous training of adults is the natural continuation of the initial education and training, as an objective necessity imposed by the transition to an economy and society based on knowledge, and the need to continuous professional fulfilment and personal development. In this context, the integrator concept of lifelong learning appeared (IPIV) (lifelong learning[2]), which includes the initial and adult education[3], as learning forms in order to ensure the overall development of an individual, including

[2] All learning activities undertaken throughout life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and / or qualifications for personal, social and / or professional. The horizontal / cross size of IPIV brings together the learning concept, either formal, non-formal or informal which is done in a full range of activities (personal, social and / or professional) in any stage of life (longitudinal dimension). The concept of *lifelong learning* includes all areas and refers to schools, vocational training and also referring to the university education and the education of adults, as components of a comprehensive system (Tissot, 2004, adapted by CEDEFOP, 2003).

[3] The adult education provided is often designed for general purposes rather than the vocational education. The adult education is close, but not synonymous with the ongoing education / training, which is especially focused on vocational connotations related to the acquisition of skills that allow the practice of a profession. It is commonly used to highlight the general education of the adults (e.g. the popular universities); to ensure compensatory learning in basic skills that people might've not acquired in the initial education (literacy), in order to develop themselves individually and manifest as active citizens, but covers all the educational needs of adults, and those to facilitate persons (a) to access and obtain qualifications that have not been acquired for various reasons in the



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professional. Constant investment in the individual's lifetime will allow the creation / development of performant human resources of high power, able to support the incorporation of technological progress and sustainable growth of the national economy and also the social and cultural development.

The current concerns show the need to develop a 'friendly environment' of occupation, to promote life-long education, to develop continuous professional formation, to ensure the continuous adaptation of the workforce, to improve the management of the active policies on the labor market, to provide access for minorities to the labor market, to promote equal opportunities, to develop the partnerships with social partners and with the civil society (Popescu, 2012). One must not overlook the aspect related to the supply of quantified information about the financial resources that may be allocated for the accomplishment of the different objectives of the policies (Cace et al., 2013, p.10).

At present, the Romanian economy and the entire public sector need skilled, performant and politically neutral labour, in order to face the competition and to be able to continually adapt to changes. This is all the more since at institutional level a set of new structures or policies were aimed at modernizing the administrative system such as Introduction of the Young Professionals Scheme "Developing The Corps Of Professional Public Managers" (YPS) with the goal of preparing a core group of new generation leaders in the civil service, politically neutral and professionally trained in the modern principles and values of European Union public sector management starting with 2003 (Mora & Țiclău, 2008, p. 94).

On 6 October 2011 the European Commission adopted the provisional version of the legislative package which consists of the implementation of the Cohesion Policy for 2014 – 2020. The new proposals are designed to strengthen the strategic dimension of the policy and to ensure that EU investments are targeted towards the European objectives for long term in relation to economic growth and employment, in line with the Europe Strategy 2020. To help achieve Europe Strategy 2020 objectives in relation to smart, sustainable and favourable growth, the new regulations for accessing the structural funds, aim among others, the following thematic objectives[4]:

- Promoting employment and supporting labour mobility;
- Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty;
- Investment in education, skills and lifelong learning;

initial education and training system (b) to acquire, improve or update their skills and / or competences in a specific field (Tissot, 2004, adapted by European Training Foundation, 1997; European Commission, 2008).

[4] See "We Invest in Your Future!" Project selected in the Regional Operational Programme and co – financed by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund, http://www.inforegio.ro/ro/programare-2014-2020/dezvoltare-regionala.html.

- Strengthening institutional capacity and an efficient public administration.

In line with the Europe Strategy 2020 objectives in Romania, the Project of Integrated Strategy for Human Resources Development (SIDRU)[5], has as the overall objective for the period 2009 – 2020: improving the capacity and quality of human resources development systems, leading to an increased and stable level of employment, a higher quality of life and effective social cohesion for those Romanian citizens found at risk of social exclusion, in order to achieve, by 2020, the current average level of EU countries, at the key indicators of sustainable development. Moreover, "continuous learning in order to obtain new qualifications, further specialization and expansions" represents the governing objective for the period 2009 – 2020 provided by SIDRU.

In this context, there are increased demands for the system of continuous training of adults (FCA), as a fundamental support for SIDRU, given that, on one hand, almost a quarter of young people between 12-28 leave school without having basics skills and necessary qualifications to hold a job[6] and, on the other hand, the Romanian economy will face in the medium and long term the aging effects. Therefore, it is necessary, an increased concern of the authorities for lifelong learning of elderly adults presents in the labour market, respectivelly supporting active ageing through the FCA services. However, solutions are needed to diversify training offers, respectively of the providers for basic adult education, for a better adaptation to the peculiarities and needs of the learners.

To conclude this part of the study, we can say that in recent years, unfortunately Romania has continued to the fragmentation of the professional training offers, sometimes unconsciously covering, at national level, with providers for continuous professional training of adults, and also relatively low level of interest from the employer (contractors, entrepreneurs) for investing in human resources development, all of which contributed to a low rate of participation of those concerned. However, even under the restrictive conditions imposed by the current economic crisis, we can say that human resources development remains an important factory in the economic revival.

## 4. LOCAL HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT. CASE STUDY

I can say that only a flexible and highly skilled workforce will be able to respond to the constant changes occurring in the labour market. To develop a viable strategy for human resources development it is necessary to consider the framework principles of supporting the development of human capital: the education and initial and continuous training, and thus develop a framework plan which is to emphasize

[5] See Project SIDRU, http://www.irea.ro/images/docs/proiect sidru_ find_ en.pdf.
[6] Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Opportunities, http://www.cdep.ro/interpel/2007/r3085B.pdf



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the involvement of all relevant stakeholders (state institutions, local government, universities, economic agents) in the human resources development policy, in increasing employment and combating social exclusion[7].

I opted for studying Municipality Arad because, in 2020, the town with the same name will become an important regional metropolis of Romania, which will dominate by impressing through its rehabilitated historical centre dominated by the fortress of Arad – ordered by the Empress Maria Theresa of Austria and built by the plans of major General Filip Ferdinand Harsch (1763 – 1783), the fortress is an original variant of French fortifications – turned into a major touristic attraction, a strong community with a major impact in the region through economic dynamism and diversity. The Municipality of Arad is in the western part of the country, a region economically prosperous. West Region of Development, briefly called the West Region is one of the eight development regions of Romania. It was formed on 28 October 1998, by associating the counties of Arad, Caraş – Severin, Hunedoara and Timiş.

Nationally, the West Region is considered to be increasing with higher economic performance in relation to the national average, often second after the Bucharest – Ilfov region.

According to the Institute of Statistics (INS)[8], in the West region it has been recorded in 2005 – 2007, the lowest rate of poverty compared to the rest of the country (Fig. 1). In general, the factors that influence the risk of poverty are: social position and career; education levels, each level obtained extra significantly reducing the risk of poverty.

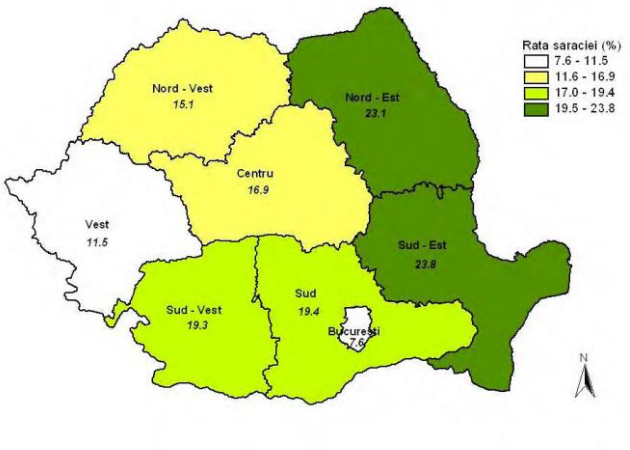



FIGURE 1. POVERTY RATE AT THE MACROECONOMIC LEVEL

Source: INS calculations using the UE 2005 methodology

[7] See Local Development Strategy of Arad 2008-2013/2013-2020
[8] See Local Development Strategy of Arad 2008-2013/2013-2020

The fact that the West Region is above the national average, is also shown to us through the evolution of several indicators in the period 2012 – 2017, such as: average net monthly earnings (lei/employee), registered unemployed at the end of year (thousand persons), and unemployment rate (Table 2)[9].

TABLE 2. THE EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL – ECONOMIC INDICATORS

| Indicators | 2012 | 2103 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Average net monthly earnings – lei/employee** | | | | | | |
| **Total economic** | **1507** | **1594** | **1676** | **1750** | **1815** | **1879** |
| NORTH - EAST | 1229 | 1295 | 1357 | 1414 | 1462 | 1510 |
| SOUTH - EAST | 1307 | 1380 | 1448 | 1509 | 1562 | 1613 |
| SOUTH MUNTENIA | 1393 | 1474 | 1550 | 1627 | 1696 | 1764 |
| SOUTH – WEST OLTENIA | 1377 | 1455 | 1530 | 1598 | 1657 | 1715 |
| WEST | 1416 | 1510 | 1595 | 1674 | 1740 | 1801 |
| NORTH - WEST | 1280 | 1354 | 1427 | 1487 | 1537 | 1594 |
| CENTRE | 1330 | 1400 | 1473 | 1535 | 1592 | 1652 |
| BUCHAREST -ILFOV | 2187 | 2324 | 2443 | 2554 | 2652 | 2748 |
| **Registered unemployed, at the end of the year – thousand persons** | | | | | | |
| **Total economic** | **493,8** | **438** | **435** | **420** | **415** | **410** |
| NORTH - EAST | 78,2 | 73 | 73 | 71 | 70 | 69 |
| SOUTH - EAST | 69,6 | 63 | 63 | 61 | 60 | 59 |
| SOUTH MUNTENIA | 87,9 | 83 | 83 | 79 | 78 | 77 |
| SOUTH – WEST OLTENIA | 75,6 | 65 | 65 | 63 | 63 | 62 |
| WEST | 34,1 | 30 | 30 | 28 | 27 | 26 |
| NORTH - WEST | 54,7 | 45 | 45 | 44 | 43 | 43 |
| CENTRE | 68,7 | 55 | 55 | 53 | 53 | 52 |
| BUCHAREST -ILFOV | 25,1 | 24 | 24 | 21 | 21 | 21 |
| **Registered unemployment rate - %** | | | | | | |
| **Total economic** | **5,4** | **4,9** | **4,8** | **4,6** | **4,5** | **4,4** |
| NORTH - EAST | 6,0 | 5,6 | 5,6 | 5,4 | 5,3 | 5,3 |
| SOUTH - EAST | 6,4 | 5,8 | 5,8 | 5,6 | 5,5 | 5,4 |
| SOUTH MUNTENIA | 6,9 | 6,5 | 6,5 | 6,2 | 6,1 | 6,0 |
| SOUTH – WEST OLTENIA | 8,2 | 7,1 | 7,0 | 6,8 | 6,8 | 6,7 |
| WEST | 3,9 | 3,5 | 3,4 | 3,2 | 3,1 | 3,0 |
| NORTH - WEST | 4,4 | 3,6 | 3,6 | 3,5 | 3,4 | 3,4 |
| CENTRE | 6,2 | 5,0 | 4,9 | 4,8 | 4,7 | 4,6 |
| BUCHAREST -ILFOV | 2,0 | 2,0 | 1,9 | 1,7 | 1,6 | 1,6 |

Source: National Commission of Prognosis. Territorial prognosis, fall 2013

The analysis conducted on human resources development was based on information provided by the Local Development Strategy of Arad 2007-2013/2013-2020 , which was conducted through extensive consultations with various local community organizations: political, economic, social, etc., including meetings with citizens from all areas of the municipality (during June – July 2007, were distributed a total of 1251 questionnaires, of which 1087 were completed).

[9] see Projection of main social and economic indicators in the territorial profile in 2017, http://www.cnp.ro/user/repository/prognoza_in_profil_teritorial_toamna_2013.pdf



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According to the methodology of work that led to the development of the strategy and the analyses performed in the city of Arad, in 2005 – 2007, have been highlighted several phenomena present on the labour market, such as :

- Low level of participation in training programs, which has led to a low skilled local workforce;
- The inability of educational and employment structures to quickly adapt to the constant changes of the labour market's needs;
- Decreased active population, against a slow but continuous aging process and an increasing trend of emigration;
- The growth of poverty, especially in risk groups (rom population, single parents, families with many children, post-institutionalized youngsters, and persons with disabilities).

All these have occurred due to: lack of qualification and demand on the labour market; poor correlation of demand and supply on the labour market and the insufficient diversity of the training/conversion offers; poor offers for professional training; mismatch between the educational system with the needs of the economic development of the municipality; migration and emigration of the workforce, which led to the immediate effect of increasing the average age of skilled labour; lack of effective partnerships between the educational institutions and businesses; the existence of underdevelopment services for different categories of people (disabled, institutionalized children, youngsters from orphanages); employing a small number of people with disabilities or those exposed to social exclusion (persons released from detention, single parent families, youngsters from orphanages, rom population), etc.

Therefore, some of the negative aspects of the local labour market at the end of 2007 were: shortage of skilled labour, poor correlation of supply and demand on the labour market, insufficient diversification of training/conversion offers, lack of competition among providers of offers, lack of correlation between education supply and with the future needs of qualifications, lack of correlation between the education system with the practical needs of the economic development of the municipality, migration and emigration of qualified labour, which led to the immediate effect of increasing the average age of skilled labour, low level of investment in human resources in SMEs, the lack of effective partnerships between the educational institutions and businesses. In the city of Arad, 75% of the total employed population (76.909 people) work in late 2007 in a SME, so it has begun to be undertaken specific actions focused on encouraging their development (table 3).

TABLE 3. TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN SMES

| Number of employees in SMEs | Year 2005 | Year 2006 | Year 2007 |
|---|---|---|---|
| TOTAL | 53053 | 57760 | 57748 |

Source: Labour Inspectorate Arad

One of the few positive aspects of the local labour market refers to the unemployment rate recorded at the end of 2007 it read a relatively low level of 6-75, to a total number of 76.909 employees spread across economic sectors such as (table 4):

TABLE 4. THE LABOUR FORCE DIVIDED BY INDUSTRY (SEPTEMBER 2007)

| Current issue | ECONOMIC BRANCHES | EMPLOYEES |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | **AGRICULTURE** | 99 |
| 2 | **INDUSTRY** | 36.29 |
| | - mining | 80 |
| | - manufacturing | 33.16 |
| | - electricity, gas and water | 2.33 |
| 3 | **CONSTRUCTIONS** | 4.90 |
| 4 | **COMERCE** | 10.53 |
| 5 | **SERVICES** | 16.25 |
| | - transportation, storage, postal and communication | 7.15 |
| | - financial, banking and insurance/reinsurance | 1.22 |
| | - education | 3.61 |
| | - health and social | 4.25 |
| 6 | **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION** | 2.42 |
| 7 | **OTHERS** | 5.49 |
| | **TOTAL:** | 76.90 |

Source: Local Development Strategy of Arad 2008-2013/2013-2020

As such, human capital and social services development – encouraging access to education, supporting training by providing equal opportunities for lifelong learning and the development of a modern and flexible labour market by promoting employment and support distressed social categories – were strategic objectives for 2007 – 2013 in the city of Arad.

In terms of human capital development, some of the specific objectives could be summarized as follows (Local Development Strategy of Arad 2008-2013/2013-2020):

- Improving education and training of human capital;
- Development of human resources in the education system;
- Create a framework for coordinating joint efforts and satisfy the interests of stakeholders (local government, schools, business, civil society);
- Creating programs to attract and retain highly skilled workforce locally and increase attractiveness of Arad on the labour market;



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- Diversification of advice and training services in order to increase their capabilities to deliver quality services;
- Facilitating access for the young people on the labour market;
- Developing and inclusive, flexible and modern labour market;
- Promoting the (re) insertion of the inactive people on the labour market;
- Improving public employment service;
- Facilitating access to education and the labour market of vulnerable groups;
- Linking supply on the labour market with specific local economic resulted in the demand for labour.

It is known that the low results in education and training are factors that increased the risk of becoming unemployed and to enter a phase of long term unemployment or exclusion from the labour market. In this regard, the reduction of early school leavers and the support to increase access and participation in the continuous professional training substantially contributes to approaching learning and work as a process that takes place throughout life, in order to support employability and labour market integration.

In order to achieve the identified objectives, in terms of human capital development, was designed a plan of action, divided into two time horizons: S – short (2008 – 2010) and M – medium (2010 – 2013). Some of the actions contained in this plan aimed (table 5):

TABLE 5. ACTION PLAN

| Current issue | Project – short description | Estimated date of commencement | Comments (short, medium, long term) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Develop a program of concrete measures on the financial support of infrastructure development and the material in educational schools | 2008 | S |
| 2 | The organization of half term symposia in town halls, involving representatives of universities of Arad and Chamber of Commerce, to present business management courses and increased internal capacity development of human resources | 2009 | S |
| 3 | Prepare, in collaboration with the Local Committee, the development of a social partnership for professional training, of a study on current trends present on the labour market in order to correlate them with the offer, and adapting the educational offers of educational institutues | 2009 | S |
| 4 | Logistical support and advertising of job fairs | 2009 | S |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | organized by A.J.O.F.M. and superior education instutions in order to attract students | | |
| 5 | Creating a program of concrete measures to support groups at risk of social exclusion (access to housing, education, transport, creating schools and kindergartens with special program) | 2010 | S |
| 6 | Creating a program of concrete measures to support local providers of training services (reducing taxes, logistical support and advertising etc.) | 2011 | M |

Source: Local Development Strategy of Arad 2008-2013/2013-2020

One of the main directions of sectorial development, under the Local Development Strategy of Arad, refers to social services, respectively, to bring them in close proximity of potential beneficiaries and improving their accessibility by beneficiaries, both in terms of information, and their effective delivery.

Thus, from the perspective of the development of social services, were established, in the city of Arad, following carrying out analysis, several strategic objectives, as follows (Local Development Strategy of Arad 2008-2013/2013-2020):

- Creating an individualized social services centred on the needs of people in distress: creating a map of social problems, creating a unique plan for services, conducting surveys/studies applied to specific problems, investment in training / professional development;
- Implementing welfare measures in the protection of children, family, single people, the elderly, disabled people, any person in need, during 2007 – 2013;
- Developing inter – institutional communication and civil society structures, expansion of social partnership – institutions, ONGs, citizens, at local, county and central level domestically and internationally.

In this sense, the actions taken to achieve the set objectives have resulted in a structured plan of action on short, medium and long term, and on the following target groups: children and youngsters, elderly, disabled people, people in a risky social status due to poverty, disadvantaged minorities. Some of the projects included in the action plan, mentioned above will be presented below (table 6 and table 7):

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TABLE 6. MEDIUM TERM ACTION PLAN (2007 – 2013)

| Current issue | Project – short description | Operational program (cf. CSNR) | Estimated date of commencement |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Advice and professional guidance – counselling and career guidance for better access to the labour market | 4.5. PO Human resources development Priority 1 | 2008 |
| 2 | Collaboration between local government and education institutions for education and skill oriented toward market demand – increased employability and adaptability, promoting social inclusion and equal opportunities | 4.5. PO Human resources development Priority 1 | 2008 |
| 3 | Care centre for elderly people – expansion, modernization of care centres for elderly people. Creating a multifunctional centre with dining, day-care centre and modernizing, efficient and ecological networks of cold water, heating and sanitation. | 4.4. PO Regional Priority 1 | 2009 |
| 4 | Training courses for people with disabilities – increased employability and adaptability, entrepreneurship development, promoting social inclusion and equal opportunities for people with disabilities | 4.5. PO Human resources development Priority 1 | 2008 |
| 5 | Equal chances for the Gypsy population to access the labour market – fighting extreme poverty and social exclusion faced by the Gypsy community and promote full integration into society of its members by gaining qualifications and employment for the community members | 4.5.PO Human resources development Priority 1 | 2008 |
| 6 | International cooperation to equalize standards in social work – comparable standards between EU countries in the social assistance industry | 4.4. PO Regional Priority 1 | 2008 |
| 7 | Training programs for staff involved in social work – improving required competences and aptitudes in the social work field | 4.5.PO Human resources development Priority 2 | 2010 |
| 8 | Creating an annual calendar (agenda) of joint work between the local government and other local stakeholders in social work – increase social cohesion by addressing in partnership, by all stakeholders in the field. | 4.4.PO Regional Priority 1 | 2010 |

Source: Local Development Strategy of Arad 2008-2013/2013-2020

TABLE 7. LONG TERM ACTION PLAN (2008 – 2020)

| Current issue | Project – short description | Operational program (cf. CSNR) | Estimated date of commencement |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Networks of social assistance from Arad between D.D.A.C., D.S.P., D.D.F.S.S., A.J.O.F.M., C.A.S. Arad – creating a computer network in Arad between institutions specialized in providing social and health services, to reduce bureaucracy and to shorten the time to solve problems through effective collaboration of all service providers | 4.6. PO educational capacity development Priority 2 | 2013 |
| 2 | Facilitating access to the labour market for people in the risk status category because of poverty – increasing employability and adaptability, entrepreneurship development, promoting social inclusion and equal opportunities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds | 4.5. PO Human resources development Priority 6 | 2015 |
| 3 | Forming a network of flexible social services, with services adequate to local needs, including even temporary services, according to the needs' duration – customer service orientation to increased adequacy and quick response to the needs | 4.4. PO Regional Priority 1 | 2014 |
| 4 | Forming working groups (composed on representatives of different partners) covering relatively small areas of the community, in order to provide support to people in difficulty - increase social cohesion by addressing in partnership, by all stakeholders in the field. The existence of working groups lead to interventions focused on the case and to a complementary intervention. | 4.4. PO Regional Priority 1 | 2015 |
| 5 | Creating a unique plan of services to approach each social case by developing the individualized intervention plan - customer service orientation to increased adequacy and quick response to the needs. The existence of databases, that are supported by individual sheets, ensures the creation of a unified plan of action on cases, and also a detailed comparison of casuistry, order to develop prevention | 4.4. PO Regional Priority 1 | 2016 |

Source: Local Development Strategy of Arad 2008-2013/2013-2020

In order to effectively implement all of the mentioned projects, it was appropriate to created, at the town's level, a Committee for the Supervision of the Implementation of Strategic Planning, by resolution of the City Council whose purpose was to oversee, monitor and evaluate the implementation of strategic plans. In Fact, the role of the Committee was to review the strategic objectives to ensure that they include all the major issues the community is facing, to review the identified objectives / projects, and decision making regarding the prioritization of projects and initiatives which follow to be implemented, based on the criteria contained in the Local Development Strategy of Arad and other relevant criteria.



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In conclusion we can say that remains to be seen if the local authorities will be able to implement all the projects envisaged in the strategy, and to complete the strategic objectives relating to the development of human resources and social services in the context of a local sustainable development.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

This study showed us some of the measures that must be adopted by local authorities for the development of human capital and social services system, in order to increase their capacity to adapt to new trends of the development of the economic environment. It is known that local development is accomplished through local development strategies, through integrated and multi-zoned areas, being placed on the community's responsibility, local action groups, made up of representatives of local socio-economic interest parties of the public and private sectors, local action groups developing and implementing local development strategies (Local Development Strategy of Arad 2008-2013/2013-2020).

In terms of human resources development and the development of the social service systems, a crucial role is played by the social economy. In Europe, social economy consists of a multitude of actors and it manages to produce social utility, and to cover the needs which neither the public sector, nor the business environment can cover. The social economy addresses all forms of social needs, and the funds for these activities are obtained either by donations and grants, or, as it is lately desired, by running economic activities whose profit is directed towards such services (Cace et al., 2013, p.12).

We can say that, being a former communist country, Romania is willing to develop a strong voluntary sector of the social economy and to avoid the extremes of the capitalism and communism (Nicolăescu *et al.*, 2011, p. 259), applying different ways to support the disfavored communities and groups running the risk of social exclusion (Nicolăescu *et al.*, 2011). The proposed transfer of responsibilities from the state towards the non-governmental sector is important and debated (Neguţ *et al.*, 2011), and may yield good results, but the transfer of these responsibilities will take a while, which will delay the overall development of the system of social work services and, implicitly, of the social economy sector, in Romania (Arpinte, 2010, pp. 126-127).

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**INTEGRATING THE E-LEARNING DIMENSION IN THE EDU-RES MASTER'S PROGRAMME**

# E-LEARNING ÎN PROGRAMUL DE MASTRAT EDU-RES


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***Abstract***

Electronic communication training techniques are a relatively new approach to learning. The basics notions remain the same, only the means of transmitting and acquiring knowledge changes. Using information and communication systems for education means attaching to the learning process the element of freedom: students can learn when and where they wish.
About motivation, pedagogical studies show that in general all training systems, classical or modern, are unmotivated. Viewed in this aspect, e-Learning systems are no exception. Conclusion: an e-learning system is unmotivated. Considering all these elements we propose a conceptual model for EDU-RES.
Initiated in 2006, Research and Teacher Education for Business & Economics (EDU-RES) is a interdisciplinary master programme in English promotes professional development.



***Keywords*:** e-Learning, master programme in English, trening systems

**JEL CODES:** A23, L86



***Rezumat***

Utilizarea tehnologiilor informatice și de comunicație (TIC) în instruire este o abordare relativ nouă. Noțiunile de bază rămân aceleași, doar mijloacele de transmitere și achiziție de cunoștințe se schimbă. TIC pentru educație înseamnă aducerea elementelor de libertate în cadrul procesului instructiv-educativ: cursanții pot învăța unde și când doresc.
Referitor la motivație, studiile pedagogice arată că, în general, toate sistemele de formare, clasice sau moderne, sunt nemotivante. Privitor la acest aspect, sistemele de e-Learning nu fac excepție. Având în vedere toate aceste elemente, în prezenta lucrare propunem un model conceptual de instruire asistată electronic pentru EDU-RES.
inițiat în 2006, EDU-RES (Educație și Cercetare pentru Economie și Afaceri) este un program de masterat interdisciplinar în limba engleză, promotor al dezvoltării profesionale.



***Cuvinte cheie:*** instruire asistată electronic, TIC, e-Learning, program de master in limba engleză

## 1. INTRODUCTION

ELearning systems analysis appears to be simple if we take into consideration some of the approaches employed by researchers so far (Făt, 2007). But the dynamics of eLearning requires caution. For more than seven years there have been discussions about a new generation of eLearning, namely eLearning 2.0 (Karrer, 2006). The eLearning market is estimated to bring a revenue of U.S. $ 56.2 billion in 2013 according to Certifyme.net, the industry leader in online training, and this amount is projected to double its value by the end of 2015.

In Romania, a team of researchers from the Centre for Development and Innovation in Education – has been using techniques aimed at identifying and classifying theoretical and practical approaches to training and education. If we consider the mission of this non-governmental organization (with no political affiliation) to promote the principles and values in education through innovative technologies and approaches (such as conducting programs and e-Learning projects, developing curricula, education for democratic citizenship, lifelong learning and continuous training of teachers) then we can rely on the experience of the organization and the seriousness with which the foundation is involved in defining and e-Learning phenomenon.

Their mission is supported by its partners:

- European Network for Educational Cooperation in South East Europe - SEE ECN (South East Europe Education Cooperation Network), initiated by the Centre for Education Policy Studies, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia and Austria KulturKontakt within the Stability Pact for Europe South East.
- EULLearN (European University Lifelong Learning Network), a network through which Socrates Erasmus aims to promote coherent strategies and practical measures to boost Lifelong Learning in universities, the main purpose being the consistent and effective use of tools and specific resources.
- European Foundation for Quality in e-Learning, an initiative of the European Commission, which aims at increasing the quality of e-Learning in Europe.
- Elearning Romania Program, a national initiative that aims to create a forum for all stakeholders in the effective use of new information and communication technologies for education and training.

The e-Learning phenomenon fits theoretically between two opposing theories. In the early '80s, Jonathan Perraton, lecturer at Sheffield University, detailed the current phase of globalization and how

modern societies refer to politics, economy, culture and communication when discussing migration, environment, legislation and the military forces. He said that "distance education (defined today largely as eLearning) is doing very well without any theory."

Since the late twentieth century until today, more and more voices have argued that the assumptions on future electronic training systems and hence distance education can only be confirmed or refuted by the results of scientific research (Kuhn, 2008). Thomas Khun launched the idea that scientific theories are actually immersed in contexts that determine their interpretations.

## 2. CONCEPTS AND TRENDS

To outline the limits of the e-learning concept, beyond the views expressed by specialized organizations, we have reviewed over 100 articles and books in the literature that discuss the phenomenon.

A simplified definition of the concept of e-Learning is given in Romanian literature by a researcher at the Institute of Education Sciences: "*The e-Learning (training distance or virtual education) consists of a planned teaching-learning experience organized by an institution providing material in a sequential and logical order to be acquired by students in their own way, without forcing agents through co-presence or synchronicity*" (Istrate, 2000). Mediation can be achieved through various media, from the floppy or CD material (possibly by mail) to technologies for transmitting Internet content.

If we go beyond this definition then, broadly, eLearning can stand for all educational situations in the use of ICT resources is significant. The term eLearning, mentioned in 2004 by an American professor Brut in his book *Tools for E-learning*, a modern teacher's information guide. He expanded the meaning of eLearning from the primary etymology, which meant learning by electronic means, to cover the area of intersection between modern information media and educational activities.

From my point of view, today the e-Learning concept is defined as eEducation. The semantic particularities of eLearning overlap and they stand for a multitude of terms that capture the variety of learning experiences that can benefit from technological support assisted instruction/ mediated by computer, digital/ mobile/ online learning, etc. Under the heading of teaching and learning software, a wide range of electronic materials (on CD) is developed to support the education process: maps, dictionaries, encyclopedias, educational films, presentations in various formats, books (e-books), tutorials, simulations, software forming skills, practice software, educational games, etc. Computer and electronic materials/ media are used to support teaching, learning, assessment or as a means of communication (for making individual tasks, etc.).



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If I had to choose a definition suitable for the general public, accepting a more restricted horizon, I would choose the definition of Professor Gross. He says that "*e-Learning is a type of distance education as a planned teaching-learning experience organized by an institution providing material in a sequential and logical order to be acquired by students in their own way, without forcing agents through co-presence or synchronicity*. Mediation is done by new information and communication technologies, especially the Internet. The Internet means both the distribution of material and the channel of communication between stakeholders. Functional only in higher education and adult education, internet training system components respond and adapt the traditional teaching approach: planning, specific content and methodology, interaction, support and evaluation.

From the content of these reviews I noted that: e-Learning approaches effectively combine face to face and distance education, fundamentally changing the role of the educator, particularly of those involved in online training situations. Therefore, I believe that eLearning is the result of evolution, not of a revolution in the field of education. There have been numerous attempts in literature to come up with an innovative terminology to describe this type of learning (Androniceanu and Abăluță (Sabie), 2008).

Such an innovation is mixed or blended learning. The term "mixed-mode" approach describes the combination of face to face and distance teaching without necessarily requiring the highest technology. Other experts prefer the term "Resource-based Learning" or a term used especially in vocational training, namely the "Blended Learning". Regardless of the typology used, the most important are the training strategies used for this purpose (Popescu, 2009).

Electronic communication training techniques are a relatively new approach to learning. The basics notions remain the same, only the means of transmitting and acquiring knowledge changes. Using information and communication systems for education means attaching to the learning process the element of freedom: students can learn when and where they wish.

The launch of electronic communication training techniques was done via the Internet. The disadvantage of the previous distance education method was that learner-instructor interaction could only be asynchronous, not synchronous. The latest achievements in the field of software for distance learning processes by means of information and communication technology allow for real-time communication, both text and audio-video, thus creating true virtual classrooms (in Romanian "teleclase").

The e-Learning solutions presented are the result of technology developments that support this functionality. Thus, with the advent of huge storage capacity, distance traditional education methods (which had been using printed material sent by mail) were improved by the use of eBooks. Later on,

interactive information and communication technologies have become central elements for new deployment training with electronic media.

Table no. 1 below presents some of the minimum standard elements required, as they were drawn from the literature, which must be taken into account when designing an e-Learning System.

**TABLE NO. 1.** FACTORS CONSIDERED IN DESIGNING E-LEARNING SYSTEMS

| Elements | Remarks / Examples |
|---|---|
| TARGET GROUP | students, teachers, people seeking employment, employees; |
| LEARNING CONTENT | information, skills, abilities, attitudes and knowledge in various fields of expertise. |
| TEACHING STRATEGIES | co-operative learning strategies, inductive learning, discovery learning, project-based learning, etc. |
| IT&C TOOLS | e-mail, website, video conferencing, chat, educational software; |
| RESOURCES | budget, time, personnel assigned; |
| OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME | training, specialization, communication of new knowledge, deepening knowledge, skills and competence creation in different areas, etc. |

As a synthesis of the presented approaches, our position is similar to that of the researchers who consider the e-Learning industry as relatively new and unexplored, which involves covering a broad set of applications and processes based on learning on a computer (Manole et al., 2011).

E-Learning means the electronic distribution of information content (media, Internet, Intranet) and is more accurately defined as:

- the convergence of learning and the Internet;
- the use of information and communications technology to build, deliver, select manage and extend learning;
- learning via the Internet which may include information in multiple formats and a network of communication between those involved;
- the fastest way of learning, with the lowest cost, allowing for increased access to education for all participants.

**eLearning Conceptual Model Proposed for the EDU-RES Master's Programme**

According to recent studies and practical approaches some of the most important factors to be considered when designing an electronic training system are:

- Motivation



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- The information content
- The development, which includes:
  - Technology hardware;
  - Technology software.

About motivation, pedagogical studies show that in general all training systems, classical or modern, are unmotivated (Dimian *et al.,* 2012). Viewed in this aspect, e-Learning systems are no exception. Conclusion: an e-learning system is unmotivated. Electronic information content is more suitable for the appropriation of concepts and creating difficult skills and abilities. It is designed just for easy concepts and skills (). Considering all these elements we propose a conceptual model for EDURES. The main components are:

- Specialized software for creating electronic presentations with static or dynamic text;
- Audio video;
- Libraries;
- Support for interacting with the communication system.

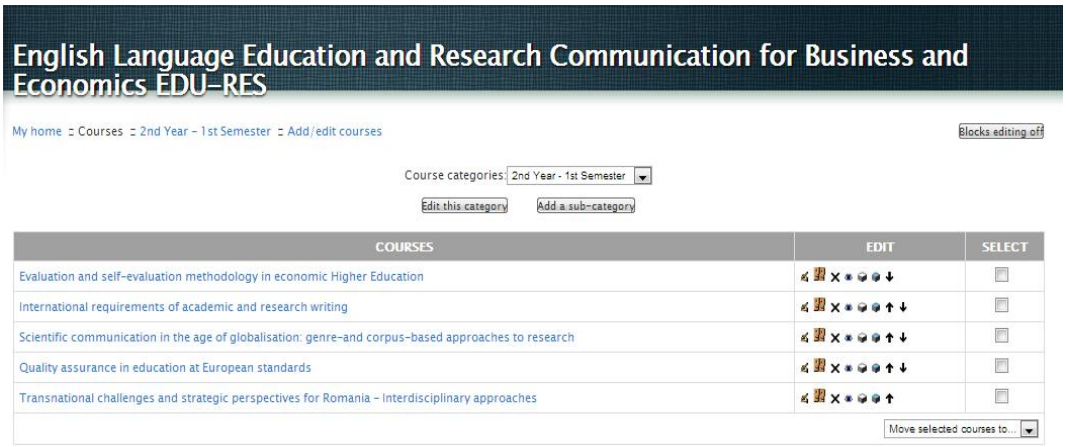
## Preparing the Platform for Loading Courses

**Step 1.** *Create course categories*

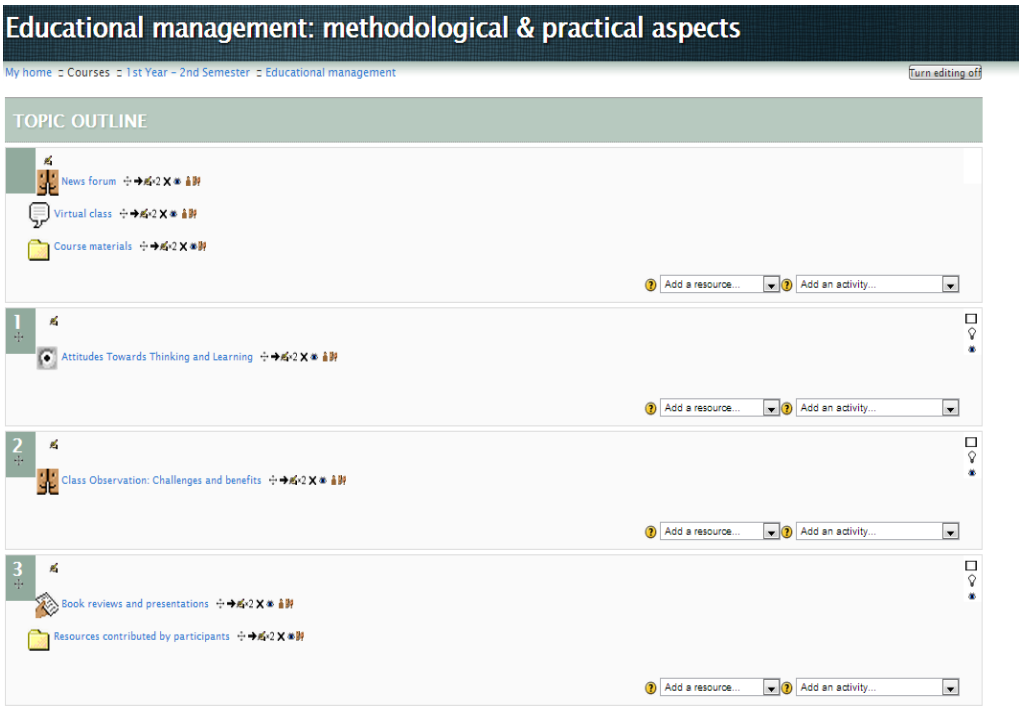



Course categories are taken from the curricula of the master.

**Step 2.** *Specifying disciplines course according to the curriculum.*




**Step 3**. *Selecting activities according to syllabus*




For Educational Management discipline have been selected 4 activities: forums, chat, support of loading homework and a survey.

## 3. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Education is seen as one of the most important factors for poverty alleviation and economic growth in developing countries and the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for



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dissemination of education is believed to have huge potential for governments struggling to meet a growing demand for education while facing an escalating shortage of teachers.

Today, the development of the Internet into a worldwide, high-speed, multimedia communication platform has enabled the development of e-learning as an effective teaching and learning mechanism . (E-learning, with its various communication tools, plays a significant role in creating and promoting learning communities and their development. E-learning has made leaps and bounds in the education system. Nowadays European Union has pushed forward a policy to support R&D in the use of ICT in education, including IT connectivity and digital learning and teaching. The strategic plan aims at using technology to enhance the quality of education and training, at increasing the effectiveness of education and training delivery systems, and at increasing the efficiency of education and training management. E-learning is not a luxury but a necessity for current and future generations. Distance learning via the Internet combined with multi-media platforms can satisfy the demand for alternative forms of education. Entering the 21st century, with the Internet and World Wide Web leading the way, distance learning is already affecting the lives of millions of children, teens and adults through interventions in their patterns of learning. Learning objects and games can build skills that engage learners in the content. Learners are more connected than ever before and the fact that the users is connected to the content offers opportunities for anyone to learn anywhere anytime.

E-Learning as a structured process requires certain quality standards and procedures for offering an efficient and easy to use platform. To fulfill this conditions the development of professional eLearning platform solution should be designed so as to meet the next user requirements:

- Efficient procedures and templates for publishing of multilingual content
- Integration of media objects into contents
- Features for image processing
- Flexibly configurable meta-data model for contents
- Drop-down formatting options for authors
- Import and export functions for XML structured contents
- Procedure for administration and release of content (work-flow engine)
- Search functions for authors and users
- Support of the publication procedure through tailored interfaces

- Cross media publishing (export to multiple formats)
- Version management for publications
- Integrated link management and link consistency check
- Functions for content distribution

To encourage the use of e-learning platforms, both by teachers and by the learners, it is important that e-learning platforms and the digital content to be easily created and accessed.

We believe that after inclusion of eLearning in EDURES program can take into account a number of goals such as:

1. Each person has a particular way in which he learns best
2. Variability exists in the human population in terms of how they learn and how they gain knowledge. This variability is of two types: group and individual. Group variability refers to the common preferences of individuals belonging to a particular group: the local community, age group, socio-economic group, etc. Individual variability refers to the personal preference of a particular individual overlapping general preferences. When they own and drive their learning, they are more motivated to want to learn.
3. As educational content folds better on the user preferences (general and personal) than the acquired competencies and knowledge will be obtained faster and will be more durable over time.
4. The followed desired preferences of individuals are the stable ones and not the variable in time (not taken into discussion type of learning style preferences with scientifically unproven existence).
5. Humans have the best results in learning from interaction with other human individuals (traditional learning). Non-personal learning not provide maximum efficiency in learning but provide efficiency in producing contents (egg. text).
6. Using computers in learning can be at least as effective as the traditional

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# THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

***Abstract***

Modern psychology has gone way beyond the classical problem – cure paradigm, and the new field of Positive Psychology is emerging as a tool managers are not only encouraged, but literally forced to use to keep their competitive advantages. Leadership experts are learning the specific strengths and weaknesses of particular psychological types. Depending on the intelligence used, leadership can vary widely, from Authoritarian, Oportunistic, Transformational or bottom-line focused Pragmatism. Personal Development has become a necessity, as each individual needs to hone and develop his latent talents to play his part in a team properly. The Organizational Culture then becomes apparent as the DNA of a company, and it can be the cause for great successes or monumental failures of the enterprise. A humane and engaging culture not only produces better bottom lines and more long-term profits, but also something money cannot and will not ever be able to buy: loyal, happy and enthusiastic employees and customers.

Success in the workplace requiers a continual development of the Human Resources potential by engaging spiritual growth and personal development as cornerstones of the Organizational Culture. People operate with symbols and he who is the master of symbols and archetypes has the most power to shape reality and produce better results.

But in all, we must remember that it begins with one thing: the Mission, the Vision and the Values

***Keywords*:** Personal Development, Organizational Culture, Leadership Styles, Human Resources.

**JEL CODES:** M 14

# ROLUL CULTURII ORGANIZAŢIONALE ÎN DEZVOLTAREA RESURSELOR UMANE

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***Rezumat***

Psihologia modernă a progresat cu mult dincolo de paradigma clasică problemă – vindecare și noul câmp al psihologiei pozitive evoluează drept o unealtă pe care managerii nu sunt doar încurajați, ci de-a dreptul obligați să o folosească pentru a-și păstra avantajele competitive. Experții în leadership învață punctele tari și punctele slabe specifice ale tipologiilor particulare de personalitate. În funcție de tipul de inteligență folosit, stilurile de leadership pot varia de la autoritar, la oportunist, transformațional sau un stil oportunist, centrat pe rezultate. Dezvoltarea personală a devenit o necesitate, întrucât fiecare individ este obligat să-și sporească și să-și șlefuiască talentele, pentru a-și putea juca rolul în echipă așa cum se cuvine. Cultura Organizațională devine aparentă drept ADN –ul companiei, putând fi cauza pentru mari succese, dar și pentru dezastre monumentale. O cultură omenoasă și antrenantă nu doar că produce rezultate și profituri pe termen lung mai mari, dar asigură de asemenea ceva care banii nu vor putea cumpăra niciodată: angajați și cumpărători loiali, fericiți și entuziaști.

Succesul la locul de muncă necesită o continuă dezvoltare a potențialului resurselor umane prin abordarea dezvoltării personale și spirituale ca pietrele de temelie ale culturii organizaționale. Oamenii operează cu simboluri și cel care mânuiește cu cea mai mare măiestrie arhetipurile și simbolurile are cea mai mare putere de a restructura realitatea și de a produce cele mai bune rezultate.

Totuși, în toate acestea, este nevoie să ne amintim că totul începe de la un singur lucru: Misiunea, Viziunea și Valorile.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** dezvoltare personală, cultură organizațională, stiluri de leadership, resurse umane.

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## 1. POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY – THE NEW PARADIGM

When we focus on Human Resources development, we can tackle the issue from two very distinct sides. Either we look to what the problems are and we seek to find solutions and cures to them, or we look to what could work even better than it already does and try to implement the change we envision.

Up until now, the dominant paradigm in psychology, be it individual or organizational, like in many other sciences was the classical problem – cure paradigm. You find the problem, you deconstruct the mechanism to see what's causing the problem, then you find a cure and implement it. Then the problem goes away and everything is fine again.

But with the coming age, a new school of positive thinking has given rise to a new way of thinking about the world in general, and human resources development in particular. This new way turns the old approach on its head and instead of asking "What's wrong with this situation or system and how can we fix it?" , it asks instead "What could go even better about this, on top of what is already going well"?

The basic presupposition of the old paradigm is that something is broken and it needs to be fixed. On the other hand, positive psychology is not primarily interested in what is going wrong, but on what could be.

If the first approach is deductive and normative, positive psychology is inductive and probabilistic. Far from being mere wishful thinking, it makes use of the gift of imagination and far-sight humans posess and instead of resulting in a to-do list of tasks meant to bring the system to a 0 point, it sets a universe of possibilities and a vision of what to become, and rather than being a clearly cut road, the journey to that vision is flexible.

Here, there is no end point. In the problem – cure approach, the end result is the problem – free state, the 0 point. That is the maximum best. But where do we go once we are problem – free remains a mistery. This is the answer the positive psychology trend tries to answer "Where do we go from here? What else could we achieve and perfect?" So the growth possibilities for this type of paradigm are limitless.

## 2. 4 ARCHETYPES – 4 LEADERSHIP STYLES

Each leader will lead based on his native intelligence, and following the Myers – Briggs model (1962), which is widely used in modern management, we find 4 main character types, each with its own brand of intelligence, and with a unique leadership style.

There are logistical personalities, tactical personalities, strategic personalities and diplomatic personalities, and they have something in common with mebers of the same group. However different they may be, the Guardians of the logistical personalities are always Sensory Judgers which gives them Introverted Sensing. This makes them the most probable of all the types to be concerned with the past and remember things that others may overlook. All tactical Artisans on the other hand are Sensory Perceivers, which gives them Extroverted Sensing. This leads them to be daring, adventurous and fully immersed in the present moment, noticing all sorts of opportunities other types miss. They don't really care about the past or the future as long as they have the present. All strategic Rationalists are Intuitive Thinkers, which gives them the long term strategic and analytical mind of a scientist. They speak the language of reason and are seldomly interested or swayed in their decisions by emotions. While on the outside they may seem robotic, none can contest the efficiency with which they work. All diplomatic Idealists are Intuitive Feelers, a stark contrast with the rationalists who are not at all interested in feeling. This gives them a soft heart, a high emotional intelligence and makes them wonderful people-people (Myers, 1962).

Myers theory was based on the earlier works of Carl Jung, the german psychologist.

Sensing was seen as perception by means of the senses, of the conscious. Intuition was another perceiving function, but it was linked to perceiving by means of the unconscious or perceiving the unconscious itself. Thinking and Feeling were preety straightforward as decision functions. Feeling decides based on emotional impact and consequences, while Thinking has nowadays scientific and analytical approach, concerned with concrete utility which necessitates brushing feelings aside because they provide too much variability. All of these four functions can either be directed toward the inside, toward the subject, becoming introverted, or toward the outside, toward the object, becoming extroverted (Jung, 1971).

Comenting on the work of Isabel Myers, a future contributor to the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, David Keirsey notes "Wow! Here I was, only five years out of graduate school, working as a corrective interventionist for schools and trying very hard to figure aut how to apply what I had learned about people in making myself useful to school children and their parents and teachers and administrators, these people having all sorts of difficulties getting along with each other. And along comes a little old lady from Princeton New Jersey, Isabel Myers, to tell me about myself, about who I was and what I was good for. Oh, I already knew some of that stuff about myself, but I didn't know that I was a kind or type of person, and that therefore there had to be others just like me" (Keirsey, 1998, p.15).



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Guardians are the authoritarian leaders, preferring strict rules, regulations, codes of conduct, and a highly reglemented environment. They will do their best to ensure the standard procedures are well defined but most of all well respected and may be very harsh in the penalties for not respecting what they see as common-sense rules meant to protect the interests of all the members against the interests of single individuals. Their intelligence is logistical, focusing on rules, deadlines, routines and standard operating procedures. The more standardized the environment, the happier guardian leaders are, for in such an environment predictability and accountability thrive. Guardian leaders are the backbone of every organization, the ones who take all the pressure from all the body. Without them, everything would crumble.

Artisans are free spirits, and seldom will you see them in leadership roles, which entail a great deal of organizing others and staying in one place. They are not really made for organizations, being much better suited for liberal professions. But, if it happens that there is an artisan leader, he will focus on opportunities, design and what could be improved to get a tactical advantage. Rules under artisan leaders will be loose, and to a more judging, organized mind, Artisan leadership will at times seem chaotic. Yet it is exacty this type of freedom that encourages creativity. Artisans have a natural zest for life and challenge, and they will be the first to spot and jump at a new opportunity when it arises. Artisan leaders are the arms and legs, the muscles of every organization. Without them, everything would come to a standstill, and progress would become little more than a nice dream. They are drive and movement.

Rationalists, as the name suggests, are all about reason, logic and efficiency. If Guardians are very practical and logistical in their approach, and artisans are tactical and opportunistic, Rationalists will lead by strategy, focusing on the biger picture and getting a bird's eye view to get a competitive edge in efficiency. For them if it's efficient, if it maximizes profit and minimizes cost, do it, if not discard it. No room for emotional attachment here, just cold hard logic and facts. In a world bogged down by emotional subjectivity, Rationalist leaders prize objectivity over anything else, paying no heed to arguments that do not appeal to their logic. They are inventors, but they are also perfectors, taking nearly any project or enterprise and making it run at full capacity, like a well oiled machine. Rationalist leaders are the eyes of every organization. They see far and wide, they scan from above, but also go into the detais like a microscope. They bring vision to a blind world and understanding of the environment. Without them, organizations would operate in the dark, and like a ship with no compass, they would surely crash on a nearby reef.

All well and good up until now, but when it comes to matters of the heart, idealists are the watery eyed, friendly understanding leaders who people come to love. As the name suggests, idealists are all about

ideals. The rationalists may have strategic visions, but idealist leaders understand it takes people's hearts to attain them. For them it is not about the mission, vision and values, for them it's about the organizational culture. Do the people feel at home and fulfilled at their workplace? How is morale among the troups? Cause if morale falters, the rest, no matter how well organized, well designed or well balanced will surely crumble soon after. They hear the pulse of the organization, the drumbeat. And as such, they will be the prime advocates of Human Resources Development. It's humans that make up the organizations, not plans, not strategies, not opportunities and dangers, but humans. And Idealists are the first to point that out. The warm hearted Idealist leaders are the heart and soul of every organization. They are the beating heart that pumps lifeblood through the organization. They are at the core, at the center of any human endeavour. For all production is ultimately an attempt to share the heart and the genius of all who work in that organization with the world.

## 3. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT – A MUST HAVE FOR ANY ORGANIZATION?

If you are skilfull but your character is lacking, your skills will take you to hights where your character will not be able to maintain you. Many people got the idea of Personal Development completely upside down. They think it is about learning skills to become better at what you do, or to get to the next level of efficiency by changing the methods of work. They think it is about tools and techniques that when applied will reduce the amount of work and stress it takes to complete a certain task.

To be sure, those are some effects of undergoing real personal development. But that is not the goal, that is the byproduct of a natural development process that transforms the person from the inside out. The changes that begin to manifest in the outside world appear first in the inner world, and they grow and mature there just as a child does inside the womb of his mother.

Rather than being akin to skill and methodology development, Personal Development is more akin to Character Development. Yes, there are some techniques and methods used to transform a person's character, but they arise naturally out of the process rather than being the main focus of it. Yes, it takes great deals of effort to undergo personal development, just as it does to grow muscles, but the process itself is effortless. The effort comes from the growth itself, not from the process.

And unless you anchor that growth deep within your body, within your cells, sooner rather than later it will show. Low levels of motivation and engagement, lack of grit and involvement, slacking and procrastinating will begin to set in once more as a clear sign of a dire lack of personal development.

Skills are external development. They allow the possessor of the skill to directly impact the external world and circumstances. But internal development has nothing to do with skills. Even the best



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carpenter, in the absence of strong inner development will slack on work, not finish his orders on time, and lead a life that, even if nobody would dare question his skill at carpentry, would not be a life they admire for what it brings to the world.

A skilled person is a great asset to any organization. But a developed person is pure gold. Skills can be developed in a few years, but character takes decades, both to learn, and to unlearn.

"There comes a time in the lives of those destined for greatness when we must stand before the mirror of meaning and ask: *Why, having been endowed with the courageous heart of a lion, do we live as mice*?

We must look squarely into our own tired eyes and examine why we waste so much time sniffing at every distraction, why we cower at the thought of revealing our true selves to the world, why we scurry so quickly from conflict and why we consent to play so small" (Burchard, 2014 p.ix)

## 4. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE – A MAKE OR BREAK FACTOR

What are the members of an organization? Are they workers, mere mercenaries working for their pay, or are they collaborators, the ones on which the quality of service provided, the good renoun or lack thereof for the organization hinges? Depending on how the leader treats his subordinates, they will get a feel for how they are being treated. Are they being cherished, honored, respected and kept in a position of high regard? Or are they being bossed around, looked down upon and even brutalized mentally and emotionally because they are under contract and they depend on the employer's money for sustenance?

The culture that the leaders promote generates an energetical field around the organization that either attracts good fortune for all involved, or draws in difficulties, problems and ill-fortune? Few leaders really take into account the crucial role of the culture that is being organically generated. They seldom have the epiphany that the organization itself is a collective phenomenon, and even though every person may have a clearly-cut assignments for his working-station, as a collective, they are all generating a quantum field that impacts each and every person involved there at a very deep level. On average, not counting hours of sleep, people spend more time at work or involved with people at work than with themselves or their loved ones. So the climate and culture created around the workplace has more air-time than any other form of influence. The lives and destinies of all involved in an organization are made or broken on the relative state of health of the organizational culture.

## 5. HOW TO LEAD? – EVANGELISTIC OR EMULATION LEADERSHIP

It is impossible to answer to the question "How best to lead?" whether the question refers to an organization, your own life, a small group, your family or anything else. There are simply too many variables to take into account. Yet, insights into what better leadership may look like are possible.

Drawing wisdom from the RPG game genere, we can begin to define two styles of leadership that yeld somewhat different results and have somewhat different approaches, even though both draw on the same source of power.

In the game Heroes of Might and Magic, but not limited to only that game, two character profiles are described. One is the Paladin, and the other is the Priest. Both have a lot to do with morality, with the Divine, with God, with respect, honor, virtue and generally the vaues associated with life or white magic. How can we take that knowledge and apply it in the sphere of leadership?

Let's contemplate the archetypes of the Priest and the Paladin and see if we can spot different styles of leading one's life that could also be applied at an organizational level.

Who is the Paladin, what is his agenda? How does he lead his life and others? Well, the Paladin is the Knight, the royal guard, the defender of the king, but also of all that is Just. Justice, duty and Honor are at the core of every paladin. His inspiration is his deity. The monarch rules by divine right, but the source of his legitimity is a deity. The paladin wants to emulate the deity, to behave as the deity would behave if it had a body, to get involved as it would get involved.

The Paladin is a might class, as opposed to magic. He has some divine magic granted to him by his god to aid him in his holy crusade, but his forte is his natural Charisma. He has the power through sheer personal example in action to inspire the nobility in others. Upon seeing his example, the others begin to have faith that the task that seems impossible to many can actually be done, and, even though odds may be against them, they set on the same mission the paladin is following because they trust him. He becomes their champion and by trusting him, people begin to trust themselves.

This is the leader that works side by side with his co-workers, setting an example, a standard, and reassuring everyone that he is there for them if they need it. This is what I call Emulation Leadership.

The Magic counterpart of the Paladin is the Priest. So again, who is the Priest, what is his agenda and how does he lead his life and others?

The Priest, as the name says is the man of God, the clergyman, or at higher ranks, the Pope or the Bishop, the Patriarch or the Hierophat. If the Paladin is Majestic and Just, the Priest is humble and



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saintly. Unlike the imposing and charismatic appearance of the Paladin, the priest's posture and look does not recomand him as particularly charismatic. Yet his power of influence is more subtle. He does not need a hamer, a sword or a shield, like a paladin does. His armor is Faith, his weapon is the Word of God and his gaze burns people soul's should they fail the test of heaven.

This is a more subtle, a more feminine way to lead, a way that is receptive, yealding, compassionate, not majestic, strong and imposing. His power comes also from his God, but in a different form. He does not seek to emulate, for the dimension of God to which he is devoted is beyond action. It is glimpsed through action, yet it is far beyond it. It is the wordless word, it is the spirit, it is the mistery, the great unknown that you can yet feel. It is pure faith.

The priest is not interested in doing what God would do, but instead he is interested in singing his praise and internalizing in his self the spirit of his God. Where the Paladin is literal and to the point, cutting no corners, the Priest curves and interprets the deeper meanings, the cryptic meanings of the word of God. He is an Evangelist of God, praising Virtue over all else and labeling as inessential all that has nothing to do with gaining virtue. He is a divine lover of his God, and by his words of wisdom, the crowd becomes also enamored with the teaching, with the God he is singing praise to. The priest has the ability to soften people's hearts rather than strengthening their resolve as a paladin would. Both followers are devoted to the path, but in very different ways.

That is why I named the leadership way of the Priest, Evangelistic Leadership, which tries to sway people's hearts by leading them gently into the eternal, the everlasting, the immortal.

And when a worker in an organization feels that by his acts or by his devotion he will indeed make a difference, matter and live forever in the hearts of people he may not ever know, that Organization will have extatic and euphoric workers that will love their work and the climate there.

Yet, that is only a quest, a vision to aspire to and to individually build. It is for future leaders to decide how they will lead. Will they lead like Guardian Kings, like Artisan Swashbucklers, like Rationalist Wizards, like Idealist Lovers, will they lead from the front by emulating and encouraging others too to emulate the Mission, Vision and Values, or will they lead from the back, by gentle faith and encouragement, keeping all the Organization in their gentle heart?

It remains to be seen, but the blueprint has been laid out for all to see and decide.

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**BUILDING CONSUMERS' TRUST IN ONLINE RETAILING SERVICES**

# DETERMINÂND ÎNCREDEREA CONSUMATORILOR ÎN SERVICII DE COMERȚ ONLINE CU AMĂNUNTUL

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***Abstract***
Over the past decade, there has been increasing evidence describing the relevance of trusting the online retailer, purchaser trust in e-commerce, and the absence of customer protection procedure. The purpose of this study is to examine determinants of online retail for e-consumers, critical factors that affect online retailing, and consumers' perceptions of online retailing service quality..

***Keywords*:** online retailing; e-consumer; e-commerce; consumer rights; online shopper; trust

**JEL CODES: D11; D18; L81**

***Rezumat***
În ultimul deceniu, au fost tot mai multe dovezi care descriu relevanța încrederii în vânzătorii online cu amănuntul și lipsa de proceduri pentru protecția clienților. Scopul acestui articol este de a examina determinanții vânzării online cu amănuntul pentru consumatorii electronici, factorii critici care afectează comerțul online cu amănuntul, și percepțiile consumatorilor asupra calității serviciilor online cu amănuntul.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** comerț online cu amănuntul; comerț electronic; drepturile consumatorilor; consumator electronic; încredere

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this paper is to explore and describe determinants of overall contentment in online retailing, the connection between trust and customer inclination to trust, and the protection of rights and concerns of online shoppers. This paper aims to analyze and discuss buyers' position and aim to engage in e-commerce conducts, the domestic customer transacting in the e-global market, and efficient shopper protection in the conditions of e-commerce.

## 2. THE GROWTH OF ONLINE RETAILING

The rise of the internet as a steady and dependable channel for managing e-commerce (Nica, 2015a) offers entities and their providers a cost effective and generic method of setting up supply chain connections. The articulation of the business-to-business (B2B) e-commerce supply chain as an expenditure-reducing technology has been altered to integrate B2B supply chains as an intrinsic and crucial element of organizational competitive benefit. Link contentment is vital for supporting the durable interorganizational connections, such as B2B e-commerce trading associations, needed to attain sustainable competitive benefit. In the circumstances of B2B e-commerce trading associations, justice senses and guarantee are influential to the constitution of confidence in a trading associate (confidence enhances link contentment with the trading associate, but senses of a trading associate's B2B e-commerce risk reduce link contentment). Organizational confidence of the trading associate is crucial for the evolution of link contentment. (Hampton et al., 2012) The home-developed platforms establishing the increase of online transactions and the significant functions of social media and mobile gadgets are essentially reconfiguring the manners Chinese customers buy products and services. China's substantial and expanding middle-class is advancing brand awareness, a raising tendency to buy first-rate quality and/or separately gratifying goods, and an adherence to brand fidelity and repeat business. Home-developed e-commerce companies cover a considerable portion of the Chinese e-commerce arena and manage a more significant amount of dealings than their more prominent international rivals. Social media platforms are a significant supplementary determinant or assistant of e-commerce undertakings: having almost instant response and easy-to-utilize interfaces, they are a necessity in the existence of Chinese shoppers, increasing their inclusion into the e-commerce chain. Mobile gadgets are a progressively essential component in China's e-commerce market. Mobile buying corresponds with the Chinese shopper's inclination for swiftness, and the advantage of "any moment" purchasing. The tendency for "smarter" and more operational phones and tablets, combined with the emerging employment of social media platforms to enlighten and link customers, will stimulate the continued



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increase in the amount and share of "m-commerce" dealings. Businesses aiming admission into China's aggressive e-commerce market should establish a scheme that involves a complete perception of the target market (Nica and Potcovaru, 2014), how customers assess and buy items, and how they choose to use technology in the community market. (KPMG, 2014)

In Africa, the restricted admission to financial services and accessibility of e-payments, the irrelevant degree of credit card access, the absence of government scheme on credit cards, the shortage of credit card proposals from the private sphere, conservatism among banks, and significant risk for shoppers are notable obstacles for the growth of e-commerce. The sluggish consumption of payment schemes for e-commerce has compelled the industry participants to incorporate their systems to platforms employed by mobile phone operators to engage more consumers. Mobile is the unique feasible infrastructure for e-services (fixed line or card infrastructure is exorbitant). Peer-to-peer (P2P) money transfers are an intensively kind of service accomplished by African customers. The most straightforward manner for m-payments firms to attract shoppers is to maintain their offer uncomplicated and enable consumers to accomplish various kinds of dealings through locally constituted representatives that can provide hands-on service. E-commerce need access to computers and low-cost broadband networks. Lacking an extensive network of bank divisions and more conventional payment tools, mobile money transfers have become tempting. (Lange et al., 2012)

## 3. CONSUMER PROTECTION IN DIGITAL CONTENT MARKETS

Online firms frequently look beyond contentment to establishing confidence for the purpose of diminishing the sensed risk of employing the service. The standard of service assessment is influenced by the outcome value of the service, requiring appraisal of the operation of service distribution. The standard of services supplied by an e-retailer is the chief incentive for shopper contentment and feelings of safety. The notion of personalization in an e-commerce environment includes: private attention; choices; comprehending the definite demands of consumers; and data concerning the goods adjustment. The presence of confidence in a connection is a type of safeguard against risks and unforeseen conduct. Customer purposes to buy a specific brand should develop substantially as his/her position toward it is more beneficial. The purpose of buying and repurchasing retains the behavioral constituent of reliability. (Kassim and Abdullah, 2008) A substantial comprehension of the moderating impact of the e-commerce established circumstances is indispensable to advise online companies on how to beneficially share out their confidence-building resources. The institutional framework unswervingly influences consumer confidence in primary transaction links, but may not have a function in impacting trust in the buyback position (returning shoppers chiefly depend on direct experience to

reassess confidence). Established mechanisms may not straight influence confidence or behavioral purpose in recurrent e-transactions with a seller, but may have a role via their capacity to moderate contextual risks. If online customers have little trust in the strength of established mechanisms to provide and carry out congruous rules of behavior in the e-commerce setting, then they demand supplementary guarantee for enhancing their credence in purchasing from the seller. A shopper's contentment with a merchant indicates the latter's achievement of the just outcomes and comfort of the consumer during their previous exchanges. (Fang et al., 2014)

The combined feature of dependability and tangibles is the fundamental one in generating purchased contentment, whereas guarantee and empathy are essential aspects in establishing both buyer satisfaction and consumer trust. Confidence can be smoothly instilled by making the system reliable, safe, private, reactive, and customized for their customers. Firms should aim their before and after transactions service mechanisms in order to achieve shoppers' disposition to participate in positive emotional loyalty to the advantage of the firm and its services. (Kassim and Abdullah, 2008) After accomplishing a transaction, customers state their anticipation via a post-purchase assessment process and establish their contentment degree. Once shoppers constitute their projections, they equate their understandings of transaction carrying out to the degree of expectation. Contentment is an emotional state indicating the customer's affective feedback to the e-commerce transaction via the selling company on the internet. If shoppers are content with a former transaction, they tend to carry out future transactions via that e-retailers' website. From a purchaser's view, contentment is a thorough type of assessment to establish the value of what has been employed or supplied. Buyers' confidence in an e-retailer can be constituted via online activities associated with the e-market place. Longer-term links must be set up by furnishing their consumers adequate primary purchase experiences. (Kim et al., 2009)

## 4. POSITIVE DRIVERS OF CONSUMER TRUST IN E-COMMERCE

Customers can profit from e-commerce concerning more extensive options and diminished prices (Nica, 2015b), whereas business can employ e-commerce to get a wider group of shoppers. The main determinant for e-shopping is price, accompanied by sensed savings in time, the likelihood to accomplish price correlations readily, the adaptability in ordering any moment of the day/week and identifying a broader choice online. Shoppers' e-acquisitions are likely to be oriented in the direction of those versions for which savings from e-acquisitions are more significant than average savings. Numerous businesses are employing e-commerce as a component of a multi-route business scheme to reach customers and offer for sale their items. Businesses are promoting their products and services on



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mobile gadgets, employing them as an instrument to attract shoppers. (European Commission, 2012) B2B e-commerce business alliances furnish sustainable competitive benefit when both purchasers and providers are involved in reciprocally advantageous and gratifying relational arrangements. For the business connection to surpass a dealing based reciprocity to a trading partnership susceptible of generating and preserving sustainable competitive benefit, confidence must intensify. Nonexistent employment of the B2B e-commerce arrangement, sustainable competitive benefit from business associates cannot be achieved. The financial and non-financial recompenses from interplays between entities and their business associates are advantageous to confidence in the trading partner. Confidence is influential in establishing and preserving the degree of contentment needed to secure durable business connections capable of generating sustainable competitive benefit. The extremely harmonized and tightly linked information systems required for entities to accomplish sustainable competitive benefit from connections with their business associate subject the entity to risk from the business connection. (Hampton et al., 2012)

A value pattern of a sustainability plan should adjust to the value pattern of another plan. The concerned fusion of product-service in the value pattern of a sustainability business design is an outstanding, recurrent, and evolutionary move in tailoring the business type. Articulating a business design for sustainability is to formulate or identify a valuable possession structure and governance. Establishing a sustainable community (Nica, 2013) is equivalent to detecting several feasible business types for sustainability. In sustainability sphere, the independent entrepreneurs should work out and develop their business types examining product service range, possession structure, and centralization-decentralization fusion. The positive result of a business type for sustainability relies on its own functioning level and the favorable outcomes of other associated business types and the admission of modifications by customers. (Lee and Casalegno, 2010) As its environment of performance is a website, the customer's sense of technology influences its utilization. For the purpose of expanding and preserving dependable shoppers, e-commerce firms should establish good links with their buyers for long-run reciprocal benefit. Confidence is crucial wherever risk, unsureness and/or interconnection occur (Nica and Molnar, 2014), as it moderates risk. Purchaser's beliefs and purposes associated with confidence in the web seller are determined by the degree of risk sensed by customers and their sensed degree of command on the data that they must reciprocate with the web seller. Shoppers share confidential data with a web seller only when they have faith in features of the site. Engaging in an e-commerce rapport generates some consumer reliance on the web seller for goods and services. (Palvia, 2009) Mobile gadgets using the internet all over are carrying payments along. They have become an ecosystem for m-commerce (e-shopping for products or services using the mobile phone),

enabling developers to constitute their own m-commerce applications by using the mobile gadget. Buying digital products by using the mobile phone via mobile platforms is the most rapid developing sphere in e-payments. Reliability and recompense strategies directed at shopper keeping are a powerful marketing tool that is being enclosed with the payment. Compelled by the constant expansion of e-commerce and the enlarging portion of e-commerce in retail expenditure (Nica, 2015c), banks should work harder towards the e-channel, to maintain shopper request for accessibility and safety. The rising rates of internet consumers, e-spending and embracing of current technologies are essential determinants for the expansion of e-commerce. The e-commerce market is to advance throughout the next years, whereas broadband pervasion rates will boost and the mobile internet will develop and stimulate the conjunction of online and offline routes. (Lange et al., 2012)

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The overall results provide strong evidence for the role of e-trust in online retailing, links between businesses and buyers in commercial transactions, and open and foreseeable legal and self-regulatory models for e-commerce. My findings highlight the importance of examining innovation as a critical component for the long-run sustainability of e-commerce, the performance consequences of supply chain cooperation as associated with sustainability, and the chances that e-commerce brings about to further sustainability.

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# STRATEGIC CHANGES NEEDED FOR A GOOD DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE WITHIN THE ROMANIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

# SCHIMBĂRI STRATEGICE NECESARE PENTRU O BUNĂ GUVERNARE DEMOCRATICĂ ÎN ADMINISTRAŢIA PUBLICĂ DIN ROMÂNIA


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***Abstract***
The paper contains an analysis of good and democratic governance within the central and local administration. The analysis of the results contributed to the identification of key pillars of good governance. Based on these main elements identified was designed a model of good governance. The final part of the paper contains several strategic recommendations needed to improve good governance within the Romanian public administration.



***Keywords*:** government, governance, multilevel, democracy, public administration.

**JEL CODES:** I128; J38; O21.



***Rezumat***
Lucrarea conține o analiză asupra bunei guvernări democratice din administrația central și locală. Rezultatele analizei au contribuit la identificarea pilonilor principali ai unei bune guvernări. Pornind de la aceste elemente cheie identificate a fost proiectat un model de bună guvernare. Partea finală a lucrării conține câteva recomandări strategice necesare pentru îmbunătățirea bunei guvernări în administrația publică din România.



***Cuvinte cheie:*** guvern, guvernare, niveluri multiple, democrație, administrație publică.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Millennium Development Goals cannot be achieved without good governance. The European Commission proposes to strengthen the European Union to promote good governance in the new Member States and invites all Member States to harmonize their efforts in this area. These goals are:

- Elimination of extreme poverty and hunger;
- Ensuring primary education for all;
- Promote gender equality and empowerment of women;
- Reduce child mortality;
- Improve maternal health;
- Combat HIV / AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- Ensuring a sustainable environment;
- Establishment of a global partnership for development.

On 20 December 2005, the Presidents of Commission, Parliament and Council have signed a new statement on EU Development Policy called "The European Consensus". For the first time in fifty years of cooperation it defines the common principles in the EU and the Member States and put each application development policies in a spirit of complementarity. Common principles governing cooperation and development activities are: possession, partnership, in-depth political dialogue, civil society participation, gender equality and an ongoing commitment in order to prevent fragility. Developing countries are primarily responsible for their own development, but the EU assumes its share of responsibility in joint efforts provided in the partnership. The Commission stresses the importance of addressing governance in a broader perspective, taking into account all its dimensions (political, economic, social and environmental). In fact, good governance is not limited to the fight against corruption, including issues such as access to health, education and justice, media pluralism, functioning parliaments and public finance management and natural resources. The EU has committed to increase aid budgets dedicated to 0.7% of gross national income by 2015 and to encourage developing countries from Europe to intensify their efforts to reform. The Commission proposed an approach based on political dialogue, respect for ownership of reforms by the governments and citizens of partner countries, as well as incentives. Identification reforms and support measures appropriate to the situation of each country requires an assessment of governance in the country. This assessment is

based on a participatory approach that encourages local actors (such as government and civil society) to develop their own tools and capabilities.

Assuming prior existence of adequate conditions of democratic control, financial management and institutional development, budget support helps to strengthen governance and institutions at central and local level. The Commission emphasizes the increased use of this support, especially in the new Eastern member states. The effectiveness of this new approach depends on the ability of fund providers to act in a coordinated and harmonized way.

## 2. MAIN CONCEPTS IN THE LITERATURE

There is no consensus on the terminology of 'governance' in the literature. It comes either from the comparative politics. The first distinction is between the government, as a group of authority institutions and governance, as a process of intervention based on this authority's actions (Stocker, 1998) and governance. Governance is a "different kind of government," an alternative to government action, targeting (re) distribution of power in public space through a (re) negotiation of authority and an incremental approach to decision partnership networks: social partnerships (government - employers - trade unions), public - private partnership (state structures - business) or civil partnership (public authorities - civil society).

Collective bargaining decision substantiates a new perspective on power. There is a dispersal of public authority through interactive networks and is based on a set of political principles of postmodern: management of mandatory collective action without the intervention of the state, the involvement of institutions and actors that do not belong to the sphere of government, involving networks of local actors, especially civil society, business and the beneficiaries ("stakeholders") (Stoker, 1998) and their communicative action. The first and most important consequence of the new perspective on the political process to solve problems is a participatory democracy, grounded by the Article 47 of the Constitutional Treaty, entitled "participatory democracy" and which states citizens and representative associations have the opportunity to make their views known and to exchange views in public in all areas of Union actions. In this regard, the combination of democracy based on public deliberation, in the sphere of collective choices, of free and equal citizens (Cohen,1989), configure a discursive concept of deliberative democracy, which J. Habermas (2005) considers the basis of normative theories of democracy. Pollack and Wallace (2006) argue the need of a "governance" in the EU, mainly because of the non-hierarchical or "network" of policy development involving sub-national actors, national and supranational, and a normative concern about the "democratic deficit" in the EU, meaning the Union

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potential to be a deliberative democracy. A clear picture with the main pillars of good and democratic governance is presented in figure 1.

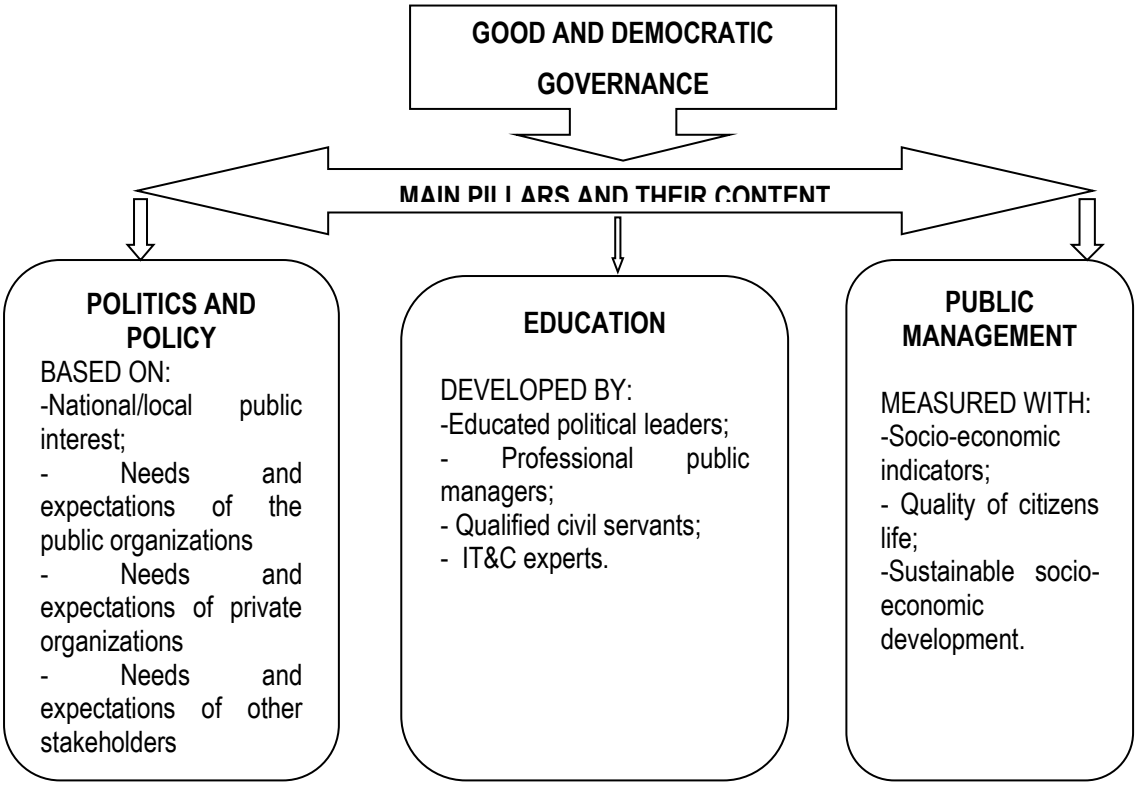



**FIGURE 1.** MAIN PILLARS OF GOOD DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Source: The Author

Since 2001, a political and institutional framework of governance was defined at the EU level. It encourages cooperation policies between the EU countries in the process of public policy, governance in the public sector, a space of political action which directly promotes the political interests of citizens who can participate in decision-making through active representation. For many authors, governance was a concept to highlight a new way to solve international problems of governance encompassing the old formula with a new model of participatory approach to various problems and needs of the states. Multi-level governance is a modern style of European governance, based on subsidiary principle stipulated in the Treaty of Lisbon over 30 times. The principle of subsidiarity states that political decisions should always be made as close to the citizens and their interests. The multi-level governance is based on a political decision and should be feasible, transparent, competitive and cost effective. (Andronicean u, 2010). According with the author view, the new model for an effective good and

democratic governance for the Romanian public administration should contain few key elements included in a simple cycle, as it can be observed in figure 2.

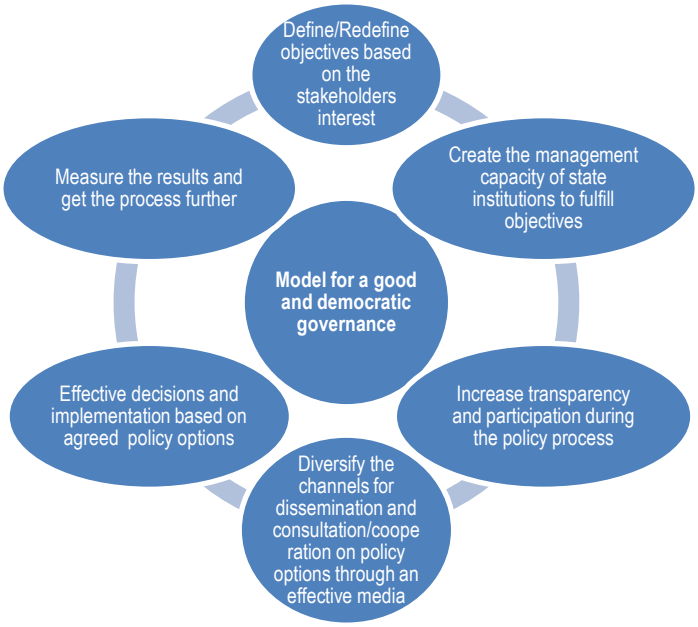



**FIGURE 2.** MODEL OF AN EFFECTIVE, GOOD AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Source: The Author

For Kohler and Eising (1999), the basis of good governance is the set of institutions, laws, procedures and rules that allow people to express their concerns and fight to defend their interests in a context of relatively predictable and fair. Naturally, good governance also applies in the private sector, since it is the expression of an integrated and effective management. The national parliaments, courts of audit, and other institutions of democratic control clearly have their role to play too. Although good governance is first and foremost a state of mind and a fresh culture in the way the state operates, assistance programmes are put in place to strengthen the management capabilities of our partner countries in all sectors of development. Democratic governance is a condition for an effective social and economic development. It is now acknowledged that political processes, regulations and institutions play a major role in economic growth and human development. The fight against poverty is not simply a social, economic and technical objective but also a political and institutional goal. In the Millennium Declaration, the international community reached an agreement on the importance of good governance for development. It goes hand in hand with the theory that development problems are linked to a failure in governance. The efficiency of governance and public institutions is determined by the work of human resources, mainly public managers and politicians. If the institutions do not work properly, the vulnerable and poor members of society will suffer.



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Democracy is directly linked to the concept of governance and cooperation. In fact, an effective governance has to meet public needs and not the other way around. Cooperation seeks to remain primarily technical, not political. A democracy or a functional public administration cannot simply be imported. The type of democracy and form of governance that a state will develop depend on its history, cultural values and local circumstances.

Actual democratic practices will therefore vary. Democratic values and cultures need to be firmly rooted throughout society, if a new democracy is developed.. Good governance is becoming more and more commonplace as a key element of development. In fact, the success of development is dependent on good governance. In fact, good governance or democratic governance is a concept or rather a practice. It means the implementation of which is fundamental in allowing countries receiving international aid to take control of their political, economic and social development effectively. Good governance will also ensure that the various support and assistance programmes from which they benefit operate as efficiently as possible.

## 3. RESEARCH BASED ON GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY IN ROMANIA

In 2013, the Freedom House Report revealed that democracy is in decline across the world. Romania is mentioned as one of the most vulnerable countries from Central and Eastern Europe having a semi consolidated democracy. In the same category were included Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. Freedom House notes the countries surveyed - in Central Europe and Eurasia - with ratings from 1 (the highest level of democratic progress) to 7 (the lowest democratic progress) based on the criteria: electoral process, civil society, independent media, national democratic governance, local democratic governance, legal framework / independence of the judiciary and corruption. According to the report, Romania registered a "democracy score" of 3.5, which is the average grade 3 (electoral process), 2.5 (civil society), 4.25 (independent media), 4 (national democratic governance), 3 (local democratic governance), 3.75 (legislative framework / independent judiciary) and 4 (corruption). Romania ranks 40 in the world in terms of the degree of democracy in a ranking led by Norway, Sweden and Finland, published by Vienna Democracy Ranking Association. Preceded by Bulgaria (position 39), our country ranks last among the European Union countries analyzed by the authors of this comparative study. The list was made based on the data provided by the American organization "Freedom House" and the UN human development index, taking into account indicators of political, economic, gender equality, access to education and healthcare, and the degree of environmental protection.

Base on the author analysis, the main deficiencies of democracy and good governance in Romania are determined by the following:

- Volatility of the legislative framework;
- Corruption within state institutions;
- Lack of solidity and coherence times of public policies in the economic and foreign policy;
- Reversibility of national strategies and public policies with each election cycle;
- Lack of political commitment.

Governance structures in Romanian public space, especially in terms of cooperation between NGOs and the government, have now a more formal institutional framework which is supported by a culture of genuine autonomy, transparency in the public sector and public-private partnership. In Romanian organizations from the public sector there is a lack of "learning" strategic coherence, low level of decisional transparency and access to public information. The process of reforms in public policies is ongoing, but good results are not visible enough. The Government of Romania has some hybrid attempts to improve governance and the governance process, but still no sufficient connection to support a cooperative strategy, other than formal. Thus, Romania is situated at a considerable distance from the provisions of the White Paper on European governance which measures the differences between the governance process in post-socialist countries and the Europeanization. The Prime Minister of Romania has attributes related to cooperation with civil society and set-up several advisory bodies called ministerial councils. They may choose to invite representatives of civil society in the work of committees and working groups, but there are no specific regulations regarding their participation and, especially, the decision to which they have access. Body for Civil Society Consultation is another advisory body without legal personality, working in the Romanian Prime Minister Office. This structure has to ensure the associative participation in the development, evaluation, amendment and implementation of public policies.

The Romanian ministries have a set of regulations regarding the public consultation process, but do not have a coherent system of cooperation, represented by specialized structures and sets / code procedures. Another typical form of cooperation is the establishment of advisory bodies on issues, including representatives of government and the non-profit organizations, councils and joint committees formed at ministerial level. The Romanian governmental agencies and other authorities working in the area should be major players in inter-sectoral cooperation, as they are designed after the European model.

Often NGOs establish assessments of government policies and make public reports to show to what extent it promotes public interests. The active role of civil society in Romania can be extended.



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## 4. STRATEGIC CHANGES FOR AN EFFECTIVE GOOD GOVERNANCE IN ROMANIA

Based on the analysis of contextual and institutional framework, and current practices related to democracy and governance in Romania the following strategic changes can be taking into account::

- Improving management capacity of state institutions to analyze and develop options to ensure the democratic formulation of public policies involving civil society. In this context, the first recommendation is to increase the role of think tanks whose institutionalized consultation would substantially contribute to better public policies.
- Consultation of economic interest groups to develop strategies to Romania's economic recovery.
- Adoption new legislation and a set of comprehensive anticorruption procedures.
- Using more active and professional public diplomacy tools, especially economic diplomacy. It requires a careful identification of public diplomacy actors and their actions, such as studies, forums, events in major capitals etc.
- Using the mass-media professionally, as a tool of articulation and dissemination of national interest.
- Promoting a new style of governance with an increased sensitivity to the requirements of the population and behaviour leading to an improvement in the living conditions of the people and the public interest generally.
- Setting up of a new procedures for good governance, according to the Western "model".
- Creating and developing a functional balance between different agents with the real power in international relations.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Although development cooperation highlights governance and institutional development as core and priority areas for cooperation, what is missing, however, are guidelines and a shared methodical and political approach which can be used as a basis for cooperation activities. Everyone agrees on the guiding principles for governance (equality, transparency, participation, responsiveness, the presentation of accounts, the rule of law and so forth), however, how to deal with these aspects in cooperation is by no means as clear question the public authorities and suggest different methods of political participation. Cooperation seeks to remain primarily technical, not political. A democratic

governance within the Romanian public administration should be developed in a proper way, it cannot simply be imported. The type of democracy and the form of governance that a state will develop depend on its economic, social, legal and political circumstances.

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# THE ROP INDICATIVE FINANCIAL ALLOCATION MECHANISM: RESULTS AND PROSPECTS IN THE NORTH-EAST REGION OF ROMANIA

# MECANISMUL ALOCĂRILOR FINANCIARE INDICATIVE DIN POR: REZULTATE ŞI AŞTEPTARI ÎN REGIUNEA DE NORD-EST


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***Abstract***
Starting from the applying of the indicative financial allocation mechanism in the case of the Regional Operational Programme in Romania, this paper proposes an inquiry into the implementation results in the North-East region, the least developed among the NUTS 2, with a focus on Suceava county. The examination and interpretation of the data provided by Inforegio are accompanied by the discussion of the answers to in-depth interviews carried out in this respect within the GRINCOH FP7 project.



***Keywords*:** ROP, implementation, North-East region, Suceava county, interviews.

**JEL CODES:** R58



***Rezumat***
Pornind de la mecanismul de alocare indicativă al Programului Operaţional Regional, această lucrare propune o incursiune în rezultatele implementării programului în regiunea Nord-Est, cea mai slab dezvoltată regiune a României, cu accent pe judeţul Suceava. Examinarea şi interpretarea datelor furnizate de Inforegio sunt însoţite de comentariile privind răspunsurile la interviurile în profunzime efectuate în cadrul proiectului FP7 GRINCOH, în care ASE Bucureşti este unul dintre cei 12 parteneri.



***Cuvinte cheie:*** POR, implementare, regiunea de Nord-Est, județul Suceava.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The entire regional development policy in Romania gravitates around the EU Cohesion Policy. Not only the policy statements but also the financial allocations are established in correlation with the co-funding levels resulted from the requirements regarding the implementation of the Structural Instruments. As far as the Regional Operational Programme (ROP) is concerned, the indicative financial allocations established for the eight NUTS 2 regions give priority to the less developed ones: thus, these allocations are calculated in inverse proportion to the GDP per capita of each region and adjusted by the density of population. As a result, the main beneficiaries are the less developed regions, with the North-East region ranking first.

This paper aims to examine the results obtained by the North-East region in the implementation of the ROP 2007-2013 as well as the effectiveness of the current governance model and the outcome of the interventions coming from national policies and EU cohesion policy. Prospects derived from the opportunities (associated with strengths) of the region's development are also addressed. With this aim in view data provided by Inforegio have been employed, accompanied by the opinions expressed by local policy makers and experts with regard to the issues mentioned above. The latter have been collected by means of in-depth interviews which were carried out in 2013 with representatives of city hall, national and regional authorities, chambers of commerce, business associations, higher education institutions, and implementing authorities within the GRINCOH FP7 project (GRINCOH, 2014), in which the Bucharest University of Economic Studies is one of the 12 partners involved . A special emphasis has been put on Suceava county, as a relevant case study within the North-East region.

The paper is organized as follows. First, the ROP indicative allocations and implementation results are examined, highlighting facts and figures pertaining to the North-East region (NUTS 2) and Suceava county (NUTS 3). Then, the interviewees' opinion with regard to the outcome of the EU-supported regional policy is examined, keeping the same focus. Finally, a look forward is provided, highlighting future prospects with regard to the opportunities and strengths of the North-East region and Suceava county in the context of the 2014-2020 Cohesion Policy.

## 2. THE ROP – INDICATIVE ALLOCATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION RESULTS. A FOCUS ON THE NORTH-EAST REGION AND SUCEAVA COUNTY

As previously mentioned, the North-East region received the highest allocations from the ROP 2007-2013 as a result of two interrelated facts: on the one hand, it has the lowest GDP per inhabitant (27% of the EU-27 average in 2004, when the allocations were established); on the other hand, its population

density (99.7 people per square km) is higher than the national average (90.9 people per square km). Table 1 presents the distribution of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for ROP by NUTS 2 region, confirming the inverse proportion between the GDP per inhabitant and the region's share in the ERDF for ROP.

**TABLE 1.** THE ROP RELATED ERDF DISTRIBUTION BY REGION

| NUTS 2 Region | GDP per capita in 2004, PPS | Population in 2004 | ERDF for ROP | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *% (comp. to EU27 average)* | *% in total Romania* | *million euro* | *%* |
| North-East | 24 | 17.2 | 724.09 | 16.32 |
| South-East | 31 | 13.2 | 587.88 | 13.25 |
| South Muntenia | 28 | 15.4 | 631.36 | 14.23 |
| South-West Oltenia | 28 | 10.7 | 621.60 | 14.01 |
| West | 39 | 8.9 | 458.77 | 10.34 |
| North-West | 33 | 12.7 | 536.41 | 12.09 |
| Centre | 34 | 11.7 | 483.62 | 10.90 |
| Bucharest-Ilfov | 68 | 10.2 | 393.10 | 8.86 |

Source: Calculations of the authors using Eurostat and www.inforegio.ro data

The ROP priority axes envisage the support to sustainable development of urban growth poles, the improvement of regional and local transport infrastructure, the improvement of social infrastructure, the strengthening the regional and local business environment and the sustainable development and promotion of tourism (Government of Romania, 2007).

As far as the ROP implementation is concerned, the domestic data on financial absorption shows considerable variation across the NUTS 2 regions (see Table 2).

**TABLE 2.** THE SITUATION OF THE ROP IMPLEMENTATION BY REGION ON OCTOBER 18, 2013

| Region | Population (million pers.) | Financing contracts | Payments to beneficiaries | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *(million euro)* | *Value (million euro)* | *Share of eligible value (%)* |
| **North-West** | **2.7** | 463.89 | 191.86 | 45.30 |
| **Centre** | **2.63** | 417.54 | 187.82 | 49.20 |
| **North-East** | **3.8** | 632.67 | 315.00 | 55.02 |
| **South-East** | **2.8** | 458.53 | 217.18 | 46.80 |
| **South-Muntenia** | **3.45** | 571.71 | 207.26 | 41.60 |
| **Bucharest-Ilfov** | **2.2** | 301.92 | 83.43 | 26.90 |
| **South-West** | **2.4** | 536.04 | 247.82 | 50.50 |
| **West** | **1.9** | 422.95 | 166.33 | 46.00 |

Source: Processed by authors using http://www.inforegio.ro data

One can notice that the North-East region has recorded the highest absorption rate, indicating a promising response to the prospects in terms of support to urban development, regional and local

transport infrastructure, social infrastructure, regional and local business environment, tourism promotion and development, as priority axes of the ROP. An important role in the good results of the North-East region with regard to the EU Funds absorption rate has been played by the North-East Regional Development Agency, which is the Intermediate Body for the ROP implementation. The number of projects in Suceava county, the subject of our case study, counts for approximately 20 % of the total number of projects implemented or under implementation in the North-East region, indicating partial results above the average (Table 3).

**TABLE 3.** PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED OR ONGOING

| | Number of projects | % county | % region | % Romania |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Suceava – capital city | 34 | 32.7 | 6.6 | 1.0 |
| Suceava county | 104 | | 20.23 | 3.0 |
| North-East region | 514 | | | 14.6 |
| Romania | 3524 | | | |

Source: own processing

The top 10 projects (in terms of value) implemented or ongoing in Suceava county are presented in Table 4. One can notice that many of them envisage the improvement of regional and local transport infrastructure, which can create synergic effects between this axis and the other axes of the ROP via increasing accessibility.

**TABLE 4.**TOP 10 PROJECTS IN SUCEAVA COUNTY (BASED ON THE PROJECT VALUE)

| Rank | Project | Key area of intervention | Beneficiary | County | Total value | ERDF |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Street rehabilitation, bridge and passage, park modernisation, creation of module stops of public transport in Suceava municipality<br><br>Street, bridge and passage rehabilitation, modernization of parks and creating modular stations for public transport in Suceava municipality | 1.1 Integrated urban development plans | Suceava Municipality | Suceava | 66,511,712 | 44,692,798 |
| 2 | Rehabilitation of the Suceava fortress and its protection area | 5.1 Restoration and sustainable valorization of cultural | Suceava, Stefan Cel Mare No.36 Str. | Suceava | 52,598,065 | 35,589,078 |



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| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | heritage and setting up/ modernization of related infrastructure | | | | |
| 3 | Modernization of the county road 174, VATRA DORNEI - SARU DORNEI - PANACI, KM- 0+000 - 22+000 | 2.1 Rehabilitation and modernization of the county roads and urban streets network- including construction/rehabilitation of ring roads | Suceava County Council | Saru Dornei, Panaci, Vatra Dornei | 38,720,078 | 28,187,286 |
| 4 | Rehabilitation of the central area of Suceava city by creating underground passages, rehabilitating pedestrian ways and street | 1.1 Integrated urban development plans | Suceava Municipality | Suceava | 37,807,346 | 24,460,915 |
| 5 | Modernization of the county road 178, Ilisesti - CiprianPorumbescu, KM 36 + 150 - 44 + 000, Suceava county | 2.1 Rehabilitation and modernization of the county roads and urban streets network- including construction/rehabilitation of ring roads | Suceava County | Ilisesti, Ciprian Porumbescu | 34,431,586 | 23,912,321 |
| 6 | Modernization of the county road 175B (reconsidered from DIN DC 90 A , based on H-G- NR- 540/2000), KM 0+000 - 15+800, POJORATA – RARAU | 2.1 Rehabilitation and modernization of the county roads and urban streets network- including construction/ rehabilitation of ring roads | Suceava County Council | Pojorata | 31,180,788 | 22,687,218 |
| 7 | Modernization of the county road 209D, DARMANESTI - CALAFINDESTI - SIRET, KM 21+500- | 2.1 Rehabilitation and modernization of the county roads and | Suceava County Council | Gramesti, DarmanestiSerbauti, Calafindesti | 26,597,694 | 19,344,688 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 48+340, SUCEAVA county | urban streets network- including construction/rehabilitation of ring roads | | | | |
| 8 | Restoration and conservation of the cultura lheritage and modernization of the related infrastructure at Dragomirna Monastery, Suceava County | 5.1 Restoration and sustainable valorization of cultural heritage and setting up/ modernization of related infrastructure | Dragomirna Monastery, Mitocu Dragomirnei, Suceava County | Mitocu Dragomirnei | 25,722,330 | 17,819,133 |
| 9 | Modernization of the urban public areas in the districts Stadion, Centru and Bodea – Campulung Moldovenesc, Suceava County | 1.1 Integrated urban development plans | Campulung Moldovenesc Municipality | CampulungMoldovenesc | 24,974,629 | 15,731,133 |
| 10 | Modernization of the county road 177, POIANA MICULUI - SUCEVITA, KM 10 + 000 - 20 + 875, Suceava county | 2.1 Rehabilitation and modernization of the county roads and urban streets network- including construction/rehabilitation of ring roads | Suceava, Stefan Cel Mare No.36 Str. | Gura Humorului ,Sucevita | 20,982,340 | 14,572,159 |

Source: authors' processing based on www.inforegio.ro

The European funding will continue to support tourism development, Suceava county being one of the most important tourist destinations at national level. There are important ongoing projects, for example the modernisation of Rarau and Campulung Moldovenesc ski slopes while others are in preparation phase (e.g. Safari Adventure Park Paltinoasa).

Also, besides the support offered by the ROP to regional and local transportation infrastructure, there are major projects funded via the SOP – Transportation which help at a better connectivity between Suceava and international destinations. For example, the National Road 2: Bucharest – Suceava – Siret – Ukraine, NR 17: Moldova – Transylvania – Hungary, NR 18: Suceava – Maramures – Hungary – West Ukraine, NR linking Suceava – Botosani - Republic of Moldova, etc. There is also a major project for the



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rehabilitation of the "Stefan cel Mare" international airport, which will be able to operate short and medium courier flights with Boeing 767 airplanes.

## 3. INTERVIEWEES' OPINION WITH REGARD TO THE OUTCOME OF THE EU-SUPPORTED REGIONAL POLICY

In the opinion of the interviewees, the regional and local policies have increased the FDI attractiveness, supported the boosting of exports, innovativeness, entrepreneurship, changes in the economic structure, labour markets, human resource development, social cohesion. They revealed how much influence the fiscal policy has on FDI, entrepreneurship, labour markets, etc. and also the positive impact that the level of local taxes and the legislative stability have on the development of business environment. A series of interventions were made by the local administration, such as development aids, support for companies in difficulty, assistance for poor families and pensioners. In terms of projects initiated, the Suceava County Council holds a top position among the county councils in Romania. Its projects have primarily contributed to the overall development of localities, to raising the living standards, to improvements in agriculture, tourism, and growth of various industries. The local chamber of commerce and industry has initiated various programmes for professional reconversion and training, has established contacts between companies and facilitated various opportunities for them. Also, it has stimulated public-private partnerships.

To a considerable extent, the national and EU interventions are believed to address the regional needs. The most relevant examples concern the industrial parks policy, the environmental protection, the farmer support policy, forestry and timber processing, the sustainable development of tourism in the Bucovina area, etc. The lower taxation policy, applied in the second half of the 1990s to aid the disadvantaged areas, was also mentioned, the Suceava county being one of these areas because of closing the non-ferrous mining at that time. Nonetheless, the policy failed to bring the expected results because many companies acting in the disadvantaged areas did not use local material resources and local labour force.

Even today, Suceava is still lagging behind other counties, the poor prioritisation from the needs and zone specificity point of view being considered as one of the reasons in terms of regional strategies. Some pessimists believe that the only decision with a real impact has been to include the Suceava municipality among the urban development poles, as a ROP-related national decision. However, as far as the EU funds distribution by county in the North-East region is concerned, it is considered to be a quite balanced one, the Suceava county having an absorption rate above the region's average.

Furthermore, the pre-accession funding played an important part, as well. For example, rural infrastructure development was the object of more than 50 SAPARD projects.

Most responses report that the main directions of the accessed funds and the most important results of implemented projects relate to the infrastructure development, the support to tourism promotion and human resource development. However, some drawbacks have been identified in connection to the deficient correlation between various regional policies, the insufficient consideration of territorial potential (capital), and the poor consultation and collaboration between the actors interested in the county development. For example, the tourism policy has not been truly supported by the improvement of the real transportation infrastructure, as an essential requirement for its success. Likewise, the stimulation of certain industrial sectors should have been distinctly, directly correlated with professional training programmes especially conceived for those sectors.

## 4. FUTURE PROSPECTS

The main opportunities of Suceava county, that the interviewees correlate with the strengths, envisage the development and promotion of a sustainable tourism by exploiting the natural attractions and the exceptional historical monuments, as well as the rural tourism basis, high quality of human capital, the ecological orientation of agriculture, cross-border cooperation, collaboration with other local public administrations of Romania.

The threats, correlated with the weaknesses, are more numerous. They refer to economic instability and the lack of trust in region's potential among investors, improper changes in the ongoing processes of decentralisation and regionalisation, the economic dependence on the wood market, the more intense ageing phenomenon and emigration of the skilled labour force (both to other countries and to other Romanian regions), the lack of interest and demotivation as regards professional training, high rates of school abandonment because of poverty and lack of perspective on the labour market, the increasing pressure on the natural environment and biodiversity (pollution of the air, water, and soil, the question of deforestation, etc.), the poor attractiveness of rural areas and small towns, the deepening of the urban-rural gap, and so on.

The respondents emphasized the need of improving the legal framework so as to attract foreign investors and encourage local entrepreneurs, to provide financial and fiscal incentives for the creation of new SMEs. They also mentioned objectives focusing on competitiveness and economic growth, enhancing the quality of life, creating more jobs and raising the quality of education. Unexpectedly, nothing was said about the development of economic and social infrastructure, but it certainly remains



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one of the highest priorities. In a larger context, the stress was laid on balanced regional development and reinvigoration of the disadvantaged areas, on the relationship between regional and sectoral policies and the support to interregional cooperation. Also, they pointed to the consideration of the alignment to EU policies and the compliance with the regulations in the field.

With regard to the future EU cohesion policy the envisaged objectives refer to the support to lagging regions, increasing regional competitiveness and employment, improving the access to professional training, viable solutions for economic and social integration of the disadvantaged categories of population, especially the Rroma minority. It can be easily concluded that the respondents in Suceava county address the future of the cohesion policy in close relation to the needs identified in their own county and region.

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THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL SECTOR IN THE ROMANIAN SOCIETY

# ROLUL SECTORULUI NEGUVERNAMENTAL ÎN SOCIETATEA ROMÂNEASCĂ

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***Abstract***
*The first part of the paper provides an overview of the Romanian non-governmental sector and its challenges faced after 1989. The legal basis for setting and maintaining this sector as well as the classification of non-governmental organizations and the structure of human resources are also explained. The second part of the paper performs a broad analysis covering the whole Romanian nongovernmental sector. In the end, some general recommendations on the Romanian NGO sector development are formulated.*

***Keywords*:**
*NGOs governance structure, the role of NGOs in social service delivery, associative index*

**JEL CODES:** L3, L31, L44

***Rezumat***
Prima parte a lucrării oferă o imagine de ansamblu asupra sectorului non-guvernamental românesc și asupra provocărilor cu care se confruntă după 1989. De asemenea, sunt oferite explicații despre temeiul juridic în baza căruia există și funcționează acest sector, clasificarea organizațiilor non-guvernamentale precum și a resurselor umane din cadrul acestora. Cea de a doua parte a lucrării realizează o analiză amplă a sectorului neguvernamental din România. În final sunt formulate câteva recomandări generale privind dezvoltarea sectorului neguvernamental românesc.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** structura de guvernare a unui ONG, rolul ONG-urilor în furnizarea de servicii sociale, index de asociativitate.

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## 1. OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY. AN OVERVIEW OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of this paper is a survey on the Romanian nongovernmental sector in order to show its role and evolution after 1989, the legislative framework governing the sector as well as the governance and human resources structure. A broad analysis of the sector and some general recommendations for its development are offered.

The research has the following objectives:

- to present the legal framework under which the sector operates, the governance and human resources structure;
- to identify the size of the sector, the strengths and weaknesses, the main problems encountered by its members;
- to identify the support needed for the development of the sector;
- to identify challenges and future development of the sector.

The value of this paper is that it summarises recent trends and developments in the field and provides an analysis of the NGO sector in Romania as well as some practical solutions to its problems.

The qualitative data in this study was collected through the document analysis method. Therefore, the paper is focused on the study of a range of published materials (articles, raports, research studies, laws), which provide theoretical and practical researches on the Romanian nongovernmental sector and represent a basis for future researches.

Qualitative research represents a type of scientific research seeking answers to certain questions; it should be done in a systematic way and involves collecting evidence. Although it is considered subjective, qualitative research can produce findings which have been not determined in advance. Compared to quantitative research which focuses on counting and measuring things, qualitative research which is used especially by researchers working in the social sciences, focuses on understanding people's behaviour, namely their knowledge and attitudes. Qualitative research may give the respondents the possibility to provide much richer answers to the questions of the interviewer. It could provide essential information that could be lost by other research methods.

According to Robert Emerson (1983) qualitative research represents the analysis of people in their natural environment in everyday life. It aims at knowing how people live, speak and behave as well as knowing the things that excite and upset them. Denzin and Lincoln (1984) consider that quantitative research is concerned with the interpretation of phenomena in their natural settings in order to see the

meaning which people give to them. Qualitative research aims at collecting data and information about personal experiences, life stories, interactions and other important moments in people's lives. The same idea is expressed by Mays and Pope (1996) who believes that qualitative research focuses on analysing things in their natural settings in order to see the interpretations of those being studied which are considered more important than those given by the researcher.

As regards Patton (1996), qualitative research is an attempt to understand the interactions that occur between people in certain situations. In fact, the aim of the research is to understand the characteristics of the situations and the meanings given by the participants at the moment. According to Merrian (1998) the researcher has the main role in collecting and analysing data in qualitative research. He should have a clear research strategy and focus on "*understanding resulting in a richly descriptive product*".

Qualitative research methods usually include interviews, observations, case studies and focus group but there are also other approaches used in order to conduct a qualitative research such as role-play and simulation, diary methods, document and artefact analysis, audio visual (photographs, art and film), phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory.

## 2. THE ROLE AND EVOLUTION OF THE NONGOVERNMENTAL SECTOR IN ROMANIA

The evolution of the non-profit sector in Romania is related to the state and voluntary sector development. In early modern society the Romanian state and philanthropic institutions were not well developed. After 1864 the state institutions and their involvement increased, while the third sector remained underdeveloped. During the interwar years, social protection and NGOs have developed strong, being stopped during the communist period by state institutions involvement in providing services that had been hitherto delivered by NGOs. Since 1989 the state abandoned its authoritarian pretensions and focused on NGO sector development (Hintea and Marton, 2003).

After 1989 the political regime changed and the rediscovery of democracy provided a political context favourable to the development of the associative sector (NGO environment analysis, n.d.). On the one hand this development took place in the context of political, economic and social transformation of Romanian society and on the other hand in the context of European evolution. Therefore, different associative entities such as political parties, free trade unions, and non-governmental organizations began to develop in Romania. (Lambru and Vameşu, 2010). The fall of communism created the possibility of developing a pluralistic society and building the civil society. However, the legacy of dictatorial regime and the political ambiguities did not allow such changes at the beginning (Bădescu *et al.,* 2004).



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The Romanians' trust in political and public life increased, but the idea of volunteering was compromised by the coercive policies instruments of the dictatorial regime. That is why for many people "liberalization" meant giving up civic activities (Bădescu *et al.,* 2004). This situation explains the development of small-scale and the marginal role of non-governmental sector at the beginning of the transition period, limited to a few people who took the initiative to fill the gap created by the loss of government social services. Over time, political leaders began to perceive NGOs as being important threats to government legitimacy. The expansion of state control over the third sector hindered any philanthropic activity outside the government sector.

The implementation of private international programs gave the Romanians the opportunity to work in a dynamic, competitive and economic field (Burada *et al.,* 2007). Although these programs did not get the success desired by the international partners and Romanian beneficiaries, they had a great contribution to the development of public activity concept. The desire of social protection coverage has increased, as well as the interest of Romanian citizens to participate in the third sector. The possibility of accession to the EU was an important factor of supporting NGO activities. Furthermore, foreign institutions lobbied for government policies in the field (Kosterink and Oostenbrink, 2006).

In fact, the development of the NGO sector in Romania and the creation of the policy framework had been set up in the context of the monitoring process made by international organizations (Council of Europe, European Union) which Romania wanted to join. The existence and consistency of the NGO sector represented a guarantee for *democracy* and the most appropriate approach for *strengthening good governance* (Lambru and Vameşu, 2010). In addition to the political process, the transition to a market economy was also important for the development of the NGO sector in Romania. Non-governmental organizations become agents of the free market, producing goods and services and offering jobs to many people (Lambru and Vameşu, 2010).

The development of public - private partnership, especially in the social field (Costachi, 2006) as well as public management formulas also led to improvements in the NGO sector. The adoption of different methods from private to public organizations in order to gain more efficiency, transparency and accountability in managing public policies influenced the public administration reform process (Lambru and Mărginean, 2004). Therefore, after 1998, NGO were being delegated more specific responsibilities by the Romanian government, especially in the field of social services, by using different ways: grants, subsidies, privatization of services, etc. Thus, the role of NGOs in providing services increased appreciably in Romania.

Currently, attention is focused on the role of NGOs in social service delivery, one of the most important

pillars for social inclusion of vulnerable groups (Guvernul României, 2011). However, the reform in this field is rather weak (public finance - private implementation), mostly due to lack of political vision. So far, positive results were recorded due to international pressure or advocacy campaigns initiated by NGOs, and not to a strategic planning process elaborated by the government for increasing the supply of services to the citizens (Lambru and Vameşu, 2010).

## 3. LEGAL ISSUES REGARDING THE FUNCTION OF NONGOVERNMENTAL SECTOR IN ROMANIA

The first law on non-governmental sector was adopted in 1924. In that period, this law, also known as the law Marzescu, was considered one of the most modern laws in Europe, being in force until 2000. (Hinţea and Marton, 2003). During the communist regime the law was not repealed and it was reactivated after 1990. Until its repeal, this law represented the only legislative reference allowing legal establishment of NGOs. Although it sometimes made reference to institutions that were no longer current (High Commission of Legal Entities belonging to the Ministry of Justice), and procedures were cumbersome (the obligation to obtain a notice from the ministry in the field), in most cases, the law no 21/1924 was adapted to the requirements of the post-revolutionary period (Lambru and Vameşu, 2010).

Ten years after 1990, the government adopted a new regulation. Government Ordinance no. 26/2000 restated the definitions of associations and foundations, while retaining the main characteristics already known, but also covering aspects unregulated by the previous law.

The distinction between Law no. 21/1924 and Government Ordinance no. 26/2000 consists in a larger freedom regarding the association, the acquisition of legal personality and the internal structure of relationships between NGOs founders. This ordinance also seeks to enshrine the role of the state as a partner and, to some extent, as a promoter of nongovernmental organizations. It focuses both on the public and private sector's issues and on various types of supports for NGOs.

The Government Ordinance no. 26/2000 on associations and foundations was subsequently amended and supplemented by Government Ordinance no. 37/2003 and Law 246/2005. The legislative framework governing associations and foundations was also modified in 2012 by Law no. 145/2012, which imposed a stricter regime for public utility associations and foundations. They were obliged to meet several conditions in order to get this status, namely to be entitled to free use of public property. In 2014 another law amending and supplementing the Government Ordinance no. 26/2000 has been adopted. The law 22/2014 has introduced several provisions relating to the words that could be used to name an NGO.



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## 4. TYPOLOGY OF THE NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN ROMANIA

In Romania, non-governmental organizations work in different areas such as human rights, professional organizations, day care centers, environmental groups, sports clubs, training centers, universities, etc. (Lambru and Vameşu, 2010). According to Government Ordinance no 26 (2000), NGOs are legal entities established by individuals or legal entities pursuing certain activities in the public interest, in the interest of local communities or in their own non-patrimonial interest. The most common entities for non-governmental sector are associations, foundations and federations.

The association is composed of three or more persons pooling financial and human resources, as well as knowledge, without right to claim a refund. The association represents a way to exercise freedom of expression as well as freedom of association. It allows members to speak out about issues in the public interest, in the community interest or in its members' interest (Romanian law, 2005).

The Foundation is founded by one or more persons who constitute a patrimony designed permanently and irrevocably to the realization of a public interest or a community interest. Initially, the assets of the Foundation shall include in kind or cash goods, totalling at least 100 times the gross minimum wage (*Romanian law, 2005).*

The fundamental difference between two entities consists in the fact that the association represents a series of wills for achieving a goal, while the foundation represents a patrimony and it is set up for charitable purposes. The two entities are also different in other aspects: legal requirements for setting up, board structure, conditions of dissolution and liquidation.

The federation represents the association of two or more associations or foundations. They acquire legal personality and works in the same way as non-profit associations. The associations or foundations that make up a federation keep their own legal personality and own patrimony.

According to Hinţea and Marton (2003), there are other organizations along with associations and foundations. The fact that they are considered as *belonging to the non-governmental sector* is however questionable. The lack of clear criteria for determining the organizations of the governmental sector leads to inclusion in this sector of the following organizations:

- *The cooperatives* - are the economic associations based on the freely expressed consent of the members. They carry out activities using means of production which are rented or in collective ownership. The cooperatives have the possibility of dividing the profits among employees. This feature raises questions about their inclusion in non-governmental and non-profit sector.

- *The mutual support organizations* - are non-profit associations, organized with the free consent of the economic units' employees. They aim to provide financial support to members. The incomes received are not shared between members, but they are included in a social fund in order to support loans.
- *The state business organizations* - were set up in 1991 in order to maintain dialogue with trade unions and to serve as partners for wage bargaining.
- *The trade unions* - are non-political organizations, set up in order to defend and promote the professional, economic, social, and cultural as well as sports interests of their members. They are independent from the state, political parties or any other governmental organization. They do not operate under Government Ordinance no. 26/2000, but their organization justifies their inclusion in the NGO sector.
- *The National Red Cross Society* - operates as a legal entity of public law, also being non-governmental, non-political, independent and non-profit. It receives financial support from the state budget in order to carry out some of its activities.
- *The sporting clubs* - are funded from extra budgetary funds as well as subsidies from the state budget. They are under different auspices and their relations with state institutions and private sector justify their inclusion in the non-governmental sector.
- *The youth foundations* - are autonomous, even if most of their programs are funded through state grants.
- *The Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Romania* - are autonomous non-governmental organizations, with public utility. They have legal personality and are set up by the free association of traders. They derive their income from provision of specialized services and do not carry out commercial activities.
- *The political parties* - are free and voluntary associations of Romanian citizens having the right of voting and exercising their political will. They are legal persons governed by public law, financed from contributions, donations or income from their own business activities**. However,** although some authors in the literature (Saulean and Epure, 1998; Lambu and Vameșu, 2010) consider that political parties represent a form of free association of citizens, the post-communist societies in Central and Eastern Europe are not convinced and do not share this opinion which generates controversial debates.



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The central government institutions use different definitions and uncertain criteria in relation to the non-governmental sector. For example, taking into account the form of organization, the National Institute of Statistics classifies enterprises into commercial or non-commercial. The non-commercial organizations include budgetary institutions, central and local public administration and non-governmental organizations. Thus, the enterprises - in the broad sense of the word - include non-governmental organizations such as associations and foundations, trade unions, political parties, religious organizations. According to the National Institute of Statistics, NGOs are called private administration.

However, the Government Ordinance no. 26/2000 states that political parties, trade unions and churches are not covered by its provisions. Although all these organizations have special regulations on the setting up and operations, they are supplemented by Government Ordinance no. 26/2000, which justifies their relation to the NGO sector (Lambru and Vameşu, 2010). Moreover, religious denominations can set up associations or religious organizations operating under Government Ordinance no. 26/2000. (Hințea and Marton, 2003).

In the National Register of NGOs, the Ministry of Justice uses the classification from the framework law, which is different from the classification used by the National Institute of Statistics. Thus, some categories are merged and professional organizations are included in the associations section. The Ministry of Finance, in some records and balance sheets or other evidence of financial control bodies, uses a generic category, namely other legal forms.

## 5. THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES OF NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

The NGOs governance structure consists of the following organs: the General Assembly, the Board of Directors and the Executive Director (Government Ordinance, 2000). The General Assembly consists of all members of nongovernmental organizations (having or not having the right of voting) and has several key responsibilities: approval of the organization's strategy, approval of the annual budget, election of the governing bodies. The General Assembly is usually convened each year or in special sessions (Extraordinary General Assembly). During the period between two General Assemblies the management functions are delegated to the Board of Directors. This structure (the General Assembly) does not exists in the foundations and its functions are taken over by the Board of Directors (Romanian Association for Community Development, 2004).

The Board of Directors sets the goals, objectives and philosophy of the organization. It takes the organizational decisions, based on the expertise and experience of its members ensuring that the

organization meets the needs of beneficiaries, members and community. A Board of Directors that works well is the cornerstone of a successful NGO, providing direction, vision and, to some extent, protection to the organization. It is responsible for the governance of the organization. The way in which the Board of Directors and the members perform tasks is different from one organization to another depending on: the type of organization (association or foundation), the budget, the age of the organization, etc (Romanian Association for Community Development, 2004).

There is no universal model regarding the size, the structure of the organization or the Board of Directors that have been proven to work in all situations. In addition, all organizations suffer transformations over time that requires periodic review and adjustments. The executive management is provided by the executive director. This will monitor the current operation of the organization, the implementation of projects and programs and will continuously monitor the external environment (Hințea and Marton, 2003). The Board of Directors focuses on ideas while the executive director focuses on results. The executive management organizes resources in order to achieve the objectives set by the board. A trust relationship could be maintained between the two entities if they operate according to their responsibilities.

In nongovernmental organizations human resources is the set of individuals who contribute to achieving organizational goals and are involved in the organization's activities. These individuals dedicate part of their time, expertise, energy and enthusiasm to the organization. Human resources could be numerically evaluated (number of individuals, hours or days dedicated to working in the organization) as well as in term of quality (experience and training). There are also other elements very difficult to quantify such as involvement, energy, intervention, creativity and dedication (Romanian Association for Community Development, 2004).

From this point of view, compared to the business or public sector, NGOs are favoured because their objectives and target group allow them to attract more enthusiastic and creative people who are also more committed to the mission of the organization.

However, human resources management in the NGO sector is often weaker than business or public sector and could lead to lower performance when it assumes that the energy, enthusiasm and creativity could compensate for the lack of organization. Furthermore, human resource management is also complicated by the fact that some members become employees, another work as volunteers or some of them are members in the Board of Directors etc. Basically, in an organization (association), the human resource structure might look something like this:

- Members who are either founders or members of the organization. In Romania there are no



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active policies for attracting members in the nongovernmental organizations. Typically, organizations are limited to the number of founder members. Thus, most organizations have less than 10 members (49.6%). There are also a number of organizations having more than 10 members. These organizations getting a large number of members are called professional organizations (Foundation for Civil Society Development, 2010).

- Employees with permanent contract as well as fixed term contract (the latter are also called collaborators, experts, consultants, being employed during the implementation of projects). The employees represent the administrative team within an organization and report to the Executive Director.
- Volunteers represent individuals who work and assist employees in an organization without receiving wages.
- Currently, NGOs have to face two major challenges: decreased funding and increased demands on services. In this context, the professionalization of members and employees as well as the communication with volunteers should be one of the strategic activities of the NGO sector.

## 6. ANALYSIS OF THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL SECTOR IN ROMANIA

The nongovernmental sector in Romania has evolved and continues to evolve into a complex and challenging context, into a country with little tradition of trust, self-determination and community responsibility (Dakova et al, 2000). Therefore, the NGO sector is often characterized as unreliable, fragmented, replacing *collective responsibility* with individualized working relationships. Moreover, the economic and social difficulties caused by the economic crisis affecting all aspects of daily life, also have a negative impact on the NGO sector. However, despite the problematic experiences generated by the Romanian democratization process and the difficulties caused by the crisis, the NGO sector has registered significant achievements, responding to acute needs.

### *6.1. The size of the NGO sector in Romania, territorial distribution and types of activities performed*

The NGO sector in Romania is characterized by many organisations varying in their scale of operations, the mix and type of services they deliver and the locations in which they deliver. All NGOs with legal personality registered in Romania are included in the NGO National Registry (Ministry of Justice, 2014). The consultation of this registry highlights the fact that most of them are associations. Such evidence is also kept by the National Institute of Statistics (2014). The analysis of the National Institute of Statistics

evidence and the NGO National Registry points out that in Romania the associative index is high due to the large number of associations and foundations. Thus, there are over 61000 associations and foundations (Lambru and Vameșu, 2010) in our country with a population of 19.6 million (Demograf, 2014), namely an NGO per 320 inhabitants.

According to the NGO National Registry, the associations have the most dynamic registration which is explained by the more simple setting conditions: the association requires at least three founding members and one gross minimum wage, while the foundation may be set up by one founding member, but the initial patrimony should consist of at least 100 gross minimum wages.

According to Lambru and Vameșu (2010), most NGOs are located in three regions, Bucureşti-Ilfov, Center and Northwest, which are considered the wealthiest regions in Romania. The same authors mention that the majority of NGOs (87%) are located in urban areas. This situation could be explained by the complex process of setting up an NGO which involves a notary or a lawyer as well as going to the Ministry of Justice or sending and receiving documents from this institution. The operation of these organizations also requires an accountant and qualified human resources in various fields, especially in writing projects. Even if their number is small in rural areas, these organizations operate at all geographical levels in our country: national, regional and local level. (Foundation for Civil Society Development, 2010).

Taking into account the number of registered juridical persons, the most important areas of NGOs activities are: sports and recreational activities (18.8%), education (7.5%) and social (7.3%). Taking into account the staff, the most important area is education (19.03%), followed by sports and recreational activities (11.56%), and social with 9.4% of the workforce employed in NGOs. Taking into account the annual revenue, education is by far the most important, 22.27% of the total revenue coming from the NGO sector. (Lambru and Vameșu, 2010).

### *6.2. Economic perspective on the Romanian NGO sector*

In recent years there has been a steady increase of NGOs revenue, the share of revenue sources being the same. However, the financial resources of many organizations (66.6%) are small and very small, limiting their ability to operate. Thus, most of them have no income or an income less than 40,000 lei per year (Lambru and Vameșu, 2010).

The NGO sector in Romania is a major employer, providing a large number of jobs (Foundation for Civil Society Development, 2010). Although the economic performance of the sector grows, the number of full-time employment decreases (Lambru and Vameșu, 2010), showing that the sector searches



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efficiency and productivity and, perhaps, a preference for more flexible forms of employment.

The NGO sector in Romania operates in almost all social and economic areas, having various functions of representation, self-help or service delivery. Despite nongovernmental sector's debates about the need for finding viable and independent alternatives for financing the activities, the organizations do not show an obvious tendency to adopt entrepreneurial strategies. The revenues from economic activities of NGOs grow slowly and their *share has* remained *fairly constant in recent years.* Moreover, according to Foundation for Civil Society Development (2010), the most important sources of revenue for NGOs are grants - with funds from the European Union, foreign or international foundations, membership fees, 2%, sponsorships and individual donations. The economic activities have a fairly low success rate, their percentage being 5.5%.

***6.3. The relationship between NGO and the public sphere***

Up to now, there was no governance systematically and pragmatically interested in the development of the NGO sector. The different periods of governance were characterized by fragmentation, combined with plenty of rhetoric about supporting this sector. The lack of interest in this sector reflects, to some extent, the lack of reflection on the general issue of the relation state - market and on the promotion of good governance (Lambru and Vameșu, 2010).

In the past 25 years, the approach of the relation state - market has been limited, the governments focusing almost exclusively on the privatization of state-owned enterprises or on the promotion of low variants of public - private partnerships or hybrid arrangements. In other words, the different governments have limited the Romanian society to the public sector and to the business one. The nongovernmental sector was almost absent from the political vision of the past 25 years. This could explain the lack of political commitment on this sector's involvement in the public policy process.

The visibility of the NGO sector among politicians has always been low. Although it follows an increasing trend, the awareness and recognition of non-governmental sector in the Romanian society is reduced. In these circumstances, the political leaders as well as the public administration leaders do not demonstrate a good knowledge of the characteristics, usefulness and opportunities regarding this sector development.

However, in recent years the media has reported that some NGOs have been used by political parties to cover the costs of election campaigns (sociological surveys, election events). According to a study elaborated in 2008 (Moraru, Ercuș, Miron, 2008), the financing of political parties by foundations is "*widespread, some foundations publically assuming this relationship*." In most cases, the NGOs are

used to make payments for the electoral campaign events, to collect donations, to organize the activity of the so-called volunteers, in fact people paid to deal with the electoral campaigns.

Over the past few years, NGOs have shown a growing interest in the public policy making process by participating in public consultation and submitting comments to the normative acts submitted to public debate. However, the authorities have preferred consultations with certain stakeholders such as employers and trade unions (social partners). NGOs and citizens have been much harder to fit into the public agenda, their approach in public consultation processes being less formal. (Foundation for Civil Society Development, 2010). In other words, NGOs and citizens involvement in public consultation is more difficult to manage by public authorities. Moreover, the public consultation in Romania is formal and limited, focusing on discussing the alternative proposed by the public administration, and not on setting goals and possible strategies. (Lambru, 2006).

## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*The Romanian nongovernmental sector and its role in the society* was investigated in this paper by studying different researches in the field. The paper attempted a qualitative research in order to provide an overview of the Romanian non-governmental sector by presenting the political, economic and social context of its evolution, the challenges faced after 1989, the legal basis for setting and maintaining this sector, the classification of non-governmental organizations and the structure of human resources.

The data analyzed in this paper highlights the following aspects:

- The need to improve the public image and the credibility of the sector

Therefore it is recommended to highlight the impact of NGOs' activities upon society and increase their transparency, to maintain a constant dialogue with the public, to submit petitions of protest to the authorities complaining about not having been consulted on NGOs involvement in the financing of political parties.

- The need to transform NGOs into major players in the economy, providing jobs and reviving different sectors (rural development, agriculture, forestry, etc.).

Therefore, it is recommended to create a legislative framework in order to stimulate social entrepreneurship among NGOs which could become an essential source of finance for them. In this way, Romanian NGOs will give more importance to economic activities than donations and sponsorships. Social entrepreneurship, applying business principles to solve social problems, will help create jobs and thus decrease unemployment. At the same time, the government should pay special



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attention to poorer regions of the country where the number of registered NGOs is lower than in the rich ones.

- The need for strengthening cooperation within the sector in order to best serve the needs and interests of the community.

This need could be satisfied through different means such as dissemination of information, complementing the services provided by NGOs, forming *coalitions* and n*etworks* around a common interest or problem, organizing national meetings on increasing communication between NGOs and educating the public about the role of NGOs.

- The need to improve NGOs' capacity to plan, organize and manage as well as to strengthen the capacity for strategic support and development of the sector, especially in rural areas.

This involves developing a national network of NGO resource centers with capacities and resources for sector representation at the national level as well as for assuming the formulation of the sector's needs, interests and achievements, providing internet access to rural NGOs, continuing the Romanian publications that are relevant to the sector.

- The need to strengthen relationships among public and nongovernmental organizations in order to effectively engage in solving socio-economic issues.

The partnership between NGOs and government structures could create an effective remedy for overcoming the crisis and for *bringing the individual* to the *forefront* as an essential factor for cooperation and development in the Romanian society. Moreover, this partnership could find the best solutions to the society problems that finally satisfy the citizens. Working with public institutions that have authority in a community and *enjoys the highest confidence* rating of *citizens*, will increase the recognition and appreciation of non-governmental organizations activities. Moreover, the achievement of objectives will increase the credibility of NGOs, further contributing to attract a large number of donors.

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# PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IMPACT ON LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. EVIDENCE FROM ROMANIAN COUNTIES

# PARTENERIATUL PUBLIC-PRIVAT ŞI IMPACTUL ASUPRA DEZVOLTĂRII ECONOMICE LOCALE. STUDIU LA NIVELUL JUDEŢELOR DIN ROMÂNIA

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***Abstract***
From a theoretical point of view, public-private partnership (PPP) is constantly associated within academic literature dedicated to local economic development (LED) with a mechanism capable of stimulating local economy through implementation of general interest projects. However, poor empirical evidence proving the impact of PPPs on LED can be found in the literature body.
Therefore, the aim of the paper is to present the results of an empiric analysis on the impact public sector and business environment relationship has on the economic and social development process of local communities, in a Romanian context.
Research reveals the extent to which PPPs contribute to economic development at local level (county level), using the results of a questionnaire administered to county authorities representatives.

***Keywords***: public-private partnership, local economic development, administrative capacity, public projects

**JEL CODES: R42, O18, O57**

***Rezumat***
Din punct de vedere teoretic, parteneriatul public-privat (PPP) apare frecvent asociat în literatura academică dedicată dezvoltării economice locale (DEL) cu un mecanism capabil să stimuleze economia locală, prin implementarea de proiecte de interes general. Puține dovezi empirice în legătură cu impactul PPP asupra DEL se regăsesc însă în literatura de specialitate.
În acest scop, prezenta lucrare evidențiază rezultatele unei analize empirice privind implicațiile pe care intensificarea relațiilor de cooperare dintre sectorul public și mediul de afaceri le generează asupra procesului de dezvoltare economică și socială a colectivităților locale, în context românesc.
Cercetarea reflectă măsura în care PPP contribuie la dezvoltarea economiei locale, prin intermediul rezultatelor unui chestionar aplicat la nivelul autorităților județene din România.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** parteneriat public-privat, dezvoltare economică locală, capacitate administrativă, proiecte de interes public.

## 1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Intensively promoted, but at the same time very much criticized, public-private partnership (PPP) is a contemporary concept, flexible and very inclusive, that does not therefore enjoy very clear theoretical boundaries, generating a series of controversies (Mina, 2012). The fact that public-private partnership is an ambiguous concept is due to its very nature, as an intermediate alternative for public works and services provision, situated between the classic method of public procurement and privatization and also is a result of the variety of stakeholders involved in a PPP and the diversity of interests each of them has.

The generous selection base of different PPP meanings, as well as the various national experiences make it impossible to issue an operational, integrated and unanimously accepted definition. Among the most frequent meanings of public-private partnership (Hodge and Greeve, 2007; De Bettignies, Ross, 2004) is ”new governments` instrument aimed at replacing the classic public procurement method”.

Also PPPs are identified with a ”new concept specific to public management terminology”, that signals the involvement of private organizations in public service delivery process.

Another point of view related to PPPs multiple meanings highlights a new ”method for developing public infrastructure projects”. From this perspective, public-private partnership builds itself as a mechanism capable of stimulating local economy through private capital infusion for financing projects of general interest (Watson, 1995; World Bank, 2001; Dapice, 2008). This specific approach to PPPs is very common in European countries, that are very much influenced by the anglo-saxon trend, which promotes two major objectives of public-private deals: creating new jobs and local economic development oriented towards economic and social cohesion (IPP, 2004:15).

Local development strategies and plans use PPP as an instrument for reaching promises and goals that hold them accountable to the citizens. Governments use PPPs in order to create public policies meant to fight financial crisis effects and bring welfare for all society levels.

Academic literature dedicated to local economic development also describe LED as a public-private partnership *per se*. Thus, most authors highlight that LED is based on the collaboration between public entities, business environment, nongovernmental sector oriented towards jobs creation, economic and social welfare, improving living standards (Blakely and Leigh, 1989; Profiroiu, 1998; Popescu, 2003).

However in this paper, the focus will be on PPP as instrument for LED at county level, in Romania. This particular approach is due to the fact that the current social and economic context in Romania (transition to market economy, EU integration process, decentralisation process, current economic crisis) represent a challenge for public-private partnerships, as they address insufficient public budgets, inefficient bureaucracies and pressure from citizens (Profiroiu *et al*, 2013).



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At theoretical level there is a generalized perception that PPPs contribute significantly to the local economic development process. However, poor evidence on the impact PPPs have on LED can be found. The aim of this paper is to bring such evidence, using the both information from a PPP database created by the Ministry of Finance and the results of a questionnaire that was administered to county level authorities in August 2012.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### Research objectives and hypotheses

The aim of the questionnaire was to reveal the state of the art of PPPs at the level of Romanian counties, to show the perception of county authorities representatives on the influence PPPs have on LED and also reveal the administrative capacity of county authorities in developing PPP projects.

The objectives of the quantitative research based on questionnaire were:

- Presenting the influence relationship between PPP and LED at the level of Romanian counties
- Evaluating county authorities administrative capacity in preparing and implementing PPP projects

Six hypotheses were set to reach the research objectives:

1. The adequate level for implementing PPPs is the subnational level;
2. At county level in Romania, public-private partnership is still in an early phase of development;
3. At county level in Romania there is particular interest for the public-private partnership formula;
4. County level contracting authorities level of expertise in the PPP field is poor;
5. At county level in Romania, public-private partnership has a positive effect on local economic development;
6. Romanian county level authorities lack administrative capacity for preparing and implementing public-private partnerships.

The sample of the questionnaire is represented by 40 out of the 42 counties of Romania. The choice to eliminate Bucharest and Ilfov counties was due to the fact that Bucharest-Ilfov region does not fit into the local trend related to the degree of development of public-private partnership and economic development. After the administration of the online questionnaire a 90% response rate was reached (36 counties out of 40).

The respondents were management level civil servants, with solid expertise in the area of administrative contracts in general and public procurement, concessions, PPPs in particular. Approximately 92% of the respondents represent County Councils, while 8% come from Prefectures.

**Sample description**

The sample of the questionnaire is represented at institutional level by County Councils and the Prefect Institution. Although the PPP phenomenon is suitable for a stakeholders` approach, my option for including only public authorities in the sample is due to the fact that the public sector is the main stakeholder, that initiates and organizes PPP deals, influencing in a decisive manner all aspects and phases of a PPP project (Coreţchi, 2011, p. 218).

The rationale for including in the sample only county level authorities is based on the finding that 42% of the PPP projects included in the Ministry of Finance PPP database are initiated by county authorities, 48% by municipalities, 4% by ministries and 6% by other public entities (Ministry of Finance PPP database, 2011).

Respondents are management level civil servants (senior county managers, public managers, directors, senior officers, officers, inspectors) working in county councils and prefectures, familiar to a great extent with administrative contracts, public procurement, concessions, privatization, in general and of course PPPs, in particular.

The response rate was 90% (36 out of the 40 counties included in the sample answered the questionnaire) (Figure 1).

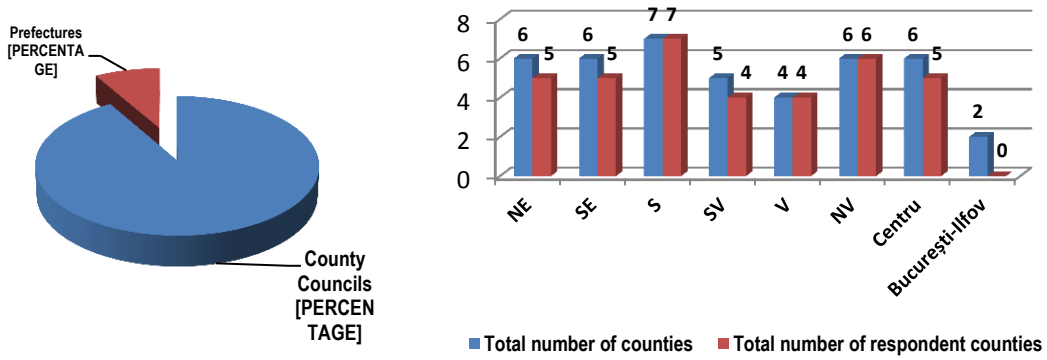



**FIGURE 1.** DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ON INSTITUTIONS AND REGIONS
*Source:* data processed from questionnaire, 2012



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**Structure of the questionnaire**

The questionnaire that was administered to county level authorities is structured on seven sections and contains 43 questions, plus a separate section that includes questions about respondents` profile. Most questions are closed, but some questions leave respondents the possibility to add an extra answer option or extra details.

The introductory section is composed of questions on general aspects of PPPs. The second section is about county authorities on PPPs. The third and forth sections are related to legal, institutional and technical aspects of PPPs. The fifth section is aimed at identifying the state of the art of PPPs at county level, in Romania. The sixth section looks into the impact of PPP on LED and the last section contains questions on how respondents anticipate PPPs future in Romania.

Questionnaire were administered electronically, using Zoomerang platform[1]. Data was gathered and processed through univariate analysis, multivariate analysis, descriptive statistics, using Excel and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) softwares.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section of the paper I present the most relevant results of the questionnaire, in relation with the research objectives, which were translated into hypotheses.

*Hypothesis 1: The adequate level for implementing PPPs is the subnational level*

One relevant aspect that came out after processing the data is related to **the most adequate PPP implementation level** (Figure 2). Thus, 83% of respondents consider that the sub-national level (local, county and regional level) is the most suitable for PPPs, by contrast with only 17% that indicate the national level. Apparently this result contradicts the theory and practice of PPPs in countries that are early PPP promoters (especially UK, Canada, Australia), that support PPPs as instrument for big infrastructure projects, characterized by high level of complexity and high transaction costs, that are usually developed at national level. However, this particular result seems to highlight the big discrepancy which exists in Romania, between the national and subnational level of development and implicitly the deep need for PPPs at sub-national level.

[1] Questionnaire is available at: https://s.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22GDUCJGWJL/

*Q1. Which do you consider to be the most appropriate level for PPP implementation?*

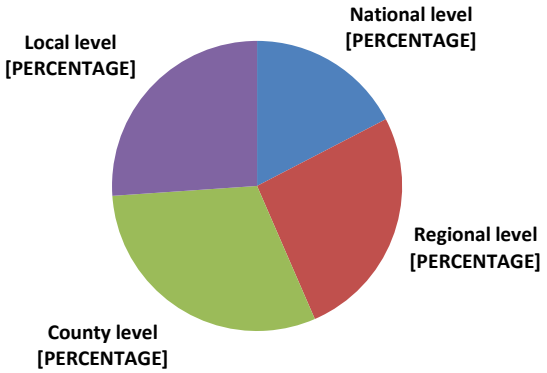



**FIGURE 2.** MOST ADEQUATE LEVEL FOR PPP IMPLEMENTATION

*Source:* data processed from questionnaire, 2012

*Hypothesis 2: At county level in Romania, public-private partnership is still in an early phase of development*

*Q3. How do you consider PPP state of development in Romania at the following levels:*

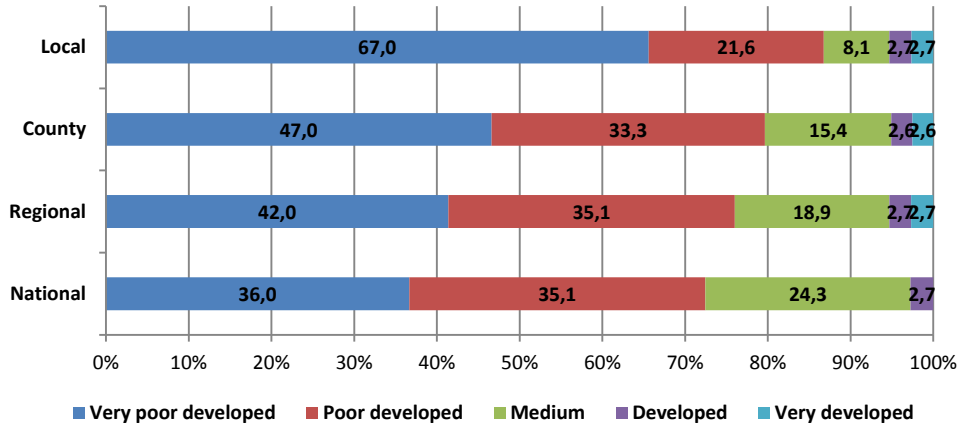



**FIGURE 3.** DEVELOPMENT LEVEL OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN ROMANIA

*Source:* data processed from questionnaire, 2012

No matter the administrative level (national, regional, county or local level), more tham 70% of the responses are directed towards the attributes"poor developed" and "very poor developed". Interesting to mention that no respondent indicated the "very developed" attribute.

The ranking of the administrative levels according to the PPP state of development, as perceived by respondents is: national level on the first place, followed by regional, county and local level. County



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authorities representatives position is most probably motivated by the fact the PPPs are by nature more adequate to big projects of national and regional interest and also by the fact that at central and regional level the perceived PPP expertise is higher than at county and local level.

However, the reality of PPPs in Romania, according to the Ministry`s of Finance PPP database shows the contrary: PPPs at subnational level are much more well represented than PPPs at national level. It becomes clear that the knowledge on the PPP reality and consequently the official dissemination of information on PPP projects` state is limited, strengthening the hypothesis that after more than a decade of official PPP reglementation and practice in Romania, this type of agreements between public bodies and private companies are still in an early phase of development. Moreover, the fact that repondents knowledge on PPP reality is poor may also indicate a poor level of expertise in this field (hypothesis 4).

*Hypothesis 3: At county level in Romania there is particular interest for the public-private partnership formula*

Almost 90% of the respondents consider PPPs as an adequate alternative for county level public investments. No respondent considers PPP a non suitable solution (Figure 4). Nonetheless, only one third of respondents indicated that such projects were developed in their county (Figure 5). What results is an obvious discrepancy between PPPs` perceived expectations and opportunities and PPP`s practice and experience, which strengthens the initial assumption that there is a particular interest for PPPs.

*Q17. Do you consider PPPs an adequate alternative for public investments at the level of your community?*

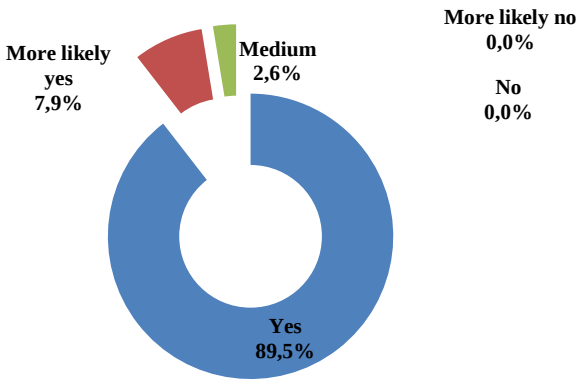



FIGURE 4.
PPP AS APPROPIATE ALTERNATIVE FOR COUNTY LEVEL PUBLIC INVESTMENTS

*Q16.Within your institution have there ever been or are under implementation PPP project?*

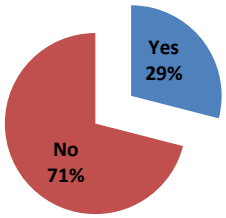



FIGURE 5.
IMPLEMENTED PPP PROJECTS

*Source:* data processed from questionnaire, 2012

*Hypothesis 4: County level contracting authorities level of expertise in the PPP field is quite low*

Regarding the **level of expertise of county authorities in the field of PPPs** (Figure 6) most answers are situated on the axis "medium- quite poor- very poor". Grouping the anwers on major categories: legislative expertise (specific legislation for PPPs, procedures for selecting partners and contractual clauses), technical expertise (defining technical requirements, estimating construction cost for public investment projects, risk analysis) and financial expertise (evaluating the most economic alternative for the public authority, projection of payment mechanisms, developing financial models for establishing PPPs` financial viability) it becomes evident that all three dimensions of expertise register severe deficiencies.

*Q7. Which do you consider to be the general level of expertise of county level public administration in the field of PPPs, in relation with the following aspects?*

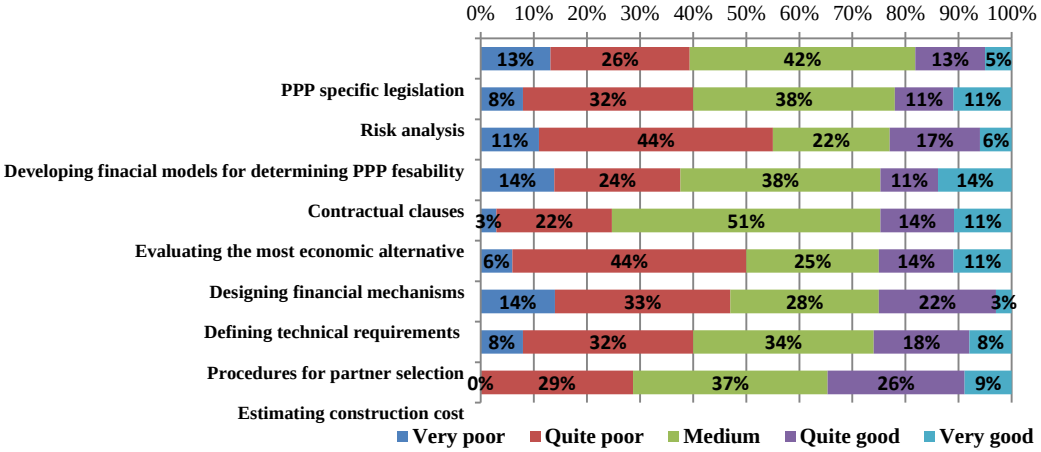



**FIGURE 6.** COUNTY LEVEL EXPERTISE IN THE FIELD ON PPPS

Source: data processed from questionnaire, 2012

Taking into account that the answers to this question actually represent a self- evaluation, there is a high probability that the real level of expertise of county level authorities in implementing PPPs is even lower than the results of the questionnaire point out.

*Q8. Employees within your institution have attended training courses, seminars, conferences on PPP topics?*

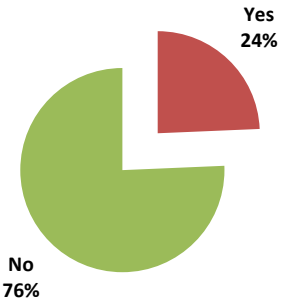



FIGURE 7. PPP HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING/EDUCATION

*Source:* data processed from questionnaire, 2012

More than three quarters of the respondents indicated that respondents within their institution did not benefit of any type of training in the PPP field.

*Q14. Which of the following alternatives represent in your opinion the most adequate risk allocation alternative?*

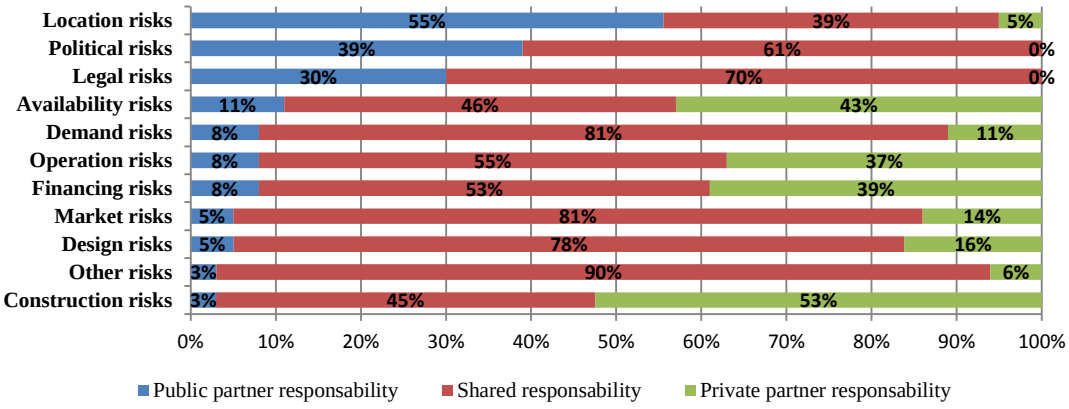



**FIGURE 8.** ADEQUATE RISK ALLOCATION BETWEEN PARTNERS

*Source:* data processed from questionnaire, 2012

Each PPP project is unique from the perspective of risk allocation between partners. However, there are some risks that are traditionally entirely transferred to the public sector (location, political, legal risks) or the private sector (design, construction, operation risks). Results indicate that only 16%, 53%, respectively 37% of the respondents are willing to transfer these risks to the business environment. Public authorities tendency to retain risks leads to a suboptimal risk allocation, which means higher costs and inefficient use of private companies know-how. The overall distribution of answers in Figure 8

clearly reveals respondents strong attachament to the classic procurement method and therefore a poor expertise in the field of PPPs.

*Hypothesis: At county level in Romania, public-private partnership has a positive effect on local economic development*

The three most important reasons for PPP adoption at county level are stimulating local economy (78%), increasing local economic development rithm (75%), limited budgets and improving public services quality (both reasons scored 73%). Creating new jobs and need for public infrastructure investments are on the next position, gathering 72%. Secondary reasons in terms of importance are know-how transfer (38%) and EU requirements (27%). Anyway, respondents consider most reasons as important and very important, which reveals that PPP is an instrument that public authories use/ would use in order to reach simultaneously more goals.

*Q29. Which are the reasons that justify the use of PPPs within your county?*

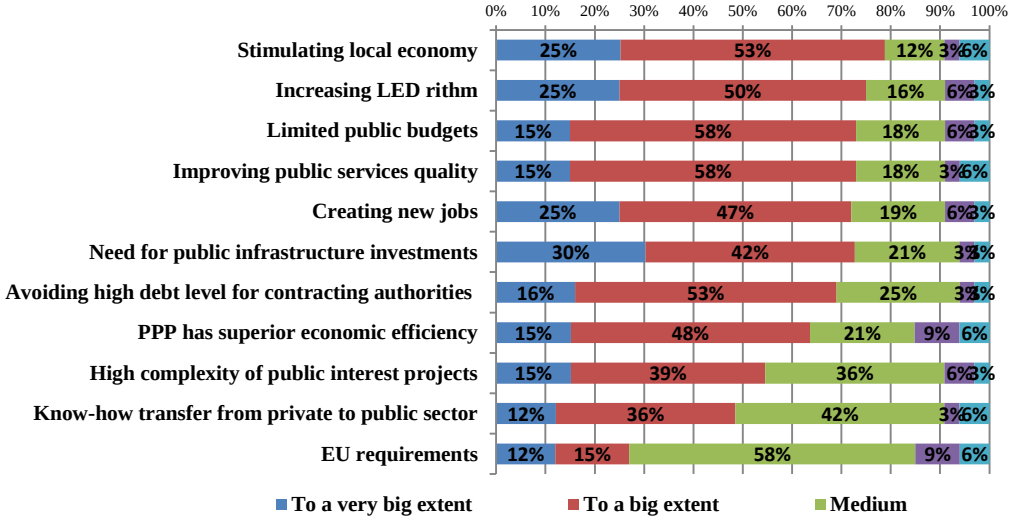



**FIGURE 9.** REASONS FOR PPP ADOPTION AT COUNTY LEVEL

*Source:* data processed from questionnaire, 2012

Surprinsingly, the main driver for PPP use at county level (stimulating local economy) has a strategic nature, because it does not address punctual limitations (such as oversized public budgets), but is aimed at developing mechanisms capble of inducing multiple benefits.

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*Q39. How do you consider the benefits brought by PPP projects at the level of your county, in relation to the following aspects:*

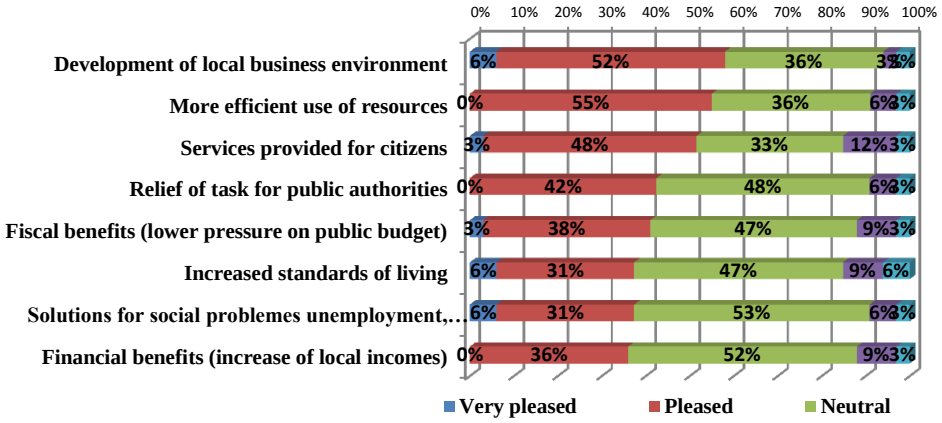



**FIGURE 10.** BENEFITS BROUGHT BY PPP PROJECTS

*Source:* data processed from questionnaire, 2012

The top three benefits brought by public-private partnership projects, in relation to which respondents declare themselves pleased and very pleased are: development of local business environment (58%), more efficient use of resources (55%), services provided to citizens (51%), all of them being factors that contribute to local economic development (Figure 10).

*Hypothesis: Romanian county level authorities lack administrative capacity for preparing and implementing public-private partnerships*

Regarding the **determinant factors that influence PPP agreeements** to a high and very high extent (Figure 11), after the legislative and institutional frameworks and governmental policies, considered to be formal factors, respondents indicated access to capital, administrative capacity and macroeconomic context. Surprinsingly, PPP projects tradition is seen as a less important factor, by comparison with the other factors.

*Q6. To what extent do you consider the following factors determinant for developing PPP projects?*

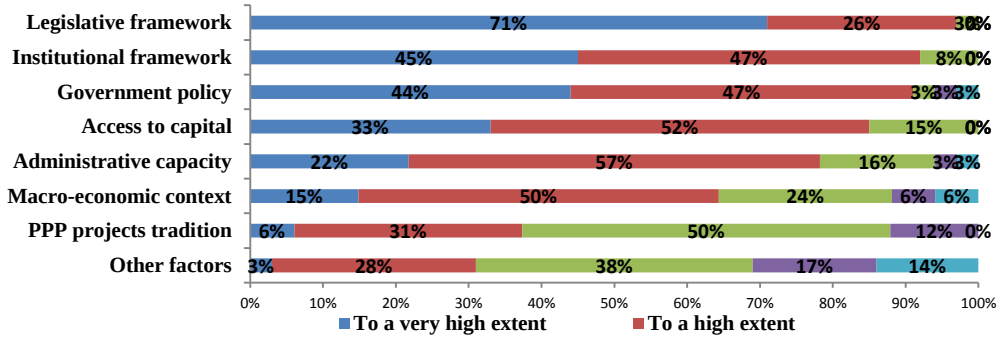



**FIGURE 11.** DETERMINANT FACTORS FOR PPP IMPLEMENTATION

*Source:* data processed from questionnaire, 2012

*Q40. On a scale from 1 to 3, how do you consider the obstacles you were confrunted with when implementing PPPs?*

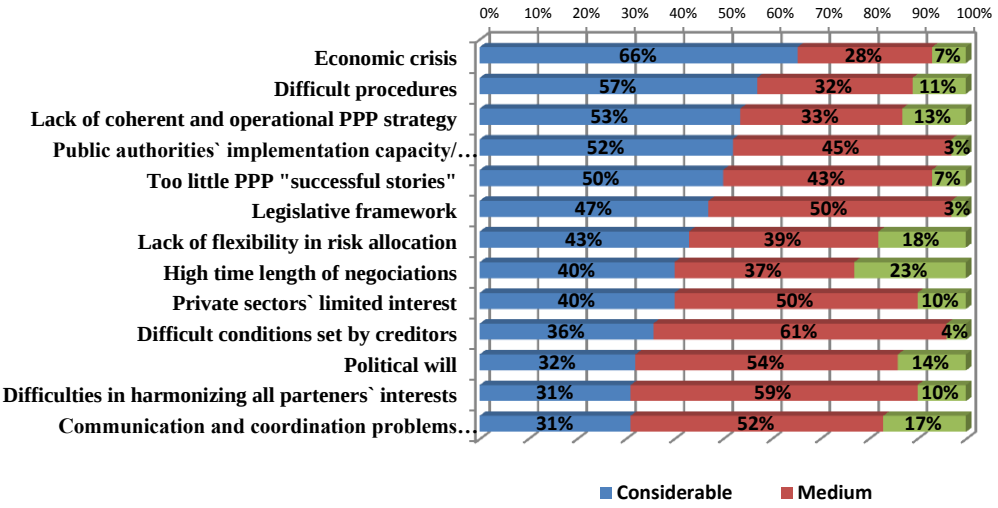



**FIGURE 12.** OBSTACLES IN IMPLEMENTING PPPS

*Source:* data processed from questionnaire, 2012

The main considerable barriers for PPP implementation indicated by respondents are the economic crisis (66%), difficult procedures (57%), lack of coherent and operational PPP strategy (53%), public authorities administrative capacity (52%) and few PPP successful stories (50%).

Because administrative capacity is seen both as a determinant factor for PPPs as well as an obtacle for such projects, hypothesis ... is also verified.



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## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The main results gathered after centralizing and processing the questionnaire reflect an **incipient stage of development** that characterizes the PPP phenomena in Romania, resulting both directly from the evaluation of 70% of the answers, that indicate a poor and very poor level of development and indirectly, as less than one third of the analyzed counties (29%) have developed public-private partnership projects. Nonetheless, almost 90% of county authorities have clearly defined PPPs as an appropiate alternative for performing public investments at county level. None of the respondents has considered PPPs an inappropiate solution, which point out that although there is no positive and significant history for such kind of government-business agreements in Romania **PPPs remain an attractive formula for county authorities**, that consider **subnational level the most adequate level for PPPs** (83%). The highest percentage of answers are to be found within the area of county level PPP projects.

At the same time, the reduced rate of partnership projects represents a valuable clue for **county authorities` expertise in the PPP field.** Thus, respondents openly and directly admit there are deficiencies in the field of knowledge related to legal, financial and operational aspects specific for PPPs. Just a quarter of the respondents reported the personnel from their institution was trained or participated at conferences/ seminars about public-private partnerships. A similar conclusion results indirectly from the answers at the questions related to PPPs distinctive features, level of partners involvement or risk management. Public authorities' tendency to retain risks that in PPP logic are totally transferred to the private environment reflects a low degree of familiarity of the public sector with the innovations brought by PPP by comparison with classic methods for public services procurement.

Concerning the **influence of public-private partnerships on local economic development**, the most important benefit experienced by the respondents as a consequence of implementing PPPs is the development of the local business environment. Furthermore, the main reasons authorities use to explain their interest in cooperating with private firms is local economic stimulation and accelerating the rhythm of local economic development.

The most significant barriers that hinder county authorities in implementing PPPs obstacole are: the economic crisis, laborios procedures, lack of a coherent and operational strategy in the PPP field, authorities capacity of implementation and a modest presence of successful domestic PPPs. All these findings enable us to consider the results of the questionnaire validate the formulated hypothesis and evidently demonstrate public authorities perception of PPPs is corresponds to an instrument capable of stimulating local economic and social development. Moreover, it becomes evident that county authorities have a low potential in accessing partnership projects, mainly because of the reduced level

of legal, technical and financial expertise, but also due to the political factor inconsistent vision over PPPs in the last decade.

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**INTER-MUNICIPAL COOPERATION IN ROMANIA: PRACTICES, NEEDS, AND OPPORTUNITIES**

# COOPERAREA INTERCOMUNITARĂ ÎN ROMÂNIA: PRACTICI, NEVOI ŞI OPORTUNITĂŢI


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***Abstract***
This paper is aiming to analyze the situation of inter-municipal cooperation associations in Romania after 1989 and examines how inter-municipal cooperation works. Compared with others European Countries, in Romania the public administration system is highly centralized, this beeing an impediment in developing intermunicipal cooperation. Local communities can choose to join forces with other communities if this is the way to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. This paper's objectives are to identify key challenges and solutions on the best ways to improve the environment and practice of inter-community co-operation in Romania. Inter-municipal co-operation is not only important for the improvement of service delivery to the citizens but also as an instrument of capacity - building. In addition, inter-municipal co-operation can support reforms that can speed up the process of local development.



***Keywords*:** Inter-municipal cooperation, citizen, service delivery, local development

**JEL CODES:** A00



***Rezumat***
Această lucrare își propune să analizeze situația asociațiilor de dezvoltare intercomunitară din România după anul 1989 și să examineze cum funcționează cooperare intermunicipală la noi. Comparativ cu alte țări europene, în România sistemul administrației publice este unul intens centralizat, acest lucru fiind un impediment pentru dezvoltarea cooperării intermunicipale. Autoritățile locale pot alege să coopereze cu alte comunități locale, în acest mod putând să-și îmbunătățească eficiența și eficacitatea. Obiectivele acestei lucrări sunt de a identifica principalele provocări și soluții cele mai adecvate pentru a îmbunătăți practica cooperării intercomunitare în România. Cooperarea intermunicipală nu este doar un instrument de furnizare de servicii, ci și un instrument de consolidare instituțională. În plus, cooperarea intercomunitară poate susține reformele, astfel încât procesul de dezvoltare locală să fie accelerat.



***Cuvinte cheie:*** cooperare intercomunitară, cetățean, furnizare de servicii, dezvoltare locală

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Local communities can choose to join forces with other communities if this is the way to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. For certain services, they can share expertise; they will find that a bigger territorial area than the municipality itself can be a more appropriate size for efficient service provision; there may even be a legal requirement for services like waste management, water supply, transport and economic development to be delivered through inter-municipal cooperation.

**Research outline**

The main questions of the research are:

(1) Why do local authorities in Romania decide to cooperate?

(2) Are their specific areas in Romania where inter-communal cooperation is more successful or more wanted?

(3) Which instruments are needed to facilitate, stimulate or oblige the cooperation?

In order to pursue the objectives of the paper related to the inter-municipal association, primary sources (legal framework, strategy, national action plans, and official websites) as well as secondary sources (studies) of information will be used in the analysis.

## 2. THE FRAMEWORK FOR SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF INTERCOMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATIONS

Practice has shown that the development based only on "top-down" strategies, implying decisions taken by the central government without a preliminary consultation with local communities, have not led to decreased disparities in living standards, on the contrary, the disparities between social strata, as well as between geographical areas, have generally increased. Today, local development policies and local initiatives are stronger and much more integrated into national and European strategies than ever before. We assist at a growing awareness that empowering the local level would not only improve effectiveness of central policies, but also enhance cohesion and assure favorable conditions for each local community to develop itself naturally according to its real needs. The concept of local development, seen as "a combination of the economic, social, and political factors which allow the capitalization of territorial potentialities on the basis of local resources with a view to its adaptation and development " (Suciu, 2000, p.109), also implies cooperation and partnership between different agents,

public or private, as many problems cannot be solved without an integrated approach, as well as the elaboration of a common, coherent development strategy.

The IDA is a comprehensive framework that contributes to explain how local governments in fragmented metropolitan settings can address the provision of local public goods, externalities, and common-pool resource issues using decentralized governance solutions. The incentives to voluntary cooperation vary depending on the nature of the problems to be handled, the geographic configuration of local governments, the size of the group involved in the solution, the availability of public entrepreneurs to promote the solution, and the statutory framework for local government cooperation (Feiock and Carr, 2001; Feiock, 2009). One of the challenges in extending the framework to a European context is to account for how different national institutional contexts structure the configuration and the preferences of the actors, the selection of the tasks for collective action, and the arrangements available to solve collective action dilemmas (Antikainen, 2005).

## 3. ROMANIAN LEGISLATION

In Romania, the arrangements for association and cooperation of local authorities and / or public or private actors in the territorial administrative units are relatively limited. The basic models that can make such combinations are IDAs (ADI) and Local Action Groups (LAGs).

The Romanian authorities have become interested in supporting the association between administrative-territorial units to form intercommunity development associations (IDA), this time trying to assure the legal framework to support their formation.

A first step was made with the provisions of Local Public Administration Law No. 215/2001, which authorizes the Local Public Administrations to set up for themselves Contracts of Association based on the provisions of Government Ordinance No. 26/2000 concerning Associations and Foundations. A next step was made in 2006, with the provisions of Law No. 286/2006 (amending and completing Law No. 215/2001), according to which, the intercommunity development associations represent "cooperation structures with legal private law personality, established, under law, by the administrative-territorial units with a view to carrying out in common some development projects of zonal or regional interest or to providing in common some public services" (*Article 1, Section 2, Paragraph c*). The Law also stipulates that "The intercommunity development associations are financed by contributions from the local budgets of the member administrative territorial units, as well as from other sources, under law" (*Article 111, Section 1)* and that "The Government gives support to the association of administrative-territorial units through national development programmes. These programmes are financed annually through the state

budget and are considered as distinct within the budget of the Ministry of Interior and Administration Reform, under the law regarding local public finances" (Article 111, Section 2). Therefore, this new type of association brings the capacity to the local councils to meet in the form of a legal entity for purposes to fix, on a territorial regrouping scale, their common objectives and priorities, the governmental support being necessary in this initial phase (Ministry of Administration and Interior, 2007).

The legislative framework for supporting the creation of intercommunity development associations also includes Frame-Law on Decentralization No. 195/2006, Law on Local Public Finances No. 273/2006, as well as Law No. 188/1999 regarding the Status of Public Servants, amended by Law No. 251/2006.

LAGs are defined by RDP (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2012) as "entities representing public - private partnerships, consisting of representatives of the public, private and civil designated for a homogeneous rural territory that will have to meet a number requirements on the composition of the territory covered and implement an integrated strategy for territorial development".

## 4. STATUS OF ROMANIAN ASSOCIATION

### The dynamic of IMC establishment

In a study elaborated by the Ministry of Administration and Interior in 2010, the total numbers of IMC was about 230 IDAs. According to the Ministry of Justice data base the number of IMCs. One aspect is very clear, there is no evidence about the concrete number of IMC at this date.

Until the law on Associations of Intercommunity Development was adopted, the local communities used to cooperate under the provisions of the Law of public administration no. 215/1991, but mainly under the provisions of Private Sector Laws, such as NGOs or Foundations. According to the same study, the year of created an association was before the law concerning IMC in Romania was approved, thus first 3 associations were created in 2001. The highest rate of establishment was in 2008, when 118 associations were created. In the figure bellow we present the evolutions of IMC in between 2001 and 2010.

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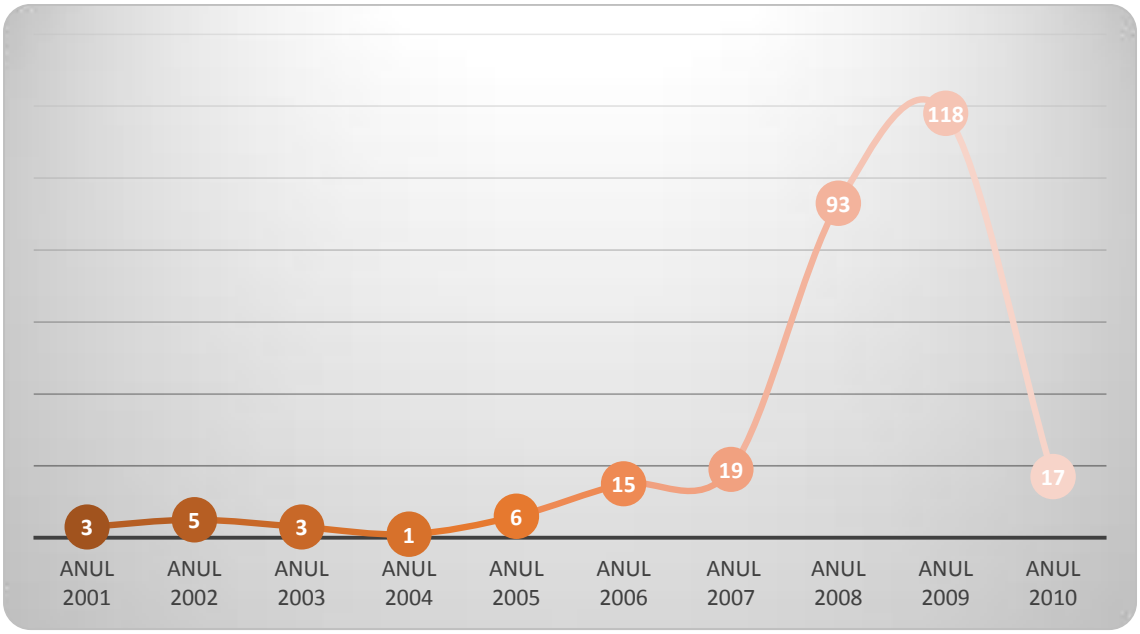



**FIGURE 1.** EVOLUTION OF IMCS IN ROMANIA

Source: Study of Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development, 2010

As it is seem in the figure above, almost half of the IDAs were created in 2009, the main reason was the opportunity given by EU Funds and the conditions imposed by the government for grants accession.

## 5. REGIONAL PATTERNS OF IMC

In a study of Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development elaborated in 2014, the situation of IMC is not very good, still there are regions without IMCs, one of this region is represented by the Sout East part of Romania.

In the Western and Center part of Romania there are many IMCs, especially in the historical provinces of Transylvania (Ardeal, Banat, or Crişana-Maramureş). As is seemed in the figure below, more than half of the IMCs are located in this part of the country. The main reason for this concentration is given by cultural factors and slightly different administrative traditions. The regional pattern is as strong if we use the eight development regions as a structuring factor, since three of them (west, northwest, and center) actually cover the historical provinces named above.

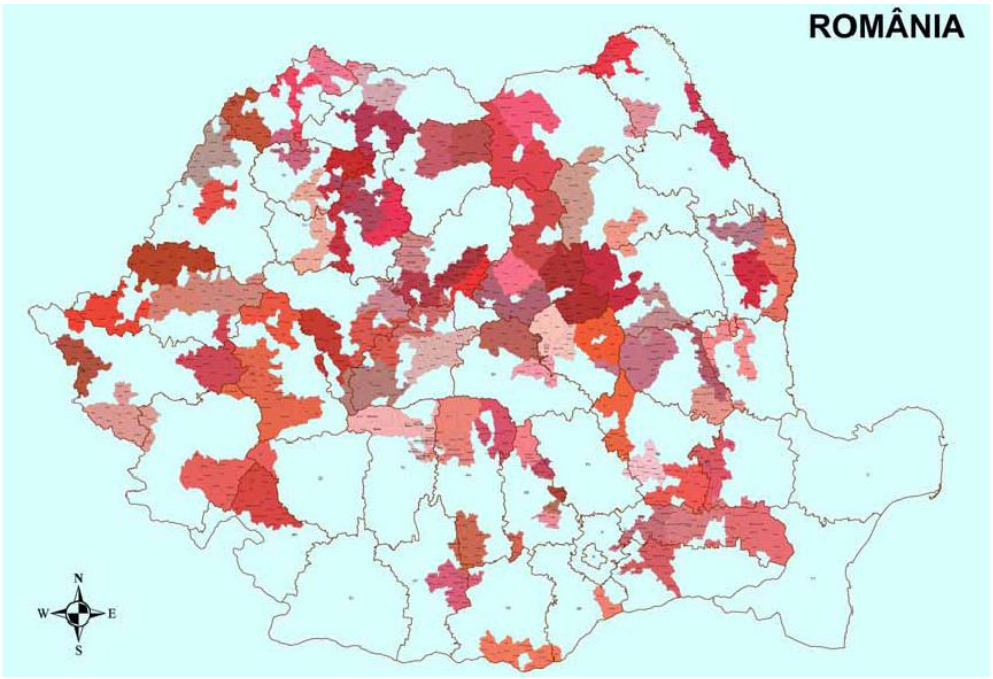



**FIGURE 2.** IMC IN ROMANIA IN 2014

Source: PATN study, MADR, 2014

**Size of IMC Bodies**

Administrative-territorial units should be considered when assigning a set of interrelated indicators. They can be cultural, social, economic. At the same time the number of members in an association depends on the technical constraints or geographical (two communities will be associated, but are separated by a mountain; this is a hindrance to the association).

The analysis showed that associations of local governments in Romania range in size from 2 to over 30 members. Very large IMC seems to be an exception, but it is an exception related to a certain incentive for cooperation: the need to establish county level ecological landfills by 2010 (required by the EU).

## 6. AREAS OF COOPERATION

Most IDAs in Romania have multiple purposes. Thus, the associations surveyed in one research study conducted by the Ministry of Administration and Interior the results are: 67 of the respondents have listed for more than 10 purposes, 58 associations listed between 5 and 9, and 86 associations mentioned between 2 and 4 purposes. According to same research, in Romania there are only 57 single-purpose associations. There are municipal services that many municipalities are not able to deliver although they have the responsibility, or service provision is inadequate. Insufficient financial



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resources or lack of capacity are frequently cited reasons for weak service delivery. In addition, many municipalities have small population and subsequently limited ability to individually support big infrastructure projects (waste water, water supply, etc.) and raise private investors' interest. Inter-municipal cooperation enables thus municipalities facing these kinds of challenges to join forces with other municipalities. The aims of the associations may be to jointly carry out development programs of regional or zonal interest or common delivery of public services (for example services of public utilities, social assistance services, cultural, tourism, youth, etc).

## 7. WAY OF COOPERATION

According to Frame-Law on Decentralization No. 195/2006, the IDAs are given the power, yet limited, to act, to get involved in an active manner in developing themselves by mobilizing the available resources (financial or human). Besides the financial resources coming from the local budgets of the member administrative-territorial units, the IDAs are given the possibility to finance themselves from other sources, under law. The human resource is also a very important key-element in the functioning of the IDA. Professionals, who know how to elaborate projects or development strategies, who are acquainted with the problems of the community, who can offer assistance and facilitate the communication between the local public authorities, NGOs and enterprises, are highly required.

In some cases partnerships are to be regarded as an inter-administrative project and/or the cooperation is directed by above local policy issues and governments. Cooperation shifts from the atmosphere of voluntariness and autonomy to different levels of (in the far extreme) mandatory and supra-imposed cooperation.

In practice, several planning initiatives are in process. According to respondents, strategic projects can contribute to inter-municipal cooperation, to the extent that the funds can help the realisation of short term developments. Case analysis shows that good process management is an important success factor, and supra-local authorities can be an important driver for inter-communal cooperation in this setting.

## 8. CASE STUDY - BAIA MARE URBAN SYSTEM ASSOCIATION

In April 2012, the Metropolitan Area of Baia Mare City has been legally established, by modifying the legal documents of Baia Mare Urban System Association, in accordance with the law and also, by expanding the territorial partnership. The Baia Mare Metropolitan Area is functioning as an intercommunity development association, Baia Mare serving as the polarizing center, which influences

the nearby communities with its economic and cultural diversity. Also, in terms of economic development, the neighboring towns mainly provide land and labor for entrepreneurs who want to develop their businesses or make new investments.

Baia Mare Metropolitan Area is composed of 19 municipalities:

- Baia Mare City;
- Five towns: Baia Sprie, Cavnic, Seini, Şomcuta Mare, Tăuţii Măgherăuş;
- Thirteen communes: Cerneş, Cicârlău, Coaş, Copalnic Mănăştur, Dumbrăviţa, Groşi, Mireşu Mare, Recea, Remetea Chioarului, Satulung, Săcălăşeni, Valea Chioarului, Coltău;
- The total population of the metropolitan area, according to the 2011 census, is around 220,000 inhabitants, and the total surface is 1,388 sq km;

The creation and development of Baia Mare Urban System (BMUS) was necessary from many points of view, the most important are:

- The creation of a favourable environment to attract the major investments;
- The defining of a common strategy concerning the durable development of BMUS (economic, social, environment);
- The development of certain communitarian projects with European funding;
- The achievement of some investments concerning the infrastructure (utilities, transport, roads…);
- The creation of a transparent and competitive public administration to efficiently collaborate with the affair environment and local community;
- The cultural patrimony and local identity conservation;
- The increasing of socio economic and territorial cohesion.

In the 2007-2013 programming period, I.D.A. “Baia Mare Metropolitan Area” has implemented a number of projects with an intercommunity impact, with the role of increasing the management capacity of the association. The association elaborated his own development strategy, which is very well drafted and respond to the needs of the members. The website of the association is attractive, with information both in Romanian and English languages, is all the time up to date and use social media instruments.



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**Problems encountered:**

- perception of the actors involved, especially from the small localities, on the general purposes of the Association.
- funding of the Association budget - some of the component administrative units do not allocate their share, according to the Statute.
- lack of financial resources in the members budgets.

## 9. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Excessive fragmentation of local government units and related teritorial administrative obviously hampers communication and cooperative networking. If joint partnerships can distinguish two distinct directions: strategic partnerships - their role being more director to establish goals and priorities; and operational - in this case their role is rather one of implementation of programs and projects.

Report FOCI (*ESPON, 2011*) identifies three basic types of cooperation: (1) cooperation focused on the implementation of clear infrastructure, waste management issues, and so on; (2) cooperation in spatial planning processes - which focuses on multiple levels of administrative units; (3) The cooperative aims to create a new level of government / governance to reorganize several administrative units into one larger unit with higher representativeness at national and international level.

The intercommunity development associations represent a good means to promote local development, encourage collaboration between different administrative-territorial units and support an integrated development by taking into consideration local needs and potentials.

Despite all the benefits, there are potential barriers that can challenge a community's ability to embrace intermunicipal cooperation as an achievable and worthwhile means to provide services. Sometimes, a *simple lack of trust* between the potential partnering communities can stand in the way of cooperation efforts. This may be brought on by a perception that one community will be taken advantage of, or that the plan itself fails to bring about a win/win outcome. *Personalities and disputes between local officials* in neighboring communities can hamper cooperation efforts as well. A dispute, regardless of its significance, can make it difficult to bring the relevant parties to the negotiating table. *Inexperience and a lack of legal knowledge* also threaten cooperation by discouraging even an initial exploration of opportunities.

These barriers are not insurmountable and should not deter interest, but acknowledging them can be a first step in working toward a successful partnership agreement.

**Next steps for a better cooperation.**

- Nevertheless, more governmental and legal support, as well as a clear guideline for their setting up, functioning and administration is required. The Government must promote a proper legal frame, in order to stimulate the intercommunal cooperation.
- The Central Authorities must allocate financial resources
- At local level, there is a need for more cooperation between different municipalities, from the institutional, territorial and economic point of view, to make inter-municipal development sustainable.
- In addition, the analysis pointed out a need of impulse through examples and good practice, an imperious need for experienced professionals (local development agents),
- Advance a culture of cooperation. Successful cooperation depends on the ability of local officials to build and maintain relationships with one another. To accomplish this, interaction at the local level should be encouraged through strong leadership at the State level. All State agencies that deal with local government issues on a regular basis have a unique opportunity to introduce new and enhanced lines of communication among local officials statewide.
- Focus on offering practical resources. Much can be achieved by merely providing local officials with effective and practical tools that will allow them to work through the process of collaborating with each other, thus a handbook for practitioners in IMC should be developed, development of a continually updated inventory of inter-municipal cooperation examples could be helpful in benchmarking and best practices.

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**STAKEHOLDER MAPPING: DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION GOVERNANCE ON THE ROMANIAN SHALE GAS DEBATE**

# EVIDENŢIEREA ACTORILOR INTERESAŢI: GUVERNANŢĂ DEMOCRATICĂ ÎN DEZBATEREA PE GAZELE DE ŞIST DIN ROMÂNIA


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***Abstract***
Growing energy demands, rising environmental awareness, increasing fossil fuel prices and new energy technologies have placed unconventional resources high on governments' agenda. The impact of natural gas production from shale has lead to a heavy debate and controversy around the hydraulic fracturing technology. Decisions that are likely to have an environmental impact, such as decisions on the shale gas development entail grater public participation. The shale gas debate begs for an inclusive definition of the stakeholder mapping concept that will not leave out any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the shale gas debate. The article concludes that portraying the key role played by stakeholders in the policy formulation process has made stakeholder analysis a vital tool and will be pivotal to policy making related to shale gas in Romania.



***Keywords*:** shale gas, stakeholder mapping, Romania

**JEL CODES:** Q42, Q48



***Rezumat***
Creșterea cererii de energie, a gradului de conștientizare asupra problemelor de mediu, prețul în creștere al combustibililor și noile tehnologii din sectorul energiei au poziționat resursele neconvenționale printre priorități pe agenda guvernelor. Impactul producției de gaze naturale din șisturi a condus la dezbateri aprinse și controverse cu privire la tehnologia fracturării hidraulice. Deciziile care sunt susceptibile a avea un impact asupra mediului, cum ar fi cele privind dezvoltarea gazelor de șist implică o participare la scară largă a publicului. Dezbaterea cu privire la gazele de șist implică o definiție cuprinzătoare a conceptului de hartă a părților interesate (*stakeholder mapping*), definiție care nu ar trebui să ignore un grup sau individ care poate afecta sau este afectat de dezvoltarea gazelor de șist. Articolul concluzionează că portretizarea rolului fiecărei părți interesate în procesul de formulare a politicilor face ca analiza părților interesate să fie un instrument crucial pentru elaborarea politicilor publice cu privire la dezvoltarea gazelor de șist în România.



***Cuvinte cheie:*** gaze de șist, harta actorilor interesați, România

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Recent advances in technology have made fracking for shale gas an economically viable solution. Nevertheless, despite the benefits that shale gas can provide, there is still much resistance and absolute hostility toward its development. Stakeholders are using the shale gas term to mean very different things. For example, the environmental organisations portray fracking as encompassing all negative aspects of oil and gas development while industry uses it to describe a process which bears significant benefits. It is therefore important to understand the different perspectives of the actors involved. For example, in an energy project, the government is de facto interested to increase contributions to state budget, safeguard the environment and score points with their electorate; private companies are interested to increase their profit margins; citizens are interested in their wellbeing, quality of life and the environment they live in; environmental NGOs are interested to protect the environment.

Romania, along with Poland, France, Sweden, Ukraine and UK is believed to hold important shale gas reserves (EIA 2012). Shale gas development in Romania fuels passionate debates about the trade-offs of energy (security, as well as economic considerations) versus environmental concerns (Vişan, 2013). To date, it proved to be a sensitive politic and societal issue in Romania (moratoria imposed and than lifted, street protests and local communities opposing the company interested in the shale gas exploration). Currently, Romania has granted exploration and exploitation permits to a company interested in assessing the economic viability of the unconventional resources in Romania (Romanian Environmental Ministry, 2013). Nonetheless, considering the rising environmental awareness among the population, the social unrest, there are different views on whether Romania needs to explore its potential for recoverable unconventional resources.

This article breaks down as follows. The first section presents the theoretical research framework, analyzing the stakeholder and stakeholder mapping and analysis concepts. Section 2 describes the methodology employed to offer an overview of main stakeholders and reviews approaches used by several scholars with the aim to find the variables relevant when mapping stakeholders. The third section proposes an analysis of key stakeholders and depicts main stakeholders involved in the process. Section 4 states the conclusions and suggestions for future research.

## 2. STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

Literature has advanced the hypothesis that low stakeholder engagement in energy projects is ineffective and is likely to lead to social unrest and project delays or even cancelation (Malone et al., 2009; Feenstra et al., 2010) pushing for proper communication and involvement of stakeholders (Wolsink, 2007; NEARCO, 2011). This is why, stakeholder participation in energy (and especially environmental) decision-making has been progressively embedded into national policies (Stringer et al., 2006). Participation in environmental decision-making is more and more perceived as a democratic right (enforced as such by the Arhus Convention).

There are several advantages to involving stakeholders in the decision making. First, it is argued that the quality and durability of decisions is likely to be greater (Beierle, 2002; Reed et al., 2009). Second, more comprehensive information inputs leads to decisions taken based on evidence and science. Third, setting a multi-issue agenda, through stakeholder dialogues is effective in moving away from issues which cannot be resolved due to fundamental differences in stakeholders' views (Australian Government, 2008, Greenwood et al., 1993). Forth, it may increase public trust in decisions and civil society (Richards et al., 2004). Nevertheless, there is little evidence to the actual evidence as few claims have been tested.

The literature on the stakeholder mapping concept yields a broad range of definitions. The widely used definition of stakeholder is the one advanced by Freeman in1984, which states that a stakeholder is any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives. Freeman et al. (2007) use the terms primary and secondary stakeholders. Primary stakeholders are employees, financiers, suppliers, communities and customers. Secondary stakeholders are competitors, consumer advocate groups, special interest groups, media and government (Freeman et al., 2007). Nonetheless, the definition is not ideal considering its focus on actors within an organization. Some stakeholder theories propose a narrower and more instrumental definition of stakeholders as those groups or individuals without whose support the organisation would cease to exist (Bowie, 1988). The shale gas debate begs for an inclusive definition, that will not leave out any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the shale gas debate. Freeman (1984, p. 53) argues that the notion of stakeholder has to include a number of groups who may not be "legitimate" in the sense that they will have vastly different values and agendas. To make it more suitable for the project context, in this research a distinction is made between internal and external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders (central to the debate) are the companies (project developers, hence the investors, the operator and subcontractors) with the initiative and a direct business stake in the project, as well as the government



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(and relevant ministries) who is the main decision maker. External stakeholders are the individuals, businesses and organizations which are confronted with this initiative, or act out of interests of an affected group of people (local communities, population at large).

The article tries to answer one main question, who are the stakeholders involved in the process. Nonetheless, there is no simple answer to this as the multitude of different stakeholders involved increases the complexity. First, given the sensitive topic, some stakeholders may capture more media attention, even thou they are not relevant to the debate. For example, environmental NGOs use internet and social networks to advocate their messages and are followed by several thousands of people. Second, the weight of the actors (their power) varies and some are likely to have a more significant impact on the decision making process and may not be portrayed as such. Third, the stakeholder concept is mostly contested due to the definition of what is a legitimate and rightful stake. This is more straightforward when applied to business management where the legitimate stakeholders are the stockholders. When applied in public policy and especially on highly politicized topics such as shale gas, this gets overly complicated.

Stakeholder mapping and analysis, initially a tool used in business management has been adapted and progressively used in policy formulation and especially in natural resources management (Reed et al. 2009). Mitchell et al. (1997) have advanced a list of useful guidelines to be sued when identifying stakeholders. Nonetheless, the article argues that those are not enough considering that this is a highly contested topic, highly politicised and concerns large populations.

Stakeholder analysis is usually conducted through three approaches (Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Friedman and Miles, 2006).

First, descriptive stakeholder analysis describes the relationship between a particular event and its stakeholders (Donaldson and Preston, 1995) and is necessary before undertaking one of the two other approaches, normative and instrumental analysis. Second, normative approach emphasis the legitimacy of stakeholder involvement and empowerment in decision making (the three variables taken into consideration when depicting the normative approach are shown in Figure 1).

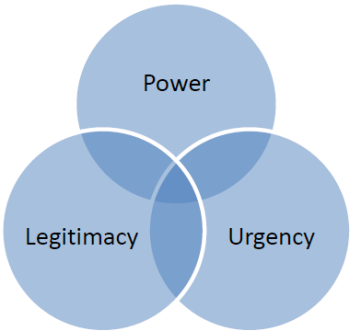



FIGURE 1. VARIABLES TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION FOR STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

*Source:* Adapted from Mitchell et al., 1997

Literature (Boatright, 1994; Hendry, 2001; Friedman and Miles, 2006) has portrayed the normative approach as identifying the stakeholders responsible in their legal and institutional context (the ones that have the power and legitimacy) in a particular debate. Building on democracy literature (Elster, 1998), it can be argued that people are entitled to participate in the management of the environment/context they live in. Third, instrumental approach to stakeholder analysis is aimed to help organisations/policy makers identify, explain and manage stakeholders' views, roles and interest so that a desired outcome is achieved. Being a more practical approach it has been largely employed in business management with the aim to understand and influence stakeholders (Freeman 1984). Considering the aim of this article, to map stakeholders in the shale gas debate in Romania, the instrumental approach would be a perfect fit considering that tool has been used in the natural resource management literature (Johnson et al., 2004) to overcome obstacles to the adoption of new technologies, adapt technologies to relevant user groups, or to disseminate the same technologies in different ways to different groups. Nonetheless, the analysis begs first for a descriptive approach aimed to ease the other two approaches. Furthermore, due to length constraints of the article, just a descriptive approach will be employed for the purpose of this article.

The three main variables used when mapping stakeholder are power, legitimacy and urgency. Mitchell et al. 1997 suggest that a stakeholder group has power when it can impose its will on the firm, especially through the control of resources. This classification can help, for example weight the stakeholders whose power may help them have an enhanced capacity to disrupt and capture public attention. The context related to shale gas development in Romania is rather complex considering that in involves several parties, multiple perspectives, overlapping relationships, divergent objectives and in particular different expectations. The article maps out main stakeholders with the aim to create a



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platform for negotiation, one that contributes to learning between stakeholders, as it helps build long-term relationships and better understanding of stakeholder concerns and expectations.

## 3. STAKEHOLDER MAPPING ON THE SHALE GAS DEBATE: THE ROMANIAN CONTEXT

In order to assess who are the key internal and external stakeholders in the project, a basic stakeholder analysis must be performed. In this chapter the roles and interests of the internal and external stakeholders are portrayed. These stakeholder profiles are sketched with the use of generally available information and interviews (Ivan 2012).

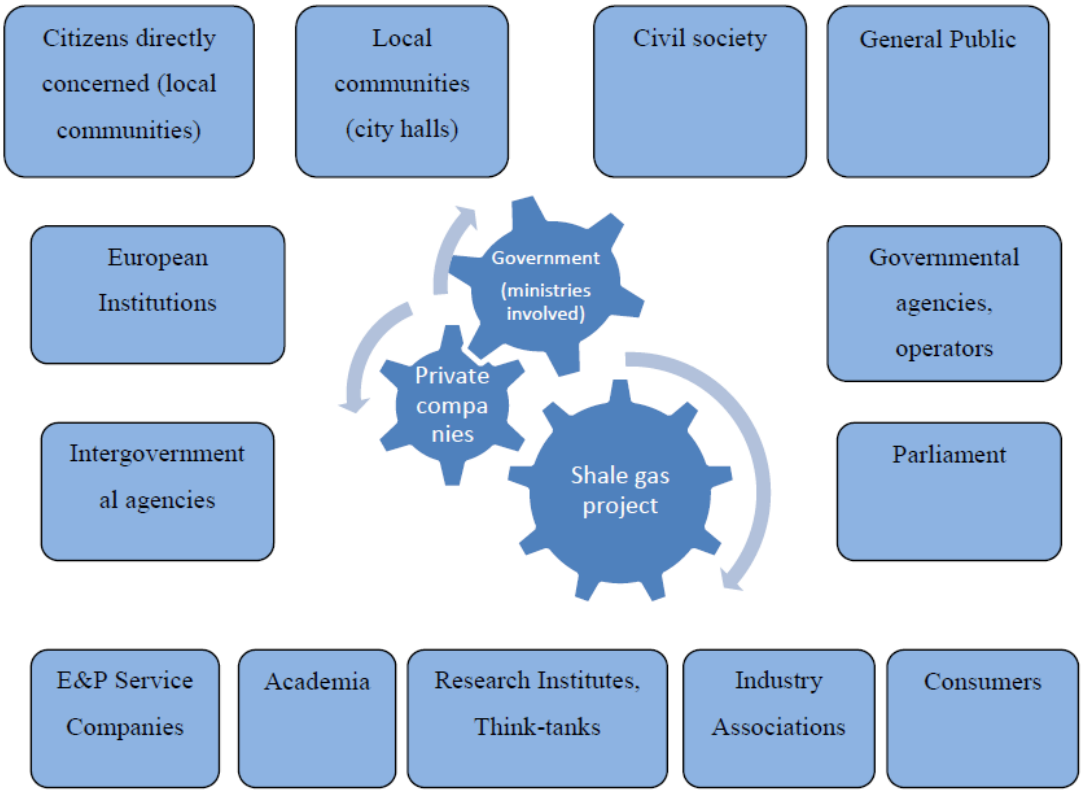



FIGURE 2. STAKEHOLDER MAPPING ON THE SHALE GAS DEBATE

*Source:* Author`s depiction

Figure 2 above reveals the entire spectrum of key stakeholders at this moment in the project. Due to the dynamics in the project this is just a caption of the current stakeholder arena and when the situation changes in the future a different make-up could be more relevant. At the heart of the shale gas debate is the government with its central ministries: the energy ministry and the environmental ministry. The Ministry of Energy owns / manages shares in state-owned companies; and promotes the energy strategy and pushes for exploration of the unconventional resources with the aim to assess the

economic viability of shale gas. The environmental ministry aims to keep the environment healthy within the confines of economic development and social progress. Furthermore, it has competences in setting a limit on greenhouse-gas emissions; control the use of drinking water and its subsequent decontamination. The finance ministry is keen on increasing contributions to state budget through taxes and royalties from the oil and gas, as well as mining sector.

The private operator interested to weight the economic viability of the unconventional resource in Romania, Chevron has received exploration permits for three wells in Vaslui county. The company is active in about 180 countries in gas and oil production and has started in May 2014 the drilling in one of the sites.

Parliament. The most important player on energy-related laws in Parliament is the industries and services committee in the lower chamber. The Parliament has very little accountability and donors always preferred to push legislation through Government, to control the end-result. However, Parliament reviews Government decrees / Ordinances – if Parliament is not "on board" with the conditionality proposed by donors, the measures promoted in Government are diluted or reversed in Parliament in a few months after adoption in Government.

European Commission is responsible for initiating most environmental legislation, primarily through the Directorate-General for Environment. As the European Parliament has acquired more formal powers and greater influence, it has developed a reputation of an 'environmental champion', particularly through its Environment Committee, and is widely acknowledged to have played a constructive role in pushing the EU's environmental agenda, often working closely with the Commission (Burns 2005).

There are some intergovernmental agencies that ease exchange knowledge and policy learning while pushing for implementing good governance concepts when managing the unconventional resources. For example, the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) is a global coalition of governments, companies and civil society working together to improve openness and accountable management of revenues from natural resources.

For citizens directly concerned, the main issues are: living in a safe environment, risk of drinking contaminated water, as well as having peaceful place of residence, risk of loss of property. For citizens not directly involved, the issues may vary. Most of them advocate for bringing safety for everyone having as main concern the environment and profitability of the project for the state budget and whether the government is capable of managing the likely risks.



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The local municipalities where exploration of shale gas occurs, the communities living close to oil refineries have raised concerns over their safety and have leverage over the permitting process of shale gas exploration and exploitation. The mayors are mainly interested to appease their electorate and thus are inclined to take more into consideration population's expectations.

Environmental NGOs (most relevant NGOs are Vira, România Fără Ei, Facebook groups against fracking) plays a vital role in the shaping and implementation of participatory democracy and is likely to have a major impact on the project. They were the first to use mass media to challenge the project, confronting the government and Chevron's representatives. They were also involved in educating and informing local communities.

Industry associations are not very well represented and have not so far been vocal on the issue. Nevertheless, considering they reunite some of the major oil & gas companies in the world, those are likely to play a key role in the development of shale gas. Major gas consumers (especially the energy intensive industries are likely to play a significant role as they are interested to have more and cheaper resources available). There are several research institutes and energy related think tanks that have built a reputation of independent actors (ROEC, EFOR, World Energy Council). Several reputed academics (mainly geologist) have been involved so far in the development of shale gas resources and have been part of research teams tasked to develop an understanding of the profitability of the unconventional gas reserves, assess the likelihood of recoverable unconventional resources, the as well as compliance with the regulatory framework).

To sum up, the shale gas debate represents an interesting case study showing a complex situation involving multiple actors, with varied levels of power and demands (see Figure 3 below). Nevertheless, considering the outrage and lack of social acceptance, we may argue that it suffers from a legitimacy gap. Stakeholders are no longer silent, they are more aware of the issues and push for social responsibility and accountability from the companies developing resources and from the government managing the development.

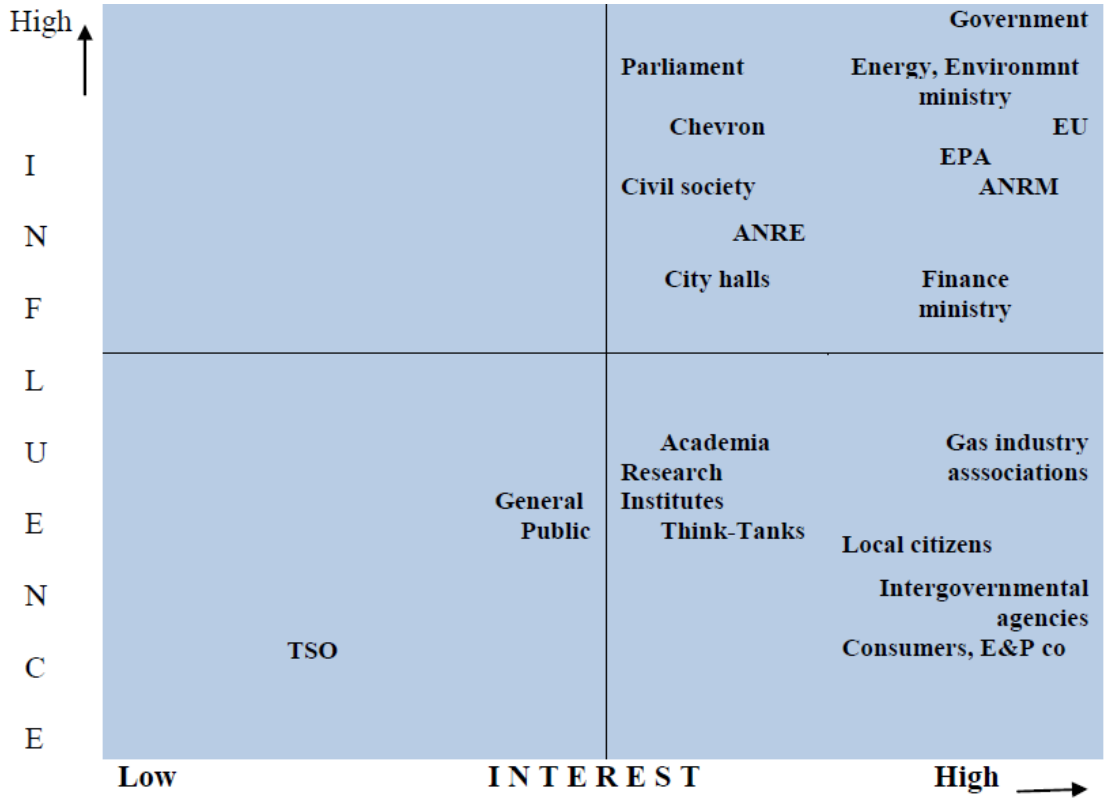



FIGURE 3. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS ON THE SHALE GAS DEBATE: THE ROMANIAN CONTEXT

*Source:* Author`s depiction

## 4. CONCLUSION

The article has provided a basic, descriptive stakeholder mapping. Nevertheless, interviews should be carried on the basis of stakeholders' functions and responsibilities, their role in the shale exploration project. Stakeholders could be identified through informal contacts, through the media, as well as through shale gas related events (workshops, conferences, debates). The responses to the semi-structured interviews can help sketch the current stakeholders' expectations of the proposed exploration project. The most relevant indicators of societal acceptance will be assessed in a qualitative manner. Furthermore, the research can be followed by a quantitative assessment, carried on a large population. Public inquiry (and in particular questionnaire) is often used when controversial projects lead to outrage. This was widely used for inquires into proposed nuclear installations (for example in Britain). Q-methodology methodology can be employed with the aim to assess an individual's subjectivity. The method is used to assess a person's perspective on a subject and comparing it to those of others. In this particular case, Q-methodology can be used to capture and understand the diversity of perspectives



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on natural gas from shale. Furthermore it allows the identification of common grounds as well as divergent views. An overview of stakeholder perspectives can be useful in the shale gas development for identifying differences in values and interests that need to be discussed, as well as creating awareness among a broad range of stakeholders.

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**INTER-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATIONS IN GROWTH POLE POLICIES FROM ROMANIA**

**- WORKING PAPER -**

# ASOCIAŢIILE DE DEZVOLTARE INTERCOMUNITARĂ ÎN POLITICA POLILOR DE CREŞTERE DIN ROMÂNIA


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***Abstract***
We analyze the dynamics of inter-community development associations (IDA) in the growth pole policies in Romania, in the framework provided by the Regional Operational Program (ROP). Prerequisites for accessing funds from ROP for development projects of growth poles included the development of strategic plans in each of the growth poles (Integrated Urban Development Plans - IUDP), which to be submitted for approval by IDAs from each growth pole to the ministry responsible with regional development.
We expect that IDAs developed under exogenous influences have less financial and human capacities and be less active in the policy implementation, while IDAs established under endogenous influences be more active, have better human and financial capacity, with influences on the policy implementation on local levels.



***Keywords*:**intercommunity development associations, growth poles, policy implementation

**JEL CODES: A00**



***Rezumat***
Analizăm dinamica asociațiilor de dezvoltare intercomunitară (ADI) în politica polilor de creștere din România, în cadrul furnizat de Programul Operațional Regional (POR). Cerințele pentru accesarea de fonduri din POR pentru proiecte de dezvoltare ale polilor de creștere includ elaborarea unor planuri strategice (planuri integrate de dezvoltare urbană - PIDU) trimise pentru avizare de ADI-uri la ministerul de resort, responsabil cu dezvoltarea regională.
Ne așteptăm ca ADI-urile dezvoltate sub influențe exogene să aibă capacitate financiară și umană mai redusă și să fie mai puțin active în implementarea politicii, în timp ce ADI-urile înființate sub influențe endogene să fie mai active, să aibă capacitate financiară și umană mai bine dezvoltată, cu influențe asupra implementării politicii la nivel local.



***Cuvinte cheie:*** asociații de dezvoltare intercomunitară, poli de creștere, implementarea politicilor publice



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Inter-community development associations (IDAs)are "cooperation structures, with own juridical personality, governed by private law, established by territorial administrative units for the joint execution of development projects of regional or local interest or joint provision of public services", as stipulated byLaw no. 215 / 2001 on local public administration. Such structures may be established under endogenous influences, as result of needs at local / county / regional level, or under exogenous influences, e.g. for taking advantage of various funding opportunities for local development projects / public service delivery infrastructure projects. Such was the case for example in service delivery for IDAs established for water-sewerage projects and may have also been the case for IDAs developed for growth poles, as part of the institutional framework developed within the growth pole policy.

In this paper we analyze the dynamics of inter-community development associations (IDA) in the growth pole policies in Romania, in the framework provided by the Regional Operational Program 2007 -2013 (ROP) - Priority Axis 1 (PA 1) - Support for urban sustainable development - Urban Growth Poles.. Prerequisites for accessing funds from ROP for development projects of growth poles included the development of strategic plans in each of the growth poles (Integrated Urban Development Plans - IUDP), which to be submitted for approval by IDAs from each growth pole to the ministry responsible with regional development. The role of the IDAs in the IUDP implementation and monitoring is agreed upon at local level and mentioned in the IUDP. We are interested to assess the influence of the endogenous and exogenous factors – in our case the European funding – in establishing IDAs and the performance of IDAs from growth poles, financially and in terms of human resources.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The selection of the growth poles and their respective IDAs has been made taking into consideration the Romanian Government Decision no 998 / 2008 to declare these seven cities (namely Brașov, Cluj-Napoca, Constanța, Craiova, Iași, Ploiești and Timișoara), as growth poles, one per region (except for the Bucharest Ilfov region) in which the Government would make priority investments from domestic and European funds.

The research conducted involved analyzing content of documents, such as the bylaws of the respective IDAsand websites of the IDAs / municipality declared as growth pole, while also taking into account the legal framework related to regulations related to establishment and functioning of IDAs, the Regional Operational Program and the guide for IUDPs for growth poles from ROP-Priority Axis I „Suporting

sustainable development of cities – urban growth poles". We shall not specifically analyse the legal framework, as such analysis has been already conducted (Pop et al., 2007), with no significant changes since then. Instead our analysis will focus on a factual component, related to decision-making within the IDAs, using an observation grid, and an evaluation component, related to performance of IDAs, as illustrated by descriptive financial data for the time series 2008-2013, based on data from reporting documents recorded to the Ministry of Public Finances. In the analysis, we shall take into account as reference point the year 2008 as year when the Guide for Applicants for ROP PA 1 was launched.

## 3. BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE GROWTH POLE POLICY IN ROMANIA AND ITS INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Christofakis and Papadaskalopoulos (2011) argue in European urban and regional development that the growth pole model is combined with that of integrated development. In the growth poles theories developed by Perroux in 1955 and further developed by Boudeville in 1968 the focus is placed on the attractiveness of activities and on the concentration of economic growth in poles (polycentrism), which in turn generates development in the neighboring areas.In the integrated spatial development models, the usage of endogenous potential from each region is key feature, as shown by Coffey and Polese in 1985, Barquero in 1991 and Garofolli in 2002. The growth pole and integrated development models are used in various combinations, based on particular characteristics of the country and its levels of development, on strategic government choices on social and economic aspects and on current international situation.

When discussing about public policies and their implementation, the institutional framework can contribute to the regional policies in Romania which include a component related to urban development, including that of growth poles. If we are to consider Thomas Dye's (Dye, 1998) definition of public policies, according to which public policies are what governments choose to do or not to do, in Romania, as result of Government Decision no. 998 / 2008, seven growth poles have been declared: Brașov, Cluj-Napoca, Constanța, Craiova, Iași, Ploiești and Timișoara, while Bucharest has been excluded deliberately from the list, as the growth pole policy wants to counterbalance the importance of the capital city in the national economy. Growth poles have been considered in this case to be represented by the municipality and the surrounding area under its influence, which in turn results at local level in establishing of organizational structures, such as IDAs to support development of the growth pole policies at local level.

The goal of this urban development policy is not mentioned in the respective government decision, yet we can assimilate the goal mentioned in the Regional Operational Program 2007-2013 for the respective priority axis 1, that is "to increase the quality of life and to create jobs in towns by rehabilitating urban infrastructure, by improving services, including social services, as well as by developing business and entrepreneurial support structures" (Guide for Applicants for Priority Axis 1 - Support for urban sustainable development - Urban Growth Poles- Regional Operational Program 2007-2013) Thus, funding would be directed from ROP – Priority Axis 1towards infrastructure projects of local public administrations for supporting further development of economic sector in their respective area, with expected potential to eventually generate growth at regional level.

This may indicate the fact the growth pole policy from Romania is developed under exogenous influences, supported also by subsidies through projects, as public policy instrument with medium level of intervention meant to encourage the development of this policy. At local level, the growth pole policy is reflected in integrated urban development plans (IUDPs) approved, in projects included in action plans of the IUDPs for funding from European and domestic funding, in projects implemented, after approval of funding.

While the entire organizational arrangements within the growth pole policy may be of interest for analysis and will be further analysed in other papers, of the organizational structure presented further, we shall briefly analyse the IDAs from the growth poles. As pointed out also by (Pop et al., 2007), the role of IDAs is to jointly formulate and implement local public policies, in our case also in the implementation of the growth pole policies. Yet the current framework has no additional provisions with regard to the IDA involvement in the implementation of IUDPs, of the growth pole policy at local level. (Ionescu-Heroiu *et al.,* 2013)

**TABLE 1.** ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES IN GROWTH POLE POLICY

| Organizational structures | Legal status | Level | Observations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Local public administration from the city declared as growth pole | Public authority | Local | Declared as growth pole – may benefit from dedicated financial support (without competition) from ROP axis 1, provided that there is IDA developed for the growth pole and IUDP is developed, with mature projects included in action plan for urban, economic and social infrastructure. Usually leads the established IDA. |
| Local public administration from neigbouring areas – urban and rural | Public authority | Local | Usually from 30 km radius around city declared growth pole, yet area of influence is debateable, as pointed out also in a recent World Bank Report (Ionescu-Heroiu, et al., 2013);Joining the IDA is voluntary, and some public authorities were reluctant to join (e.g. |



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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | see Timisoara growth pole); lower human and financial capacity |
| County council | Public authority | Local - county | May provide additional human and financial resources for specific projects for local authorities and or IDA; may implement projects from IUDP action plan. |
| **IDA established by the above-mentioned local authorities** | NGO of public utility (quasiNGO) | Local – no adminis-trative level | Submits the IUDP to the ministry for approval, may have specific tasks set in the IUDP with regard to monitoring of IUDP / project implementation and further planning, even own projects |
| Agency for Regional Development (ARD) | NGO of public utility, (quasiNGO) | Regional – no an adminis-trative level | Established under law no 315 / 2004 on regional development in Romania; acts as Intermediary Body in each region for ROP program, its structure includes the growth pole coordinator |
| ***Growth pole coordinator*** | Structure within the Agency for Regional Development | Bureau included in the ARD | Tasks and roles set through tripartite protocole among line ministries for regional development and of public finances (currently the department within the ministry for European Funding); collaborates with the growth pole leader (leader of IDA), supports elaboration and implementation of IUDP, monitors implementation of projects from IUDP in the respective growth pole, acts as liason between local authorities and central authorities involved in elaboration and implementation of IUDP. |
| Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration (previously Ministry of Regional Development and Housing, then Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism) | Line ministry | National | Management Authority for ROP, promoted top-bottom approach in growth pole policy; responsible for development and implementation of this policy; supported the idea of IDAs as part of organizational framework in growth pole policy, by imposing that the IUDPs be submitted by IDAs of the growth poles for approval. |
| Ministry of European Funding – General Department for System Coordination and Technical Assistance (previously within the Ministry of Public Finances) | Line ministry | National | Management Authority for Techical Assistance Operational Program; this program is used to ensure financial support for the growth pole coordinators (project-based approach) |
| Interested stakeholders | Public and private structures | Local, regional, national | May include other public institutions, universities, companies, NGOs |

Source: Author's own computations

The institutional framework in the growth pole policy, presented in table 1, provides an image of the organizational arrangements in the growth pole policy, highlighting the fact that there are no subordination relations among the actors involved, and collaboration and cooperation are done on voluntary basis, for joint projects, emphasizing the partnership needed for supporting growth.

## 4. DECISION-MAKING IN INTERCOMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATIONS IN GROWTH POLES

The organizational structures of the IDAs include local authorities both from rural and urban areas, as shown in table 2, and almost all include the county council as member (in the case of Craiova it is not clear whether the county council is member in IDA).

**TABLE 1.**COMPONENCE OF IDAS FROM GROWTH POLES IN 2014

| Name of IDA | Year of establish-ment | Number of members (Administrative-territorial units) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Total, of which | City declared growth pole | Other Urban | Rural | County Council |
| Metropolitan Agency for Sustainable Development Brașov | 2006 | 18 | 1 | 6 | 10 | 1 |
| Intercomunity Development Association Cluj Metropolitan Area | 2008 (December) | 21 | 1 | 0 | 19 | 1 |
| Intercomunity Development Association Constanța Metropolitan Area | 2007 | 15 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 1 |
| Intercomunity Development Association Craiova Metropolitan Area | 2009 | 24 | 1 | 2 | 21 | n.a |
| Iași Metropolitan Area Association | 2004 | 15 | 1 | 0 | 13 | 1 |
| Intercomunity Development Association "Ploiești-Prahova Growth Pole" | 2009 | 16 | 1 | 4 | 10 | 1 |
| Intercomunity Development Association "Timişoara Growth Pole" | 2009 | 16 | 1 | 0 | 14 | 1 |

Source: author's own computations based on information from bylaws of IDA from growth poles and from websites of IDAs / municipality declared growth pole

When taking as reference point the year 2008, when the guidelines for ROP PA I was lauched, with the requirements for IDA clearly stated, we notice that the IDAs from Brașov, Constanța and Iași have been established earlier, with four of the IDAs established later, with the influence of the guidelines clearly reflected in the case of two IDAs, which clearly states the term growth pole in the name of the IDA (Timisoara and Ploiesti).

The IDA internal structures are: a general assembly, which in our case is formed of mayors or other designated representatives of the IDA members, board / administration council and censor.(Government Ordinance No. 26 / 2000 regarding associations and foundations)

The uneven power balance between municipality declared as growth pole and the other members, especially from rural areas, may influence the decision-making structures set in place. Thus, even though the number of members from rural areas are high in the IDA, the power struggle among small communities from rural areas and larger cities members in the IDA may be visible also in the decision-making structure, with tendency to have the IDA controlled by the city declared growth pole and development model imposed by stronger members (which in our case may be either the city declared as growth pole and / or the county council).Thus, the president of association, leading the board, is generally the mayor of the city declared as growth pole. Moreover, the representativeness in the general assembly / board may favor also the city declared as growth pole. While some of the IDAs have a more democratic decision-making structure, with one representative from each member in the general assembly of the IDA (Ploiești, Iași and Constanța), in other IDAs, the number of representatives / votes is proportional to population. For example, in the general assembly of Cluj-Napoca IDA there is one representative per 10.000 inhabitants, with at least one representative per each member and county council having 4 representatives, while in the one from Timișoara there is one representative per 20.000 inhabitants, with at least one representative per each member. In the case of Craiova, the number of votes in the Board is proportional with the population, one vote per 10.000 inhabitants, with at least one vote per each member. Of these, we notice that the city control-oriented decision-making structures are from IDAs established after launching of the guide for ROP – PA1 in 2008.

Support for development of IDA may be provided by the members, and also from central government or from other external funds, such as European funding, in a project-based approach. Even though current legislation stipulates that the national government may subsidize the IDAs functioning, through a national program, such endeavor as been left uncovered. (Pop, Stănuș, & Suciu, 2007)(Ionescu-Heroiu, et al., 2013). Consequently, there was little interest in developing mechanisms that enable IDAs to create own working techical structure. The IDA is still seen as being established to attract additional funding for infrastructure development projects, this is visible also in the legal documents for establishment of some IDAs from growth poles.

**TABLE 2.** NUMBER OF STAFF OF IDA FROM GROWTH POLES

| Name of IDA | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Metropolitan Agency for Sustainable Development Brașov | 11 | 14 | 14 | 25 | 28 | 18 |
| Intercomunity Development Association Cluj Metropolitan Area | | :na | :na | :na | :na | :na |
| Intercomunity Development Association Constanța Metropolitan Area | 12 | 12 | 12 | 14 | 14 | 12 |
| Intercomunity Development Association Craiova Metropolitan Area | | | 1 | 6 | 8 | 7 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Iași Metropolitan Area Association | 4 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 7 |
| Intercomunity Development Association "Ploiești-Prahova Growth Pole" | | 0 | :na | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Intercomunity Development Association "Timişoara Growth Pole" | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Source: Ministry of Public Finances www.mfinante.ro, as reported in short yearly balance sheets

In the IDAs from growth poles established before 2008, the staff is increased after 2008, possibly due to requirements for implementing the growth pole policies at local level, as set in the IUDPs. In the case of IDAs with decision-making structures that are oriented towards maintaining control by the city declared growth pole, such as the case of Cluj-Napoca and Timișoara, the development of the IDA is rather reduced, with 0 employees and low financial resources in the case of the IDA from Timișoara, while in the case of Cluj-Napoca, information is unavailable, due to lack of submitting financial documents to the Ministry of Finances, which is legal obligation.

Observation of the list of projects from the action plans included in the IUDPs reveal that even though the know-how available for the IDA is higher than in the case of other associations (including own staff and personnel from the public authorities members in the IDA), such as the IDAs from rural areas, the main approach is still bottom-up, with projects considered from local perspective instead of micro-regional / metropolitan. Without additional support to develop own capacity for partnership and for working together in joint projects, such approaches may continue.

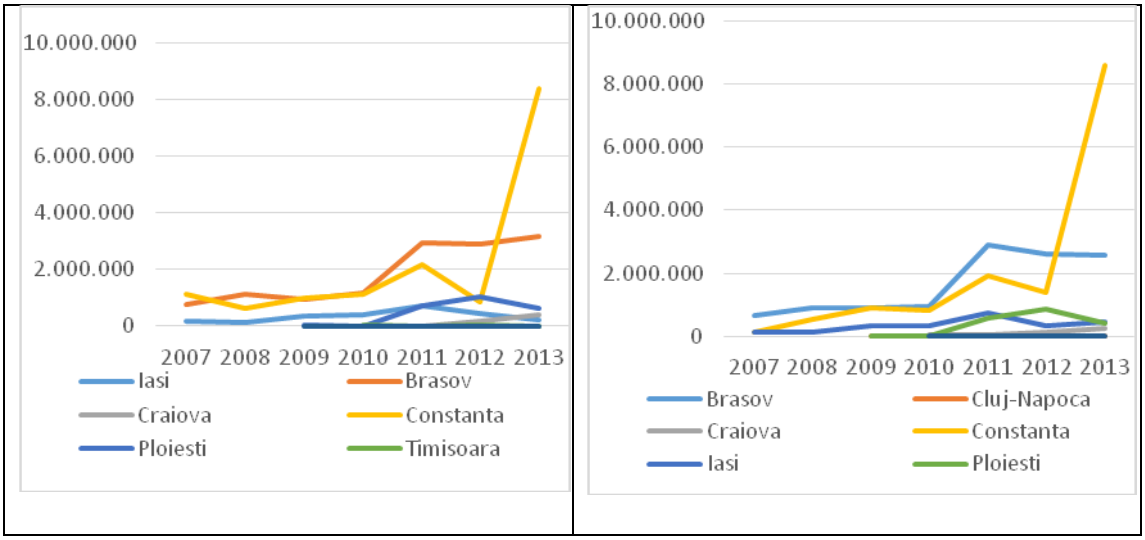



**FIGURE 1.** FINANCIAL DATA SHOWING PERFORMANCE OF IDA FROM GROWTH POLES

Source: Ministry of Public Finances, yearly short balance sheets

One may notice that after the year 2008, the amounts both in terms of total revenues and total expenditures have a generally slightly increasing trend, which may mean either that the IDA activity



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became more intense after the ROP-PA 1 guidelines for applicants were launched, either working on the IUDPs or on projects.

The IDAs that perform best, with general upward trends both in total revenues and expenditures are the ones from Brașov and Constanța, both established before 2008, presumably due to local needs identified at micro-regional / metropolitan level.

Two interesting cases are represented by the the growth poles from Timișoara and Cluj-Napoca, when looking at the financial data. The extremely low amounts in terms both of revenues and expenditures in the case of Timisoara shows that the need to control decision-making by the city declared as growth pole did not result in additional interest in stimulating the development of the IDA, with influence also in the growth pole development. In the case of Cluj-Napoca, the fact that the IDA did not have public data on revenues and expenditures may show that the IDA is not actually functioning (no financial movements), as there is legal yearly obligation to submit public financial reports to the Ministry of Public Finances. One may argue that such values reflect the interest to have only the center of the growth pole developed through urban, while other may counter-argue that the IUDPs include an appropriate management structure that actually enable the public administration from Timișoara growth pole to support the growth pole development, without placing too much importance on the IDA, with other structures from the organizational structures from local / regional level assuming more responsibility for the implementation of the growth pole policy. Such aspects remain to be researched later.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The levels of development of growth pole IDAs and their roles in the implementation of growth pole policy varies. Our hypothesis that IDAs developed under endogenous influences are more active, have better human and financial capacity than IDAs developed under exogenous influences has been confirmed by analysed data, with interesting results for Brasov and Constanța. Our hypothesis that IDAs developed under exogenous influences are less developed and less active is partially confirmed, for Timișoara and Cluj-Napoca, yet still to be determined for Ploiești and Craiova. Yet we should also take into account the differences in organizational development, the need of these organizations to grow in time and also the local institutional arrangements for policy implementation established in the IUDPs and / or possibly that other structures from local / regional level assuming more responsabilities in the growth pole policy implementation, to compensate for the IDAs lack of capacity. Such aspects are to be taken into consideration in further researches.

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**EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COHESION: VISIONS AND PROSPECTS**

***Abstract***
Territorial cohesion represented a goal with a changng importance during time. Since the territorial impact of the most important sector policies proved the existence of contradictory effects, territorial cohesion gained in importance and became outlined as a goal and as field of action. The main visions regarding the models that lead to increased territorial cohesion will be compared with the identified trends and the priorities of European Territorial Agenda 2020 in order to outline how territorial differences have impact on European policy.

***Keywords*:** territorial cohesion, diversity, competitiveness, territorial capital

**JEL CODES:** O20, O21

# COEZIUNEA TERITORIALĂ EUROPEANĂ: VIZIUNI ŞI PERSPECTIVE

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***Rezumat***
Coeziunea teritorială a reprezentat un obiectiv a cărui importanță a fluctuat de-a lungul timpului. Pe măsură ce impactul teritorial al celor mai importante politici sectoriale a dovedit existența unor efecte contradictorii, coeziunea teritorială a câștigat în importanță și s-a clarificat atât ca obiectiv, cât și ca domeniu de acțiune. Principalele viziuni privind modelele care conduc către creșterea coeziunii teritoriale europene vor fi comparate cu tendințele identificate și prioritățile Agendei Teritoriale Europene 2020 în vederea conturării modului în care diferențele teritoriale au impact asupra politicii europene.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** coeziune teritorială, diversitate, competitivitate, capital teritorial

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Spatial planning have a very important role to play as support of policy making since many aspects of public concern manifest territorial characteristics that necessitate adaptation and careful design to keep goals achievable within an efficiency driven framework of actions. The European Union gathers twenty seven states and even more nations that have different histories of spatial planning although many similarities are also noticeable (Candea et al., 2006).

The design of European policies needs more cohesion in spatial planning in order to improve its effectiveness and efficiency. The goal of European territorial cohesion is currently pursued in various sectors, but it also represents a specialized field of action with important progress in its institutionalization.

The milestones of this progress will be analyzed by comparing them with expectations in order to frame the perspective of European territorial cohesion in the decades to come.

## 2. UNDERSTANDING TERRITORIAL COHESION VISIONS OF EU

The pursuit of territorial cohesion by European Union (EU) is supported by the efforts of the Directorate General Regio and Directorate General Employment of the European Commission, while the shadows of uncertainty are also getting stronger by the opposition of some Member States (MS), especially France and the Netherlands. The formal basis for this is article 16 of the Treaty of Amsterdam and the Treaty of Nice.

Despite the effort and formal recognition, territorial cohesion is in fact a biased concept with many interpretations. For instance, in the polycentric perspective the focus is falling in inter-connected urban centers that drive smart growth and lead to territorial cohesion by diffusion effects. According to other opinions, the material reality of territorial cohesion is a minimum level of services that are available in all European regions. In fact, territorial cohesion could be regarded as the territorial dimension of Europe's social model.

The various opinions and interpretations given to the concept of territorial cohesion could be divided in four categories according to their core leading concept, such as (Lennert and Robert, 2010):

- Coherent European policy;
- Competitive Europe;

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- Europe in balance;
- Green and clean Europe.

*Coherent European Policy.* The territorial impact of EU policies proved to be conflicting in many aspects streamlining the efforts toward policy coherence. In order to achieve this it is necessary to have horizontal coordination, a characteristic that was neglected in the early 1990s in most of EU's sector policies because in most member states was of little concern. Among the exceptions could be listed Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany, Finland, France, and more recently Slovenia (Profiroiu, 2007). The malfunctioning of sector policies from a territorial perspective was documented by DG Regio that supported several researches in this direction, such as the EPSON project. Sector policies with major territorial impact are the Regional Policy, the Common Agricultural Policy, the Trans-European Network of Transport policy, the Environmental Policy by at least four directives – Habitat Directive, Birds Directive, Air Quality Directive, and Water Framework Directive. Currently the policy coherence of spatial planning is considered subordinated to the concept of spatial development and is supported by encouraging the use of spatial frameworks in policy making.

*Competitive Europe* is a vision developed gradually along with the strengthening of globalization's challenges for the European economy as a whole, but also of its member states. It has strong supporters especially in the northern Europe most of the vision being grounded on the Dutch concept. The redistribution of wealth is considered less important, the main recommendation for policy makers being to find the best way of valuing the uniqueness of their territorial capital.

Territorial capital is the latest vision on what should be the source of the competitive advantage and it replaces former concepts like urban network and gateway cities. Both of them focus on cities as poles of development that are securing the access of Europe in the global economy (Popescu and Corbos, 2010). Their physical representation is the so-called pentagon of Europe formed by London, Paris, Milan, Munich and Hamburg (fig. 1).




**FIGURE 1.** PENTAGON (CITIES) OF EUROPE

The pentagon outlines the most developed region of Europe that is able to make the breakthrough within global competition acting as a streamliner for the whole European economy.

By shifting to territorial capital the emphasis fall more on regions than on urban areas. The capital is given by geographic position, geographic size, climate, natural resources, quality of life, and economies of scale. Other factors are traditional culture and quality of governance expressed as mutual trust and informal rules and an intangible element made up by the combination of these components and that give uniqueness to each region.

*Europe in balance* is a vision that is grounded on the need to transform Europe in cohesive territory, where economic and social disparities are removed, the differences among regions being in their advantage against the global competition. The means to achieve this balance is by public policy levies that correct the causes of disparities up to a level where services of general interest have similar availability in all areas. The main supporters of this vision are mainly southern countries like Spain and Portugal.

Services of general interest are considered important not only for territorial cohesion, but also for the competitiveness of EU. Since the provision of these services cannot be guaranteed by the market, EU policies should reach out. These services are: electronic communication, electricity, gas, postal services, water, transport, and broadcasting (Constantin et al., 2013). Throughout Europe the availability of such services is an issue only for remote regions, with low population density that are often peripheral.

The underlying premises of this vision are:



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- Europeans are prone to their space due to differences in languages, cultural traditions and identities;
- Diversity should be preserved as much as possible since it is more an advantage than a disadvantage;
- All peoples of Europe should be treated equally, with no discrimination arriving on the ground of their place of birth.

The vision of balanced Europe is transposed in actions by the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Funds that support projects aiming to bring many regions within the coverage of services of general interest.

*Green and clean Europe* is an accompanying vision that was outlined along with the contribution of Denmark to the European policy making. The priority given in this country, but also other northern countries like Sweden and Finland, to environmental concerns in spatial planning, was sustained in European environmental and spatial policy. The premise of this vision is that sustainable development cannot be achieved without a balanced spatial development. The integration of environmental goals in spatial planning was formalized by approving the principles of ecosystem approach becoming operational by the design and establishment of the Natura 2000 European ecological network (Ioan et al., 2010).

The territorial challenges faced by Europe are global economic competition, ageing, migration, population decline, climate change, and energy security. In order to address these issues in an effective manner there is needed a coordinated policy response backed by real territorial governance.

## 3. INDICATORS OF TERRITORIAL COHESION

The goal of territorial cohesion was considered important enough to be supported by a proper monitoring system based on carefully selected indicators within a coordinated and transnational research action. The ESPON project focused on this issue and after the investigation of more than 600 indicators there were selected 32 indicators grouped in the following six territorial cohesion objectives:

- Strong local economies ensuring global competitiveness;
- Innovative territories;
- Fair access to services, market and jobs;
- Inclusion and quality of life;
- Attractive regions of high ecological values and strong territorial capital;

- Integrated polycentric territorial development.

The entire list of indicators is presented in table 1.

**TABLE 1.** EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COHESION INDICATORS

| Territorial objective | Indicators | Spatial resolution |
|---|---|---|
| Strong local economies ensuring global competitiveness | Labor productivity | NUTS 2 |
| | GDP per capita in PPP | NUTS 3 |
| | Overall unemployment rate | NUTS 3 |
| | Old age dependence ratio | NUTS 3 |
| Innovative territories | Population aged 25-64 with tertiary education | NUTS 2 |
| | Intramural expenditures on research and development | NUTS 2 |
| | Employment rate 20-64 | NUTS 2 |
| Fair access to services, market and jobs | Access to compulsory school | NUTS 0 |
| | Access to hospitals | NUTS 0 |
| | Accessibility of grocery services | SILC data |
| | Access to university | SILC data |
| | Accessibility potential by road | NUTS 3 |
| | Accessibility potential by rail | NUTS 3 |
| | Accessibility potential by air | NUTS 3 |
| Inclusion and quality of life | Disposable household income | NUTS 2 |
| | Life expectancy at birth | NUTS 2 |
| | Proportion of early school leavers | NUTS 1 |
| | Gender imbalances | NUTS 3 |
| | Different female-male unemployment rate | NUTS 2 |
| | Ageing index | NUTS 3 |
| Attractive regions of high ecological values and strong territorial capital | Potential vulnerability to climate change | NUTS 3 |
| | Air pollution: PM 10 | NUTS 3 |
| | Air pollution: ozone concentrations | NUTS 3 |
| | Soil sealing per capita | NUTS 3 |
| | Mortality, hazards, and risks | n.a. |
| | Biodiversity | n.a. |
| | Renewable energy potential | n.a. |
| Integrated polycentric territorial development | Population potential within 50 km | NUTS 3 |
| | Net migration rate | NUTS 3 |
| | Cooperation intensity | NUTS 2 |
| | Cooperation degree | NUTS 2 |
| | Polycentricity index | n.a. |

Source: ESPON, 2013

According to the assessment made by using these indicators, the strongest positive trends are recorded for labor productivity and early school leavers, while negative trends, that are not so strong, are unfolding for old age dependency ratio, employment rate 20-64, and accessibility potential by rail. It should be stressed that for many indicators the final resolution was *not available*, fact that calls for improved data collection and renewal of assessment. These indicators include access to compulsory school, access to hospitals, ageing index and all environmental indicators.



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## 4. PRIORITIES OF EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL AGENDA 2020

The territorial development of Europe is influenced by a number of global and local trends that there identified and broadly explained in a report prepared specially for supporting the territorial cohesion policy (EC, 2011a). The most important processes considered to have impact on EU's territorial development are:

- Increased impact of globalization on territories of Europe: since Europe is one of the major economic poles in the world with advanced integration of relations with NAFTA, India and Eastern Asia. Meanwhile, its economic relation with Africa and Middle East are hampered in Africa and the Middle East due to large economic disparities and political instabilities. The position of EU in the emerging economic order should be strengthened;
- Long-term effects of the global economic and financial crisis: the impact and path of recovery from crisis is very different across European regions depending on their economic structure. Economies that were highly integrated in the globalized flows proved to be the most sensitive ones;
- EU integration that increase the interdependences among regions – this complex process is continuing although borders and other administrative barriers interferes especially in cross-border regions;
- Negative demographic and social processes that increase imbalance between rural and urban areas and between eastern and western Europe;
- Slow changes in connectivity provided by accessibility and transportation;
- Climate change with a wide range of impacts depending on the territorial diversity;
- Energy availability that impact on regional competitiveness;
- Increasing efforts to preserve Europe's natural heritage by a wise environmental management.

Considering these trends and processes and the results of wide and thorough reports (ESPON, 2013; UE, 2010) there were outlined the European priorities of the territorial agenda for 2020 as follows (EC, 2011b):

- Fostering of polycentric and balanced territorial development;
- Encouragement of integrated development in cities, rural regions and others;

- Territorial integration in functional cross-border and transnational regions;
- Improvement of territorial connections for individuals, communities and enterprises;
- Management and linkage of ecological, landscape, and cultural values of regions.

The territorial keys that connect these priorities with the Europe 2020 goals are accessibility, services of general interest, valuation of territorial potential, urban networking and functional areas.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Europe is striving to achieve economic and social cohesion by various sector policies. The lack of horizontal integration in its first stages together with the large territorial diversity of European regions led to conflicting outcomes at various territorial units. In addition, the vision about how Europe should continue to develop was also different. The territorial cohesion was for quite a long while a backstage issue but the latest studies and reports provided strong enough proves to consider it an important European concern. Hence, the possibilities of monitoring and assessment improved along with the INTERCO project, while the priorities of the territorial agenda 2020 were outlined and linked to the Europe 2020 strategy. Territorial cohesion is considered now an important issue and it is based on the concept of territorial capital pursuing the valuation of the uniqueness of each region not only on European scale, but also in global interactions.

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# APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION AND THEIR RELEVANCE FOR TEACHER-STUDENT COMMUNICATION IN AN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

# ABORDĂRI PRIVIND COMUNICAREA ŞI RELEVANŢA COMUNICĂRII PROFESOR-STUDENT ÎN CONTEXTUL EDUCAŢIONAL

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***Abstract***
This paper objective was a survey on current academic debates on teacher-student communication. The methodology used in this paper was the study of a range of published materials (articles, raports, research studies), which provide theoretical research on teacher-student communication and ITC solutions in enhancing teacher–student communication and relations. Themes discussed ranged from: what is communication - dimensions and current theoretical delimitations, communication with and without words and dimensions of teacher-student communication. The paper provides information on each author's perspectives on communication and accomplish to cover a gap in the literature regarding diffrent approaches to teacher-student communication. The value of this paper is that it summarises recent developments in the field and provides a context-setting narrative within which the other papers that comprise this special issue can be situated.

***Keywords*:** communication, student-teacher communication, ITC solutions

**JEL CODES:** A20, A23, I23

***Rezumat***
Obiectivul acestei lucrări este realizarea unei cercetări cu privire la dezbaterile academice privind comunicarea profesor-student. Metodologia a constat în studierea unei game variate de publicaţii (articole, rapoarte, cercetări ştiinţifice), care asigură o cercetare teoretică privind comunicarea profesor-student şi utilizarea soluţiilor TIC în îmbunătăţirea acestor relaţii şi a comunicării. Temele abordate au variat de la: ce este comunicarea, dimensiunile şi delimitările curente ale acesteia, comunicarea cu şi fără cuvinte. Articolul prezintă informaţii cu privire la perspectivele fiecărui autor asupra comunicării şi încearcă să completeze un gol în literatura de specialitate. Valoarea acestei lucrări constă în faptul că sintetizează ultimele cercetări în domeniu şi oferă un cadru narativ în care alte lucrări, care abordează acelaşi subiect, se pot situa.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** comunicarea, comunicarea profesor-student, soluţii TIC.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Communication has been an ongoing concern for people since old times. In ancient Greece, for example, those who master the art of communication stated more easily in society and could gain special privileges in this way. Communication is a pervasive aspect of any human activity, personal or professional, putting his mark on the success achieved in these actions. Moreover, it is part of the infrastructure of any organization, it is the base of understanding, cooperation and action. In essence, the ability of an organization to perform depends on the content and nature of the communication, that makes information to spread, to obtain desired behaviours and to achieve objectives, but it can also distort the messages, mess things up, to cause frustration, tension or conflicts (Sabie and Androniceanu, 2012).

Over time there have been concerns on the definition of communication, both overall and in respect of certain sides of this phenomenon. So, we remember the contributions of Oliver (1997), Nemteanu (1997), Bovee and Thill (2000), Spence (1994), Eisenberg and Goodall (2004), O'Rourke (2004), Kalla (2005) who were concerned of the general definition of the communication phenomenon, stressing the two sides of the process studied as interdependence or its transactional character. Cândea and Cândea (1996), Prutianu (1998), Daft (2000), Covey (2000) and Adler and Rodman (2006) dealt closely with interpersonal communication and Simon (1997), Drenthe et. al (1998), Myres and Myers (1982), Witherspoon (1997), Burduş and Căprărescu (1999), Buckley and others (1998), Burduş, Căprărescu, Androniceanu and Miles (2000), Cheney (2007), De Ridder ( 2003) with organizational communication.

The levels of communication is another important issue, with contributions from Prutianu (1998), Vasile (2000), Cândea and Cândea (1996), Burduş and Căprărescu (1999), O'Rourke (2004), which identifies several distinct levels communication - intrapersonal, interpersonal, group and mass.

## 2. COMMUNICATION - DIMENSIONS AND CURRENT THEORETICAL DELIMITATIONS

Communication within the organization, as a form of human communication, has some features that can be studied and learned, since it constitutes a major influence factor level. Nature and role of communication is not often the subject of research or analysis, as they are considered obvious, although their importance within the organization is far from being very clearly defined.

### *2.1. Defining communication*

What is communication? How important is it to the organization? What are its' effects on work groups results? All these questions are very important and should find their appropriate response considering the fact that managers spend at least 80% of their working day in direct communication processes with others (Mintzberg 1973 quoted by Cândea and Cândea, 1996). In other words, 48 minutes of every hour is spent in meetings, at telephone, or less formal conversations, management has a crucial position in the communication networks formed within the organization. Communication "enter" all functions to meet the managers, communication skills and basic decisively influencing the results of any management activities and, therefore, the results of any actions taken in the organization. Interesting though, even if managers spend most of their time communicating, it does not necessarily mean that they carry out these activities effectively and efficiently.

Regarding the definition of communication, there are numerous attempts, but none of them can not be assessed as satisfactory overall. One of the simplest definitions is that communication is a process of social interaction through messages (Fiske, 1990). O'Rourke (2004) deals with communication as a transfer of meaning and another broader definition considers communication as "an exchange of ideas, facts and emotions, between two or more people through words and / or symbols, influenced of technical problems of accuracy with which these symbols can be transmitted, the semantic problem of precision with which the desired symbols can transmit the desired message, and determines how effectively the purposes of understanding behavior in the desired direction" (Oliver, 1997).

More broadly, it is considered that the term "communication" includes all methods of transmission of people thoughts and feelings (Nemţeanu, 1997), however, although this is an action that everyone practice, communication is difficult to define.

There are some authors who make the difference between the generic level communication and effective communication, such as Bovee and Thill (2000, p.4) who considers that an effective communication takes place only when the participants "reach a common understanding, it stimulates others to work and encourages people to think in new ways". There are also views (Spence, 1994) that communication is always a persuasive process with a two-way sense, in which the issuer intends to influence the receiver, while others (Eisenberg and Goodall, 2004) identifies it as a process targeted only in certain situations. Continuing, in order to be effective, a message must be perceived and understood in order to produce the expected action (Spence, 1994). According to the authors mentioned above, communication is not a neutral process of information exchange, but a persuasive process, with clear purpose.



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There are other authors that are making subtle differences between terms found in this area, such as Kalla (2005) who defines effective communication as an interactive process with two-way communication resulting in action or decision (even if it's not the action or decision originally intended), that effective communication can be separated from overall communication (two-way messaging, but no-action) and information (sending messages in one direction).

### *2.2. Interpersonal communication*

Cândea and Cândea (1996) believes that interpersonal communication is the first tool of the human spirit in its socialization process, human beings are communicating in order to transmit ideas, feelings, emotions, opinions, attitudes, to influence, persuade or impress, to work, to join a team or just for fun. Communication is a highly complex process because it is done through several kinds of languages, it can be disturbed by various factors, depends on the context in which it is performed, is specific to each individual and may occur at different levels.

Ştefan Prutianu (1998) view human communication as a transactional type process by which people transfer the energy, emotions, feelings and can change meanings. Thus, this process always has a purpose, namely to make the partner feel, think or behave in a certain way. To communicate is to deliver and receive messages, send stimulus and collect responses. Communication can be defined as a dynamic process by which human behavior, verbal and nonverbal, is perceived and receives a response.

Communication is assessed also as the process by which information is exchanged and understood by two or more persons, usually with the intent to motivate or influence the behavior (Daft, 2000). This definition is interesting in two respects: first is that information must be understood by those involved in the episode of communication, that the receiver must be affected by this flow properly, and second, directly related to the first, represented by the need to influence the recipient information to a particular direction. Daft and Prutianu believes the idea of influencing the behavior of people involved in communication, the transactional nature of it.

One can say without exaggeration that nothing can stop human beings to communicate, people communicate through their activity or inactivity, by their appearance or behavior. The communication is irreversible, is impossible to go back on what already has been sent. There is however a possibility to explain, to clarify, to present that message in other words, but it can not be removed as much as you would like it. Once delivered and received, the message belongs jointly to both the person who submitted and those who received it.

An interesting vision of Adler and Rodman (2006, p.4) is that they see communication as a process by which human beings respond to symbolic behavior of others.

Thus, in communication the crucial dimension is interpersonal relationship (Covey, 2000), poor relationships conducting usually to poor communication, people becoming suspicious, suspicious, wrongly interpreting the meaning of certain words and intent of the communicator. Therefore, strained or antagonistic relationships between communicators can lead to distorted communication and even block communication channels. If interactions are harmonious, the communication episode runs smoothly. It is therefore important to establish harmonious relationships with partners, to pay attention to interests, needs, hopes, fears and doubts that people interact.

### *2.3. The communication process and its components*

Communication process definition proposed by Bowditch and Buono (1985, p.81 quoted by Kreitner and Kinicki, 1989) translateing "exchange of information between sender and receiver, and interference (perception) of meanings between individuals involved" indicates that this process may be described by a series of clear steps and a series of elements that are closely interdependent. Managers who understand these actions may consider, first, their means of communication and, secondly, can design communication programs that align with the needs, objectives and characteristics of work groups or run organizations.

**A model of the communication process.** There are many who consider communication as easy just because they communicate effortlessly and without a full awareness of the process, but communication is often complex, and "opportunities" for sending or receiving incorrect messages are numerous, and therefore the concerns have emerged on the definition of appropriate models for the complexity of the situation.

Concerned professionals have advanced many such models of communication. Among the first are those of Shannon and Weaver, American researchers who appreciated this process as beening linear, between a transmitter and receiver, through a channel with a code, in the presence of a certain "noise", Gerbner's model that emphasizes the perception, specifically Lasswell's mass communication, or contribution by Newcomb, who first brought the issue of communication in a social relationship, the communication process within the school, moving to semiotic school that emphasizes the meaning and methods of production to school in Palo Alto, which considers communication as a social phenomenon and try to build the integrated logic link between relational and organizational aspects (Tran and Stanciugelu, 2003). School is based in Palo Alto phrase "everything is communication", communication



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is the new term which expresses man's relationship with the world, providing rules of understanding of all things and issues.

Transmission through communication channels can make some problems (Greenberg, 2002), since there are many ways that information can circulate, such as telephone lines, radio or TV signals, fibber optics, and even waves that transmit vibrations of the human voice. Thanks to modern technology, people can exchange messages through a variety of channels suitable both visual and oral information. However, regardless of channel chosen for transmission, the goal of communicator must be the same: understanding of the intended message by the receiver.

Communication channel capacity is influenced by the ability to transmit multiple signals simultaneously, to facilitate rapid feedback and both ways and establish a personal communication. Face-to-face discussion is the greatest capacity for interaction that allows direct reception of multiple signals and immediate feedback.

It is important that teachers and students to understand that each communication channel has advantages and disadvantages and all can be effective and efficient in the right circumstances. Selection of these channels must be made according to message type, arising out the key to success in choosing the appropriate channel for the right message. Noise or distractions factors occur along the message path from transmitter to receiver and can affect the quality of communication, distorting its meaning through a filter, blocking, jamming, etc. that can act in the encoding, transmission, and / or decoding messages.

Feedback appears when the receiver responds to the transmitter with a different message; when the feedback is missing, communication takes place in a single direction, and when it appears, the communication gets a double valence. Feedback is a very powerful tool that can be used to improve efficiency and effectiveness of communication, because it makes possible to verify the correct understanding of the message. To be effective, feedback should not only achieve its goal, but to keep open the relationship with the interlocutor, it must be an invitation to interaction through communication and to the creation and deepening of relationship (Cândea and Cândea, 1996). This aspect is important for successful communication because it takes place on two interrelated levels - relational and information, the communication is not limited, especially in an organizational context, at the transmission of information, but is limited to induce a particular behavior (Tran and Stănciugelu, 2003).

This type of interaction occurs frequently in teacher-student communication, the teacher providing positive or negative feedback to influence the actions of students, guidance, advice, training and information for evaluation also calls for student feedback and should be able to receive it (Cândea and

Cândea, in 1996). To be effective, feedback should be descriptive rather than evaluative - evaluative words generates defensive reactions and blocking communication channels, to be specific, clear and specific, to be provided at the right time - as close to production behavior to be expressed in terms relevant to the recipient's needs, and to be usable - to refer to something that is for the recipient to do or change.

Students should be able to discern between good and useless feedback and useless based on its communicator experience to assess the validity and credibility of the source, to take into account the emotional state of the providing or receiving feedback (especially in negative feedback). Skills for supply and demand feedback are part of teacher competence to communicate, his positive attitude in all these acts of communication is essential. Thus, because of the multitude of disturbances or communication barriers, the only way to determine whether the communication was carried out successfully is to use feedback that people communicate, whether it is a verbal response (s), a nonverbal response (a raised eyebrow, a smile, an angry expression) or no answer - to be interpreted as indication that the message has not been heard, understood or accepted (Sigband, 1982).

## 3. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHOUT WORDS

Communicating with or without words? Although many managers in modern organizations are more concerned about the communication through words (written or oral), perhaps because it is less obvious and more easily standardized, non-verbal communication (without words) has a major influence in the working groups, with obvious issues as how to dress or waiting time, and other, more subtle ones, such as spatial language.

### *3.1. Written Communication*

Members of organizations use written communication in high proportion in the course of their work, to request or send internal memos, reports, decisions, plans, letters (Burduş and Căprărescu, 1999); so it becomes inevitable in the life of any individual, with a predominantly pragmatic, objective and accessible character, and work-related (Vasile, 2000).

Written message, in order to be effective and efficient, must meet certain conditions related to legibility, correctness, suitability and thinking (Cândea and Cândea, 1996): written message must be easy to read - the language must be correlated with reader's characteristics, text structure must guide the reader to conclusions; punctuation and grammar must be correct, appropriate form of text, text coherence, must be suitable for transmission direction - for bottom-up communication should be retained need to adopt a correct attitude and appropriate tone not to endanger the message, compliance level of detail - enough



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detail but not too many and must distinguish clearly between facts and opinions, and if top-down communication is necessary to show diplomatic interlocutor interaction , ensuring clarity of purpose and motivation to achieve that goal, should be well thought - have an appropriate structure, content that they read properly, his intellectual skills, to make clear separation between the actual and possible actions to take power conviction.

Where written communication, must always be taken into account, besides accuracy, clarity, concision (Burduş and Căprărescu, 1999 ), and the requirement relating to courtesy, also the consideration for the recipient (Sigband, 1982), without which the written material will miss one of the most important ingredients for achieving purpose. Lack of ability to write properly can become a handicap for an individual, affecting not only communication, but also self-image, success in work depending also on written communication (Vasile, 2000), with the risk of creating an unfavourable image of the person or organization, that is inadequate in content or form of a letter, addressing mistakes, grammatical errors, wrong tone or style.

### *3.2. Verbal communication*

This type of communication is frequent within the organizations, professionals considering that 70% of internal communication is done orally (Burduş and Căprărescu, 1999, p.429); verbal communication takes place through language, being influenced by personal experiences, knowledge and values to which the individuals report when they send and receive the messages.

Verbal communication is about facts, events, feelings and reactions to certain situations, opinions on various topics, opinions and attitudes that express a particular position, subjective viewpoints etc. and it is affected by perception, many problems could occur due to different interpretations of the same message.

O'Rourke (2004, p.84) suggests that when a manager is preparing a speech to consider the following steps: setting a strategy, knowing the audience, clarifying why the discourse, finding as many things on the occasion, anticipating questions, identifying barriers that may arise in communication, support words with credible evidence, appropriate organization of ideas, maintaining audience interest, selecting the right approach for transmission, repeating speech to gain confidence in the message before sending it. These steps are also valid for a teacher.

**Oral addressing** takes place in connection with the exchange of information, training, creation or modification of individual and group identities, maintaining a certain organizational culture, preparation

and implementation of change, respect for traditions and customs, creating and maintaining relationships, etc.

Taking into account the material form, you can choose one of the following methods of presentation: presentation after a memorised text, reading from the manuscript (acceptable only in critical situations), free presentation (after summary notes or other material support) and improvised presentation (without training) (O'Rourke, 2004). The difference between the speed of speech and the reception (Cândea and Cândea, 1996) - the audience is able to process information faster than the speaker can provide it, visual aids can be used to emphasize an idea, to clarify something or to provide information related to the topic (Level and Galle, 1988).

**"Question - answering" situations** are a communication activity very difficult and delicate, even if it to answer questions related to oral appeals or questions regarding any activity or situation. A problem in these situations is the time to be accepted questions. Starting from the desire like the speaker to retain permanent control on communication protocols, for addressing it should be noted at the outset when you want to answer the questions: during or at the end of communication. If questions are put on the way, responses will be more relevant to the one that address the questions and feedback will be quick, but they can disrupt the preliminary planning of material and time spent and can enter information prematurely. If questions are put at the end, may be kept programming control and introduction of information, but may lose the attention of those who would like clarifications. In a "question – answering" communication situation is very important to have an attitude control, the defensive or aggressive attitude should be avoided (Cândea and Cândea, in 1996). It is also important that the person that must answer to be sure he properly understood the question, to answer briefly and clearly (if not known the answer, to recognize this) and note that is owed to the entire audience and not just to one who asks.

**Improvised speech communication** appears frequently in the organization and its quality depends on the communicator's ability to create a period of grace to use it, choose the best content of the message and choose non-verbal language to sustain and strengthen posts transmitted and play attitude of respect for the interlocutor, for the topic of interest and willingness to respond.

Verbal communication requires the communicator the ability not only to be able to signal, but also the ability to listen, and experts say that only 28% of adults listen to what they say (Burduş and Căprărescu, 1999), which leads to some major problems with the effectiveness of oral communication. A successful oral transmission of the message depends on a good voice stamp, careful use of vocabulary, appropriate dress during communication and clarity of thought (Baldrige, 1993), returning much of importance on nonverbal elements.



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### 3.3. Nonverbal communication

This type of communication is the transmission - intentionally or unintentionally - of messages that are not coded in the form of words spoken or written (Vasile, 2000). It came as written communication by the graphics of the sheet (space, form letters, distance between rows, etc.), structure and format of writing and oral communication through sensory nonverbal communication through the senses (sight, hearing, smell, etc.), the language of time, space, color. Understanding nonverbal communication messages is valuable, especially in oral communication, which is considered as the most important is the nonverbal messages at a rate of up to 90% (Zorlenţan, 1996). A face-to-face meetings study with a relative weight of features comprising the message is allocated as follows: 7% impact report (words), 38% impact of voice (tone, pitch, timbre), and facial expressions 55% (Mehrabian 1968, 1971 quoted by Daft, 2000).

Nonverbal communication may support, contradict or replace verbal communication, while having regulatory role and its control. Nonverbal message is the closest to the reality of the transmitter and is the one to which is given by the interlocutor the biggest attention. There is a study which showed that when verbal and nonverbal messages are contradictory, the receiver becomes confused and will usually give greater weight to measures of behavior (nonverbal) than to verbal messages (Shepperd, 1986, quoted by Daft 2000).

The most important elements of nonverbal communication are related to body language, spatial language, the language of things and color, time language and preverbal language, each of these messages intervening in communication episodes involving people in general, and managers in particular.

**Body Language** - nonverbal communication is transmitted through body movements and facial expressions of the transmitter, as well as its physical location to the receiver (Johns, 1998). To have knowledge in this area makes it possible to use their body language and interpretation staff, having the opportunity to respond effectively in dealing with them (Ruck, 2000). Body language contributes to communication by facial expression, body movement (gesture), posture, head shape and position, general appearance, tactile communication (physical contact), eyes / eye contact. Experts argue that non-verbal signals are born with, learned, genetically transferred or acquired by other means (Pease, 1993).

**Space Language** - spatial relationships affect the quality and quantity of communication in that too much or too little space may inhibit the free flow of information. Everyone has preferences about the distance from that or those who communicate with them, according to the relationship and

communication context, defined itself and intimate space, personal space, social space and public space. Getting to close can communicate threat or personal relationship; a large distance can communicate excessive arrogance, importance, higher social status. If the person is important, he will tend to choose a bigger office, which requires a greater distance from the speaker. By tracking how people tend to choose their place in a room and how they mark their personal space by spreading sheets, legs extent etc. we can identify what they will want to communicate.

**Things and Colors Language** - is considered important because personal things are, intentionally or not, telling about the holder elements, are status symbols, significance, concern, lifestyle, etc. and colors influence, in turn, communication. First, the colors forward some ideas about who use them (for personal belongings, decorations, clothing), and secondly, colors affect the way we communicate: warm colors (yellow, orange, red) stimulates communication, while cold colors (blue, green, gray) inhibit communication; monotony and excess variety of color, inhibit and distract the communicators.

**The language of time** - time is an important indicator of feelings, attitudes and opinions of communication partners. How people communicate through this language it takes the precision of time, his absence time as a symbol (Cândea and Cândea, in 1996). Precision time communicates attitude towards partner or a particular activity, perception and power status, respect and importance given. Lack of time is taken during the discussion because people perceive as a limited personal resource and, therefore, how shall each person choose to use it shows the attitude toward someone who is applying for this resource. Sociologists have found that positive communication relationship grows proportionally with the frequency of interaction (time spent together). Time as a symbol for repeating activities keeps of a certain habit, a certain pattern (eg eating three times a day and at certain hours, holidays and rituals marked the time and is known around the holidays we buy more and work less).

**Preverbal language** - represented everything that transpires beyond words, behind them, the subtext, about pronunciation or writing words (Prutianu, 1998). There are many elements incorporated in verbal message which, beyond the associated content, beyond the meaning of words, cause different emotional reactions: voice, tone and rhythm of speech, writing style, breaks between words, accents and even stammering. Their intervention over the verbal message can cause weakness, distortion or increasing significance of words contained in the message. Preverbal aspects of communication are called metacommunication or metalanguage, a language found hidden within the language (Pease and Garner, 1994, p. 12).



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### *3.4. Efficient and effective listening*

Listening is an important component of the communication process, with speaking, reading and writing, being recognized that a good communicator is a good listener first. This dimension is important both for the accuracy of communication and its relational content, communication effectiveness and efficiency is increasing positive attitude and concern over the relationship between communicators support (if the relationship is broken, communication can become unclear, imprecise or even impossible ).

Receiving and understanding the message by the receiver is vital in the communication process (Daft, 2000); listening involves in the same time skills for understanding facts and feelings, verbal and nonverbal elements in order to interpret the real meaning of messages.

Benefits of a better listening are represented by the acceptance shown by this action, it promotes better skills to solve problems, improve self-image of the caller, passing over the self concentration (O'Rourke, 2004). Moreover, the hearing is central to creating and maintaining relations with a major influence on oral communication episodes. The signals sent to speakers determine how they will continue "hostilities", this episode can improve, or rather, degenerate.

For teachers is important to learn the skill of active and interactive listening. Active listening involves a series of activities designed to ensure proper receipt and retention of message when the opportunity to interact directly with the speaker is limited (eg in case of an oral presentation). Interactive listening involves opportunity to interact directly with the speaker in two ways: by putting questions and by requesting confirmationl (by paraphrasing, perception checking the message, request additions and summarization).

When practice the correct listening skills should be aware of distractions (Cândea and Cândea, 1996), among which most important are lack of interest and willingness to listen, attitudes and preconceptions, the difference in status, egocentrism in communication, the trend towards polemic, resistance to change, daily worries, the language used by the speaker, speech rate, receiving and processing information, internal and external physical disturbance (noise, visual stimuli, voice characteristics, the appearance of the speaker, wrong physiological time).

For a more suitable listening, Kreitner and Kinicki (1989) recommended improving skills by finding areas of common interest, evaluating the content of the message and not the way of transmission, focusing on the ideas submitted, maintain flexibility and not least, avoid preconceived ideas.

### *3.5. A new communication form – online socialization*

This form is subscribing to a mediated technical communication, which is becoming more and more a permanent part of contemporary human labor, as few cases exists where employees are not in a position to use one of the technical means through which communication can take place today. Mediated technical communication term is used to describe precisely those forms of communication in which messaging is done through artificial means (Vasile, 2000). Currently, computers are a mandatory presence in the business world, even becoming a "driving force of rapid change which they suffer" (Vasile, 2000, p. 35). Thus, people have access to a large quantity of information or new ways to carry out their work - for example, home working, employee of the organization by linking computer without having to be physically present. Email can be used for receiving the message almost instantly, regardless of the distance. Therefore, how people live and work changed (Greenberg, 2002). There are many cases in which work is taking place in the virtual environment, you can work and colaborate with people from other parts of the world, email is checked for at least several times a day, spend considerable time online. The Internet has become so central to the way people communicate today for professional scope, and beyond.

In this context, there is a new form of communication - online socialization (words of English language being social media, Web 2.0). This online socialization is using a set of online communication means based on connectivity, community, conversation, openness and participation (ICrossing, 2007) and includes, as main components: inter-networking sites online (online social networks) - sites that allow members to create their own pages and then come in relation to other members to communicate and exchange content (eg LinkedIn, Facebook, MySpace), blogs - online journals posted with the latest entries on top list; online encyclopaedias (wikis) and other sites that allow adding and editing content in an existing base (eg, Wikipedia) Forums - special platforms that enable online discussions, community content - groups of people organized online around common interests, for example photos (Flickr) and videos (YouTube).

Besides these main elements, there are several other possibilities such as using podcasts - audio and videos available online based registration (Apple iTunes) and micro bogging site - a combination of inter-sites networking and very small blogs, where short messages are distributed online with a much higher frequency (sometimes several times a day) to keep them abreast with the network performance of a particular event (a leader in this area Twitter). Another very useful application is RSS (acronym for Really Simple Syndication or Rich Site Summary) is actually a kind of subscription made online for a particular topic and which points whenever there is a novel about the chosen topic with a high utility by filtering large quantities of existing information online.



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Socializing online started growing importance in people's lives, with a very vigorous rhythm of development. For example, at the end of 2007 over 110 million blogs were sighted by Technocrats - a search engine specialized in this type of content, with almost 50 million more than at the start of that year over 100 million videos viewed daily on YouTube and created over 200 million profiles on MySpace (ICrossing, 2007).

Rapid sharing of ideas, cooperation, collaboration and finding quick solutions to problems have become much easier by "supporting" this network of people with common interests or stakes. Although at first online socializing was more personal in nature, people calling her free time, companies and their employees have begun to use these resources to support their pursuit of their activity, with numerous examples.

Implementation of online social media in the organization may involve certain risks; including two aspects more obvious that may become problematic - distracting employees and loss of confidential information. And even if there are some managers who currently fail to see the benefits of this communication form, there are specialists who appreciate that is inevitably to accept its inclusion into organizations (Holtz, 2006), as happened in other cases (eg, instant messaging).

**In conclusion**, given the existence of a high potential for achieving the benefits of using this type of communication within the organization, the decision on its introduction must be weighed as quickly as possible by management companies, but with particular attention paid to the formulation of principles and rules for using these tools and making them work content performed.

Reality shows us that any message, once delivered and accepted, can not be taken back or changed. You can make additions and may offer explanations, it can soften the message, but can not return any way at the existing condition before it was launched. Once delivered and received, the message belongs jointly to both the person who submitted and those who received (Prutianu, 1998). Thus, people should pay special attention to communication, particularly in labor organizations or groups they belong, where not only individual results and activities may be affected, but rather the collective.

## 4. DIMENSIONS OF TEACHER – STUDENT COMMUNICATION

In teacher-student communication processes, and not only, we can encounter four basic communication styles, such as: assertive, aggressive, passive and passive-aggressive.

### *4.1. Four basic communication styles*

**Assertive Communication.** The most effective and healthiest form of communication is the assertive style. It's how teachers/students naturally express themselves when their self-esteem is intact, giving them the confidence to communicate without games and manipulation. When they are being assertive, they work hard to create mutually satisfying solutions. They communicate their needs clearly and forthrightly. Teachers and students care about the relationship and strive for a win/win situation. They know their limits and refuse to be pushed beyond them just because someone else wants or needs something from them. Surprisingly, assertive is the style most people use least.

**Aggressive Communication.** Aggressive communication always involves manipulation. Teachers or students may attempt to make people do what they want by inducing guilt (hurt) or by using intimidation and control tactics (anger). Covert or overt, they simply want their needs met. Although there are a few arenas where aggressive behavior is called for (i.e., sports or war), it will never work in a relationship. But even war might be avoided if people could learn to be more assertive and negotiate to solve their problems.

**Passive Communication.** Passive communication is based on compliance and hopes to avoid confrontation at all costs. In this mode, usually students don't talk much, question even less, and actually do very little. Passives have learned that it is safer not to react and better to disappear than to stand up and be noticed.

**Passive-Aggressive Communication**. A combination of styles, passive-aggressive avoids direct confrontation (passive), but attempts to get even through manipulation (aggressive). This style of communication often leads to office politics and rumour-mongering.

Clearly, for many reasons, the only healthy communication style is assertive communication. Surely we can identify many people in our own life that favor each of the four styles. Most of us use a combination of these four styles, depending on the person or situation. The styles we choose generally depend on what our past experiences have taught us will work best to get our needs met in each specific situation. Understanding the four basic types of communication will help teachers and students learn how to react most effectively when confronted with a difficult person. It will also help them recognize when they are using manipulative behavior to get their own needs met.

### *4.2. Effective teacher-student communication*

**Effective Teacher – Student Communication** is an important tool to enhance students' academic performance and self-development. In the traditional classroom scenario, communication between the teacher and students occurs mainly during lessons, with little opportunity for interaction outside of class.



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Since much of the learning activity occurs outside the classroom, this limited teacher-student communication is ineffective. The communication outside the classroom plays an important role in student's performance as the communication in the classroom limits the learning process to the subject that's being taught. Students require more than rigid classroom interaction. There are various factors that contribute to the student-teacher communication problem. These factors can be grouped into two categories: student related causes and teacher related causes. Student Related Causes: Many students are uncomfortable when their work is evaluated or commented upon. These under-achiever students prefer to remain anonymous instead of approaching their teachers for help. Students also lose interest in writing very easily. Teacher Related Causes: There is an obvious lack of motivation among teachers. Teachers fail to see students as individuals and class them together into general categories. This kind of categorization prevents teachers from communicating with each student or helping each student with his/her difficulties. Instead, teachers tend to deal with the whole groups of students at a time and therefore 'dilute' whatever information they are trying to communicate (Dhrra, 2009).

**Teachers' communicator style**, their use of friendly, relaxed, and impression-making qualities, has been associated with students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning (Anderson, Norton, & Nussbaum, 1981; Myers & Horvath, 1997; Norton & Nussbaum, 1980), as well as student perceptions of teacher immediacy, or verbal and nonverbal cues that convey warmth, interpersonal closeness, and availability to the students (Anderson et al., 1981). A substantial literature has linked student perceptions of instructor immediacy to important educational outcomes, including attendance (Rocca, 2004), information-seeking (Myers & Knox, 2001), participation (Gendrin & Ruckin, 2007) and learning (Witt, Wheeless, & Allen, 2004).

Norton (1978) conceptualized communicator style as a pattern of communicative actions that signal the interpretation of literal meaning. For Norton, the way that information is communicated to others is central to determining how meanings should be comprehended. This pattern of communicative actions is comprised of any combination of ten independent communicative attributes: friendly, impression leaving, relaxed, contentious, attentive, precise, animated, dramatic, open, and dominant. *Friendly* communicators convey kindness and caring through encouragement and acknowledgment of others. *Impression leaving* is characterized by a memorable style of communicating that expresses affiliation and seeks information from others. *Relaxed* communicators are identified as individuals who are free of anxiety and avoid nervous mannerisms in social interactions. Individuals who are argumentative, aggressive, hostile, or belligerent are characterized by a *contentious* communicator style. *Attentive* communicators are empathic listeners who show interest in what others say. *Precise* communicators are concerned with constructing accurate and well-defined arguments that are supported by evidence or

proof. *Animated* communicators embellish content through the use of nonverbal cues, such as eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, movement, and posture. Similarly, *dramatic* communicators emphasize content through exaggerations, stories, voice, and rhythm. Communicators who are extraverted, approachable, unreserved, and affable display an *open* style. Last, dominant communicators aim to take charge in communicative situations by using a loud vocal tone and controlling the length of conversations by talking without interruptions (Johnson & Evans, 1997; Myers, Mottet, & Martin, 2000; Rovai, 2003).

**In conclusion, the importance of communicator style in an educational context** lies in its potential as a predictor of teaching effectiveness or positive student behavior. For instance, instructors who are perceived by students to use attentive, impression leaving, dramatic and relaxed styles are viewed as effective (Norton, 1977; Norton & Nussbaum, 1980; Nussbaum, 1981), as better instructors (Anderson et al., 1981; Schroeder & Leber, 1993), and as agents of influence on students' perceptions of their own cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning (Anderson et al., 1981; Myers & Horvath, 1997; Norton & Nussbaum, 1980). **A friendly communicator style**, for instance, has been found to be the best predictor of students' perceptions of teachers' immediacy (Anderson et al., 1981), The way in which students respond to teachers' communication in the classroom and students' perceptions of teachers' immediacy are both associated with important learning and classroom-level outcomes (Myers et al., 2000; Witt et al., 2004).

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QUALITY OF LIFE OF VULNERABLE GROUPS INVOLVED IN INFORMAL WASTE MANAGEMENT SECTOR: A CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

# CALITATEA VIEŢII GRUPURILOR VULNERABILE IMPLICATE ÎN SECTORUL INFORMAL AL MANAGEMENTULUI DEŞEURILOR: O ANALIZĂ CRITICĂ A LITERATURII DE SPECIALITATE

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***Abstract***
The article presents some results of the critical literature analysis on quality of life of vulnerable groups, as a broad problematic, complex and topical issue in Europe and worldwide. In the context of the current trends of social policies decentralization process has become necessary to make an objective and subjective quality of life evaluation at local or group level, as a means of substantiating responsible social policies. Resorting to traditional research methods for realise a critical literature review, the author suggests the need for a new approache in Romania, that of assessing the quality of life at local and regional, not national or supranational level.

***Keywords*:** quality of life, vulnerable groups, informal sector, waste management

**JEL CODES: I39, J46, L38**

***Rezumat***
Articolul prezintă rezultatele analizei critice a literaturii de specialitate în domeniul calităţii vieţii grupurilor vulnerabile, o problematică amplă, complexă şi de actualitate pe plan european şi mondial. În contextul tendinţei actuale de descentralizare a politicilor sociale devine necesară măsurarea obiectivă şi subiectivă a calităţii vieţii la nivel local sau de grup, ca mijloc de fundamentare a unor politici sociale responsabile. Recurgând la metode tradiţionale de analiză a literaturii de specialitate autorul sugerează necesitatea unei abordări noi pentru România, aceea a evaluării calităţii vieţii la nivel local şi regional, ci nu la nivel naţional sau supranaţional.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** calitatea vieţii, grupuri vulnerabile, sector informal, managementul deşeurilor

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Government efforts to stimulate economic development, as a reaction to the crossing of the global economic crisis should be directed beyond the concrete measures of economic growth, combating poverty and social inequality limitation, to amplifying the social welfare of the population and generally raising the quality of life. Considered the most multidisciplinary term in the current use of socio-economic sciences, quality of life presents different connotations, some with reference to: (i) the conditions necessary for happiness, (ii) subjective satisfaction, (iii) importance granted to life, (iv) the extent in which a person fulfils his/her purposes in life or (v) the significance of human life for a person. Daly (2007) analyses quality of life referring to the global welfare of people, in a broad and multidimensional sense, considering quality of life an umbrella concept that groups all spheres of life (both conditions, resources, opportunities available and results in life) and an evaluative concept witch report life conditions and activities to human needs, values and aspirations.

The usefulness of subjective indicators in evaluating quality of life is a most current theme in scientific literature, whose relevance refers to the necessity of social policies fundamentation on realistic basis, especially for social policies on vulnerable groups.

## 2. QUALITY OF LIFE LITERATURE PERSPECTIVES

The importance of studying the quality of life is argued by specialists such as Veenhoven, Bohnke, Delhey, Mărginean and others, advocating the need to both establish social policy objectives and asses implementation of these policies. Hagerty et al., (2001) capture 14 criteria for considering quality of life indicators relevant to the development and implementation of social policies; among the issues analyzed, it is stated the need to focus on evaluating quality of life at individual and group level (quality of life evaluation at local and regional level), to the detriment of national and supranational assessment; such a scientific approach is extremely important and necessary in the context of the trend towards decentralization of social policy formulation and implementation. The diversity of scientific domains which analyse quality of life (health, agriculture, urban management, employment and unemployment) demonstrates both the transdisciplinarity of quality of life concept and the complexity of scientific concerns about people's lives and opportunities to quality of life evaluation.

The importance of quality of life issues relies in a large preoccupation of the litareture regarding the management of the gap between countries as especially to reduce inequalities among regions in the same state, based on the negative influence that these gaps have on poverty; Kanbur and Venables



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(2005) identify two reasons for which the regional and local quality of life assessment is relevant to reducing inequalities: (i) local and regional gaps are the causes of national inequalities and (ii) gaps become problemical if inequalities are the subject of ethnic, religious matter.

The results of quality of life evaluations done on a national, European and global level capture many complex tendencies and challenges. The last Quality of Life Research Institute survey done in 2010 on a sample of 1161 individuals from 78 localities in Romania, revealed a deterioration of quality of life in most indicators analyzed (sometimes with a return to the level from 1999). Indicators with large positive values are the ones belonging to the family, home and relationships with neighbours, while the most critical elements of quality of life are the fears about purchasing power and job loss. 14% of households manage to save money, and 46% cannot cope with monthly expenses; 76% of respondents feel a decline in living conditions.

Europeans are generally satisfied with the quality of life level, on a scale from 1 to 10 being at level 7 (Eurofound, 2012). There are significant disparities between member states, the report reflecting that for Romania and Bulgaria, indicators associated to household incomes situate below the European average, with values similar for candidate countries (eg. Macedonia). Indicators on life satisfaction with family life record positive trends in general. Imbalances between personal and professional life exists mainly in the South-Eastern Europe, 70% of respondents in Croatia and Greece stating that they do not have enough time for housework because of demanding jobs. 81% of European citizens considered that good health is very important for quality of life increasing.

The 2013 report of the United Nations Development Program captures state an increase in the global Human Development Index, from 0,698 in 2011 to 0,700 in 2012 (United Nations Development Programme, 2013). The Caribbean and South American states are facing major problems about national income disparities. More than 15% of the world population remains prone to poverty, the highest phenomenon being in South Asia, where 800 million people live in poverty and other over 270 million are at risk of poverty.

Romanian public debates on social welfare and in general on quality of life include aspects relating to the protection of so-called “vulnerable groups”. The content of this concept includes a wide variety of people, from single parents and people with disabilities to unemployed people, people leaving the child protection system, inmates leaving custodial systems. Vulnerable groups are limited compared to most people, as having difficult living conditions (poor housing or homelessness, unemployment, low educational level, lack of income) witch adversely affect the welfare and the quality of life According to

Hoogeveen (2005), vulnerability refers to those risks which may lead to a level of welfare and quality of life placed below wthat society considers as acceptable.

The importance and relevance of studying q.o.l. was noted as early as 2000, when the Lisbon European Council addressed the issue of combating social exclusion, throught a coherent package of social and economic policies to stimulate vulnerable groups employment (Lambru, 2010). The European Commission (2010b) believes that promoting equality and social inclusion requires efforts so that all individuals, including v.g., can play an active role in the labour market and to enjoy equal access to social welfare. In "Europe 2020. A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth", the European Commission (2010a, 21) mentions that an "inclusive growth means empowering people through … investing in skills, fighting poverty and modernizing labour markets … to build a cohesive society".

In the Romanian legislation, vulnerable groups cover a wide variety of socio-demographic categories and social issues, but the employment situation is one of the most important criteria in the definition of vulnerable groups. Social economy is often regarded as a solution to the inclusion of vulnerable groups on the labour market, insertion social enterprises being the most eloquent case (Arpinte et all, 2010). Bostani and Grosu (2010) capture the current economic crisis very well, whose consequences overlap with the already usual problems of vulnerable groups, generating social unrest due to rising poverty population, the possibility of loss of employment, increasing the number of families with serious financial problems. At the level of the vulnerable groups involved in informal waste management sector, such risks are doubled by problems regarding inhumane working conditions, poor health and low life expectancy.

Amid deepening the economic crisis and hence lower living standards (especially for vulnerable groups), the accelerating expansion of informal activities is noticed. In waste management the informal activities are influenced by the existence of different categories of recoverable materials and packaging among generated waste (paper/cardboard, plastic/PET, metals/aluminum cans) which can be recycled.

In recent years in Romania, informal waste management sector has developed markedly, in terms of size, role, importance and economic, environmental and social impact (Ciocoiu and Târţiu, 2012). OECD, World Bank, International Labour Organization and the United Nations have developed detailed reports and studies that capture the general coordinates of informal economy and the activity of informal waste recyclers. Chaudhuri and Mukhopadhyay (2010) comparatively analyze the formal and informal economy, using a range of quantitative models and customizing for many subsectors of the informal economy, including in informal waste sector. Within the literature are identified factors that favor the



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emergence and / or extension of informal waste management sector (Gunsilius, 2012), are evaluated empirically the informal waste sector role and contribution to waste recycling (Katusiimeh et all, 2013) and analyzed the economic implications of the phenomenon: informal recycling market, the financial benefits for informal recyclers, the need to improve working conditions (Zapata Campos and Hall, 2013).

## 3. DIFFICULTY ELEMENTS OF QUALITY OF LIFE EVALUATION

The need to compare quality of life within different countries and regions around the globe lead to the apparition of indicators for evaluating the quality of life level. Judging from the perspective of quality of life evaluation the main difficulty refers to the comparability of the available data (Veenhoven, 2005). Given the concept's multidimensionality and its deep and diverse implication it cannot be considered that an indicator, including a compozit one, can reflect the entire factors which compound and determine the quality of life. The international literature is extremely generous regarding the quality of life assesment indicators; each country has its own methodology and indicators for quality of life evaluation (American Demographics Index of Well-Being, Netherlands Living Conditions Index, German System of Social Indicators or Swedish ULF System).

The comparability issues are partially solved by the existence of the supranational indicators, which facilitate the comparing of the quality of life evaluation results (World Health Organization Quality of Life Index, International Living Index, United Nations Human Development Index), but at the national level. The level from which the data for quality of life evaluation are gathered and systematised represents another issue, as it influences the relevancy of the final results for an efficient and coherent social policies process; from this point of view, the quality of life assesment should be realised at a local and regional level, not at a national and supranational one, in order to correctly reflect the existing gaps not only between countries, but also inside them. Some indicators which explore the regional dimension of quality of life are Index of Economic Well-Being, Estes's Index of Social Progress, Genuine Progress Index.

Within the vulnerable groups evaluation it also were used some indicators. At the European Union level, vulnerable groups are given by indicators of social inclusion, such as: the relative poverty rate, the long term unemployment rate, the percentage of persons which live in households with no employed member, the early school dropout rate, the household deprivation rate (European Commission, 2010a). From the perspective of vulnerable groups involved in informal waste sector the main issues reflected in literature are sending to the lack of official statistics. There are no reports/analysis/guides available in which to be quantified the informal waste sector dimension, in general (moreover within the vulnerable groups) or in which to be analysed the informal recycler's quality of life. Several international

studies/projects (WIEGO, TransWaste et all) identify solutions for formal employment increase of informal recyclers. It is recomanded that the literature explores the vulnerable groups matter from the perspective of the means and measures in which the formalization of it's informal activities could lead to quality of life growth.

## 4. LIMITATIONS OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE CURRENT APROACHES

The foundation of preoccupations connected quality of life belong to the french scientist Bertrand de Jouvenel, witch perceiving the concept as an agreeable way to arrange one's existence and living conditions (Leonte, 2012). Urse (2008) considers that the quality of life notion emerged relatively late (in the speech of American president Lyndon Johnson) in a programme that entailed special measures to increase American citizens quality of life.). After the explosion of quality of life research in the '60s - '70s of last century, there followed a period during which research aimed at completing the economic indicators with social indicators (Mărginean and Bălaşa, 2002); the obvious current tendency being to consider both objective indicators, as well as subjective indicators and to grant multidimensionality for quality of life concept. The quality of life knows two major approaches in the international literature: the utilitarian approach and the capabilities approach. Sen (2008) noted that utilitarianism was for a long time the sole theory of welfare. The occurrence of approach based on capabilities (in witch the individual aimed not only wealth or wellbeing, but a superior condition which is not given by the amount of property, or the level of welfare) meant quality of life content revaluation; Alkire (2008) viewed that the quality of life derived from emotional states, so it is independent of material resources.

Despite the quality of life concept's transdisciplinary, the literature presents some limitations. Being a multidimensional concept, quality of life is not enough conceptualized; it has being defined with the help of the indicators regarding its level evaluation, instead of establishing evaluation indicators based on the content of the quality of life concept. We consider the lack of conceptualization as being the most important limit within the research.

Most of the studies having the quality of life belong to the health sector, refering to quality of life evaluation for patients with different dental, hearth or mental illnesses (World Health Organization, 1997; Lupu, 2006; Paşcanu et al., 2009) and even cancer (Chopra and Kamal, 2012); in pediatrics there are some studies dealing with the kids and teenagers quality of life in different health problems, but also for the family they come from (Park et al, 2002; Freeman et al., 2009, Grozăvescu, 2009). Lupu (2006) conduction an inventory of the most relevant quality of life assesment methods, from general ones like WHOQOL-100, Duke Health Profile or Sickness Impact Profile, to the specific ones for cardiovascular



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disease (MACNEW, Seattle Angina Questionnaire), for dentistry (Oral Health Impact Profile, Oral Quality of Life Inventory, Oral Impact on Daily Performance) or for pediatrics (PedsQOL-CM-27 and Kindl).

Another limit of the current approaches is given by the lack of preoccupations regarding the quality of life problematics for vulnerable groups and in general of the quality of life evaluation at the individual or group level (except the studies from health sector). Quality of life researches are related with the labour market and the workplaces (Peruniak, 2010; Leovardis, 2011; Green 2013), with the cultural activities (Urse, 2008) or with agricultural sector (Casini et al., 2011); urban management studies (Feldman, 2008; Brueckner, 2011; Eurofound 2012; European Commission, 2013) analyse too the quality of life aspects. At the European level are approached comparatively quality of life evaluation within rural and urban area (Eurofound, 2014), in order to identify the gaps and elaborate effective solutions to reduce them.

Behind the conceptualization there are some problems within the quality of life operationalization and measurement; Veenhoven (2005) underlines the fact that the specialist have not yet agreed on quality of life definition and within the empirical evaluation there are used various instruments, without a clear vision, which significantly reduces the results comparability. The surveys, studies and researches (Quality of Life Diagnosis, Public Opinion Barometer, European Quality of Life Survey, European Values Survey, Human Development Report) are periodically conducted by various active organizations at the national level (Quality of Life Research Institute), European level (European Commission, Eurofound) and at the global level (United Nations Development Programme, World Health Organization), but those analize quality of life at a national and supranational level. Thus, there is a certain impossibility to identify the tendencies and the relevant aspects for the quality of life at regional and local level; the lack of the quality of life indicators calculated and adapted at local level, with a focus of the vulnerable group's problems, for example, will lead to a misleading social policies process for these categories. Briciu (2009) states that, at the national academic, governmental and non-governmental level there are sufficient knowledge and expertise on poverty and social inclusion.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The quality of life literature has to contributes to the knowledge and experience diversification by identifying and testing a new type of evaluation, not the degree of vulnerable groups social inclusion or poverty level, but their quality of life; the essential aim is to divert the focus on identify and analyse the needs, interests and aspirations, as the real basis of a sound social politics.

Literature analysis within the informal waste management domain and vulnerable groups involved in reveals the fact that this issues are scientificly unnaproached niche until now and also a tabu subject, very actual for the society, decision factors and non-governmental sector. The subject of the informal social aspects, in general, and of the quality of life of informal recyclers, in particular, is either lacking from the international literature, either summary treated. Informal recyclers are associated with various vulnerable groups categories, researchers emphasizing the analysis of the work conditions and their implication over the vulnerable groups health and of the social equality (Sembiring and Nitivattananon, 2010; Katusiimeh et al, 2013). On another hand, there can be observed a tendency of literature to channel its atention over informal waste management sector within the undeveloped countries (especially from southern America, Africa and Asia), as this phenomenon takes an increased attention also in the developing countries, including from Europe.

In conclusion, the literature relatively contributes to knowledge development on the quality of life of vulnerable groups, in general, and those involved in informal waste sector in particular, and offer some solutions for quality of life evaluation and best practice exemples in order to improve the existing approaches.

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# ANTHROPOGENIC PRESSURE ON FORESTS IN THE GLOBAL ERA

# PRESIUNEA ANTROPICĂ ASUPRA PĂDURII ÎN ERA GLOBALĂ


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***Abstract***
Of all terrestrial ecosystems, the forest is the most important and complex ecosystem. Because of humans the largest forests of the world are in serious danger. Anthropogenic pressure on the forest is becoming greater with increasing global population. Characteristic new management methods must be found, among others, naturally regenerating forests, ecological technologies in forestry, achieving various structures as close to that of natural forests. The measures presented are able to contribute significantly to stability and sustainable development of forests, if they apply and totally uninterrupted.



***Keywords*:** forest ecosystem, globalization, demographic growth, regeneration

**JEL CODES:** Q23, Q51



***Rezumat***
Din toate ecosistemele terestre, pădurea este ecosistemul cel mai important și mai complex. Datorită oamenilor, cele mai mari păduri din lume sunt în mare pericol. Presiunea antropică asupra pădurii se intensifică datorită creșterii populației globale. Este necesară găsirea unor măsuri de management caracteristice, printre care regenerarea naturală a pădurilor, silvicultura ecologică, asigurarea structurii cât mai apropiate celei naturale. Măsurile prezentate pot contribui semnificativ la stabilitatea și dezvoltarea durabilă a pădurilor în măsura în care se asigură aplicarea lor completă și neîntreruptă



***Cuvinte cheie:*** ecosistem de pădure, globalizare, creștere demografică, regenerare

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Forests cover about 31% of Earth's surface is an integral part of global sustainable development. More than 1.6 billion people depend on forests for their livelihoods, and 300 million people live in these ecosystems. The forests are home to more than two-thirds of known terrestrial species and most threatened species on the planet. Since the total area of forest, Europe, and South America have about 25%, while only 5% are Oceania (Bran et al., 2013).

Absorbing 2.4 billion tons of carbon in a single year, forests serve to slow global warming. Unfortunately forests are covered by one of the major choices you have to make people (Bran et al., 2009). It may be to identify a balance between the desire to exploit forest resources and land, and the important roles they play in planetary life support system.

Forests include vegetable formations extremely complex and diverse, arranged in several layers, as well as the flora and fauna that they host. Forest's natural wealth, whose role in the national economy and whose multiple functions in maintaining the ecological balance are difficult to assess. For centuries, the forest was seen as a source of raw materials.

Because of humans the largest forests of the world are in serious danger. Half of the original forest has been destroyed and things are about to get worse if the current rate of deforestation is not slowed. This would be catastrophic not only because of the fact that many species have their habitat in the forest, but also because forests play an important role in regulating the planet's climate.

## 2. MAIN ANTHROPOGENIC THREATS FOR FOREST ECOSYSTEMS

Only 12% of the Earth's forests coating retains intact forest ecosystems. These are the tropical forests, mangrove, coastal and swamp. More than 75% of these intact forests are in three countries: Russia and Canada, boreal forests, and in Brazil, the Amazon forest. Canada has approximately 4.02 million km2 of forest land, more than 90% of the land is public property. Russia has experienced a series of fires in recent years have alerted not only local, but also all the neighboring states. Examination of issues and exchange experiences on forest tragedy in Russia are marked with the "Megaforest" involving ten countries holding 75% of the world forest (USA, Canada, Russia, Brazil, China, Australia, India, Indonesia Congo and Cameroon).

Of all terrestrial ecosystems, the forest is the most important and complex ecosystem. The key feature of trees is biomass, given their great capacity for assimilation. Forests have important protective

functions of which are distinguished hydrological function, the function of soil protection and ensure soil stability, improve the function of climatic factors and purifying the atmosphere. In this regard it is noted that forest ecosystems have the ability to retain and neutralize largely gaseous pollutants (SO2, SO3, fluorine compounds) and also changing their mode dispersion.

Forests are the key factors in maintaining ecological balance, climatic and hydrological having a regenerative capacity 3-5 times greater than any natural ecosystem.

Anthropogenic pressure on the forest is becoming greater with increasing global population. The need for new agricultural land in countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia, or to crops, pastures, buildings have reduced areas under forest.

There is a deterioration of habitat, biodiversity loss and increased aridity. Overall deforestation leads to soil erosion, favoring increased emissions of carbon dioxide as not filtered through the process of photosynthesis.

Ignorance of the people, ignoring the value of forests, poor management of natural resources and poor environmental laws are several factors that allow large-scale deforestation. Deforestation causes permanent changes of climatic conditions, desertification, global warming, greenhouse effect, population displacement (Pana et al., 2011).

Every minute 26 hectares of forest are lost and it is not difficult to see that if things continue in this way we have a planet devoid of forest. This would be catastrophic not only for that many species you have habitat in the forest, but also because forests play an important role in regulating the planet's climate.

In the period 2000-2010, deforestation has led to gross loss of 13 million hectares of forest per year, warned the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). At such a rate of deforestation, tropical forests may disappear completely in less than 100 years. Conversion of agricultural land, unsustainable wood cutting, lack or mismanagement of land and building settlements near forests are the most common reasons for forested areas suffer.

In the last 20 years we have lost 6 million hectares of primary forest through logging, illegal trade of coal, pasteurization and urbanization. For many specialized species losing their habitat is pushing them to the brink of extinction, others have been lost forever.

## 3. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES DEALING WITH DEFORESTATION

Policies dealing with methods of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) have been addressed as one of the major solutions to tackle climate change. The central idea of REDD

is using funds from developed countries to finance projects involving reducing deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries. This can be achieved through complex financial mechanisms.

This action man favored unleashing of natural factors such serious consequences, as the forest biocenosis was more fragile and aggressive external factors. In areas with extreme conditions, the process of deforestation has transformed entire regions steppes, savannas and deserts (Nastase et al., 2009).

As a result of deforestation, 20-100 thousand tree species are threatened with extinction. Afforestation fails to balance this balance. In the U.S. almost half of the afforestation is declared commercial forest timber producing or capable of producing.

Habitat degradation is due to changes in land use, namely the conversion of land use in the lower classes. Changing habitats event occurs as a result of cumulative effects global or regional pollution due to direct and arrangement (the transport, industrial and tourist).

Pollution by pesticides, hydrocarbons, heavy metals, PCBs, nutrients induce changes in population structure and strength. Pollution is the landfill which means the removal of the affected area has a number of 30-300 species / ha, without considering soil microbiological population.

One major risk of natural phenomena is to landslides. They affect the slopes, the most widespread and putting on a variety of events.

Term landslide defines both the motion, movement of rocks or deposits on the slopes and the resulting landform. Landslides gravitational processes are generally fast modeling of land slope, moving materials are separated by a plane or planar slip systems from stable, untrained in motion. They can occur in any type of terrain that favorable conditions in terms of lithology, moisture and slope angle.

Floods are processes drain and overflow of water from riverbeds in the meadows, where they occupy large areas used by humans for agriculture, habitat, means of communication. Production is due to the entrance in white flood large amounts of water from rain, melting snow and glaciers sharp mountain.

Deforestation promotes rapid water leak on the slopes and production of floods.

## 4. FORESTS OF ROMANIA – MAIN PRESSURES

In Romania, the forest occupies a total area of about 6.2 million ha, representing 26% of the total. Abuses and corruption in the restitution of forests are well known in many articles and even official document of the Chamber of Deputies, which found that in one year over 1559 people abuse the



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National Forest in 1103 hectares in residential areas. They continued to take abusive forests that have not belonged to politicians, government, police and judiciary. They were true residential areas in forests declared by law of social protection around Bucharest and county capitals in protected areas, forests lakes area. To make deforestation prohibited by law, these private forest districts were established and achieved through the application of the forest management planning in forestry and timber trade is still the owner of the forest.

Romania is monitored by the EU, together with Bulgaria, for how to spend such funds, but while Bulgaria were carefully managed forests in Romania has been a process of destruction and deforestation that has passed and the African countries.

To stop the catastrophic effects of global warming climate generalized scientific research and political power have concluded that urgent action is needed to preserve existing forests and their resettlement in areas where there were before.

From FAO data shows that state forests are a serious condition worldwide. Over 40% of the approximately 1.5 billion hectares of the world's forests are in various stages of decay and destructive actions continues. Between 1990-2000 annual disappeared from Earth on average 9,4 million hectares of forest. In Romania deforestation are more active than African and desertification is present.

Applying a forestry regime for the protection and conservation of forests has been a concern of great empires and the brightest personalities in history. Some specialists consider that errors of some civilizations and empires, through deforestation, have even led to their disappearance (Eduard and Curea, 2009).

The volume of forest resources is dependent on the area occupied by forests and forest type. After FAO data, the forests of South America and Europe have a high productivity per hectare (92-94 m³ / ha / year), while in Africa it reaches only 8 m³ / ha / year.

In terms of area covered with forests worldwide, it is estimated at 4.02 billion hectares, with notable differences from continent to continent. Northern Hemisphere is much richer than the southern forests, although South America has the largest areas covered by forests (874.1 million hectares). A high degree of afforestation have Russia and North America.

The distribution of forest resources in the Member is assessed by afforestation. Therefore were classified into four categories:

- State highly afforestation (over 30% of the total area). Most countries in this category are located in the equatorial region or the northern hemisphere, the area of spread of conifers.

- States with an average degree of afforestation (20-30%) contain numerous countries on all continents; most are located in Europe - Romania (26%), Germany, Poland, France, Belgium, but also in Asia - India, Thailand, Turkey, or Africa - Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, most Central American countries, plus Mexico.
- State of afforestation low (10-20%), the operation must be limited to the amount of annual growth, the European countries situated in plains and hilly regions.
- States with a very low degree of afforestation (below 10%), which imports large quantities of wood are numerous in Southwest Asia, tropical Africa, Europe and isolated several small states on the other continents.

At European level, Romania ranks 13 in terms of percentage of afforestation, being 5.1 percent below the European average of 32.4%. In terms of forest area relative to the number of inhabitants, Romania is ranked 10 in Europe with 0.30 ha / capita, first come the Nordic countries (Finland, Sweden and Norway) (Nistoreanu, 2004). Caring for the protection and preservation of "green gold" is more obvious to the whole world. An increasing number of people realize that the destruction and degradation of forests have serious consequences for the present and future of mankind incalculable.

Forest regeneration is a must both globally and in Romania. Expanding the forests through afforestation is no other forest vegetation outside forest areas and degraded land.

Analysis on the situation in Romania afforestation carried reveals a worrying situation in terms of sustainable development wooded areas recorded a dramatic decrease after 1990, from 25 489 ha to 10 106 ha in 2010.

**TABLE 1.** WOODED AREA

| **Year** | **1990** | **2000** | **2001** | **2002** | **2003** | **2004** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Area (ha) | 25489 | 12701 | 13539 | 16448 | 14772 | 14100 |
| **Year** | **2005** | **2006** | **2007** | **2008** | **2009** | **2010** |
| Area (ha) | 14389 | 15533 | 10176 | 11244 | 10962 | 10106 |

Source: http://statistici.insse.ro

The table 1 data can be represented in the following chart (fig.1):



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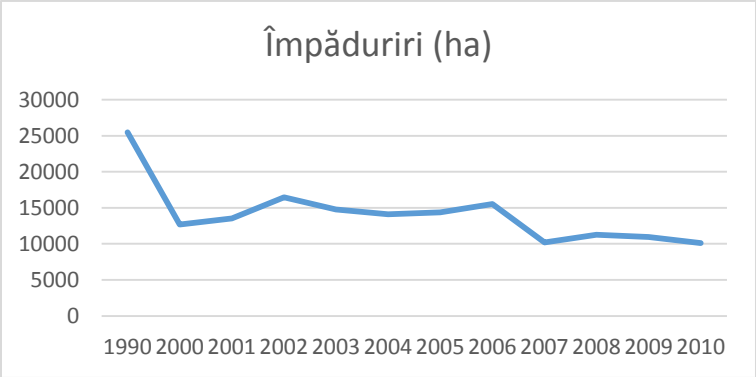



FIGURE 1. AFFORESTATION

Other ways to increase the surface area covered by forest vegetation can be:

**- Afforestation unfit for efficient agriculture**

According to studies made by the National Research - Development Institute for Soil Science, Agrochemistry and Environment Protection there are estimated 2170 hectares of degraded land, most of which are located in hilly and mountainous. Large areas of degraded lands are in the Piedmont Plateau, Subcarpaţii Wallachia Somes Plateau, Plateau Transylvania, Moldavia Subcarpaţii Plain and Plateau Moldova, Dobrogea (Ardeleanu et al., 2012).

One of the main functions of the forest is the protection of soil against erosion, improve water balance and ensure the purity of water, air, climatic factors improve, while producing sources of raw materials for the needs of the population and the national economy. Between forest and soil is an interrelation through its forest roots contribute to disintegration of rocks, soil formation, maintenance and improvement of the structure edaphic humidity. Forests protect rocks, land sliding and deep erosion, debris, sands mobile, land prone to avalanches and swamps, steppe and steppe zones, high altitude land with vegetation or exposed to extreme industrial pollution (Candea et al., 2006).

Forest soils are rich in substances for plants resulting from plant and animal residues that accumulate annually. Deforestation during the years 1920 - 1948, especially in Vrancea, Vaslui, Arges, Olt, Gorj, Dolj, Mures and Cluj was one of the main causes of erosion expansion in Romania. Installed on degraded forest ecosystems are mostly artificial, temporary or transitory type the regional ecosystems, the main objective of halting land degradation processes and improving conditions.

**- Establishment of protective forest watercourses and passageways, the crops against pests and climatic factors to protect against land erosion on slopes**

In our country the first concerns the study of economic efficiency of use of forest belts in agriculture were initiated in the early twentieth century. Windbreaks provide effective protection of agricultural field

when placed in a grid. Installing forest belts to protect agricultural fields left the idea of fixing the sands and sandy soils due to their mobility, to wind erosion hazard. Opportunities for improving forest vegetation areas by creating protective forest is currently limited due to the lack of cadastral plans , records owners in the towns and landowners refusal to allow the establishment of forest crops . Making agriculture and forestry cadastre would lead to the establishment of important protective forest areas with favorable economic and social effects. Completion of the cadastre for Agriculture and Forestry will lead to the creation of large areas of protective forest with favorable economic and social effects.

In order to prevent damage caused by natural factors pests, reduce soil erosion, improve water retention capacity, improve air quality and production of wood in the National Rural Development was included Measure 221 First afforestation of agricultural land. This measure aims to increase forest areas in order to improve environmental conditions in rural areas through sustainable use and management of land through afforestation.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion , the main problem faced by protection forests are related to imbalances characteristic of these ecosystems , disturbances which are generated only by natural factors , but also the management of these forests , which contributed greatly to the disruptive action of these factors.

Because the factors that generate imbalances continue to exist, have not been found yet effective solutions because the problems have been addressed individually, without taking into account the close relationship existing between them. Therefore , the solutions cannot be truly viable than those aimed at increasing the stability of forests, but taking into account the numerous phenomena acting over a long period in these forests.

In this respect, a change in the management used in the past is needed. Characteristic new management methods must be found, among others, naturally regenerating forests, ecological technologies in forestry, achieving various structures as close to that of natural forests. The measures presented are able to contribute significantly to stability and sustainable development of forests, if they apply and totally uninterrupted.

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MARKETING OF DESTINATIONS: A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

# MARKETINGUL DESTINATIILOR: O PERSPECTIVĂ EUROPEANĂ

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***Abstract***
Capitalizing tourist destinations is a complex and lengthy process whereby resources are gradually transferred within the area of trade relations. Marketer's proficiency is a key factor to accelerate this process, but also for making better and fuller use of existing touristic attractions of a destination. Other factors of influence are the involvement of the local population, general infrastructure, valuable and unique attractions, tourist preferences etc. Among the influences identified as positive while marketing a destination, we could name social trends monitoring that can supply information on consumer preferences evolution trends, valuable enough to gain a vital competitive advantage; maintaining conventional promotional activities, even when using internet based promotional channels and the need to quantify of as many processes possible that could have any impact on the destination image.

***Keywords*:** tourism destination, marketing, EDEN, promotion

**JEL CODES:** L83, M31

***Rezumat***
Valorizarea destinațiilor turistice este un proces complex și de durată prin care resursele turistice sunt transferate treptat în sfera de cuprindere a relațiilor comerciale. Competența marketerilor este un factor cheie pentru accelerarea acestui proces, dar și pentru utilizarea cât mai completă a atracțiilor turistice existente la nivelul unei destinații. Alți factori care influențează acest proces sunt implicarea populației locale, infrastructura generală, bogăția și unicitatea atracțiilor, preferințele turiștilor ș.a. Dintre influențele identificate ca având efecte pozitive pentru marketingul destinațiilor amintim monitorizarea tendințelor sociale care poate furniza informații privind tendințele evoluției preferințelor consumatorilor suficient de importante pentru a câștiga un avantaj competitiv hotărâtor; menținerea activităților convenționale de promovare, chiar și în condițiile utilizării canalelor de promovare bazate pe internet și necesitatea cuantificării a cât mai multor procese care influențează imaginea destinației.

***Cuvinte cheie:*** destinație turistică, marketing, EDEN, promovare

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Choosing the marketing strategy to promote tourist destinations is an important decision for which numerous factors shall be taken into consideration following a specific tourism markeign methodology. The major application of this methodology to the case of a tourist product is that, in the case of tourism destinations, multiple tourism products are being promoted, combined with their availability in the same geographical.

Choosing the marketing strategy to promote tourist destinations is an important decision for which numerous factors shall be taken into consideration following a specific tourism.Developing the marketing plan begins by analyzing the current situation, usually divided according to the limits established between influencing factors related to the destination and the factors that act as external influencers for the destination.

## 2. MARKETING IN TOURISM – CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES

In the first case, the method most commonly used is the SWOT analysis. Strengths stand for cases when the destination is relatively well known and has a status in relation to the main targeted audience, while enjoying a good reputation. Other strengths are the numerous and the variety of tourism resources, available tourism products that meet to a very large extent consumer preferences, a harmonious relation between stakeholders, a high degree of awareness and community involvement, general well-developed infrastructure, a brand and image identity, etc. Weaknesses can be low profitability of tourism service providers, poor quality of the basic services, low diversity leisure offers, a low level of staff training, poor accessibility due to infrastructure or social and political restrictions, touristic attractions damaged or undeveloped, loss of authentic travel experiences, sources of pollution, strong seasonal tourist travel (Rațiu et al., 2011).

To analyze the influence of external factors most frequently used is PEST analysis which requires micro and macro marketing knowledge, consumers and competitors analysis and how to position the destination or some of its products.

Validating a marketing strategy for a tourist destination is finalized by developing a marketing mix for each market segment (Cândea and Bogan, 2014). Because there are restrictions in terms of price and distribution, destination marketing mix focuses especially on promotion.

In these circumstances the destination marketing mix will focus on: creating a brand; marking; products and promotion opportunities and public relations.

## 3. EUROPEAN TOURISM TRENDS AND CROSS COUNTRY DIFFERENCES

Annual tourism growth is estimated at 4.0-4.5 %, exceeding the one billion international tourists. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC ), in 2013, tourism's contribution to global GDP was about 10%, representing 6,600 billion USD. The size of the sector is confirmed by the large number of jobs that it creates, in the same year it was reported that over 260 million people have worked in this sector. The growth trend is expected to continue, so that by 2020 the sector size is expeacted to double. The strongest factor in this respect is the growth of BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) which strongly stimulate both outgoing tourism to neighboring areas and also those to more distant destinations.

The European Union is an internationally important touristic destination. Among Member States, five are the destinations that fall in the top 10 worldwide locations. Tourism has the potential to contribute to economic growth and job creation and the development of rural and disadvantaged areas. In 2012, the European residents have made 1041 trips, of which over half were short trips of 1-3 days. The most wanted country level tourist destinations were Spain, Italy and France, which hosted almost half (47.6%) out of the whole overnight stays in Europe. Other attractive destinations were the United Kingdom, Austria, Germany etc. (fig. 1).

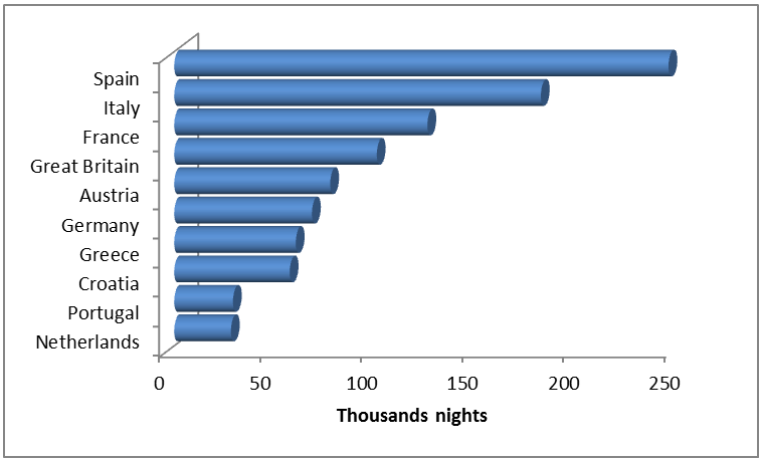



**FIGURE 1.** THE MOST IMPORTANT EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS IN 2012

Source: personal representation using Eurostat data



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The structure of destinations per country outlines the country's size and geographical position. Thus, small Nordic countries tend to rely more on outgoing travel; while in southern countries with high tourism potential local destinations are preferred (Scarpato et al., 2014).

Of the EU population, more than half participate in tourism activities, but even for this indicator important differences between countries can be noticed. The indicator ranges from 10% in Romania's case to 78% for Sweden.

Tourists stay in almost half a million accommodation structures (545 000 accommodation units) with a capacity of 13.1 million people. Of these, over half are concentrated in four Member States: Italy (2.3 million seats); Spain (1.9 million seats), Germany (1.8 million seats) and UK (1.6 million seats). - Eurostat data

Among member states, Germany and UK are eaders in outgoing tourism as the number of overnight stays of tourists from these countries account for over half of all overnight stays of tourists from EU. Number of nights spent abroad in relation to the number of residents was highest for Luxembourg (22.6 nights /capita), Cyprus (16.3), the Netherlands (12.1) and Ireland (12.0). Conversly we find Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and Portugal for the same indicator is subunitar.-Eurostat data

The most popular foreign destinations were Spain, Italy and France, which accounted for almost half (48.7%) of all overnight stays made abroad. Tourist intensity ratio between arrivals and the destination resident population was highest in Malta, Cyprus and Croatia, and in alpine areas and cities in Austria.

## 4. NATIONAL TOURISM TRENDS

In relation to tourism state in EU member states, Romania has a significant gap, being far behind them. However, Romania has a remarkable tourism potential, but this was not enough to turn it into a competitive tourist destination.

Romania's tourism potential on the natural component line is characterized by spectacular scenery, favorable climatic conditions, variety of landscape, ecosystems well preserved on a large scale with high biodiversity and resourceful spa tourism - salt springs, thermal sulphurous sludge, lakes, etc. (Bran et al., 2013). The anthropogenic potential includes traces of many civilizations that have succeeded in the country, monuments of art, religious sites, museum collections, customs and traditions well preserved, to which prestigious achievements can be added.

The high potential allows the organizing of many forms of tourism, of which the most important are tourism stay (sea, mountain, spa), itinerant tourism with cultural values, ecotourism, hunting and fishing.

In Romania are over 6000 units in the region, with a total capacity of 305.000 people (Popescu and Corboș, 2012).

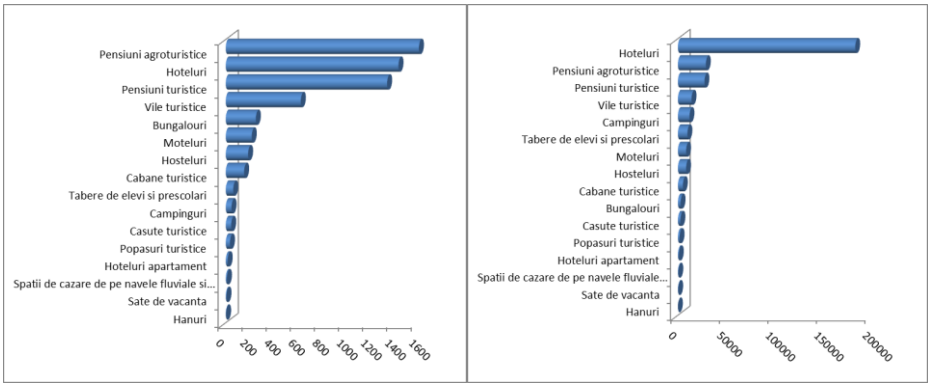



FIGURE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF TOURIST UNITS AND THE ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY ON UNIT CATEGORIES

Source: personal representation using NSI

Over half of the accommodation capacity is distributed between two tourist destinations: Seaside area (27%) and Bucharest and surroundings (26%). Next, in order, other towns and tourist trails (17%) mountain resorts (16%) spa resorts (13%) and the Danube Delta (1%) (fig. 3/10).

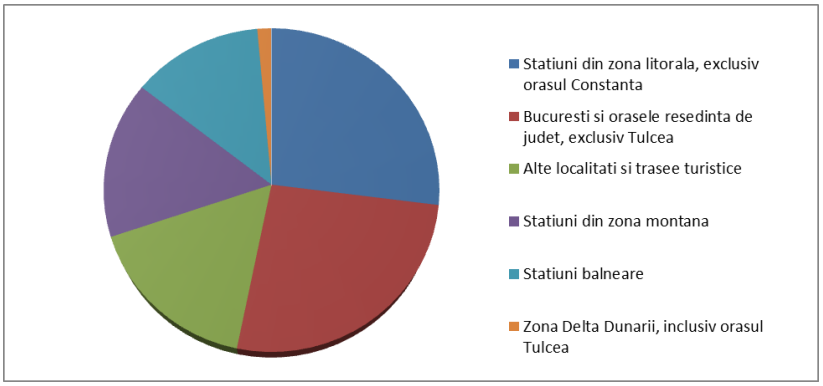



FIGURE 3. ACCOMMODATION STRUCTURE ON TOURISM DESTINATIONS

Source: personal representation using NSI

The structure of accommodation capacity on turistic destinations indicates the predominance of seaside tourism and cultural tourism, while mountain resorts and spas are less attractive. Also the remarkable potential of the Danube Delta is underrepresented in relation to the seaside destination, situated in the vicinity.

More than 7 million tourists arrive annually in Romania, the growth trend is quite obvious in recent years. Romanian tourists dominate in terms of accommodation capacity fill, representing 78-79% of the



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total. Foreign tourists that arrive in Romania are, mainly, from neighboring countries, the first three places being claimed by Hungary, Bulgaria and Moldova (fig.4).

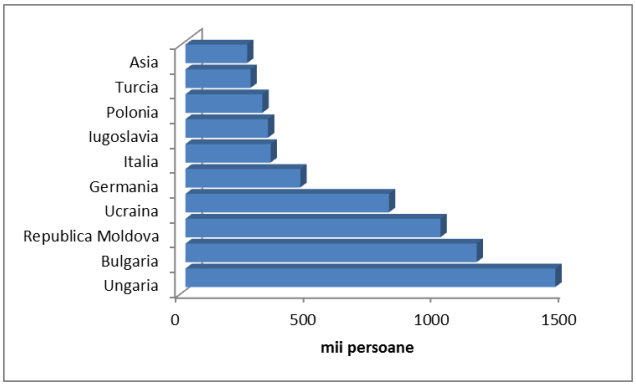



FIGURE 4. FOREIGN TOURISTS IN ROMANIA (PLACE OF ORIGIN)

Source: personal representation using NSI

Nationally, the relatively low degree of coordination in tourism planning of the territory led to an unbalanced development, the overuse of certain destinations and insufficient exploitation of others. European tourist traffic trends are noticeable in Romania, perspectives can be outlined based on the indicators, being favorable in general. Low uptake of accommodation capacity, decreasing of incoming tourism, the concentration of tourists in Bucharest and cities are items that can be considered problematic, while the correlation with European trends, master paln existance and of strategies for all forms of tourism, international enhanced promotion and further investment in the development of tourism structures can be considered favorable developments.

## 5. PROMOTING DESTINATIONS AT EUROPEAN LEVEL

The Variety of tourism offers shall be achieved by encouraging intra-European tourist flows. Thus one can follow the developed at European level of thematic tourism products, focusing on a number of heritage elements: cultural heritage (including cultural itineraries), contemporary culture, protected areas, health (including spa tourism), education, wine and food, history, sports, religion, agritourism, rural tourism.

At European level there are already a number of cross-border initiatives such as cycling and pilgrimage routes. For these and the like an European label guaranteeing the transnational character shall be created. The quality of tourist destinations depend heavily on the natural and cultural heritage. To ensure sustainability, European policy should take into account a number of concerns, among which the most important are:

- tourism seasonality; / environmental impact of travel transport;/ quality of travel tourism jobs;/ maintaining and improving the welfare of the local community ;/ minimize resource use and waste;/ conservation and enhancement of natural and cultural capital;
- increased accessibility;/ using tourism as a tool for sustainable development.

Tourist destinations is a key element in the European tourism policy. European destinations promotion is being made by use of several actions, the most common being: *Network* of *European Region for a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism* (NECSTouR) and Destinations of excellence (EDEN).

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

Romania is a complex macrodestination whose promotion can be achieved compared to many segments of the tourism market. On the other hand, Romania includes many and varied microdestinations, which in turn can be promoted both on local and international markets. Defining territorial units for microdestinations is a complex process, with different results depending on market segmentation. North Dobrogea shall be a real challenge in developing a consistent marketing strategy and effective integration in the context of policy development at national and European level.

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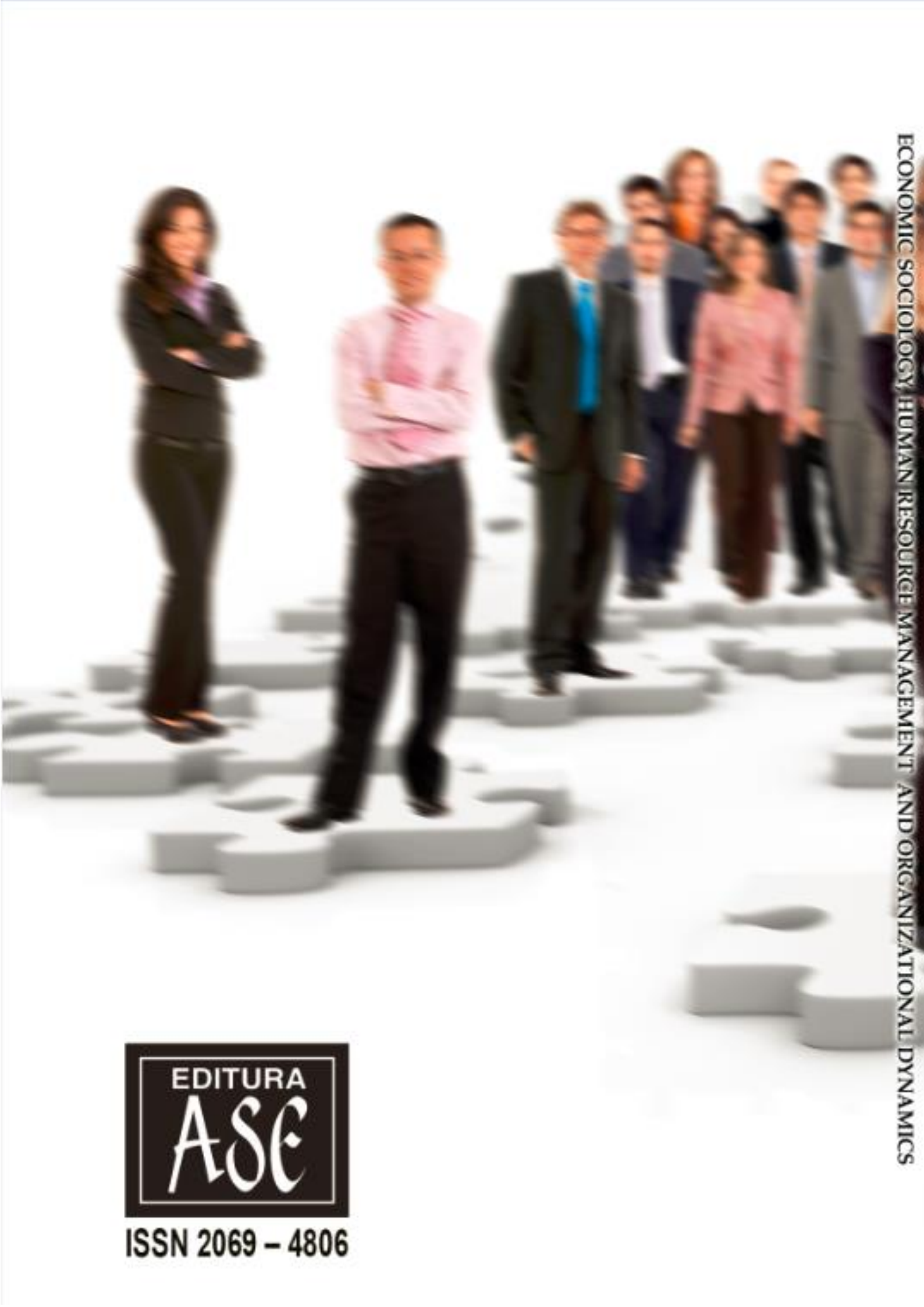
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