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1

CONTENTS

INCREASED INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS IN SCHOOL ACTIVITY AND IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION: OPTIONS, ATTITUDES, AND OPINIONS. A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT. The paper presents the results from a case study undertook in five different pre-university education institutions in the County of Alba (Romania) which prefaced the implementation of the school-family-community partnership programs as far as it ensured the agreement between the programs and the particularities of each comprehensive or high school. Purpose and objective of the research was to find out the parents' and teachers' positions towards the changing nature of the school-family relationship within the democratic society. Data were analysed through hierarchical cluster analysis and multidimensional scaling, with the help of which we identified easier the tendencies of the subjects' options and attitudes. In this way, the investigation revealed also the domains imposing a sustained activity of the Action Team for Partnerships set up in every school to implement the partnership programs.

Keywords: education, parents' involvement in school activities, Central and Eastern Europe;

Research design

In the second year of activity within the research project "Partnerships School-Family-Community. A Case Study in Alba County – a Qualitative-Quantitative Approach", we set to find out the options and attitudes of parents and teachers regarding the increasing role of parents in school and in community activities and in their children's education. Research took place in five schools of Alba County (Romania) with the aim to implement partnership programs based on the particularities of each comprehensive or high school. Basically, we attempted to find the answer to the following questions of our research:

- Which are the parents' options regarding the means of increasing their involvement in school activity and in their children's education?
- Which of these means are considered by the teachers to be appropriate for parents?
- In which fields of activity do parents want to get involved?
- Which are the fields that teachers find appropriate for parents to become involved in?

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These questions have compelled us to test the hypothesis of extant differences between the parents' and the teachers' options, attitudes and opinions.

Data were collected through a questionnaire composed of three sections: the first one presents eight statements and requires the subjects (parents and teachers) to express agreement or disagreement. The second proposes ten assertions on important fields in the school's activity and requires the subjects to assess the parents' most appropriate level of involvement. The third section consists in only one question that asks the parents and teachers to say if the program "Parents' Representative Council" should be extended, maintained or reduced.

The special literature mentions that most of the research on this issue consists in descriptive case studies that use small batches (Henderson and Mapp, 2002). Therefore, after consultations with the County School Inspectorate, we chose three high schools and two comprehensive schools that are representative for the pre-university system of education in our county. The participation of subjects from the population established for investigation was carried out according to the formula *ad libitum*. As we wanted to find out which were the options and attitudes of the whole community of teachers from the schools under study, and they were not that many, all the teachers from each institution were potential participants to our research. In the end, 137 teachers answered, 38 of which taught in comprehensive schools and 99 taught in high schools. The parents' batch was limited to those who had children in the 5th and the 9th grade. The reason for this option was that in the 5th grade, the pupils pass from primary to secondary education and in the 9th grade they pass from comprehensive to high school education. These changes imply that the students have to overcome certain difficulties in adjusting, which require, at least theoretically, greater support and guidance from the part of their parents. All in all, 296 parents participated, of which 90 had children in comprehensive schools and 206 in high schools.

In the pilot study, the analysis of data indicated that there were no significant differences between the options and attitudes of the teachers from comprehensive and high schools. The same thing is valid for the parents as well. This is why we stopped working with sub-batches chosen according to the subjects' school type (comprehensive or high school) and we used after all two compact batches of parents and teachers. In this way, the size of the batches gives credibility to the results that we obtained.

The questionnaire, besides stating the status of teacher or parent of the comprehensive or high school where the subjects come from, did not contain other questions necessary to statistically process the data, as are those related to social gender, education or income. From this reason, we could use in the analysis only two nominal variables as independent values, which implied a limitation of the data to a few descriptive aspects. Considering that multivariate interdependency analysis techniques do not require a difference

between the ontological status of variables, as opposed to the dependency techniques that are grounded on the way in which independent variables (predictors) relate to dependent variables that can be explained (Culic, 2004: 67), in our research design we decided to use hierarchical cluster analysis and multi-dimensional scaling for the analysis of collected data with the questions from the two sections of the questionnaire. With their help, we expected to identify more easily the main tendencies of choices, stands, and attitudes of the social groups of teachers and parents as to the increase of the involvement of parents in school activities and their children's education.

A comparison of the structure of teachers' and parents' options and attitudes

Ways of increasing the involvement of parents in school activity and children's education
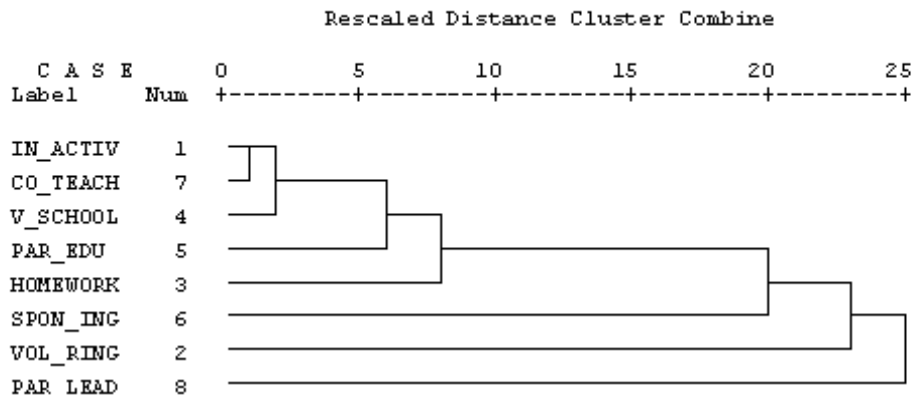
The hierarchical cluster analysis of the parents' options regarding the ways of their involvement in school activities and in their children's education is visualized in Graph 1. Easy to see, that there is only one cluster formed through a successful addition of the eight variables that result from the answers to the questions in the first part of the questionnaire.

Variables can be explained as follows:

IN_ACTiv (1) There should be more school activities that involve students, parents and teachers;

CO_TEACH (7) Besides the planned meetings, when they feel the need, parents should initiate personal contacts with the teachers;

V_SCHOOL (4) The parents should visit the school during the week to understand the experiences that their children have there;

PAR_EDU (5) There should be education classes to teach the parents how to help their children be successful in school. (Here we can notice that the branches are a little longer, which tells us that there is a certain difference in how parents' options are expressed);

HOMEWORK (3) Parents must supervise their children when they do their homework. (After this variable, three other variables are added one after the other, whose "branches" grow suddenly, which tells us that they are significantly different from the previous ones);

SPON_ING (6) The first link of parents with the school should be to sponsor certain activities, collect funds and other such actions;

VOL_RING (2) Parents should be encouraged to work as volunteers in school;

PAR_LEAD (8) Parents should take part in the meetings of school management.

5

The length of the arms of the last three variables show that they have little in common with the variables grouped at the beginning of the cluster formation process. In other words, the parents' option is headed in a small extent towards such ways of involvement in school activity.

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Dendrogram using Complete Linkage

                    Rescaled Distance Cluster Combine

     C A S E           0         5        10        15        20        25
   Label     Num     +---------+---------+---------+---------+---------+

   IN_ACTIV    1
   CO_TEACH    7
   V_SCHOOL    4
   PAR_EDU     5
   HOMEWORK    3
   SPON_ING    6
   VOL_RING    2
   PAR_LEAD    8
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Graph 1. Dendrogram of the structure of parents' options as to ways of increasing their involvement in school activities and in their children's education

Multidimensional scaling that produces Graph 2 validates the hierarchical analysis cluster; it clearly shows the patterns formed by the parents' options concerning ways of increasing their involvement. If we relate to the origin of the two dimensions (the horizontal and the vertical axis) we can observe the concentration of variables from the beginning stage of the grouping process close to where the axes intersect and the last three variables from the dendrogram that have the longest branches are placed at a high geometrical distance from the intersection and implicitly, from all the other variables.

We can say, after the application of the two techniques – cluster analysis and multidimensional scaling – that the last three ways of increasing the parents' involvement in school activity, meaning sponsoring, volunteering and participation to management are the less agreed by parents. Such a fact represents practically a line that the Action Team for Partnerships needs to follow in order to build viable school-family-community partnership relations (see the final comments).
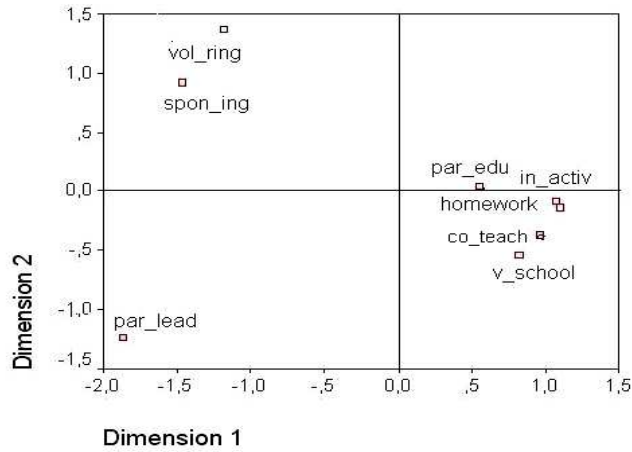
Graph 2. Structure of the parents' stand as to ways of increasing their involvement in school activity and their children's education

The hierarchical cluster analysis of the teachers' options is presented in Graph 3. Its "reading" highlights that sponsoring, seen as a first manner of parents' involvement and the participation within the meetings of the school management gathered the fewest options and that is why their branches grow suddenly as compared to the others. Here is the first significant difference between the parents' and the teachers' stand: the former reject volunteering as a major option while the latter accept it as a proper way of parents' involvement in school activity.
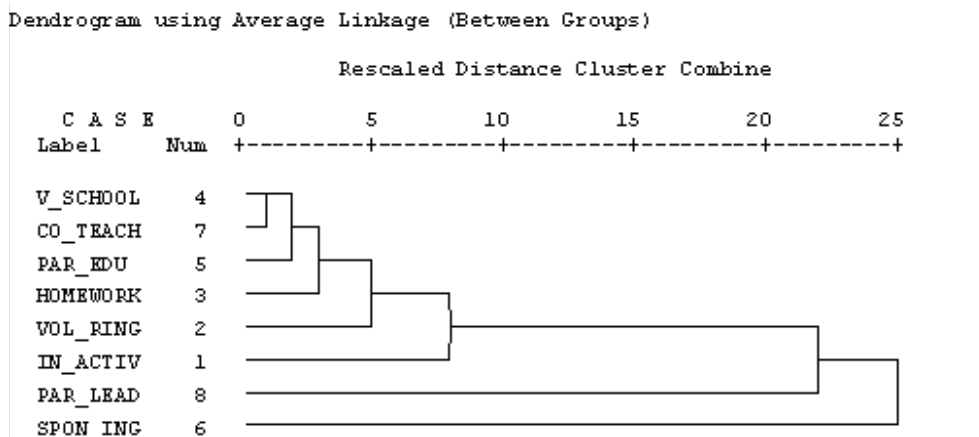
Graph 3. Dendrogram of structure of the teachers' options as to ways of increasing the parents' involvement in school activity and their children's education

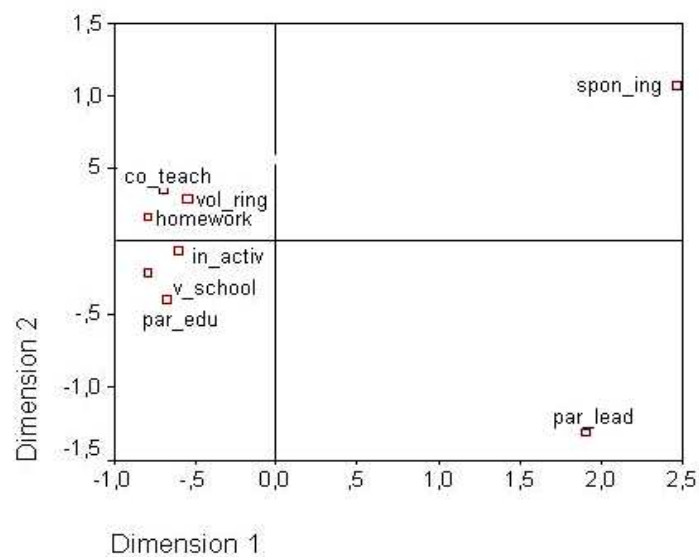The same result from the dendrogram is produced by multidimensional scaling (Graph 4), which places at a significant geometrical distance the ways that gathered the fewest options of teachers. In addition, it shows a significant concentration of the other options.

Graph 4. Structure of the teachers' stand as to ways of increasing the parents' involvement in school activity

How can we explain the disagreement between parents and teachers regarding volunteering? Why is it useful from the perspective of teaching staff and the parents' perspective does not see it as useful? A possible answer is found in the observations at the end of the article so as not to interrupt the logic of the present study (see the final comments).

Areas of involvement in school activity: Options and attitudes of parents and teachers

As I mentioned before, the second section of the questionnaire lists 10 statements that had to be evaluated by the subjects on a four-level scale: 3 – the parents should be actively involved; 2 – the parents should be regularly referred to, 1 – the parents should sometimes be referred to, 0 – it is not an appropriate role for parents. The hierarchical cluster analysis of the parents' attitudes is presented in Graph 5.

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Dendrogram using Complete Linkage

                        Rescaled Distance Cluster Combine

     C A S E         0         5        10        15        20        25
    Label     Num    +---------+---------+---------+---------+---------+

    PROMOT_     5     ┐
    SET_NORM    6     ┤
    EVALUAT_    4     ┘
    PLANNING    3
    PART_EV_    9
    EDU_POL_    1
    SELECT_M    7
    BUDGET      8
    CRITERIA   10
    INCREASE    2
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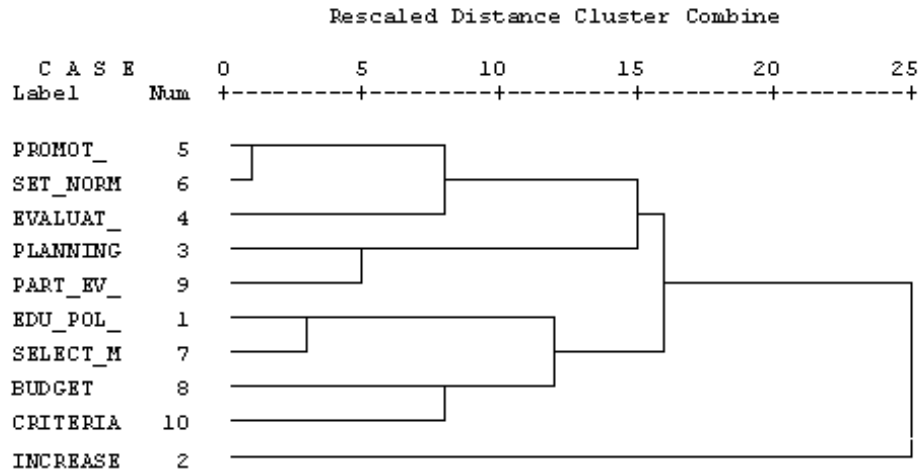
Graph 5. Dendrogram of the structure of the parents' attitudes towards the areas of involvement in school activity

The dendrogram has four clusters and an isolated variable. The first cluster is made of the successive grouping of the following 3 variables:

PROMOT_ (5) Participation in setting the means for promoting the students;

SET_NORM (6) Participation in establishing discipline norms in school;

EVALUAT_ (4) Evaluation of the level of competence of teachers and directors; rewarding the best. (This last variable is united with the first two ones at a significant geometrical distance, which tells us that the parents are reluctant to get involved in the evaluation of the teaching staff. The variables 3 and 9 form a second cluster that becomes united with the former one at a distance that shows a weak relation with the variables that form the first cluster);

PLANNING (3) Planning the aims and objectives that concern the increased involvement of parents in school activity;

PART_EV_ (9) Participation in school events.

The third cluster is made of 2 variables:

EDU_POL_ (1) The development of guiding lines for the school's educational policy. (This is the field which is considered by most parents as inappropriate for their involvement. From this reason, the variable is isolated and does not belong to a cluster);

SELECT_M (7) Selection of manuals and other teaching materials.

These two variables become united at an appreciable geometric distance in the next step of the agglomeration process, with variables 8 and 10, which form the fourth cluster.

BUDGET (8) Increase in the school's budget;

CRITERIA (10) Establish the criteria for acknowledgement and hierarchy of the special performances of teachers.

The distance between clusters 3 and 4 speaks in fact about the different attitudes of the parents when involved in these domains. At last, the agglomeration process ends with a single variable 10, which tells us that the parents simply reject the increase of their degree of involvement in school activities. Actually, as we shall see, most choose to preserve the current situation.

INCREAS_ (2) Developing means of increasing the parents' involvement in school.

Multidimensional scaling is more accurate as it adjusts the real proximities between variables, so that Graph 6 clearly shows us the isolated variable, and the position of the variables highlights their grouping.
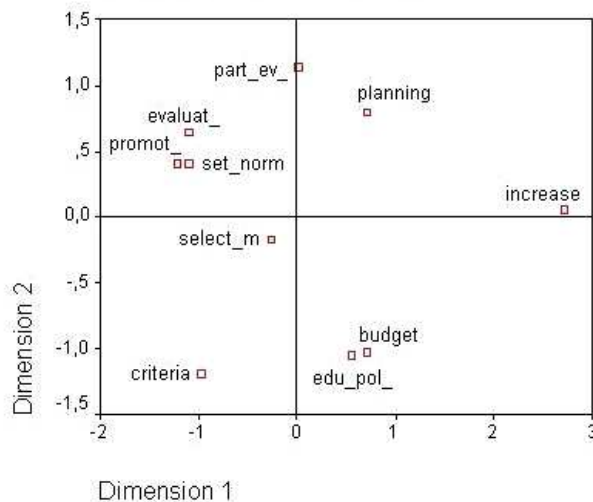
Graph 6. Areas of activity from school in which parents want to get involved

We notice that the last two clusters are placed under the horizontal axis, and the isolated variable is at a significant geometric distance from them. This indicates to the Action Team for Partnerships another direction for action. For instance, setting the optional courses and finding means of institutionalised support to help children with learning difficulties that should eliminate the practice of tutoring.

10

The teachers' attitudes as to the fields of activity in school that they consider to be appropriate for the parents' involvement is structured in Graph 7.
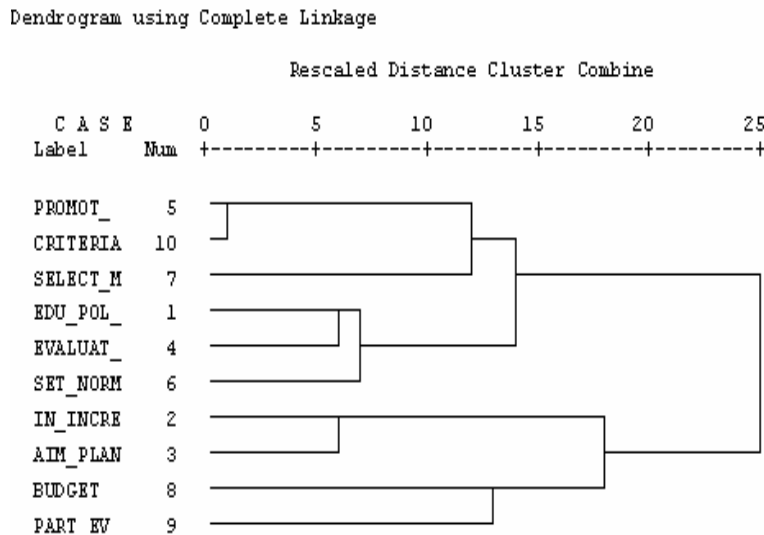
Graph 7. Dendrogram of the structure of teachers' attitudes concerning the appropriate fields of parents' involvement in school activity

This dendrogram also has four clusters, however, we no longer have an isolated variable. The agglomeration process from the dendrogram shows that from six fields rated by the teachers to be their most important preferences for parents' involvement – variables 5, 10, 1, 4, 2 and 3 – only three are the same with those indicated by the parents. These are the variables 5, 1 and 3. A larger difference between the teachers' and the parents' rates can be noticed in variable 2, which refers to developing means of increasing the parents' involvement in school activities, which is however no longer considered by the parents to be appropriate for them.

Anyway, after each fourth cluster, the branches of the successive groupings become suddenly longer, indicating weak links between them. This is another aspect to which the Action Team for Partnerships must pay high attention. Graph 8, which results from multidimensional scaling, visualizes better the patterns that make the difference between the parents' and the teachers' stand.

The first pattern that catches our attention refers to the variable 3 (planning the aims and objectives that concern the increased involvement of parents in school activity). It is placed in isolation and at a relatively large

geometric distance from other variables, a fact which denotes a weak, insignificant relation with them. The second pattern refers to variable 9, 8, 2 (participation in school events, increase in the school's budget, and increasing the parents' involvement in school) which are placed at a relatively large geometric distance from other variables – from here a possible unfavourable attitude of teachers towards the parents' involvement in these three fields.
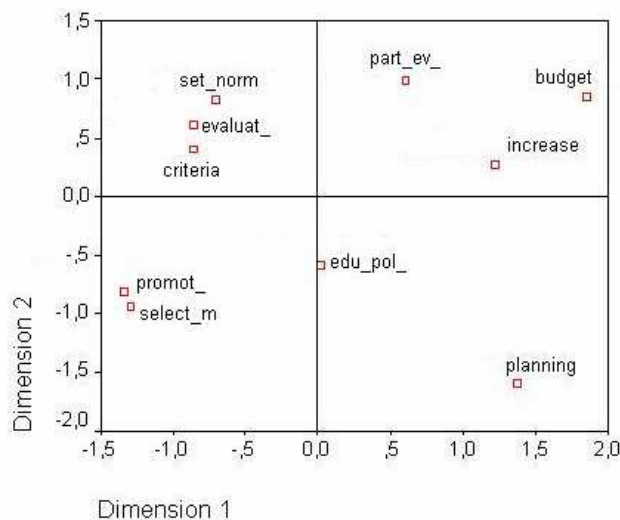
Graph 8. School fields of activity that the teachers find appropriate for parents' involvement

Opinions about the Parents' Representative Council

Graph 9 presents the result of processing the subjects' answer to the opinion question in the third section of the questionnaire. Resistance to change is the term that defines the best the stand of most subjects, teachers or parents. The addition of answers favourable to continuing the Parents' Representative Council in the same manner to those that favour its decrease clearly shows the option of the two groups to maintain a status-quo of the body that represents the parents' interests in school. If we are to take into consideration the quite high percentage of people who answer "I do not know" or "No answer", then it is clear that many of the subjects do not yet understand the parents' role in the school's social space. This trend of attitudes contradicts the opinion and behaviour of the members of a modern society who consider school to be the centre of a democratic community life, respectively that school-family-community partnerships are an important dimension of the civil society.

12
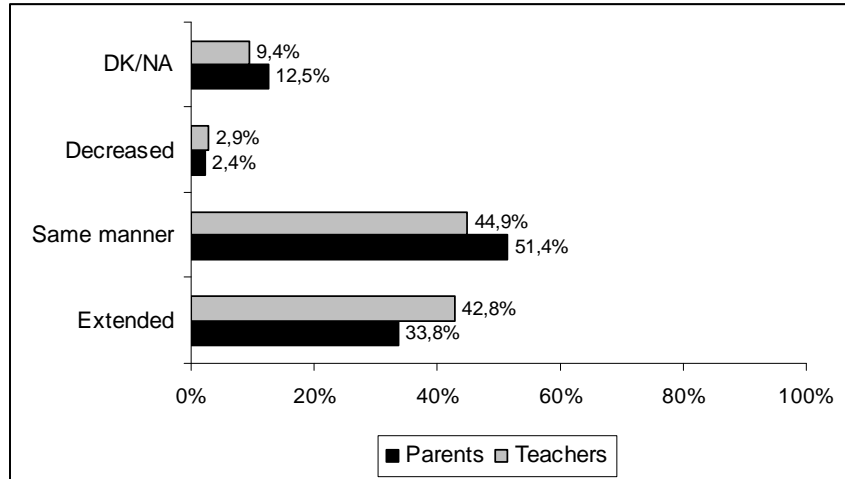
**Graph 9. Distribution of the subjects' opinion regarding
the Parents' Representative Council**

If we report the research results to the action strategies regarding the parents' involvement in school activity and their children's education which have become national standards in many countries of the world (Agabrian, 2005), we believe that something must be done to promote them into the pre-university education system from our country. We believe that we must start from the theoretical and methodological training in institutions of teachers regarding the place and role of school-family-community partnerships in school activity centred on ensuring the student's school and life success. All the activities and actions carried out in this purpose should, in a manifest and implicit way, aim to change the mentality and behaviour of the teaching staff towards the parents' presence in the school's social space. The finality of efforts becomes valid when teachers from all levels of the pre-university education system will acknowledge the obligation and responsibility of training in order to ensure parents' efficient involvement in their children's education and in the school activity.
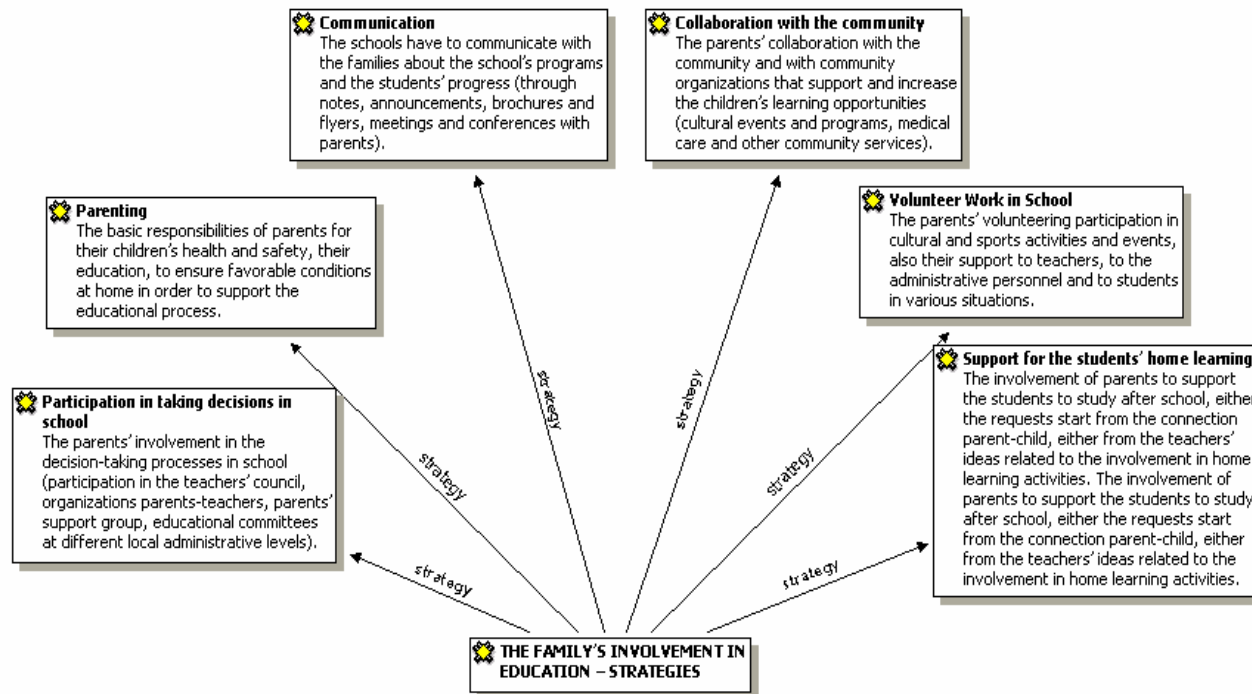
Final comments

After 30 years of research, the school-family-community relationships have been conceptualised as action strategies of parents, of the school and of the community that efficiently support the students' success in school, their satisfaction and welfare in the family and school environment as in the wider

13

frame of the community in which they live (Epstein et al., 2005). Each strategy has its specific objectives and its own activities to achieve the objectives, but the integration and implementation of standards must be based on the local needs and particularities (Graph 10). In order to achieve this, and in order to elaborate and carry out efficient partnership programs, every comprehensive or high school must create an Action Team for Partnerships.

The purpose of the first investigation carried out within the project mentioned in the beginning of the article was to identify the state of school-family-community relationships in the pre-university education system in Alba County. Our research discovered that they are still very much reduced to the "traditional" meetings with parents. The semantic network from Graph 11 (Agabrian and Millea, 2005: 37) contains the "standard" activities carried out during these meetings. A parents' meeting usually has two almost invariable components: the first one is the analysis of the students' grades; the second one are issues such as financial or material support, including doing work to improve the living and learning conditions in the school. We believe that this situation, which is well-known by the parents, can be an explanation for the tendency to refuse their involvement in volunteering activities. Likewise, the fact that the rules of sponsoring are not applied, and instead, there is a constant appeal to direct financial support, that most teachers and parents name and understand as "sponsoring" determine the parents to reject this type of involvement.

In contrast, we make a short presentation of the significance and objectives of volunteering as a scientifically grounded action strategy. Volunteering activities must have meaning and value for the parents, who should feel appreciated and welcome. The expertise and skills that parents and family members add together ensure the necessary support for the teaching staff and administrative personnel, so that the objective of the Action Team for Partnerships should be to improve the methods for recruitment, training and work within the involvement programs which support students and activities carried out in schools.

Communication
The schools have to communicate with the families about the school's programs and the students' progress (through notes, announcements, brochures and flyers, meetings and conferences with parents).

Collaboration with the community
The parents' collaboration with the community and with community organizations that support and increase the children's learning opportunities (cultural events and programs, medical care and other community services).

Parenting
The basic responsibilities of parents for their children's health and safety, their education, to ensure favorable conditions at home in order to support the educational process.

Volunteer Work in School
The parents' volunteering participation in cultural and sports activities and events, also their support to teachers, to the administrative personnel and to students in various situations.

Participation in taking decisions in school
The parents' involvement in the decision-taking processes in school (participation in the teachers' council, organizations parents-teachers, parents' support group, educational committees at different local administrative levels).

Support for the students' home learning
The involvement of parents to support the students to study after school, either the requests start from the connection parent-child, either from the teachers' ideas related to the involvement in home learning activities. The involvement of parents to support the students to study after school, either the requests start from the connection parent-child, either from the teachers' ideas related to the involvement in home learning activities.

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THE FAMILY'S INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION – STRATEGIES

Graph 10. Strategies to involve the family in their children's education

Graph 11. Semantic network: a "traditional" meeting with parents

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STRESS PREDICTORS FOR THE EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED IN PRE-ACCESSION ROMANIA

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ABSTRACT. This paper attempts to highlight the main differences in the manifestations of stress between employed and unemployed people in pre-accession Romania. We considered variables like state and trait anxiety, optimism, social support, self-esteem, locus of control, positive and negative affect and the main coping mechanisms. Based on previous investigations, we expected that unemployed persons have higher levels of stress even after controlling for demographic variables (gender and age), education and individual resources. The empirical research took place in Cluj county in June 2006. We found no significant differences regarding the optimism level and the state anxiety, but the unemployed, on average, had a higher level of stress, lower self-esteem and a more external locus of control. There were several coping strategies adopted by both employed and unemployed people, yet those who lost their job used behavioural disengagement more frequently.

Keywords: stress predictors; stress management; unemployed; social support

Introduction

Researchers consider that there are a couple of important social causes in the development and maintenance of mental health. A paper published by the World Health Organization, *Social determinants of health* presents a summary of findings linking social determinants such as social status, stress, social exclusion, work, unemployment, social support, addiction, and health in a general sense (Wilkinson and Marmot, 1998).

Work has been seen as an important element of mental health and in developing one's identity for quite a while now (Dollard and Winifield, 2002). Many see unemployment as a stressful event for most individuals. Losing your job is ninth in "The Social Readjustment Rating Scale" which consists of 38 stressful life events (Holmes and Rahe, 1967).

A large variety of studies from medical sciences, behavioural and social sciences underline the negative social and health consequences of unemployment. Researches from the 80s indicate higher psychological distress among the unemployed as compared to employed persons. In a longitudinal study which

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covers the 1968-1992 period, Lavis (1998) finds significant correlations between unemployment, high morbidity and mortality rate, and highlights the negative impact of long-term unemployment.

The research of Jahoda, Lazarsfeld and Zeisel on unemployment in Marienthal in the 1930s had a formative influence over the future of unemployment research in the social sciences (Cole, 2007). In her later work, Jahoda was also preoccupied to answer the question why work is so important for the psychological well-being of the person. She showed that employment imposes a time structure, implies regularly shared experiences and contacts with people outside the nuclear family, links individuals, goals, and purposes, defines aspects of personal status and identity, and enforces activity (Jahoda, 1981). Those latent consequences of employment help us understand the motivation to work and explain why "...employment is psychologically supportive even when conditions are bad..." and "... why unemployment is psychologically destructive" (Jahoda, 1981: 188). Jahoda considered that unemployment stress leads to demoralisation and the loss of self-respect, for those who look for a job without any success, to irrational self-doubt and depression. Therefore, unemployed people can cope with job loss with resignation, and the worker tends to blame himself for the job loss rather than impersonal economic events. Jahoda underlines that other unemployed people react against the situation more aggressively, such as delinquency (Jahoda, 1979). This model views the unemployed as passive, unstructured, and inactive individuals.

Other studies stress upon the idea of the affective and behavioural sequel of unemployment, and the depressive affect is probably the most frequently studied psychological variable among unemployed people. Murphy and Athanasou (1999) are representative for this direction of research.

In the study of a possible model of response to the stress of involuntary job loss, Gowan and Gatewood (1997) underlined that recent models of response to job loss have attempted to explain these differences in individual responses. For example, DeFrank and Ivancevich (1986) present a model of response to job loss, which includes both job losers and job survivors. Their model, which includes more than 70 variables, points out that the effect of job loss is not always negative. They tried to identify variables that moderate individuals' reactions to job loss.

Subsequent studies proved large individual differences in response to job loss stressing upon the idea that some individuals may react in a passive manner while others respond more proactively, searching for a new job, staying physically active, enrolling in retraining programs (Leana and Feldman, 1994). The Leana and Feldman model includes three immediate consequences or reactions to job loss: a) perceptual, b) emotional, and c) physiological (Leana and Feldman, 1994). Long-term consequences can be changes in financial

status, social and family relationships, and conditions of employment. They discussed also other categories of variables such: unemployment rates in the industry and occupation of the job loser, the individual's demographic and personality characteristics, coping resources, and individual coping strategies.

An alternative model is Schneer`s model (1993), which assumes that job loss leads to immediate negative outcomes such as financial insecurity, job finding difficulty, which are present for all individuals, but not necessary to continue over time. Scheer underlines the negative effect of job loss on an individual's self-esteem and indicates five groups of moderator variables that influence the immediate outcomes. He looks at the unemployment rate in the relevant labour pool, the degree to which the individual's financial status depends upon work, the social support available, the individual's psychological investment in work, and the extent of self-blame on the part of the individual (Scheer, 1993)..

Gowan and Gatewood (1997) follow the same direction of the conceptualisation of job loss model, including categories of variables for immediate and long-term effects, and mediators on job loss. Their model is organised into four categories: a) individual and situational coping resources, b) mediating processes (cognitive appraisal and coping strategies, c) immediate effects and d) long-term effects (physiological, psychological, and social well-being).

As David Howell (2002) stressed, it is widely accepted that global forces of technology and trade have caused a profound shift in labour demand toward the most highly skilled, generating sharply rising earnings inequality in flexible labour markets (United States) and persistently high unemployment in rigid labour markets (Europe).

For Romania, even before 1989, full employment was just a formal reality as for all the communist countries (Preda, 2000). After 1990, official unemployment became a Romanian reality as in other post-communist countries (Brown, 2007). The Romanian governmental implemented the Law on Unemployment in 1991 (Law No.1/1991). Studies on the psychological effects off job loss started to develop as well.

Research design, objectives and hypotheses

The general objective was to compare the particular aspects of stress related to the unemployed and the employees.

A specific objective we proposed to analyse was the stress level of the unemployed, to measure the emotional reactions to job loss, and the elements that influence the stress level for unemployed people.

The general hypothesis was that the level of stress varies with individual characteristics like age, level of education, unemployment duration, and individual stress management resources.

Working hypotheses:

- Unemployment generates stress for the unemployed people; based on the duration of their unemployment period, long term unemployed are more stressed that the employed people;
- Unemployed people's age influences the stress level, with older people being disadvantaged; the educational level also influences stress level in favour of more educated people;
- There are differences in state anxiety level, locus of control, social support, optimism level, self-esteem and positive and negative affect between employees and unemployed people, in favour of the first ones;
- There are differences regarding stress management between employed and unemployed people; unemployment stress influences the coping strategies adopted.

Research methodology and participants

We selected 269 unemployed people registered to the County Unemployment Agency in Cluj (North-West Romania) in June 2006, and 191 employed people who agreed to participate in the research. All the interviews of the unemployed people took place at the County Unemployment Agency.

Participants' age for unemployed people ranged between 18 and 59 years old, they were 26.8% male and 73.2% female. The unemployment duration ranged from 1 month and the long-term unemployed. We considered unemployment from 1 month to 12 months and long-term unemployment from 12 months on, as Bartley and Ferrie (2001) defined it. Education levels ranged from 8th grade to over 4 years of college.

The age of employed interviewees varied between 17 and 60, they were both male (42.4%) and female (57.6%), with an educational level ranging from 8th grade to over 4 years of college.

Research instruments and variables

We measured stress with *Perceived Stress Questionnaire* elaborated by Levenstein et al. (1993). The scale consists of 30 items, the minimum possible value of the score is 30 and the maximum is 120. We calculated Chronbach's alpha coefficient and we obtained the value of .8724 for unemployed people

and .9026 for employees. We kept them, as the value of the additive scale would have decreased if removed.

Table 1.

Educational level of respondents

Years of schooling	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
8.00	20	7.4	7.4
10.00	50	18.6	26.0
12.00	171	63.6	89.6
16.00	28	10.4	100.0
Total	269	100.0	

To measure state and trait anxiety we used *State –Trait Anxiety Inventory* (STAI-X1 and STAI-X2) developed by Spielberger et al. (1988). Both state and trait inventory scale consists of 20 items. The minimum possible value is 20 and the maximum is 80. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient value (alpha = .9100 for unemployed and .9238 for employees, for State Anxiety Inventory and alpha = .8228 for unemployed and .8415 for employees, for Trait Anxiety Inventory) and the values for items were registration close values.

The *Life Orientation Test* (LOT) elaborated by Scheer and Carver (1992) measured optimism level. The score can go from 12 to 60. Cronbach's alpha coefficient value (alpha = .6422, and alpha = .7540) and the values for items were close to this value of the coefficient.

To measure self-esteem we used the *Self-Esteem Scale* (SES), elaborated by Rosenberg (1965). It consists of 10 statements/items and the score can go from 10 to 40. Cronbach's alpha coefficient value for unemployed and employed people (alpha = .7021, and alpha = .6994) and the values for items were close.

For stress management strategies we used brief COPE, elaborated by Carver (1997) comprising 14 subscales with 28 items (two items per scale) that measure different coping strategies such as: active coping, planning, positive reframing, acceptance, humour, religion, using emotional support, using instrumental support, self-distraction, denial, venting, substance, behavioural disengagement, and self-blame. For this scale, we introduced another variable, a dichotomist one that indicated if the strategy is present or absent for each individual.

For brief COPE Cronbach's alpha coefficient value (alpha = .7860 for unemployed people, alpha = .6843 for employed people) and the values for items were close so we kept all these items for the study as well.

To measure LOC we used *Work Locus of Control Scale* (WLCS) elaborated by Paul E. Spector in 1988[1]. Cronbach's alpha coefficient value (alpha = .8045, alpha = .8483 for employed people) and the values for items were close, so we considered both items. The score for this 16 statements scale can go from 16 to 96.

Social support level and social support satisfaction were measured with *Social Support Questionnaire* short form (SSQSR) elaborated by I.G. Sarason et al. (1987). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient value for unemployed and employed people (alpha = .8418 for the Cronbach's alpha coefficient value for unemployed people (alpha = .8418) and Cronbach's alpha coefficient value for employed people (alpha = .9005) and the values for the component items were close so we kept all of them. The social support satisfaction can go from one to six, the number of persons in the social support network vary theoretically from zero to *n* persons.

For negative and positive affect we used PANAS-X, elaborated by David Watson and Lee Anna Clark (1994) which consists of a list of 60 items into 13 subscales, measuring general and specific emotional states (positive affect and negative affect, fear, hostility, guilt, sadness, joviality, self-assurance, attentiveness, shyness, fatigue, serenity and surprise). Cronbach's alpha coefficient (alpha = .8496 for unemployed and alpha = .8199 for employed) and the items had close values, so we kept them all.

The demographic information details we noted were subjects' age, sex, education attainment, and unemployment duration (for unemployed).

The following table presents the means and standard deviations for perceived stress, anxiety, optimism, self-esteem, LOC, social support for the employed and unemployed participants. We calculated the same values for negative and positive affect, joviality, hostility, guilt, attentiveness, fatigue, self-assurance, shyness, serenity, fear, sadness and surprise, and stress management.

Table 2.

Descriptive statistics for the core variables

	Employment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Stress	employed	191	62.7277	11.5567	.8362
	unemployed	269	65.0743	10.9433	.6672
State anxiety	employed	191	40.5550	9.8347	.7116

[1] http:/chuma.usf.edu/~spector/scales/wlcsover.html

STRESS PREDICTORS FOR THE EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED IN PRE-ACCESSION ROMANIA

	Employment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Trait anxiety	unemployed	269	41.6691	10.2089	.6224
	employed	191	42.0366	7.6209	.5514
Optimism	unemployed	269	44.3532	7.8440	.4783
	employed	191	28.5550	5.3769	.3891
Self-esteem	unemployed	269	27.8141	4.8000	.2927
	employed	191	28.6387	3.2832	.2376
Locus of control	unemployed	269	27.9926	3.5037	.2136
	employed	191	48.7696	12.6045	.9120
Social support	unemployed	269	53.5019	12.5343	.7642
	employed	191	2.2799	1.8111	.1310
Social support satisfaction	unemployed	269	1.9042	1.3112	7.995E-02
	employed	191	4.9030	.8930	6.462E-02
	unemployed	269	4.7542	.9375	5.716E-02
Negative affect	employed	191	19.7225	6.2980	.4557
	unemployed	268	18.5970	6.3466	.3877
Positive affect	employed	191	29.7696	5.7491	.4160
	unemployed	268	28.2873	6.3420	.3874
Joviality	employed	191	24.5550	5.6060	.4056
	unemployed	268	25.9440	6.8663	.4194
Hostility	employed	191	11.6440	4.6869	.3391
	unemployed	268	10.5597	4.2901	.2621
Guilt	employed	191	10.4450	5.7056	.4128
	unemployed	268	9.4104	3.2630	.1993
Attentiveness	employed	191	12.2094	2.8188	.2040
	unemployed	268	11.6269	2.8023	.1712
Tiredness	employed	191	8.8901	2.8843	.2087
	unemployed	268	7.1231	2.6655	.1628
Confidence	employed	191	18.1571	4.1073	.2972
	unemployed	268	17.0746	4.6778	.2857
Shyness	employed	191	8.1937	2.6831	.1941
	unemployed	268	7.9851	2.5498	.1558
Serenity	employed	191	9.6021	2.3348	.1689
	unemployed	268	9.1716	2.4480	.1495
Fear	employed	191	10.7539	3.7144	.2688
	unemployed	268	10.6157	4.1178	.2515
Sadness	employed	191	10.7277	4.6746	.3382
	unemployed	268	10.1231	4.0599	.2480
Surprise	employed	191	5.2408	2.0608	.1491
	unemployed	268	5.1530	2.1747	.1328

Table 3.

Stress management strategies used by employed people

		Strategy is missing	Strategy is present	Total
		Substance abuse		
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed	128	63	191
	unemployed	226	43	269
Total		354	106	460
		Venting		Total
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed	5	186	191
	unemployed	19	250	269
Total		24	436	460
		Humour		Total
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed	13	178	191
	unemployed	62	207	269
Total		75	385	460
		Self-blame		Total
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed	6	185	191
	unemployed	23	246	269

Table 4.

The stress management strategies frequently used by the unemployed

		Strategy is missing	Strategy is present	
		Behavioural disengagement		Total
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed	113	78	191
	unemployed	122	147	269
Total		235	225	460
		Acceptance		Total
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed	7	184	191
	unemployed	2	267	269
Total		9	451	460

Table 5.

Stress management strategies with no significant differences

		Strategy is missing	Strategy is present	
		Mental disengagement	Total	
Employment	employed	4	187	191
	unemployed	7	262	269
Total		11	449	460
		Active coping	Total	
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed		191	191
	unemployed	3	266	269
Total		3	457	460
		Denial	Total	
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed	14	177	191
	unemployed	16	253	269
Total		30	430	460
		Using emotional support	Total	
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed	6	185	191
	unemployed	4	265	269
Total		10	450	460
		Using instrumental support	Total	
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed	2	189	191
	unemployed	4	265	269
Total		6	454	460
		Positive reframing	Total	
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed	2	189	191
	unemployed		269	269
Total		2	458	460
		Planning	Total	
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed	0	1191	191
	unemployed		269	269
Total		0	460	460
		Religion	Total	
		.00	1.00	
Employment	employed	4	187	191
	unemployed	7	262	269
Total		11	449	460

27

We can see from tables 2-5 that there are differences in the manifestation of stress between the employed and unemployed. The next step was to analyse the statistical significance of these differences.

Results and discussion

In order to identify the significant differences between unemployed and employed people regarding stress manifestation, we used t test for all variables that we investigated: stress, state anxiety, trait anxiety, optimism, self-esteem, locus of control, social support, social support satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect, fear, hostility, guilt, sadness, joviality, self-assurance, attentiveness, shyness, fatigue, serenity, surprise, and the 14 coping strategies.

Level of stress

For stress perception scale, we used a mean value of 65.07 for unemployed people and 62.72 for employees. To compare them we used t test and we obtained a value of t = 2.214, p< 0.05. In other words, the unemployed people have the mean value of stress significantly higher that the one of the employed people. We can conclude that the empirical evidence supports the hypothesis that unemployed persons face higher levels of stress than the employed.

Level of anxiety

Both situational anxiety and state anxiety do no significantly differ between the two categories of participants.

Level of optimism

There are no significant differences between employed and unemployed people from this point of view.

Level of self-esteem

T test indicates for self-esteem significant differences at p<0.05 in favour of employees. That means that employed people have a better self-image than the unemployed. As expected, the workplace can be a good source of personal satisfaction and positive validation.

Results underline the idea that the first source of self-acknowledgement is the dynamic of personal success and failure. Success raises the self-esteem level and failure diminishes it (Matei, 1994). From this point of view, it was not hard to understand why job loss, if seen by the person as a major personal failure, determines a significant degradation of self-esteem. However, in any country with high levels of structural unemployment in the recent past, some people may not interpret job loss in terms of personal failure. Low self-esteem might be fuelled rather by the fear of not being able to find a new job, not

succeeding at a job interview. This might possibly be the case especially for dismissed industrial manual workers.

Locus of control (LOC)

From LOC perspective, we can observe differences, meaning that unemployed people have a significant higher score of this variable, respectively a LOC much more externally oriented. At t test we obtained a t=3.981, p<0.05. Researchers (e.g. Rotter, 1966; Matei, 1994) pointed out that LOC tends to be more external after traumatic events, and we can consider unemployment one of them.

Social support level

Social support network is significantly bigger to employed people versus unemployed ones. We found a significant difference of means, at t=2.581, p<0.05.

Social support is one of the most important individual resources for the stress management process. Cohen and Syme (1985) considered that social support is the amount of resources that other persons can offer to us.

There are a couple of psychosocial factors that can influence us physically and psychologically, among which changing or loss of the job, moving to another town, death of a loved one etc. All these aspects imply important modifications into the social support network. It does seem that a level of social integration influences general health if any is available. Cohen et al. (1986) consider that stress level negatively correlates with the level of social support. Westman et al. (2004) conducted a study among unemployed people and their spouses assessing state anxiety and social support. Our findings indicate that social support is negatively correlated with anxiety.

To conclude, the fact that colleagues can be a source of mutual help and friendship is a possible explanation for our results that go in the same direction with the assumptions grounded in previous studies, that personal resources are a source of social support that influence stress levels.

Positive and negative affect

We found no differences on the negative affect means but there is a significant difference between the positive affect means in favour of the employed, to a t=2108, p<0,05. A possible explanation is that the positive working relations and work satisfaction can contribute to a higher level of positive affect.

The same explanation can be used to clarify why employed people are having a significant higher *joviality* mean, for a t=2.302, p<0.05.

There are differences also regarding *guilt*, t=2.458, p<0.05, and *hostility*, t=2.565, p<0.05, in favour of employed people. We can explain this by supposing

that the work place offers not only supportive relationships but also possible conflicts among employees, and between employees and their bosses.

Another variable that registered differences between employees and unemployed people was *attentiveness*, t=2.190, p<0.05 and *fatigue,* t=6.764, p=0.00. Those differences can have their origins in the additional job role-status, which brings not only personal expectancies to the fore but also work duties from the role point of view.

Self-assurance, similar to self-esteem, differs in favour of employees, colleagues and a superior's appreciation being a source of personal validation.

There were no statistically significant differences for shyness, serenity, fear, sadness, and surprise (See Table 2).

Stress management strategies

Studying *stress management strategies* for both categories of participants, we found that the unemployed and those in employment were using planning. There are, also, no significant differences for mental disengagement, active coping, and denial, or those using emotional support, instrumental support, positive reframing, and religion.

Unemployed people use significantly more frequently behavioural disengagement and acceptance and employed people use more often venting, substance abuse, humour, and self-blaming as coping strategies. We used the analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test if gender influences alcohol consumption or any other coping style. For both unemployed and employed people alcohol use vary with gender. Because of the small sample size and the gender imbalance of the unemployed sample, we were not able to investigate more on the problem of alcohol consumption.

We verified the hypothesis of the demographic variables influence on stress level to unemployed people and the results show that age is the only variable that statistically influences stress level in a significant way.

Corduban and Bojan (1990) underlined the idea that if we are interested in the stress-age relation we have to take into discussion the fact that anxiety and depression are the most relevant factors. Russu (1996) had another approach saying that not age but the prevalence of different stressors is important in the stress level study.

We obtained, in our study, significant differences on stress level due to the age, with an r= .126, p= .05. Therefore, the hypothesis that stress levels vary with age were confirmed by our own findings and the hypothesis that stress level vary with unemployment duration, education, or gender has been infirmed. The conclusion is that age is a better predictor for the stress level than unemployment duration.

Stress level correlation with optimism, self-esteem, and LOC

		Optimism			Optimism
Stress	Pearson correlation	-.409**	Stress	Pearson correlation	-.488*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	269		N	191
		Self-esteem			Self-esteem
Stress	Pearson Correlation	-.381**	Stress	Pearson correlation	-.392**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	269		N	191
		Locus of control			Locus of control
Stress	Pearson Correlation	.390**	Stress	Pearson correlation	.395**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	269		N	191

** correlation is significant at p= 0.01; * correlation is significant at p= 0.05

Table 6 shows that there is a significant correlation between stress level and optimism both for unemployed persons, r = -.409, p=0.01, and employees, r = -.488, p=0.01.

We can consider optimism as an individual resource, influencing the stress level. Carver et al. (1989), Scheier and Carver (1992) consider that optimistic persons evaluate positively the physical and social environment and this influences them in their stress coping efforts.

There is also a significant correlation between self-esteem and stress for unemployed persons, r = -.381, p=0.01, and for employees, r = -.392, p=0.01. These results support the hypothesis that individual resources such as optimism and high self-esteem influence stress level manifestations.

Locus of control also correlates significantly with stress for both types of participants, stressing the idea that a high level of stress determines a more external LOC. As Rodin (1986) argued, people who experienced repetitive confrontation with negative events tend to place the locus of control much more often in the exterior, as compared to the others.

Table 7.

Stress level correlations with anxiety, social support, positive and negative affect

		State anxiety	Trait anxiety			State anxiety	Trait anxiety
Stress	Pearson correlation	.683**	.652**	Stress	Pearson correlation	.601**	.715**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	269	269		N	191	191
		Social support	Social support satisfaction			Social support	Social support satisfaction
Stress	Pearson correlation	-.180**	-.239**	Stress	Pearson correlation	-.251**	-.348**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.000		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	269	269		N	191	191
		Negative affect	Positive affect			Negative affect	Positive affect
Stress	Pearson correlation	.536**	-.275**	Stress	Pearson correlation	.596**	-.167*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.021
	N	268	268		N	191	191

** correlation is significant at p= 0.01; * correlation is significant at p= 0.05

State and trait anxiety were also discussed, given that one of the specific emotional reaction to stress is anxiety (Bolger, 1990). Therefore, if anxiety is the most common stress related emotional reaction, it will have different intensity manifestations on people.

Assuming that state anxiety is one of the stress emotional manifestations and seeing trait anxiety as one of the features that can exacerbate stress, we expected that both would positively correlate with stress. As we can see from Table 6, both state and trait anxiety correlate positively for unemployed people, r = .683, p = 0.01, r = .652, p = 0.01 as for employed ones, r = .601, p = 0.01, r = .715, p = 0.01.

Our own study showed a significant negative correlation between perceived stress level and the quantity and the quality of social support as we can see from Table 7. This observation concerns both unemployed people and employed ones. The data sustain the hypothesis that social support was viewed and considered as an individual resource in the person's attempt to deal with stress.

Ross and Altmaier (1994), Thomas and Ganster (1995), Carlson and Perew (1999) emphasised the moderating role of social support in stressful situations. Miclea (1997) explained the relationship between social support and stress, considering that persons who have enough resources from their social network can have a more favourable primary evaluation of the situation. As for the second evaluation, they can consider that they have sufficient resources to deal with stress.

Data from Table 7 shows that there is a negative correlation between stress level and positive affect and a positive one with negative affect for both unemployed and employed people. We anticipated the results based on the findings of previous researches (Billings et al., 1983; Cutrona and Troutman, 1986; Monroe et al., 1986).

From Table 8 we can see that different positive and negative affects have the same pattern of correlation with stress for both unemployed and employed people.

Table 8.

Positive and negative affects that correlate with stress

Employed people		Unemployed people	
Correlations between stress level and negative affects	Correlations between stress level and positive affects	Correlations between stress level and negative affects	Correlations between stress level and positive affects
Fear (r= .519, p= 0.01)	Joviality (r= .-441, p= 0,01)	Fear (r= .455, p= 0,01)	Joviality (r= -.500, p= 0,01)
Hostility (r= .519, p= 0.01)	Self-assurance (r= .-286, p= 0,01)	Hostility (r= .467, p= 0,01)	Self-assurance (r= -.360, p= 0,01)
Guilt (r= .389, p= 0.01)	Attentiveness (r= .-173, p= 0,05)	Guilt (r= .452, p= 0,01)	Attentiveness (r= -171, p= 0,01),
Sadness (r= . 529, p=0.01)	Serenity (r= . 570, p= 0,01)	Sadness (r= .519, p= 0,01)	Serenity (r= -539, p= 0,01)
Shyness (r= . 292, p= 0.05)		Shyness (r= .323, p= 0,01)	
Fatigue (r= . 277, p= 0.01)		Fatigue (r= .394, p =0,01)	
Surprise (r= . 370, p= 0.01)		Surprise (r= .270, p= 0,01)	

For both unemployed and employed males and females we used linear regression to see which are the most important predictors of stress, from the list of variables used in the study.

In the case of unemployed men, the model explains 77.8% of the variance of self-perceived stress, whereas in the case of unemployed women, 59.8% of this variance. For unemployed men, after controlling for other potential predictors, the direct influence of unemployment duration is negative: on average, the increase of unemployment duration by one standard deviance leads to a decrease of self-perceived stress by 0.750 standard deviances. As expected, trait anxiety increases self-perceived stress, *ceteris paribus.* For unemployed women, the length of unemployment does not influence significantly self-perceived stress. Trait anxiety and also negative affect increases self-perceived stress (the latter is significant only for women). It is interesting to look at the effects of working locus of control: its direct effect is negative in the case of males, but positive in the case of females. As far as the positive and negative affect are concerned it seems that negative affect increase the level of stress for women.

Table 9.

Predictors of perceived stress for unemployed

	Males		Females	
	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta	Std. Error
(Constant)		.000		.006
Optimism	.108	.300	-.071	.229
Self-esteem	-.471	.000	.006	.917
Substance use	.567	.000	-.036	.478
Active coping	.148	.121	.005	.930
Behavioral disengagement	.298	.002	.126	.020
Acceptance	-.498	.001	-.070	.162
Working LOC	-.311	.020	.190	.001
Trait anxiety	.622	.000	.412	.000
Social support	.074	.502	-.001	.979
Social support satisfaction	-.313	.023	-.078	.133
Negative affect	.135	.196	.220	.001
Positive affect	-.610	.000	.005	.927
Age	-.527	.002	-.004	.939

	Males		Females	
	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta	Std. Error
Education	-.134	.204	-.012	.816
Unemployment duration	-.750	.000	-.062	.200

For employed men, the model explains 76.6% of the variance of self-perceived stress, whereas in the case of unemployed women, 70.5% of this variance.

For both employed men women trait anxiety increases self-perceived stress and working locus of control has no significant influence. For the employed women the higher social support network is the lower level of stress. For employed man it is not significant the length of social support network but the social support satisfaction level.

Table 10.

Predictors of perceived stress for employed

	Males		Females	
	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta	Std. Error
(Constant)		.006		.232
Optimism	-.366	.001	.088	.307
Self-esteem	.063	.492	.123	.156
Substance use	.269	.001	.127	.079
Active coping	-.046	.585	-.199	.006
Venting	-.037	.663	.065	.332
Humor	.026	.719	-.248	.001
Self-blame	.284	.001	.184	.009
Working LOC	.028	.787	-.048	.503
Trait anxiety	.231	.066	.446	.000
Social support	.048	.542	-.157	.024
Social support satisfaction	-.275	.041	-.084	.230
Negative affect	.006	.940	.383	.000
Positive affect	-.234	.018	.019	.750
Age	-.119	.102	-.010	.892
Education	-.192	.039	.034	.577

At the end we used linear regression to shed light on the most important predictors to unemployment stress, selecting 11 out of the 39 variables that we used in the study. The predictors in the regression model were: self-esteem, active coping, behavioural disengagement, acceptance, working LOC, trait anxiety, positive affect, negative affect, age, education and unemployment duration. We obtained a $R^2 =0.562$ for males and $R^2 =0.579$ for females meaning that we explained with those predictors more than 50% of the variance of stress level. The most important predictors were trait anxiety level (39.83% for males and 67.67 for females) and working LOC level (35.71% for males and 41.99% for females). It is important to mention that for females negative affect constitutes a significant predictor, whereas for males it does not (See Table 11).

Table 11.

Variables that explain unemployment stress

	Males		Females	
	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta	Std. Error
(Constant)		.000		.055
Self-Esteem	-.297	.033	-.042	.482
Active Coping	.440	.005	.067	.205
Behavioural disengagement	-.101	.316	-.091	.076
Acceptance	-.376	.003	.038	.462
Working LOC	-.456	.001	.233	.000
Trait anxiety	.587	.000	.473	.000
Negative affect	.049	.683	.199	.002
Positive affect	-.159	.249	-.002	.978
Age	-.156	.370	-.037	.474
Education	-.042	.723	.011	.834
Unemployment duration	-.268	.020	-.038	.437

These results offer an important insight into the stress phenomenon in the case of the unemployed, revealing that trait anxiety is a major component. Positive and negative affect and the relevant coping strategy constitute also main predictors.

Conclusions

Firstly, the analysis of the differences between employees and the unemployed points out that the stress level differs significantly. This highlights that unemployment is a stressful life situation in pre-accession Romania. Age is clearly the only demographic characteristic that influences significantly stress level, even after controlling for the length of unemployment.

Because there were no significant differences in trait anxiety between employed and the unemployed, we concluded that there is no reason to consider trait anxiety responsible in any way for the stress level differences between those two categories.

There were no significant differences between state anxiety and optimism level, neither for the negative affect. There were, however, significant differences in the self-esteem level and the positive affect, both in favour of the employed persons. Dollard and Winefield (2002) consider that the major difference between persons who have a job and those who lost it is the fact that the first ones have work satisfactions that raise their self-esteem. Even though there were no differences in the negative affect, we found differences for attentiveness and fatigue, both significantly higher in the case of the employed persons. We considered that this was determined by the usual daily stress at workplace. Taking into consideration the fact that employees have also higher self-esteem and higher levels of positive affect, we can assert that work has a positive role for maintaining a good general health.

The locus of control seemed to be more internally situated for employees, sustaining the presupposition that negative life events such as unemployment can move it towards an external position.

Social support, seen as a resource for stress management, was lower for the unemployed. We can explain this by the fact that people usually have positive, supportive relations with their colleagues at workplace. The unemployed lack these personal ties. This also explains why emotional venting as a stress management style was significantly less often used by the unemployed than by the employed respondents.

We can have a more accurate general view on the impact of job loss by taking into account the twofold functions fulfilled by the job: satisfaction of human needs and human bonding (Hoffman, 1996). For each individual, work is not just the main source of income, but also a means of gaining self-respect and employing one's knowledge and skills.

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A TYPOLOGY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN ROMANIA: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS FROM A LOCAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT. The present study aims to build an empirical typology of political participation and to describe the types resulted. I refer only to those acts which are strongly and directly linked to the political sphere for which the political component was explicitly mentioned in the items in order to narrow down the possibility of different interpretation. The data used for the development of the political participation typology were collected within a survey funded through a CEEX research grant[1]. Data collection within the survey was done face-to-face, using a standardized questionnaire. The sample was representative for the adult population of four communities (urban area: Sibiu and Cluj-Napoca; rural area: Răşinari and Apahida), the total size of the sample was 1,456 citizens. After the factor analysis of the political participatory acts, there resulted three major factors (modes of participation): collective participation, individual participation and voting. Through the cluster analysis of these dimensions, four types of political participation resulted: the non-participants, the traditional participants, the parochial participants, and the active participants, each with a relatively well defined profile.

Keywords: political participation; voting; trust in political institutions

Political participation: definitions, modes, and typologies of participation[2]

„Citizen participation is at the heart of democracy. (...) Political participation provides the mechanism by which citizens can communicate information about their interests, preferences, and needs and generate pressure to respond" (Verba et al., 1995: 1). Beyond the consensus regarding the importance of citizens' involvement in public decision-making, and by this in the good

functioning of democracy, the definition of the concept of political participation is relatively less unitary. Probably the best known definition of political participation is provided by Verba and Nie (1972: 2): "political participation refers to those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and / or the actions they take". A shorter and more recent definition but somewhat different (in which influence is not only directed at politicians but the political outcomes are also targeted) belongs to Brady (1999: 737): "action by ordinary citizens directed toward influencing some political outcomes". In these terms, political participation means any observable behavior undertaken by individuals (non-elites) with an intention to influence (in sense of willingness to affect decisions taken by someone else; this someone else need not by government personnel, not even a state agent) some political outcome.[3] Starting from these perspectives, we can define political participation as a voluntary process by which individuals engage in activities aimed at influencing the political activities and decisions / of political agents (even if sometimes these actions do not target the political factor exclusively).

In the specialist literature, the term "political participation" is used for a wide array of acts. An attempt to systematize these acts cannot ignore the condition of the classification criterion. Some of the most frequently used criteria for classifying modes of participation are: the domain, the mode, the goal, the number of persons involved, the degree of non-conventionality, the degree of involvement needed, the types of resources necessary for participation, etc. naturally, sometimes even if on the theoretical level we can operate with such distinctions, in practice the limits are less clear.[4]

While older studies of political participation considered it unidimensional, in other words that there is a general factor of participation, namely the amount of participation,[5] starting from the study conducted by Verba and Nie (1972), things have changed. More and more often, "rather than being unidimensional, participation is comprised of distinct dimensions" (Welch, 1975).[6] On the other hand, however, Verba and Nie (1972: 76) warn that "just

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[3] A political outcome can be "any decision over the authoritative allocation of values for society" (Teorell et al., 2007: 336).

[4] For instance, if we keep in mind the sphere of participation and try to distinguish among political, civic or social participation, we will find that it is sometimes difficult to do so (Comșa, 2006).

[5] An analysis from a historical perspective (Salisbury, 2001) points out the fact that many studies of political participation used to take into account one dimension only (cost/difficulty) but that gradually the sphere of participation tended to include several different modes.

[6] The same idea is supported by other authors of the same period (Zipp and Smith, 1979). Due to the fact that voting and campaign activities are qualitatively different forms of political participation, they cannot be treated additively (considered to belong to a scale).

as it is an oversimplification to categorize individuals solely on the basis of their amount of participation, so it is a mistake to think of them as arrayed on four unrelated modes of political activity". In the following, we will briefly introduce the modes of participation identified in various studies, as well as the various participation typologies developed starting from them.

One of the best known typologies of the modes of democratic participation is the one put forward by Verba and Nie (1972), and Verba et al. (1978: 55; see also Parry et al., 1992; Topf, 1998: 66; Dalton, 2006: 37). Based on the logical positioning depending on certain criteria[7] (Verba and Nie, 1972: 56), but also as a result of empirical analyses (Verba and Nie, 1972: 65), they distinguish among four modes of political participation: voting, campaign activity, communal activity, and particularized contacting (contacting officials on personal matters).[8] Starting from these dimensions, and using the cluster analysis, the authors define six types of participation: the inactives (22%), the voting specialists (21%), the parochial participants (4%), the communalists (20%), the campaigners (15%), and the complete activists (11%) (7% are unclassified). A replication of Verba and Nie's analysis in another national context or after a significant period of time led to relatively similar solutions. Thus, based on a set of data for Canada, Welch (1975) reached a factor solution with only three major factors: the first factor included items referring to voting, the second the factors referring to activism in the electoral campaign, and the third included items such as signing a petition, participating in communal meetings, and discussions with political officials about local problems.[9] In a more recent analysis (Clarke et al., 2004: 217-236) based on BES data of 2001, four structural factors of political participation resulted: voting, party activity, communal activity, and protest.

Another well-known typology is the one proposed by Milbrath and Goel (1977: 11). Considering that participation is unidimensional (what varies is the number of modes of participation in which a person is involved: none, only voting, voting and others), these authors distinguish among the "Apathetic" (an estimated approximately 33% of the total adult population), „Spectators" (60%) and "Gladiators" (5-7%). The apathetic are those who withdraw from the political space; the Spectators seldom participate in anything else then

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[7] (1) what outcomes they (the mode of political participation) can influence, (2) how much they involve the individual in conflict, and (3) how much initiative they require.

[8] The 1978 version also contains the category "protest".

[9] In the analyses of Verba and Nie (1972: 58), this last factor is divided into contacting officials and cooperative activity.

voting; while the Gladiators are engaged, besides voting, in other modes of political participation, too. Using this analysis as a starting point, Verba and Nie (1987) find approximately the same extreme categories (the Apathetic and Gladiators), but they divide the middle category into two sub-categories (they also introduce the dimension "how they participate" in addition to the dimension "how much they participate" or, in other words, they introduce the type of participation in addition to the amount of participation). As a result, the category of "Spectators" is divided into participants in voting (these citizens only vote – they make up the category of Spectators in the typology put forward by Milbrath and Goel) and parochial participants (for these citizens, all that matters is their personal interest, as a result they contact official persons in order to solve their own problems).

In order to distinguish among participatory acts, Verba et al. (1995: 44-45) used the following criteria: (1) What is required for activity? (time, money, skills); (2) What is the extent to which they (participatory acts) convey information about the circumstances and preferences of the participant?; (3) What is the extent to which they generate pressure on policymakers to pay attention? Because it is difficult to measure the pressure on policymakers, the authors proposed a proxy criteria: What is the extent to which it is possible, or even legal, to multiply the amount of participatory input? Starting from these criteria, Verba et al. (1995: 48) identified a much wider array of participatory acts, pointing out at the same time that most of them differ by the following criteria: vote, campaign work, campaign contribution, contact an official, protest, informal community work, member of a local board, affiliation with a political organization, and contribution to a political cause.

A very new typology is advanced by Teorell et al. (2007: 341). Setting out from a wider definition of political participation proposed by Brady (1999: 737), the authors took into account a much broader series of participatory acts.[10] Considering the criteria channel of expression, mechanism of influence, and targeted, the authors hypothesized the existence of five modes of political participation: voting, party activity, consumer participation, protest activity, and contacting (Teorell et al., 2007: 343). Their typology is presented below:

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[10] Participatory acts included in factor analysis: have membership in a political party, participate in party activities, donate money to a party, do voluntary work for a party, contact a politician, contact an organization, contact a civil servant, work in a political party, work in other organization, sign a petition, take part in a public demonstration, take part in a strike, boycott certain products, buy certain products, donate money, contact/appear in the media, contact solicitor / judicial body, participate in illegal protest activities.

Channel of expression

	Representational	*Extra-representational*
Exit-based	**Voting**	**Consumer participation**
Voice-based	*Non-targeted:* **Party activity**	*Non-targeted:* **Protest activity**
	Targeted: **Contacting**	

Mechanism of influence (label at left, spanning Exit-based / Voice-based rows)

Graph 1. A typology of modes of political participation (Teorell et al., 2007: 341)

A descriptive perspective on proper political participation

As seen above, political participation may take multiple forms. Under the circumstances of limited resources, and a low participatory context[11] but also in order to keep the duration of questionnaire administration within acceptable limits, which should not compromise data quality, we chose to focus only on some forms of political participation. More precisely, we chose to analyze only **the acts of political participation defined in a narrow sense**, and of these we only retain some. The separation between the political and the non-political acts is not easy; to prove the point, we can point out that one of the important themes discussed in relation to participation targets "embeddedness of political activity in the non-political institutions of civil society" (Verba et al., 1995: 40). According to these authors, "the boundary between political and non-political activity is by no means clear". Besides, „voluntary activity in both the religious and secular domains outside of politics intersects with politics in

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[11] According to some national data (BOP-FSD, 2002, 2005; Barometrul Urban [Urban Barometer], FSD, 2005; Barometrul "Intoleranţă, discriminare şi autoritarism" ["Intolerance, discrimination and authoritarianism" Barometer], IPP, 2004), the incidence of various forms of participation (except for voting) is reduced in Romania. Moreover, some political activities which occur in research carried out in other countries are so "exotic" that the chances of finding citizens in Romania who practice them are close to nil (especially in a not too large sample).

45

many ways." Some arguments[12] in favour of this statement are presented below (Verba et al., 1995: 41):

- participation in these spheres is in many ways a politicizing experience;
- these non-political institutions can act as the locus of attempts at political recruitment;
- those who take part in these non-political institutions are exposed to political cues and messages;
- the non-political institutions have a complex relationship to politics and public purposes;
- many voluntary associations and even churches get involved directly in politics, and their attempts at influencing policy outcomes constitute a crucial source of input about citizen views and preferences;
- the reported motives for activity may be at variance with the outward appearance of the act or, in other words, the motives invoked by the persons for their engagement in acts which aim to influence politics are sometimes non-political and the other way round, persons engaged in non-political acts claim that their acts are political (they try to influence the government's activity and decisions).

In the same line, in order to orient the respondents, at least on the inter-subjective level, we formulated the items referring to participatory acts in such a way as to make it as clear as possible that we meant only acts that are strictly political (each type of act had the attribute "political" next to it). Of course, this formula does not eliminate the possibility of different subjective interpretation (the respondents need to establish what they mean by political), and therefore we may have situations where acts that have a political component were excluded, or on the contrary, acts without such a component were included. In conclusion, the present analysis targets only activities that in our understanding can be called **proper political participation**. We include here a list of activities which according to the above typologies go under the categories voting, party activity and contacting political officials. More precisely, we include the following acts: voter turnout, contacting officials, persuading friends to vote in a certain way, participation in political meetings, participation in political protests, marches / demonstrations, participation in electoral meetings, signing a political petition, personally contacting an official / politician, voluntary work for a party / candidate, financial donations for a party / candidate. Given that in Romania most of the acts of political participation (except for voting)

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[12] In my opinion, these are not entirely arguments in the specified sense; they partly show that there are connections, and mutual influences between the two spheres.

are carried out by very few citizens, we chose a longer period (any time after 1990) to obtain more cases of participation (in other words, a broader variance of participation).[13]

All research on the topic of political participation shows that the occurrence of various types of participatory acts of a political nature among the citizens presents a quite wide variety. Thus, except for voting (most often with an over 50% participation), involvement in the rest of political acts often characterizes a minority (Denni and Lecomte, 2004). Depending on the percentage of participants, we have the following situation (mean values for 13 European countries,[14] Teorell et al., 2007: 338-339): vote in parliamentary elections (71%), political party member (5%), participate in party activities (3%), donate money to a party (2%), do voluntary work for a party (2%), contact a politician (9%), work in a political action group (3%), take part in a public demonstration (7%), sign a petition (23%), attend a political meeting / rally (7%), etc.

As expected, in our sample the political participation activity with the widest support is voting. If we take into account all the elections since 1990, most of the respondents (93%)[15] state that they voted at least once (Table 1). Of those who never voted (7%), very few did not have the legal age to vote at least in the last elections (2004). As a result, we may estimate that the share of those who categorically refuse to vote is approximately 7%, although in reality the value is very likely bigger.[16] If we take into account the last four elections (2000 and 2004, local and general elections), and if we keep in mind only

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[13] Such a long period of time may reduce the association between participation and certain variables (for instance, age, level of education, etc.) and / or may distorts the results by putting together individuals that (probably) participated differently in different years of the reference period (1990-2006). Unfortunately we don't have data that can be used to estimate the effects of this choice.

[14] Average values calculated from data collected in the survey CID (Citizens, Involvement, Democracy). Except for voting, the period of reference is "the last 12 months".

[15] Given that the statement about voting is affected by social desirability, it is expected that in reality this value is lower. This phenomenon is called over-reporting and it was analyzed in another paper (Comşa, 2004). We should point out here that over-reporting is present in all surveys, regardless of the surveyed population.

[16] At the national level, the percentage of those who state that they usually do not vote is also approximately 7 (BOP-FSD, May 2005). In surveys carried out in other countries (e.g. Great Britain, BES 2001, Clarke et al., 2004: 221) a similar value was obtained (12%). From the analysis of official documents (electoral lists holding the signatures of those who voted), it is found that the percentage of those who voted in the last elections is, in fact, about 12-15% lower than the figure estimated from statements (or even more, if the time period since the last elections exceeds a year) (Comşa, 2004). As a result, it is expected that the percentage of those who consistently refuse to vote should be well over 7%.

those who were entitled to vote, the share of those who stated that they voted at least once is 90%, and of those who state they voted in all elections is 77%. Consequently, based on the respondents' statement, we can estimate that the group of consistent non-voters makes up about 10%, and the occasional voters 13%. Given that the official turnout rates in the 2000 and 2004 elections were significantly lower (65%, and 58% respectively in the general elections), in reality the percentages of consistent non-voters and of the occasional voters are higher (approximately 15-20% for consistent non-voters, and 25-30% for occasional voters).

Table 1.

Proper political participation after 1990

Since 1990, have you ever […]?	% Yes
Voted	93
Personally contacted elected officials	15
Tried to persuade your friends to vote like you	12
Participated in a political rally	11
Taken part in a political protest, march / demonstration	7
Participated in an electoral meeting	5
Signed a political petition	5
Writing a letter to a politician / another official	5
Worked as a volunteer for a party / candidate	4
Donated money for a party / candidate	2

N = 1456

In general, the other forms of political participation have fewer adherents. Naturally (due to a larger number of such opportunities), contact with elected officials, participation in political rallies or the attempt to persuade friends to vote for a certain candidate or a party are modes of participation with a relatively high number of adherents (11-15%). The political participation activities for which there are fewer opportunities or which require a higher degree of involvement / higher costs are less favoured: participation in meetings (electoral or other types), volunteering for a candidate or a party, written to a politician / an official (4-7%). Off all the analyzed political activities, financial donations for a party / candidate are the least frequent (2%). To sum up, we can state that in the period 1990-2007, including voter turnout, almost two thirds of the respondents took part in only one of the listed participatory acts only in voting in most cases) and almost one third took part in two or more (6% did not take part in any). If we exclude

the vote, the situation changes radically: two thirds of the citizens did not participate in any political activity after 1990, 16% in only one and 15% in two or more (Graph 2).[17]
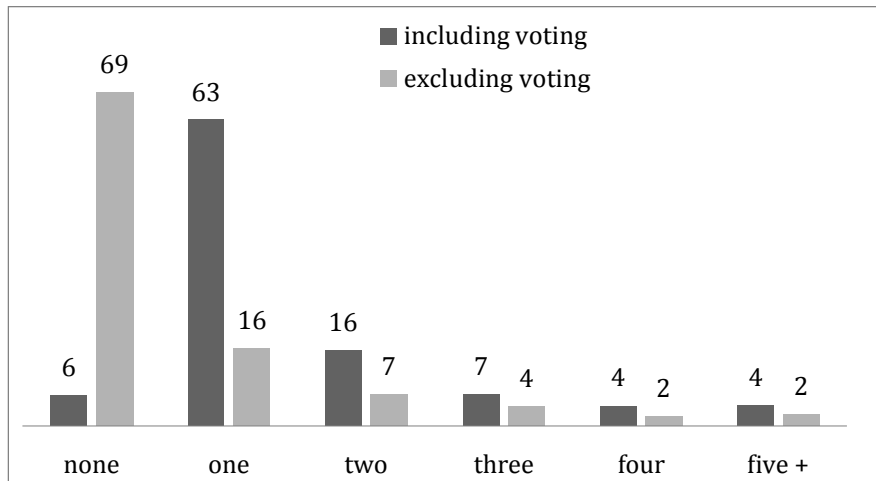
Graph 2. Percentage of people who took part in a certain number of political participatory acts after 1990

A typology of political participation

The political participatory acts analyzed above are characterized by various degrees of involvement and different costs (for instance, voting is a type of mass political participation, clearly distinct from the others). We expect that this type of statement, based on observation, but also on previous results in the literature (Verba and Nie, 1987; Denni and Lecomte, 2004; Dalton, 2006), should be supported by our data. In order to develop the typology of political participation we will adopt a two-step approach: (1) through factor analysis, we will reduce the participatory acts to some major dimensions of participation, called modes of participation; (2) we will group the citizens according to their simultaneous positioning to the modes of participation determined above.

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[17] To provide a relative term for comparison, in France (Denni and Lecomte, 2004: 10) or the US (Rosenstone and Hansen, 2003: 51), the percentage of those who state they have been involved in at least one mode of participation besides voting is almost 70%.

In order to see to what extent their aggregation is correct statistically speaking, the items presented above will be subjected to factor analysis, the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) approach in SPSS. Data adequacy to this type of analysis is justified statistically by the high value of the KMO coefficient (0.801) and the significance of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (0.000). Given that it is expected for the dimensions of political participation to correlate, we rotated the resulting factors using the Oblimin method.[18] Thus we obtained three major factors with the Initial Eigenvalue over 1; the percentage of the variance explained by each of these was, in this order: 32%, 12%, 10%. After the rotation, the factors reached almost the same explained variance (smaller in the factor related to voting; the new Eigenvalues are 2.8, 2.4 and 1.1). The resulting dimensions and their relation with each type of political participation are presented in the table 2 (we only withheld factor loadings over 0.400):[19]

For involvement in political volunteering and financial donations, the correlation with voting is negative (the items negatively loaded on the vote factor: -0.45 and -0.47). As a result, those who vote, on the average, tend to be less involved in volunteering or donating money, and reservedly, those who do these acts tend to vote less frequently. In addition, as a result of its ambivalent character, political volunteering "charges" the first two dimensions (collective participation and individual participation) relatively positively to the same extent.

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[18] In similar studies (Verba and Nie, 1972: 65; Welch, 1975; Teorell et al., 2007) an oblique method of factor rotation – Oblimin – is used because it allows for the inter-correlation of resulting factors, thus being less restrictive and at the same time closer to reality (in general it is expected that some of the political participation acts inter-correlate).

[19] In order to verify the obtained solution, we repeated the AMOS analysis with a few changes: for the vote dimension we used two indicators (voter participation in the general and local elections in 2004); we allowed for the correlation of errors among some types of participation (the items were measured successively, thus making it possible for some recording errors to occur and for the effect of question order); introduction of a bi-directional relation between volunteering for a party and donating money to a party. This last modification led to a major improvement of the model showing that the bi-directional relationship between the two is strong (so it cannot be ignored) and reversed: those who volunteer tend to donate money (standardized regression coefficient of 0.56), and those who donate money tend not to volunteer (-0.30). With these modifications, the model generally supports the factor solution obtained in SPSS, in that it approximates very well the empirical date (C/MIN = 2 for 1456 cases; all relative measures - NFI, RFI, IFI, CFI - take values of approximately 0.99, and those of the parsimonious - PRATIO, PNFI, PCFI - are very close to 0.60). However, there are differences, too: the correlation between the factors "collective participation" and "individual participation" is somewhat higher (0.65), while the correlations of these two factors with voting are not statistically significant.

Table 2.

Dimensions resulted from the factor analysis of items of political participation

Dimensions of political participation Since 1990, have you ever [...]?	Collective participation	Individual participation	Voter turnout
Voted			.823
Participated in a political rally	.683		
Taken part in a political protest, march / demonstration	.809		
Participated in an electoral meeting	.828		
Signed a political petition	.626		
Worked as a volunteer for a party / candidate	.492	.519	-.450
Donated money for a party / candidate		.550	-.473
Tried to persuade your friends to vote like you		.565	
Personally contacted elected officials		.741	
Written to a politician / an official		.746	

* Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.
** All variables are dummy (1=yes; 0=no).

The correlation between collective and individual participation is significant both statistically, and practically (0.42), a significance which does not show in the case of the other two correlations (-0.13 between collective participation and voting, and -0.08 between individual participation and voting; although, as we have seen in the AMOS model, it is very likely not of statistical significance). Consequently, voting appears again as a distinct mode of political participation.

In conclusion, after the factor analysis of the forms of political participation, I identified three modes of participation which can be named, based on the variables that scored high on these, as follows:

- *political participation in voting:* this factor is made up of only one form of political participation, namely voting;
- *individual political participation:* contacting elected officials (in person or by writing a letter), persuading friends to vote for a certain party or candidate, volunteering (this form of participation also has a strong collective component) or donations for a party or a candidate; the common point of these forms of participation is direct and visible involvement, potential personal interest;
- *collective political participation:* participation in political rallies, electoral meetings, political protests, marches and demonstrations, signing political petitions; these modes of participation have in common the larger mass of citizens who participate together and somehow anonymously, "hidden" among the other group members.

51

Starting from these factors, through the cluster analysis, we can build a typology of proper political participation. As a result of the two-step cluster analysis[20] of the factors obtained above, we identified two better defined solutions: one including three, and the other four groups of citizens.[21] The two solutions partly overlap, the difference being that the four class typology distinguishes among parochial and active participants. Given that the distinction is important, and the profiles of the two types differ to some extent, we preferred the four class typology. The resulting types of political participation have the following characteristics and percentages out of the total population:

Table 3.

Profile of political participation types (% Yes)

Group	Participants			Non-participants (inactives)[22]	Total
Since 1990, have you ever [...]?	traditional	parochial	active		
Voted	100	100	94	0	93
Personally contacted elected officials	0	57	50	6	15
Tried to persuade your friends to vote like you	0	44	37	2	12
Participated in a political rally	0	15	28	0	5
Taken part in a political protest, march / demonstration	5	14	64	0	11
Participated in an electoral meeting	0	11	58	1	7
Signed a political petition	0	11	38	0	5
Written to a politician / an official	0	3	57	0	5
Worked as a volunteer for a party / candidate	0	0	48	2	4
Donated money for a party / candidate	0	0	21	0	2
Percentage of the group out of the total population	67	19	8	6	100

[20] Two-step clustering in SPSS.

[21] There is a wide overlap of the items corresponding to the groups with items that make up the previous factors, although there are some differences too. The situation may be the outcome of low percentages of some types of population (the percentages of the items concerning participation calculated in these categories are unstable) or of the use of a smaller set of items related to participation.

[22] The 6% non-participants can be divided into absolute non-participants (never participated in any of the participatory activities studied here - 5%) and non-voters, but occasional participants (never voted but they did participate in one of the participatory activities - 1%).

To some extent, the types that resulted correspond to the profiles of the types obtained by Verba and Nie (1987) with the note that the percentages differ widely in some types.[23] Thus, the category of "non-participants" overlaps with the "inactives", although its percentage is significantly lower (6% as compared to 33%) in our typology, the "traditional participants" are "spectators", those who only vote; the "parochial participants" are "parochial spectators", those who vote and participate in some political acts out of personal interest; while the "active voters" are "gladiators" (almost identical percentage - 8%), those who get involved in a broad diversity of political acts.

Description of the types of political participation

In the above, we have seen that the types of political participation differ by the intensity and quality of participation. Beyond these aspects, are there any other differences? Or, more clearly, there are differences among these types depending on various characteristics such as socio-demographic aspects, satisfaction (of general / specific or personal / local nature), trust in people, in institutions and political actors, interest in and knowledge of politics, the representations of the relationship between politics and citizens, and the context of mobilization? In order to describe the types of political participation identified above we have considered a series of variables (see annex) which measure all these aspects. Given that the interest variable (typology of political participation) is qualitative, and the variables used for describing the types are mostly quantitative (or treated as such), we chose to produce the portraits of the types of participation using the one-way analysis of variance. This method allows us to calculate, for each bivariate relation, the existence and the size of the relation, as well as to identify the real differences (statistically significant ones) among the types of participation. In addition, due to the mode of data construction and presentation, we can make also comparisons among the variables used in the description of the types of participation.

In order to be more explicit, in the following we will present the construction of the bar graph below. The bars in this graph represent the average of the respective characteristics within each type of political participation.

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[23] There are three possible explanations for these differences: besides the fact that the population in Romania tends to over-report turnout to a larger extent (1), the questions used for the construction of our typology were different as concerns both the participatory conduct measured (2), and the period in which the data were collected (the entire period after 1990 and only the last year / 12 months) (3).

53

The variables used to describe the types of participation were standardized beforehand (the means of these variables are zero, while the standard deviations are one). As a result, a sub-zero value represents under average presence (per total sample) of the respective characteristic within the type of participation, while an over-zero value represents a presence over the average. In the bottom part of each graph, for each considered variable we indicate the value of F test (values equal to or higher than 3 are significantly different from zero for p ≤ 0.02, 4 or over for p ≤ 0.01). The higher the value of F, the stronger the relation between the respective variable and our typology of participation (there is a strong relation between them). For instance, judging by the variable "age" there are no statistically significant differences among the four types of political participation, while judged by the variable "male" there are (the percentage of men within the types increases from the left to the right). Using these figures we can "read" effortlessly the portraits of the four types of citizens. In order to identify the source of variables in this figure more easily, we used the initial code of the question assigned in the questionnaire. The manner of construction of the composite variables is presented in the Annex.

Given the relatively large size of the sample (1,456) it was expected that some of the differences observed among the four types would be statistically significant (on the other hand, two of the types are made up of few cases). While the statistical significance is not enough, the practical significance (size of differences) is important. With a few exceptions (age, satisfaction with the locality, satisfaction with own life, general trust, trust in various categories of the population, trust in political leaders), all the other indicators have a statistically significant relation with the types of political participation; in other words, the types differ from each other depending on these variables. However, this is a global difference, not necessarily that one type differs from the other types. The intensity of the relations with the tested variables differs quite a lot, which is indicated by the wide variation of the F values (the values range from 0 to 116).

The data obtained in this research show that the types of political participation are relatively little associated with the subjects' gender and age, or parents' education and more with the respondents' education, occupational status (the current one or the last one), the position held at the job (manager / participation in decision-making), standard of living, level of personal modernity and relational capital. In general, the shift from the category of non-participants to that of traditional participants, then to parochial participants and finally to that of active participants is associated with an increase in the level of resources available to the subjects (education, occupational status, position in the hierarchy at the workplace / old workplace, welfare, modernity

and relational capital).[24] As a result, people with resources and those who have (had) experienced participation in decision-making at the work place participate more.
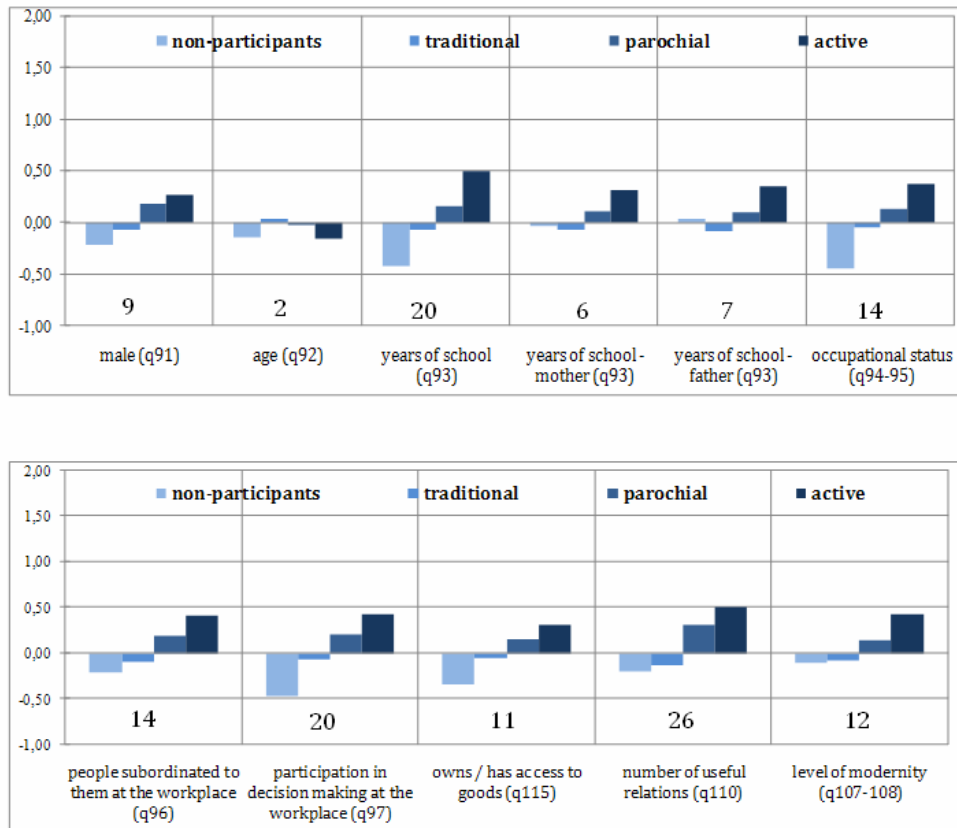
Graph 3. Relationship between types of political participation and different variables (set 1)

If we only consider the values of F or the mean values of the standardized indicators within the types, the differences among the types depending on the socio-demographic characteristics are not too big. However, if we analyze the variation of non-standardized mean values, we discover rather big differences.

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[24] Of course, not all shifts are also statistically significant (as shown by the Tamhane test, calculated in the one-way analysis of variance, not shown here), but the tendency appears in all situations.

For instance, the percentage of males in the four types increases from 32% in the case of "non-participants" to 57% for "active participants". The level of schooling increases almost linearly with participation, although there are significant differences among the four types (the same relation appears for the level of education of the respondents' parents, but the intensity of the relation is smaller and only some of the differences among the types are statistically significant). Thus, the percentage of people with university or postgraduate education increases from 15% for non-participants (the average year of schooling for this type is 10.3) to 41% in the case of active participants (13.4 years of schooling on the average). The more participatory types also tend to have a higher occupational status, even if not all the differences among the types are statistically significant (the traditional participants do not differ from the parochial ones, and the latter do not differ from the active ones). Thus, the percentage of professional people (white collar jobs / managers) increases from 14% for non-participants to 33% for active participants. The occurrence of differences is also supported by the following two: people who are subordinated to the respondent, and participation in decision-making at the workplace; the percentage of people in these types of situation increases with participation (31% of the non-participants state that they are subordinates, while 35% state that they have participated in decision-making; the percentages in the case of active participants is 54%, and 65%, respectively). The increase in life standards (measured by ownership of long-term household goods) and in the level of modernity (knowledge of foreign language, the capacity to use a PC) is accompanied by an increase in participation (18% of the non-participants state that they can fluently read and write a foreign language, while 54% assess themselves with a 1 for using the computer; the shares in the case of enthusiastic participants are 31%, and 26%, respectively). The most intense relation is recorded, however, in the case of relational capital. The more participatory types have a significantly higher relational capital. Thus, the percentage of persons with no useful relations drops from 34% in the case of non-participants (on the average, they have relations in two fields) to 12% in the case of active participants (on the average, they have relations in four important fields of activities).

The variables in set two (Graph 4) do not generally have a statistically significant association with the types of political participation. Regardless of the type of participation, the average level of satisfaction with one's life standard, support from a social network, general or specific trust, in some categories of population remain almost unchanged (only satisfaction with life and support from a network differ just about statistically significantly; for instance, the share of those very pleased with their money is 3% among non-participants, and 10% among active participants).

56
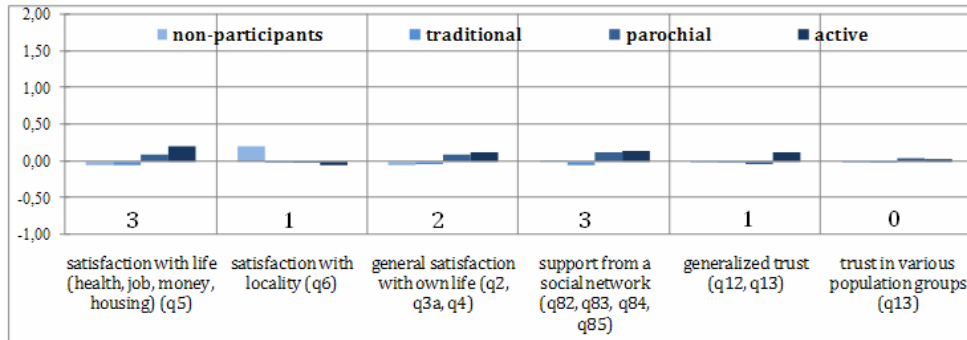
Graph 4. The relationship between the types of political participation and different variables (set 2)

The variables that measure trust in political actors (Graph 5) have a statistically significant but less intense association with the types of political participation. In these relations, there is a constant element: on the average, the non-participants tend to have less trust in institutions, parties, political leaders, and to be less satisfied with their activity (although the number of non-participants is low, most of the differences are statistically significant). For instance, 45% of the non-participants do not have any trust in the Parliament, but somewhat less (36%) of the active participants belong to this category.
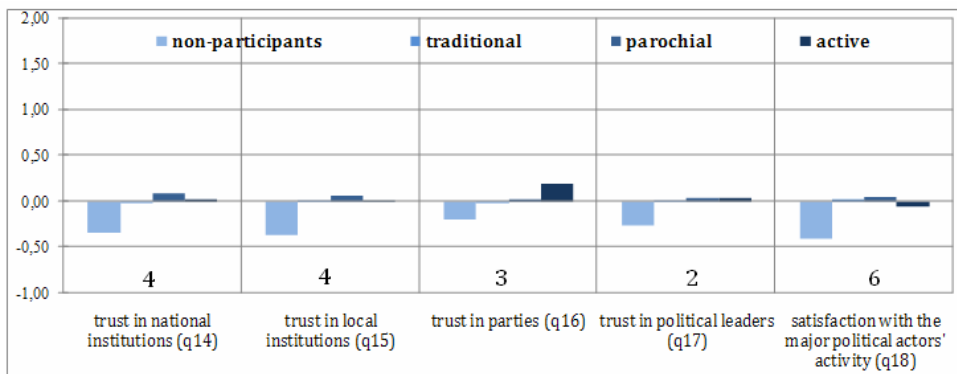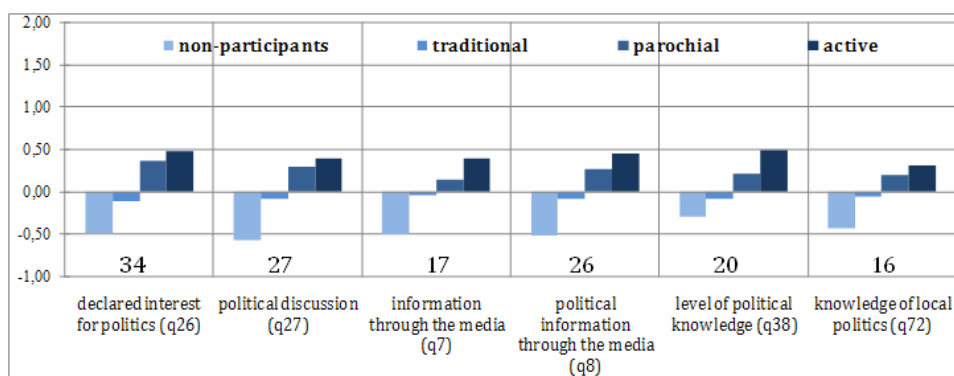

Graph 5. Relationship between types of political participation and different variables (set 3)

The variables that measure declared interest and real interest (political discussions, information gathering from the media) for politics, as well as the level of political knowledge (Graph 6) varies a lot depending on the types of

57

participation. The declared interest for politics, the intensity of political discussions, information from the media, in general, but also on political topics, as well as the level of political knowledge increase significantly from one extreme of the typology (non-participants) to the other (active participants). There appear relatively bigger differences among the types of participants in terms of stated interest for politics, political discussions and information gathering about political topics from the media. Thus, 40% of the non-participants are interested in political life in Romania, 48% do not discuss about politics in their family, 48% do not watch the news or political shows on TV; for the active participants, the values are much lower (16%, 22%, 18%).

Graph 6. Relationship between the types of political participation and different variables (set 4)

Almost all variables which measure the relationship between the citizens and politics (Graph 7) have a statistically significant association with the types of political participation (external political efficacy does not vary by the type of participation). Thus, non-participants have a lower level of internal political efficacy, more of them state that their life is not influenced by political decisions, that the latter cannot be influenced and that it does not matter who is leading/ who people vote. At the other end, the active participants have a higher level of internal political efficacy, more of them state to a larger extent that their life is influenced by political decisions, that the latter can be influenced and that it is important who is leading / who people vote for. In comparison, 17% of the non-participants consider that participation in voting is a very efficient means of influencing political decision-making, the percentage of active participants who believe the same thing being much higher (38%); while 12% of the non-participants find that they can decide easily who to vote for, 28% of the active participants are in the same situation.
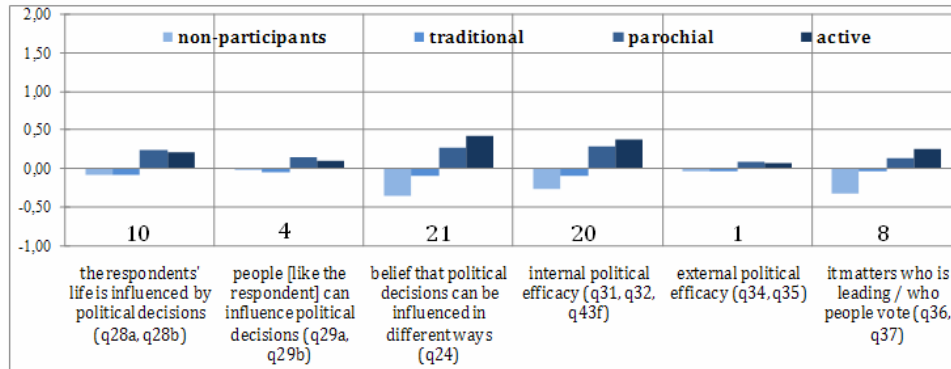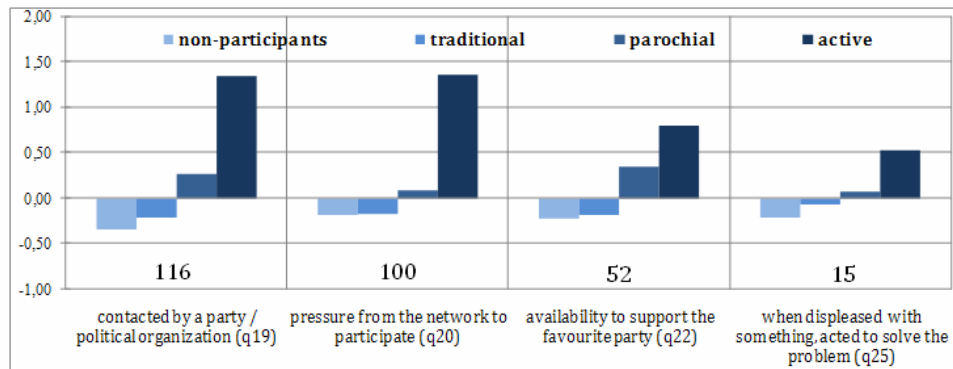
Graph 7. Relationship between the types of political participation and different variables (set 5)

Belonging to one of the four types of political participation is mostly under the influence of external, rather contextual aspects (Graph 8). If a person was contacted by a party / political organization or whether s/he was under the pressure of a social network to engage in political acts, the chances are significantly higher that this person also participates actively (active participants are those who have higher scores along these dimensions).[25] Thus, only 5% of the non-participants were contacted by a party aiming to convince them to vote (31% of the active participants); for 9% of the non-participants, someone close has tried the same thing (30% of the active participants have been in this situation). The two other aspects also have a quite big influence on participation: availability to support the favorite party, and availability to act in case of discontent (in this case, too, the active participants have significantly higher scores as compared to the other types of voters). For instance, 18% of the non-participants, and 47% of the active participant would wear a badge with the logo of the favourite party.

[25] Of course, this relationship is partly the result of the fact that political influences (from parties or social networks) are associated with some socio-demographic characteristics (for instance, the share of persons who are under such influence increases with the level of formal education). In other words, the pressure of the context is differentiated, unequally distributed as concerns some socially relevant characteristics (education, social status, etc.). The phenomenon is called strategic recruitment (Abramson and Clagget, 2001).

Graph 8. Relationship between the types of political participation and different variables (set 6)

All the analyses carried out before were bivariate ones. In order to reflect the complexity of the relationships between the considered variables, it is necessary that the statistical analyses be carried out at the multivariate level. Given that the variable of our interest - the political participation typology - is multinomial (four categories), and the variables used for characterizing the types are quantitative (or they can be treated otherwise), the most adequate analysis method is the multinomial logistic regression analysis. The application of such a method of analysis is one of the necessary steps to reveal the causal relation (it indicates that if between two variables there is an association when the influence of other variables is controlled) but not the only one (the theoretical plausibility of the causal relation is an important condition too). Thus, temporal coordination of the independent variables, more precisely of their influence, is also necessary. While in the case of socio-demographic variables the sense of the influence is clear and unidirectional (the effect - belonging to a certain type of political participation - precedes the cause), in the case of the other sets[26] of variables things are less clear. The order in which the sets of variables enter the analysis is the following: socio-demographic (set 1), relative life satisfaction and trust in people (set 2), trust in political actors (set 3), interest for politics and information about politics (set 4), relationship between the citizens and politics (set 5), context (set 6). Given that the multinomial logistic regression analysis (as opposed to the linear regression analysis) does not allow the block entry of the variables in the model in a particular order, we built six

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[26] The sets of variables were made up so as to make the data analysis, presentation and interpretation easier. In general, the variables which make up a specific set have common characteristics, but there are also situations in which this condition is not met for all the variables in a set.

regression models (Table 4). The first model includes only the socio-demographic variables (set 1 of predictors), while the next model includes sets 1 and 2, etc.

In order to measure the general quality of the models we can use three types of information: the value of the chi-square for a certain degree of freedom, the model explained variance and the percentage of the correctly predicted cases (for each type of political participation and in total).

The data presented below (Table 4) indicate that all the six models have a statistically significant contribution comparative to the basic model, the one which only includes the intercept. However, not each model can make a superior contribution to the previous one. If we test the statistical difference between the models, taking the previous model as the basis,[27] we can notice that model 1 brings some statistically significant improvement as compared to the previous model (the one which only contains the intercept), while model 2 does not; if compared to model 2, model 3 improves the prediction (for $p \leq 0.000$); as compared to the previous adequate models, models 4-6 also produce better statistically significant predictions. Consequently, the sets of variables that have a significant contribution (statistically, but also as concerns size) to the prediction of the type of political participation are models 1, 4 and 6. The contribution made by these models is also illustrated by the values of the totally explained variance (Nagelkerke coefficient) or by its increase from one model to the next.

Table 4.
Comparison of the models of prediction of belonging to a certain type of political participation (Likelihood Ratio Tests)

Model	chi-square	df	sig.	Change ... as compared to the previous model			Nagelkerke (%)	
				chi-square	df	sig.	model	increase
1 (set 1)	166	27	.000	-	-	-	13	13
2 (sets 1 to 2)	179	47	.000	13	20	.877	14	1
3 (sets 1 to 3)	215	60	.000	36	13	.000	17	3
4 (sets 1 to 4)	314	78	.000	99	18	.000	23	6
5 (sets 1 to 5)	353	96	.000	39	18	.003	26	3
6 (sets 1 to 6)	572	108	.000	219	12	.000	39	13

[27] They calculate the difference between the chi-square values, and the degrees of freedom, corresponding to the two models to compare and they check in the chi-square distribution table whether the threshold of statistical significance (p = 0.05) has been exceeded. For instance, if we want to compare model 2 and model 1, the chi-square = 13 (179-166) and df = 20 (47-27). If we look in the chi-square distribution table, we notice that the difference between the two models is not statistically significant for $p \leq 0.05$ (for 20 degrees of freedom, chi-square should have been at least equal to 31.3 so that the difference between the models be statistically significant).

Approximately the same conclusions can be drawn from comparing the percentages of correctly predicted cases by each model (Table 5). In addition, we find out some new things: model 1 (only the socio-demographic variables) predict almost perfectly belonging to the category of traditional participants, and not at all or almost not at all belonging to the other types; as we introduce other sets of variables, the percentage of correctly predicted cases for the category of traditional participants decreases very little (in the final model it stays quite high - almost 95%), while the percentage of correctly predicted cases for the other types of participation increases significantly; the biggest increase in the quality of the prediction appears in the first model, the one which includes the variables that measure external mobilization (by parties and social networks); in the maximal model (the one which includes all the sets of variables), the category which is the most difficult to predict is that of the inactive citizens, followed by that of the parochial participants, the active citizens and then the traditional participants. It is very likely that the difficulty of distinguishing the non-participants is the result of two factors: (1) they are very close as a profile to the traditional participants; (2) some of the traditional participants are in fact non-participants.[28] The phenomenon of turnout over-reporting, recognized and revealed in specialist studies (Bernstein et al., 2001; Matilla, 2003; Comșa, 2004) results in the artificial increase in the degree of similarity between the two types of voters.

Table 5.
Percentage of cases correctly predicted by each model

Category	Inactives	Traditional participants	Parochial participants	Active participants	Overall percentage
Model 0 (chance)	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	66.6
Model 1	0.0	99.0	4.3	0.0	66.3
Model 2	0.0	98.6	3.6	0.9	65.9
Model 3	1.1	98.2	4.0	1.8	65.9
Model 4	3.4	97.1	8.3	4.4	66.4
Model 5	6.7	95.7	13.0	7.2	66.7
Model 6	6.7	94.6	18.5	37.2	69.6

So far, we have presented only the aggregate results (for sets of variables) of the multinomial logistic regression analysis. In the following, we will analyze each variable used for describing the types, and finally we will develop the portraits of the four types of political participation. In order to evaluate

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[28] We could call them "false traditional participants", their existence being the result of turnout over-reporting.

the effect of a variable on belonging to a type of participation, we will use the Likelihood Ratio Tests[29] (Annex: Table 6). The comparison of the chi-square values for each variable in the six models indicates some interesting aspects:

- only one socio-demographic variable, useful relations, has a statistically significant direct influence regardless of the model, or - in other words - regardless of what other variables are controlled;
- the effect of some socio-demographic variables disappears (statistically speaking) when some other variables are introduced; thus, age and level of education have a statistically significant influence only as long as the variables in set 4 are introduced; therefore, the effect of age and of level of education on participation is shown through the mediation of interest for politics, of information and of level of political knowledge; the influence of involvement in the decision-making process at the workplace is maintained until the introduction of set 6 (at the limit of statistical significance); in fact, the effect of this variable overlaps to some extent with that of the contextual variables (the person's belonging to a professional decision-making network influences directly the person's political participation, but also had an indirect influence by that the chances that this person will be contacted by a party or that s/he is pressed by a social network increase); the effect of gender is maintained until the introduction of set 6, and it is at the limit of statistical significance even in the complete model (this situation may be accounted for by the gender differences in political socializing);
- the variables of modernity, welfare and holding a leadership position (as a result of the strong correlation with participation in decision-making, the effect of this variable is reduced) do not have a significance influence on participation;
- in most cases, the satisfaction and trust variables do not have significant effects, except for satisfaction with locality (only for model 3) which is associated with types of participation;
- when the other variables considered are controlled, trust in political actors does not affect participation, except for the case of trust in political parties;
- interest for politics, discussions on political topics and level of political knowledge have significant effects (statistically and as concerns

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[29] The chi-square statistic is the difference in -2 log-likelihood between the final model and a reduced model. The reduced model is formed by omitting an effect from the final model. The null hypothesis is that all parameters of that effect are 0.

size) in all the situations; if the other conditions are equal, the rest of the variables in the set do not have statistically significant effects;

- for some aspects, the manner in which the relationship between the citizens and politics is perceived influences directly belonging to one type of participation or another; thus, belonging to the types of participation depends on the level of internal political efficacy, on the perception of politics' influence on the person's life, and on the belief that political decisions can be influence in various legal ways;

- the biggest effect on participation (when all the other variables considered are controlled) is exerted by the variables in set 6 (all have statistically significant influence), especially by being contacted by a party / political organization.[30]

In order to describe and compare the profiles of the four types of political participation I reiterated for four times the complete model, each time with a different reference category. The odds ratios obtained in these models are presented in the annex (Table 7). The values in this table show which variables determine belonging to a specific type of participation (when the influence of the other variables is kept constant), as well as the sense of the influence. Thus, if for a particular pair of types of participation and for a specific characteristic, the value of the odds ratio is marked in bold, then between those two types there is a statistically significant difference depending on the variable concerned; if the odds ratio is over 1, the type on the first line has more of the respective characteristic as compared to the type on line two, while if the value of the odds ratio is under 1, the first type has less. As we see in the table, most often the significant values pertaining to a variable are grouped in one type of political participation (which indicates that this type differs significantly from the others by that variable). Depending on the differences observed, the four types of political participation can be described as follows.

As compared to all the other types, the type of **inactive people** (non-participants) is quite widely made up of females, young people, who rarely take part in decision-making at the workplace, who are relatively pleased with the locality of residence, who seldom discuss politics, who are much less frequently contacted by a party / political organization. In addition, as compared to the traditional participants, the inactive people are less satisfied with political actors' activities; as compared to the parochial voters, they have fewer useful

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[30] Given the results of previous studies (Wielhouwer and Lockerbie, 1994; Rosenstone and Hansen, 2003; Aars and Strømsnes, 2007), it was expected that mobilization would (also) have significance in Romania's case ("when contacted, citizens in new democracies are more likely to become involved than in old democracies", Karp and Banducci, 2007: 229).

relations, less knowledge of local politics, they believe less that the common citizens can influence political decisions; as compared to the active participants they have more support from a social network, less knowledge of politics; they believe less that political decisions can be influenced by common citizens, they are les available to support their favourite party or the act when they are displeased with how things work in society.

The traditional participants have a relatively less differentiated profile (let us remind that this is the category with the highest percentage and that, in fact, some of them are inactive). There is only one characteristic by which they are distinguished from all the other types, namely the extent to which they have been contacted by a party / political organization - which is higher as compared to the inactive people and lower as compared to the parochial or the active participants. As compared to the inactive people, the traditional participants are older, they participate in decision-making at the workplace more often, they are less pleased with their locality but somewhat more pleased with the political actors' activities, they discuss about politics more often and hey belief less that their life is influenced by political decisions. As compared to the parochial participants, the traditional participants have fewer useful relations, they consider that their life is less influenced by political decisions, they have a more limited sense of political efficacy, there are fewer occasions when a social network puts pressure on them to participate, and they are less inclined to support their favourite party. As compared to the active participants, the traditional participants have less trust in local institutions and parties, they have less political knowledge, there are fewer occasions when a social network presses them to participate, they are less ready to support their favourite party, they act more rarely when they are confronted with a problem in various social contexts.

The parochial participants differ from all the other types simultaneously only by that they have been contacted by a party / political organization – more often as compared to the inactive people and the traditional participants, and less often as compared to the active participants. As compared to the inactive participants, the parochial participants are older, they tend to be male rather than female, they participate more in decision-making at the workplace, they have more useful relations, they are less pleased with their own locality, they discuss politics more often, they know more about local politics, and they believe more that political decisions can be influenced. As compared to the traditional participants, the parochial participants have more useful relations, they more often consider that their life is influenced by politics, they have a higher sense of political efficacy, their social network presses them more often to participate, they are readier to support their favourite party. As compared

65

to the active participants, the parochial participants have less trust in parties, they know less about politics, their social network presses them less often to participate, they are readier to support their favourite party, and they act more rarely when they are confronted with a problem in a social context.

As compared to the other types, **the active participants** are characterized by a higher level of political knowledge, they are more frequently contacted by a party / political organization, there is more pressure on them by social networks to participate, they are readier to support their favourite party, and they act more often when they have a problem in a social context. In addition, as compared to the inactive people, the active participants participate more frequently in decision-making at the workplace, they have less support from a social network, they discuss about politics more often, they believe to a larger extent that political decisions can be influenced in various legal ways. As compared to the traditional participants, the active participants have more trust in the local institutions and in parties, and unlike parochial participants, they have more trust in parties.

Conclusions

In the study, I aimed to construct a typology of political participation and to describe the resulting modes. From the multitude of political participatory acts I focused on some, the ones that are properly political (acts that are strongly and directly linked to the political sphere). The data of the survey used for developing the typology were collected using the face-to-face approach and administering a standardized questionnaire. The sample was representative for the adult population of four communities (urban area: Sibiu and Cluj-Napoca; rural area: Răşinari and Apahida); the total volume of the sample was 1,456 citizens. After the factor analysis of the political participatory acts three major factors (modes of participation) resulted: collective participation, individual participation and participation in voting. Through the cluster analysis of these dimensions, four types of political participation resulted: the non-participants, the traditional participants, the parochial participants and the active participants, each with a relatively well outlined profile. The inactive type is made up of citizens who did not partake in almost any political participatory act after 1990; the traditional participants only participated in voting, the parochial participants participated in voting and in some acts that involved direct contact with politicians, and the active participants are those that, besides voting, also partook in a diversity of other political participatory acts.

Our study included only so called traditional / conventional participatory activities. In a rapidly changing world, this choice could appear to be too narrow, at least by the fact that ignores some of the political participatory

66

activities associated with the new media. Another limitation refers to the large time period of reference (after 1990) for the political participatory acts (we have done this choice because of the low level of political participation in Romania, in order to obtain more cases of "political participants"). Putting together individuals that performed the political participatory acts in such a large time span could be a risky choice: it is possible that some of them participated only at the beginning of the '90, some only in the last years, and some along the entire period.

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Annex

The construction of indexes

Access to / availability of household goods (bunuri):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal component method) of variables q115a, ..., q115h (KMO = 0.80; variance accounted for by the unique factor 40%).

Number of useful relations (relatii):
Index resulting from the sum of situations in which the respondent states s/he has relations (q110a, ... q110j).

Level of modernity (modern):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q107 and q108 (KMO = 0,50; variance accounted for by the unique factor 79%).

Satisfaction with own life (sat_via):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q5a, q5b, q5c, q5d (KMO = 0,67; variance accounted for by the unique factor 46%).

Satisfaction with locality (sat_loc):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q6a, ..., q6j (KMO = 0,80; variance accounted for by the unique factor 34%).

General satisfaction (sat_gen):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q2, q3a and q4 (KMO = 0,64; variance accounted for by the unique factor 58%).

Support from a social network (sup_ret):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q82, q83, q84 and q85 (KMO = 0,89; variance accounted for by the unique factor 32%).

Generalized trust (incr_gen):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q11 and q12 (KMO = 0,50; variance accounted for by the unique factor 76%).

Trust in different categories of population (incr_spe):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q13a, ..., q13e (KMO = 0,74; variance accounted for by the unique factor 48%).

Trust in national institutions (incr_ins):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q14a, ..., q14j (KMO = 0,87; variance accounted for by the unique factor 46%).

Trust in local institutions (incr_insl):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q15a, ..., q15d (KMO = 0,79; variance accounted for by the unique factor 70%).

Trust in major parties (incr_par):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q16a, ..., q16i (KMO = 0,88; variance accounted for by the unique factor 46%).

Trust in major political leaders (incr_lid):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q17a, ..., q17k (KMO = 0,87; variance accounted for by the unique factor 38%).

Satisfaction with the activity of the major political actors (sat_pol):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q18a, ..., q18f (KMO = 0,75; variance accounted for by the unique factor 55%).

Declared interest for politics (int_pol):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q26a, ..., q26g (KMO = 0,86; variance accounted for by the unique factor 70%).

Political discussions (dis_pol):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q27a, ..., q27e (KMO = 0,79; variance accounted for by the unique factor 56%).

Information through the media (inf_med):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q7a, ..., q8d (KMO = 0,58; variance accounted for by the unique factor 46%).

Political information through the media (infp_med):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q8a, ..., q7d (KMO = 0,77; variance accounted for by the unique factor 61%).

Level of political knowledge (cun_pol):
Index resulted from relating the number of correct answers provided by the subject to the total number of items (q38).

Knowledge of local politics (cun_poll):
Index resulted from relating the number of correct answers provided by the subject to the total number of items (q72).

The respondent's life is influenced by political decisions (pol_cet):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q28a and q28b (KMO = 0,50; variance accounted for by the unique factor 88%).

People [like the respondent] can influence political decisions (cet_pol):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q29a and q29b (KMO = 0,50; variance accounted for by the unique factor 91%).

Belief that political decisions can be influenced in various ways (pol_inf):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q24a, ..., q24h (KMO = 0,83; variance accounted for by the unique factor 40%).

Internal political efficacy (efi_int):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q32 and q43f (KMO = 0,50; variance accounted for by the unique factor 58%).

External political efficacy (efi_ext):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q34 and q35 (KMO = 0,50; variance accounted for by the unique factor 72%).

It matters who is leading / who people vote (vot_con):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q36 and q37 (KMO = 0,50; variance accounted for by the unique factor 83%).

Contacted by a party / political organization (con_par):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q19a, ..., q19h (KMO = 0,85; variance accounted for by the unique factor 47%).

Pressure from the network to participate (pre_ret):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q20a, ..., q20h (KMO = 0,85; variance accounted for by the unique factor 48%).

Availability to support favourite party (dis_sus):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q22a, ..., q22h (KMO = 0,89; variance accounted for by the unique factor 53%).

When displeased with something, they acted to solve the problem (nem_per):
Aggregated index resulting from the factor analysis (principal components method) of variables q25a, ..., q25d (KMO = 0,70; variance accounted for by the unique factor 46%).

Results of the multinomial logistic regression analysis

Table 6.

Effect of analyzed variables within each model (Likelihood Ratio Tests)

Model	1		2		3		4		5		6	
Set / Variables	L^2	p	L^2	p	L^2	p	L^2	p	L^2	p	L^2	p
Set 1												
Male (q91)	**18**	**0.00**	**19**	**0.00**	**20**	**0.00**	**9**	**0.03**	**10**	**0.02**	7	0.08
Age (q92)	**9**	**0.03**	**10**	**0.02**	**8**	**0.04**	6	0.12	6	0.11	5	0.18
Years of schooling (q93)	**9**	**0.03**	**8**	**0.04**	**8**	**0.04**	3	0.47	2	0.48	2	0.55
Occupational status (q94-95)	2	0.64	2	0.65	2	0.65	1	0.69	2	0.56	3	0.39
People subordinated to them at the workplace (q96)	7	0.08	7	0.08	6	0.10	6	0.10	6	0.13	5	0.16
Participation in decision making at the workplace (q97)	**13**	**0.00**	**13**	**0.01**	**12**	**0.01**	8	0.06	7	0.06	6	0.14
Owns / has access to goods (q115)	5	0.15	6	0.12	7	0.08	5	0.21	3	0.42	3	0.38
Number of useful relations (q110)	**30**	**0.00**	**28**	**0.00**	**27**	**0.00**	**26**	**0.00**	**25**	**0.00**	**13**	**0.00**
Level of modernity (q107-108)	3	0.40	3	0.36	3	0.40	4	0.22	4	0.28	1	0.82
Set 2												
Satisfaction with life (health, job, money, housing) (q5)	-	-	1	0.87	0	0.95	1	0.89	1	0.91	2	0.55
Satisfaction with locality (q6)	-	-	5	0.19	**8**	**0.05**	8	0.06	6	0.10	5	0.16
General satisfaction with own life (q2, q3a, q4)	-	-	2	0.67	2	0.67	2	0.56	2	0.61	3	0.44
Support from a social network (q82, q83, q84, q85)	-	-	2	0.51	2	0.55	3	0.41	2	0.51	4	0.24
Generalized trust (q12, q13)	-	-	2	0.48	4	0.31	4	0.30	3	0.34	3	0.38
Trust in various population groups (q13)	-	-	0	0.93	0	0.97	1	0.71	2	0.63	1	0.89
Set 3												
Trust in national institutions (q14)	-	-	-	-	4	0.32	3	0.45	3	0.39	3	0.46
Trust in local institutions (q15)	-	-	-	-	1	0.74	1	0.75	1	0.78	4	0.22
Trust in parties (q16)	-	-	-	-	7	0.07	**9**	**0.04**	**8**	**0.05**	**12**	**0.01**
Trust in political leaders (q17)	-	-	-	-	3	0.44	4	0.25	4	0.22	4	0.22
Satisfaction with the major political actors' activity	-	-	-	-	6	0.12	5	0.15	6	0.10	7	0.07

Model	1		2		3		4		5		6	
Set / Variables	L²	p	L²	p	L²	p	L²	p	L²	p	L²	p
(q18)												
Set 4												
Declared interest for politics (q26)	-	-	-	-	-	-	**13**	**0.00**	4	0.30	1	0.88
Political discussion (q27)	-	-	-	-	-	-	**14**	**0.00**	**14**	**0.00**	**12**	**0.01**
Information through the media (q7)	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	0.48	2	0.52	2	0.51
Political information through the media (q8)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.74	1	0.83	1	0.88
Level of political knowledge (q38)	-	-	-	-	-	-	**17**	**0.00**	**15**	**0.00**	**17**	**0.00**
Knowledge of local politics (q72)	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	0.12	6	0.13	4	0.23
Set 5												
The respondents' life is influenced by political decisions (q28a, q28b)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	0.06	**8**	**0.04**
People [like the respondent] can influence political decisions (q29a, q29b)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.78	1	0.86
Belief that political decisions can be influenced in different ways (q24)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**16**	**0.00**	**8**	**0.05**
Internal political efficacy (q31, q32, q43f)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**8**	**0.05**	**8**	**0.05**
External political efficacy (q34, q35)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	0.48	3	0.39
It matters who is leading /who people vote (q36, q37)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	0.59	2	0.62
Set 6												
Contacted by a party / political organization (q19)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**58**	**0.00**
Pressure from the network to participate (q20)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**28**	**0.00**
Availability to support the favourite party (q22)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**30**	**0.00**
When displeased with something, acted to solve the problem (q25)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**10**	**0.02**

the statistically significant values ($p \leq 0.05$) are marked in bold; N = 1,456.

Table 7.

Profile of voter categories (complete model); odds ratios - Exp(B)

Category of voters ...	Non-participants (NE)			Traditional participants (PT)			Parochial participants (PP)			Active participants (PA)		
... as related to the category ...	PT	PP	PA	NE	PP	PA	NE	PT	PA	NE	PT	PP
Male (q91)	0.8	**0.7**	0.7	1.2	0.9	0.9	**1.4**	1.2	1.0	1.4	1.1	1.0
Age (q92)	0.7	**0.7**	0.8	1.4	0.9	1.1	**1.5**	1.1	1.2	1.3	0.9	0.9
Years of schooling (q93)	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.3	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	1.4	1.1	1.1
Occupational status (q94-95)	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	1.1	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.8	1.4	1.2	1.2
People subordinated to them at the workplace (q96)	**1.5**	**1.5**	1.6	**0.7**	1.0	1.1	**0.7**	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.9	1.0
Participation in decision making at the workplace (q97)	**0.7**	**0.6**	0.6	**1.5**	0.9	0.9	**1.6**	1.1	1.0	1.6	1.1	1.0
Owns / has access to goods (q115)	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.2	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.0	0.9
Number of useful relations (q110)	0.9	**0.7**	0.8	1.1	**0.7**	0.8	**1.4**	**1.3**	1.1	1.3	1.2	0.9
Level of modernity (q107-108)	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.8	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.1
Satisfaction with life (health, job, money, housing) (q5)	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	1.1	1.2	1.1
Satisfaction with locality (q6)	**1.3**	**1.3**	1.2	**0.8**	1.0	0.9	**0.7**	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.1	1.1
General satisfaction with own life (q2, q3a, q4)	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.3	0.9	0.9	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.8
Support from a social network (q82, q83, q84, q85)	1.2	1.3	**1.5**	0.8	1.0	1.2	0.8	1.0	1.2	**0.7**	0.8	0.8
Generalized trust (q12, q13)	1.1	1.3	1.1	0.9	1.1	1.0	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.1
Trust in various population groups (q13)	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0
Trust in national institutions (q14)	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.2	0.9	1.1	1.1	0.9	0.9
Trust in local institutions (q15)	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.1	0.9	**0.7**	1.2	1.1	0.8	1.5	**1.4**	1.3
Trust in parties (q16)	1.3	1.3	0.7	0.8	1.1	**0.6**	0.7	0.9	**0.5**	1.4	**1.7**	**1.9**
Trust in political leaders (q17)	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.3	1.0	1.4	1.2	1.0	1.3	0.9	0.7	0.8
Satisfaction with the major political actors' activity (q18)	**0.7**	0.7	1.0	**1.4**	1.0	1.3	1.4	1.0	1.3	1.0	0.7	0.8

Category of voters ...	Non-participants (NE)			Traditional participants (PT)			Parochial participants (PP)			Active participants (PA)		
... as related to the category ...	PT	PP	PA	NE	PP	PA	NE	PT	PA	NE	PT	PP
Declared interest for politics (q26)	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.9
Political discussion (q27)	**0.6**	**0.5**	**0.6**	**1.6**	0.9	0.9	**1.8**	1.1	1.1	**1.7**	1.1	0.9
Information through the media (q7)	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.0
Political information through the media (q8)	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.1
Level of political knowledge (q38)	1.0	0.8	**0.5**	1.0	0.9	**0.6**	1.2	1.2	**0.7**	**1.8**	**1.8**	**1.5**
Knowledge of local politics (q72)	0.8	**0.7**	0.7	1.3	0.9	0.9	**1.3**	1.1	1.0	1.4	1.1	1.0
The respondents' life is influenced by political decisions (q28a, q28b)	**1.3**	1.1	1.3	**0.8**	**0.8**	1.0	0.9	**1.2**	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.8
People [like the respondent] can influence political decisions (q29a, q29b)	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0
Belief that political decisions can be influenced in different ways (q24)	0.8	**0.7**	**0.6**	1.2	0.8	0.8	**1.5**	1.2	1.0	**1.5**	1.2	1.0
Internal political efficacy (q31, q32, q43f)	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.0	**0.8**	0.8	1.2	**1.2**	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.0
External political efficacy (q34, q35)	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.8	1.0	1.2	0.8	1.0	1.2	0.7	0.9	0.9
It matters who is leading /who people vote (q36, q37)	0.9	0.9	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.3	1.1	1.2
Contacted by a party / political organization (q19)	**0.4**	**0.3**	**0.2**	**2.4**	**0.6**	**0.5**	**3.9**	**1.6**	**0.8**	**5.0**	**2.1**	**1.3**
Pressure from the network to participate (q20)	1.2	0.9	0.6	0.9	**0.8**	**0.5**	1.1	**1.3**	**0.7**	1.6	**1.8**	**1.4**
Availability to support the favourite party (q22)	1.2	0.9	**0.7**	0.8	**0.8**	**0.5**	1.1	**1.3**	**0.7**	1.5	**1.8**	**1.4**
When displeased with something, acted to solve the problem (q25)	0.9	0.9	**0.6**	1.1	0.9	**0.7**	1.1	1.1	**0.7**	1.6	1.5	1.4

the statistically significant values (p ≤ 0.05) are marked in bold; N = 1,456.

EASTERN EUROPE IN THE SOCIAL POLICY SCIENCES SINCE THE 1980S. THREE INTERNATIONAL JOURNALS REVISITED

TIM GOEDEMÉ[*]

ABSTRACT. Since their accession to the European Union, the Eastern EU member states fully participate in the EU social protection and social inclusion process. One of the crucial factors for the success of this process consists of accurate knowledge about the evolution of the social policy situation in each of these countries. However, knowledge on the Eastern EU member countries may be biased in several ways. This article aims to provide some background information on how and to what extent social policy research on the Eastern EU member countries has been presented in international journals since the 1980s in order to assess to what degree this bias may be present. An analysis of the relevant articles published in internationally renowned journals offers answers to three questions: (1) To what extent are the Eastern EU member countries present in social policy research? Which countries receive most attention? What is the risk of a 'country-bias'? (2) Can an evolution in topics be observed and if so, is this evolution similar to a general evolution in social policy research, or does it concern a specific trend in research on Eastern Europe? (3) What is the background of the authors? How is this related to the publication of social policy research on Eastern Europe? In this article the results are presented for three journals: the International Social Security Review, the Review of Income and Wealth, and East European Politics and Societies. The first two journals are considered to be social policy scientists' general resource of state-of-the-art research in social security, income (inequality) and social policy. The third is focused on the analysis of Eastern Europe and – as far as social policy issues are concerned – is written primarily from a political science perspective.

Keywords: social policy journals; Eastern Europe; "country bias" in social research

Introduction[1]

Since May 2004 ten Central and Eastern European countries have joined the European Union. Four years earlier, with the launch of the Lisbon

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process, social policy gained more attention from EU policy makers. Accordingly, an Open Method of Coordination was launched between the member states in order to set common goals in the areas of social inclusion and social protection, learn from each other and measure progress towards these goals (Marlier et al., 2007). In this process, accurate knowledge about the social situation and social policy in the member states is indispensable. Furthermore, in order to fully understand the present (policy) situation, knowledge is needed about the situation in the past. Much of this knowledge is produced by social policy research, which in its turn largely (but not exclusively) reaches us through publications in journals. However, we do not know whether all countries are equally well covered by these publications. Moreover, previous research has shown that the background of authors may influence their research (e.g., Bockman and Eyal, 2002). Both factors may bias our knowledge about social policy and the social situation in Eastern Europe. If, furthermore, almost no information on Eastern Europe is available on some issues whereas much information on these issues is at hand for Western Europe or America, another bias in the form of inappropriate generalisations from Western to Eastern Europe may occur.

Therefore, in this article, I look at social policy research on the Eastern EU member countries as it has been presented in international journals. Instead of focusing on the content of this research, the purpose of this article is to offer some more background information on how and to what extent this research has been presented in Western Europe and North America. In particular, our background knowledge on this issue is enhanced by answering three groups of questions: (1) To what extent are the Eastern EU member countries present in social policy research? Which countries receive most attention? (2) Can an evolution in topics be observed and if so, is this evolution similar to a general evolution in social policy research, or does it concern a specific trend in research on Eastern Europe? (3) What is the background of the authors? How is this related to the publication of social policy research on Eastern Europe?

To this purpose, three journals will be studied from 1980 until 2007. The journals should be representative for state-of-the-art social policy research as presented in Western Europe and North America (the U.S. and Canada) and contain enough material on the Eastern EU member countries. Furthermore, since the interdisciplinary character of social policy research, they should cover a broad field of research. Three journals do not suffice to claim any representativeness. Nonetheless, I attempted to attain a balanced selection. I selected two journals that focus on a particular subject (social security and income distribution) and one journal that focuses on a particular area (extended

Eastern Europe, which is a broader region than the countries included in this article). To the first category belong the Review of Income and Wealth (ROIW) and the International Social Security Review (ISSR), to the second belongs East European Politics and Societies (EEPS). Although East European Politics and Societies was first published only in 1986, it is included in this study since it is considered to be the leading journal in its field in North America (at least according to some editor's notes: Gross, 1994: 1; Tismaneanu, 1998; Prizel, 2004: 7). All journals combined draw primarily on research from an economics, sociology and political science perspective, which should allow for shedding enough light on social policy research that features the countries under review.

The article is structured as follows. Firstly, some technical considerations are made. Secondly, I give a short introduction to the three journals included in this study and discuss the extent to which they cover the region. Thereafter I look for an indication of the existence of a country bias in social policy research. In the next section, I assess the degree to which social policy research on Eastern Europe followed research on the West and I present an overview of 'hot topics' in social policy research. Finally, I address the relation between the background of the authors, the journals and the countries studied. I finish with some concluding remarks.

On the selection of articles

This article focuses on social policy research on the Eastern EU member countries (EU10)[2], these are: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Romania. Since the Baltic countries were a part of the Soviet Union and Slovenia of Yugoslavia, these republics have been considered to be 'Eastern EU member countries'. I applied a broad definition of 'social policy research': both research on 'social policy' and on the 'social situation' in the selected countries fall under the heading of 'social policy research'. 'Social policy' is "taken to refer to the policy of governments with regard to action having a direct impact on the welfare of the citizens, by providing them with services or income" (Marshall, 1967: 7). As Titmuss (1974: 26) argues, social policy is not always policy in favour of the poor: it can also be aimed at exploiting the poor to the benefit of the rich. Moreover, intended absence of governmental action can also be regarded as

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[2] I use EU10 to refer to the Eastern EU member countries. Note however that the European Commission used the same indication to refer to the countries that accessed the EU in 2004 (including Malta and Cyprus, but excluding Romania and Bulgaria).

policy (for a discussion, see Higgins, 1981: 17-18). In this article, not only research on social policy is under review, but also the subject social policy aims to affect: the social situation, especially in terms of the distribution of income (as follows from Marshall's definition of social policy). Marshall (1967: 7) identifies as the 'central core': social insurance, public (or national) assistance, the health and welfare services, and housing policy. Although he states that education and the treatment of crime also belong to social policy, I exclude both policy areas from the definition applied in this article. Nonetheless, this definition is only relevant for the study of East European Politics and Societies, since for the sake of comprehensiveness and pragmatic reasons, as far as the ROIW and the ISSR are concerned, all articles dealing with the Eastern EU member states are included, supposing that all articles published in these journals comply with the definition of 'social policy research' – a supposition that is not entirely correct in a number of cases.

Only articles published in the 'body' of the journals are included in this study. These are the articles in which research is presented and are thus of most interest here. As a consequence, introductions, editors' notes, errata, short book reviews, discussions (comments and notes) and others are excluded from the analysis. Nonetheless, review essays (a review of different books in one article, or an article of several pages on one book) are included.

The journals and their coverage of Eastern Europe

Understanding the evolution of topics covered in the journals and countries included, but also the kind of authors that contributed to it, is helped by information on the context in which the journals evolved and the major changes that occurred within the journals. In this section, along with a general introduction to the three journals, special emphasis is laid on the degree to which each of them included Eastern EU member countries and social policy research. In order to do so, a distinction is made between countries 'included' and countries 'in focus'. An article focuses on a country if this is explicitly stated in the title, the abstract or the introduction, all other countries that are considered in the article are classified as 'included'[3]. Note that 'included' and

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[3] The focus of an article is defined as follows: countries mentioned in title, the abstract or introduction (in this order) as such; all others (also if mentioned in abstract), are registered as 'country included'. If, however, more than 10 countries are in focus (or a group as world, all transition countries), than no country is classified as 'in focus' and all are registered as 'included'. If no abstract, summary or introduction is available (as is the case with many

'focused' are not exclusive categories: all articles classified as 'focused' are also classified as 'included'.

The *Review of Income and Wealth* is the peer reviewed journal of the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth (IARIW), founded in September 1947. The Association had initially a primary focus on national income accounting. In 1951, the first volume of the series 'Income and Wealth' was published. This series contained a selection of articles presented at the conferences organised by the IARIW. In 1966, it was converted into the Review of Income and Wealth a truly international journal, potentially covering all countries over the globe[4]. The international character of the review was immediately established (e.g. Derksen, 1951, who included, among others, Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland). In 1959 a conference was held in Yugoslavia. Later on, in 1965 the IARIW obtained a grant from the Ford Foundation to encourage economists and statisticians in Eastern Europe to participate in the IARIW and attend the General Conferences. In 1975, with the help of Eastern European participants, the 1973 IARIW General Conference was held in Hungary (Ruggles, 1999: 399). The last General Conference held in Eastern Europe was in 2000 in Poland.

In spite of the link between the IARIW's conferences and the articles published in the Review, the Eastern EU member countries were not very well represented in the journal during the 1980s (around 8 per cent of articles included these countries). Especially articles that focused on the Eastern European countries were very scarce. With the arrival of review articles in 1991, however, this situation improved somewhat, with even 8 articles focused on one or more Eastern EU member country (whereof 3 review articles) in the first half of 1990s[5]. The second half was less fruitful with less than 6 per cent of all articles including one of these countries[6]. With the coming of the new millennium (and the European Union memberships?), their presence improved again, being included in more than 10 per cent of all

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review articles), then the focus is derived from the introduction to the article, and if this is not possible, this is a bit more arbitrarily done by reading the whole article.

[4] See Ruggles (1999: 398) and http://www.roiw.org, the official website of the journal from which all articles until 2003 can be downloaded for free.

[5] A rise of attention devoted to Eastern Europe in U.S. non-area studies journals was also observed for the first half of the 1990s by Comisso and Gutierrez (2002: 23-24). They analysed among others: the *American Economic Review*, the *American Political Science Review* and the *American Journal of Sociology*.

[6] This decrease cannot be attributed to the exclusion of Russia from the countries in. In the case of the 'included articles', the presence of Eastern European countries remained stable.

articles published, although focused articles more than halved in number[7]. All in all, 19 articles focused on at least one of the Eastern EU member countries over the entire period.

As is the case with the ROIW, the *International Social Security Review*, is a quarterly of a long established international organisation. The International Social Security Association (ISSA) was founded in 1947, the same year as the IARIW, although its roots go back until 1927. Its members are social security organisations and governmental departments with direct administrative responsibilities in social security. Since its establishment, the Association has continuously grown in scope to include all branches of social security and in number of members, encompassing the majority of countries around the globe. Many of the Eastern EU member countries were involved in the association already in the years between the two World Wars (AISS, 1987). The origins of the ISSR date back to 1948, when ISSA started to publish its official journal, the Bulletin of the International Social Security Organisation (Le Bulletin de l'Association internationale de sécurité sociale). In 1967 this bulletin was converted into the International Social Security Review and since then it appears four times a year (with regularly combined issues since the 1990s (AISS, 1987: 171-172). The Journal deals with social security issues in the first place and the broader field of social policy in the second.

Table 1.

Number of articles that focus on at least one Eastern EU member country relative to the total number of articles

	1980 - 1984	1985 - 1989	1990 - 1994	1995 - 1999	2000 - 2004	2005 - 2007	Total
Review of Income and Wealth							
% focused	0.8	3.6	5.8	1,9	1.4	1.6	2.6
% included	7.5	8.1	8.6	5,8	10.3	12.5	8.4
Total number of articles	120	111	139	155	146	64	735
International Social Security Review							
% focused	8.6	12.6	11.3	3.9	9.4	0.0	8.4
% included	22.2	21.8	18.8	18,2	25.5	17.0	21.1
Total number of articles	81	87	80	77	106	47	478

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[7] On the basis of a sample of 50 per cent of all articles between 1988 and 1998, also Blades (1999: 414-415) concludes that OECD countries (before OECD's enlargement in the 1990s) receive by far most attention in the ROIW.

	1980 - 1984	1985 - 1989	1990 - 1994	1995 - 1999	2000 - 2004	2005 - 2007	Total
East European Politics and Societies							
% focused		1.7	0.0	2.8	0.0	3.2	1.2
% included		1.7	1.0	2.8	0.0	3.2	1.4
Total number of articles		59	101	108	158	63	489

In the case of EEPS, only the articles that focus on social policy research and focus on, respectively include, at least one Eastern EU member country are counted.

The attention given to the Eastern EU member countries is considerably higher in ISSR than in ROIW. In 1991 and ten years later, in 2001 a special issue was devoted respectively to social policy and social protection in Central and Eastern Europe. Over the entire period more or less one out of five articles included at least one of the Eastern EU member countries. Furthermore, one out of ten articles focused on one of these countries, although this figure fluctuated much more with a remarkable drop in the second half of the 1990s and in the most recent years. As was the case with the evolution in ROIW, this drop cannot be attributed to the exclusion of Russia from the area in focus. On a ten year basis however, a clear declining trend of articles devoted to EU10 countries is observable[8]. Over the entire period 40 articles focused on at least one Eastern EU member country. How does it come that the International Social Security Review has published many more articles on Eastern Europe than the Review of Income and Wealth? An explanation is not readily available. The evolution in Eastern Europe since the 1980s has offered important research questions in the fields of both journals. An exact explanation goes however beyond the scope of this article.

East European Politics and Societies (EEPS) is considerably younger than ROIW and ISSR: the first issue of East European Politics and Societies

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[8] This is hard to explain. Not only did Comisso and Gutierrez (2004: 23) observe that Eastern Europe became a focal point of all the social sciences, one would also expect that the accession to the European Union would have increased scholarly interest in the region during the last five to ten years. Vladimir Rys (former Secretary General of ISSA) has ascertained me that during the second half of the 1990s articles have not been 'saved up' for the publication of the special issue on Central and Eastern Europe in 2001.

appeared only in December 1986. The driving force behind the journal are the Committees on East European Studies and Language Training of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS). According to its own description "East European Politics and Societies is an international journal that examines social, political, and economic issues in Eastern Europe. EEPS offers holistic coverage of the region - every country, from every discipline - ranging from detailed case studies through comparative analyses and theoretical issues"[9].

Although Eastern EU member countries are omnipresent in EEPS, social policy was clearly no important issue in the journal. Only two articles entirely focused on social policy in a (post-1989) EU10 country (one about Hungary in 1995 and one about the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland in 2007) and a few more on social policy outcomes. Since only 6 articles over the entire period fall under what was defined as 'social policy research', it does not make much sense to draw serious conclusions about trends, except for the observation that social policy research is not completely absent and pops up now and then.

A country bias?

Since the total number of articles about social policy in the Eastern EU member countries is relatively low in all three journals, many social policy issues are not discussed with reference to all countries. If moreover some countries are on some issues much more present than others (especially if these others are absent), then a tendency to generalise the knowledge about the most researched countries to the least researched countries is more likely to exist – although it does not necessarily follow. Much depends of course on the ability of the researcher not to generalise if little or no information on the country (s)he considers exists. In what follows I will present for all three journals figures on the number each country is 'in focus' or just included in an article (see footnote 3 for a definition of 'focused' and 'included')[10].

Table 2.

Absolute number of articles focused on each Eastern EU member country

	1980-1984	1985-1989	1990-1994	1995-1999	2000-2004	2005-2007	Total
Bulgaria		4		1	2		7
Czech				2	4	1	7

	1980-1984	1985-1989	1990-1994	1995-1999	2000-2004	2005-2007	Total
Republic							
Estonia					2		2
Hungary	1	1	2	2	4	2	12
Latvia					3		3
Lithuania					3		3
Poland	1	3	4	4	4	2	18
Romania		1	1		3		5
Slovakia					2		2
Slovenia				1	2		3
Czechoslovakia	1	2	1				4
Soviet Union	5	6	7	1	1		20
Yugoslavia							0
Total	8	16	15	9	12	3	63

The categories are not exclusive, this means that articles may focus on different countries at once. In the case of EEPS only the articles about social policy research have been taken into consideration.

The Baltic countries, Slovenia and Slovakia are the countries that figure always among the ones that are least featured, irrespective of journal, looking at focused or included articles, and moment in time (by 5 year periods). In some cases Slovakia, Slovenia or Latvia is doing better than the other countries in this group, but overall they appear the least in social policy research on the Eastern EU member countries. Of course, one can argue, these are all countries that (re)gained their independent nature only since 1991 and the figures run from 1980 until 2007. But how to explain then that the Czech Republic is doing better? Nonetheless, adding the articles in which these countries' forbears are included or 'in focus' alters the picture dramatically, especially in the case of the Baltic countries. Slovakia on the other hand would jump before Romania and Bulgaria. Slovenia however, remains the least featured country. Two considerations undermine the value of this last comparison: first of all, these countries were the least featured countries for each period in time (with some minor exceptions); and secondly, particularly in the case of the Baltic countries, would a generalisation of research on the Soviet Union to the Baltic countries not exactly cause the biased picture we try to avoid?

The middle group of countries is composed by South Eastern Europe (Romania and Bulgaria) and the Czech Republic. It is not easy to draw a clear line between these countries. Depending on the period under consideration and whether one looks at being 'included' or 'in focus' or the journal under consideration, anytime the ranking of the three countries changes. For instance, Bulgaria is included most in the ISSR, the Czech Republic in EEPS and Romania in the ROIW, the same holds for being in the focus of articles.

The two countries most 'in focus' and 'included' in social policy research are clearly Hungary and – even more – Poland. Only in EEPS Hungary is once more in focus than Poland. Poland is absolutely the most researched country as far as social policy research in the International Social Security Review, the Review of Income and Wealth and East European Politics and Societies are concerned. Except for EEPS (which includes only 6 articles of interest here), Poland is almost in all periods the most frequently researched EU10 country[11]. Nonetheless, an important nuance is that until the first half of the 1990s the Soviet Union was far more in focus than Poland – although this observation is not replicated if all articles that included at least one EU10 country are taken into consideration.

Table 3.

Absolute number of articles in which each Eastern EU member country is 'included'

	1980-1984	1985-1989	1990-1994	1995-1999	2000-2004	2005-2007	Total
Bulgaria	6	6	2	4	12	7	37
Czech Republic				6	13	9	28
Estonia			2	2	8	7	19
Hungary	10	9	9	7	17	10	62
Latvia			2	2	12	6	22
Lithuania			2	2	9	6	19
Poland	13	9	11	9	21	12	75
Romania	7	5	4	3	10	6	35
Slovakia				2	8	9	19
Slovenia				4	8	9	21
Czechoslovakia	11	8	4		1		24
Soviet Union	9	8	10	3	5	3	38
Yugoslavia	8	3	2		1	1	15
Total	26	21	21	16	27	14	125

The categories are not exclusive, this means that articles may focus on different countries at once. In the case of EEPS only the articles about social policy research have been taken into consideration.

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[11] This does not only hold for social policy research, but for all articles in EEPS as well. Only during the second half of the 1980s Poland was bypassed by Hungary and during the second half of the 1990s by Romania.

Research subjects: the evolution in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s

This section mainly focuses on the articles that focused on at least one Eastern EU member country. Given this sample, two questions are addressed: (1) to what extent have the topics discussed in this articles followed the general evolution in social policy research?; (2) What then, is the evolution in topics discussed in these articles and can some 'hot topics' be discerned? Firstly, I will discuss the Review of Income and Wealth. Secondly I address the International Social Security Review. Thirdly, I shortly discuss East European Politics and Societies.

The Review of Income and Wealth

Initially, national income and social accounts made up the core fields of interest in the ROIW (Lundberg, 1951). It is only later on that (re)distribution of income and wealth, income inequality and poverty have become ever more prominent in the journal, especially towards the end of the 1980s and in the 1990s. A proxy for this evolution could be the list of sessions at the IARIW's General Conferences: whereas these issues appeared rather rarely on the conferences in the 1950s and the '60s, in the 1970s they appeared more regularly. By the 1980s every conference harboured at least one session dedicated to the (re)distribution of income and wealth and / or to poverty (Carson, 1999: 386 and Ruggles, 1999: 404-407)[12]. In spite of the revived discussion from the mid-80s onwards about national accounts in the light of the future revision of the System of National Accounts, poverty, inequality and redistribution were clearly issues that became more prominent in the ROIW during the 1980s. This evolution consolidated in the 1990s. Blades (1999: 412-413) reports on the basis of a sample of 50 per cent of the articles published in the Review between 1988 and 1998 that a bit more than half of all articles were dedicated to 'distribution issues'.

In spite of this evolution, the Eastern EU member countries almost never appeared in these analyses in the 1980s and only to a limited extent in the 1990s and 2000s. In the case of articles that focus on these countries, prior to the fall of communism income (re)distribution and poverty were not an issue. Four articles were published that focus (in some way) on national

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[12] This is an acceptable proxy, since as Ruggles (1999: 398-399) reports, the journal primarily published articles presented at the IARIW's conferences. However, this policy started to erode by the end of the 1970s (Blades, 1999: 411).

accounts (one on Hungary, one on Romania one on Poland and one on the Soviet Union and the United States) and one deals with productivity in Austria and Hungary. No articles on inequality and poverty, no articles about social policy. The same can be said about the articles that include (some) Eastern European countries, but focus on a wider region: in the 1980s, the accent clearly laid on national accounts and real product and price comparisons. One exception is an article of 1983 about the level of 'world inequality' (Berry et al., 1983). This is remarkable, since already in the seventies a few articles on income (earnings) inequality in Eastern Europe were published (e.g. Michal, 1973; Cromwell, 1977) and because of the growing number of articles published on these subjects during the 1980s. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, this picture changes drastically. In the 1990s, out of 11 articles focused on the EU10, only two are about national accounts, two are about economic growth and one is about the economic transition. On the other hand, five articles focus on poverty and inequality and one on the redistribution of income. Out of 3 articles published in the new millennium, one was about economic growth, one about redistribution and one about poverty. The same can be said about the articles that included EU10 countries: the number of articles on poverty and inequality published in the first half of the 1990s increased compared to the 1980s and 'exploded' in the new millennium, whereas the number of articles on national accounts (and the economy in general by extension) decreased in the 1990s – although still accounting for half of all articles including some EU10 country – and shrunk dramatically in the 2000s (to 5 per cent on national accounts and 30 per cent on economy and national accounts).

Conclusion: the articles published on EU10 countries have followed the general evolution from 'economic context' to 'social outcomes' as can be observed in the Review of Income and Wealth in general, but this evolution took place with a delay of about ten years.

The International Social Security Review

Similar broad evolutions are harder to observe in the ISSR since the range of issues linked to social policy research it extensively covers is much wider than in the ROIW. In order to gain more insight into this issue, I labelled all articles since 1980 according to some categories and analysed the evolution. An overview is presented in the tables below. The table on 'all articles' includes also the articles that focus on a EU10 country. Although many observations could be made, I highlight only the most remarkable ones.

The basic concern of the ISSR has not changed very much over the period under review. The bulk of articles (more than 80 per cent) is primarily

concerned with the core of social policy: social policy making and discussion of reforms, social policy legislation, social security institutions and social policy output (expenditures, number of beneficiaries, and so forth), in other words, the functioning of social security and health care. This picture has not changed very much over the years in one or another direction. Virtually non-existent are the articles that focus on social policy outcomes (poverty and inequality) in the 1980s, although some articles have been published since the end of the 1990s. In the case of articles that focus on EU10 countries, this picture is reinforced: 36 out of the 40 articles deal only with the core of social policy and only one is focused on poverty (in Russia / the Soviet Union).

If one looks at the different branches of social security that have been covered, the general picture that appears when taking all countries in consideration, is similarly reinforced when articles on Eastern EU member countries are considered. What becomes most apparent from the list of special issues is confirmed by the table below: pensions constitute the most considered social security branch. Although the attention devoted to pension issues exploded only in 1995, no other social security branch received more attention since the second half of the 1980s. It should be mentioned that one of the most important factors that contributed to this huge rise on the ISSR agenda is constituted by the publication of the World Bank's (1994) Averting the Old Age Crisis a year earlier. The special issue in 1995 was conceptualised as a major debate (and response to) the World Bank's analysis and proposals for reforms (privatisation and the introduction of multi-pillar schemes in particular). Ever since, pensions remained a very prominent theme in the ISSR, but attention peaked in 2002 (with the special issue on the challenge of ageing for social security) and once again in 2004 (largely due to articles focusing on pension reforms in Latin America and the Eastern Europe). Nonetheless since 2002 the overall trend is a decrease in the place reserved for pensions. Whereas about 30 per cent of all articles addressed the issue of pensions on average, this figure amounts to over 40 per cent in the case of articles that focus on Eastern EU member countries, with a peak in 2001 and 2004. In the immediate debate that followed the publication of Averting the Old Age Crisis Eastern EU10 countries remained out of attention, but it can be argued that from the special issue in 2001 dedicated to Central and Eastern Europe onwards, they were fully integrated in the pension debate.

Table 4.

The evolution of research subjects in the *International Social Security Review*, as a percentage of the total number of articles (all articles)

All countries	1980-1984	1985-1989	1990-1994	1995-1999	2000-2004	2005-2007	Total
Social security issues							
Social security (general)	7	13	14	10	12	23	13
pensions	17	21	15	47	42	23	28
unemployment	5	3	5	6	3	6	5
health insurance	0	6	1	4	13	13	6
family benefits	4	2	6	0	1	2	3
occupational disease and work accidents	5	3	1	1	4	4	3
disability	16	7	9	1	2	2	6
social assistance	1	0	5	1	1	4	2
several branches	10	11	10	14	16	6	12
Other social policy areas							
health care	25	10	8	14	14	13	14
family policy	5	5	20	1	1	0	5
labour market	10	3	10	9	10	13	9
Cross-cutting issues							
poverty and inequality	1	0	5	4	9	4	4
Ageing	7	5	9	19	10	4	9
Reforms	1	0	11	23	36	36	17
Gender	1	6	6	3	3	4	4
institution/administration	2	10	3	0	3	0	3
Total (absolute) number of articles	81	87	80	77	106	47	478

Categories are not exclusive, nor exhaustive. 'Pensions' does not include invalidity pensions. 'Disability' refers both to disability (invalidity) pensions and other disability related issues. 'Different branches' refers to articles that discuss at least three different branches of social security. 'Labour market' includes primarily articles that discuss employment policy and the interaction between social security and the labour market. In the lower table zeros are deleted to improve clarity.

Table 5.

The evolution of research subjects in the International Social Security Review, as a percentage of the total number of articles; articles focusing on at least one Eastern EU member country

	1980-1984	1985-1989	1990-1994	1995-1999	2000-2004	2005-2007	Total
Social security issues							
Social security (general)		18			30		13
pensions	29	36	22	67	70		43
unemployment				33	10		5
health insurance							0
family benefits		9			10		5
occupational disease and work accidents		9					3
disability	29		11				8
social assistance			11				3
several branches	14	9	22		10		13
Other social policy areas							
health care	29		22				10
family policy	14	9					5
labour market	43	9		33	20		18
Cross-cutting issues							
poverty and inequality			22		10		8
ageing / elderly	14	9					5
reforms	14		44	67	80		38
gender		9					3
institution/administration							0
Total (absolute) number of articles	7	11	9	3	10	0	40

See notes from the previous table.

The story about disability issues (disability pensions, reinsertion of disabled persons in the labour market) is almost the opposite from the one about pensions. In articles devoted to EU10 countries and articles in general, during the first half of the 1980s disability is as prominent as pensions are. Nonetheless thereafter attention steadily melted down after which it vanished almost entirely from the scene from the second half of the 1990s onwards (and it disappeared completely from articles focusing on Eastern EU member

countries). If the attention given to disability issues was primarily inspired by the special issue at the occasion of the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981, its effect lasted nonetheless relatively long, but not enough to extend beyond the second half of the 1990s. Maybe the ISSR needs another special issue to prevent it from complete evaporation.
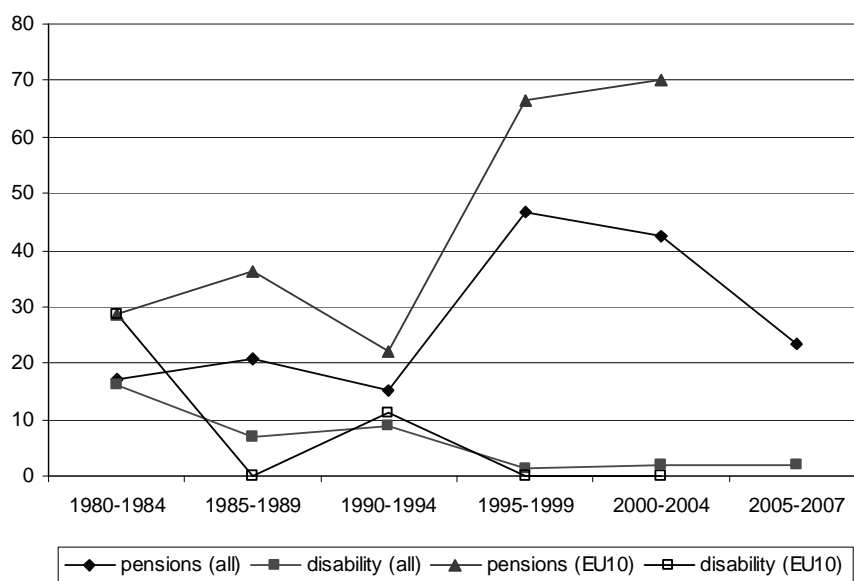
Graph 1. Percentage of articles that deal with pensions and disability in the *International Social Security Review* (all countries and EU10 countries)

East European Politics and Societies

Whereas the Eastern EU member countries constituted in some way a hot topic in social policy research, social policy was by no means 'hot' in Eastern European area studies (here represented by East European Politics and Societies). From 1986 until 2007, only six articles addressed social policy issues, of which only two really focused on social policy and social security. Although EEPS publishes regularly special issues, no single issue was devoted to social policy. Nonetheless, as appears from the articles that do deal with social policy issues (and those published in for instance in the ISSR), social policy research was during the entire period of great importance for society and posed some challenging research questions.

Any link between journals, authors and countries?

As since long argued in sociological theory "sociology, together with the social sciences in general, is inherently and inescapably part of the 'subject-matter' it seeks to comprehend" (Giddens, 1986: 11-13; 156). In the same vein, social scientists happen to be a part of their study-object, and as Bockman and Eyal (2002) have shown, this needs to be taken into consideration. On the one hand, they counteracted the view among many Western scholars (at least at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s) that Eastern European researchers still had to be convinced of the benefits of a transition towards a market economy. Though at the same time, they also demonstrated that maybe the strongest East European voices in the (at least economic) literature conferred a partial view. Conclusion: the background of authors matters, but different views do not necessarily always coincide with an East-West divide and national boundaries. Furthermore, it is clear that social science is, and remains, a social construct, which cannot be treated as absolute knowledge, but has to be taken for what it is: the result of a social process. In this section, I will not scrutinise the relation between the background of the authors in terms of education and social / knowledge networks and their opinions on the benefits of a market economy. I will focus on two (rather superficial) background characteristics of the author in order to find out how these relate to the journals and the countries they study. I limit the analysis to: (1) the home country of the institution to which they were affiliated when writing the article (2) the kind of this institution. This limitation is entirely based on practical reasons, since these were the only two variables that were readily available for this study. Furthermore, the analysis is restricted to the 64 articles that deal with social policy research focused on at least one EU10 country.

Does a link exist between the institutional background of the authors and the three journals? If so, remains this link constant over time? I discern four different institutions to which authors are affiliated: academic institutes, governmental institutes (Central Statistical Offices, Ministries), international organisations (the World Bank, IMF, ILO and ISSA) and social security administrations. A clear difference between the journals appears. In EEPS all articles under review were written by authors who held an academic position. In the ROIW four out of 18 articles were (co-)written by authors from government-linked institutions (mainly Central Statistical Offices). Compared to the other two journals, the ISSR published the lowest number of articles written by authors with an academic position. Nonetheless both the ROIW and the ISSR have been 'academicised' during the period. The biggest changes took place in the ISSR. Whereas in the 1980s still less than half of the articles were written by academic scholars, this figure amounted to 8 out of 10 articles in

the 2000s. After the 1980s no articles written by persons from social security organisations have been published, although they once constituted the largest share of contributors. Due to the small sample of articles (and clearly not an at random one) these evolutions cannot be generalised to the ROIW or ISSR as a whole.

Table 6.

The institutional background of the authors by journal as a percentage of the total number of articles focused on EU10 countries

	1980-1989	1990-1999	2000-2007	Total
Review of Income and Wealth	4	11	3	18
academic position	75	73	100	78
international organisation	0	18	0	11
social security administration	0	0	0	0
governmental institution	50	18	0	22
International Social Security Review	18	12	10	40
academic position	39	75	80	60
international organisation	0	25	20	13
social security administration	44	0	0	20
governmental institution	22	8	10	15
East European Politics and Societies	1	3	2	6
academic position	100	100	100	100
international organisation	0	0	0	0
social security administration	0	0	0	0
governmental institution	0	0	0	0

Figures refer to the absolute number of articles in each journal that deal with social policy research in at least one EU10 country. The figures by type of institution indicate the proportion of articles written by authors with this background. In several cases articles were written by authors with different backgrounds, in that case the article is recorded in both categories.

Is the institutional background linked to the country that is analysed in the article? The table below reveals clearly the existence of such a link in the ISSR, but denies its existence in the ROIW and EEPS. Whereas in the ISSR 70 per cent of the articles on an EU10 country are written by an author from that country, in the case of the ROIW this is only in 40 per cent of the articles the case. Whereas academicians write the most about a country which is different from the one in which they are based, authors affiliated to social security organisations or governmental institutions write almost exclusively about their own country. This helps to explain the following evolution in the ISSR:

whereas in the 1980s only one article was published on a country that was different from the country base of the author, in the 1990s and 2000s half of the articles were in that case[13].

Table 7.

Percentage of articles for which the country in focus is the same as the country in which the institution of the author is located by kind of institution

	ROIW	ISSR	EEPS	Average (weighted)
academic position	38 %	71 %	50 %	58 %
social security administration		88 %		88 %
governmental institution	75 %	100 %		90 %
Average	39 %	70 %	50 %	

In several cases articles were written by authors with different backgrounds, in that case the article is recorded in both categories.

In order to explore the existence of any causal link between the background of the authors and the publication on EU10 countries (in the case of the ROIW and ISSR), the analysis should be extended to include also the articles that do not focus on the EU10 countries.

Concluding remarks

The aim of this article was to offer some background information on how and to what extent social policy research on the Eastern EU member countries has been presented in Western Europe and North America. First of all it appeared that the presence of Eastern EU member countries largely differs between journals and periods of time. The International Social Security Review paid most attention to social policy in these countries. On the other hand, social policy research was fairly absent in East European Politics and Societies. Furthermore, some countries (initially the Soviet Union, thereafter Poland and Hungary) received much more attention than others, which points to a potential country-bias in social policy research. Social policy research on EU10 countries seemed to follow general trends in research in the Review of

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[13] The relation in the ROIW is different, since such a decrease in the link between country of study and country in focus is not present in that journal.

Income and Wealth, although with a ten year delay. In the case of the ISSR, general trends were reinforced in research on EU10 countries. Although the link between authors and publications should be further scrutinised, it appeared that the background of the authors plays probably at least a role in the selection of the countries they study. Nonetheless all questions were approached from a strict 'quantitative' point of view. Therefore, the analysis should be completed with an in-depth study of at least the articles that focus on Eastern EU member countries.

This descriptive study has also raised some questions which remained unresolved: Why has there been a delay in income research as presented in the Review of Income and Wealth? How does it come that the Eastern EU member countries received much more attention in the International Social Security Review than in the Review of Income and Wealth? Has it to do with the kind of research and the link with authors? Or has it more to do with the availability and accessibility of the necessary data? What is the link with the members of an editorial board and its policy to publish on certain issues and not on others, on certain countries and not on others, and how has this evolved over the years? Last but not least: to what extent do the inherent research value of countries and evolutions in society play a role? An analysis strongly grounded in the sociology of knowledge production is needed to fully grasp why some countries and some topics received more attention in social policy research history than others.

Apart from a deepening of this analysis, it would be interesting to extend this study in at least four ways. The time range could be extended. It would be interesting to recall the hot topics of social policy research of 50 years ago and the way the research community looked to Eastern Europe. Furthermore, apart from an extension to become more representative for the international/Western literature, a logical extension would be to compare social policy analyses in international and 'Western' journals with East European ones. Especially in earlier periods, it is possible that viewpoints and 'hot topics' also differ between for instance German, French, Italian, US and British journals, I believe this would be another interesting broadening of this study. Last but not least the study could be broadened by including books. The International Bibliography of the Social Sciences may offer a good starting point. Such a broadening could extent our sociological knowledge of the history of social policy research and enable us to take a more critical distance at current hot research issues, better informed to face present and future social policy problems.

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LEGISLATIVE HARMONISATION ON GENDER ISSUES IN ROMANIA: THE CASE OF PARENTAL LEAVE AND SOME OF ITS IMPLICATIONS

RALUCA PETRE[∗]

ABSTRACT. The paper discusses the case of paid parental leave within the larger framework of the legislative changes on gender issues in Romania, in the context of joining the European Union. Romania can be seen as still a patriarchal society, where traditional gender roles within the family persist. However, parental leave might be used by either the mother or the father, conditioned upon previous employment and contribution to the public social insurance fund. In 2007, around one fifth of parents on childcare leave were fathers. Based on secondary analysis, it is argued that fathers usually take the opportunity of receiving state benefits for engaging in informal work to supplement the family budget. The active role in raising the children is still performed by the mothers. The question is whether, on the long run, the prevalence of the economic reasoning over the perpetuation of gender models will prove beneficial for increasing women's independence, especially for the ones already in the workforce.

Keywords: parental leave; family policies; gender roles

Introduction

In my paper, the focus will be on parental leave as the right of either the mother or the father to go on a paid childcare leave. I am referring to this issue in the larger framework of the social implications for Romania of the legislative changes on gender issues in the context of joining the European Union. The stress will be on the fathers that take the leave for child-raising. At the European level, according to Hobson, "the gender neutral policies, particularly the parental leave policy, appeared revolutionary in the 1970's; the policy recognized that work was not just women's responsibility and that parenting included fathers as well as mothers" (Hobson et al., 1995). At the same time "that fathers have not taken full advantage of their right to parental leave is a fact that is documented by feminist research" (Hobson, 2000: 104). I am interested in how parental leave is used, unused or abused by fathers in Romania.

I will try to analyse both the legislative setting and the social usage of this legislation by fathers and families at large, thus its instrumentalisation at the grassroots level. I argue that harmonisation of legislation regarding gender and the specific case of paternal leave are indeed important in highlighting how legislation inspired from another cultural area is appropriated and transformed

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in Romania and to what possible ends. I chose the case of parental leave because it is an important gender measure to be applied in a patriarchal society, moreover, one that seems to have some adherents in the last seven years. I would have not chosen this example had I not found data showing almost one fifth of the parents in paternal leave as male parents at the county level in Romania[1].

Important dates for gender legislation at the European and Romanian level

At the European level "the foundation for gender equality policy in the EU is enshrined in Article 199 of the Treaty of Rome (...) During the 1970s and 1980s five equality directives were introduced: equal treatment: in wages, in employment, in social security, in occupational pensions, and pregnancy leave[2]" (Hobson, 2000: 94)

In Romania, there have been several legislative aspects on gender influenced by the negotiations for joining the European Union. Enikő Magyari–Vincze is summarising these steps as follows: "the re–legitimization of gender equality (...) fell under the rubric of the policy of equal opportunities. This is reflected in the governmental ordinance, and later, the Law for Preventing and Punishing All Forms of Discrimination (2000), the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2002), the creation of the Sub–Commission for Equal Opportunities[3], as well as the creation of the Consultative Inter–Ministerial Commission on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men" (Magyari–Vincze, 2006: 47).

In Romania, apart from these laws and special institutions[4] for protecting gender rights, there are as well two laws that refer strictly to the right to childcare leave of employed parents. The first law (120/1997) will be discussed at length in the following paragraphs. The second law (210/1999) refers strictly to fathers and it was introduced in 1999. According to that, each father has the right to five days off, paid at 100% of his salary, for taking part in the raising of children. It might be that it was introduced given the criticism on limited legislation that deals with fathers, especially from the feminist

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[1] For example, in Alba county 20% of parents on parental leave were the fathers. The comparative percentages were 8% in Arad, 30 % in Suceava, 10% in Timisoara, 20% in Vaslui. Source: The County Labour and Social Solidarity Offices.

[2] Noted as improvements for the safety and health at work of pregnant workers or workers who have recently given birth or are breast-feeding

[3] The Sub-Commission for Equal Opportunities was set up in June 1997.

[4] The Commission on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men was set up in November 1999.

scholars. "The EU Directive does not propose any proactive strategies to involve fathers. The Directive does not tamper with negotiations within the family, but undermines laws that prohibit men's participation in parenting leave" (Hobson, 2000: 96).

The *Law on Paid Leave for Raising the Child up to the Age of Two*, which is the Romanian version of the Parental Leave, was introduced in 1997. Thus, it came into force prior to the negotiations of Chapter Thirteen on work and social policy that took place in 2001-2002. It was introduced only one year after the European Directive on Parental Leave[5] was passed in June 1996. The European Directive gave fathers and mothers the right to a minimum of three months benefit on the birth or adoption of a child. Hobson argues that "the Parental Leave Directive modified an earlier decision of the Court, which did not recognize father's right to parental leave. The rationale for the earlier decision was based upon the Court's repeated insistence that questions of family organization are matters that are outside its sphere of intervention" (Hobson, 2000: 95).

I believe that, in Romania, the legislation on parental leave was fostered both by the European agenda of gender legislation and by the demographic drop during the transition years[6]. In the initial formulation of the law, the childcare benefit during parental leave represented 85% of the previous income of the parent (salary or other regular income subject to taxation and social contribution), and benefits were paid from the state insurance budget for a period of two years[7].

In 2004, the amount of money was flattened under the leftist government. The amount of money for each person leaving the workforce was set to 800 RON (~230 EUROS), the equivalent of 85% of the average national gross wage at that moment. The legislation continued to favour the ones that had previously worked and to exclude the ones that did not work before going on parental leave. The latter ones could only claim a child benefit of 24 RON a month (~7 EUROS a month) which was the anyway the right of the child, not of the parent.

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[5] Directive 96/34/EC, entry into force 3.06.1998, deadline for transposition in the Member States: 3.06.1998. Source: www.europa.eu.int

[6] The fertility rate (children born alive at 1000 women of ages 15-49) evolved in the following way: 1989 – 66,3; 1996 – 39, 9. The same tendency of reduced number of births is illustrated by the synthetic fertility indicator (number of children per woman): 1989 – 2, 19; 1990 – 1, 83; 1997 – 1, 30. Natality (children born alive per 1000 inhabitants) dropped from 16/1000 in 1989 to 10,5/1000 in 1997. This generated a negative growth: 1989: +5,3; 1990: + 3,0; 1991: +1,0; 1992: - 0,2; 1997: -1, 9. The population of Romania decreased from 23, 2 millions in 1989 to 22, 5 millions in 1997 (Ghebrea, 2003).

[7] The same amount was to be paid for three years in case the child was handicapped.

The last legislative modification of the parental leave legislation dates from January 2007. Under a liberal ruling, a leftist measure is put into practice. Namely, the flattened amount of money is 600 ROL (~ 170 EUROS), for the ones that had paid taxes for at least 10 months. Apart from this, the flat amount of 200 RON is to be added, the right of every child below the age of two. At the same time, the ones that decide to go back to work earlier than the two years term, receive the fix bonus of 100 RON besides the salary, up to the moment the child reaches the age of two.

Conceptual considerations

My main argument is that in Romania the usage of the parental leave legislation has an economic end; the gender issue is lagging behind. It might be more so in the context of economic instability and growing poverty in the first years after the fall of communism (Zamfir et. al., 1994: 8-9). On the other hand, it is as well noticeable that the percentage of people living under the poverty line has started to decrease in the last few years, yet 20% is not a negligible percent (see Appendix 1, Table 1). Two hypotheses on parental leave can thus be formulated in the Romanian context. The first one: *economic instrumentalisation can prevail over traditional patriarchal mentalities in a context of poverty and economic instability*. The second one: *long dependency on state provisions made the family prone to consider the state benefits as an opportunity*. It is important to mention that, at the Romanian level, the economic unit is represented by the nuclear family, rather than the individual (Ghebrea, 2003). On the other hand, the new generation of parents was socialized in families having experienced strong dependency on state social protection.

In order to sustain my argumentation, I first review qualitative empirical studies on women's opportunities for combining work and childcare in Romania (Marinescu and Pricopie, 2003), illustrating my point with fragments from newspaper articles from that period[8]. Then I present statistical data concerning the implementation of the legislation on childcare leave and other rights of families with dependent children, as well as fragments from the declarations of officials working at the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and the Family (after 2007, the Ministry of Labour, the Family and Equal Opportunities).

I believe that the legacy of state dependency of Romanians[9] can help explain the instrumentalisation of this legislation. "Generally speaking, the

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[8] The list of newspaper sources is provided in *Appendix 2*.
[9] For an in-depth analysis on this issue, see Verdery (1996), especially the 3rd chapter: "From the parent-state to the family patriarchs".

participation of citizens in the construction of socialism was not a process of empowering citizens, but of infantilizing them by means of paternalist politics, while empowering the nation–state against its citizens." (Magyari-Vincze, 2006: 43) Thus, like in other post-communist countries, in Romania: "public patriarchy in the East supplanted the male head of household and women experienced state dependence" (Hobson, 2000: xxii).

I have found inspiration in the work of feminist theories, especially in approaches of Joanna Regulska, who lays a particular focus on Eastern Europe and its transformations in terms of gender. Regulska (2007) argues that the relations to the state and its specificity under communism, corroborated with the legacy of traditional family relations, do have explanatory power on the present shape of gender relations in the Eastern Europe. I use the concept of the shifting relation of dependency of women from the state to a reshaped "male order". In the socialist order "women and men were expropriated and instrumentalised by the socialist paternalist state which 'took upon itself some of the more 'traditional' nurturing and care-giving roles that were the responsibility of women in the patriarchal family,' and 'expropriated men's patrilinial 'rights' to the sexual and reproductive lives of their wives' (Kligman 1998: 27). One can agree that state dependency did not have an obviously gendered face, while after the fall of communism the gendered face of male dependency constituted quite a shock for women expecting liberty and equal chances on the emerging market. Women soon discovered the emerging male categories on employing women[10].

The second line of analysis, adding to the dependency of people on the state during communism, goes along economic lines. I argue that the economic rationality can prevail in concrete contexts of poverty and economic insecurity. I follow here the ideas of Havewlkova, who asserts that we should rather focus "on the pragmatic situations and varied arenas for contesting citizenship, particularly in the economic sphere where the sources of power and policymaking are perhaps more central for understanding the new gender order than the political spheres" (Hobson, 2000: xxii). Thus, the formal political level can be sometimes less telling than the grassroots areas of power distribution and policy applications. I argue that it might be the case that economic hardship provides an impetus for men to chose parental leave if their income is below the value of the state benefit.

At the same time, despite the criticism that "because unpaid work, caring work, is not counted as work, women workers lack economic citizenship

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[10] Judith Dushker has gathered women narratives of their first transition experiences in Romania and the emerging requirements for women to be under a certain age and with good looks in order to be employed (2002).

in systems where the calculation of benefits is based upon working status or contributions of employers." (Hobson, 2000, 93) I argue that parental leave legislation in Romania can bring positive results. It is indeed the case that childcare benefit is only available to the ones that had incomes subject to taxation for at least 12 months prior to going on parental leave. At the same time, in Romania, more than 47% of the employed people are women (see Appendix 1, Table 2). Moreover, the percentage of unemployed women has been lower than the level of unemployed men throughout the transition period (see Appendix 1, Table 3). What I want to stress is that in cases where the percentage of employed women is high, the parental legislation that favours the ones that had worked can prove beneficial for some of the women, especially for the ones with a good salary. I will bring in my paper cases to illustrate this position. Women's salaries are on average lower than men's salaries in Romania (see Appendix 1, Table 4). At the same time, I consider that it is relevant that there is an opportunity for mothers to go back to work while the fathers stay at home on the parental leave.

To conclude, in the framework of harmonisation of gender legislation in the European context, it is interesting to deepen the inquiry with the concrete case of parental leave. One needs to research whether the economic instrumentalisation of the parental leave legislation could eventually determine some changes at the level of the traditional family: placing more women on the labour market and more men in the domestic space. At the same time, one needs to be cautious and refrain from inferring that if men take parental leave they will necessarily stay at home. It might be, just as in any relation to the state in Romania, that there is a disparity between the legislation as such, the intended purpose of the money, and its actual usage. "How the rights and obligations assured by the state are played out in people's everyday lives ultimately depends on who controls the chances and limitations of individuals inside different institutions, and how the negotiation of the right to control occurs at different sites" (Magyari-Vincze, 2006, 38).

Economic uses and abuses of parental leave

In the next paragraphs I present some illustrations of the economic instrumentalisation of the law. There are no pretensions for generalization out of these scattered illustrations. At the same time, they show the economic rationality that prevails over the gender one. Moreover, the relation to the state and state money is revealed.

In the first example, a head-judicial manager of a factory with severe economic problems voted an exorbitant salary for himself; then went on

parental leave. The state had to pay to him 85% of his self-voting salary for the next two years[11].

In the second case, thirty men from a Suceava factory used the law to go on parental leave. The director of the factory Horia Rosca, stated that "most of them did not do it in order to stay at home and take care of the child, but to do other activities. Some work in the countryside in agriculture, and others went abroad. The factory can do nothing to stop them"[12].

In the third example, there is a similar situation in another factory, where 31 of the 37 people on parental leave are men. The article comments that the 'orientation' of men towards going on parental leave is noticed especially in the enterprises that face economic difficulties, units at high risk of closing down. Raising children is considered a safe business, as during the parental leave they are paid not by the factory but by the General Directorate for Labour and Social Protection. At the same time, the time spent on raising children is considered as contributory period for the retirement benefits.

In the context of the flattened benefit, thus after 2004, it seems logical that poorly paid employees would take advantage of this state money. These employees are either coming from state system that usually pays very poorly or from low qualification employments. The press reads: "Half of the City Hall, on Parental Leave."[13] The case is reported from Vrancea County where the director of the cultural house, the cashier and the cleaning man went on parental leave as they became fathers. The secretary of the city hall is reported to join in spring. The salaries of the employees in the city hall are of 400 RON, thus staying at home and receiving a double benefit for raising their children is seen as an opportunity. The Head of the Iaşi Pension House concludes that "in all companies and state institutions that do not offer a salary not even close to the raising child benefit, the number of men that request this right is quite important"[14].

The ex-mayor of the city of Bacău, who is on parental leave himself, fully supports this opportunity: "I am neither the first, nor the last that does this. It is a right that all mothers and all fathers from this country have, and I see no reason I would not benefit of it"[15].

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[11] Muntean, Cora. "Kocsis Sandor, Head Judicial Manager at 'Manpel', Took the Child-Raising Leave". *Evenimentul Zilei.* 19 April 1998.

[12] Avram, Tiberiu. "30 men from URB Rulment SA are on 'maternity' leave". *Evenimentul Zilei Online.* 13 June 1999.

[13] Vrinceanu, Silvia. "Half of the City Hall, on Parental Leave". *Evenimentul Zilei Online.* 8 December 2003.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Solomon, Elena. "Dumitru Sechelariu is on Parental Leave". *Amos News-Politica.* 30 January 2006.

The above illustrations are of course of an almost anecdotic nature, at the same time, I believe that the common language of media can shed some light on the ideas circulated and believed to be normal in the society. Thus, one of the regularities in approaching the issue of parental leave is the economic angle[16]. This element is present in all the articles covering the issue. At the same time, the gender key is not present, one of the explanations being that gender is a non-issue in contemporary Romania, as Magyari-Vincze points out: "after "re–giving" women the right to control their reproductive decisions and, at least in these terms, to be liberated from state authority, the new state then considered women's issues as resolved, and therefore struck them off of the agenda of priorities for good" (2006: 46).

Some official statements on the issue of parental leave in Romania.

In the next section of this paper I provide with some of the statements of local-level officials working at the Labour and Social Solidarity County Offices. One of the common things they declare is that the percentages of men that take up parental leave are significant, even if they are still lower than the percentages of women on parental leave. At the same time, the economic reasons are brought to the fore by all interviewees.

The Deputy Director of the Vaslui Office states that:" Lately, there in an increase in the number of men that raise their children, because the salary of the husband is lower than the child raising support money. Thus, they prefer the parental leave in order to take the money"[17].

The Head of the Labour and Social Solidarity Office of the Alba County states that the most plausible explanation for the fathers that require the parental leave is that, at the date of the birth of the child, the wives were having a higher salary than their husbands, thus the family decided that the husband would go on parental leave[18].

The Executive Director of the Arad County Office states: "We did not analyse all the cases and why men chose to raise their children, but the most pertinent reasons are that either the mother had a higher salary or that the

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[16] It is present in all the 11 newspaper articles I have found on the issue of parental leave on the on-line versions of newspapers and news agencies

[17] According to the dates of the Work and Social Solidarity Office in Vaslui County, there are 3.494 people in the county on parental leave, of which almost 700 are fathers. Source: Evenimentul Zilei Online Archive

[18] In the Alba County, almost 700 men were on parental leave in 2005, meaning that one in five children are raised by their fathers (Bichescu, Nicoleta, *Cotidianul*. 19 May 2005).

female potential beneficiary was not employed, thus, only the husband being able to take the money"[19].

To conclude, at the official level, the economic arguments are prevailing in the context of criteria of eligibility set by the law. The gender dimension is not mentioned, the discussion being set around numbers and money.

Women's position on the fathers taking the parental leave

This section of the paper has as point of departure an extensive research carried in Romania in 2003 on women and their access on the labour market. The authors of this research have been using the focus-group as main methodological tool and I am using some of the ideas and results of this analysis considering them relevant in the construction of my own argument on the issue of parental leave. I am especially interested in the position of women on the parental leave, and this analysis provides with fresh and detailed ideas on the female perspective on this very issue.

In the context of this research, women have been asked about the parental leave and the possibility that fathers take it. According to the authors, Marinescu & Pricopie, women agree with fathers taking the parental leave invoking mainly economic arguments Thus, they state that a lower salary of the father as compared to that of the mother is a good financial reason for the father to go on leave. Moreover, the woman will not risk losing her job – a risk she would have to face if she chose to go on parental leave. Another argument brought to the fore by the women was that men can supplement their income by performing additional activities, thus taking the parental leave is justifiable. Women provided with examples of men on parental leave working at home thus having a much higher income. Other examples are of children left with their grandparents while the father leaves to work in the 'black market'. (Marinescu and Pricopie, 2003: 30).

Other arguments in favour of fathers taking the parental live are related to the division of roles in the household. The position here is that men should be more involved in raising the child. The authors notice, though, that this argument is brought only by the employed women that do not have children. The third set of arguments focus on the issue of personal development.

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[19] In Arad County 550 fathers are on parental leave, out of 4400 people requesting this leave. From these, 537 receive the full amount of 800 ROL, meaning that they come from the workforce, and 13 receive the fix amount of 300 ROL, meaning that they had not worked before. (*Observator*, 22 February 2002).

Thus, women argue that a father that is on parental leave can undertake retraining courses, eventually having the chance to change his field of specialisation.

According to the research, the women that agree on fathers taking the parental leave believe that mentalities are a major obstacle that discourages a larger practice of this kind. From this perspective, men can refuse taking the parental leave for fear of the irony of the colleagues, of neighbours, etc. The perception of the respondents is that in a big city or in a western country, the husbands would accept more easily to take the parental leave (Marinescu and Pricopie, 2003: 31). The authors notice that the women that are working are more likely to agree on men taking the parental leave than non-working women.

The conclusion of this research is that "the option that the father benefits of the parental leave is mainly justified with economic arguments. While most of the respondents complain about the long working hours, the right of the father to parental leave is not discussed from the perspective of easing the double responsibility of women – as mothers and employees" (Marinescu and Pricopie, 2003: 31).

The prevalence of reasoning in economic terms is visible in this instance as well. At the same time, from the position of women, there emerges the worry about losing one's job. Parental leave is seen, especially by the active women, as an opportunity for them not to leave the labour market. The gender perspective is not very visible not even in this instance, when the research is carried on women. I would state that the rights as citizens are more present than the rights as women.

Conclusions

In this paper I opened up the discussion on legislative harmonisation of gender issues in the European context. In order to get a better understanding, I chose a single but highly relevant legislative piece, namely the parental leave. I tried to grasp the rationale of its content as well as some of its implications at the grassroots level.

I presented in detail some of the instances of the average one-fifth of the men that are on parental leave. According to three types of evidence, real cases, official positions and women's accounts, the economic rationality prevails. At the same time, the distance between the money from the state and the actual usage of it for raising the child by the man is obvious. There is no discussion as to the effort and costs for raising a child, the arguments evolving around the economic opportunity. The uses and abuses of the law by the fathers range from taking the money and engaging in parallel activities to taking the money because he is on the verge of losing his job, to taking the

money and leaving the child with the grandparents. In all the above situations it might be that it is still the mother that has a more active role in raising the child than the father. It should be noticed though that men take the opportunity of the money from the state to supplement the family budget, thus, on the long run, to be able to better provide for the family.

At the same time, in the case where the wife has a better salary, the father can indeed stay at home and take care of the child. At least this is one of the common ideas documented in my paper. In this case, there is a decision taken at a family level, with mainly the economic rationality being emphasized. It is safe to infer from the arguments provided in this paper that, in case of economic limitations, the rational choice of the family is for the man to withdraw from the workforce. In this case, there is some room for the women to join or to stay in the workforce. But, in case that men on childcare leave actually engage in paid informal work, domestic duties will continue to rest on women's shoulders and gender divisions of paid labour (typically male) versus unpaid housework (typically female) are maintained intact, de facto.

In Romania, which is still a patriarchal society, with a long legacy of dependency on the state, the parental leave might be used by fathers for economic reasons. The prevalence of the economic reasoning over the perpetuation of gender models might prove beneficial for increasing women's independence, especially for the ones already in the workforce and with good salaries. On the other hand, the poorest strata of the society are composed mostly of jobless families who are not eligible for parental leave. It would be interesting to further research how this situation could eventually determine the challenge of the non-egalitarian principles in the society, fostering a more egalitarian approach not only in the case of childcare provisions. I have focused on the gender balances and imbalances rather than on the discrepancies between working and not working mothers, even if the latter issue requires further analysis in itself. In this paper I have tried to go at the grassroots level, investigating the uses of a policy that has been generated at the European Union level out of specific preoccupations for gender balance as I have explained in the first part of the paper, but which is reshaped and economically instrumentalised in the specific conditions of Romania in transition.

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Annex 1.

Table 1.

Population below the income poverty line by occupational status

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Persons under 7 years old	34.8	39.1	42.3	37.9	35.0	32.1	25.3	20.4
Persons with occupational status:								
- employee	15.5	16.0	18.5	12.6	11.2	9.0	6.3	4.3
- owner	2.2	2.5	3.1	3.7	2.5	1.6	1.0	1.0
- self-employed in non-agricultural activities	41.4	47.4	50.1	41.0	41.0	35.6	27.7	25.3
- self-employed in agricultural activities	52.4	56.6	57.3	58.7	55.3	50.9	36.9	30.4
- unemployed	46.0	47.1	51.3	43.3	44.9	39.3	33.8	28.5
- pensioner	28.9	29.7	31.1	25.9	24.2	20.7	14.2	10.9

Source**:** NHDR Romania, 2007 *Making EU Accession Work for All, p.178*

Table 2.

Women's participation in eonomic life

Proportion of women in:	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
- employed civilian population	47.2	48.2	48.5	48.5	48.2	47.3	47.6	47.3
- active civilian population	47.2	48.0	48.3	48.3	47.9	47.0	47.2	46.9
- proportion of women in the total number of employees	45.8	46.8	47.5	48.0	47.7	46.6	47.8	47.6

Source: NHDR Romania, 2007 *Making EU Accession Work for All, p.178*

Table 3.

Unemployment rates

Registered unemployment rate	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
- males	10.4	12.1	10.8	9.2	8.9	7.8	7.0	6.4
- females	10.4	11.6	10.1	8.4	7.8	6.8	5.6	5.2
- proportion of women in the total number of employees	45.8	46.8	47.5	48.0	47.7	46.6	47.8	47.6

Source**:** NHDR Romania, 2007 *Making EU Accession Work for All, p.180*

Table 4.

Average monthly wage

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
- males	154	215	324	471	581	740	858	853
- females	123	178	271	385	480	610	738	984

Source: NHDR Romania, 2007 *Making EU Accession Work for All, p.181*

Annex 2.

The List of Newspaper Articles and Reports of News Agencies in Chronological Order

Note: Reports of news agencies are marked with ***. Original titles in Romanian are indicated between parentheses.

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Avram, Tiberiu. "30 Men from URB Rulmenti SA are on "Maternity" Leave" [30 de bărbaţi de la URB Rulmenţi SA se află în concediu de "maternitate"]. *Evenimentul Zilei.* 13.06.1999.

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*** "Men on Mammy's Leave" [Barbati in concediu de mamici]. *Jurnalul de est.* 22.04.2004.

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*** "Parental Leave, for 550 Men from Arad County" [Concediu Paternal pentru 550 de bărbaţi din Arad]. *Observator*. 22.02.2006.

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LIQUID BOUNDARIES IN MARGINAL MARSHES.
RECONSTRUCTIONS OF IDENTITY IN THE ROMANIAN DANUBE DELTA

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ABSTRACT. Building on recent research in political geography, anthropology and the reinvented field of border studies, we investigate the present (re-)construction of borders and boundaries in the Romanian Danube Delta, in connection with the permanent reconstruction of identities. Conceptual boundaries, social boundaries and spatial boundaries are approached as intertwined and interconnected. The Danube Delta, we argue, is historically an ambiguous area, a hybrid of centre and margin. This history left its mark on the present mechanisms of boundary formation, identification and marginalization. Boundaries create margins, and they can create border territories. The metaphor of landscape as palimpsest is borrowed from Claude Raffestin to synthesize the notions introduced on boundaries and identities.

Keywords: identity construction; boundary zones; marginalities; Northern Dobrogea

Introduction[1]

In recent years, anthropology and geography have developed a considerable interest in borders, boundaries, frontiers and margins (Hertzfeld, 2001; Lamont and Molnar, 2002; Van der Velde and Van Houtum, 2000). Connections between these phenomena of delimitation on the one hand, and narratives, discourses, identities on the other hand, are commonplace by now. Authors like Sarah Green (2005) and Henk van Houtum (2005)[2] show that the work is just getting started, by unearthing ever surprising aspects of boundary functioning and marginality maintenance. We subscribe to this approach, and will try to explicate the interwoven construction of boundaries, identities and marginalities in the Romanian Danube Delta.

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[1] The authors like to thank Gareth John, Margaret Villanueva and Martijn Duineveld for helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.
[2] The geographical literature on boundaries as spaces of difference often starts from different definitions, but the theoretical perspective is related. See e.g., P. Price (2004): *Dry Place: Landscapes of Belonging and Exclusions.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

First, we will outline briefly our concepts of boundaries, identities and marginalities. In particular, the linkages between boundary construction and identity construction are highlighted. Next, we will reconstruct the histories of marginality and centrality for the Danube Delta and surrounding areas (Northern Dobrogea). Finally, we focus on the micro-constructions of boundaries and marginalities, in everyday life. A series of reflections, grounded in observations, interviews and literature are focused on the marginalities of the villages, and the temporary, short-lived centrality of Sulina, on the edge of the Delta. Our work is based on fieldwork done in the summers of 2006 and 2007, with an interdisciplinary team of mainly anthropologists and urban planners[3]. We carried out research, including 75 interviews, on different locations in the Danube Delta (mainly in Sulina and Tulcea).

Borders, boundaries, margins

Preliminary definitions

In this paper, we distinguish – following van Houtum (2005) – *borders* from *boundaries.* Borders are seen as the spatial boundaries of a nation-state. Boundaries are broadly defined, as lines dividing entities, and we distinguish three main types: *spatial boundaries, social boundaries* and *conceptual boundaries.* Social boundaries delineate and separate social groups, spatial boundaries mark the edge of spatial entities (with or without political relevance), conceptual boundaries form concepts. Entities defined by a type of boundaries can aggregate, and these aggregates can have relevant boundaries, at a different scale. Municipalities form provinces, tribes form confederations, concepts can cluster into discourses, e.g. disciplinary discourses (Foucault, 1970).

These spatial, social and conceptual boundaries are part of a process of definition. In recent years, dynamic or processional definitions of boundaries have become widely accepted: a boundary needs to be maintained (Barth, 1969; Paasi, 1998), made relevant over and over again by people. In that sense, every boundary that features in human communication is a conceptual boundary; every line we see as a boundary is drawn by people. Without ongoing communication on that line as a boundary, it ceases to function as such. Following Foucault, we see this as the process of the discursive construction of boundaries. Scientific disciplines, ethnic groups, political institutions are all typified by their own sets of social, spatial and conceptual

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[3] In the context of a larger research project titled, *Nature, culture, planning in the Danube Delta,* a cooperative effort of Minnesota State Universities, Babes-Bolyai University, KULeuven, Wageningen University.

boundaries, and their own mechanisms of boundary construction (Vila, 2000; Walsh and Bouma-Prediger, 2002), i.e.: when is what seen as different from what and why?

Foucault also elucidates the ambiguity of every boundary formation: discourses produce knowledge, create reality and access to that reality, but simultaneously render opaque the implicit choices, the lost alternatives. The three types of boundaries are essential in the workings of discourse, yet every boundary is contingent, could have been drawn differently, and the alternative categorizations, realities are lost in the process. At the same time, boundaries strive for purity of a certain kind, not acknowledging hybrids and other types of purity. In Mary Douglas' (1970) terms they create dirt, inside and outside the boundary. Putting up a garden fence suddenly turns wildflowers into weeds.

Boundaries and boundary zones

Boundary can be dividers, but they can also develop various bridge-functions. If we conceptualise a boundary as a divider and connector (Barth, 2000) and recognize the multitude of overlapping boundaries in society, then it becomes easier to acknowledge the possibility of non-linear boundaries, the existence of boundary-zones and frontiers (Paasi, 1998; Donnan and Wilson, 2003). Ethnic groups straddle state boundaries (Wilson and Donnan, 1998), economic networks ignore boundaries, frontiers can have a special system of governance (e.g. the Habsburg militargrenze) and more recently, trans-boundary Eurozones have been created (Gualini, 2003).

A boundary zone, a frontier, can be a site of harsh conservatism and exclusion, as well as a place of hybridisation and innovation (Van Assche, 2004). In the case of nation- states, the force of the centre will be clearly felt at the border, while on both sides of the border, connected margins can exist, escaping innovations that affected the centre long before, leaving room for other innovations, difficult to explain in the discursive environments of the centre. Post-modernism inspired many critiques of the conservative causes and effects of boundaries, but more recently, theorists started to stress the productive functions of boundaries, while celebrating the hybrid cultures and identities of border zones (Anderson, 1996).

Marginalities

Marginalities are constructed in the interplay of centre, periphery and boundary. Spatial and social marginalities can reinforce each other, yet do not

necessarily coincide (harbours, by nature, exist on the edge). Anthropologists and geographers have demonstrated clearly how varied nation-states can be (Verdery, 1998), consequently, how different the relations between centre and periphery can be, and how varied the role of boundaries and borders (Sahlins, 1989). Foucault often reconstructed and analysed micro- environments in the margin, in order to study the processes of discursive formation and normalization emanating from the centre (the capital, the major institutions, the dominant discipline). The same analyses illustrate the multifaceted nature of marginality: a newly dominant knowledge or institution can create new marginal places and groups, while marginal knowledge can survive everywhere (cf. Foucault, 1968; Van Houtum and Van Naerssen, 2002). New knowledge can be easily created in the centre, yet changing the paradigm might take place in the margin (Gupta and Ferguson, 1997).

People can respond to marginalization in many ways: they can accept, acquiesce, resist, or redefine. Anthropologists and historians commented on the speed of ethnic redefinition with medieval Eurasian nomads, where one lost battle could lead to the re-labelling of whole tribes (Eriksen, 1993), e.g., as of tomorrow, we're Khazar, said the Bolgar. Social marginalization will have a greater negative impact on people in border areas, when the border is not really permeable, or when the bridge- function does not offer economic or other advantages. The proximity of the spatial boundary can give access to certain resources, while the distance to the centre can imply a reduced access to certain resources, as well as a reduced exposure to unwanted measures in / by the centre. In case ethnic boundaries differentiate people in the margins from the centre, the differences in perception and utilization of the border are likely to be more significant (Van Houtum and Van Naerssen, 2002).

Boundaries and margins need permanent maintenance. At the same time, they tend to reinforce themselves: a boundary with a history has a better chance to survive longer, a new boundary is not so easily created. New marginalities are created constantly, yet a history of marginality tends to produce marginality.

Boundaries and identity construction

Boundaries delineate entities. They create identity. In the case of places and regions, we speak of *identity of place*. Groups of people define identities of place, concepts and discourses of place that can include images, ideas, feelings, smells, local dishes and so forth (Seifrid, 1996). Following Eriksen (1993) we see *social identity* as culture, with ethnicity as a subgroup. Everything in communication can potentially be a marker of social identity, a sign of similarity,

118

staking off the social boundaries. Markers can be objects, visual signs, they can be concepts, e.g. identities of place, or some of their constituent elements. Social identity and place identity are often interlinked, with groups defining themselves in terms of places, and /or defining place and self by means of shared elements.

A third type of identity to be dealt with here, is what we call *image of history* (since 'historical identity' has strong overtones of social identity). A group, a social identity, often defines and delineates itself in terms of shared history. Just the fact of sharing and duration can be essential, while in other cases an often mythological origin is invoked, or a series of key defining moments (battles, conversions and so forth), (Leman, 2000; Lang and Cohen, 2000). We focus in this paper on the interactions between social identity, spatial identity and image of history. In a Foucauldian perspective, everything that applies to conceptual boundaries (and discursive boundaries) will apply to constructions of place, history, group (Lamont and Molnar, 2002; Paasi, 1998; Bhabha, 1994).

A social group, living in a certain place for a while, defining itself in a similar way for a while, will tend to solidify certain spatial boundaries, and naturalize them, mythologize an 'eternal' link between themselves and a territory (Hakli, 2001). The Swiss geographer Raffestin (1974) devised a rich metaphor that de-naturalizes immediately: spaces are seen as palimpsests, as manuscripts where several older texts shimmer through the surface text. Before moving to the Danube Delta, let us explore this metaphor briefly.

Landscapes are seen by X as social constructs (texts), written on a sheet that is never entirely blank (older texts shimmer through, the parchment has an influence). The combination of parchment and ink properties (features of nature beyond our control), and of series of human interventions, constructions of landscape, create the resulting amalgamation. One can stretch the metaphor a little further by saying that the surface text itself is the product of histories (of language, writing, literature, group) and shows the traces of those histories. Apparently, careful observers can also see more than the surface; they can see traces of older texts and some natural features.

Spatial boundaries are made relevant if concepts are available to discuss them. Layers of meaning, layers of history, layers of culture constitute the landscape. Spatial boundaries can be dormant until something in culture changes, until histories are rewritten or other histories become relevant or dominant. Almost forgotten histories can be used in reconstructing old cultures, and old landscapes, while barely visible spatial boundaries can help in the reconstruction (and sometimes re-vitalization) of cultural boundaries. Boundaries need to be maintained, but due to the layering of landscape, and to

the interweaving of space, culture, history, they can be revived as well. Marginalities follow the same pattern, and we hope to add to this picture in our observations on the Danube Delta.

The Danube Delta: margin and centre

Historically, the Danube Delta area has often been a border area. In Roman and Byzantine times, it formed a strategically important frontier for centuries, and a chain of now ruinous fortifications is testimony to this (Florescu, 1986). A hoist of nomadic peoples came and went (6th to 10th centuries), the Byzantines returned (resuming control by the end of the 10th century), Bulgars had an impact (in various periods), the Turks annexed (15th century), and when the Romanian state took over (1878), Northern Dobrogea counted a minority of people identifying as Romanians. The Danube itself, with its three main branches, and many smaller ones, as well as the vast marshlands surrounding its lower course, formed an obstacle for expansive nations, and it was turned into a major obstacle because of geo- political games involving Russians, Germans, Habsburgs, Ottoman Turks. On several occasions, they prevented each other from taking over the lower Danube, assuming that this would make the aggressor too powerful (Kann, 1992). So, the marginal area was often the centre of attention, but did not fulfil a central function in the politics, culture or economy of any of the powers involved.

Conversely, the major powers undertook little constructive action in the Delta. Development and investment were scarce, due to an overall vagueness about its identity and ownership. In addition, several Turkish- Russian wars raged in the Delta, razing many villages. Sulina was therefore a marginal seaport for most of its existence, and the Danube was mostly a connector of river-ports. Besides the political complexity, creating the vague boundary-area, there is also the intricate and inaccessible landscape. All this did not encourage the development of centre-functions, e.g. on the waves of trade.

Until the late 19th century, navigation of the Danube mouth was tricky and time- consuming, a formidable obstacle for the Greek and Jewish trading communities of the coastal cities. (Rosetti et al., 1931; Mihailescu et al., 1940; Tatu, 2005). Their trade networks were an integral part of the Ottoman economy, but could have profited significantly from better connections with the west over the Danube. When in 1856, after the Crimean War, the Commission Europeenne du Danube (Danube Commission) was founded, a managing organization representing the great European powers, jointly governing the lower Danube (Rosetti et al., 1931; Mihailescu et al., 1940) the Greek, Jewish and Armenian traders were very fast to rise to the occasion. Sulina (1870), on

the mouth, together with Braila (1836) was declared free port, and the seat of the CED was located in Sulina, generating a flurry of public investment (Teampau and Van Assche, 2008).

Suddenly the ambiguity created by the conflicting discourses dissipated, when the CED in Sulina transformed the place into a new centre[4], politically, commercially, culturally. Large scale technical improvements of the harbour, and the Sulina branch of the river were carried out, tax- exempt status was given, schools and churches subsidized for the various trading communities. Now some pre- existing trade networks converged on the new Sulina, and extended to the west. The flourishing did not endure however, since the CED construction and its creation of centrality in Sulina proved to be artificial: Constanta, with a railroad and later a canal linking it with the Danube, proved a much more profitable harbour, and the CED construction collapsed in 1939 with rising tensions in the coalition, with Romania strengthening as a state.

In the remainder of this paper, we will investigate whether this temporary centrality left an imprint on the social landscape, but first we need to devote a few words to enduring aspects of marginality in the area. Since the establishment of Romania, Northern Dobrogea was a border area with Russia, and somewhat of an internal frontier, an area of internal colonization (Iordachi, 2001). During the heydays of the CED, that hybrid entity complicated the situation for Romania, since it did form an obstacle for consolidation of the territory, a challenge to the sovereignty and unity of the state. In the meanwhile, the marshes, inaccessible, sparsely populated, were largely ignored.

While northern Dobrogea can be described as an internal frontier, spear-point of development in the late 19th and early 20th century for Romania, and while Sulina on the edge of the Delta, received its temporary centrality from the CED and collaborating minorities, the Delta- marshes themselves, can only be described as utterly marginal. People in Sulina still do not see themselves as belonging to the swamps, which are always "out there". They do feel marginal towards central power (Bucharest), but also different (not necessarily marginal) from the delta. Also the Delta was mostly inhabited by minorities, by Russian and Ukrainian speaking people, but their networks were limited, their histories rarely recorded, their collaboration was rarely solicited. Education levels were traditionally low, poverty rates high, life

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[4] Sulina acquired some central functions, attracted people and activities because of the CED, and the pivotal role it created for the town. A mass influx of people however, came with the communist period, when waves of peasants were brought to the city. At that time, the international networks of the CED period had disappeared.

expectancy low[5]. Many of them had escaped from Tsarist Russia, for various reasons. Right now, a dominant historical narrative among many of the Russian speaking old believers, Lipoveni, recounts that they all ran away from Russia 'when Peter cut the beards', i.e., when Peter the Great reformed orthodox Christian rite in the early 18th century, but it seems clear that several waves of Russian speaking people came in, for several reasons. Some of them were probably from the Don- Cossack area, and a Cossack- heritage is cherished by some of the Russian speaking people, as well as by the Ukrainian- speaking villagers.

For most of these people, the marginal location and inaccessibility of the area were prime reasons to move in. With the fall of the CED and later the advent of a more independent style of communism in Romania, the border with Russia hardened, and the remaining cross- border connections of the Russian and Ukrainian speaking minorities were cut, leaving them more isolated and marginal. Political 'cold winds' were felt in Sulina proper, and the Russian school was closed down in 1959. Interviewees confirmed that locally, the privileged position of everything Russian, quickly crumbled.

Boundary mechanisms – marginalities

We find ourselves in an area, the Danube Delta, with a history of generalized marginality on several scales, with one historical exception, Sulina after the creation of the CED. Given this history of marginality and centrality, what kind of boundary mechanisms can we observe nowadays in the Danube Delta? Returning to the metaphor of the landscape as palimpsest, we can readily acknowledge that the Delta is a tough nut to crack, very hard to read. The Delta is geologically the youngest landscape in Romania. All river deltas are highly dynamic landscapes, but the Danube, one of the longest rivers in Europe, carrying a lot of sediment, alters its ending at a remarkable speed (Bell, 2004). The edges of the Delta are very clear, the remnants of Romania's oldest mountains. Internally, higher areas with relatively clear boundaries, betray some of the history of moving river arms, moving sand bars before the coast, changing dune patterns. Few boundaries are clear however, and for most of its history, the force of river and sea wiped out the traces of prior patterns at high velocity (Cameron and Matless, 2003).

Only recent histories of human intervention are clearly visible: the communist regime turned part of the polders into geometrically laid out

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[5] According to research done by mr Iulian Nichersu and associates at DDNI, Tulcea, and studies done in the 1970's by Iasi University, Dept. of Anthropology.

agricultural polders. Result of the effort was mostly marginal agricultural land, either too wet or too salty or inaccessible. Now, under influence of recent green policies, part of those polders are turned into wetlands again, and the brief history of agricultural use is swiftly vanishing from the page. The forces of the water and its sediments are so overwhelming that it is much harder to stabilize landscape patterns, and much harder to read older patterns under new ones. Spatial boundaries are mostly ephemeral, with a few notable exceptions: the places where people settled down and were determined to stay. Here, boundary maintenance is a very literal matter, a matter of pumping, draining, restoring levies and mending fences.

Most people felt the recent "agriculturalization" as an intrusion on the part of communists. See for instance Mrs. Neranzi: "When we went to the seaside, we would pass along the bridges, and could see the fish in the clear water, with water lilies and willows. That was very nice. But then *they* drained it. They drained it for agricultural reasons, which wasn't really productive anyway. Then they had to build the dike to protect the city from flooding, because the channels were closed. This dike compromised the beauty of the swamp. They were supposed to turn the lands into agricultural ones, but they never did it. But they destroyed the swamp in the process". People are also upset about closing the natural channels (one of them the local photographer, who is documenting local change for forty years now). Symbolically, turning these agricultural plots back to nature is also getting old Sulina back (pre-communism).

In furthering the analysis, let us first look at the villages, next at Sulina. Both the villages in the Delta and Sulina are shrinking[6] (with the exception of Mila 23). Many young people are moving out, and few local traditions are transmitted to the next generation. Many people feel either ashamed or uneasy about their marginality, spatial and social. The Delta is seen as the edge of the world, of Romania, of the European Union, presented as such in the Romanian press. Lipoveni in particular are stigmatized as 'lost', without a prospect of return nor a place to go, and feel the burden of this stigmatization. While there is a marked interest in these 'lost old Russians' on the part of the Russians –journalists come over regularly to take a look- the Lipoveni themselves often reluctantly identify as Russian. Many of them feel that this would underline their marginalization, identify as Romanian, and the youngsters prefer Spanish classes to classes in Russian[7]. This in turn reinforces their marginalization in

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[6] County administration data, Tulcea (2006)

[7] During comunism, Russian was *the* foreign language in school everywhere. In most places, it had nothing to do with teaching the minority language, but the language of the conqueror. That complicates the potential role of those Russian classes for the maintenance of Lipovan identity.

the Russian cultural sphere, since their archaic Russian, hybridized with Romanian, Ukrainian, Turkish, is hardly understandable for modern Russians[8].

The villages in the Delta

Research carried out by Iulian Nichersu and others[9] points in the direction of a quickly fading of social boundaries among the Russian- and Ukrainian speaking communities in the Delta. Pure Ukrainian seems to be (re-)introduced fairly recently, in a local effort to establish/maintain boundaries, but the overall picture is one of simplification of the ethnic mosaic: whereas there used to be several (up to five are mentioned) Russian speaking groups in the Delta, they now identify as one, Lipovan (if not as Romanian). Within some villages, divisions evolved between followers of the local priest and the rest. Together with the simplification of the social boundaries, histories were simplified. Despite the ongoing controversy regarding the origins of the Lipoveni, the statement above about the various waves for different reasons, seems logical. While right now, as said, the dominant local narrative is a unified one: one group came in, at one time, for one reason, speaking one language, hiding out in the swamps, becoming fishermen in an adaptation to the environment. Closely related groups entered the area at the same time, for the same reasons, and settled down in the surrounding steppe areas, on the plateau. Fast reconstructions of identity went along with fast rewritings –simplifications- of history.

A strong connection with the place, a strong role of spatial identity in the narratives of self, could rarely be observed. They ended up in the swamp, were not proud of it. As soon as economically feasible, they alter the traditional Russian architecture of their houses[10], and reed architecture of the sheds, trade them in for modern and western looking buildings. It seems that history did not play an important role in the maintenance of social boundaries in earlier times either: the isolation of their landscapes, and language and religion played more vital roles. In this isolated position, education levels were hard to maintain. The level of education of the local old believer clergy was often not very high, and once on the job, they did not seem to place a strong emphasis on education in their village, or stress history within the curriculum.

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[8] According to the Lipoveni themselves and according to Russian visitors.

[9] Unpublished DDNI studies.

[10] Observations, interviews and Ministry of waters, forests and environmental protection, Romania (2000). *Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve authority. Public awareness strategy,* Tulcea: DDBRA

A rather cynical entrepreneur in the Delta replied annoyed to our questions on Lipovan history: "History? They don't even know what happened last week", underlining a point made by many other respondents, that religion is about the only binding element in the communities now. Albeit cynical, the entrepreneur hinted also at their programmatic ignorance towards "regular" history (data, facts, documents), a trait of the Lipovan community that was observed by other respondents, including Lipoveni. A local Lipovan historian and community leader: "our people, the Lipoveni, didn't keep track of birth records and other documents. Only with the Romanian authorities, they started to record such things. They did not even care too much for schooling. All that mattered was the church writings and readings. The old men considered that one who knew how to read and write the church language [Slavonic], even if only had 4 classes, was more educated than me, for example, after I finished high school".

Fishing is not the common activity anymore, many lost the language, many moved out, histories and identities are often lost, education is a Romanian education, framing history in a Romanian manner. Marriage is taking place more and more often outside the community, because of education outside the area, migration, and fear of disease in a dangerously limited gene- pool. (An educated Lipovan in Tulcea: "My family had long discussions on marriage, and we decided to deviate from the tradition. We decided that I had to marry outside the community. We were afraid of the diseases people used to have here").

One can say that near- dissolution of the social boundaries, of Lipovan identity, accompanies a gradual decrease of marginality in Romanian society. At the same time, counter- currents appear. One of them is the already noted prevalence of green policies in the area, recently. We refer to the –in many respects beneficial- establishment of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, importing a zoning code that allows for certain human activities in certain areas, yet much more restrictive than in other regions. Without downplaying the many blessings the reservation authority and its planning activities brought for the fragile wetland ecology (Bell et al., 2004). We must say that the stricter regulatory regime –not always obeyed in practice- did also introduce new marginalities for the locals (Boja and Popescu, 2000; Bell et al., 2004).

Many local people also feel the recent "eco" policies as foreign, since in the old times ecological awareness came natural, out of a different man- nature relationship. The Lipovan community leader referred to earlier: "And the [recent] fishing, it literally erased everything, with no consideration for the fish, a living creature. It has to grow, to reproduce. And in the old times, all fishermen were obliged to keep silence while fishing. But now, with these big engines... There used to be guards, agents. But since the fishermen rarely smoked, and the agents did, when they felt the smoke of the cigarettes, they

just hid in the swamp with the boat and waited for the agent to pass by.[…] There was a famous agent, Shova Macov. The fishermen used to curse him, but now [with new, more modernized fishermen destroying the habitat] they say 'where are you, Macov?' Even during communism, there were experiments with electric fishing. But later they found the invisible nets, and the fish had no chance. You have to give nature a chance to revive. In the old times, the fishermen used to clean the swamp by themselves, it was their job at stake. They were ecologists without even knowing it."

In early ecological policy- discourse in the region, the locals were mostly absent, while recently, they are given a modest place in a vision for the green area that includes museum-like ethnic villages populated by museum-like villagers (Ministry of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection, Romania, 2000; cf. Edwards, 1998). History and ethnicity are commodified to attract modest quantities of tourists respectful of nature. Some Lipoveni go along with it, present a local fish- dish to the tourists, but seem to feel uncertain which story to tell to the visitors, as they mix their cultural adaptation as fishermen with adaptation to former communist and current tourist ideologies and practices. A second countercurrent is the Romanian discourse on the Delta –and especially Sulina- as the end of the world, the margin of the margin. The new EU border revived the strategic interest of the Romanian- Ukrainian border, at the same time seems to have reinforced the perception of marginality of the boundary zone.

Another aspect of marginality needs to be mentioned here: the limited control from the centre. Recently, with increasing Romanian education, the conceptual boundaries of Romanian culture are more dominant, but with the older generations, the influence of education is lower, and concomitantly, the influence of Romanian categorizations and discourses. Before Romania felt the need for strict border control and had the means to do so, the border, as spatial boundary was often not very relevant for the local communities. More slowly, the force of law, including fighting tax evasion, was extended to the boundary zone, the swamps. Iordachi (2001) and others, point out that, immediately after annexation to Romania (1878, after the War of Independence), the delta functioned as a hiding place for all kinds of evil-doers, and attracted peasants with no land (and shepherds form Transilvania etc.). War veterans also got land in this not very friendly, area. Even now, tax evasion and other cracks in the law are major concerns for all the regional administrations, and respondents at those regional administrations often admitted that the problems have not been solved at all. Finding out real income is hard, even population statistics are hard to come by.

From the perspective of the administrations, a history of marginality, a tradition of soft or absent law, a tradition of freedom, explains the present difficulties with law enforcement. Mr. Petrov: "Pirates were in Partizani, there were many. Before, there was no navigation, and often they needed to take the boat at edec [the crew hauling the boat, with ropes]. Or they would travel several ships together to avoid the pirates." The same person added: "Well, there are pirates even today", thereby assuming a widespread narrative about lawlessness.

All of this is being reinforced by the nature of the landscape, the vast marshes, and by the physical distance from effective power centers. Lipoveni often had a preference for the margins, where nobody would interfere with their conservative lifestyles and religious habits; they moved to the Delta, not to Bucharest, they moved to Siberia, and to Alaska, not Washington. In the case of the other communities, there does not seem to be a deliberate strategy.

Talking to Lipoveni directly, the picture is even more complex. Many downplay their distinctness, emphasize their Romanian identity, sometimes their education level (or their children's) or even international connections (often made as temporary migrant worker). Alcoholism and domestic violence –often mentioned in stories about the Lipoveni, with vodka as local currency- are first denied, later admitted, but seen as common in Eastern Europe. At the same time, often a nostalgia shimmers through for the rites of their religion, the sounds of the Church Slavonic, even if they do not understand what is being said, and also, a nostalgia for the isolation and its freedoms. In these remote and inaccessible areas, far away from Bucharest, Kiev and Moscow, the need for laws and regulation was perceived in a very different manner. Even if daily life was hard, isolation and tradition often suffocating, that past is not wholly rejected. The restrictive patterns of the closed community are now interpreted as more free, because the present restrictions, embodied by a still vaguely alien Romanian (and European) law were not imposed on the wild area in the old days. Recent green regulations are wholly alien, and are often seen as straightforward attacks on the local communities (Boja et al., 2000). Catching a fish illegally is condemned on the one hand, and simultaneously presented as a kind of innocent Robin Hood- behavior, suffused with nostalgia for the good old times.

Sulina

In Sulina, the historical exception, the temporary centrality in the CED years, left its imprint on the city landscape. Monumental buildings dot the city, empty spaces mark the location of historic architecture that has been demolished (e.g. the Armenian church). Sulina was an island, a broad river

127

levy that was artificially enlarged and connected with the dry dune areas. In the 1970's, the isolated position was softened by a land reclamation project to the south. Original spatial boundaries have been softened, connections slightly improved, but Sulina remains an inaccessible place. The Sulina canal, result of CED projects, is hardly in use anymore, and as a seaport, Constanta has taken over completely. Since the collapse of the CED and certainly since WW II, the Greek, Jewish, Armenian trading communities have disappeared, and with them, their networks, their embeddings in a larger world. Communism tried to keep people and bring here, by founding new industries, but these enterprises did not last. Many Moldavian women were brought in for the fish factory and many people from the rural areas worked at the naval repair facilities or on the dykes and related engineering projects. (This contributed to the complete ethnic makeover of the city.)

Nowadays, the population shrinks fast, unemployment is over 50%, and all kinds of semi- legal operations are rampant. Half- jokingly, administrators in Tulcea say that nobody in Sulina pays taxes, and if you do, you're the laughing stock of the neighborhood. A newly invigorated border police (EU influence), also responsible for Sulina, seems to have a positive impact now on certain aspects of law enforcement.

In Sulina, the palimpsest still shows more of its layering, despite the destructions of a collapsing economy, and the deliberate demolitions under communism. Many historical buildings are still used, and others present as ruins or recognizable in newer constructions. The boundaries of some neighborhoods are still visible. Despite the new polders, old landscape boundaries around and on the island (e.g. small creeks cutting into it) can still be discerned (Schut, 2008 forthcoming). Connecting places with certain ethnic or other social groups, however, proves very hard. Under the CED, certain areas were mostly Greek (Greek was in practice the lingua franca, French in theory – [Rosetti, 1931]), or Lipovan, or Turkish. Now, with so many people gone, some groups depleted, with so many social and spatial redefinitions in the past, these links between social and spatial boundaries are gone. Sometimes the architecture still refers to a group (late Ottoman wooden houses), or the location (small houses next to an old creek, probably fishermen, probably Lipovan, and the palimpsest again allows for some degree of reconstruction.

On the streets, Russian and Ukrainian is still spoken, rarely Greek, never Armenian or Turkish. Also here, Lipovan identity is rarely confirmed, more rarely than in the villages. Most people living in the city now, cannot trace their ancestry back to the cosmopolitan days of Sulina, to its centrality. Most of them came in from the villages afterwards, most of them have either Lipovan or Ukrainian backgrounds, and worked in the communist factories

now defunct. A small Greek community survives; an identification as Greek seems to have held some of its old attractiveness, and people with a partially Greek background, often see themselves as Greek, are proud of it. At the same time, for them, being 'from Sulina' seems to be more relevant, being part of the cosmopolitan, multicultural place Sulina was.

Very few people have actual memories of the life in the Sulina of the CED. They and others gloss over the problems of the place, the sometimes restrictive ethnic boundaries (Ukrainians and Lipoveni working in the homes of Greeks and Armenians), and imagine it as place without boundaries, without conflict (Anderson, 1992). A place where all the goods and the good things of the world came together. Reflections on the artificial character of its centrality are rare, and Jean Bart's premonitions about the fate of the town (Teampau et al., 2008) are rarely mentioned. Bart is a local hero, an icon of the international character of the place.

Conclusions

Just like many people in the villages rewrote their history and identity, reducing it to a simple narrative of marginality, so the people from Sulina, mostly coming from the villages, rewrote their identities, downplayed ethnic boundaries, and inscribed themselves in the multicultural and international identity of Sulina. Even when any centrality in political, cultural, economic sense is long gone, this identity of place still survives, succeeds in adopting new people, redefining them, turning them into Sulinese. The histories of Sulina used in this process were originally largely the histories of people now gone, but they are simplified and revived constantly.

The actual absence of those people, their more differentiated histories and identities, smoothens the selection and simplification process, since nobody can oppose the images produced. In the meanwhile, that same absence, that same loss of centrality is perceived much more stringent from the center, from the national media, and national politics. The images produced in Bucharest about Sulina, images of Sulina as the dying city at the end of the world, are felt as very painful and insulting. A local student told us about journalists coming to Sulina with predefined ideas, asking her to 'show us some ramshackled houses, a tree grown through the ceiling, ugly corners etc.' She added: "They once published the picture of a one-legged old man as an embodiment of the disability and immobility of "those people" (he lost his leg in the war, actually). And they write phrases like: 'Seagulls falling down from the smell over Sulina, prostitutes waiting in line for seamen etc.' They just came down here to confirm their stories." National discourses like this in

turn reinforce the local marginalities, despite the powerful local palimpsest, the generative power of old places and memories.

Despite some initial euphoria in some circles about the beneficial disappearance of borders and boundaries in a postmodern, globalised world, boundaries are here to stay (Van Houtum, 2005; Cerny, 2008 – forthcoming). Thinking, socially and spatially existing requires boundaries, spatial, social, conceptual boundaries that play a role in the construction of identities, in the making of homes for ourselves (Walsh et al., 2002). Marginalities will reappear as well. As Green (2005) pointed out marginality itself is a complex and very imperfect concept. In the Danube Delta, a region with a history of marginality and ephemeral centrality, both complexity and imperfection were highlighted. In the Delta, several boundaries and marginalities coexist, and old boundaries can be revived in the blink of an eye. We believe that the metaphor of the landscape as palimpsest, though quite old, is very instrumental here, in its potential for unraveling the interweaving of different layers of time and space, and the associated identities, as for showing the potentiality of old layers and identities to be revived. Potential means real here, in a real Deleuzian sense.

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ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RESEARCHER AND THE RESEARCHED: POSITIONALITY AND THE ETHNOGRAPHIC METHOD

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ABSTRACT. The present essay reviews several of the issues related to the relationship between researcher and researched for the practitioners of the ethnographic method. My main argument underlines the reflexive, situated dimension of the field interaction and stresses the need of a continual assessment of the rapport processes, in order to deploy the adequate strategies that would allow the researcher to maintain the balance between 'doing closeness' and 'doing distance.' I rejected the determinism implied by 'outsider/insider' dichotomy, as well as the alleged insuperable influence of factors such as gender, ethnicity or class. On the contrary, I argue in favor of a constructed, bi-univocal relationship between ethnographer and hosts, the deepness of which is to be negotiated according to the research's objective and the field circumstances.

Keywords: ethnographic method; researcher and researched; situated knowledge

"William James tells us that when he asked Sir John Frazer about the natives he had known, he exclaimed: But Heaven forbid!" (Wax: 1972: 2). This little anecdote, (*si non e vero e ben trovato)* shows we've come a long way in social sciences in respect with the relationship between the researcher and the researched. In this essay I will begin with a short over-view of the history of participant observation. I see it as a method through which the researcher, immersing oneself in the ocean of meanings and practices which structure and constitute the day-to-day life of those s/he chose to study, "engaging in the same body rhythms," hopes to arrive at a better understanding of their experiences, articulated on their own categories and framed by their local context. In the following pages I will address the relationship between ethnographer and host from three perspectives: I will trace the origins of the participant observation from its inception to its classical definition as we have it from Erving Goffman, I will explore the issues related to the insider/outsider dimension of fieldwork, and in the last part I will review several authors who positioned themselves at distinct and successive immersion levels, and I will address several strategies they used in order to construct and maintain their stance, in a reflexive and situated manner.

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The origins of participant observation: the Chicago-New Guinea-Boston triangle

The creation of the Chicago University department of sociology, (Bulmer, 1984) under the leadership of Albion Small, represents a momentous turning point in the history of sociology as a discipline (Bulmer,1984; Deegan, 2001). The Chicago school was inspired by reform-motivated social surveys and muckraking journalism to develop a keen interest for empirical data. Nevertheless, Robert Park's urge toward his students to "go get the seat of their pants dirty in real research" (Emerson, 2001: 11) did not mean doing what we call now participant observation. The distinguishing particularity of the Chicago school was its commitment to the 'case study,' open to a wide variety of manners of collecting data: statistical data, personal documents (letters, diaries, life-stories), official data collected by specialized agencies, newspaper stories as well as interviews and, indeed, observation. But, even in the works that emphasized observation more than others, such as Nels Anderson's "The Hobo" and Paul G. Cressey's "The Taxi-Dance Hall" "contact with those studied was "typically short-term, situationally specific and involved little effort to get close on a sustained, every-day basis" (Emerson, 2001: 12). It is not sure they would have necessarily developed good rapport with their subjects, as some of them expressed patronizing attitudes or crude dislike of them. In the first page of "How the Polish Peasant came about" W. I. Thomas notes: "The choice was between the Italians, the Jews and the Poles. *The Poles are very repulsive people on the whole*[1], but there had been a movement for" enlightenment" and freedom that had developed many documents and masses of material on the peasant, so I decided to bore in there." (Bulmer, 1984: 47)

That direct, long term, eventually intense relationship between researcher and subject is not a neutral or benign interaction was explicit from its inception. Possibly the first social scientist who practiced this kind of immersion (Frank Hamilton Cushing, studying the Zuni community) was marginalized in the academic field because his "quasi-absorption in their way of life (...) raised awkward problems of verification and accountability (...) [and] could not confer scientific authority" (Clifford, 1983: 123).

It was the advent of Bronislaw Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown in the anthropological field that finally wrote-off the Frazer-ian armchair studies. The new paradigm promoted by the two fieldworkers would confer academic value only to the studies which complied with a set of requirements, such as an intense and prolonged direct contact with the researched, done by an academically trained expert, having an adequate (but not perfect) mastery of

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[1] My italics, CG.

their language (Clifford, 1983: 124-125). Yet, despite Malinowski's urge "to render a picture of the world from the native's perspective" and to "give an organic account of their beliefs" (Malinowski, 1955: 238) he did not treat the Trobrianders as equals and failed to apply their meanings in his evaluations of their behavior toward him (see the episode on betel-nut in Wax, 1972: 11).

From the perspective of sociological ethnography the triangle of sources closes at Harvard, where William Foote Whyte chose the Malinowskian method of participant observation in order to study an Italian-American community in Boston, so-called Cornerville in his influential *Street Corner Society* (1943, [1955]). A graduate fellow at Harvard, Whyte managed to befriend a local Italian cornerboy, Doc, who became both his access-point to the community he intended to study and his principal informant. Unlike the Chicagoans, Whyte moved in Cornerville in order to gain first-hand, "intimate knowledge of the local life" (Whyte, 1955: xv) and his book was a strong advocate for the new method (which he named 'participant observation' in the Methodological Appendix he wrote to the 1955 second edition). It is only at this moment when the relationship between researcher and researched became (fairly) equal, friendly and it is reciprocated by the other side. Whyte's method was given new theoretical grounds through the works of the second Chicago school (Blumer, 1969; Hughes, 1971, Fine, 1995) and found its excellent description in the words of one its undisputed masters, Ervin Goffman:

"The standard technique is to try to subject yourself, hopefully, to their life circumstances, which means that although, in fact, you can leave at any time, you act as if you can't and accept all the desirable and undesirable things that are feature of their life. That "tunes your body-up" and with your "tuned-up body" and with the ecological right to be close to them (which you've obtained by one sneaky means or another) you are in a good position to note their gestural, visual, bodily response to what's going on around them and you're empathetic enough –because you've been taking the same crap they've been taking- to sense what it is they're responding to." (Goffman in Emerson, 2001: 154-155)

The relationship between researcher and researched

Once we accept Goffman's definition, the relation between ethnographer and its subjects becomes very important. Ethnographic knowledge is a situated knowledge. Any interactions in the field are can and should be construed both as "sources of information *about* a social world and episodes situated *within* and expressive *of* that world." (Emerson and Pollner, 1988: 194). This realization brings to a new attention on the researcher /researched interaction, as one of the major determinants of the quality of knowledge we can extract from the field.

137

Elaborating on the concept of rapport (between researcher and researched) Hunt (1984) provides a working definition for the process which makes fieldwork possible: "a process through which the researcher becomes competent to membership by first displaying an awareness that membership is problematic and must be negotiated, and second, by demonstrating a salient knowledge of the essential features by which subject members distinguish themselves from non-members" (Hunt, 1984: 284). Her definition of the rapport between scholar and native should be completed with an essential note of Emerson and Pollner (2001). Starting from what they see as the *diferentia specifica* of fieldwork as compared with other methods, *the embodied presence in the daily lives of those who host the research* Emerson and Pollner (2001) note that the ethnographer have to keep a delicate balance between involvement and detachment. Their review not only the strategies of "doing closeness" but also of "doing distance," reminding us that the fieldwork is and should be seen as an ongoing process of negotiation between the researched and researcher. One of the possible ways of characterizing the position of the researcher toward the researched is the dichotomy between 'outside' researchers and 'inside' researchers.

Outsider/Insider issues and beyond

In this section I will explore the practical and analytical relevance of the insider/outsider fieldworker dichotomy, and I would conclude it is not as useful as it seems.

One can honestly acknowledge that there are fields and groups we cannot penetrate, given our gender, age or ethnicity. Or, let me recant, we can penetrate them with a lot of time and effort, time and effort that –sometimes- might simply not be available to the researcher. On this, see Harper (1995: 149) on abandoning his attempt to become a farm worker, as it did not allow him a good rapport for what he intended to study. From the perspective of her research on the Sioux, Wax (1979) advances the claim that gender and ethnicity transform us into outsiders vis-à-vis certain groups and that, no matter what: "women can sometimes accomplish what men cannot – and vice-versa."

I tend to reject the vision that one is definitively 'an outsider' given, say, our ascribed gender characteristics. A good argument against this position is provided by Hunt's (1984) work within a male dominated environment: the police. Hunt sees rapport as "part of the intersubjective construction of reality." Rather than letting a man do the study, she engaged in an elaborate and tough process of building rapport and making herself accepted by her male policemen counterparts, managing to bypass her 'outsider' status and to become accepted inside the group.

Conversely, insider researchers are those who share a common characteristic with those researched, be it ethnicity, race, gender or age. A classic example is Niels Anderson's "The Hobo" (1923) where an ex-hobo (actually a hobo on his way out) does a study on hobos. A superficial perspective might indeed favor on insider over an outsider in doing fieldwork. Nevertheless, after considering a couple of recent examples, I will show that while some aspects of the rapport are facilitated by an 'insider' status, others become impossible, or very difficult to address. Let's take a couple of examples.

In "On interviewing one's peers" Jennifer Platt (1981) addresses the social, technical and ethnical problems she encountered while attempting to interview her peers, university professors on issues like the efficacy of modes of grade assessment at her university. It may be noted that interviewing one peers, a group characterized by "the shared community membership and the continuing relationship" (Platt, 1981: 82) suggests a profound similarity with the position of the practitioners of participant observation. While it may seem easier to approach a peer for an interview than a stranger, the peer is an equal and the roles of interviewer/interviewee do not come handy, because other roles may be more salient. The insistence of the researcher to impose the settings of the interactions "may bring later personal difficulties" (Platt, 1981: 86). In the same vein, peers belong to the same communities and are likely to have shared norms and values. Thus, unlike the outsider researcher, there are issues which cannot be addressed by the insider, either due to his/her pre-supposed knowledge of the issues, or to the delicate or rude value conferred to them by the group.

Another issue related to insider/outsider relationship is raised by Maxine Baca Zinn (in Emerson, 2001). As a Mexican-American woman studying Chicano families, Baca Zinn had to face pressured from the group members to devote less time to her research activities (defined as individual goals) and to commit more to goal which would benefit to the entire group (from which she was perceived to be a part), such as managing the activities of Parent Activities organization. An outsider would not have been asked to do the same, or would have had less moral obligations to do so.

Last but not least, as a Transylvanian Romanian studying sociology in Los Angeles under the supervision of an American ethnographer who wrote extensively about Transylvania and Romania, I have a certain amount of research experience in dealing with the distinction between insider and outsider researchers. Thus, during my field work for my UCLA MA thesis on the process of ethnicization (leading to ethnic clashes) of the public and private lives of the inhabitants of a ethnically mix Transylvanian city, I was forced to limit my involvement to the Romanian side only. Also, while doing field work in my

139

native village on the process of land collectivization I had easier access, as an 'insider' in some communities, and I was treated as an 'outsider' in others, as the village is structured by regional, kin, class, gender, ethnic and quasi-racial (the Gypsies) lines, to name but a few.

This last point brings me to the major point of my argument. When we speak of 'insiders' and 'outsiders' we define them as such in respect to ethnicity, or gender, or age, or other salient criteria. Yet, in the process of day to day interaction "the participant observer is a subject who interprets a reality that is mediated by the members interpretation of his identity" (Hunt, 1984: 285). Depending on the gender, class, ethnic, age or other relevant characteristics of the members, one is at the same time an insider and an outsider (see also Zavella, 1996), making thus the dichotomy a less useful analytical tool.

Constructing immersion at different levels

More relevant than the insider/outsider characteristics I claim, is the degree of immersion one reaches within the researched community. To begin with, I will sketch the two extremes of the immersion continuum. On the one hand, one can have observation behind a fake mirror, or –for example- video-taping as displayed in Jack Katz's "Families and Funny Mirrors" (1996). There is no interaction between the researcher and researched, and the latter is not aware of the fact that s/he is being studied. On the other hand one can attempt, as it is requested by ethnomethodology, to become the phenomenon to be studied: "in its final expression, the ethnomethodology of mathematics becomes mathematics" (Emerson and Pollner in Atkinson et al., 2001: 131).

Once having defined both the ends, I will review in the following pages several levels of immersion, where the researcher can end up, and which I chose to name: quasi-membership approach, membership, and full membership. In the last part of my essay will consist in a short review of these levels of immersion and of several of the strategies of fields positioning they imply.

By *quasi-membership* I understand a position of "respectful distance" in the vein of Reinharz (1992). The quasi-member is accepted as a researcher by the hosts, but s/he does not participate in the core activities of the group, even if s/he can participate in marginal practices. I illustrate this level of immersion with the stance assumed/earned by David Halle (1984) during his fieldwork at the Imperium Oil and Chemicals refinery. In the tradition of the first Chicago school, participant observation is just one of a larger battery of source ("information of earnings, age, seniority, grievance and arbitration records, homeownership, occupational composition of the areas where workers lived, etc.) Halle used in order to have a better grasp of the situation of the

140

workers he chose to study. During his impressive seven years of fieldwork, Halle was introduced to (through a trade union connection), and in time accepted by, the workers as a graduate student doing research on them. Not going for a deeper level of immersion (becoming a worker himself) was a matter of practical opportunity: during the period of research an economic down-turn made jobs a very scarce commodity. Halle does not regret a higher degree of immersion because as a worker "I would have been confined in my observations to the area where I worked. I would have had no natural reason to wander around the entire complex, still less to pose the continuous stream of questions I asked workers throughout this study." (Halle, 1984: xviii). However he acknowledges that becoming an insider would have spared him of many opening efforts. Not being a worker, it took two years in the field until enough rapport has been built so that he managed to find out "how work in automated plants is really performed." In conclusion, a brilliant piece of ethnography does not require necessarily a deep immersion level in the field. What might have been lost by not becoming 'a member' was gained through a impressively long (in ethnographic research terms) period of building trust between the ethnographer and his hosts, as well as through the use of a variety of sources, not limited to participant observation.

I move now to a more integrated position of the researcher versus his/her hosts, *the member*, which I see as an accepted participant in some/most of the group's core activities, without implying by this fact that the researcher is 'one of us.' Jennifer Hunt (1984) and Phillipe Bourgois (1995) managed this level of immersion, in which they became fully accepted by their hosts. Both stress the fact that establishing rapport is an on-going process, which cannot be supplied by managing to get an entry in the field. In fact, contrary to the traditional pattern of classic ethnographers' tales, "*In search of respect*" does not begin with an entry (compare with Geertz's account on Bali's cockfights, 1973). Instead, the book begins with an account of a wrong move, which almost got the researcher out of the field for good, if not completely out of this world –due to a unintended offensive act of the researcher against the local mobster. (Bourgois, 1995: 19-27). He describes both his strategies to do closeness (beginning with buying beers to his future informants – the wrong kind of beers, as it turns out) as well as his strategies to decline overtures. As his main informants were crack dealers and drogue users, they offered Philippe the chance to sniff crack. Luckily, the rejection of the offer was not interpreted as an insult (as it could have) but as conferring more respect and individuality to the researcher, making him thus a even more prized friend for his two main informants.

In the same vein, challenging the police commander by eating candies during a meeting aimed to reinforce the authority of the chief upon the researcher and the other subordinates was a strategy Hunt used was 'producing resistance'

in order to distance herself from the management and to do closeness toward the suspicious and reluctant rank-and-file (Hunt, 1984: 291). Conversely, she aggressively rejected sexual advances, as she needed to 'construct masculinity' in order earn acceptance within the members of the police squad. (Hunt, 1984: 292)'

Both these representative pieces of work illustrate the long way an outsider (a white, middle class man in el barrio, a woman in the male-chauvinistic police environment) can travel in order to get first hand information from his/her hosts. In both cases they researcher managed to get fully accepted by the researched, without claiming or attempting to become one of them.

The last position I am reviewing here is that of *full membership*, when the researcher aims at, and manages to fully join the group he studies. Exemplary in this respect is Wacquant's (1995, 2004) three years experience in becoming a pugilist, succeeding not only to be accepted by the mainly black community of amateur boxers trained by DeeDee Armour, but also to became an amateur boxer himself, "Busy Louie" fighting in the ring and representing his club. For Wacquant learning "how boxers feel and think about their trade" was "to *become one with* the universe of which he partakes" enabling his analysis "to convey something of the *passion* (in the double sense of *love* and *suffering* (the etymological meaning of *patio*) that ties boxers to their trade by explicating what it is that they find –or make- *desirable* and worthwhile about it. (Wacquant, 1995: 491). Given the aim of his study, it is no wonder that Wacquant neede to strive for the deepest level of immersion. We could also classify this stance as an embodied participation (Emerson and Pollner, 2001: 125) as the immersion does not limit itself to the intellectual and emotional relations with the hosts/co-members, but puts an emphasize on replicating their bodily experience too. One of the dangers related to this stance relates to what Emerson and Pollner (2001: 254) call "subjective anchoring," as a set of practices aimed at facing "the intoxication of immersion," the risk of 'going native' and completely abandoning the research in favor of groups core activity –in this case, boxing. Wacquant noted: "I feel so much pleasure simply participating than observation becomes secondary, and frankly, I'm at the point where I tell myself that I'd gladly give up my studies and research and all the rest to be able to stay here and box" (Wacquant, 2004: 4)[2].

Conclusion

I parsed in the present essay several of the issues related to the relationship between researcher and researched. My main argument was focused on underlying the reflexive, situated dimension of the field interaction

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[2] On this strategy see also Van Zandt (1991: 16).

and stressing the need of a continual assessment of the rapport processes, in order to deploy the adequate strategies that would allow the researcher to maintain the balance between 'doing closeness' and 'doing distance.' I doing so I rejected the determinism implied by 'outsider/insider' dichotomy, as well as the alleged insuperable influence of factors such as gender, ethnicity or class. On the contrary, I argued in favor of a constructed, bi-univocal relationship between ethnographer and hosts, the deepness of which is to be negotiated according to the research's objective and the field circumstances.

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