Perspectives on the European postcommunist societies

Edited by:
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First printing: 2005

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SUMMARY

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MINORITIES AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION

BOGDAN VOICU, HORAȚIU RUSU
Introduction. A round-table for young social scientist

This volume is the third in a series that promises to continue. The story starts few years ago, when a conference for young social scientist in Eastern and Central Europe happened in Sibiu, Romania. The theme was pretty generous. The participants had a good time together, debated about postcommunism and European integration, and decided to continue. A result was the first co-edited volume of proceedings[1]. A second event took place in December 2004, also in Sibiu, gathering some additional colleagues to those who participated in the 2003 meeting[2]. Almost the same people were present in Leipāja, Latvia, in July 2005, during the *EU Integration Process from EAST to EAST: Civil Society and Ethnic Minorities in a Changing World* conference. Anita Kalnina (Latvian Sociological Association) and Sandra Sumane ("Social Analysis Mediator") ensured an excellent organization. The Open Society Foundation (Latvian and Romanian branches) as well as the Latvian Sociological Association and the social organization "Social Analysis Mediator" (MAS) supported the project. This volume collects most of the papers presented there and benefits from the respective support, too.

The Leipāja meeting also offered the opportunity for discussing the statute of the then-emerging *Network of Young European Social Scientist* (NYESS), now an association that aims to facilitate the communication between young scholars across the continent[3].

The thing that assembles together the papers is the post communism theme. Civil society and ethnic minorities are the pretext themes for addressing into the topic, but other approaches are also present. Comparativeness and interdisciplinary analysis are the red line for most of the studies, and the focus on the ex-communist societies is almost always completed with references to the Western Europe. Of course the book is not covering all aspects of postcommunism or East-West comparisons. This was not our aim. We rather intend to present few pieces of the huge puzzle that Europe is, with the purpose to contribute to the improvement of the knowledge of the European diversity.

Three large themes can be identified through the volume. The first main topic is postcommunism, presented either through its own features, based on local case studies and national analyses, either as compared with the Western societies. Postcommunism becomes a subject to be directly addressed in only one paper, but it mainly maintain its function as background framework, common to all the other contributed papers.

Civil society, civic participation and social capital come together, forming a second stream of the volume. Communism swamped down the civic society, and established a full control of the

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[1] Bogdan Voicu, Horațiu Rusu, eds. 2003. *Globalization, Integration, and Social Development in Central and Eastern Europe*, Sibiu: Psihomedia. The papers are also available from the NYESS website (http://www.iccv.ro/nyess)
[2] The papers were collected in Horațiu Rusu, Bogdan Voicu, eds. 2005. *EU Integration Process from EAST to EAST: Civil Society and Ethnic Minorities in a Changing World*, Sibiu: Psihomedia. They are also available for download from NYESS web site, see the previous note.
[3] More details about the network and its activities are available on the website: http:/www.iccv.ro/nyess.

state over the people. Re-shaping the Eastern and Central European societies is in many aspects a matter of (re)building a participative political culture and a more inclusive social relation set up. Several papers address directly the respective topic. Minority issues, ICT development, international relations are considered in their interdependency with various forms of social capital and civic participation.

Finally, the third stream of interest covers the issue of minorities and identities. The cold war frozen the existing tensions in the melting pots that some 100 years ago were the three Empires relevant for the area: the Austro-Hungarian, the Ottoman, and the Russian. In some cases the now-resulting states inherited quite homogeneous societies, some of them ethnically "purified" during the communism. Others like the Baltic states, are confronted with increasing minorities. Officially unrecognized for 50 to 75 years, the existing tensions are now visible, and the eastern societies are in search for a new equilibrium, for a better social tolerance. Several papers are addressing this search for solutions, both from theoretical and empirical perspectives.

No matter the topic, the search for comparability links most of the papers. Some are explicitly comparative (see the contributions of Mălina Voicu and Katarina Strapcova, Bogdan Voicu & Tanya Basina, Victor Cebotari); others are comparative through their aim to the global society and/or international relations (Varduhi Tovmasyan, Victoir Cebotari, Tomasz Kapusniak, Magda Lesińska); in other cases, the national approach is doubled by the need to relate to the experiences of the neighbouring countries or of the Western Europe (Jitka Laštovková, Yana Leontiyeva).

We have organized the volume according to the main interest of the collected articles. The first section deals with the general situation of the ex-communist area, seen through the lenses of the current transformation and of the European integration. Both empirical and theoretical approaches are proposed to the reader.

Varduhi Tovmasyan opens the volume with an attempt to discuss postcommunist integration of the global society. The author argues about the importance of the transforming of any society as part of the larger process of world development. Mankind is treated as a consistent organism. From this perspective, the illness of any apparently isolated or less important part of the body, concerns the whole system and produces surprising effects everywhere. Varduhi Tovmasyan claims that the current transformation processes from Armenia, for instance, many of them relevant for other ex-communist societies too, become relevant for the whole world, being, to a certain extent, universalistic. Armenia proves to be a country with high uncertainty related both to the recent past (particularly the Independence), to present and to the future. The pessimism of the society is explained by the author using socio-economic, historical (recent past) and cultural factors, as well as using the psychological mechanism as a way to understand how these factors transpose in the respective defeatism. The argument is that the current situation is not necessary special for the humankind, but similar with other past and present experience of various societies. Therefore, Armenia may learn from the victories and the mistakes of other transitions, and may contribute to increasing the understanding of such processes.

Victor Cebotari's contribution also looks to a globalizing world, focusing on the new

European Border. The differences and similarities between the new member states, the SEE and the CIS are analyzed under various aspects. Poverty and economic performance is the focal point, but Victor Cebotari also discuss other factors affecting the current situation, including the initial position of the transition countries in the world system, respectively in the USSR, for the CIS, as well as the path followed during the postcommunist transformation, particularly the involvement in mass, armed conflicts. The conclusions of the paper draw around the "new European periphery". One may note that the new Europe tends to be surrounded by a chain of poor societies, many of them instable and experiencing armed conflicts in the recent past. Some of these countries were also part of the periphery of the Russian influence, and they may become even more unstable. They cumulated both poverty and conflict, two interrelated social diseases, as the author notes. Their instability might be dangerous for the European Union, as Victor Cebotari warns, bringing related problems such as illegal migration, as well as trafficking human beings, drugs, arms.

A further analysis of the Ukrainian situation in the light of the orange revolution adds. *Tomasz Kapuśniak* discusses the development of civic society in Ukraine under the impact of the bilateral relations with the European Union. The mass protests that accompanied and supported the victory of the opposition in the 2004 general elections are considered within the context of Ukraine's European aspirations. Similarly with the Victor Cebotari in the previous chapter, Tomasz Kapusniak identifies Ukraine as a nation located at the border of the enlarged European Union, and considers the implied challenges. Reconciliation the EU aspirations and the Russian influence and historical dependency would be a difficult task. The choices of the Ukrainian elite may be of high interest not only for the Bruxelles officials, but also for the neighbouring countries. However, globalization seems to push Ukraine closer to the EU.

Mălina Voicu's and *Katarina Strapcova*'s paper keeps the interest on comparative perspectives, but the aim is no longer European integration or globalization. The two authors present a complete picture of the European countries with regards to population attitudes towards social inequality and poverty. Quantitative data (EVS1999-2001) is used for supporting five theoretical hypotheses, describing the variations in representing poverty across Europe. Two basic findings arise: In the countries with universalistic welfare regime, with a high level of social spending, or/and with higher levels of unemployment, the population is more inclined to support structural explanation of poverty (society is the one that generates poverty, not individuals). The second result of the analysis underlines the current societal dynamics: an increasing in preferences for the structural explanation of poverty is reported for most of the European societies between 1990 and 2000. This holds particularly true for the CEE countries, as a consequence of the growing of poverty in the region and to the changes in the social structure. The discussion is highly relevant both for the rather strong egalitarian societies from the CEE region which "underwent the new process of hierarchization", and for the Europe as a whole, in the perspective of living together in a united Europe.

In one of the papers included in this volume that focuses on only one country (respectively, the Czech Republic), *Renáta Sedláková* keeps the focus on a theme relevant for social policy. She deals with the representations of the seniors in the nationwide media. Content analysis (five

newspapers and the main news bulletins of the three biggest national TV channels were considered) is used to address a very hot issue for each of the postcommunist societies: the unprecedented ageing of the population, a process that has already happened few decades ago in the Western Europe. The proportion of the elderly within the society constantly increase, as it did in the Western societies. The attitudes of the society toward ageing and old people are of high importance for the present and mainly for the future of the European societies. In this respect, the role of the media is crucial. As the author concludes after a first investigation, the representation of elderly in the media is not neutral, but imbalanced towards negative traits, mainly related to illness and poverty.

Raluca Popescu also discusses the role of media in structuring representations of a specific group. She focuses on trafficking women, and explores a series of 37 in depth interviews with Romanian journalists who were presenting cases of trafficking women. The victims are usually young, low educated, single, without a stable situation. They are trafficked, being 'exported' to the Western 'market', were Romanians, Ukrainians, and Moldavians are among the competitors for supremacy. Exploring the representations of the Romanian journalists, Raluca Popescu concludes that their discourse, rather negative towards the victims, may contribute to perpetuating the stigma that society puts on the trafficked women. Some changes should occur in order to back public policies for combating the phenomenon.

The second section of the volume is devoted to civic participation and social capital. A comparative analysis of Ukraine and Romania opens the discussion. According to the EVS/WVS 1999-2001 data, both countries display lower levels of bridging social capital than the rest of the European countries. Romania is even more traditional under this perspective than Ukraine. Substantial explanations are proposed by *Bogdan Voicu* and *Tanya Basina*, supported by qualitative examples, but also by survey data from the two countries. Civic participation (in mass protest actions, but also through membership in associations) is considered, along with trusting people and institutions, and the extent or social relations. Both countries are said that "share a non-participatory culture, probably having its roots in the communist past, underdevelopment, rural structure, lower economic development". However there are identified clear tendency towards the increase of the participatory life, both outside and within the political set ups.

Eglė Butkevičienė brings a very contemporary perspective on social capital creation in the information age. She opens her article with a theoretical discussion about the effects that ICT, particularly Internet use, has on creating and maintaining social capital. Since "Internet is no more a separate world, not a special thing; it is routinely incorporated in to our everyday life", Internet use may create or destroy social capital. Two divergent arguments are described: due to keeping busy the 'Internauts', Internet may contribute to their alienation, while the week-ties that Internet may built are not string enough to compensate the loss. Alternatively, the virtual; connections, especially resulting from participating in forums and chats, may create bridging social capital both in the virtual and in the real world. Social connection, trust and reciprocity may be stimulated through the virtual communication. Using qualitative data collected in several rural Lithuanian communities, Eglė Butkevičienė argues that "the diffusion of ICT can change the concept of rurality, empowering such residents with new opportunities of participating in society's life". The use of Internet in rural

Lithuania is self-directed, each one looking to fulfil ones own needs and interests. However, the interviewed rural inhabitants consider the Internet as a useful tool for social-inclusion, for access to information. This may create the premises for an increase in bridging social capital, too.

The interest of the paper overlaps the country for which the data were analyzed (Lithuania), since the impact of ICT on rural development is among the policy principles currently under debate in other societies too. Among the examples one may mention the setting up of the *telehaz* in Hungary, or the *telecentre* in Romania (extended now as a mandatory institution in any rural area, financed by the government), both inspired by the Swedish and British telecottages – places were local people may access Internet with the explicit aim to stimulate development, community interaction, and to avoid social exclusion.

Horaţiu Rusu and *Raluca Bălăşoiu* in "The pessimistic society" try to capture, using a ten-year perspective, the various attitudes the Romanian people take on the pessimism-optimism continuum and then seek some of their determinants. Their analysis is based on survey data representative for the Romanian adult population, covering the 1994-2004 period. The authors show that an overall perspective of the evolution of optimism/pessimism phenomenon in the last decade indicates that for many Romanians, pessimistic attitudes generally prevail. Only on very few occasions the various types of optimistic oriented attitudes overcome the pessimistic ones. The causes as their analysis indicates are on the one hand the associations between the attitudes people take on the pessimisms-optimism continuum and their resources (be they status indicators or perceptions) meaning that less resourceful one is more likely is to have a pessimistic attitude; and on the other hand the effects the economic respective the political settings (including here the situations generated by the electoral contexts) have on increase or decrease in optimism/pessimism.

The section devoted to identities and minorities gathers papers approaching the topic from four different perspectives. Local, regional, national and ethnic identities are considered, all together contributing to better understand the processes that underlie identity formation in the former communist space.

Jitka Laštovková opens the section with a paper discussing the construction of identity in the case of the Czech *citizens* from Czech-Bavarian borders, an area who knew a salient exchange of inhabitants after the Second World War. The author exploits an impressive number of biographical interviews, in search for identifying what "home" means for these people. Jitka Laštovková explores the relations verbally sat up by the interviewees with the nature and the cultural landscape, the profession, the family, the economic and ideological constraints, the personal roots etc. She concludes that home means a little from all of these, but it keeps its traditional salience in everyday life, as a crucial determinant of identity. This somehow contradicts the postmodernization arguments, but one should carefully consider the region, since it is rather undergoing a process of fast modernization, than a transition to late modernity. The situation is common for other former communist areas too. For instance, the Bulgarian Cadrilater, formerly (before WWII) included in Romania, the border area between Armenia and Azerbaidjan, or, to some extent, some Slovak-Hungarian border areas, and to a larger extent many regions in the former-Yugoslavia, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Another local approach with some regional elements is proposed by *Melinda Dincă*. She discusses the socially constructed identity of the rural inhabitants from the Timiş county, the core of Banat, the most tolerant and multicultural Romanian region. Survey data collected in 2004 offers the author the opportunity to assess the inter-ethnic and inter-regional tolerance, using Bogardus social distance scales. Almost all ethnic groups composing the Banat puzzle prove to have a positive representation in the mind of the local people. The exception is the Roma population, the negative stereotype present at European level being reproduced in Banat too. On the other hand, the other Romanian regions are generally represented in the same terms as Banat, suggesting that the Banat socially constructed identity is not very different from the one constructed at Romanian level.

Maintaining the discussion around identity and ethnicity, *Thea Kacharava* and *Giorgi Kipiani* develop another interesting point of view: they deal with the importance of school as socializing factor in creating and maintaining stereotypes related to ethnical identity. More exactly, they are concerned with the role that the language of teaching (Georgian or Russian) plays in determining self-identifications. Using semi-projective techniques, they explore the way in which three different groups of teenagers define themselves: "the Georgians which are studying in schools with Georgian as teaching language", "the Georgians studying in schools with Russian as teaching language" and "the Armenians studying in schools with Russian as teaching language". The small availability samples limit somehow the generalization of the results, but the study itself provides some very consistent findings. The three groups display equal importance to "being European", while for the students from the schools with Russian as teaching language being Caucasian is more salient from the identity point of view. Armenians tries to define themselves as Georgians, in an attempt to better integrate, but they use rather their Caucasian identity for this purpose, not the European one.

In the end of the section, *Magda Lesińska* surveys the theory connected the interactions between minorities and majorities, discussing the identity construction of Roma across Europe. The Roma value orientations and life-styles, defining for their culture, the stereotypes of the others (other ethnic groups), and the state politics towards Roma are analyzed as salient factors for the Roma ethnic identity formation. On one side the focus is on the values related to pureness and dirtiness, and on the once-nomad life-style, involving up to date the family as a working unit and self-employment as a more frequent occupation as compared with other status groups. On the other side, the stereotypes of Gipsies as strangers are considered. All led to the negative attitudes and policies towards Gipsies dating from the Middle Age to the present days, all across Europe. The Roma population was always depending to the trade with the dominant population in the area were they co-existed. They have never been economically self-contained. Moreover, their identity was constructed and is constructed through permanent comparison with the others, and many times differed from a region to another. This affects the way in which the Roma elite tries nowadays to construct a common Roma identity, as the feature of a unity, and contributes to explaining „their crucial aim is to create and promote Romani culture, shared identity and language". Let also note that the discussion, valid for the entire Europe, gets more relevance for the CEE, with a higher percentage of Roma ethnics in the respective populations.

Roma issues are also approached by *Ana Bleahu*. She starts from a different perspective, considering the political participation of Romanian Gypsies as a core of her paper. Lower political participation is noticed, being explained through the parochial political culture of the respective ethnic minority. The same factors are invoked: lack of homogeneity, expressed through a huge number of Roma political parties in the 90s, but the struggle of the elite to promote a common identity, also through proposing fewer political alliances in the 2000 and 2004 elections; the former travelling life style, with its impact towards atomization of the Roma groups, but with stronger in-group ties. Except for voting, involving in any political activity is reported to be rare among the respective ethnic group. In voting, however, participation is higher, due to the pressures from the Roma elite, in a typical top-down approach. However, as internal stimulant for voting, satisfying the immediate needs seems to work better, according to the paper. Common identity or discrimination make no or at most low interest.

Keeping the focus on both minorities and participation, *Yana Leontieva* moves the discussion towards another topic which may become an issue on the top of the public agenda within the next years. Similarly with the previous paper, Yana Leontiyeva discusses the situation of the minority organizations, particularly with those of the small Ukrainian community the Czech Republic. The approach is however different, targeting the position of these associations in relation with the increasing Ukrainian immigration towards the Czech Republic. The investigation reveals that the respective associations are rather unaware and do not represent the interests of the majority of Ukrainian labour migrants. They rather focus on the cultural needs of the initial Ukrainian minority (not the recently migrated one). However, the recent "orange revolution" from Ukraine opened the road for cross-border collaboration with Ukraine-based organizations. The story may be common for different other countries at the present or future European border.

VARDUHI TOVMASYAN

Some Peculiarities of Transforming Societies

Introduction

The collapse of the totalitarian modes in the East Europe brought serious transformations of the global society's structure. These processes have changed not only political-economic reality of the world, but also all spiritual situation of the end of the millennium. The result was the disintegration of East block and lessening of world's global intensity and due to that orientational semantic (notional) vacuum was formed. This vacuum became apparent differently in various parts of a worldwide society.

The communist experiment to construct „the bright future" has not turned out well, and victims of the past appeared vain. The present of people in a post-communist part of global society is indefinable, vague. Yet this uncertainty is globalizing, and based on the force of the civilization inevitably results in new displays of this force. Loss of vital sense and as a whole, local conflicts, terror and criminal revelry, in particular aspire to sate this vacuum and signal us about the necessity to re-comprehend the deep-laid bases of the old universal civilization in general and all-European, in particular, which implicitly assume this tensions and confrontation[1].

Still the obvious latent propagation of violence by worldwide mass media takes place, stereotypes of intolerance and enmity are spread, traffic in arms more and more quickens. The inequality of nations in the field of distribution of universal resources causes the mass poverty, which is ground for cultivation of national disagreement and alienations. This fact generates aggression and propensity to violence in people. We have to admit that the world's order is still based on force of the weapon of mass destruction, and the „cold" peace came to replace „cold" war. But recently, it seems that, with the collapse of the Eastern European system of socialism, humankind has got rid of totalitarianism. The remaining authoritative modes in some places are located and are not prospects for world development. But in reality the process of becoming of the new civilization based on consolidation assumes persistent and indefatigable struggle. The further democratic development of the humankind is not possible without peace. This development assumes peace, and the true peace assumes equality of peoples, fair distribution of resources among them and creation of conditions for the comprehensive development of human freedom.

Further in this article an idea is expressed according to which there are three key types of transitional problems, which are: economic problems, problems of institutionalization and cultural-psychological problems. The cultural-psychological problems are seen as causes of the previous two types. This idea is developed though theoretical analysis, afterwards it is conformed by the data of a sociological research, presenting the situation of the Republic of Armenia in this perspective.

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[1] The example of that are the events in Yugoslavia.

General pessimism and its reasons

Disintegration of the Soviet Union has led to a new world situation and has drawn out a number of new universal problems. The further progress of the world (global) society is impossible without solving these problems. The nowadays world is so interconnected, that no part of it is capable to develop, if ignoring any circumstance in the other parts. In connection with the emergence of some newly independent states in the place of former communist empire and infringement of former balance of forces on a world scene, problems of integration of the world community into a certain qualitatively new whole arose, which is a new step of development of humankind. Attempts of liquidation of imbalance and establishment of a new global balance under the recipe of past, I mean „power or force decisions" are fraught with consequences, which themselves require balancing mechanisms.

The general content of the current globalization process depends in many respects on how the integration of the postcommunist states into a global society will proceed. This integration should promote optimization of functioning of the global society's system, and should not cause dysfunction and crisis. Starting from this position, scientists - researchers should reveal, design and put in pawn the optimum mechanisms of integration processes and develop principles of their successful realization. Hence, problems of this integration are not especially private business of each new state, and their decision should be based on universal values accepted by the world community. Therefore the transformation of former totalitarian Soviet Republics in modern open democratic societies is the command of time. Here there are problems that the humankind did not face earlier. For instance, the presence of the mass defeat weapons in the hands of those states which experience a deep economic crisis and are in a phase of internal political instability, is a serious threat. Any uncontrollability of the socio-political processes in these states should be prevented. Any spontaneity in cases of resolving the problems of integration should be reduced to minimum. But the management of these processes assumes presence of corresponding theoretical - methodological base. From here follows the necessity of serious scholarly elaboration of principles and means for solving problems of integration.

In this respect the transformational processes proceeding in the Republic of Armenia are an important practical material for similar development, because here there was a unique situation. Transitional problems were aggravated by utterly extreme living conditions, that appeared due to Karabakh conflict and economic blockade. On the one hand, Armenia's historical-geographical location is one of the most unique places in the world. In an environment of the Muslim East there was peculiar Christian culture that has left the richest inheritance to us. Centuries-old cultural orientation of Armenians to the western values is brightly expressed nowadays as well, unequivocally defining a democratic choice of the Armenian people. From certain points of view, Armenia is in the avant-garde of the post-soviet states' building an open society. However, the country also has a lot of difficulties. Many of them are specific to all transforming societies. In this light, the mechanisms elaborated for solving these problems are of general interest.

It is already possible to sum up Armenia's transformation experience and subject it to scholarly analysis. Results of this analysis contribute to studying of regularity and mechanisms of

transformation of other post-totalitarian countries and allow developing practical recommendations on the management of the transforming processes tendencies. The applied importance of such development roots in their aiming at the practical solution of problems. But the experience of the transformation of totalitarian closed societies into open democratic societies has universal value and also represents doubtless theoretical interest for global science. Transformation of Armenia is an integral part of world processes and consequently has universal value.

Even an initial consideration of transitional problems allows bringing them to three basic types: economic problems, problems of institutionalization and cultural-psychological problems. The last type in many respects causes the previous two types. Therefore the transformation of public consciousness appears in the focus of our attention. The consolidation of democratic orders is inextricably related to the formation of democratic turn of mind and way of thinking among people. Transforming public consciousness is characterized by collision of old stereotypes and innovative ideas, conservative ideologies and groundless utopias. It is unstable and easily falls into extremes of mass euphoria and universal despair.

Just a similar social - psychological atmosphere was established in the Armenian society in the sphere of public consciousness in the very beginning of transition. It become apparent both in reality, and in the activity of the top echelons of the Government. This atmosphere worried the Armenian intelligence that should define and preserve the „health" of national consciousness.

Sociological researches carried out by the Center of Gender Researches of Association of Women with University Education testify to the presence of serious problems of social-psychological character. The expectations of the Armenian intellectuals concerning the future in many respects are pessimistic. Only 9% of the respondents look ahead with optimism, and only 26% hope for positive changes. For the others the future is associated with uncertainty, alarm and pessimism. Prospects of the nearest future appear as even more pitiable: only 20% consider it to be satisfactory, while 29% do not expect anything good for the country in 10-15 years, and 7% predict its destruction.

It is obvious that the reasons for such global pessimism of people should be looked for in socio-economic conditions.

Universal pessimism as a social phenomenon is caused by certain circumstances of public life which, certainly, can be changed. In the beginning of the 20th century Yervand Frangian, an Armenian philosopher, has analyzed these reasons and has revealed their passing character. In his opinion, pessimism is a usual phenomenon and „the humankind (individual) is more likely to be a pessimist, than optimist" (Frangian, 1911: 140). When individual pessimism appears under trying social - economic and political conditions, it immediately becomes apparent in the sphere of public psychology. The economic and moral decline, the pending war and internal intensity, instability and threat to existence, today cause mass frustration, disappointment and result in an inadmissibly large scale migration. The following data confirm this statement; 49% of the respondents estimate the economic situation of today's Armenia as depressive, and 41% consider it in deep crisis, and only 7% expect improvement of the economic situation in the upcoming 5 years. In this situation the estimation of a financial position of the family and hope for its improvement is too low: 22%

consider, that the situation is satisfactory, 33% hope that their financial position will improve in five years. Only 22% hope for the increase of their social status though they have a high educational level.

Many respondents consider themselves socially unprotected and vulnerable in terms of civil rights. Only 29% of the respondents recognize the presence of partial social security in our society. At the same time 42% speak about absolute vulnerability of the civil rights and only 5 % consider that their civil rights are protected. 25% of the respondents hope for the improvement of civil security, though 75% are ready to protect civil rights and justice. It means, that people appreciate the fact of civil security and consider that authorities are guilty, and in the opinion of 57 % of the respondents, do not provide social justice at all. It is the reason for the disapproval of more than 3/4 of the respondents, given the tendency of social and economic reforms carried out in Armenia. People were disappointed in authorities and Government. Besides, many of the respondents doubt the value of the achieved independence and 37% of them consider the independence to be the main reason for their problems and difficulties. That means that the complex of the „totalitarian" person who has received freedom actively influences the consciousness and mentality of the person.

The problem here is that earlier the totalitarian person felt to be part of the system, some kind of „detail or device" in the whole mechanism, The aim of the activity of the mechanism consisted in the proper performance of the functions of this „detail." or The mechanism could function properly if the "detail" could perform properly.

The system provided all that was necessary and gave to it a certain sense, sense of activity of the part of the almighty whole. Disintegration of the totalitarian relations has caused a paradoxical situation when the person, having at last received freedom, does not know what to do with this freedom and independence. The person feels more protected and free in the closed system with a small choice of occupations and limited opportunities for social promotion, than in conditions of uncertainty, in mobile, open system with the universal norms formally equal for all. Suddenly appearing outside of restrictions denying his/her personal freedom, the post-totalitarian person considers himself/herself to be lonely and helpless against his/her own problems, deprived of feelings of security. Now those links that earlier connected him/her with the society are destroyed, and the new ones are not formed yet. Senselessness of the past and hopelessness of the future give rise to feelings of apartness, feebleness and anxiety which frequently are not realized. On this basis the phenomenon that Fromm calls „a flight from freedom" occurs, when the person trying to overcome the apartness, refuses freedom, voluntarily submitting to authorities, running in conformism, withdrawing from the reality, and so on. Here an unusual return to dissolving in the whole takes place, which even at the expense of rejecting freedom would give sense to the present. It is necessary to search for the reason for it in the essence of freedom per se. „The ego" of the totalitarian person seems to be lulled by narcosis, the person is quiet and pleased. This „ego" is standardized and not personified. From here it follows that „there are no irreplaceable people." Freedom of the post-totalitarian person as a matter of fact is negative; it is not all-sufficient. The person is exempted from bounds of the whole and acts independently, personally solves the problems. However, even in this case the person cannot refuse the social environment because the process of individualization cannot occur outside of a social context. That means there are two

alternative developments; back to dissolution in the totalitarian whole or forward in the direction of identification and cooperation among independent persons. This already is the precondition of transition to the following step of freedom.

Not trusting their one own abilities 20% of the respondents who were representatives of the Armenian intelligentsia consider the absence of expectations and hopes for improvement in their lives the worst. 25 % do not expect any improvement in their financial position. Moreover, the majority suppose themselves not protected from criminal encroachments on the safety of their person (45 %). The majority think that the borders are not protected well enough either. Such wide circulation of disappointment and pessimism in the Armenian society depends on a political and economic situation in which we found ourselves as a result of the defeat of the USSR in the „cold war."

The matter is not only in the psychology of people. We appeared not to be ready for changes, first of all, *socially*. The Armenian society is not structured for transitional period. This unstructured-ness and also uncertainty of the intra-system social processes makes our society unable for adequate reduction of complexities of influences on the part of a system environment and results in functional contradictions and a gamut of conflicts, ranging from family conflicts, to the unresolved Kharabakh conflict, which affected the expansion of pessimism, as the most tragic reason for pessimism is the threat of war.

Summary

Coming back to the problem of post-totalitarianism and freedom, it is necessary to note, that not the destruction and oblivion, but the transformation of the inherited totalitarian culture in view of universal values of a global society will create conditions for overcoming difficulties of an era of negative freedom and transition to the era of creative freedom. Globalization demands defining principles of the state sovereignty, legal assurances and legitimacies in a new way. It is necessary to re-comprehend our own history from the point of view of universal problems. When our activity is under construction in global cooperation with others' activity, when the individual success becomes a part of general success and, on the contrary, when people start to operate according to the understanding that they are included in global networks of interactions, they exist not only for themselves, but also for each other that despite differences in the past, all of us have and share the same future, then it will be possible to speak about approach of time of positive freedom of individual creativity. In fact, "to create" means to introduce something of your own in the general, to connect the past and the future in the present.

The way from negative freedom to positive freedom is transient. If the West by virtue of its achievements has advanced down this road the postcommunist part of the global society has just stepped on it. People should free themselves both from total disappointment in the past, and from principal anomie of the future. We should remember our own background and aim for the universal. Only remembering the past, it is possible to set the purposes to the future. Only realizing the purposes, it is possible to achieve freedom and to create the safe and stable present.

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VICTOR CEBOTARI
New Social Changes: Conflict and Poverty in the New Neighbourhood Area of the European Union

The European Union is moving beyond its 50 years old boundaries with a new enlargement wave which comprises eight ex-communist and ex-soviet countries. However, this process brings a new concept within the European strategic and security policy: the new east neighbourhood area of the enlarged Europe. This concept was officially exposed by the European Commission in 2003 along with a five-year „action plans" for six selected „new neighbours". Moldova, Ukraine, Byelorussia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan are among them. The present EU Commissioner for external affairs, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, stressed that the plans would be a key policy aim over the next five years as Brussels seeks to extend the zone of „peace, stability, and prosperity" to countries around the EU: „The European Union gains the benefits of a stable neighbourhood"[1]. This statement appears to be of not so new conception as the enlargement process strengthens European Union's necessity to elaborate a more articulate relation with its new neighbours.

In the present paper I am going to consider the new neighbourhood reality next to the EU border. This reality is composing from poor and relatively poor countries, many of them with a deep conflict face. In fact, I will try to see the link between conflict and poverty and to demonstrate that the countries willingness to be in the European family is stopped by the frozen facets of conflicts and poverty. The neighbourhood policy seems more and more to be a new strategy of the EU which finally starts struggling with the roots of the main chronic problems of the region.

The Recent established EU borders

With the recent events the European Union is becoming a full circle. From a community, firstly based on economic reasons within the six states of the western Europe, now it become a Union of 25 members with another two on the way to accession (in 2007 when Romania and Bulgaria are supposed to join the EU). Now, the European Union's borders moved beyond the traditional European 'centre' and comprised a new and to some extend unknown neighbourhood.

We can say that the recent enlarged European Union border is characterized by five quite contradictory phenomena:

1. Inside the European Union, *the new accepted countries*, coming from the ex-communist/soviet space, are characterized by a quite stable and high economic growth rates. These are so called *"lucky countries"* which performed well to overpass the direness of the post-communist

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[1] Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, (2004), *EU: Brussels Unveils 'Action Plans' For Ukraine, Moldova, Mediterranean Neighbours,* 9 December. http://www.rferl.org/features/features_Article.aspx?m=12&y=2004&id=59BB8C0E-008C-4440-81FF-11BBA9B5B92D.

transitions. Even some social problems are still present this is highly to be over-passed with the financial support coming from the EU member states, in a quite elegant way.

2. The *EU enlargement is not fully completed*: at least two countries (Romania and Bulgaria) will join soon the European Union in 2007 completing the eastern border process. These are the *"tailed countries"* with many chronic and unresolved social and economical problems.

3. There is at least *one new possible enlargement wave* in the near future in order to permit the accession into the EU for some of the *"waiting list countries",* Croatia and Turkey being among them. In December 2004 meeting, on the basis of a report and recommendation from the Commission, that Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria, the European Union opened accession negotiations with Turkey.[2] Croatia is the first country from the ex-communist block which after the harsh war-times, managed to overpass the conflict problems and to move toward the European integration process. However, even the European Council of 17 and 18 June 2004 decided that Croatia was a candidate country and subsequently, the European Council of 16/17 December 2004 decided that accession negotiations would be opened on 17 March 2005[3], the conflict's roots have still a big word to say during the admission process. The EU concluded in March 2005, as the Chief Prosecutor of The Hague Tribunal had done, that Croatia was not fully cooperating with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).[4] As I stated above, this is the first proof that conflict roots have serious unintended consequences in nation's willingness to join the European family. Several examples will follow.

4. We can agree over the fact that east and south-east to the present EU border lay a *relatively unknown region* with several "frozen" conflicts, among them: Transnistria (Moldova), Abkhazia, South-Osetia (Georgia), Nagorno-Karabakh (Armenia – Azerbaijan) and to some extend Kosovo (Serbia & Montenegro). In the new context of a globalised world, this can be seen as a *"disturbance factor"* which destabilizes the entire region being seen as a threat to the eastern and south-eastern European Union's border.

5. There is a *group of eastern neighbourhood countries* (Byelorussia, Ukraine, Moldova and the Caucasus) that will only be able to associate in one way or another to the European Union, but less likely to make more advances steps to integration. These are the *"suspended countries"* with no chances or hope to become members of the EU in the near future. Shortly, the bilateral relations of these countries with the EU can be stated as follow:

    a. Moldova is the first ex-soviet country electing a communist party as a majority in the national parliament and having a communist president as a ruler. However, Moldova is the country which has a privileged neighbourhood relationship with the EU since the adoption of the EU-Moldova Action Plan on 22 February 2005, providing a new tool to

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[2] European Commission, (2004), *Conclusions of the European Council*, Brussels, 16/17 December. http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/turkey/docs.htm

[3] For further information see http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/turkey/docs.htm

[4] European Commission, (2005), *EU – Croatia Relations: main steps towards the EU*, Brussels, 17 March, http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/croatia/eu_relations.htm

help implement the Partnership & Cooperation Agreement (PCA)[5] and bring Moldova closer to the EU. Also, on 28 June, in Moldova, should be Established an Agreement to open a Delegation of the European Commission which is a major step to involve the EU in the Moldova's conflict and poverty problems.

b. Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, the Caucasus countries, all have Partnership and Cooperation Agreements in force with the EU. On 14 June 2004 the Council decided to include all three countries in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). At the same time, the Council endorsed the Commission's strategy for putting the ENP into action.[6] These are the countries which also have a geostrategic position being on the route to the Caspian oil and gas export. It is one point to take into consideration when speaking of the EU involvement in this region.

c. EU relations with Ukraine are based on the Partnership & Cooperation Agreement which entered into force in 1998 (for an initial ten year period renewable by consent of the parties). Ukraine is considered a priority partner country within the ENP. A joint EU-Ukraine Action Plan was endorsed by the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council on 21 February 2005[7].

d. Byelorussia is the only country who has almost no links with the EU further developing plans. President Lukashenka has a strong authoritarian rule which make impossible for Belarus to benefit in present from the EU's Neighbourhood Policy which is based on mutual commitment to common values, including democracy, respect for rule of law, good governance and the respect for human rights, including minority rights.

All this events are coming from a wide transition process starting after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and clustering the new independent states (with the exception of the Baltic States) into the Community of the Independent States (CIS). The transition process was very different for the ex-soviet countries. The three Baltic States over-passed relatively well the post-soviet identity and transitional problem and now enjoy the EU integration process. The other remain ex-soviet republics, are not so lucky.

Transition process in the Eastern Europe

The changes occurring in the former Soviet Union alter the context around countries which in former times was part of the "soviet border wall" and now surrounding the east and south-eastern EU border. We can say that the new neighbourhood countries with all their problems are

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[5] The Partnership & Cooperation Agreement (PCA) came into force in July 1998 for an initial period of ten years. It establishes the institutional framework for bilateral relations, sets the principal common objectives, and calls for activities and dialogue in a number of policy areas. Moldova welcomed EU enlargement and signed on 30 April 2004 the protocol extending the PCA to the new EU member states.

[6] For further information see http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/ceeca/news/ip04_848.htm

[7] European Commission, *EU – Ukraine Relations : Political and legal foundations,* http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/ukraine/intro/index.htm

comparable to the periphery of the former Soviet Union, where the process of russification was very acute in shaping the national identity. Understanding their past soviet history can help to better understand their present social and political problem. "The socialist mission of USSR was constructed in order to create the state as a social 'mind,' capable of directing the irrationalities of the social identity market and administering the multitude of competing wills present in the Soviet Union's civil societies".[8] This concept of the civilising mission of the supra-national culture - its role as the educational support for the rationally administered society and its function as the cultural foundation for national unity (*sovetskii narod)* - has foundered upon the radical doubt introduced by reflexive modernity. This 'soviet identity/mind' creates chaos in the social structures of the post-soviet countries, making a large segment of the population from the ex-USSR countries to be still soviet-nostalgic.

The consequences is that after the first years of euphoria following independence, the post-Soviet order that emerged in the late 1990s in most of the former western Soviet republics, was characterised politically by managed democracies, economically by deeply corrupt and opaque private/public spheres, and socially by widespread poverty and social disenchantment.

This process was also characterized by two inter-linked phenomena:

1. Increased poverty and inequality, where a big segment of the population remains largely in poverty.

2. It is the "frozen conflicts" region, which mostly are fought under the ethnic and politically/ideologically banners. Such events produce poverty, the internally displaced persons and refugees.

As the region is plagued by instability, conflict and poverty which fuel the illicit trade in narcotics and other forms of organized crime, all these has a very deeply effects in the West. The same phenomena, coupled with the slow development of political systems, also fuel radicalism that potentially breeds terrorism. In sum, more often than not, this wider area is at the centre of the crucial events and processes of our time.

The new Poor countries surrounding the enlarged EU

When the enlargement process attended its eastern border, the EU discovered the true reality of its neighbourhood: poverty and instability. With the recently established European Neighbourhood Policy, the EU hopes to create the necessary instrument to handle the new neighbourhood situation. "If the EU is to work with its neighbourhood to create an area of shared prosperity and stability, proximity policy must go hand-in-hand with action to tackle the root causes of the political instability, economic vulnerability, institutional deficiencies, conflict and poverty and social exclusion".[9]

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[8] Castells M., (1997), The Power of Identity, 2nd volume, Blackwell, Massachusetts, p. 35.
[9] European Commission, (2003), *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A new framework for relations with our Eastern and Southern*

Table 1: Poor population in Eastern and CIS countries in the mid-1990s and end-1990s

Countries	Mid-1990s		End-1990s	
	Poor (Percentage)	*Poor (Millions)*	*Poor (Percentage)*	*Poor (Millions)*
Armenia*	18	0,53	55	1,6
Azerbaijan*	33	2,6	62	4,9
Georgia*	16	0,74	60	2,8
Kyrgyzstan	86	3,9	55	2,8
Moldova	66	2,9	80	3,6
Tajikistan	57	2,2	83	5,9
Uzbekistan	39	8,3	27.5	7,2
Ukraine	63	32,7	-	-
Belarus	22	2,3	-	-
Russia	44	66,1	-	-
Bulgaria	15	1,3	-	-
Romania	39	8,9	-	-
Total		**132,47**		**28,8**

Source: IMF and World Bank (2002); Milanovic (1998) cited in Max Spoor (2004). http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ECA/eca.nsf/Attachments/PovertyReduction1/$File/Joint+IFI+paper+growth &debt.pdf;

Note: Poverty line is defined as 50 percent of median income

*The figures show the results of the data from the beginning 1990s and end-1990s respectively.

Within the new eastern[10]: and south-eastern EU's neighbours we can distinguish two wide groups of poor countries:

1. *The Poor Community of Independent States (CIS)* – 7 countries: Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. In spite of many progresses in stabilizing and reforming their economies during the past decade of transition, these seven countries of the former Soviet Union face high levels of poverty and uncertain growth prospects. All of them experienced conflict movements on their territory after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. As World Bank and IMF stated "heightened investor uncertainty about political and security risks will likely dampen investment and trade flows to these countries in the near term and make it more difficult for them to solve their poverty, growth and debt sustainability problems".[11] The relation between their conflict history and progressing poverty is evident and stop the development even in the long term base. The percentage of poor in some countries of the region rose up to 80 % of the population by the end-1990s (Table 1). According to Max Spoor a new category of poor was raising "the working poor"[12] who has a job and earnings but their income

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Neighbours, Brussels, 11 March. http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/pdf/com03_104_en.pdf

[10]Further on, this classification will not embrace two countries from the eastern EU neighborhood: Ukraine and Byelorussia. The reason is that I want to focus more on countries who experienced (violent) conflicts in their post-soviet transformation as the main reason of their present common poverty status.

[11] IMF & World Bank, *Poverty Reduction, Growth and Debt Sustainability in Low-Income CIS Countries*, 4 February 2002, p.4. http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ECA/eca.nsf/Attachments/PovertyReduction1/$File/ Joint+IFI+paper+growth&debt.pdf

[12] Max Spoor (2004), *Poverty within Europe's border and beyond,* Keynote Speech at Public Debate Europe's New Members and New Neighbours: Accession versus Marginalisation, 22 April, Institute of

was less than the necessary leaving basket. In the World Bank statistics is stated that "most of the poor in the Region comprise working adults and children, who between them account for 60–75 percent of the poor".[13] According to the World Bank report, this structure of poverty, with the predominance of working families households with working adults), is no different from that of the past (meaning beginning of 1990s n.a.), thus poverty become more chronic with the time passing. If we look at Table 1 we can see that at the end of 1990s the most dramatic fall in poverty within the population was in those countries that experienced conflict during the 1990s. It is the case for Moldova, Caucasus countries and Tajikistan. According to the World Bank, this is a clear evidence of the interrelated post-soviet conflicts, their present "frozen" status and resulting poverty.

2. *The Poor South-Eastern Europe/Balkan* (SEE) – 7 countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia & Montenegro, FYR Macedonia, Romania and Bulgaria. The poverty in many of these countries is relative and we can not make a direct comparison link between them and the CIS - 7 poorest countries. We can find however a common point in their conflict history (except Romania and Bulgaria) and poverty dimension comprising a wide range of their population. In the former Yugoslavia countries from this group there is still a high-level of the human insecurity and the presence of the UN-led administration in Kosovo is a proof in this sense. Two other countries from this group (Bulgaria and Romania) are in advanced process of acceding into the European Union in 2007. However, the proportion of population leaving in poverty in these countries is still very high but the nature of poverty has change. During the 1990s, poverty for many households was a transient phenomenon resulting from the immediate shock of hyperinflation and sharply increasing unemployment. At the beginning of this century, poverty is more entrenched, concentrated among clearly defined groups. In the World Bank assessment, most strikingly, poverty is highest among ethnic minorities, which comprise 60 percent of the poor.[14] Roma people are the most poorest among this group. As result, ethnicity is associated with higher-than-average poverty incidence in most of the region countries' cases. Data on ethnicity are sometimes not covered in surveys, and even where they are, sample size may preclude any robust conclusions. While the data do not allow trends to be inferred, relatively strong evidence exists that in more than one country, groups such as the Roma of South-Eastern Europe (SEE) face a substantially higher incidence of poverty than the general population does.[15]

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[13] World Bank. 2005, *Growth Poverty and Inequality: Eastern European and the Former Soviet Union*, 1998–2003, Washington DC: World Bank: 11-13. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTECA/Resources/ overview-poverty-en.pdf

[14] World Bank, *Poverty assessment for Bulgaria and Romania*, 2002 and 2003. http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTPA/0,,contentMDK:20205098~menuPK:435735~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:430367,00.html, respectively http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTPA/0,,contentMDK:2020532 1~menuPK:435735~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:430367,00.html

[15] World Bank, (2000). *Making Transition Work for Everyone: Poverty and Inequality in Europe and Central Asia.* Washington, DC: World Bank.

These two groups of countries become part of the neighbourhood ring around the European Union. They share to one extend the common problems, in an area of insecurity, given by the past but still frozen conflicts. One common characteristic is that all the countries around the EU are mostly agricultural with an increasing rural to urban migration. In some countries, like Romania and Bulgaria in the 1990s, workers were forced to return to agriculture in large part because labour markets were inflexible, due to high payroll taxes, a cumbersome bureaucracy and tight labour regulations (especially for unemployment benefits and the minimum wage).[16]

"With regard to location, urban and rural residents are evenly split, each constituting around 50 percent of the poor in the Region as a whole. This split is influenced by an interaction of higher-than-average poverty risk for rural residents and their relatively low share in the population. In relation to sub-regions, rural residents form the bulk of the poor in the low income CIS group (70 percent of the poor), SEE (62 percent), and the EU-8 (51 percent)".[17] In the near future, these groups of countries will reallocate their strategic position both in relation to the European Union and the Russia Federation. Some of them will become more closed to the EU integration; some of them will become a "no where land" or a tampon territory between the two Euro-Asian superpowers.

Future integration versus "No Where Land"

The present situation of the neighbourhood countries is that they found themselves in an ambiguous position between Europe and the Soviet Union successor – Russian Federation. By 2005, Belarus' immediate neighbours of Lithuania, Latvia and Poland have joined NATO and the EU, and Ukraine, Moldova and Caucasus are more and more intent on leaving the post-Soviet space to join European neighbourhood. The immediate post-soviet transition is coming to an end, countries starting to reallocate their strategic position as regard to their future hopes and political realities.

The transition process in the Central East European (CEE) countries, Baltic States, SEE and CIS has advanced considerably but the progress achieved is very heterogeneous. According to the European Commission, most of the EU's Southern and Eastern neighbours have a nominal GDP per capita of less than €2000.[18] Poverty and social exclusion has increased sharply in many eastern countries in the last decade as a result of falling solving the chronic post-conflict situation. This has led to an increased risk of economical, social and political dislocation. In this context, we can distinguish between three categories of post-communist countries, during their last decade of transition:

[16] World Bank, (2005), Pro-poor Growth in the 1990s, the Washington DC. June. Available at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPGI/Resources/342674-1119450037681/Pro-poor_growth_in_the_1990s.pdf

[17] World Bank, (2005), Growth Poverty and Inequality: Eastern European and the Former Soviet Union, 1998 – 2003, the Washington DC. World Bank, p. 11. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTECA/Resources/overview-poverty-en.pdf

[18] European Institute for Research on Mediterranean and Euro-Arab Cooperation (MEDEA), (2003), *Wider Europe - Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours*, Communication de la Commission, COM 104 final, http://www.medea.be/?page=2&lang=en&doc=1457

1. Successful transition economies. The level of development is in concordance with this reality. The Central European countries and the Baltic States experienced in the 1990s only a decline in their GDP at the level of 90, 0 (compared with the GDP in 1989 = 100).[19]

2. Countries with building transition economies. These are the South-Eastern European countries where the drop in GDP was to the level of 76, 4 from those of 1989.[20]

3. Countries with a low level of the transition economies mainly identified with CIS – 7 countries. In these countries the drop in GDP during the 1990s was at the level of 40. 0 of that before independence.[21]

Again, it is evident the steep drop in the living condition in those countries that had arms conflicts on their territory after the Soviet Union dissolution. They still have many unresolved political and social problems. Most of the bloody conflicts from the 1990s become the "frozen" one and create a destabilizing feeling in the region. Heterogeneity is further strengthened by a differentiation in economic and social development. Many of the countries from the last two groups have not achieved the pre-transition level of GDP; almost all of them face high unemployment rates and high poverty rates, many of them are still conflict-prone countries, etc. The varying progresses in transition and in economic development require different policies, different approaches in implementation, different actions and different assistance from international organizations.

Being aware of this situation, the Communication of the European Commission argues that "enhanced interdependence – both political and economic – can itself be a means to promote stability, security and sustainable development both within and without the EU. The European Union should aim to develop a zone of prosperity and a friendly neighbourhood – a 'ring of friends' - with whom the EU enjoys close, peaceful and co-operative relations".22

I have more a feeling that this 'ring of friends' is to become the *"no where land"*, a tampon territory between two European superpowers: The European Union and Russian Federation. The European Union do not want to be involved to more that a certain point in solving the "frozen" conflicts from its neighbourhood, knowing that Russia has its interests in the region and those countries (mostly in the CIS-7) are highly dependent on the former soviet economical links. In this context, conflicts seem more and more to be the factor that closely links the poverty and instability of the region which in turn inhibits the EU enlargement interest.

Conflicts in the SEE and CIS

The economic disorder created by the break-up of the former Soviet Union was compounded by diverse shocks, including armed conflicts which in turn produced waves of

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[19] Max Spoor, (2004), p. 11.
[20] Idem
[21] Max Spoor, (2004), pp. 11-13.
[22] Commission of the European Communities, (2003), *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament.* http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/pdf/com03_104_en.pdf

displaced persons and refugees with effects in increasing poverty and inequality. It is a big difference between the CIS conflicts which are characterized by their "frozen" status and the Balkan conflicts which are in a wide attention of the International community and especially in the attention of the EU. With a huge international support, some of the former Yugoslav countries with a turbulent conflict history overpasses successfully the war reality and now are on the "waiting list" countries for acceding in the European Union.

We cannot say the same for their CIS counterparts. The EU did not make any appreciable involvement in the Transnistrian, Abkhazian or Nagorno-Karabakh settlement. Moreover, in the spring 2005, the EU external Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner stressed over the fact that there is no chances in Ukraine, Moldova and the Caucasus countries seeking to start the process of joining the European Union.[23] Now, after the 15 years of independence we can observe that the most unfortunate CIS countries along with some Balkan states are among the poorer in Europe and their common link was and are still the conflicts (Table 2).They provoked chaos and poverty in the countries' societies, being familiarized with a new phenomenon: refugees and displaced persons.

Table 2. Conflicts in the CIS and SEE and their consequences: Deaths, Displaced Persons and Refugees (2004)

Country and Region	Period	Deaths	Displaced Persons (DP) and Refugees(R) - 2004
Ferghana Valley (Uzbekistan)	1989	-	R - 44,455*
Osh and Djalalabad (Kyrgyzstan)	1990	300-1000	R - 3,753*
Transdniestria (Moldova)	1992	2000	-
Nagorno–Karabakh (Azerbaijan)	1988-94	35,000**	DP – Aprox. 1 mil** R - 8,606*
Tajikistan	1992-97	157.000	R- 15,604*
Abchasia, S-Osetia (Georgia)	1992-93	NA	DP - 237,069* R- 2,559*
Bosnia & Herzegovina	1992-95	278.000	DP - 309,240* R - 22,215*
Croatia	1992-95	20.000	DP - 7,540* R - 3,663*
Macedonia	2004, 2001	50-	R- 1,004*

Sources: UNHCR (2002), *Statistical Yearbook 2001*, Cited in UNICEF (2003), *Social Monitor 2003*, Innocenti Social Monitor, http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/monitor03/monitor2003.pdf;

Max Spoor (2004), *Poverty within Europe's border and beyond,* pp. 17-18

 * Updated for the end of the year 2004: Source - UNHCR (2005), 2004 *Global Refugee Trends*, Geneva, June 2005 http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/events/opendoc.pdf?tbl=STATISTICS&id=42b283744

* Data are provisional and subject to change. Date of query: 6 June 2005

**All the data concerning the victims of the conflicts should be taken with caution as it is hard to find credible sources in this sense. Here I take the data from Kenneth Shaitelman (1999), *The Azerbaijan-Armenia Conflict: The War in Nagorno-Karabakh and their Impact on the Oil Pipeline Routs*, January, http://www.wws.princeton.edu/wws401c/1998/ken.html

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[23] RFE/RL report, Prague 2 May 2005, www.rferl.org

The "prosperity" and the "poverty" dimension actually revolve around the issues if political instability, economic vulnerability, institutional deficiencies, conflict and poverty and social exclusion that plague the countries in the region.24 The negative effects of conflict on economic, social and political development, especially where sustained over a long period, cannot be over-estimated. They have a hidden power and can erupt any time in violent crises. Separatist entities such as Transnistria, situated in the near proximity of the EU border, are the focus for organised crime and can destabilise the process of political consolidation and sustainable development. The European Union has all its interests that this should not happen.

With the new neighbourhood policy, comprising a "new vision" and a "new offer", the EU union, finally admitted that the conflicts in its neighbourhood area should not be anymore neglected. The EU should work with "the partners *to reduce poverty* and create an area of shared prosperity and values based on deeper economic integration, intensified political and cultural relations, enhanced cross-border cooperation and shared responsibility *for conflict prevention* between the EU and its neighbours".25 Two main supports of the neighbourhood policy are established to support this statement:

First, to extend the area of prosperity and stability around the EU's frontiers by reducing poverty and conflict management, and

Second, the benefits should come to replace the conflict threats by aid and economical trade relations in order to consolidate the political and economical condition.

With this new reasoning, the new rational agreement it is to take place: it has more logics to erase conflicts and after that to start fighting with poverty. In this context, a shared neighbourhood implies burden-sharing and joint responsibility for addressing the threats to stability created by conflict, poverty and insecurity.

Conclusions

The European Union is going beyond with its integration plans as the modernisation progresses of some ex-communist countries are impressive. However, the EU realizes that around its borders there is a group of countries fully marginalized which stuck in many problems they are facing. Two of them are as serious as interlinked: poverty and conflict. I prefer to say that one derives from another, namely poverty from conflicts but do not exclude the fact that the former deep the roots of the later. This is the new periphery of the Europe which not surprisingly coincides with the periphery of the Soviet Union. In the World Bank's expression, these are the CIS – 7 countries, the poorest in Europe. Comparatively, there is a group of Balkan countries facing the same range of problems but their outcomes seems more and more successful because of an active

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[24] Marin Lessenski, (2005), *The EU Policy towards its Black Sea Neighbourg*, IRIS paper, p.7 http://www.iris-bg.org/Lessenski_EUPolicy.pdf

[25] European Commission, (2003), *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A new framework for relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours*, Brussels, 11 March, p. 9.

European and international post-conflict involvement.

In the new geo-strategic environment, the European Union seems to clarify its political willingness toward integration. With the last enlargement process, the "lucky countries" obtained the EU membership but only several places were left for countries wish to join the Union. Two of them, Bulgaria and Romania have assured the place in the EU, despite their stringent social and political problems. Some countries are on the "waiting list" with a middle term integration perspective. Turkey and Croatia are among them. The remaining countries are forming the new poor neighbourhood around the European Union. This is the region characterized by poverty and instability with many unresolved ethnic and social problems.

In order to target this region, The European Union established its European Neighbourhood Policy with its consecrated scope of creation of a 'zone of prosperity' and a 'friendly neighbourhood'- in other words a 'ring of friends'. We tend to believe that this friendly neighbourhood is to transform some of the unfortunate countries in a "no where land", a check territory between the two European powers in formation: The European Union and Russian Federation. These countries which are characterized by instability and poverty do not have any chances to accede further in the EU integration process as long as their conflict situation is not adjusted.

This region seems to need a more comprehensive strategy from the European Union focused on the roots of the most stringent problems. The negative effects of conflict on economic and political development, especially where sustained over a long period, cannot be over-estimated. A new EU approach to its neighbouring countries cannot be confined to the border regions alone. The problems which the region has can destabilize not only the EU but also the entire region. The EU should work with its neighbourhood, to create an area of shared prosperity and stability, to deal with the root causes of the political instability and economic vulnerability, resulting from conflict and poverty. It is time to understand that in order to erase the poor status of the region the accent should be putted firstly on created a secured region, free of the conflict flagella.

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TOMASZ KAPUSNIAK
European Union – Ukraine relations: challenges and chances for democratization and development of civil society

Objectives

The main goal of my paper is to show how the European Union policy towards Ukraine has influenced the democratization and development of civil society.

My tasks include explaining the challenges and chances for democratisation after the "Orange revolution" in Ukraine. In turn, I will also focus on the impact such events had on European Neighbourhood Policy and how they opened new partnership, economic integration and cooperation perspectives between the EU and Ukraine. Ukraine and the EU will work together in implementing this Action Plan. As confirmed in the EU's Common Strategy on Ukraine, the European Union acknowledges Ukraine's European aspirations and welcomes Ukraine's integration into Europe.

I would like to stress the fact that my research will mostly focus on activities within the framework of the European Union and its pressure on the democratisation and developing civil society. And it is important to make clear that Ukraine and the European Union agreed to enter into intensified political, security, economic and cultural relations, including cross border co-operation and shared responsibility in conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

To understand the background of my research, one must explore the initial moves Ukraine and the EU made towards integrating into the state into the EU. Relations between Ukraine and the European Union were established in December 1991, when the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands as the EU President, on behalf of the Union officially recognized the independence of Ukraine. The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between Ukraine and the EU (PCA) signed on 16 June 1994 (entered into force on 1 March 1998) constitutes the legal base of the EU – Ukraine relations and establishes cooperation on a wide range of political, trade, economic and humanitarian issues.[1]

The European Union relations with Ukraine are based on the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA) which entered into force in 1998. This plan is connected with areas such as trade, science, technology, and nuclear energy. The TACIS programme has been the framework for technical assistance since the early 1990s, supporting the transition process towards democracy and market economy. We have to remember that the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instruments are set to replace TACIS in 2007. Ukraine also is considered as a priority partner within the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). A joint EU – Ukraine Action Plan was endorsed by the EU – Ukraine Cooperation Council on 21st of February 2005.[2] We have to know that in the 2002 Copenhagen European Council, the European Union unveiled its strategy for managing relations

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[1] < http://www.mfa.gov.ua/mfa/en/847.htm> (access on 20.06.2005).
[2] < http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/ukraine/intro/#pol> (access on 25.08.2005).

with its new neighbours to the east following enlargement. Based on a long term approach to promote sustainable development, economic and political reform and trade with the countries on its eastern periphery, the professed aim of the strategy is to allow Ukraine to come as close to the EU as possible without actually becoming members, at least in the medium term.[3]

The best example for cooperation between EU and Ukraine is the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA). It provides a framework for political dialogue; harmonious economic relations, sets the principal common objectives in terms of promotion of trade and investment and development, social, economic, civil scientific technological and cultural co-operation, and support to Ukraine's efforts to consolidate its democracy and develop its economy. The PCA is an important instrument for focusing Ukraine's approximation efforts on the legal framework of the EU's single market and of the WTO system.[4]

On 1 May 2004, the enlargement of the European Union took place with the accession of ten new Member States. It has brought changes to the EU's political geography offering new opportunities to develop existing relations between the Union and its neighbours such as Ukraine.[5] The Union is determined to further develop partnerships with Ukraine to mutual benefit, promoting security as well as stability and prosperity. The EU's external borders will not become new dividing lines but the focus of enhanced co-operation.

We should remember that Ukraine participates in the YOUTH programme which promotes people-to-people contacts and co-operation between actors of civil society, such as associations and NGOs in the youth field. Regarding higher education, Ukraine is eligible for participation in the EU programmes such as: Tempus and Erasmus Mundus. Ukraine was one of some 30 focus countries for the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) in 2002-2004.

Enlargement of the European Union towards the East is a step toward creating security and stability beyond the borders of present day "Europe".[6] The new opportunities at the same time also carry some new risks and political challenges. These emanate on the one hand from economically and politically unstable neighbouring states and on the other hand from follow-up questions beyond the current requirements of EU enlargement towards the east. Ukraine, located between Russia and Poland, and a case of unfinished transition, includes as well risks and challenges for the EU.[7] At the same time, Ukraine remains at risk for exclusion from European institutions. Such an exclusion would preclude the possibility of influencing the Ukrainian transition through norm setting from the outside and encouraging a western orientation.

Geographically as regards those states and border regions for which the EU has not yet formulated accession prospects, and which will thus find themselves beyond the European

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[3] <http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/intrel/EFPC/Papers/Gatev.doc> (access on 25.08.2005).
[4] < http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/ukraine/intro/#pol> (access on 25.08.2005).
[5] *Więcej niż sąsiedztwo. Rozszerzona Unia Europejska i Ukraina – nowe relacje. Raport końcowy*, Fundacja im. S. Batorego, Warszawa 2004, s. 14 – 19.
[6] T. Kuzio, *"The Nation-building Project in Ukraine and Identity: Towards a Consensus"*[w:] *Dilemmas of State-Led Nation Building in Ukraine,* (ed.) Taras Kuzio, Paul D'Anieri, Weaport 2002, s. 9 – 29.

integration process in the medium term as well. Temporally as regards the follow-up questions of enlargement towards the east from 2005 onwards for various policy areas. Qualitatively as regards the questions of principle to be derived from enlargement towards the east and the discernible finality of the Union.

Victor Yushchenko won the second round of presidential elections in Ukraine with 52% of the votes as opposed to 44% for his opponent, Victor Yanukowych. The victory of the opposition candidate, who is perceived as a symbol of European values in the Ukraine, clearly means at least two things for the EU and for Ukrainians themselves:

1. It's a victory for democracy. Considering the widespread corruption of the campaign and massive fraud of the November 21 second round, this victory means that the opposition candidate won in spite of everything and deserves even more appreciation and support. Due to mass rallies at Maidan Niezaleznosti (Independent Square) in Kyiv, and on the squares and streets of tens of other cities throughout Ukraine, the authoritarian regime had to give concessions under the strong civic pressure and the Supreme Court cancelled the results of the original election that took place November 21, which opened the door for Yushchenko's victory of December 26.

2. The victory of the opposition candidate is perceived as a chance to change the ruling elite. New people come to the government and automatically receive trust for a certain period of time, internally and from the society and international community.

In any case, the victory of the opposition through the "Orange Revolution" and the legitimate vote of December 26th definitely mean a positive scenario for the Ukraine and EU – Ukraine relations.[8]

The Yushchenko victory has already posed a profound challenge for Europe and the EU. Indeed, on one level, the EU may find it more difficult to deal with Ukraine under Yushchenko than Ukraine led by Yanukovych. There are two reasons for this: First, Yushchenko is serious about domestic reforms. Secondly, he is committed to Ukraine's eventual membership in the EU.

The question that remains is what will the positive attitude of the EU to the opposition candidate and his victory bring to Ukraine in practical terms. We can define some groups of issues, which will be under consideration in the course of bilateral cooperation and influenced (or not) by the results of the election.

We expect that almost immediately after the opposition candidate is sworn in as president, Ukraine will be given market economy status, something the Ukrainian government has been fighting since 2002. It's well known that this decision has limited practical meaning for both sides and will have marginal influence on their economies. However, it has positive political benefits, good press and is in fact a positive political message to the relevant government.

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[8] O. Sushko, *The Orange Revolution in Ukraine: A Challenge for EU-Ukraine Relations*, Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs, no. 2/2004.

Important, non-political issues, especially in the field of real access to EU markets and the movement of persons, will remain off the above list and be kept for the distant future. Supporting a democratic president in Ukraine is not a sufficiently compelling argument for societies and elites in the EU member states to convince them to agree with giving the same access to Ukraine.

The most important political issues are in fact limited to the acknowledgement of the Ukraine's right to become a member of the EU and subsequently transforming relations, as some Ukrainian high ranking diplomats liked to say, from cooperation to integration. The conclusion of the European Association Agreement is normally perceived as the first step on this path.

It is important to note here that Yushchenko as a Prime – Minister has done some reforms such as:

➢ paradigmatic change of government away from rent-seeking behaviour towards good governance;
➢ reduction of wage and pension arrears;
➢ substantial reduction of state subsidies for various sectors and enterprises;
➢ implementation of structural reforms in agriculture;
➢ strengthening of fiscal discipline and improvement of budget procedures;
➢ start of structural reforms in the energy sector;
➢ reduction of non-monetary transfers (barter);
➢ speeding-up of privatisation;
➢ reduction of foreign debt;
➢ first successes in deregulation of industry[9]

Challenges and Chances for Ukraine

The fact of EU bordering Ukraine objectively increases the influence of the European society on Ukraine, transforms positively co-operation with the new Member States. In terms of strategy this process is a positive one, encouraging implementation in Ukraine of European standards, widening limits of co-operation with the European Union. We should jointly with the EU find mutually acceptable mechanisms, able to save and develop the positive dynamics of the bilateral trade, economic and political relations.

In practical sense in the near future the Cabinet of Ministers is going to face the following tasks:

in the area of policy and security:

➢ further strengthening the stability and effectiveness of institutions guaranteeing democracy, and the rule of law;

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[9] See in particular German Advisory Group on Economic Reforms, The First 365 Days: A Constructive Retrospective of Economic Reforms in Ukraine in the Year 2000, Kyiv, January 2001.

- application to Ukraine of the principles and modalities of co-operation in the sphere of security existing between the EU and former candidate countries;
- enhanced co-operation in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation
- creation in the context of the Article 24 of the Treaty on European Union of separate Co-operation Agreement in the sphere of regulation of crisis situation based on provision of respective the EU Mechanism, adopted in June 2002 on the summit of the European Union in Seville;
- enhanced co-operation in our common neighbourhood and regional security, in particular working towards a viable solution to the Transnistria conflict in Moldova, including addressing border issues;
- creation of an Agreement between Ukraine and the EU on usage of air transport of Ukraine;
- expansion of the dialog in the sphere of security of measures in accordance with the propositions of Ukraine, stipulated in the Memorandum on European Security Strategy, submitted to the EU in December 2003;
- attraction of the resources of the European Union and its Member States for the purposive aid to Ukraine in deactivation of antipersonnel mines and liquidation of ammunition, that are not suitable for further use and/or storage.

in social and economic areas:

- implementation of an innovation model of economic development of Ukraine as a preliminary step towards achievement of social and economic level of the EU Member States;
- determination of ways of raising of the competitive strength of the economy of Ukraine in the context of the enlarged EU, including state support for economy sectors with bearing in mind mechanism of subsidy and provision of privileges in accordance with the WTO requirements and EU law;
- execution of measures to keep access for our goods and services to the market of the enlarged EU;
- coming to agreements with the EU on application to the Ukraine of „social" preferences in the context of the EU General System of Preferences;
- creation in the Ukraine of the product quality monitoring system (first of all agroindustrial) in accordance to the EU norms;
- approximation and approval of the standardization system of Ukraine by the standards, norms and rules of the EU, as well as creation of the legal base for the recognition of the Ukraine's evaluation by the Ukraine's certification authorities;
- extension of the sector co-operation between Ukraine and EU (energy, transport, space, ecology, science and education sectors); attraction of the resources of EU Structural Funds, European Investment Bank to the realization of investment projects in Ukraine with participation of the EU member States;

- ➢ activation of integration of infrastructural networks, namely by way of realization of the projects of European significance (EAOTC, bring in European gas companies to the creation of Consortium on Management and Development of the Ukraine's Gas-Transport System, development of the Ukraine's parts of Pan-European transport corridors);
- ➢ development of cross frontier co-operation with the enlarged EU on the basis of the single financial instrument built on principles of the INTERREG Programme applying to the Member States.
- ➢ coming to agreement with the EU on determination of the new forms and mechanisms of the technical aid;

in area of justice and home affairs:

- ➢ ensuring the democratic conduct of parliamentary (2006) elections in Ukraine in accordance with OSCE standards;
- ➢ securing the top-priority realization of the measures of the EU Action Plan on Justice and Home Affairs in Ukraine directly affecting the dynamics of the internal social and economic growth;
- ➢ continuance of the co-operation with the EU in the context of liberalization of the visa control and simplification of obtaining visa for Ukraine's citizens;
- ➢ ensuring respect for the freedom of the media and freedom of expression;
- ➢ attraction of the Ukraine to the work of the EU Strategic Committee On Migration and Asylum (SCIFA), Task Group of the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers on visa issues and other institutions of the EU;
- ➢ formation of an electronic database for control over migration processes, joint with European electronic network of control over the European electronic network of migration control Eurodac;
- ➢ receipt of technical and financial aid from the EU for the proper equipping of eastern and northern parts of the state border of Ukraine and extradition and deportation of illegal migrants, being transferred to Ukraine pursuant to the respective Readmission agreements into the countries of their origins;
- ➢ development of the border co-operation, particularly realization of the respective projects on technical aid within framework of EU technical aid programmes;
- ➢ securing work of a central contact point of communication on organized crime, which should be joined with and interplay with the EU contact points' network;
- ➢ signature of Co-operation Agreements with Europol.

Euro-integration course is an integral part of the social, policy, and economic progress in Ukraine. Role and place of Ukraine in the new structure of Europe will be determined by the capability of Ukraine to use fully the new opportunities and find adequate answers to the challenges of the EU enlargement. That is why evaluation of the prospects and outcomes of this process, their effective use, strengthening political and economic dialog with the European Union for the sake of

Ukraine's national interests are our major tasks for the near future. Consolidation of all progressive forces of the society, deepening interplay of the branches of power in the direction of creation of stable and foreseeable model of the government of the State and competitive strength of the economy guarantee the achievement of this strategic aim of our social development.

Conclusions

In fact, the EU position towards Ukrainian accession is determined by two serious factors than its internal political developments:

> ➢ the first factor relates to the EU's internal difficulties. As *Eurobureaucrats* claim, the EU is overload with current problems of internal functioning, current and upcoming waves of enlargement, the question of Turkey, economic and social difficulties, etc.;

> ➢ the second factor relates to the EU's perception of Ukraine in a border context. We have to remember that the real problem in the EU attitude toward Ukraine is the psychological, historic, geopolitical break lying on its western border in the eyes of the EU's political and bureaucratic elite. In spite of years of independents, they still identify Ukraine as a part of the Russia world, linked with Russia by language, history, economy, political and administrative culture, etc.

Jan Marinus Wiersma, vice president of the Socialist Group within the European Parliament, has called for new provisions in EU-Ukraine relations that go beyond those foreseen in the European Neighbourhood Programme, and has pledged „generous support" from the European Union. Mr Wiersma said, „Neither Ukraine nor the EU is ready for accession negotiations at this moment." But keeping the door to talks open, he added, „The EU would be denying the spirit of its founding treaty if it were to preclude the possibility of Ukrainian membership. We welcome Ukraine's European aspirations and the Socialist Group will continue to support Ukraine in its progress towards this end goal, but no guarantees can be given as to the outcome of this process. For now, the way forward is in Kyiv, not in Brussels!" He added that the EU should concentrate first and foremost on creating an international setting in which Ukraine can develop independently, enhancing its ties with Europe while fostering its ties with other neighbouring countries.[10]

At present, the EU's New Neighbourhood Policy seems insufficient to prevent Ukraine from slipping back into the Russian sphere of influence. It is, however, a new policy and one has to see what concrete proposals the EU has in mind before one can judge its potential effectiveness. Whether the EU can persuade Ukraine to forgo the economic advantages arising from increased cooperation from Russia while at the same time withholding the prospect of eventual membership, is debatable. It depends on how much access to the four freedoms of the internal market the EU is actually prepared to grant Ukraine. If Ukraine becomes a member of the Union in everything but

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[10] <http://eng.maidanua.org/node/165> (access on 20.06.2005).

name, then the potential of the New Neighbourhood Policy to influence Kyiv's external orientation would be considerable.[11]

A series of new tactics are needed in order to create a new image of Ukraine in the eyes of the EU. Therefore the new tactics of Ukrainian authorities will be extremely important in 2005, especially given the need to overcome the lingering 'Ukraine fatigue' in Brussels which set in under Mr Kuchma. Ukrainian authorities also should establish a clear institutional structure dealing with European-integration process. The competencies of Deputy Prime Minister Mr Rybachuk, minister of economy Teryokhin and minister of foreign affairs Tarasyuk now overlap. Their relative responsibilities need to be more clearly differentiated. The new Ukrainian government is faced with a huge reform agenda. The extent to which European integration and the objective of eventual EU membership informs the reform process has yet to be seen. It is evident that the complete convergence to EU standards (political and economic) is at best a very long-term proposition. The sequencing of the reform process thus becomes a critical issue insofar as it is important that Ukraine does not approach the approximation of legislation a la carte, but rather chooses the sequence of reforms in plans to introduce carefully in consultation with the EU, at a pace that the (hopefully significantly enhanced) institutional and administrative capacity of Ukrainian national, regional and local authorities are able to accommodate. Ukraine should set a more ambitious goal for trade aspects of a new agreement, which should replace the PCA in 2008. In particular, Ukraine should push for joining the EU customs union. Not only would this once more reiterate its commitment to European integration, but would also focus Ukraine's efforts on the vast agenda involved in adopting EU rules, standards and policies. It could start by focusing on one of the more problematic areas such as customs or borders. It would of course also reduce the probability that Ukraine might revert back to a multi-vector foreign policy.[12]

At this moment: Ukraine can realistically achieve the most important practical goals in its relationship with the EU if it is moved from the Neighbourhood list to the list of prospective candidate countries.

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[11] <http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/intrel/EFPC/Papers/Gatev.doc> (access on 24.08.2005).
[12] < http://eng.maidanua.org/node/336> (access on 20.08.2005).

Mălina VOICU
Katarina STRAPCOVA
Structural explanation of poverty: culture or self interest?

Studying inequality and social policy development in CEE in its post-socialist period is studying social phenomena in a real progress. Social and economic inequalities in these countries are changing mostly due to the process of the transformation from the state economy to the principles of market economy. This process has significant consequences in many areas of the people's daily life, especially consequences on the labor market, which relates also to the emergence of new social phenomena as unemployment, job insecurity, privatization, self-employment or employment in private sector of economy. Social policy had to reflect these changes and develop new instruments, which could help people to deal with the new social and economic context.

One of the major changes within the post-socialist societies caused by transformation and „marketized" environment (Crompton, 1998) is that the rather strong egalitarian societies from the CEE region underwent the new process of hierarchization. Decreasing power of the political capital and increasing significance of the economic capital, together with new phenomena appeared on the scene have a significant impact on the polarization of these societies.

On the other hand, the increasing of the inequality was signaled not only in post-communist countries, but also in other developed industrialized states from Western Europe and North America. This fact was emphasized by many researches (Gottschalk & Smeeding 1999, Gustafsson & Johansson, 1997, Smeeding, 2002, Jesuit & Smeeding, 2002) and can be observed looking to the dynamic of the inequality's indicators. Figure 1 show the variation of the Gini coefficient (if data available[1]), during the 90ties. This trend awakens the new wave of interest for studying inequality within scientific community.

Many studies have been devoted to the perception of inequality and of causes of poverty in the last years, because this topic is of interest for the design of social policy and of the welfare system. The perceived reasons for poverty give us information about the legitimacy of the welfare system and indicate what kinds of welfare policies do people agree (Oorschot, Halman, 2000; Kluegel & others, 1995). Thus, if people consider that the poverty is the result of the individual lack of will and skills, it is likely that they will support liberal policies, while if they agree that the

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[1] For most of the countries data are available for the years 1991 and 2000. If data were not available for these years, we used another figures to illustrate the change (e.g. Czech Republic figures for 1992 and 1996, Slovak Republic figures for 1992 and 1996).

structure of society is the main reason for poverty they will sustain an universalistic system of welfare.

Figure 1. Trend: Increasing income inequality during the 1990s
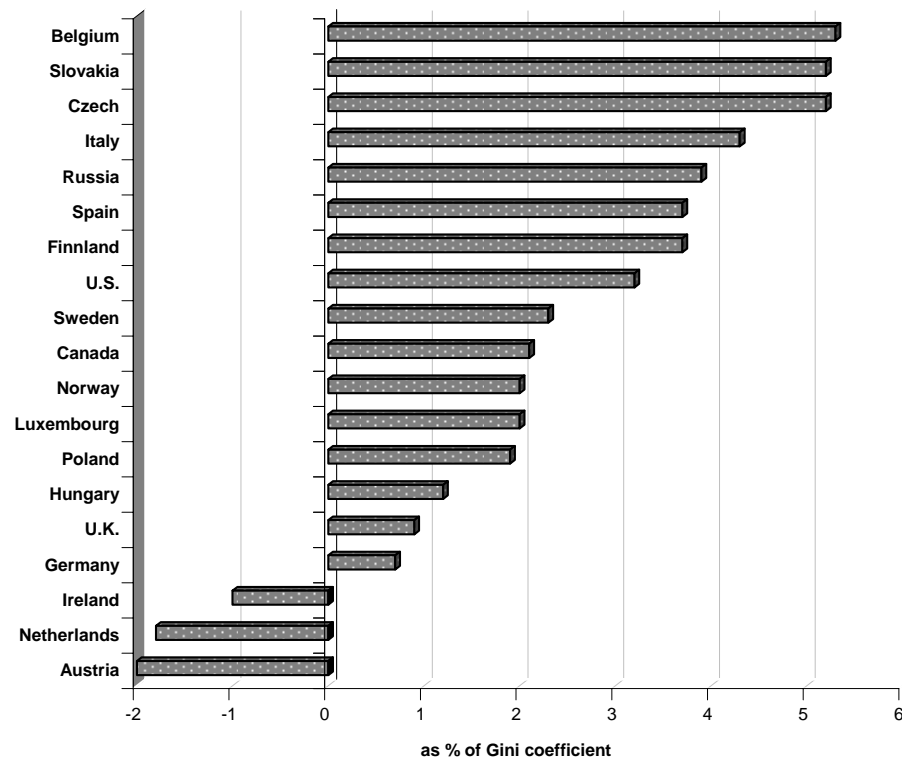
Source: Luxemburg Income Study[2] The figures represent the growth rate of the Gini coefficient (1990=1).

Generally speaking the explanations of inequality are divided by the literature in two main categories: 1. individual-meritocratic explanation**,** which emphasizes the characteristics of individuals such as education, skills or work motivation and their role in maintaining the person in poverty, and 2. structural explanations**.** focused on macro-economic and macro-social factors such as demand-supply mechanisms on the labor market, tax policy, activities of the unions, gender differences and so on (Vanfossen, 1979, p.120). On the other words, there are two answers to the question: Why do people live in poverty? The first answer implies that people are lazy and lack adequate education (the individual explanation). The alternative argument place the explanation to the market game and to the unfair distribution of income in the society (the structural explanation).

This paper focuses on the people preference for the structural explanation of poverty and

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[2] www.lisproject.org (accessed 27.08.2005).

tries to analyzes, from the comparative perspective, the main trends in public opinion with the respect to this topic. We will center our research on the dynamic of preferences for structural explanation of poverty in Europe, between 1990 and 2000. On the other hand, we will analyze this preference from the cross-sectional perspective, too. The third aim of the paper is to identify the factors which determine the option for structural explanation of poverty at individual and aggregate (country) level. The analytical strategy was a comparative one and we have used data provided by the European Values Survey collected in 1999 and 2000[3].

The paper is structured in three parts. The first one is dedicated to the reviewing of the theoretical framework, while the second describe the analytical strategy and the indicators used in the analysis. The third part presents the results and it contains three districts chapters, one presents the trends in preferences for structural explanation in Europe, with a special focus on CEE countries, while the others two try to point out the factors which determine the option for the structural explanation of poverty at the individual and at the aggregate (country) level. The final section contains some short conclusions and comments.

Theoretical framework

Roughly speaking, the explanation of poverty can be divided in two categories, as it is mentioned before. Individual explanation stresses that people are poor because are lazy and they deserve to be poor as long as they do not something special to escape from the poverty trap. This explanation emphasizes the role of the person in building it own welfare and it is known as blame the poor perspective. The second explanation highlights the role of society in producing and maintaining the poverty. According to this view, the people are poor because the society does not properly distribute the welfare and it is out of the individual capacities to escape from poverty, therefore the help of society it is required (Kluegel & others, 1995).

However, Oorschot & Halman (2000; 1998) point out that the social explanations of poverty have a bi-dimensional structure, not a one-dimensional one. Thus these explanations can be classified according two criteria: the agent (individual or social one) and the control of the situation (fate or blame). On the individual – social dimension, people can choose between explanations which arise from individual behavior or from structural factors. Blame – fate dimension is connected with the potential to control and act against unfavorable factors. One can change or overcome blame factors, but fate factor are given and impossible to control[4].Crossing the two

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[3] See Halman 2002 for detalis about the reserach.
[4] Theoretical concept is operationalized into research question „Why are there people in this country who live in need? Here are four possible reasons. Which one reason do you consider to be most important? 1 =

criteria one can identify four types of explanation like in the Table 1. This paper chooses a one-dimension classification of the explanation of poverty, those which divides the explanation in individual and structural ones.

Table 1 Theoretical framework: two dimensions and four types within poverty explanations

	INDIVIDUAL	SOCIAL
BLAME *(AGENCY)*	**Individual blame** The poor are lazy, lack of thrift, good morals	**Social blame** The poor are victims of the actions of others, are victims of social injustice
FATE *(NON-AGENCY)*	**Individual fate** The poor are unlucky	**Social fate** The poor are victims of uncontrollable societal and global developments

Source: Oorschot & Halman, 2000

A review of the literature dedicated to topic of poplar explanation of poverty points out that there are two types of factors involved in choosing one kind of explanation, a structural or an individual one. These factors are located either at the country level or at the individual level. The country level factors explain the people preference for the structural vs. individual explanation of poverty depending on aspects like type of welfare sate, level of poverty or the structure of social spending. The second kind of factors is related to the individual characteristics which determine the variation in preferences for the explanation of poverty, like position in the social structure or the ideological orientation.

At the aggregate level, many studies have focused on few characteristics like: type of welfare state, the social structure or the level of poverty. Thus, Svallfors (1993), Halman, Oorschot (1998), show that there is an association between the preference for one type of explanation of poverty and the structure of the welfare state. Therefore the people who live in countries with social

Because they are unlucky, 2 = Because of laziness and lack of willpower, 3 = Because of injustice in our society, 4 = It's an inevitable part of modern progress, 5 = None of these. In surveys there is usually also second question about „second most important reason". Same question was used already in Eurobarometer 5 „Satisfaction and Poverty" (May - Jun 1976), where principal investigators were Ronald Inglehart a Jacques-Rene Rabier. Eurobarometer series of study started in the year 1974 (research documentation http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/index_en.htm, last accessed 2.7.2005).

– democrat welfare state are more inclined to support structural explanation of poverty. This fact is related to the legitimacy of the welfare state. The values promoted by a political or a welfare regime must be similar to those shared by the population, otherwise the regime looses its legitimacy. In order to be legitimate a regime has to establish a set of values similar to those shared by the majority. This correspondence is needed in order to preserve the legitimacy of the regime (Voicu, 2004). As a consequence, the inhabitants of countries with generous and universalistic social policy should be the adepts of the structural explanation of poverty, otherwise the welfare system loose its legitimacy and people refuse to support it paying taxes.

On the other hand, Arts and Gelissen (2001) emphasize the relation between the type of welfare state and the social solidarity. The social-democratic welfare states encourage the strong solidarity between people, while the liberal welfare regimes promote the weak solidarity. In society with strong solidarity people are more supportive towards the equality principles and favor the structural explanation of poverty, while the citizens of the liberal states stress the meritocratic ideology and are more inclined to choose the individual explanation of poverty.

Consequently we are expecting to find an association between level of social spending, as indicator for the type of welfare state, and the preference for the structural explanation for poverty. Our hypothesis is:

> (H1) *The population of countries with universalistic welfare regime and with a high level of social spending will be more inclined to support structural explanation of poverty.*

However, not only the structure of welfare regime influences the people preference for structural explanation of poverty. Kluegel & others (1995), Stephenson (2000) stress the role social structure in determine the preference for poverty explanations. Thus, in countries with a big middles class, the preference for individual explanation will be higher compared to countries with a large lower class. Usually, poor people favor the structural explanation because they cannot blame themselves for their position. Accordingly, better off societies favor the individual explanation of poverty, while the increased level of poverty support the structural explanation. Moreover, Oorschot, Halman (2000) points out the changes in preference for the explanation of poverty depending on the transformation of the economic context. The authors indicate an increasing in preferences for structural explanation in Western Europe between 1976 and 1990. While in 1976 the blame perspective was dominant, in 1990 the social explanation becomes prevalent. These changes are the result of the economic crisis encountered by the Western countries in this period. Due to the crisis many people have experienced the poverty and change the opinion about the poverty causes.

On the other hand, many studies have stressed the differences in perception of poverty's causes between Western countries and post-communist countries (Gijberts, 2002; Kreidl, 2000; Verwiebe, Wegener, 2000; Oorschot, Halman, 2000; Mason, 1995; Kluegel & others, 1995). As we have pointed out before, in the mid '70 the dominant opinion about the causes of poverty in Western Europe used to blame the victims, while in the '90 the structural explanation prevailed. However, there is no dominant ideology in explaining causes of poverty in Western countries, according to Kreidl (2000). In Central and Eastern Europe a similar trend to increasing in structural explanation was signaled, but after the falling down of the communist regimes, but the acceptance of inequality is lower then in Western countries (Kreidl, 2000). The former communist regimes form the region used to encourage an egalitarian image of the society, which allowed neither the poverty, nor the affluence. The citizens of the communist countries were equal and the poverty and the affluence were publicly condemned by the official ideology. The poverty was not officially recognized because, according to the communist policy, the state used to provide an optimal level of welfare for all its citizens (Zamfir & Zamfir, 1999). As a consequence, the poverty was officially blamed and the communist society favored the preference for the individual explanation. The highly stigmatized services were provided to the poor people (Evans, 2003) and the regime has encouraged blame the victim perspective all around the region.

The post-communist changes favored the transformation of the social perception on causes of poverty. First, the transition from the planed to the market economy has generated an economic recession accompanied by the increasing in unemployment and poverty. Some countries have been affected more by the economic recession, like Romania and Bulgaria, while others have recovered quite easy after the initial shock of transition, as Czech Republic or Hungary. However, all around the region the poverty become an everyday reality for many people. On the other hand, the class structure ahs changed too. In the post-communist societies the people should confront with a new reality, that of income inequality and of the restructure of the society according different criteria. All these facts determine a transformation in the perceived causes of poverty. As long as to be poor is not an 'illegal' fact, as it was 15 years ago, and many people have experienced the poverty, the social perception of poverty was changed too.

> (H2) *We expect to find an increasing in preferences for the structural explanation of poverty in CEE countries between 1990 and 2000, due to the growing of poverty in the region and to the changes in the social structure.*

The risk of being poor is closely connected to the unemployment which became "the strongest factor behind income insufficiency and poverty under the market economy". (Vecernik, 2004). High level of unemployment and especially, the higher level of long-term unemployment

have an impact on the level of poverty and on the structure of society. Long-term unemployment keeps people out of labour market and induced them the idea of a wrong structure of society. Inaccessible labor market can be reflected also in the people's preferences for the poverty explanations and in higher proportion of the structural explanation in the poverty explanation pattern.

(H3) *We are expecting to find an association between level of unemployment in a country and the preference for structural explanation of poverty.*

The second level of explanation for the structural vs. individual causes of poverty is that of individual characteristics. According to the studies dedicated to the topic, some individual features like the age, the position within the individual structure or the level of education influence the option for one justification of poverty. Generally speaking, the factors which determine the preference for one explanation of poverty can be classified in two categories: factors related to the self interest and factors related to the ideological and values orientation.

The self interest approach has its roots in the rational choice theory. According to this tackling, people perceive the poverty and its determinants depending on their own interests, rationally judging the costs and the benefits of the situation. Thus, the poor people incline to ascribe the poverty to the society because he cannot self blame and, on the other hand, if the poverty is the result of the unfair distribution of the resources in society the poorer deserve to be helped. It is very rational for a poor person to support the structural explanation. On the other side, for a member of the middle class a generous policy for supporting the poor people is not in their own interest, as long as he supposes to pay high taxes designated to sustain the programs targeted to poor persons. A middle class member looses money because of the anti-poverty programs. It is very rational for him to consider the poverty as a result of the lack of willing and of effort and to blame the victim, as long as the middle class component looses in this game.

Thus, few characteristic have been associated with the self interest in explaining the preference for the structural vs. individual causes of poverty. Kreidl (2000), Gijsberts (2002), Stephenson (2000), Verwiebe, Vegener (2000), Őrkény, Székely (2000), Klugel & others (1995), Stephenson (2000) indicate that the personal position within the social structure play a very important role in influencing one kind of poverty explanation. Thus, the person with a good position in the social structure tends to favor the individual explanation. They are better off and their own interest is, first, to avoid the waist of their own money spent in social programs and, second, to maintain the status-quo. For them, blame the victim perspective is the best explanation for poverty. On the other hand, Kreidl (2000) shows that people who have a good position due to the individual effort are more inclined to support the individual explanation of poverty as long as they have

achieved a good status by their own effort. According to the author the social mobility encourage the individual explanation of poverty.

The age play an important role in explaining the causes if poverty. Studies carried out on this topic indicate that older people are more favorable to the individual explanation, while the younger population is more inclined to support the social blame position (Kreidl, 2000; Gijsberts, 2002). The explanation is related to the position in the social structure. Generally speaking the older people has a quite higher position as compared to the young people, thus they are interested in maintaining the status-quo. On the other hand, Gijsberts (2002) stresses the impact of education on the preference for individual explanation. As long as the higher education ensures a good position in the social structure, the more educated is a person, the higher is the probability to choose the blame the victim position. The researches indicate a difference between men and women in choosing the one explanation of poverty (Gijsberts, 2002; Kreidl, 2000). Generally, the men are more favorable to inequality and prefer the individual explanation, due to the fact that they have better position in the social structure.

The second series of factors which influence the option for one type of explanation of poverty are related to the ideological and values orientation. Many authors, like Gijsberts (2002), Kreidl (2000), Kluegel, Miyano (1995), Alwin, Gornev, Khaklulino (1995), Mason (1995), Lewis (1982), Oorschot, Halman (2000) have stressed the role of ideology in influencing the option for individual vs. structural explanation of poverty. On the first hand, the political orientation towards left or right influences the perception of causes of poverty. Thus, people who are closer to the left political ideology will be more inclined to equality and are more supportive to the social blame perspective. On the other side, Oorschot, Halman (2000) point out that not only the political ideology has an impact of preference for poverty explanation, but also the materialist – post-materialist values orientation. According to the authors the post-materialist people are more inclined to structural explanation of poverty.

Our hypothesis is that (H4) *the preference for structural explanation of poverty depends both on factors related to self interest (as social status, education, age and gender) and on ideological and values orientation.*

On the other hand, some studies mention that there are differences in factors which influence the preference for explanation of poverty between CEE countries and Western countries. Kluegel & others (1995), Mason (1995) stress the role of self interest in CEE and of ideological orientation in the case of Western countries.

In this context we are expecting *to find different determinants of perceived causes of poverty in post- communist and in Western countries. We are*

expecting to find a strong influence of economic factors in CEE countries and

an important effect of ideological orientation in Western countries. (H5).

Analytical strategy and measurement

The analysis uses data from European Values Survey 1990 and 1999/ 2000 wave. Both wave of the research provide comparable data with the respect to the perception of poverty causes. The survey was conducted in 22 countries in 1990 and in 32 European countries in 1999/ 2000[5] and the data allow longitudinal and cross-cultural comparisons among countries in Europe. The analytical strategy tried to identify the variation of preferences for structural explanation of poverty between 1990 and 2000 and to compare countries by their level of preferences for structural explanation of poverty. Another aims of the paper are to discover the determinants of preferences for poverty explanations, at both individual and country level. We have carried out few logistic regressions in order to determine the causes of preferences for structural explanation at the individual level. For the aggregate level few correlations have been employed in order to see the associates of the preferences for structural explanation. The reduced number of cases does not allowed us to carry out an OLS regression and to analyze the cumulative effect of the factors on the dependent variable.

Dependent variables

As we have mentioned before we are interested in studying the preference for the structural explanation of poverty, but we have carried out the analysis at two level, individual and country level. We have used two types of dependent variables corresponding to the two levels of analysis. The item utilized in building the dependent variable was: *Why are people in your country who live in need: 1. 'Because of injustice in our society'* and *2. 'It's an inevitable part of the modern progress'*. At the individual level we have built a dummy variable which takes value 1 if the respondent chooses one of the mentioned answers and 0 if the respondent prefers individual explanation of poverty. At the aggregate level the percent of population who is in favor of structural explanation was used as the dependent variable.

Independent variable

At the individual level two categories of independent variables have been employed: variables related to the individual status and indicators for the ideological and values orientation.

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[5] See Halman (2001) for the research details.

The indicators of individual status employed by the analysis are: *age*, *education*, measured as age for completing the full education, *gender* and *income*, measured as monthly income per household member. The indicators for ideological and values orientations are: Left / Right ideological orientation and the post-materialist values orientation. The ideological orientation is measured using the answers to the question: *In political matters, people talk of the left and the right. How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?* - a ten points scale: 1 meaning left and 10 meaning right. The Post-materialist values orientation, measured using the Postmaterialism index – built forms the answers to the questions: *Which of the things on this card would you says is most important? Maintaining order in the nation / Giving people more to say in important government decisions / Fighting rising prices/ Protecting freedom of speech.*

At the aggregate level, the independent variables are: social expenditures as percent of GDP in 2000, poverty at the country level and unemployment rate. Social expenditure is an indicator for the type of welfare state. Countries with high social expenditures have a generous – universalistic welfare state. Poverty is measured as percent of people bellow 50% of media income is an indicator for the poverty level in a country. According to our hypothesis a high level of poverty is generally associated with the preference for the structural explanation. The appendix located at the end of the paper detailed presents the construction and the significance of the country level indicators.

Data analysis

The fist step of our analysis is to compare from the longitudinal and cross-cultural perspective European countries, with the respect to people's preference for structural explanation of poverty. According to the data from Figure 2, in 2000 the inhabitants of some post-communist countries like Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Bulgaria and Belarus, together with those of some Nordic countries as Sweden and Finland use to prefer structural explanation of poverty. At the opposite situation there are the citizens of Portugal, Malta and Czech Republic which give priority to the individual explanations. It is hard to say that people from post-communist countries prefer more equality and is more supportive towards structural explanation of poverty. However, in almost all ex-communist countries, excepting Czech Republic and Slovakia, the population agrees more to the structural explanation of poverty. In this sense, Czech Republic and Slovakia are exceptions, because people give priority to blame the victim explanation.

Figure 2 Preference for structural explanation of poverty in 2000 in Europe
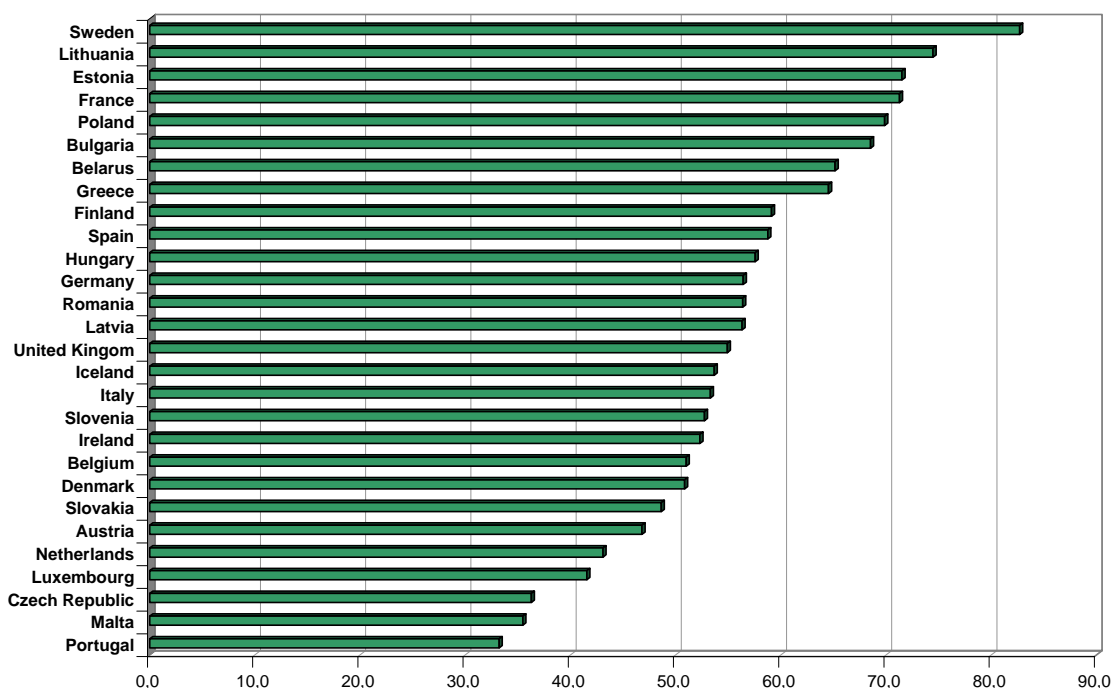
On the other hand, looking from the longitudinal perspective, one can mention an increasing in preference for structural explanation of poverty in almost all post-communist countries, excepting Slovenia and Latvia. Between 1990 and 2000 many people from CEE countries change theirs opinion about causes of poverty and accept the structural explanation for poverty. These findings confirm our hypothesis about the dynamic of perception of poverty causes in CEE countries. This trend affects Czech Republic, too but in a lower degree, while in Slovakia the preference remains stabile over the investigated decade. On the other hand, it is hard to identify a trend of variation for the Western countries, as long as some of them are in 2000 stronger supporters of structural explanation and others evolve to a less equal society.

Data provided by EVS shows that most of the Europeans are in favor of the structural explanation of poverty and the support for blame society perspective has increased during the '90. For the CEE countries the explanation is related to the increase in inequality at the social level, due to the post-communist transformation. On the other hand, the amplification of poverty in the last decade had stress the trend in the region. For Western countries it is rather difficult to identify a trend, some of them being stronger supporter of the structural explanation, while the others clustering in a different group.

Figure 3 Variation in preferences for structural explanation of poverty between 2000 and 1990
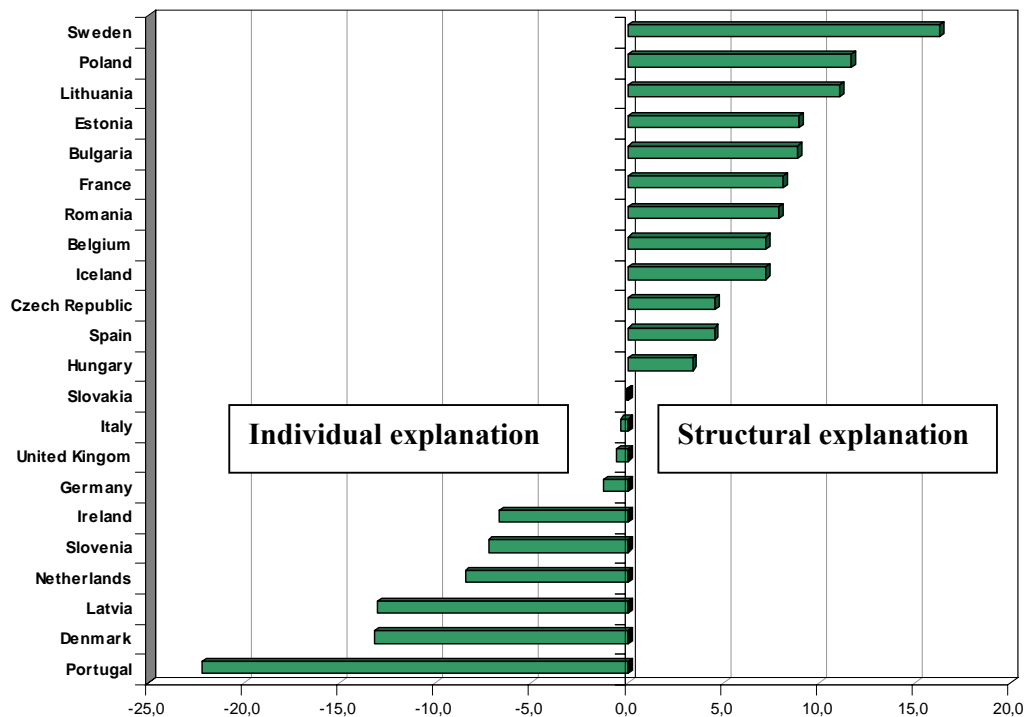
Reading tip: positive values indicate an increase of the structural explanation from 1990 to 2000 (for instance, Sweden, Poland and Lithuania are in this situation). Negative values indicate an increase of the individual explanation (like in Portugal and Denmark).

The next step in our analysis was to compare the preference for structural explanation in post-communist countries and in Western stable democracies. For each group of countries, Western and CEE ones, we have built box-plot (the horizontal line in the middle box represents the median value, see Figure 4). Median for CEE group (57,5%) is slightly higher than for group Western Europe (53,3%), indicating a higher support for the structural explanation in post-communist societies. On the other hand, data from Figure 4 shows that values are more stretched around median in Western Europe than CEE countries, pointing out that in Western Europe the homogeneity of the opinion is higher then in CEE countries. We can also observe the outliers (values which are markedly different than for the other countries in the group), which are Sweden and Portugal for Western Europe and Czech Republic for the CEE region. Thus, according to the mentioned data in Western group Sweden is more equalitarian then the rest of the countries, while Portugal is more in favor of the individual explanation of poverty.

Figure 4 Descriptive of the structural explanation in CEE countries and Western Europe

			Statistics	
			country	Value
Western Europe	Highest	1	Sweden	82,70
		2	France	71,20
		3	Greece	64,50
		4	Finland	59,10
		5	Spain	58,70
	Lowest	1	Portugal	33,20
		2	Malta	35,50
		3	Luxembourg	41,50
		4	Netherlands	43,10
		5	Austria	46,80
CEE	Highest	1	Lithuania	74,40
		2	Estonia	71,50
		3	Poland	69,90
		4	Bulgaria	68,50
		5	Belarus	65,10
	Lowest	1	Czech Rep.	36,30
		2	Slovakia	48,60
		3	Slovenia	52,70
		4	Latvia	56,30
		5	Romania	56,40

Source: EVS 1999, www.europeanvalues.nl

In order to describe the relationship of the poverty explanation and social policy – or relationship between formal and informal solidarity with poor people - we have tested the significance of the correlation between the two indicators. The results contradict the hypothesis of the association between type of welfare state and preference for structural vs. individual explanation of poverty. According to the data from Figure 5 there is no significant correlation between the preference for the structural explanation and the level of social spending at the country level. On the other side, the bivariate correlations indicate no association between preference for social blame explanation and level of poverty in a country (see Figure 7). The preference for structural explanation is associated only with level of unemployment[6] (see Figure 6). The data indicate that the higher the unemployment rate in the country is, the higher the proportion of the structural poverty explanation. Thus, the data validate only the hypothesis of the association between unemployment and preference for structural explanation of poverty. The hypotheses about the relation between preference for one type of poverty's explanation and level of poverty or the level of social spending are not sustained by the data.

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[6] For a level of significance p = 0.05

Figure 5 Total social expenditures in 2000 and structural explanation in European countries
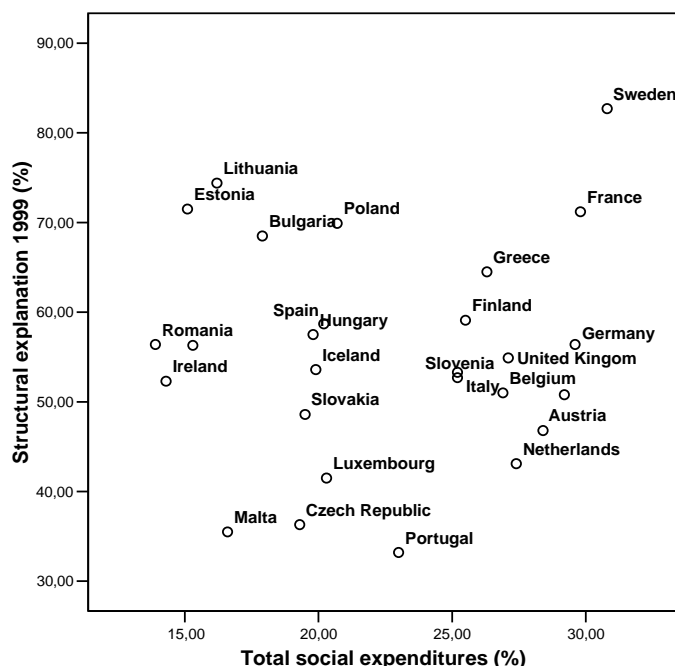
We can interpret the impact of unemployment level on the preference for structural explanation of poverty taking in consideration the labor market conditions in the country. For example, Slovakia is the country with the second highest level of unemployment within EU countries, which is about 17,3% (EUROSTAT structural indicators, November 2004). According to a survey carried out in 2004[7], more than 95% of respondents think it is hard or very hard to find a job if you are unemployed in Slovakia. It seems that such an attitude does not leave space for blaming individual as inactive or lazy. On the other hand, it seems that it opens space for criticism of the macro-structural conditions in the country, which failed in creating a participative environment for people and thus also in the improvement of the people's life chances. On the opposite, in the countries with low level of unemployment (for example Luxembourg 4,4% and Austria 4,5% in October 2004, Netherlands 4,6% in October 2004, EUROSTAT) it seems that people see labor market as open and enabling participation to the unemployed people and as a result respondents have the tendency to see poverty more as the individual failure.

However, as we expected that there will be more connections between formal and informal solidarity indicators, we cannot conclude that there is a clear direct connection between the character of social policy and poverty perceptions in the selected countries.

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[7] survey "Society 2004", N = 3980 respondents, Social Data Archive of the Institute for Sociology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences

Figure 6 Unemployment rate in 2000 and structural explanation in European countries
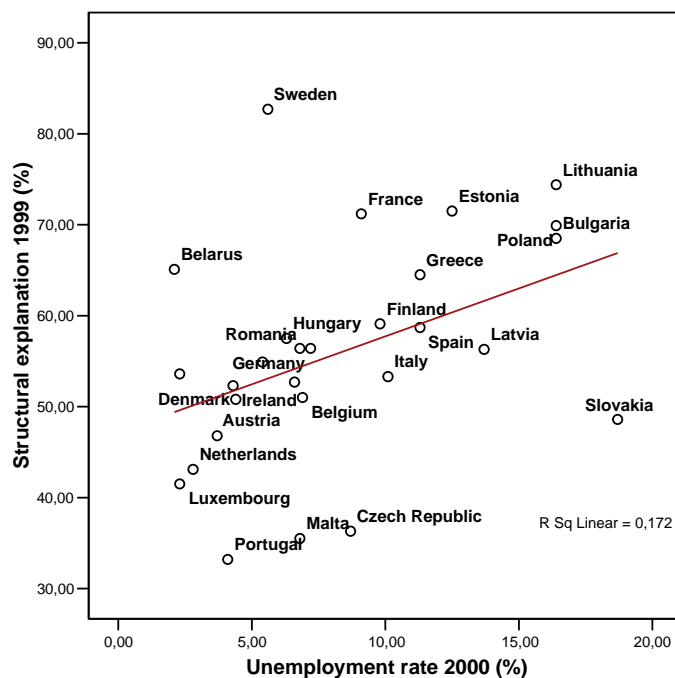
Figure 7 Poverty and structural explanation in European countries
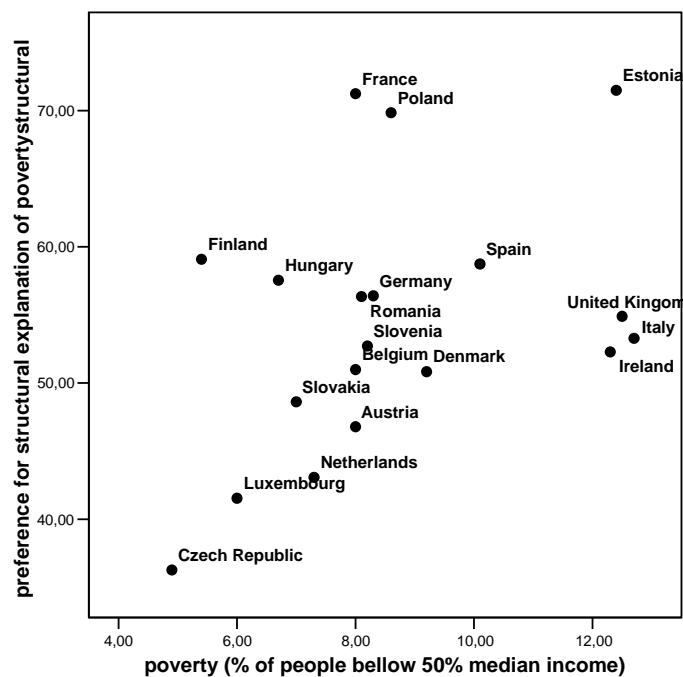
The last step of the present analysis is to identify the factors which encourage the option for structural explanation of poverty at the individual level. Four logistic regression models have been run in order to identify these factors. We have run the model separately for Western and CEE countries in 1990 and 2000 and we have compared the results.

Table 2 Logistic regression models: dependent variable – preference for structural explanation of poverty (dummy variable)

	Model 1 Western countries 1990		Model 2 CEE countries 1990		Model 3 Western countries 2000		Model 4 CEE countries 2000	
	B	Wald	B	Wald	B	Wald	B	Wald
Constant	1,228	138***	1,106	36***	0,600	12***	0,703	10***
left / right ideological orientation	0,112	159***	0,038	9**	0,095	50***	0,088	46***
age	0,011	106***	0,012	49***	0,002	1	0,001	0
postmaterialism	0,522	85***	0,455	22***	0,357	24***	0,062	0
materialist	0,359	64***	0,372	17***	0,423	22***	0,141	1
education	-0,026	57***	-0,033	32***	-0,039	43***	-0,030	23***
female	0,098	8**	0,056	1	0,100	4	0,127	5*
income	0,000	0	0,082	165***	0,033	3	0,033	3

* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.000

Model 1: Cox & Snell R^2 = 0,045; Nagelkerke R^2 = 0,060 for Hosmer & Lemershow Test χ^2 =3,999, p= 0,857.

Model 2: Cox & Snell R^2 = 0,048; Nagelkerke R^2 = 0,064 for Hosmer & Lemershow Test χ^2 =8,817, p= 0,358.

Model 3: Cox & Snell R^2 = 0,028; Nagelkerke R^2 = 0,037 for Hosmer & Lemershow Test χ^2 =16,731, p= 0,033.

Model 4: Cox & Snell R^2 = 0,014; Nagelkerke R^2 = 0,019 for Hosmer & Lemershow Test χ^2 =7,567, p= 0,477.

The results of logistic regressions confirm our hypothesis of double determination of preferences for poverty explanation by own interest and ideological orientation (see Table 2). For 1990 data in Eastern and Western countries both ideological orientation and status variables are significant in explaining the support for structural explanation of poverty. The situation is different for 2000 data. Data from 2000 indicates a difference between Eastern and Western countries. In both groups of countries the left - right ideological orientation is the most powerful determinant, but in Western countries the materialist – post - materialist value orientation plays an important role. In CEE countries the preference for structural explanation is sustained by other factors related to social status, like education and gender. One should mention that education is a significant predictor in all our models.

Conclusions

The analyses carried out in this paper show that the preference for the structural explanation of poverty increased in many European countries especially in CEE countries between 1990 and 2000. Due to the social and economic transformation faced by these countries during '90, people from the region become more willing to support structural explanation of poverty. The increasing in social inequality and the raising of poverty in the region changes people's image about poverty and

its determinants. This fact has serious implication for the design of social policy in a period of rebuilding of the welfare regime of these countries. Most of the people from post-communist countries consider that the poverty is the result of the wrong distribution of resources within society and that the poor deserve to be help. Thus, they are willing to support generous social policy destined to assist the people in need.

On the other hand, the EVS data reveal that only unemployment influence the preference for structural explanations, while the profile of the welfare regime does not play a role. The results do not support our hypotheses about the relation between preference for structural explanation of poverty and the level of poverty on one hand, and of level of social spending on the other. However, the analysis supports our hypothesis of a double determination for the preference for structural explanation of poverty at the individual level. Thus, in both groups of countries, Eastern and western ones, both ideological orientation and social status influence the option for one type of explanation.

We have also signaled some changes with the respect to factors which influence the preference for one explanation of poverty or another. Therefore, in 1990 the determinants were quite the same in both groups of countries, while in 2000 the post-materialist values orientation did not play a role. According to Inglehart (1990) the increasing in insecurity of life will determine a change in people orientation towards post-materialist values. As a result, the importance of post-materialist values has probably decreased during the transition, because of the increasing level of social risks in post-communist countries. The question which raise is in what direction will evolve the preference of people who are living in post-communist countries? Will they remain more attached to materialist values and willing to support a low level of inequality or they will change theirs way of thinking and will accept more inequality as the result of changing the social structure? Future research should answer this question.

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RENÁTA SEDLÁKOVÁ

What would we know about seniors if we knew them only from Czech media?
An analysis of representations of senior in the nationwide media.

> Motto: (… why media matters…)
> *»„But why such old ladies? And why so cruel attacks,“ not just the judge but also the associate justice asked.*
> *„Old people are trustful and innatentive. I learned from the media how easily they could be deceived,“ explained the human monster how his long serie of crimes had started.«*
>
> (*Blesk* 14. 7. 2004, str. 6)

The historically unprecedented ageing of the Czech population evokes a huge challenge for our society and all major social actors gradually centre their attention on it. Media – as the main transmitters of information in modern societies and actors in the social construction of reality – play a major role in the signification of the old age. Due to this the research concentrates on the interpretative sociological analysis of media representations of seniors and old age in Czech media. The analysis concerns above all the news coverage of national television channels and important dailies. The research aims at exploring grand narratives about old age in Czech media, topics which are covered and the context within which seniors are placed in Czech media. The research addresses the question of whether the current media representations of old age and seniors are really stereotypical and distorted as research on foreign media suggests. Data were analyzed by quantitative content analysis.

<u>Brief overview of current knowledge of the research topic</u>

Population ageing has become one of the major characteristics of modern developments in Euro-Atlantic societies and situation in the Czech Republic is not an exception. The rapid second demographic transition, increasing hope of reaching a high age and other deep demographic (and also interconnected social) changes gradually change the shape of the Czech society. The evaluation of these changes by various social actors oscillates between an almost glorifying account of previously unseen achievements of the human race and eugenic statements about the destructive influence of ageing populations on the well-being of whole societies. This, understandably, justifies an increasing interest in research. The attitudes of the society toward ageing and old people are one of the major topics in this respect. (Haškovcová, 1989; Pacovský, 1990, Kuchařová, 1996 etc.). Thus far, however, only minimum attention was paid to old age as a social (socially constructed) phenomenon and the role of the media in the creation of this construction. Our findings though suggest that as of 2005 in the Czech Republic there is no indication of detailed analysis of media

culture and an interpretative analysis of media messages in connection with old age. In 2005 Diakonie CČE in Prague ordered the first pilot research on the media representation of seniors (Sedláková, Vidovićová 2005) as part of an extensive project "Seniors and I" (NROS project). This paper refers some findings from this project.

Media, as it appears, are actually some of the major actors that participate in the creation and structuring of our everyday reality and they help us overcome the uncertainty of surrounding events. Media messages are actually themselves socially constructed. This does not apply only to entertainment genres such as series or adventure films but also genres that are based on the representation of reality such as news. Although the medium succeeds in creating the illusion that the presented information faithfully mirrors reality, everything that the media present to us is only a certain representation – a retelling that contributes to the further construction of reality. The extreme nature of media representation of reality is reflected by popular saying: "that what is not in the media as if never happened". In our approach to others who share our everyday reality thus a whole range of constructed stereotypes and generalizations is reflected – these are the result of the superficiality and constructivism of media messages. According to Burton and Jirák (2001) stereotypes shared by the media tell us a lot about the society in which the media operate. This closes the imaginary circle. Media reflect the sphere of their influence while they themselves in return re-construct it. If we accept this thesis we must ask what the mutual interaction between ageing societies and the mass media is like. What qualities does this relationship have? And what image or reflection of old age is returned to the society? Researches made in the western countries (e.g. Bazzini et al. 1997; Signorielli 2001; *Mass longevity…* 1998, Evers 1999; Ross 2001 etc.) found that seniors are underrepresented in audiovisual media as compared to their share in the population, they are significantly more often mentioned in a negative context such as violent crimes or economic problems of the society and they are visualized as helpless or old people. All these foreign projects arrived at the same major findings. Can we expect similar findings in the case of Czech media? How do contemporary media approach the topic of old age? Do Czech media inform about seniors objectively or do they present certain stereotypes and thus support negative attitudes that the public holds towards seniors? Are the representations of Czechs of pension age balanced or are the topics biased? These are questions which we lay down in the pilot study with my colleague from the School of Social Science of Masaryk University in Brno – Lucie Vidovičová.

We have analyzed media messages printed in five important dailies and the main news bulletins of the three biggest national television channels issued in 2004. The pilot analysis was conducted using the news monitoring service provided by the Newton IT agency (news were provided without visual documentation). But we kept in disposition only the transcriptions of the articles and TV shots – what was restrictive especially in the case of audiovisual media. The sample selection was based on the occurrence of key words in articles published in dailies (*Blesk, Hospodářské noviny, Lidové noviny, Mladá fronta DNES, Právo*) and main nationalwide television news reports: *Události* (ČT1), *Televizní noviny* (Nova), *Deník* (Prima) in the period between 1 January 2004 and 31 December 2004. The selection of the relevant news items was done on the basis of the following key words: *senior, seniors, pension, (male/female) pensioner, retirement,*

retired person, old age, old aged people, old, old woman, old man, elderly, elderly person, grandmother, grandfather. We have analyzed according to 8000 printed articles and about 260 news shots.[1] Although the number of messages may seem high – in the total amount of all messages published in year 2004 in monitored media it represents only a imponderable part. Therefore we can not talk about systematic coverage of the topics related to age and aging. Topical coverage of senior's life is in monitored media considerably selective and differs according to intensity in particular periodicals and TV stations Apart from one daily (Mladá fronta Dnes) we cannot talk about systematic coverage of the topic.

Table 1 – The portion of articles printed in daily newspapers and news broadcast in television

Printed media	
Mladá fronta Dnes	72 %
Blesk	13 %
Hospodářské noviny	5 %
Právo	9 %
Lidové noviny	1 %
Total (approximately 8 000 articles)	*100 %*
Audio-visual media	
ČT1 - Události	29%
Prima - Deník	32%
Nova - Televizní noviny	39%
Total (261 news shots)	*100%*

In the pilot project we analysed the content of the media messages with the help of content analysis on the basis of the major signifying categories to which they were related. Though newspaper articles and television reports were analysed separately, in the end we find very common types of context in which the information about seniors and ageing were framed by the journalists in the newsrooms. Following topics were identifying: *economy, criminality, tragedy, social problems, culture, health, human interest stories, demography, housing* and *politics*. As shows the table 2 – in both type of the analysed media almost the same categories of topics were found and in very similar proportion of news in each of them.[2]

The biggest attention was paid to news from criminal area, in which seniors act as offenders as well as victims of criminal offences. Although it may seem that the topical spectra, in which we learn about seniors is quite wide, it is not truth. The three most referred categories (criminality,

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[1] See table 1.

[2] As H. Rusu advised me during the conference – similar topics and their respective shares in news service were disclosed in my previous research focused on the image of Romas in media. Therefore we can consider hypothesis, that this structure of topics only imitates general representation of particular topics in Czech media and that we would get analogical results from analysis of any other phenomena. Unfortunately, a study which would research spectrum of topics covered in Czech media, is not available. Therefore we were not able to accomplish comparison. In our case, the representation of particular topics is probably just reflection of so called journalist routine and casual journalistic practise of news presentation.

political economy, tragedy) made up the majority (more than 72 %) of all reports. There was only a small space left for other topics. When doing a content analysis it is often emphasized to also pay attention to topics which media don't cover at all. For example we didn't note any reports about discrimination of seniors. Viewers were rarely notified of problems which describe everyday life of people in pension and of their activities. Reports were generally notifying of separate topics mainly from the majority point of view. Only in some cases seniors were given a chance to express their opinion of the situation. Besides, seniors were asked to express their opinions only in cases, when they weren't satisfied with reported situation. This conduces to perception of seniors as chronic complainers dissatisfied with benefits provided by the welfare state. Inappropriately chosen names of this group of people also contribute to biased perception of seniors. In particular, names like *old people, grandma, granny, and grandpa* shift perception of people concerned in the report toward image of very old, helpless and kind people. Image of seniors printed and broadcast in Czech nationwide TV stations and daily paper is not neutral, but rather imbalanced and simplifying.

Table 2 – Topic of the news about seniors

Topic	Printed media newspapers articles		Audio-visual media television reports
Economy	34 %	Criminality	38 %
Criminality	28 %	Political economy	27 %
	-	Tragedy	12 %
Story	8 %	Story	9 %
Culture	8 %	Culture	2 %
Social politics	7 %	Social politics	6 %
Health	4 %	Health	2 %
Demography	2 %	Demography	1 %
Politics	2 %		-
Housing	1 %		-
Other	1 %	Other	1 %

Summary

To verify of falsify conclusions of some foreign researches, which talk about unequal representation of seniors in media, we would need information on total number of published articles in all periodical and that, unfortunately, was not possible. None the less, on the basis of preclusive outcomes of the research realized within the project "Senior and I", it is possible to declare that in Czech media environment, questions relating to seniors are underrepresented in terms of the amount of information as well as its variability. Seniors are a group that print as well as audiovisual media report on selectively and in a stereotyping manner. Seniors are, in Czech media, particularly described as economic and social problem, cause of overburden of pension system, as victims of

criminal offences and catastrophes or as authors of bizarre criminal offences. Common attribute of Czech media senior is poverty or mental defect. Vice versa, if they don't fit in this scheme, they are admired for their extreme or unusual vitality or life story. Although it is common to distinguish between tabloids and traditional media, in our case it is very difficult to trace the division. Almost all of the monitored media use slightly scandal language and attributes in order to boost the drama of the situations. They are also used to describe the cases in detail or in an effort to concisely express the essence of the situation, which usually goes beyond the information need. The only exception is the newspaper *Hospodářské noviny*, which saves its reputable face even while notifying of seniors. We haven't noted any differences in style of messages between the public service TV and commercial stations.[3]

It isn't possible to bring forward more detailed conclusions of carried out research. The above presented findings are more likely just inceptive, preliminary results of the effort, focused on monitoring of the image of seniors and age in Czech media. We tried to capture what media predicate about the seniors and aging problem. We also focused on topics and situations which media choose and whether there are any distortions during the processing and presentation of the information.

It follows from the above summary that media representations of seniors are considered an important empirical indicator of the society's approach to the issue of ageing and that the quality of these representations can tell us much about the dominant discourse within the given society. With this report we wanted to contribute to discussion on the seniors and aging as a media topic. Wa also wanted to draw the attention to certain areas in which media could contribute to form age inclusive Czech society of the 21st century. The fact, that image of seniors created by media matters, illustrates following citation, which we consider to be a motto of our research project:

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[3] It is necessary to mention that, besides the verbal comment, the visual site is also important for the apprehension of the message. We haven't had Access to that part of the reports. The importance, which the massage represents for the viewer also depends on his self, his experiences and knowledge. It is therefore impossible to unambiguously summarize the impact of described style of TV newscast on it's viewers.

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Raluca Popescu
WHAT DO JOURNALISTS THINK ABOUT WOMAN TRAFFICKING*

Argument

Mass media represents an important actor in preventing and combating human trafficking due to its role in shaping the public opinion. The awareness campaigns developed through public and private TV and radio stations along with newspapers and magazines are notable initiatives that should be continued.

However, the way in which individual cases are presented, often based on the sensational character of the phenomenon, does not help the public to understand the risks and the consequences of the phenomenon. At the public opinion level, the confusion between prostitution and trafficking for sexual exploitation is still dominant, while the victims are often regarded as responsible for their situation.

In this context, the journalists' perceptions on the phenomenon, as important actors in public opinion forming, represent a major aspect in understanding the general attitude regarding woman trafficking.

Methodological aspects

The aim of the study is to identify and to analyze journalists' perceptions on woman trafficking. A special focus is given to the differences in attitudes towards trafficked women in reference to the recruitment methods, especially through casting and matrimonial agencies.

The study is based on a qualitative research. 37 semi-structured interviews were conducted with journalists from written press (central and local), TV and radio stations, in June – July 2005. The investigated journalists have experience in this field; all of them have previously presented cases of woman trafficking in media.

The study is structured on three main parts. For the beginning, the paper presents a brief description of the main characteristics of the phenomenon in Romania, based on the analysis of the assisted cases. The second part examines the journalists' descriptions of the cases they presented in media, tackling in what extent the basic facts are the same as those resulting from the analysis of the assisted victims. In the end, an analysis of the journalists' perceptions on the phenomenon is addressed and further implications are discussed.

Trafficking in Romania – an overview[1]

Trafficking persons represents a serious problem of the Romanian society, with several social and individual implications and reaching alarming dimensions.

Romania is one of the main countries of origin within South Eastern Europe for trafficking in persons, but also a transit country for trafficking from Moldova, Ukraine and other countries from the former Soviet Union.

Table 1. Number of Victims Trafficked to or Originating from Romania, 2000 to 2004* (assisted victims)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Romanian trafficking victims	163	261	243	194	193	1054
Foreign trafficking victims	2	0	3	8	18	31

Source: IOM, Second Annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe, 2005
* based on primary data provided by IOM Mission in Bucharest, Resource Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons (Ministry of Administration and Interior), NGOs and other relevant organizations.

The number of victims assisted from 2000 to 2004 is 1054, but the actual number of trafficked persons is expected to be far higher because of the obvious under registration of the phenomenon; also, data about victims identified and assisted in destination countries are not included.

The slow decline after 2002 in the number of victims assisted is also questionable. Data can be tricky if we consider that year the turning point in the dynamics of the phenomenon, because it is also the year in which new legislation permitted Romanian citizens to travel abroad without visa. In fact, trafficking has become less visible, the route has changed from former Yugoslavia countries to Western European countries, traffickers have changed their strategy, using more subtle forms of control and coercion (rather psychological than physical). Trafficking has become more connected and facilitated by the circulatory migration in Romania[2].

Romanian victims of sexual exploitation were trafficked to 22 destination countries in 2003 and 2004, most of them in the EU area. The majority of victims were female, trafficked mainly for sexual exploitation (85% in 2004). Men were also among assisted victims, trafficked for labour, begging and delinquency. Minors represent a significant share of assisted victims (over a fifth).

A multiplicity of factors, including economic background, family relations, education and employment, contribute to vulnerability to trafficking.

Characteristics of trafficking for sexual exploitation victims

Age. The most in risk group is 18-25 years old, only a few cases of trafficking being reported after this age category. Minors under 18 represent another group of risk. Young people, particularly young women are easier to be attracted in going abroad, many times voluntarily. They

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[1] source of data presented in this chapter: *Second Annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South Eastern Europe* (Rebecca Surtees) International Organization for Migration, 2005
[2] The relationship between woman trafficking and circulatory migration was revealed by previous researches being described as "Failed Circulatory Migration" (Lăzăroiu, 2000).

are more likely to assume risks, having less to loose in terms of social status. On the other hand, if considering several purposes for trafficking, such as prostitution, or hard working, the young people are more 'profitable' for the respective aims.

Residential area. Roughly equal numbers of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation originate from rural and urban areas but most of them are recruited in towns, where they are attending school or working.

Region. The high percentage of victims comes from Moldova (over 40%), the poorest region in Romania, demonstrating the higher risk associated to poverty.

Education. Most victims assisted have graduated middle education studies, slightly below the average education level in Romania. Recent studies stressed that lack of education was not a direct indicator of trafficking for sexual exploitation (IOM, 2005). Rather, vulnerable women regard education as a valueless strategy for succeeding in life (Alexandru and Lazaroiu, 2003).

Occupational status. The majority of women were not employed when they were recruited, but an important share of victims was under 18 year old and attending school at that time. The occupations they are involved in are rather low – qualified (agricultural or domestic worker, waitress, seller, factory worker, shop assistant, etc) with rather low earnings and generally low levels of satisfaction with work. The link between employment and trafficking is explained to a certain extent through willingness for a better job.

Family status. Most assisted victims were unmarried and without children. Only 10% were involved in a relationship and a fifth has children. As in the case of age, a similar explanation works here, too: the single ones have less to loose, and are more open for taking risks.

Economic status: Economical standard is an important contributor to trafficking. Most victims are describing themselves as poor, but a noteworthy number has average living standards: at least one of five victims has an average economic background. Victims perceive their current financial situation as unsatisfactory. Aspirations for higher standards shape a subjective poverty more than an objective one (Alexandru and Lazaroiu, 2003: 34-36).

Family and social relations. Violence and abuse are important contributors to victims' willingness to migrate, increasing the risk of trafficking. Over a third of the victims reported violence and problems at home. The majority of victims come from normal family environments though. Lack of communication between parents and children on important personal issues seem to be a quite common situation. A survey focused on this topic reveals that vulnerable girls/women have generally poor social capital and they usually lack parental guidance and control.

Values. According to the most recent study on this topic, vulnerable girls are rather independent and "risk-takers". They do not feel close to their families and do not believe in the prevailing importance of family. They do not value education as the means for a successful life. They tend to believe that money would justify the acceptance of any job and display a lower than average trust in public institutions (Lăzăroiu and Alexandru, 2003). The model of a successful migrant among acquaintances can serve as a significant push factor for victims.

Recruitment Experiences

Victims are usually recruited by men (in almost two third from the total cases), but there is an increasing tendency to use females as recruiters. Most of them are acquaintances (around 40%) and friends (over a third). The recruitment through familiar persons covers the majority of cases (77.6% of cases in 2003 and 89% in 2004), becoming more spread in recent years. Still, an important share of victims were kidnapped, but with a drastic reduction in the last year (2003 – 15.1%, 2004 – 2.6%).

Victims' Trafficking Experiences

Almost all victims were recruited with a work offer, mostly in traditionally female roles in the service sector (waitress, dancer, domestic worker, seller, nanny, other care giving activities). Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation worked in various locations – bars, brothels, streets, private homes, etc. The majority of victims reported poor living and working conditions. However, victims reported some improvement over time, with diminished use of violence and receiving some payment.

Data seem to reveal a shifting strategy of the trafficker based on diminished use of violence and increased use of manipulation tactics, such as paying a minimal salary, providing clothing and even allowing the victim some leisure time and freedom of movement. It can be observed a "professionalisation" of the trafficking industry in which traffickers make a strategic decision to use more subtle forms of control and coercion (Surtees, 2005).

Post-Trafficking Experience

Victims were identified and referred mainly by law enforcement authorities, including upon extradition from destination countries. Other identification came through self-referrals, embassies and NGOs.

In Romania, there is no centralized mechanism for the screening, identification and referral of trafficking victims so there is no common methodology for the documentation of cases. The assistance for reintegration has generally been available only to victims who agreed to be involved in legal proceedings, so that few victims have received public assistance.

Woman trafficking as presented by journalists

Police represents the most important source for journalists in contacting traffic cases. Other sources often mentioned by interviewed journalists were International Organization for Migration and Nongovernmental Organizations.

The analysis of the case descriptions offered by the journalists (cases investigated and previously presented in the press by them) reveals several main characteristics of the victims.

General victims' profile

Age. The trafficked women were young, most of them between 18-20 years. The minimum age mentioned was in case of a girl of 14 years and the maximum was a woman of 32 years.

Education level is medium-low. The most frequently mentioned education attained was high-school or vocational. Several cases have only primary school or gymnasium, and none of them have post secondary education or high education.

Occupation: The most frequently mentioned status was unemployed /without occupation. For those employed, the occupations they are involved in are rather low – qualified: waitress, housekeeper, baby-sitter and dancer.

Family: All journalists describe the victims' family as disorganized, conflictual, sometimes poor, mostly from rural area.

Recruitment

The method of recruitment. The most frequently mentioned recruiters were acquaintances. Cases of traffics through labour force placement agencies or by casting / matrimonial agencies were less encountered.

Transportation. Journalists mentioned that in most of the cases they examined, coach was the most frequently mentioned mean of transportation. For those trafficked by acquaintances, the car of the traffickers was mentioned.

Route: Two main routes were pointed out: one to Western Europe, mainly through Hungary and Austria, ramified to other destinations – Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal and another one to South-eastern countries: former Yugoslavia (Serbia, Bosnia, Macedonia) or Albania.

The trafficking network. There is a lack of information on this topic. The recruitment structure and placement network in destination country are mafia-type, well organized, connected to weapons or drugs traffic. There were indicated three cases in which the traffic network included certain persons from the police force, especially to facilitate getting passports and visas.

Repatriation

Usually there is no information about the cases after repatriation. Almost all journalists admitted that they do not monitor the cases after repatriation, and they do not have further information abut victims. Only a few of the interviewed journalists know about victims testifying and trialling against the traffickers, but without any information regarding the victims after the lawsuit. Only three of the interviewed journalists have information about victims receiving specialized services of counselling and therapy.

The similarity of the main characteristics

Comparing the basic facts of the phenomenon resulting from the "objective" analysis of the assisted victims presented in the first chapter, with the description of cases presented by interviewed journalists, the main findings generally converge. The victims' profile of the cases presented by journalists is very close to the profile of victims assisted. The girls are young, middle –low

education, unemployed or employed in low-qualified jobs, not married and have no children, with disorganized and conflictual family environment, poor or at least with middle – low living conditions. Acquaintances were the most frequent method of recruitment. Most common destination countries are Western European countries or former Yugoslavia countries, the last ones less frequent in recent years.

After repatriation, information about cases is scarce. The good knowledge of the journalists usually ends here. What happens to the victims after returning, how well are they assisted and socially integrated, these questions are unanswered. Explanations for this are various. Fear of traffickers or fear of stigmatization can determine the victim itself to be evasive. Besides, in many cases, the information is not collected directly from the victims, but from the organization / institution which assist her or other intermediary sources, this tertiary relationship explaining the lack of information. A more controversial hypothesis can be stipulated though. After the repatriation the cases are no longer sensational, presenting this part may not be that appealing to the audience

Journalists' perceptions about trafficking victims

The general profile of the trafficking girls

The journalist perception about the trafficked girls can be described as having two main cores: a "tough" core, grouping unanimously agreed characteristics and a "weak" core, grouping more disputed characteristics.

The tough core gathers "objective" characteristics about their family / community of origin, education and in a lesser extent regarding their moral profile. According to the tough core, the victims come especially from rural or/and disadvantaged areas and poor communities. They lived in families with problems, disorganized, dominated by conflicts and alcohol abuse, with weak family relations on the background of parents' lack of interest regarding children. Their level of education is medium or low, and they are uninformed about trafficking risks. They are described as vulnerable, naive, „immature", „easy believers", "girls who believe that everything that flies can be eaten".

Weak core covers rather "subjective" characteristics, related to their physical aspect and their moral values. They are „pretty" and they make use of their physical qualities: „because of their physical aspect, they are very popular in their group". They do not have "solid" ideals and values; they are „confused about their life ideal". They want a rapid enrichment in their life and have a „doubtful moral profile", tending „to choose easy ways of living". Moreover, some journalists consider that „often trafficking is an alternative accepted by the 'victims', considered as a new opportunity abroad"

The girls profile by recruitment method

The recruitment way seems to be an important discriminator in victims' profile. The girls trafficked through casting agencies are described in a larger extent through features from "weak"

core. Interviews reveal a clear inclination of the journalists to blame them for their situation: *„Those who ask for casting agencies are good looking and they know what they're doing. Usually they complain if they are not paid"*. The majority of interviewed journalists sustain that they are at least partially aware of risks: *„90% of them know, they have done this in the past hoping this time for a better pay"*, but *„not always these risks are properly evaluated"*.

Many journalists describe the profile of the girls trafficked through casting and matrimonial agencies in opposition with girls trafficked by acquaintances, friends or relatives or even kidnapped. They admit that in these cases, the girls' awareness is almost inexistent. In all the cases traffickers make use of the girls' trust.

Public opinion about trafficking

Asking about what is, in the view of the journalists, the public opinion about this phenomenon, they describe it as quite indifferent to the phenomenon. However, there are signals that the public's attitude is changing, *„blaming the phenomenon", "requiring a more serious intervention of the authorities for controlling and reducing the phenomenon"*.

The public imagine of the trafficked girls, as perceived by the journalists, is differentiated by recruitment methods. Those trafficked by acquaintances are regarded with compassion, *„they are naive who became victims of a very dangerous individuals"*. Those trafficked through casting agencies have a negative image, being considered responsible for their situation (*„The image of girls trafficked through casting agencies is those of luxury prostitutes, aware of what they're doing"; „The public consider that the victims deserve their faith because of their longing for quick and easy getting"; "The public attitude is mostly of contempt, blaming or mocking"*)

Asked about intervention methods on trafficking through casting and matrimonial agencies, the journalists consider that authorities should involve more, expanding their monitoring and control functions, imposing restrictive conditions in authorizing matrimonial and casting agencies, periodically checking these agencies etc. Other measure mentioned was to strengthen the professional association of casting agencies, which will expose the firms suspicious of human trafficking. The initiative would be in the benefit of the "fair" casting agencies, which have a deteriorated image because of these illegal firms.

The perceived role of the mass-media

All interviewed journalists show an enlarged trust in media capacity to support the prevention and combating the phenomenon. The role of mass-media is perceived as rather an informative or "awareness" one. The cases presented increase the public awareness of the risks and consequences of the phenomenon. Also the journalists' inquiries are seen as supporting the state institutions in investigating the phenomenon. Many concrete solutions were pointed out, as consolidating European and international press networks in this field, action already initiated by IOM, which requires more journalists involving and more attention from authorities.

However, the attitudinal change toward this phenomenon, especially toward victims, was mentioned only by a small part of the interviewed journalists.

Conclusions

The journalists prove to have quite different images about victims and consequently, different attitude towards them. Those trafficked through acquaintances or kidnapped display an image of naïve girls, who come from problematic areas, with low human capital. They are pitied, regarded with compassion and sympathy. Those trafficked by casting agencies and in a lesser extend those trafficked through labour force placement agency display a negative image, the victims being blamed for their situation.

The journalists' perceptions on public opinion represent in fact their own image / attitude in the mirror, projected on public. It results the same distinction between naive and innocent girls trafficked by acquaintances or kidnapped, and those trafficked by casting agencies, partly aware of what they're doing and thus responsible for it.

The attitude towards the phenomenon and especially towards the trafficked girls through matrimonial and casting agencies is not viewed as part of the problem. The role of mass-media is perceived as rather an informative or awareness one, not as one of changing the general attitude on human trafficking.

The main argument used against victims, in accordance to which problems they face are the result of their choices, cannot be entirely accurate. On one hand, we could still expect innocent victims to appear, as result of the persisting gaps of knowledge in the population or new unexpected operating procedures of the recruiters. On the other hand, even when the victims are initially aware of the situation, they are completely deprived from alternatives afterwards; they cannot change their mind, as they abused and trapped in the trafficking networks

A moral discourse on woman trafficking is not productive. The trafficked woman could be "social innovators" (Lazaroiu, 2000) who try to find solutions to an unstable, critical environment, who assume risks, as young spirits, but often with limited socio-cultural capacities, which lead to failure. The upholding of a "blaming the victim", attitude does not help the public to understand the risks and the consequences of the phenomenon, limiting the means to avoid the threat for potential victims and affecting the victim's reintegration. The association of trafficking with prostitution and the stereotype of the victims responsible for their situation increase the confusion, reinforcing the belief that "it couldn't happen to me". The prevention and especially the social reintegration processes would be seriously affected.

We can not ascertain the extent in which this negative perception explains the current deficit of public support for the victims of the trafficking, but it is reasonable to believe that it provides part of the explanation. Policies aimed at diminishing the phenomenon and helping the victims to reintegrate are less likely to stand as a political priority when they are not backed by mass-media, as an expression of the collective opinion. Also, public stigma pushes victims further away from the mainstream society.

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BOGDAN VOICU, TETYANA BASINA
Social capital and civic participation in Ukraine and Romania

A very 'sexy' concept in the '90s, social capital continues nowadays its impressive career as one of the major determinants use for explaining the differences in development levels among societies. The bulk of the literature is based on the works of the three founding fathers (Bourdieu, Coleman, Putnam), with some punctual distinctions (bridging versus bonding social capital and missing/negative social capital – Woolcock, Narayan, Collier, Paldam; considering mass protest actions as an indicators for social capital at societal level – Weltzer et al, 2004; etc.). Most of the analyses are describing how social capital is shaped within a particular community or society, but there are several comprehensive approaches trying to identify common patterns and to compare the levels of social capital in different societies (Rose, 1999; Raiser et al, 2001; van Schaick, 2002; B.Voicu, 2005 etc.).

Our paper attempts to combine comparative analysis with substantially describing what is beside the scores describing the stocks of social capital in two East European societies: Ukraine and Romania. The background of the analysis is a comparative study of bridging social capital in Europe, based on EVS/WVS 1999-2001 data (Voicu, 2005). The analysis shows that Ukraine and Romania share similar patterns on most of the social capital dimensions. Both societies are quite large in size, which can raise the question of homogeneity; they have a high proportion of rural (and traditional) population; they have important ethnic minorities, they share the recent experience of the communist regime; they are poor etc. On the other hand Ukraine was part of the USSR, and was not independent in its recent history until the 1990s, while Romania was, at least formally, an independent state during the 20th century.

What we aim is to use existing literature at local level (Ukraine, respectively Romania), as well as the secondary analysis of existing qualitative and quantitative data for the two societies, and punctual observations of everyday life, in order to check if those similarities are to be found in the respective examples quoted in the literature and in those existing data. We focus mainly on the bridging social capital, but some examples are also related to bonding social capital.

A brief review of the literature opens the paper, setting up the main dimensions in which we are interested. A short discussion of the differences between different European regions completes the introduction (based on Voicu, 2005). The core of the paper is devoted to qualitative (& quantitative, when data are available) descriptions of how the comparative data are reflected in the social reality of Ukraine, respectively Romania. Bringing into focus anecdotic examples of how relations and trust are build in smaller or larger communities, we qualitatively describe how often Ukrainians, respectively Romanians, are meeting their friends; if and how they prefer to develop relationships within the kinship; how often they tend to involve in associative life; we discuss the most prominent mass protest actions which took place in the two countries - focusing on the role played by social capital and civic action propensity in the development of the respective phenomena; we discuss (and bring qualitative examples) for the levels of social trust in each

society. A common, but flexible grid and structure shapes the presentation of the data for the two countries, allowing both the description of each society, but also subsequent comparisons. The conclusive part is devoted to discussing the differences and similarities between the two societies.

Defining social capital

Popularized by Bourdieu (1986, 1999), Coleman (1988, 1990), and Putnam (1993), social capital is best defined through its elements. Social relations, membership in associations, generalized trust, trusting institutions, involvement in mass protest actions were used over time to operationalize the concept (for reviews of the literature, see, by example, Portes, 1998; Robinson et al, 1999; Dagsupta and Serageldin, 2000; Mihaylova, 2004, to mention only a few sources).

Considering collective action "as the central reference point in any definition of social capital' (Weltzel et al, 2004), one may focus on those elements of social capital that contribute to enhancing social development. However, the relatively recent analyses (Narayan, 1999; Putnam, 2001; Woolcock, 2000; Paxton, 2002; etc.) tend to impose the distinction between bridging and bonding social capital as a crucial one. Bonding social relations and trust manifest through developing ties almost solely within the immediate groups of affiliation. They let place for collective action within these small groups, but also close them, making them impenetrable to outside connections. They decrease the informational content of the social ties (similar people have access to similar information, therefore they can not add very much to the initial stocks), foster intolerance and normativeness, decreasing trust in outside groups and individuals. Lack of generalized trust hinders cooperation between different social groups that may share common problems that need collective solutions. Bridging social capital, in contrast, allows access to a greater variety of resources, supports public debate and common solutions to the society issues, fosters individuals' involvement in society development, and even common socialization and fastens social solidarity creation.

The bridging-bonding distinction may be largely overlapped with the positive-negative effects of social capital (Collier, 1998). Bonding social capital has indeed, on long run, extremely negative effects (see for instance Banfield's example of amoral familism). However, for specific purposes, it may catalyze the efforts of small community for solving immediate problems, such as those generated by natural disasters.

This paper considers mainly bridging social capital, but pays attention to the bonding one, too. A brief review of the literature shows out that Eastern Europe has been often described as a place which lacks bridging social capital. Richard Rose's (1995, 2000) metaphor of hour-glass society which describe the Russian post-soviet society may be applied to some extent to the rest of the former communist block, lacking substantial ties between different social strata. Paldalm's and Svendsen's (2002) discussion of missing social capital in CEE also refers mainly to the lack of bridging social capital in the area. Åberg (2000) notes that Western Ukraine is rich in negative (or non-communitarian) social capital.

Figure 1. Patterns of social capital across Europe
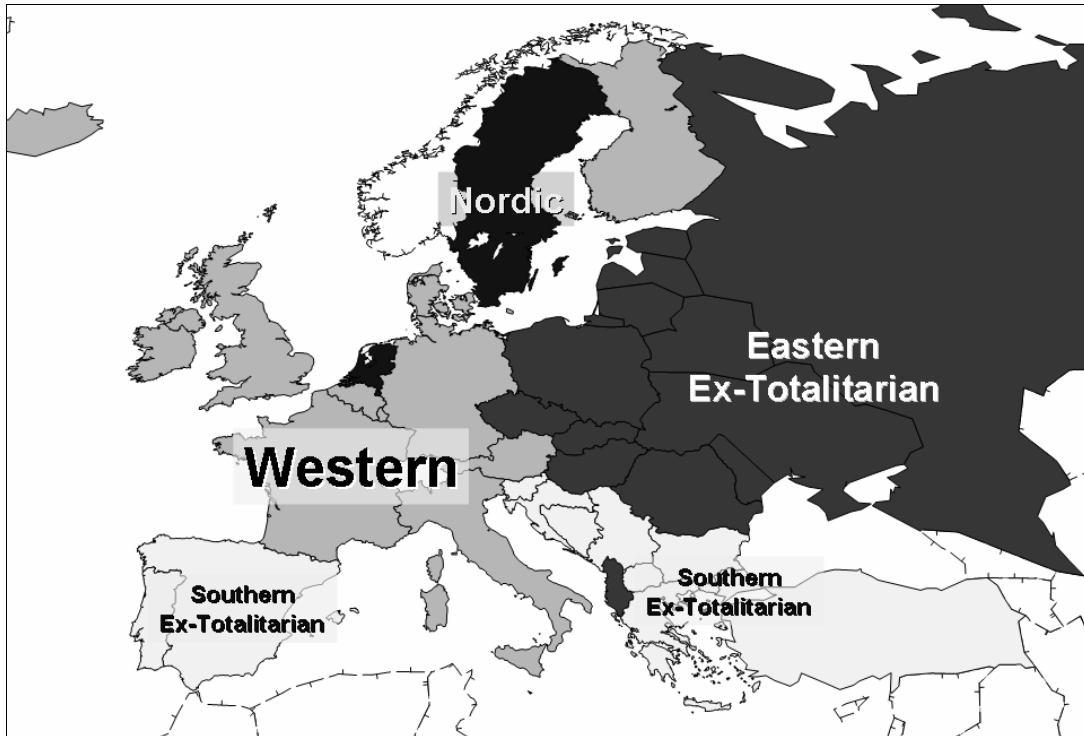
Note. The white spots indicate the lack of data for the respective country. Data source: EVS/WVS 1999-2001 data set. (the picture is reproduced from B.Voicu, 2005, with the permission of the editors)

Table 1. The four patterns of bridging social capital across Europe

	Nordic	Western	Southern Ex-Totalitarian	Eastern Ex-Totalitarian	Romania	Ukraine
% of people *spending time with friends weekly*	**67%**	60%	**64%**	40%	36%	43%
% people considering *friends at least as important as family*	**71%**	58%	55%	40%	34%	49%
# *memberships in associations*	**1,8**	0,7	0,4	0,3	0,12	0,14
social trust (% of people trusting the others)	**62%**	37%	20%	21%	10%	24%
trust in institutions (factor score of trusting police, press, labor unions, the social services, the UN)	**0,37**	0,24	-0,21	-0,10	-0,30	-0,24
involvement in protest actions (% of people declaring that they have participated in at least one petition signing, lawful demonstration or boycott action)	**77%**	**62%**	32%	31%	18%	26%

Note: The bolded figures indicate the higher scores for the respective dimension (row). Grey background reflects the minimums. Data sources: EVS/WVS 1999-2002, computations by B.Voicu, 2005.

In a previous work, Bogdan Voicu (2005) showed that from the point of view of the levels

of bridging social capital, postcommunist societies tend to cluster together in one of the four consistent groups of countries that define Europe. With the exception of the Balkans, the former communist societies share similar patterns of meeting friends, valuing friendship (as compared with the family), membership in associations, trusting people and institutions, involvement in mass protest actions. When considering all the six dimensions depicted in **Error! Reference source not found.**1, the Nordic societies appear to be the richest ones in bridging social capital. The Western cluster immediately follows, but with lower generalized trust and incidence of involvement in associations. Higher sociability, indicated by the frequency of spending time with the friends, separates The Southern and the Eastern clusters.

Social Capital in Romania and Ukraine

Friendship and meeting friends

Romania

There are many visible signs which qualitatively describe the intensity of the social relations within a certain society. Institutionalized informal settings where people meet, the relations with the in-laws, the way in which ritualistic events – such as the weddings – happen, the importance given by the elites to the public debate, the number, activity, and social image of the NGOs etc.

Socializing with friends proved to be more important for development than socializing with work colleagues, neighbors and family, in this order (Peri 6, 1997; B.Voicu, 2004, 2005). Frequently meeting friends implies the existence of some institutionalized places where people can meet. The traditional set up in the Romanian villages is the bench in the front of the courtyard for women and the local pub for men. The bench decreased its importance over time, almost disappearing in better developed villages, while the pub is more and more a simple place where the main activity is drinking and it is negatively defined by the social representation. In towns, the restaurants could play the role for informally meeting friends and debating the public interest issues. Romania, especially in South and in the East, is a country with very few restaurants. During communism, dinning out was officially labeled as a bad behavior and stigmatized as bourgeois, while the products where scarce. Consequently, the number of restaurants was very small. In the beginning of the nineties, most of the restaurants which did existed outside the downtown, bankrupted. They used to lack clients during communism too, but the irrationality of the communist system kept them alive. When confronted with the free market, they needed to adjust to the existing demand. Immediate closure occurs, as mentioned, but, almost simultaneously, brand new restaurants flourished in new locations, mainly in the central areas. They attracted especially new generations of adults, since the older ones (and I am not referring the retired persons) lack the culture to meet friends in restaurants. Actually they lacked the habit to meet friends no matter where. Poverty is only part of the problem. Mistrust in the public space (Voicu, 2004; Verdery, 2003) is another: during communist, anyone could be informant of the political police or – as the rumors where saying – everywhere a microphone could be planted. Therefore, the risk of discussing

anything in public spaces such as restaurants was too risky. Beside this, the society values were rather traditional, excluding the habit to meet friends when growing older. Family was, and still is, perceived as being more important and much more trustful. The small number of restaurants acts as one of the indicators of low propensity towards meeting friends.

Meeting friends in other public spaces which facilitate informal interactions, such as voluntary associations is also low, since such associations have a very low incidence as compared with other European societies.

Turning back to the rural areas, one may raise the question of the usual lawn, where people used to meet and to debate about the public problems. For Romanians, the respective place has an almost mythical character, as part of the traditional rural society, after its description as such in a famous novel[1]. Meeting there was institutionalized and the respective lawn, located somewhere, in the heart of the village, played the same role as the Roman plaza did in the Roman Republic. Nowadays it seems that it seems that it almost disappeared as institution. Paradoxically, this happens especially in the most traditional villages.

Without excluding the private space as a place for meeting friends, let note that it has less capacity to enhance public debate and to really act as a place for meeting friends. First, the size of houses is low, and can not accommodate more than few people that can meet. Second, it is traditionally devoted mainly to meet family. Third, the mentioned culture of not-meeting friends after young adulthood, acts in this case too. Quoting a Romanian sociologist, one may say that "In rural Romania the networks are based on and built around kinship relations" (Lăzăroiu, 1999: 42). I would add that urban areas do not differ very much.

However, neither rural, nor urban is homogeneous. If comparing Western villages with Eastern ones, one can note a higher propensity to involve in community actions and to cooperate with the rest of the world, as well as a higher tolerance in the Western Romania. Public space is used more often for debating the local problems, while more symbolic actions – such as fêtes and celebrations – occur, offering the villagers the opportunity to meet, to strengthen their ties and to reinforce their in-group and inter-group mutual trust. Specific institutions – such as the Saxon-type Nachbarschaft[2], the "popular assembly" gathered at the request of the community leaders, the above-mentioned lawn etc. works for sustaining such a relatively higher associative life[3].

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[1] I refer Marin Preda description of "Poiana lui Iocan", in the novel "Moromeţii". "Poiana lui Iocan" is nothing else then a lawn, located in a courtyard of the village where the novel's action happens. People use to meet there, smoking and drinking, and discussing about everyday life, public issue, naïve philosophy etc.

[2] In Romania, the institution of Nachbarschaft (neighborhood) exists mainly in the (former) Saxon villages. People with similar status from a certain village form such a Nachbarschaft, usually grouped depending of their position in a certain neighborhood (they live on the same street/s, for instance). The Nachbarschaft plays the role of instance for solving community problems as an expression of communitarian solidarity: it helps those which are in need when hazard occurs; it has line sets, plates and dishes, tables and benches which are used at weddings, funerals, local festivals etc.; it decides in some communities actions such as repairing or building roads and ensure the community participation etc.

[3] See Voicu & Voicu (2005) for the description of a set of six Romanian rural communities and comments about the differences in capital social levels due to different degrees of modernization and East-West location. Some other communities described in the Romanian sociological literature fit the model: Fulga (described in Berevoiescu, 1999), Comişani (Lăzăroiu, 1999; Lăzăroiu & Lăzăroiu, 2000), Greaca (Ocneru,

The wedding parties have an important symbolic role in describing a society. In Romania, the accent of such a party lies on pragmatic social exchange and conspicuous consumption: lot of food and loud music contribute to setting up a bad environment for conversation. Normally there are a lot of participants, with the average around 100. They have to eat and to watch each other, since the music do not allow discussing any subject. The gifts (usually money) offered to the new couple are in many cases announced to the public, as in a contest, underlining both the pragmatic and the conspicuous features of the event. Probably if the people would really feel a need to schmooze with the others, there would be some room for conversation.

As Fukuyama (1995) stressed on, the structure of the business management and the rules for selecting employees differ among societies, depending on the type of social capital to be found in the respective social environment. In Romania, the importance of the family/kinship networks in developing business seems to be very high. For instance, within the top 300 wealthier persons yearly sat up by the *Capital* journal[4], in 2004, 4 out of the top 10 position were taken by persons who run businesses within the immediate kinship. Among the remaining six persons, 4 had a long experience of living abroad or acted as partners for Western companies. None from those which run business within the family and are in the top 10 experienced longer period of time living in Western countries.

Table 2. The distribution of the richest Romanian citizens, depending on their style of doing business and their background experience

	Top 10	Top 30	Top 50
From which…			
…Do run businesses which involve the immediate kinship	<u>4</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>18</u>
Born in Romania	*4*	*9*	*14*
Born in Arabic countries	*0*	*2*	*3*
Are/were living abroad (Western countries)	*0*	*0*	*1*
…Do not involve family in their business	<u>6</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>39</u>
Have only Romanian experience	*2*	*11*	*30*
Are/were living abroad or are born in Western countries, or are partners of Western companies	*4*	*8*	*9*

Source: Own computations according to *Capital top 300, November 2004*.

The examples ay continue if investigated the rest of the top, with the limitation that starting with position 31 the details about how they run their businesses are very scarce. Overall one can notice the huge proportion of the businessmen running at least part of their business with or even within the close kinship/family. This may be another good sign of bonding social capital at societal level.

2000), Moşna (Berevoiescu & Stănculescu, 1999); Voineşti (Mihăilescu, 1997; Mihai, 2001), Cândeşti (Pop & Rughiniş, 2000; Mihai, 2001), Biertan (Tufiş & Tufiş, 2000), etc. Informal meetings, public debates over the local issues, collective action for producing the public good, developing cooperative projects without the intervention/initiative of external actors (such as the Romanian Social Development Found) are to be found in better developed as well as in the Western areas.
[4] *Capital. 300 cei mai bogaţi români*, no. 3, November 2004.

Going further, a short comment may be devoted to the Internet communication. Its incidence is rather low in Romania, even as compared with other ex-communist societies (Hollanders, 2003; B.Voicu, 2004). However, the interest of this paper is not about how many people use Internet, but how they communicate using the e-technologies, as a rough indicator of their skills to communicate. A society rich in bridging relational social capital is a society in which people are able to communicate, which implies the ability to clearly state the messages and the skills of approaching unknown partners (which is frequently the case on the Internet). I have firstly considered the messages received by the Research Institute for Quality of Life between 1st of December 2004 and 31st of May 2005, from Romanian citizens, excluding any kind of official communication (from other Institutes, from Romanian Academy, or from Romanian or international agencies) or spam. The focus was therefore on personal communication of the individuals with the respective organization. 24 e-mails were considered: 7 lacked a clear statement of the aim of the respective communication; 14 (more than a half) lacked any salutation formula; in 8 cases the name of the sender was not specified. Only in 7 cases (less than a third), all the three indicators of good communication skills were present. This may be a rough prove of how frequently the respective individuals (all younger and better educated than average) interact with other people/organizations.

Ukraine

The situation in Ukraine is not very much different from that in Romania. Socializing with friends usually happens in private settings, at homes, rather than at institutionalized places such as restaurants. The reasons are much the same as in Romania: in the first place, not every Ukrainian can afford dining out regularly. Another important reason is the lack of culture of dining out, as in the former Soviet Union, besides being expensive, this was also seen as "bourgeois" and inappropriate. Finally, outside of large cities, especially in rural areas one can hardly find a restaurant with an appropriate level of service; rural bars are often places of heavy drinking and consequent violence.

Meeting friends is important for Ukrainians and is one of the most frequent pastimes. For example, in the study reported by Panina (2004) respondents were asked what leisure activities they performed during the past 7 days. 52.6% of respondents reported that they were visiting friends and 35.6% said they received friends at home. Compare this to the percentage of people who visited restaurants, night clubs, etc: 4.8%, visited cinema: 2.7%, theaters, concerts, museums: 2.2%. This is a stable tendency over the period of 1994-2004.

Friendship is significant for Ukrainians not only as means of socializing and leisure. Friendly favor often allows solving everyday problems, such as finding job, finding a good doctor, getting discounts, borrowing money, etc. While the overall level of social security is low and the infrastructure of broken, a favor from a friend can help resolve a situation in the easiest way. For example, if one needs a loan, one would rather not approach a bank, where interest rates are often prohibitively high and conditions for loan approval are quite strict, but rather ask his friends.

Membership in associations

Romania

Estimating the number of Romanian NGOs is a tough task. Overtime they were used as tools for various means: for instance, during the mid-nineties, the low allowed NGOs to import cars legally avoiding the custom taxes, if the car would be used for the NGO's activities. Many "foundations" were founded for importing cars for the founding members at lower costs and never actually had any activity. Some others were simply founded, but as they lack founding, they have no activity at all.

Keeping in mind this limitation, let note that the estimations of the total number of registered NGO's varied at the end of 1999 between 7.000 and 30.000 (M. & B. Voicu, 2003: 155). No matter if the NGO is active or not, the maximal figure was lower than the corresponding one from the rest of the ex-communist countries except for Bulgaria, Albania, some former Yugoslav societies and the Slavic part of the NIS. When reporting the number of voluntary associations to the size of the population, the distances grow. According to L.Ilie (2004) in 2000 Romania had a lower number of non-profit associations per capita than all the other EU candidates, except for Bulgaria. The differences maintained in the beginning of the 2000s (see Table 3).

Table 3. The incidence of the NGOs in the ex-communist societies (2003)

Society	NGO's	Inhabitants per NGO	Society	NGO's	Inhabitants per NGO
Estonia	19.653	71	Georgia	4.348*	1.012*
Slovenia	18.000	111	Armenia	3.565	1.066
Hungary	62.000**	163**	**Romania**	**17.373**	**1.289**
Czech Republic	58.000	178	Moldova	2.880	1.493
Croatia	23.800	181	**Ukraine**	**30.000**	**1.607**
Slovakia	20.000*	270*	Serbia	4.000*	2.057*
Lithuania	12.000*	292*	Kazakhstan	4.000	3.700
Russia	450.000**	318**	Albania	800	3.875
Macedonia	5.100	392	Kyrgyz Rep.	1.050	4.762
Montenegro	1.550**	419**	Belarus	1.980*	5.000*
Bosnia-Herzegovina	7.929	429	Tajikistan	1.250	5.040
Latvia	5.000**	460**	Azerbaijan	1.400	5.857
Bulgaria	8.000	875	Uzbekistan	3.000	8.467
Kosovo	2.000	925	Turkmenistan	270	20.741
Poland	41.000	942			

Sources: USAID's NGO Sustainability Index reports: Levinson & Stuart (2002), Stuart (2003), Anderson & Stuart (2004). Notes: *data for 2002; **data for 2001. The number of NGOs is the either the number of official registered non-profit associations or an estimation of the respective figures, where it was not available.

Many of the active associations are rather leader centered than associative. The members expect that the elected/named leader should do everything. Decision is not consensual, and the work follows similar patterns, with a much higher charge for the elected officers. Volunteering is also rare, and this supports the maintaining of the higher number of tasks for the leader and almost no duties for the regular members of the associations. Foundations, many founded or inspired by

Western/international partners, are different, since they use paid employees which have clear responsibilities, but they act similar in the low frequency of recruiting volunteers.

The entire society developed overtime a non-participatory culture and some mistrust regarding NGO's: in November 1998, some 22% of the population declared to have "much" or "very much" trust in the NGOs, while 51% expressed "few" or "very few" trust[5]. 27% of the respondents could not decide what to answer, probably due to their low familiarity with what NGOs are and do. The figures recorded in 2001, 2003 or 2004 were similar, with the precaution of the changing measurement methodology. For instance, in November 2004, 19% expressed trust in NGOs ("much" or "very much"), 55% mistrust them ("low", "very low", or "no trust at all"), and 26% were undecided or refused to answer[6].

The precaution attitude towards NGOs supported and was reinforced by the NGO's rejection by the Government during the 2000-2004 mandate. During the 2000-2004 mandate, I have noticed many government officials expressing, in private discussions, their belief that the NGOs are a source of wasting national resources, and they should not be encouraged to exist. A similar attitude was to be noticed in public interventions. On the other hand, the most active NGOs were opposed to the respective Government being closer to its opposition from the beginning and they had a similar position towards the Social-Democrat party since early 90s. The situation changed in 2005 when some NGO leaders became part of the Government, as they also did in the precedent Governments of the center-right coalitions (1996-2000). This political enrolment of the NGO movement did not contribute to the image of the civic society as independent actor between the main political forces. More, it hindered the development of the non-profit sector reducing access to financing from the public budgets. Only in 2005 contributors had the right to choose directing part of their taxes to the NGOs. Until the respective moment, the available grants come mainly from international donors and EU founding.

Ukraine

Ukrainian society has grown from the Soviet society. In the USSR there were a number of formal organizations, membership in which, although formally voluntary, was a necessary prerequisite for successful career. Starting from Young Pioneer Organization in schools, continuing with the Komsomol at a university, the Communist Party at work, as well as Trade Unions and various professional unions such as Union of Artists, etc., a Soviet citizen was obliged to participate in all these "voluntary" organizations throughout his or her life. Although many of them were conceived with useful goals in mind, bureaucracy often reduced them to a burdensome formality. Thus majority of members considered their membership as unnecessary, but would not leave their organization because it was considered inappropriate and could hurt their careers. As the result,

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[5] According to the Public Opinion Barometer of the Open Society (Soros) Foundation, a biannual research on national representative sample, carried out since 1994 to 2005.
[6] The low trust with which the Romanian society credits the NGO sector is also of the general mistrust in institutions (see next sections), but it also express the unfamiliarity with the respective type of organizations, both due to communism, underdevelopment and traditionalist thinking about the societal arrangements.

with the fall of the Soviet Union most of these organizations fell apart, leaving their ex-members with a strong belief that any association is a useless formality. Panina (2004) shows that the level of trust to public associations, Trade Unions and political parties remains low throughout the period of independence: 15,2%, 17.1% and 8.5% of respondents trust public associations, Trade Unions and political parties correspondingly.

As Table 4 shows, the structure of involvement in different types of public associations remained almost unchanged starting 1994. the dominant majority (over 80%) do not belong to any kind of association, while most of the people who join an association as members choose traditional organizations, either trade unions (in many the membership is more or less mandatory), or the religious associations.

Table 4. Political & civic involvement in Ukraine: membership in different types of organizations, 1994-2004

	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Club	2,0%	1,6%	1,3%	2,5%	1.2%	1.7%
Political party	0,7%	0,5%	0,9%	0,8%	2.2%	1.9%
Public-political movement	0,4%	0,4%	0,4%	0,2%	0.7%	0.6%
Ecological movement	1,3%	0,9%	1,5%	1,1%	2%	1.3%
Public organization, foundation, association	0,9%	0,6%	0,6%	0,8%	0.7%	0.7%
Non-traditional trade union	3,3%	1,0%	1,4%	1,5%	0.3%	0.4%
Artistic union	1,2%	0,4%	0,7%	0,6%	0.4%	0.5%
Sports club, society	3,2%	2,7%	2,7%	2,8%	2%	2.1%
Professional association	2,7%	2,3%	2,0%	2,9%	2.8%	2.9%
Student society, youth organization	1,7%	1,6%	1,4%	2,0%	1.8%	1.4%
Religious organization, church community	3,0%	3,3%	3,9%	5,2%	4%	4.2%
Farmers' unions	0,7%	0,2%	0,3%	0,7%	0.9%	0.4%
Other organization, union, movement	0,7%	1,1%	0,6%	1,0%	0.9%	0.7%
Not member of any civic or political organization	82,2%	86,7%	86,6%	82,9%	83.9%	83.8%
No response	0,9%	0,0%	0,2%	0,1%	0.2%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Panina, 2004: 13.

It is interesting to note that the youth, the most active group of the society and also the one least affected by the Soviet legacy, also shows low interest in public associations. According to sociological research and statistical data, youth non-governmental organizations, despite the stable tendency to grow in number and diversity (for example, from year 1992 to 2000 the number of nation-wide youth and children non-governmental organizations grew from 7 to 97 (Ukrainian Government, 2002: 109), are often limited in the number of members; their majority represent a local level only; most importantly, they are often unknown even in the youth environment. The percentage of the youth that participate in such non-governmental organizations in the last 10 years remains practically constant at about 2-3% (Table 4).

Table 5. Registered public associations as of Jan 1st, 2004.

	Registered public associations		
	Total	International	Ukraine-wide
Total	**1978**	**399**	**1579**
Political parties	96	–	96
Public organizations	1882	399	1483
Public movements	8	3	5
Associations for national relations	123	43	80
Youth associations	113	8	105
Of them students'	15	–	15
Children organizations	9	1	8
Women organizations	42	4	38
Associations of veterans and people with disabilities	58	10	48
Of the veterans of war	12	–	12
Professional associations	335	45	290
Environment protection organizations	51	16	35
Organizations for protection of historical and cultural monuments	2	–	2
Sports and physical training organizations	241	15	226
Associations for protection from aftermaths of Chernobyl catastrophe	31	22	9
Scientific and creative associations	143	36	107
Educational, cultural associations	162	38	124
Other public organizations	564	158	406
In addition, unions of public associations	76	4	72

Source: Panina, 2004: 110.

Some new tendencies became visible during the recent presidential election campaign of 2004. Important role in the events of the "Orange revolution" that decided the outcome of the vote was played by a grass-root organization "Pora". This tendency to revitalize public associations is new and requires further research. Currently too little time has passed since the elections for reliable data to appear, thus it's difficult to judge the stability of this trend. At this point one can only pose hypotheses about its origin and perspective. However, one can't help but notice that grass-roots organizations such as "Pora" appeared and started massive activities exactly before the election campaign and seemingly disappeared after it. One can hypothesize that their origin is not entirely grass-root and was influenced by the political forces that they later supported and helped to win.

Trusting people & institutions

Romania

During communism, the public place was a place of lying, where one should not invest trust. Through its often arbitrary, therefore unpredictable, actions, the state promoted pervasive mistrust

in institutions. One of the consequences was a higher focus of the individuals on horizontal relationships and investing particularized[7] trust, instead of generalized one (Vasilieva, 2002). In this context, when assessing the political role of the most salient civic organizations from the communist block (such as Charta 77, Solidarity etc.), one may note that they were created as a reaction against the "state-induced mistrust" (Warren, 1999:12), and they mobilized the existing roots of civic action. Meanwhile, in some societies, they paradoxically contributed to polarize the society, and to further reduce the propensity towards generalized trust.

Most of the salient Romanian civic formations, such as the Civic Alliance, The Group for Social Dialog, or The League for Defending Human Rights played similar roles in early 90s, immediately after the communist breakdown. They radically opposed to the first elected governments, which they have labeled as neo-communist, contributing to decreasing trust in the institutions controlled by the respective Government, as well as to decreasing trust between the supporters of the two opposed political coalitions: the "neo-communists" and the center-right "historical" parties. The phenomenon is still present today but at lower intensity.

On the other hand, as Sztompka (1999) coined out, the stability of the law and of the existing institutional system condition the levels of trusting institutions. Repeated changes decrease not only the trustworthiness that the laws shape the "right" direction for organizing society, but also the familiarity of the individuals with the respective regulations. This lack of knowledge and understanding of the system contributes to diminishing the belief that the institutional system may "encapsulate the interest" of the individuals[8].

Romanian legislation changes very often. Few examples may be relevant. The educational system suffered strong and repeated revisions during the last 10 years. Starting 1999, for instance, the length of compulsory education varied between 8, 9 and 10 grades almost yearly. No significant public debate occurred. In 1998-1999, even the school personnel accused the top-down approach and the impossibility to keep pace with the fast changing legislation (Voicu, 2000), which supported several changes and chocks (decentralization, increasing autonomy, adopting alternative textbooks, demographic decrease of new cohorts of students, exits form the system of well qualified teachers, dissolving some 20% of the rural school units due to lack of students etc.). Another visible example is the tax system. Repeated important changes affected it in 2000, 2003, 2004 and – several times – in 2005.

The situation is generally present in all sectors of governing, and may also be illustrated through the impressive number of so-called emergency ordinances issued by the 2000-2004 Government, as well as by the current one. No public debates preceded the respective decisions, some having high impact on the existing system of laws, issued by the executive power which substituted this way the legislative one.

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[7] Uslander (2002) distinct between generalized trust ("trusting most people") and particularized trust, which is directed towards specific groups, usually kinship, colleagues or neighbors. Generalized trust is vertical, while the particularized one is associated which the functioning of horizontal networks.
[8] Hardin (2002) showed out that trust is directly related with the conviction that the trusted person or entity get have reasons that encapsulate the interest of the individual that put his trust in the respective trusted person or entity.

The political system offers another interesting example of low vertical trust, if investigating the feelings of the supporters of a party towards the other major political blocs. Discussing the role of social capital in democratic transition, Paxton (2002) argued that it offers a place for discourse. On the other hand, low levels of bridging social capital and high levels of bonding social capital may hinder development and democracy. Let suppose a system with two major parties/coalitions. When the two forces are sensible equals, lack or very low trust in the 'other' (opposed) party may lead to the impossibility of governing, or to a very minimal government, since always an important part of the population will mistrust the intentions of the group which is in power and will not comply very much with its decisions, even if converted in laws.

Analyzing the data for Romania depicted in **Error! Not a valid bookmark self-reference.**, one may note the mutual lack of trust manifested by the electors of any specific party towards the other parties. The respective attitude reflects on the level of politicians and led to fragmented political elite, with low cooperation between the main blocks. The Parliament resulting from the 2004 elections proved, at least in the first half of 2005, to have difficulties during debates, since the PSD and the PNL-PD coalition got a similar share of votes – around 40% – and were not able to cooperate and to negotiate as opposition and government[9].

Table 6. How much trust the electors of the main Romanian parties have in the concurrent parties

voters of …	trusting „very much" or „much" in …			
	PSD	PRM	PNL	PD
PSD (the Social Democrat Party)	82%	8%	10%	15%
PRM (the „Great Romania" Party)	12%	87%	8%	14%
PNL (the Liberal Party)	9%	14%	84%	21%
PD (the Democrat Party)	23%	8%	33%	73%
The PNL-PD Alliance, as a whole	11%	7%	75%	72%

Notes: I have employed the November 2003 wave of the Public Opinion Barometer of the Open Society Foundation. PSD is social-democratic; PNL is liberal; PRM is nationalist; PD declared between 1994 and 2005 its social-democrat ideology, and had switch towards popular orientation in July 2005. PNL and PD formed a center-right coalition in 2003, and come to power after December 2004 elections. PSD governed between 2000 and 2004. Reading tip: 15% of the PSD voters have "much" or "very much" trust in PD (the possible choices for the respective trust questions were: "very much trust", "much", "a little", "very little", "not at all", "I don't know", "I do not know the respective party").

Lack of trust may be found even inside the PNL-PD coalition, between the voters of the two allied parties, which in December 2004 formed the Government with the support of two other smaller parties. In November 2003, only 20% out of the PNL voters were crediting with trust the partners from PD, while 33% from those declaring PD sympathy trusted „very much" or at least „much" their coalition partners. This highly affected the levels of trust displayed by the voters of the respective parties in the PNL-PD alliance: at the time only a half (57%) of the voters of PNL

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[9] According to Holmes (2004: 41), postcommunist societies generally lacked, at least in the first years of their transitions, a culture of compromise, allowing the supporters of opposite points of view to negotiate in order to reach a common solution. The above described mutual lack of trust is an example of this 'radicalism'.

and PD trusted the alliance. After elections, in May 2005, another survey initiated by the OSF, offered similar results. The mutual mistrust was still there, being also present inside the Governing coalition. The only important change is the 10% higher trust of PNL in their coalition partners, but PD decreased trusting PNL with the same percentage.

Changing again the perspective, trust is part of a late modern (postmodern/postmaterial) culture, as Inglehart (1997), for instance, pointed out. It implies accepting that other people and groups can be different, both in thinking and in needs. It implies a more openness and less labeling different people as "strangers". This is not the case in contemporary Romania. Gypsies, new religious movements, homosexuals, any different life-style are less tolerated[10]. Several inter-ethnic mass conflicts ended with deaths, and severe material damages in the beginning of the 90s: gypsies versus Romanians (in the village of Mihail Kogălniceanu, in 1991, as well as in Bolintin, in 1991), or against Romanians and Hungarians (Hădăreni, 1993); Romanians against Hungarians (the huge conflict from Târgu Mureş, 1990) are just the most visible examples from a longer series.

Finally, one may look at the corruption as a sign of mistrust related to the system dysfunctions. Corruption, as well as blat (Ledeneva, 1998; Verdery, 2003; Paldam and Sevdson, 2002; etc.), is part of the bloc culture given by the former totalitarian rule. Evidences from Romania shows up that bribe tend to be considered part of everyday life. About half of the Romanians (50% in 2000 – Anderson et al, 2001; 52% in 2004 – Mărginean et al, 2004) think so. As a pervasive phenomenon, corruption is perceived to dominate society. 61% think that most of the clerk is corrupted, 80% know at least a person who offered bribes, and 33% admit that they gave bribes during the last two years, while 6% declare that someone offered them bribes[11] (Mărginean et al, 2004). Corruption is related with both lack of trust in institutions and in the others and with the prevalence of the kinship networks, more trustful than other connections. Low trust in institutions involves the need to have better ways to predict their behavior. Bribing is, in this perspective, the best way to control the environment, to reduce uncertainty.

Ukraine

In the transforming society the role of the political elite increases, since the elite guides the reforms. But the elite can perform its function only when it has the trust of the people. The results of numerous sociological researches show that the Ukrainian elites have passed the stage of high trust in 1991, when transition to the democratic state was initiated. After that, throughout the first 13 years of the independence period, the trust in political institutions was very low. Thus we can speak of a crisis of legitimacy of Ukrainian ruling elite. For example, according to Panina (2004), in 2004 (before the elections), 15% of respondents trusted the President, 9.1% the Parliament, 11.2%

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[10] Sandu (2003) treats tolerance as a distinct indicator of the social capital. However, as I have shown elsewhere (Voicu, 2005), I consider tolerance as a combined effect of cultural orientations, such as postmodernity (see Inglehart, 1997), and social capital, more specifically of trust.
[11] The figure is quite high considering the fact that not everyone holds a position that can put him in a situation to receive such 'gifts' (the quoted survey does not allow to control for this). More, I expect that very few people would declare receiving bribes even when if so, due to the legal implications.

the Government, confirming the lower levels of trust registered for the respective institutions during the last ten years (see Table 6).

Table 7. The dynamics of trust in the Ukrainian President and Government: 1994-2004

	Trust in the President		Trust in the government	
	trust	do not trust	trust	do not trust
1994	11%	51%	16%	53%
1998	8%	62%	10%	61%
1999	10%	62%	13%	58%
2002	10%	59%	13%	59%
2004	13%	58%	11%	58%

Notes: 5 points scales were used in all cases. Trust includes those giving positive answers (the first two points of the scale), while mistrust includes the last two points (4 and 5). Indecision ("not sure", the midpoint of the scale) is not included in the table. Sources: Vorona & Shulga, 2004: 63-64.

The decline of the authority of the state and political structures, social institutions in general, mass dissatisfaction with the system of power distribution and other significant social resources lead to social tension increase. People were dissatisfied with the current economical situation and inability of the government to change it; they also believed that many government officials abused their status for the sake of personal enrichment at the expense of the society. At the same time, people did not see any acceptable alternative, mostly they did not engage in political opposition, but rather assumed the attitude of passive hostility to the political elite, relying only on themselves and family networks. Public social representations accuse the political and economic elite of frequently breaking the law, as opposed to ordinary citizens (Table 7). An acceptable alternative presented itself at the presidential elections of 2004. The distrust in the then-current political elite and its candidate, prime-minister V. Yanukovich, was one of the major factors contributing to the ultimate victory of the opposition candidate, V. Yushchenko. Currently the new government enjoys a high trust level (over 50%). Many believe that the new political force will be able to quickly improve the economic situation and eliminate corruption. Further evolution of the political trust in Ukraine will depend on how the new government will fulfill this promise.

Table 8. Public representations about the measure in which Ukrainian elites respect the law

In your opinion in which measure, the following categories respect the law in today Ukraine?	More often respect	Hard to tell	More often break	No answer
Representatives of legislature (members of Parliament)	4%	33%	**63%**	0,2%
High-ranking officials of ministries	3%	32%	**65%**	0,3%
High-ranking officials of the Presidential Administration	4%	40%	**56%**	0,6%
Ordinary officials	10%	41%	**49%**	0,2%
Entrepreneurs, business people	7%	41%	**49%**	0,2%
Citizens	**45%**	41%	14%	0,4%

Source: Vorona & Shulga, 2003: 600.

<u>Involvement in mass protest actions</u>

Romania

The communist heritage was one of non-involvement in any public protest. The former regime severely punished any attempt in this respect. The very few mass protest actions (such as the strikes of the miners from Jiu Valley in 1977, the street protest of the Iaşi students, in February 1987, the street protests of the workers form Braşov, in 1987) were rapidly repressed and no information was offered through the Romanian media. The mass manifestations from December 1989 were definitively inspired by the ones from the rest of the communist block. Notably, their initiation, at least in Bucharest, came from the regime itself[12].

The beginning of the 90s was marked by several street manifestations, culminating with the two months occupation of the University square, in the very center of Bucharest, by some ten of thousands people daily opposing to the new regime, considered as a communist. As a sign of irreconcilable perspectives, lack of dialog between the implied groups and violent counterdemonstrations occurred. The miners, for instance, used by leftist governments as armed justiciar troupes, occupied several times Bucharest (February and June 1990, September 1991, in January 1999, they stopped after winning the 'battle' with the Police forces in Costeşti – 200 km from Bucharest, and some negotiations with the center-right Government in the Cozia Monastery). In March 1990 the Hungarian ethnic pupils from Târgu Mureş manifested for having only Hungarian teaching in a local highschool while the Romanian ones protested, also through street manifestations. The conflict became violent, involving many Romanian and Hungarians from the villages surrounding Târgu Mureş. Many of the participants were wounded during the street fights. All this examples may be considered as indicators of lacking bridging social capital and abilities to negotiate. Mass protests did not served in these cases as means for negotiating, and did not actually proved the capacity of the society to organized and to mobilize forces in collective action, but the opposite. The conflicting groups may prove some roots for bonding social capital, but nothing more.

Two examples from 2004-2005, prove indices that some changes may occurred. The first one is the series of flash-mobs, used in December 2004 by the young supporters of the opposition parties as a way to protest against the Government, accused for non-democratic practices, and against the public television, accused for misinforming the public. Even if the actions had a political side, they were initiated outside the political parties, and formal organizations. Some chain e-mail messages announced the actions and informed the potential participants few days before the event (see Matei, 2004). Some tens of participants were part of each of the four protest actions, all planned to last maximum 10 minutes, at a precise hour, at a few days distance: the first implied consuming candies in front of the PSD campaign tent from the University Square and offering candies to the young supporters of Adrian Năstase, the leader of the party and the prime minister at

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[12] They have gathered a huge number of people to manifest their solidarity with the regime. However, the crowd roved to have other feelings and become uncontrollable.

that time[13]; the second involved deflating blue[14] balloons in the same place, then leaving; the third action, also held in the University Square, after the first official results from the ballot were published, consisted in sticking on the coat the adhesive stamp that proved voting[15]; the fourth flash-mob was to apply, as a protest towards lack of democracy, for immigration in the Congo Democratic Republic; finally, the last action in the series, implied covering the mouth and flexing the ankles[16], in from of the public television building, as a symbolic protest against the obedience of the respective TV channel in front of the Government. Despite the low advertising of organizing the flash mobs (only electronic messages and SMS were used), and the anonymity of the organizers, there was some notable participation. More, no violent incident was to be noticed, despite the fact that in most cases the PSD supporters were there, gathered around the respective party's campaign tent from the University Square.

The second type of recent examples invokes the demonstrations of support for the Romanian journalists kidnapped by the Iraqi terrorists. Several tens or hundreds people were daily present, in the same University Square, in the spring of 2005, to manifest their solidarity with the three journalists and their guide. Bridging social capital, particularly for the younger generations, but not only, was manifest in this case.

One should note that all the above examples have many in common with the politics, even if they are not originated in the activity of political parties or lobby groups. We recorded no salient example of civic mobilization, no local protest against an entrepreneur or company, no petition signing for obtaining better access to something, no boycott against commercial practices. The case of manifesting solidarity with the kidnapped journalist is different, but it still implies some political decision, such as the involvement of the Romanian military forces in the Iraqi war. Several local and larger protests were organized by the labour unions, including strikes and street manifestations. The main topics were the salaries or privatizing some particular companies. The Government was the target for the most of the unions' protest action. The number of such actions, as well as the number of participants seems to decrease from 1990 to present.

Ukraine

In the first 13 years of Ukrainian independence (1991-2004) there were very few cases of mass protest actions. The relatively low support for such actions (see Table 9) explains somehow the causes. Behind these lies nevertheless a non-participatory culture, as well as the lack of organization of the civic society: as we previously showed, the number of voluntary associations is quite reduced.

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[13] Năstase was nicknamed "Bombonel" ("little candy gay"). The sense of the protest was that the people, including the electors of Năstase, should eat candies, not elect them…

[14] The color used in campaign by the same Social-Democrat Party.

[15] During the 2004 elections, the Government was accused for defrauding, by letting its supporters to vote several times: the sticker that proved voting was easy to unglue from the identity card; some organizations of the party in power were suspected to organize buses to transport sympathizers from a locality to another, in order to vote.

[16] „Keep your mouth and flex the ankles" is a Romanian saying for keeping low profile, obey and do not protest against the orders.

Table 9. The level of social acceptation of different protest activities in Ukraine, 1994 & 2004

Which of the following protest activities appears to you as an effective and admissible measure for me to adopt when considering the need to protest about something?	1994	2001	2004
Collecting signatures for a petition	17%	20%	22%
Lawful meetings and demonstrations	17%	27%	19%
Participation in election campaigns	16%	20%	-
Threatening a strike	8%	9%	4%
Boycott (refusal to comply with the decisions of the administrations and other bodies of power)	7%	9%	3%
Picketing of government offices	4%	8%	5%
Unauthorized meetings and demonstrations	2%	4%	1%
Hunger strikes	2%	4%	2%
Establishment of armed forces independent of Presidential and governmental control	2%	3%	-
Unlawful strikes	2%	2%	1%
Seizure of buildings	1%	2%	2%
None of these methods appear as an effective and admissible measure for me to adopt	32%	30%	37%
Difficult to answer	30%	27%	19%

Source: Panina, 2004: 18.

For 2004, the levels of support for specific protest forms seemed to record a slight increase: in Panina (2004) study, the respondents were asked what form of legal protest they would chose if their rights or interests were violated by the government. The most frequent answer (36,6%) remained "no form seems effective to me". However, 21,8% would participate in signing petitions and 19,2% in public meetings. Thus we can say that Ukrainians did not participate in mass protests, despite being dissatisfied with the government, primarily because they thought that such protest would not result in any change. On the hand, in late 2004 we saw a massive outburst of protest during the events of "Orange revolution" in Ukraine. This apparently signifies a new tendency for more active social position and civic participation of Ukrainians.

Why such as radical change happened is one of the hottest and most highly debated topics in Ukraine. Currently no-one can claim to have an exhaustive explanation. One can only suggest hypotheses. We think that massive participation in the protest actions was influenced by a combination of causes. First, Ukrainians really were dissatisfied with the current regime, which is confirmed by the low level of trust in the past. The opposition candidate, Victor Yushchenko, managed to persuade the electorate that he is different from the old elite and that he has real chances to win – thus, for the first time in the modern history of Ukraine, an acceptable alternative to the current power presented itself. Second, after the election results allegedly were rigged, the opposition called the nation to fight for their choice. In other words, they convinced the people to stand up not only for the specific candidate, but rather for themselves. This gave the protesters a feeling that they are defining the fate of their country, which was attractive to many. Finally, comparison of the "Orange revolution" to similar events in Yugoslavia and Georgia shows so many similarities that we can suspect that consultants experienced in this style of political struggle had their role in the Ukrainian events.

Such a massive involvement in a mass protest action is however exceptional, as it proved to be in the cases of the similar manifestations which accompanied the communist breakthrough in Central and Eastern European non-soviet countries in the late 80s. DDR, Czech Republic, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary experienced the same high rate of popular participation in street protest meetings in 1989, which had a very low level of formal organization. The situation remained the same during the first years after the regime changes, but participation in such actions dramatically decreased when the regime changing goal (an issue which attracted the majority consensus) was reached.

Conclusions

The quantitative data invoked in the beginning of the article find some substantial correspondence in the selected examples from Romania and Ukraine. Both countries share a non-participatory culture, probably having its roots in the communist past, underdevelopment, rural structure, lower economic development. For illustrating the levels of social capital in the two societies, we have used a multitude of indicators. Some are stronger manifestations of existing levels of social capital, while others are only proxies when assessing the studied phenomena, and get their explanations merely in other factors than social capital. Each of them offers only isolated, incomplete information, but their assembly may be used, if consistent in describing what lies under the "cold" figures offered by the comparative surveys.

We have showed out how people prefer private settings instead of public one, how they lack a culture of meeting friends, as well as, more generally, a participative culture. Developing relations inside the kinship, and giving low credits of trust to the institutions and other people were found common to both Romania and Ukraine. Substantial examples were used to show out how bonding social capital overcome the bridging one.

However, trends towards rebuilding civic society, collective action, civic and political participation, bridging social capital were mentioned for both countries. An increasing number of restaurants, associations, flash-mobs etc. stands as proof. Pervasive corruption still undermines the development of a participatory culture and of the bridging social capital, but, on long run, Romania and Ukraine seems to follow the path towards development.

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Eglė Butkevičienė
SOCIAL IMPLICATION OF THE INTERNET DIFFUSION IN RURAL COMMUNITIES OF LITHUANIA

Introduction

Information society is one of the major visions that characterize the end of 20th and the beginning of 21st century. This new type of society is described as "a new social and economic paradigm restructuring the traditional dimensions of time and space within which we live, work and interact" (Loader 1998, p. 3). Information communication technologies as itself do not change the social structure; the force for change is provided by the use of ICT in all spheres of everyday life activities. Information and knowledge we get by means of the Internet empower individuals to participate successfully in nowadays society's life.

Many authors (Haythornthwaite & Wellman 2002, Kahin & Keller 1995, Katz & Rice 2002b, Kavanaugh & Patterson 2002) analyzed and still are analyzing the way the new information communication technologies, especially the Internet, influences everyday life of community members.

According to Caroline Haythornhwaite and Barry Wellman (2002), the Internet is no more a separate world, not a special thing; it is routinely incorporated in to our everyday life. After three decades of existence, the Internet "emerged from specialized communities in the world of researchers, techies, hackers, and countercultural communities, to catch fire in business and in society at large" (Castells 2002). We use the Internet for reading online newspapers, playing games, shopping, listening to the music, watching films, banking and other everyday life activities (A Nation Online: Entering the Broadband Age 2004, Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania 2004). But mostly we use the Internet for communication. According to statistical data, in 2004 84% of the Internet users in Lithuania communicated online (Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania 2004, p. 250). Online communication involves many activities: e-mails, synchronous or asynchronous chat forums, newsgroups, MUDs[1] (Quan-Haase et al 2002). Computer mediated communication enables us to create new social contacts that is why it could promote civic ideas and activate civic participation.

But there are others who consider the new ICT as a tool to strengthen social inequality and widen the information gap, when one part of the population (haves of information) uses digital devices, while the other part of the population (non-haves) is in a digital divide (see Kahin & Keller 1995, Loader 1998, Green 2001, Katz & Rice 2002a, Servon 2002).

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[1] "A MUD (Multiple User Domain) is a textual virtual environment with built-in features described to users as they enter the "room" (Green, 2001, p.xxii). Each user takes control of a computerized persona/avatar/incarnation/character. You can walk around, chat with other characters, explore dangerous monster-infested areas, solve puzzles, and even create your very own rooms, descriptions and items." (http://www.mudconnect.com/mudfaq/mudfaq-p1.html#q1).

The key questions framing this article are as such:

- What is the impact of the Internet use on civic participation? Could the Internet be considered as a tool for promoting ideas of civic society, increasing participation in public activities?

- What are the opportunities and the main obstacles to use the Internet in rural areas?

- Do rural residents really want to take the opportunities offered by the Internet? What are motives to use the Internet – public-directed or self-directed?

- What about those who do not use the Internet? Is there a threat of social exclusion for rural residents who do not use the Internet?

In the first section of the paper the main theoretical debates about the impact of the Internet on civic life and social activity are presented. The second section discusses patterns of diffusion of the Internet in respect to socio-demographical dichotomies such as urban/rural, rich/poor, young/old, etc. and demographical situation and social context of rural communities in Lithuania, emphasizing the role of local community centres in rural settlements. In the third section I present evidences from a pilot study "*ICT diffusion in rural communities of Lithuania",* examining prospects and obstacles for using the Internet in rural communities of Lithuania. The pilot study is only a starting methodological point at the analysis of this issue, describing the common tendencies and exploring the main questions and areas that should be investigated more deeply in the further studies.

Debating the impact of the Internet on social activity and social capital

In *Bowling alone* (2000), Putnam argues about decreased community sense in American society. The last several decades have witnessed a striking diminution of regular contacts with fiends and neighbours (Putnam 2000, p. 115). He provides some possible reasons for the diminishing role of social capital in American society, arguing that observing went up and doing down, and "watching a team play is not the same thing as playing on a team" (Putnam 2000, p. 114).

In modern contemporary societies people are less doing, but more watching. According to the survey, people are most likely to spend their leisure time watching TV (Putnam, 2000). Another reason – young generation is not interested in community life and community organizations.

Quan-Haase, Wellman, Witte and Hampton (2002) try to explain the situation arguing that young people could have been engaged in other activities than their parents or grandparents had been. The evidence suggest, that community becomes embedded in social networks and community relationships moved from easily observed public spaces to less-accessible private homes, where people may go socialize online (Quan-Haase, Wellman, Witte & Hampton 2002).

Undoubtedly, ICT brings qualitative changes in to almost all spheres of society life (see Bell 1973, Castells 1996, Lyon 1986, Webster 1995). But the question is how these changes should be evaluated?

According to theoretical debates on the impact of the Internet on social activity, there are several opinions:

- The Internet has positive impact on social activity. It increases the density of social network. The studies show (see Quan-Haase, Wellman, Witte and Hampton 2002) that people are the most likely to use the Internet for communication – e-mails, virtual chats and conferences. That is why the Internet can be helpful to maintain the relations which due to the separation in geographic location otherwise could be lost. Computer-mediated communication can be stimulus not just for maintaining, but also for expanding social networks and creating a new form of community – virtual or cyberspace community which often is based on the same interests (Rheinhold 1998).

- The Internet has negative impact on social activity. It decreases the intensity of social participation. Robert Kraut and his colleagues (1998) found that people who use the Internet heavily tend to be lonely because virtual communication creates weak ties which are the reason for social isolation. Thus the Internet does not increase social network, but vice versus, it creates social isolation and reduces social capital.

- The Internet has no impact on social activity. It depends on the person, not on the Internet itself.

Putnam (2000) is cautious when speaking about the impact of the Internet on social capital. He is more negative than positive about this. He believes that "it is much too early to assess the long-run social effects of the Internet empirically" (Putnam 2000, p. 171). He holds a "middle" position saying that "neither the apocalyptic 'gloom and doom' prognosticators nor the utopian 'brave new virtual community' advocates are probably on target" (Putnam 2000, p. 171).

Putnam claims that some special characteristics of virtual communities (like absence of nonverbal cues, anonymity, easy-in and easy-out) does not facilitate to creation of social capital, especially in terms of building trust and reciprocity, because "if entry and exit are too easy, commitment, trustworthiness, and reciprocity will not develop" (2000: 177).

Computer-mediated communication is suitable for social network development, but does not facilitate building of trust and reciprocity:

> … because of the paucity of social cues and social communication, participants in computer-based groups find it harder to reach consensus and feel less solidarity with one another. They develop a sense of "depersonalization" and are less satisfied with the group's accomplishments. Computer-based groups are quicker to reach an intellectual understanding of their shared problems – probably because they are less distracted by "extraneous" social communication – but they are much worse at generating the trust and reciprocity necessary to implement that understanding" (Putnam 2000, 176).

In recent years we can notice wide discussions about positive impact of the Internet on social capital building in virtual communities. This issue was discussed by Quan-Haase, Wellman, Witte and Hampton (2002), Mark Ginsburg and Suzanne Weisband (2002), Ben Daniel, Gord McCalla, Richard Schwier (2002), Sheizaf Rafaeli, Gilad Ravid, Vladimir Soroka (2004) and others.

Sheizaf Rafaeli, Gilad Ravid, Vladimir Soroka (2004) argue that social networks are essential element for virtual social capital:

> We claim that reading and posting in a forum creates a social network where all participants, both active and passive, acquire social capital by getting access to valuable information, learning the social norms of the relevant virtual community and getting to know active participants (Rafaeli, Ravid, Soroka 2004).

They define virtual social capital of community as "a collection of features of the social network created as a result of virtual community activities that lead to development of common social norms and rules that assist cooperation for mutual benefit" (Rafaeli, Ravid, Soroka 2004).

Quan-Haase, Wellman, Witte and Hampton (2002), analyzing how does the Internet affect social capital in terms of social contact, civic engagement, and a sense of community, found that as the Internet is incorporated into routine practices of everyday life, social capital is becoming augmented and more geographically dispersed. They also found that the Internet use supplements existing participation in organizations and politics and the Internet does not draw people to greater civic engagement. On the other hand, Quan-Haase, Wellman, Witte and Hampton (2002, p.318) claim that their data have not supported dystopian fears that the Internet isolates people and reduces civic engagement.

In virtual communities, like in physical ones, different participants have different degrees of social capital. The use of the Internet does not necessarily add social capital, but definitely can do this.

Contemporary scientists have formulated the terms like information poor and information rich (Green 2001). An approach like this emphasizes the circumstances of people with access to minimal or large amounts of information. People who do not have or have limited access to information resources (non-haves of information or information poor) are in the social position lower than information rich. The policies based on the idea of fundamental equity are that all people should have "trouble-free access to information" and this will promote equality (Green 2001, p. 105).

Of course, not everything depends on the access: "Access to technology does not necessarily lead to its use, and information does not necessarily fuel self-empowering activity" (Green 2001, p. 105). As Lelia Green argues:

> … access is a necessary, but by no means sufficient, condition of equitable participation. To talk simply in terms of equity of access ignores the fact that effective interaction in the information society requires high levels of motivation and sustained effort. Such keenness to interact with the technology of information cannot be assumed. Continuing motivation is perhaps the key determinant of successful participation – more important than access *per se* (Green 2001, p. 104).

Thus motivation to use the Internet is of the same importance as the access to the Internet.

ICT Diffusion Patterns in Lithuania: who are the Internet users and non-users in Lithuania?

Information technology is the core element analyzing the new, global, knowledge-based society. In today's world the use of ICT becomes one of the most influential factors that determine

both the present performance and the future conditions for the person.

This study suggests that several aspects of ICT diffusion are of a very high importance. Fist of them is an access to the Internet; and the second is availability of e-services provided by public institutions.

The number of households possessing personal computers is increasing every year in Lithuania (see Figure 1). The same situation is with the access to the internet – from 2.3% in 2000 it increased almost 5 times (to 10.6 % in 2004). Nevertheless, a share of households having computer and the Internet access is not high.

In 2004 38% of Lithuanian residents used personal computers and 30% used the Internet (Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania 2004, p.250).

Figure 1. Households possessing personal computers and having access to the Internet (%)
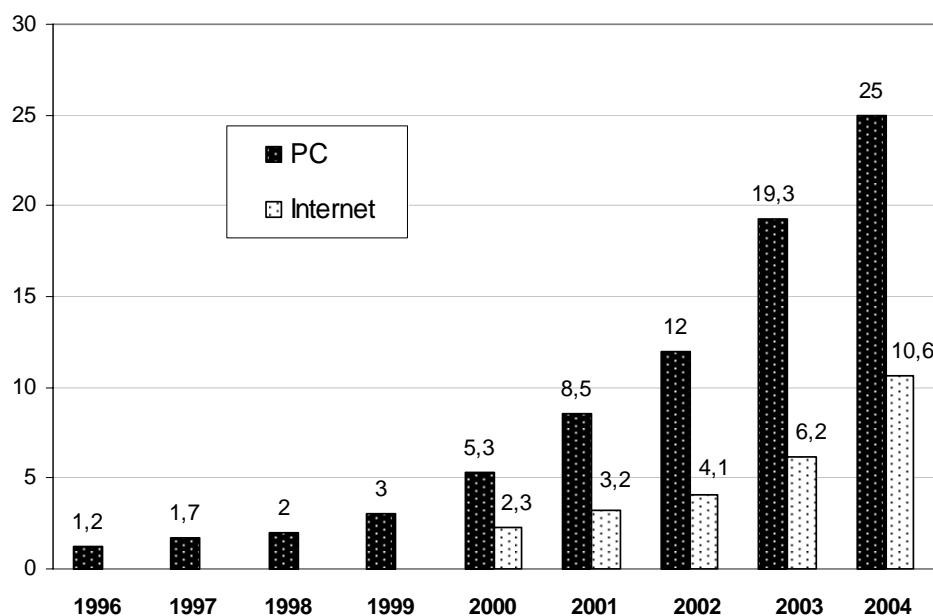
Source: Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania 2004.

Discussing the opportunities to communicate with public institutions online and take e-services, statistical data show that most of public institutions have their Internet pages and provide e-services (see Table 1). As more and more commercial activity, government services, and health and educational material are offered online, thus access to the Internet has become increasingly important.

Considering the use of the Internet, it is obvious that socio-demographic characteristics determine a gap between different groups of the population. According to the data of a survey *Digital Lithuania 2001*, performed in the framework of a study *Lithuanian Information Society*, carried out by *The Open Society Fund* (Šaulauskas, 2001), the Internet and other information technologies are mainly used by young, educated, well paid and urban consumers. The statistical data of this survey showed that people at the age of 15 – 49, who have acquired higher education or

live, or aim at living in Vilnius, Kaunas and other major cities of the country, and have high income are the most involved in the processes of information society development (Šaulauskas, 2001).

Table 1: Web pages and e-services by public administration (*Beginning of year, %*)

	Public institution with internet pages			Public institution which provide e-services		
	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005
Total	**53,7**	**56,9**	**59,3**	**33,5**	**37,0**	**50,7**
Presidential administration of the Republic of Lithuania	100	100	100	100	100	100
The Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and subordinate institutions	100	93,3	100	78,6	60,0	80,0
The Government of the Republic of Lithuania and subordinate institutions	77,8	94,4	95,5	66,7	66,7	86,4
Ministries and subordinate institutions	71,2	83,9	78,8	48,6	52,7	66,3
County administrations	100	100	100	50,0	60,0	80,0
Town and district municipalities	82,4	91,7	100	45,0	53,3	75,0

Source: statistical report (2005) http://www.std.lt/uploads/1119353144_ITP_valstybes_savivald_instituc_e.doc

According to the statistical data, the lowest awareness of the processes and opportunities of information society development is among the Lithuanians over 60, who have acquired secondary or special secondary education, live in villages, rural centres or towns and have rather low income (Šaulauskas 2001). In U.S. geographic area (rural/urban) has no impact on the Internet use. 57.2% of rural and 59.2% of urban residents were the Internet users in 2003 (A Nation Online: Entering the Broadband Age 2004). In Lithuania, unfortunately, there is a gap between rural and urban Internet users, while 35.8% of residents in Lithuanian capital Vilnius are the Internet users and just 7.9% of rural residents use the Internet in 2001 (Šaulauskas, 2001).

ICT Diffusion in rural areas of Lithuania

Rural residents still make a significant part of Lithuanian population. From the total population of 3445857 in the beginning of 2004, 33% (1148457 residents) lived in rural areas (Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania 2004, p. 54). More than 16% of total population of Lithuania is working in the sphere of agriculture (Agriculture and rural development in Lithuania 2005, 166).

In rural areas, like in all Lithuania, there is a tendency of ageing of population (Agriculture and rural development in Lithuania 2005, p. 157). The ageing of population has a negative impact on rural development and on the social context in rural areas, especially on issues related to the use of the Internet and other ICT. On the other hand, retirement due to an old age can be a factor for increased social activity and involvement into volunteering and community activities, as a

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consequence of increased spare time and diminished opportunities for communication.

In the first quarter of 2004 in rural areas 12% of households had a personal computer and just 2% of them had an access to the Internet. In urban areas the share is respectively 32.4% and 15.2% (Agriculture and rural development in Lithuania 2005, p. 162).

As figure 2 shows, just 2% of rural residents can access the Internet at home. Such situation is clearly indicating that it is very complicated to talk about building virtual social capital. That is why we should look to other opportunities for rural residents to access the Internet – public access, access at schools, libraries, workplaces, community centre.

Figure 2. The share of households with personal computer and the Internet access, 2004, in %
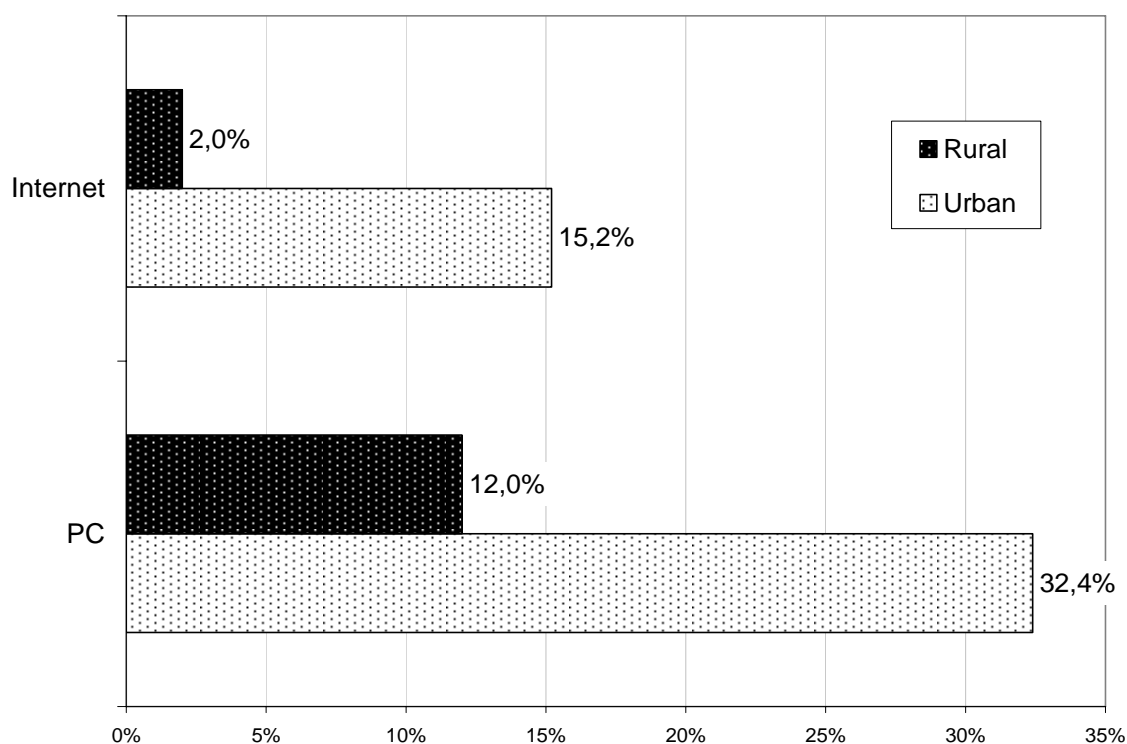
Source: Agriculture and rural development in Lithuania 2005

Local community organizations as a driving force for promotion of the Internet in rural communities

In recent years the number of rural community centres highly increased and in 2004 there were about 800 rural community organizations in Lithuania (Agriculture and rural development in Lithuania 2005, p. 182). One of he driving forces of this process is projects related to the implementation and use of information technologies.

According to the information on Community website, there are 59 rural communities

representing their activities online. That means 7.4% of all communities have their websites.

From the research "*Rural community organizations*" (Gegužienė, Žiliukaitė 2004, p. 21) several tendencies about the use of the Internet by local community organizations can be traced.

According to the data of this research, 42.5% rural community organizations have opportunities to access the Internet. Unfortunately, the connection is not so good – usually rural residents use the Internet connection of 56 kb/s through modem, but 51.7% of respondents are quite satisfied with this speed (Gegužienė, Žiliukaitė 2004, p. 21). 9.4% of rural communities (30, as total sample was 326), place important information for local residents on community website; and just 0.9% of them send information to Community portal. The most common way to inform local residents about the results or plans of community centre activities is to organize local meetings (Gegužienė, Žiliukaitė 2004, p. 25). In order to inform broader audience about community activities, 7.4% of local communities present the information on their website very often. Rural communities also send the information to the interested bodies by e-mail – 15.1% of them do this often and very often and 14.3% - sometimes (Gegužienė, Žiliukaitė 2004, p. 26). 72.2% of communities indicated that one of the major obstacles in their activities is the lack of knowledge about the use of computer and the Internet. 14.2% of rural communities plan to acquire a PC or the public Internet access in the near future (Gegužienė, Žiliukaitė 2004, p. 13). During focus group discussion in Balninkai and Raudone, participants also highly emphasized the importance of the Internet access to their community life quality improvement.

Prospects and obstacles for using the Internet in rural communities of Lithuania

The study "*ICT diffusion in rural communities of Lithuania"* tries to explore the prospects and obstacles for using the Internet for daily life activities in rural communities of Lithuania.

Methods of investigation:

(1) Quantitative: opinion survey. The pilot study represents the opinion of local communities' leaders from different regions of Lithuania, who had participated in the conference *"Active communities. Transparent self-government. Information technologies"* on 12th June, 2003. A survey is based on a sample of 72 respondents.

(2) Qualitative: focus group discussion. The survey implies data from 2 focus group discussions. Participants: members from local communities in townships *Balninkai* and *Raudone.* They expressed their opinion about the willingness to use the Internet in their everyday life activities.

Talking about community's everyday life activities and areas in which the Internet can be used, the respondents of a questionnaire-based survey identified 6 main spheres: (1) the search for information; (2) e-mail communication; (3) learning via the Internet; (4) spending leisure time on the Internet; (5) presenting the information about community activities, and (6) participating in political activities. People were the most likely to emphasise "the access to information". 95% of respondents indicated this area as the main (see Figure 3). 84% of respondents pointed out that the

e-mail communication is also important for communities' members. 81% of respondents agree that World Wide Web can be used for the educational purposes. Nevertheless, rural residents are the least likely to use the Internet for participating in political activities.

Figure 3. The expected areas of the Internet use
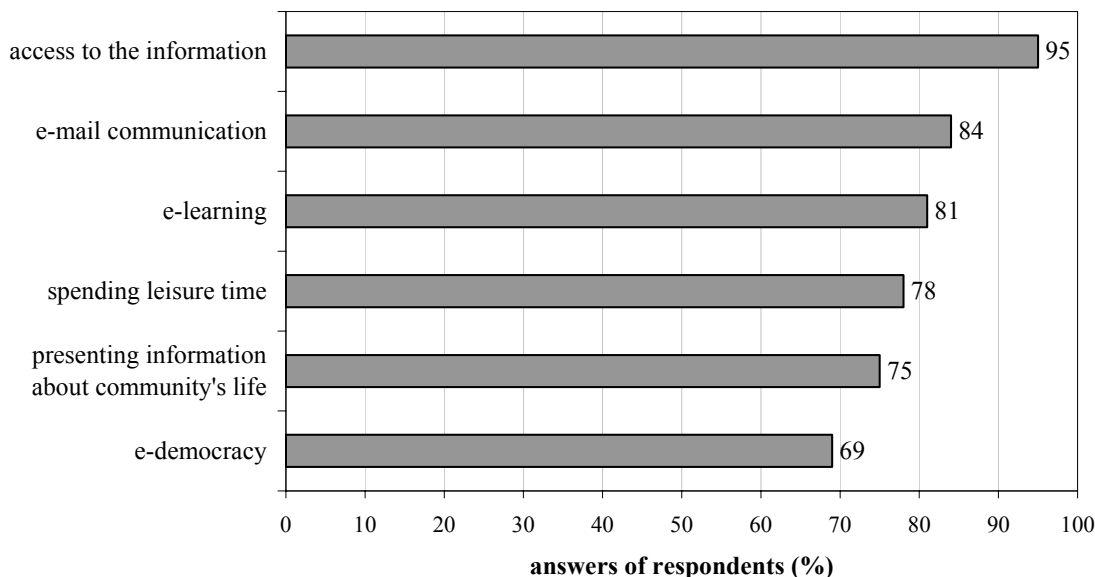
Considering the categories of the Internet users, respondents of the questionnaire-based survey pointed out that, according to their opinion, the leading users of the Internet in the rural regions of Lithuania are: (1) schoolchildren, (2) teachers and librarians, (3) municipality officials and other governmental officers, and (4) members of community centre (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Categories of the Internet users in local communities
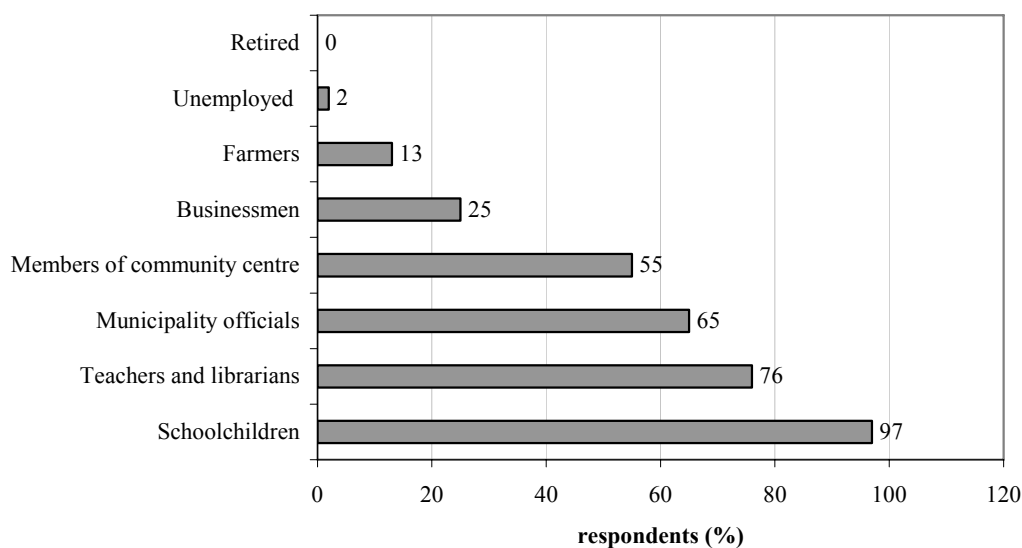
Almost all respondents (97%) agree that the Internet is mostly used by schoolchildren. The retired, elderly and unemployed people are among those who use the Internet the least. Nobody of the respondents consider retired people as active users of the Internet. These findings correspond to the data of the survey *Digital Lithuania 2001* (Šaulauskas, 2001).

According to the results of focus group discussions, the work-related reasons are the main for using the Internet. There is a relatively high level of unemployment in rural regions of Lithuania, thus a paid work is highly valued as the main source of household income. In order to be competitive in labour force market, people try to use ICT:

> …yes, work-related reasons are the main in the decision to learn how to use computers and the Internet…
>
> …the fear of unemployment is the main reason why adult people learn to use computers and the Internet. Work guaranties income and financial security. On its turn, financial security creates moral comfort.

The shift from centralized economy to market economy in Lithuania influenced changes in a labour market structure: the emergence of new professions and the dissolution of the other ones:

> …some profession became unnecessary, while new ones have emerged; so re-qualification is very important: people need new skills in using computers and new knowledge
>
> …everything is different now, new requirements for employees…even for ordinary service worker…

The other group of reasons for using the Internet is related to the individual's everyday activities. Participants of focus group discussions emphasized the need for the Internet in order to save money and time in doing daily activities:

> …you should learn to use the Internet if you want to write e-mail instead of calling by phone… calling by phone is expensive, so in such a way you can save your money… or instead of writing an ordinary letter which is time-consuming. On the Internet you can check your account in the bank and find out whether you have received your pension or to read news in online newspaper…

The diffusion of ICT can change the concept of rurality, empowering such residents with new opportunities of participating in society's life.

According to the data of opinion survey, it is quite complicated to answer the question whether the use of computers and the Internet really empowers rural residents to participate in society's life more effectively. As the data show, 35% of respondents think that there is a threat of social exclusion of some groups in Lithuania, while 30% of them consider that the traditional human relations are the most significant in community's life, the users or non-users of ICT in Lithuanian society have the same opportunities, and 35% of them do not have any opinion about this issue.

Participants of focus group discussion in Balninkai agree that

> at one point, the Internet refers to the idea of equality for all individuals in diverse society: all the information to all citizens.

As an ideal, it could empower socially excluded people, allowing them to participate in everyday activities, which previously were inaccessible, e.g. due to the shortage of time and unwillingness to leave their homes. The participants of the focus group discussion in township Raudone explain the reasons why they try to establish a public access to the Internet in their township:

> …I can not leave my home for a long period of time, so I can learn via the Internet; …You do not need to travel 50 kilometres (1-2 hours) for the lesson that lasts 1-2 hours; …It is cheaper for me to write an e-mail than to call by phone.

Thus, participants of focus group discussions agree that the Internet opens new opportunity for the individuals from rural regions of Lithuania.

In spite of the advantages and opportunities that rural residents see in the use of ICT, there were indicated the obstacles that ICT diffusion itself meet in rural regions of Lithuania. According to the opinion of the resident from the township Raudone:

> the Internet could be an useful tool, but, first of all, we need PCs and connections to the Internet here…

Thus non-equal ICT infrastructure is one of the problems. ICT infrastructure is deployed with widely varying local and regional rates of penetration, depending on factors such as geography, age and income levels. According to the survey Digital Lithuania 2001, (Šaulauskas 2001:79), in 2001 87% of Lithuanian residents, who do not use the Internet, pointed out that the main obstacle is uneven distribution of access to the Internet. People in Balninkai supported this data saying that "it is easy to have an access to the Internet in town, but here, in country it is difficult…"

The diffusion of ICT often relies on a change agent who is the most technically competent (Rogers, 1983, p.19), but in rural communities the quality and number of professionals who maintain the network and provide ICT service is rather low. According to the focus group discussion in township Balninkai, "the spread of ICT in [their] community mostly relies on the leader of the community centre" [author's note: who is not professional in ICT]. Their Web site was also created by a community member, who is not professional in ICT.

The challenging issue in using computer and the Internet is language. Most people in rural settlements of Lithuania are not able to read texts in foreign languages, thus foreign sites are not suitable for most rural residents from Lithuania. Participants of focus group discussion in Balninkai comment on this:

> …If you want to work, read, search for information, or learn you should know foreign languages… especially English…

But the main obstacle for using the Internet and buying computers are the costs of ICT.

According to the focus group discussion, the price which business and individual consumers pay for the Internet access, personal computer's both hardware and software is extremely high for them.

As residents from rural regions where low-income levels cannot support high-priced ICT items argue, public access is essential in making the Internet available to greater numbers of individuals:

> Internet cafes and community information centres assume great importance in making the Internet available to those who do not have personal access at home or at work.

Conclusions

This study contributes to an analysis of social implication of ICT diffusion in rural regions of Lithuania.

As theoretical debates reflect differences in theoretical and methodological standpoint, it is rather complicated to suggest one common conceptual context for describing the impact of the Internet on social capital building and changes in social networks' structure in the virtual space.

This study allows some conclusions to be drawn about the role of the Internet in rural communities. Rural communities' members are the most likely to use the Internet in order to get information, for e-mail communication, and for educational purposes (e-learning).

The motives of using the Internet are more self-directed than public directed.

This study suggests that rural residents consider the Internet as a useful mean and new opportunity for being involved in everyday life processes. But also they indicate some obstacles that ICT diffusion meets in Lithuania. Non-equal ICT infrastructure at regional level, the low number of professionals who maintain the network and provide ICT service in rural regions of Lithuania, lack of knowledge in foreign languages, and relatively high costs of ICT (the prices for the Internet access or personal commuter's both hardware and software) are the main obstacles for rural residents to use the Internet. Public access is emphasised as one of the ways in making the Internet available to greater numbers of individuals and firms in rural regions of Lithuania.

This case study also suggests that the methodology of the pilot study should be revised, because it is quite complicated to answer the question about the impact of ICT on social exclusion. Data show that people consider that there is a threat of social exclusion of some groups (ICT non-users) in Lithuania. But they are also positive about the role of the Internet in solving problems of exclusion. The use of the Internet is considered as an effective mean to integrate socially excluded people into society's life, because living in rural region is not the key issue for being excluded.

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Horațiu Rusu & Raluca Bălășoiu
The "pessimistic society"

> *Both optimists and pessimists contribute to our society. The optimist invents the airplane and the pessimist the parachute* [1]

The social change processes brought by the transition of the Romanian society from communism to democracy can be viewed in many ways and on different levels; some can focus on the "visible" (i.e. unemployment, literacy, migration rates) and others on the "soft" dimensions of the social life (i.e. mentalities, representations, perceptions). In this paper, we explore both dimensions, but take a closer look at the latter, more precisely, at the phenomenon of pessimism and optimism.

Although, for some of the southeastern European countries, transition seemed to encapsulate all elements of chaos, desperation, low morality[2] and lack of perspectives[3], the "pessimistic society" is not about places but about social and mental spaces. Our main objective is to capture these spaces, and then seek some of their determinants. What is the evolution of optimism/pessimism in the post communist Romania? What makes pessimism to rise or fall? Who are the people that can be labeled as pessimists/optimists? These are the questions we are trying to answer.

Both, commons sense and theorists place the sources of pessimism/optimism either at the individual or structural level. In this paper we will question both levels. Our main assumption is that the attitudes of the Romanian people vary on the optimism-pessimism continuum along with: the increase or decrease of a series of individual resources like age, education, occupation, residency – according to the status theory about optimism/pessimism[4]; a horizontal and vertical assessment of the present – the first being measured here through: the subjective evaluation of ones family income, the current life satisfaction, and the latter through the perception of the government activity; the political orientation. We also assume associations between the overall alterations of optimism/pessimism and the general evolution of the Romanian economy, and the contexts of political change given by elections.

The variable we have constructed to determine the optimistic/pessimistic orientation of the people is based on a combination of two indicators[5] largely used for measuring either the individual or social optimism/pessimism. The first indicator is measured with the following question: "How do you think your life will be one year from now on?"[6]; and the latter with: "Do you think that in our

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[1] Stern, Gladys Bronwyn
[2] In the Romanian case for instance abundant examples suggest this: violent social movements (the repeated miner assaults in Bucharest – also called "Mineriade"), bankruptcy of Dacia Felix or Bancorex, collapses of mutual funds like SAFI or FNI, pyramidal games like Caritas, political and corruption scandals, etc.
[3] Elements like these made P. Sztompka to speak about a "culture of distrust" in the eastern European emerging democracies (1996; 1998)
[4] Suggesting that optimism increases with the social status - see T.E. Dow jr. (1966:14)
[5] This way optimism/pessimism is a general outlook, not only a perspective over the personal or social future.
[6] Noted qB from here on

country things are going into a good or a wrong direction?"[7] The datasets we have used in our analysis are survey data (Romanian Public Opinion Barometers[8] - POB) collected on representative samples for the Romanian adult population between 1994[9] and 2004; beside these, some economic indicators[10] were used.

What is pessimism/optimism?

An increased number of scholars, from diverse fields[11], raise the issue of optimism/pessimism in connection with a large variety of individual or social problems. Several studies[12] indicate that optimism is a valuable ingredient for health, happiness, life satisfaction, success, or better social connections, while pessimism, is exactly the opposite. The narratives of decline, in respect with environmental, intellectual, moral and political issues, are also linked with the growth of pessimism in the Western world during the last decades. (O. Bennett, 2001) Likewise, the war against the terrorist threat, generated discussions about a transition from global optimism to pessimism illustrated by: the use of force, the rise of the global justice system and the relation between civil liberties and national security at home. (H. Koh, 2003:318).

The types[13] of optimism/pessimism are diverse and their sources not entirely known. I. Wallerstein speaks about mundane pessimism as a way of seeing "the social world as unequal and imperfect and believed to remain so" and optimism as the faith in the possibility of social betterment (1996:7). O. Bennett (2001) discusses the concept of cultural pessimism as a matter of psychological and biological disposition. S. Taylor (1999) distinguishes between situational[14] and dispositional[15] optimism/pessimism, regarding the latter as a tribute to the genetic inheritance. D. Sandu differentiates between chronic versus recent pessimism and between reaction versus continuity optimism when defines it as "an extension of the current state of satisfaction towards future" (1999:44-7). For I. Krastev et al, social optimism and pessimism are defined as „the positive or, respectively, the negative expectations of the individual about his/her own future or the future of

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[7] Noted qA from here on
[8] The datasets are collected by various Romanian research institutes for and with the financial support of the Open Society Foundation – Romanian branch – and can be freely accessed on the Internet. For information regarding the samples and sampling procedures see www.osf.ro
[9] The data were collected twice a year, in spring and autumn time. For 1994 data are available only for the spring survey.
[10] The evolution of: the indices of real salary earnings, GDP and unemployment between 1994 and 2004.
[11] i.e psychology, medicine, sociology etc
[12] see Peterson C, Bossio L.M. (1991); Scheier, M. F., & Carver, C. S. (1992); C.S.; D P. Deptula, R. Cohen, L. C. Phillipsen, S. Ey. (2006); J.-F. Saucier & A.-M. Ambert, (1982); E. Uslaner, (1998).
[13] There are various calls: cultural, mundane, social, situational, dispositional, chronic, recent optimism/pessimism etc.
[14] Situational optimism refers to the expectations an individual generates for a particular situation concerning whether good, rather than bad, things will happen. (S. Taylor, 1999)
[15] Dispositional optimism refers to generalized outcome expectancies that good things, rather than bad things, will happen; Dispositional pessimism refers to the tendency to expect negative outcomes in the future. (S. Taylor, 1999)

the community to which he/she belongs – family, population centre, region or state" (2003:4). E. Uslaner considers that optimism and pessimism reflect ones' "expectations for the long run" (1998:446). Similarly, for M. Scheier and C. S. Carver (1985, 1992) the optimism/pessimism dimension represents the generalized expectancies concerning important future outcomes. According to them, people who anticipate that things will evolve as they wish and consider that they will have rather good outcomes than bad, are optimistic. Conversely, those who expect bad outcomes and believe that things will not evolve as they wish are pessimists. A nexus with trust/distrust[16] is often evoked. Social psychologists suggest that optimism and trust are part of the same psychological general disposition towards the world[17]. For political scientists like E. Uslaner, optimism, "a belief that the world tomorrow will be better than it is today", is one of the pillars of trust (1998:442). The 'moralistic trust' is a value that rests on an optimistic view of the world; one of the roots of the decline in trust is traceable to declining optimism. (2002, 2003, 2004) Similarly for R. Wuthnow (1998) the source of trust is of psychological nature, is a matter of self-confidence and optimism. He addresses this problem in terms of "trust from within" noticing that people's willingness to trust others seem to be a reflection of whether or not they believe they can trust themselves.

Although, as we have shown, the meanings of optimism/pessimism are very complex, two main bodies of theories can be outlined: psychological/individual theories and societal theories. The psychological perspectives suggest that, optimism/pessimism is part of a broader dimension of everyone's personality[18]. The second major approach considers that optimism/pessimism is a characteristic of societies rather than of individuals[19]; it is the product of experience and interconnected, "liquid", contexts.

We have chosen to understand optimism/pessimism here within the framework of P. Sztompka's theory of social becoming (1993). This way, optimism/pessimism (like trust, civility, entrepreneurship, etc) can be regarded both as an intangible agential and structural resource that determines the strength of the agency.

The working definition we use is: optimism/pessimism is an attitude based on an inherent evaluation of the personal and social past and present manifested in the prospect of the future.

The paths of transition - a sketched image of the political and economic changes

Romania has passed through major transformations during the last fifteen years. An overall outlook at the Romanian democracy doesn't show many dissimilarities from other Eastern European countries. Maybe the fact that it took much longer to achieve the current status[20] makes

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[16] E. Uslaner (2002); R. Wuthnow 1998
[17] E.H, Erikson, (1950); G. W. Allport. (1961); R. B. Cattell (1965).
[18] idem
[19] i.e. see the links with trust in P. Sztompka (1993) R.D. Putnam (1995) R. Inglehart, (1999)
[20] We use here as a reference points the achievement of the statute of functional market economy and the country eligibility to accede to the European Union

the situation somehow different. Otherwise, the reform processes were fundamental like everywhere in the former CEE communist countries and meant: the transformation of the political system, the change of legislation, the redesign of all types and forms of institutions, the land reform process, the transfer of state property towards the private sector, etc.

Between December 1989 and April 1990, more than two hundred parties were founded. Obviously, at the beginning there was no social or ideological basis for each of these parties. In May 1990, the first democratic elections in the last 50 years took place. The FSN[21] (forerunner of PSD and PD[22]) led by Ion Iliescu a prominent former communist leader won the legislative and presidential elections with a large majority. In October 1992, at the second term, FDSN[23] – a divided version of FSN[24] – still led by Ion Iliescu, won the elections and governed supported by an extremist party PRM[25]. Since 1992, we can broadly speak about two political poles: left oriented (FDSN) and right oriented (CDR[26]), and about a pluralist party system since no single party had the absolute majority in the Parliament. The third term, November 1996, brought the first real change. The so called democratic forces won the elections and the Democratic Convention, a group of centre-right parties, dominated by the PNȚ-CD, was the leading partner in the government coalition[27]; Emil Constantinescu replaced Ion Iliescu at presidency. The coalition proved to be eroded by internal fights for power and incompetent to solve the social and economic problems. These "performances" made that in November 2000, at the fourth term, Ion Iliescu and the Social Democratic Party, labeled as the "former communists" to return to presidency and governance. The National Liberal Party decided to enter in the electoral competition alone and gained only 7% of the votes. The Democratic Convention (CDR) failed to achieve the threshold of 10% of the popular vote required for this electoral coalition to win representation in the Parliament and since then the National Peasant-Christian Democratic Party ceased to exist as a parliamentary party. The fifth term, December 2004, brought a result somehow unexpected; although the party who scored the best was the SDP, the newly elected president coming form the Democratic Party, designated the National Liberal Party and the Democratic Party[28] to form the government together with the Magyar Democratic Union of Romania and the Humanistic Party[29]. As a general outline, since 1996 all the elections have been won by negative voting[30].

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[21] National Salvation Front
[22] Social Democratic Party and Democratic Party
[23] The Democratic National Salvation Front (FDSN) which eventually developed in the current Social Democratic Party
[24] FSN broke in two factions: FSN the forerunner of the current PD (Democratic Party) and FDNS
[25] Great Romania Party
[26] Democratic Convention of Romania (the two leading parties of this coalition were the National Peasant-Christian Democratic Party and the National Liberal Party)
[27] The coalition was formed together with the Democratic Party (PD) and the Magyar Democratic Union of Romania (UMDR)[28] Who participated together at the elections in coalition called "D.A."
[29] Now Conservative Party
[30] i.e. see Ion Iliescu in Dimineața, No. 12/ 18.01.1997 at http://kappa.ro/news/dimineata/dmr7012.html

Evolution of GDP per capita, unemployment rate and indices of real salary earnings between
1994 - 2004

| Year | GDP per capita in USD at PPP | Indices of real salary earnings | Registred unemployment rate |

Values shown on chart:

GDP per capita in USD at PPP: 100.00, 160.82, 174.01, 169.45, 162.35, 143.56, 151.72, 164.43, 185.15, 199.05, 203.17

Indices of real salary earnings: 100.00, 111.9, 122.4, 94.7, 98, 94.3, 98.6, 103.6, 105.6, 117, 128.7

Registred unemployment rate: 100.00, 90.91, 70.91, 68.18, 84.55, 103.64, 101.82, 81.82, 92.73, 69.09, 61.82

Sources: own computations based on data from: UNDP & IMF – for GDP per capita in USD at PPP; National Institute of Statistics (INSSE) for 1994-2003 & WTO Report (WT/TPR/G/15524 October 2005, p21, Annex 1) for 2004 – for the indices of real salary earnings; ANOFM (National Agency for Labor Force) – for the unemployment rate. The reference year (1994) is recoded and the scores are reported to it as relative frequencies (1994=100%)

Is the Romanian's glass half full or half empty?

In order to obtain a better general image of the outlook Romanian people have on future, we have computed a new variable which takes into consideration both the individual (qB) and social (qA) optimism/pessimism indicators. This variable captures in new classes, the various intensities of optimism/pessimism. The resulting categories are illustrated in Table 2. For instance, (++) the first category designates the attitudes of the people who consider that both their future and the country's future will be better. We named this category total optimism.

Table 2.

qB \ qA	Good	DK	Wrong
Better	Total optimism (+, +)	Personal optimism (+, 0)	Circumstantial pessimism (+, -)
Same	Dispositional optimism (=, +)	Personal stable (=, 0)	Diffuse pessimism (=, -)
Worse	Circumstantial optimism (-, +)	Personal pessimism (-, 0)	Total pessimism (-, -)
DK	Social optimism (0, +)	Undecided (0, 0)	Social pessimism (0, -)

Note: Country/Individual[31] heading across qA columns (Good, DK, Wrong).

The table below (Table 3) shows the evolution in all these categories between 1994-2004.

Table 3

Year/month %	1994 March	1995 March	1995 September	1996 March	1996 October	1997 March	1997 September	1998 June	1998 November	1999 May
Total optimists	13,27	19,35	18,04	13,29	14,07	31,34	25,82	10,23	10,30	10,17
Personal optimism	3,20	5,82	5,87	7,42	7,58	3,03	2,52	4,79	2,63	2,36
Circumstantial pessimism	11,25	11,39	9,87	10,96	18,72	8,42	8,75	9,74	12,61	10,80
Dispositional optimism	11,44	11,99	13,19	7,33	8,75	11,00	10,18	7,59	5,11	7,04
Stable	6,95	6,42	8,85	6,90	9,30	3,72	2,69	6,35	3,59	3,09
Diffuse pessimism	17,11	12,50	12,68	14,06	12,60	4,10	6,31	10,31	13,89	15,19
Circumstantial optimism	3,57	5,31	4,60	5,00	2,39	5,31	5,55	4,95	3,91	3,13
Personal pessimism	4,12	3,68	5,70	6,04	3,73	3,49	1,85	6,68	3,99	4,19
Total pessimism	27,63	19,86	16,34	25,28	13,15	17,60	22,96	25,58	28,49	31,63
Social optimism	0,55	0,86	1,53	0,86	2,32	4,17	3,53	1,90	3,03	1,54
Undecided	0,09	1,03	1,36	1,04	2,14	3,11	4,54	5,20	3,99	2,60
Social pessimism	0,82	1,80	1,96	1,81	5,26	4,70	5,30	6,68	8,46	8,24

Table 3 (continued)

Year/month %	1999 October	2000 May	2000 November	2001 May	2001 November	2002 June	2002 October	2003 May	2003 October	2004 April	2004 November
++	3,32	7,52	5,30	19,95	16,01	13,88	19,45	14,43	14,89	21,10	20,11
+0	2,87	4,73	5,01	2,69	2,40	1,31	1,60	1,43	3,73	2,04	2,28
+-	7,58	15,76	14,42	14,23	7,93	9,40	13,06	8,71	10,37	10,91	9,56
=+	2,82	4,73	3,83	9,73	10,96	13,47	13,82	12,38	11,99	16,07	12,94
=0	6,59	6,68	5,63	3,86	4,66	2,22	2,35	2,95	6,93	2,17	4,22
=-	14,96	16,98	16,06	14,62	12,74	17,50	16,40	16,00	13,96	15,44	14,83
-+	2,33	2,06	1,69	3,96	4,66	4,93	2,87	4,10	3,29	3,62	3,78
-0	6,93	3,73	3,66	1,56	3,61	1,63	1,36	2,81	4,32	1,72	2,78
--	33,98	23,94	22,14	18,24	19,81	23,51	18,28	19,67	16,41	14,67	14,94
0+	1,68	1,34	1,41	3,91	4,47	3,39	2,35	4,81	2,51	3,58	4,00
00	4,85	3,45	7,10	0,00	4,95	2,17	1,69	3,86	4,86	2,22	4,00
0-	12,09	9,08	13,75	7,24	7,79	6,60	6,77	8,86	6,73	6,47	6,56

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[31] The responses scale for the question measuring individual optimism/pessimism was before transformation:
a. Much better; *b*. A little better; *c*. About the same; *d*. A little worse; *e*. Much worse *f*. DK.

An overall perspective of these data indicates that for many Romanians, pessimism generally prevails. Looking at the extreme categories we observe that, with few exceptions[32], the attitudes of total pessimism[33] outnumber the attitudes of total optimism. A similar situation can be noticed regarding the social and diffuse pessimism versus the social and dispositional optimism categories.

The pessimists and optimists of transition

An explanation of the situation described above can be discovered if the main traits of the people adhering to each type of optimism/pessimism are revealed. We have tried to capture the significant characteristics of these people (Table 2) using the adjusted residual value tests. To simplify the procedures and avoid redundant information we have chosen for analysis only one survey per year, the one that indicates turning points in the variation of the phenomenon in each class of optimism/pessimism. This means that when the results of the spring and autumn surveys were almost identical[34] we have used only one of them (see for instance the year 1995 – Table 3). A series of indicators were tested: life satisfaction, political orientation, evaluation of the government activity, self evaluation of the family income, educational status, occupation, age, sex, and type of locality of appurtenance. Where possible, we have decided to enlarge the information used for profiling each type of pessimism/optimism, considering the fact that the richness of data was improved from 1994 to 2004. The findings of the analysis[35] concerning only the total optimism and total pessimism are presented below[36].

Total optimists are people who declare to belong/ascribe themselves to one or the other of the categories presented here, rather than to any other category of similar type[37]:

- *March, 1994:* rather people considering their family income enough for a decent living or enough for buying expensive items if saving; rather people satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating that the economic policy of the government will give positive results next year; rather people appreciating the government activity as good and very good; rather people who declare that will vote in case of elections; rather left parties voters;

- *March, 1995:* rather men then women; rather people having university degree than any other degree; rather employees with university degree than any other type of employees; rather people living in localities with more than 100 thousand inhabitants; rather people satisfied and very satisfied with their current life; rather left parties voters;

- *March 1996:* rather people having university degree than any other degree; rather employees with university degree, technicians and skilled workers than any other type of employees; rather

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[32] i.e. total optimism increases and pessimism decreases substantially only after the 1996 elections – see October '96 and March '97; the situation observed immediately after the 2000 elections is alike.

[33] It is possible that the peaks of pessimism from 1999 were influenced by the miners' assaults, which eventually indicated the complete lack of capability of the Democratic Coalition to govern the country.

[34] The relations were also verified with correlation tests

[35] We have used a signification level of .05 for all statistical tests

[36] The features of all other types of pessimism/optimism are presented in Tables A6 to A 16 in the Annexes

[37] To be read for instance: rather left parties' voters than voters of other parties.

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people considering their family income enough for a decent living or enough for buying expensive items if saving or enough for everything they need; rather people satisfied and very satisfied with their current life; rather people who declare that will vote in case of elections; rather left parties voters;

- *March 1997:* rather people between 25 and 34 years than of any other age interval; rather men then women; rather people having high school, post high school or university degree; rather technicians, skilled workers, students or entrepreneurs; rather people living in localities with more than 100 thousand inhabitants; rather people considering their family income enough for a decent living or enough for buying expensive items if saving; rather people satisfied with their current life; rather right parties voters;

- *1998 June*: rather people having high school or university degree than any other degree; rather employees with university degree than any other type of employees; rather people living in localities with more than 200 thousand inhabitants; rather people considering their family income enough for a decent living or enough for buying expensive items if saving; rather people satisfied and very satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating the government activity as good; rather right parties voters;

- *1999 October:* rather entrepreneurs; rather people considering their family income enough for a decent living or enough for buying expensive items if saving; rather people satisfied and very satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating the government activity as good; rather right parties voters;

- *2000 May:* rather people having high school degree than any other degree; rather employees in services sector; rather people considering their family income enough for a decent living or enough for buying expensive items if saving; rather people satisfied and very satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating the government activity as good; rather right parties voters;

- *2001 May:* rather men then women; rather people having high school/post high school or university degree; rather people considering their family income enough for a decent living or enough for buying expensive items if saving; rather people satisfied and very satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating the government activity as good; rather left parties voters;

- *2002 June:* rather people between 25 and 34 years than of any other age interval; rather men then women; rather people having high school or university degree; rather entrepreneurs, employees in services sector employees with university degree; rather people considering their family income enough for a decent living or enough for buying expensive items if saving; rather people satisfied and very satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating the government activity as good; rather left parties voters;

- *2003 May:* rather people between 25 and 34 years than of any other age interval; rather people having high school/post high school or university degree; rather students, entrepreneurs, and employees with university degree; rather people living in localities having more than 200 thousand inhabitants and in localities having between 30 and 100 thousand inhabitants; rather people considering their family income enough for a decent living or enough for buying expensive items if saving; rather people satisfied and very satisfied with their current life; rather

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people appreciating the government activity as good; rather left parties voters;

- *2004 May:* rather people between 25 and 34 years than of any other age interval; rather men then women; rather people having post high school or university degree; rather students; rather people considering their family income enough for a decent living or enough for buying expensive items if saving; rather people satisfied and very satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating the government activity as good;

As we can see, the traits of the people adhering to total optimism vary along this period. Nevertheless some common features can be identified. The total optimists are rather educated people, rather people appreciating the sufficiency of their resources in terms of family income; rather people satisfied and very satisfied with their current life, rather people appreciating the government activity as good, rather young, rather men and rather coming from important urban areas. When the governing party/coalition is left oriented the people adhering to total optimism are rather left party voters and when the governing party/coalition right oriented the people adhering to total optimism are rather right party voters.

Total pessimists are people who declare to belong/ascribe themselves to one or the other of the categories presented here, rather than to any other category of similar type:

- *March, 1994:* rather people having 7-8 grades than any other educational level; rather people considering their family income not enough for living; rather people not at all satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating that the economic policy of the government will give negative results next year; rather people appreciating the government activity as very bad; rather people who declare that won't participate to voting in case of elections; rather right and extreme right parties voters[38];

- *March, 1995:* rather people between 55 and 64 years than of any other age interval; rather people having 7-8 grades than any other educational level; rather housewives; rather people living in rural localities; rather people considering their family income not enough for living; rather people not too satisfied and not at all satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating that the economic policy of the government will give negative results next year; rather people who declare that won't participate to voting in case of elections; rather right parties' voters.

- *March 1996:* rather people between 44 and 54 years than of any other age interval; rather people having 7-8 grades (gymnasium) than any other educational level; rather workers; rather people living in urban localities under 30 thousand inhabitants; rather people considering their family income not enough for living; rather people not at all satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating that the economic policy of the government will give negative results next year; rather people who declare that won't participate to voting in case of elections; rather right parties' voters.

- *March 1997:* rather people between 44-54 and 55-64 years than of any other age interval; rather people having 7-8 grades (gymnasium) and vocational school degree than any other educational level/degree; rather pensioners; rather people living in rural localities; rather people considering

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[38] To be read: rather right and extreme right parties' voters than voters of other parties.

their family income not enough for living; rather people not at all satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating that the economic policy of the government will give negative results next year; rather left parties' voters.

- *1998 June*: rather people between 44 and 54 years than of any other age interval; rather people having post high school and vocational school degree than any other educational level; rather technicians /skilled workers and workers; rather people living in localities having between 30 and 100 thousand inhabitants; rather people considering their family income not enough for living; rather people not at all satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating that the economic policy of the government will give negative results next year; rather people appreciating the government activity as bad; rather left parties' voters.

- *1999 October:* rather people between 55 and 64 years than of any other age interval; rather people considering their family income not enough for living; rather people not at all satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating the government activity as bad; rather left parties' voters.

- *2000 May:* rather people between 55 and 64 years than of any other age interval; rather people having 7-8 grades (gymnasium) than any other educational level; rather workers; rather people living in urban localities under 30 thousand inhabitants; rather people considering their family income not enough for living; rather people not at all satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating the government activity as bad; rather extreme right parties' voters.

- *2001 May:* rather people between 44 and 54 years than of any other age interval; rather people having elementary school (4 grades) and vocational school degree than any other educational level; rather unemployed people and persons unable to work; rather people considering their family income not enough for living; rather people not at all satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating the government activity as bad; rather extreme right parties' voters.

- *2002 June:* rather people between 44 and 54 years than of any other age interval; rather people having 7-8 grades (gymnasium) and vocational school degree than any other educational level/degree; rather pensioners, unemployed and unskilled workers; rather people considering their family income not enough for living; rather people not at all satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating the government activity as bad; rather extreme right parties' voters.

- *2003 May:* rather people between 44 and 54 years than of any other age interval; rather people having 7-8 grades (gymnasium) than any other educational degree; rather pensioners; rather people considering their family income not enough for living; rather people not at all satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating the government activity as bad; rather extreme right parties' voters.

- *2004 May:* rather people between 44 and 54 years than of any other age interval; rather people having 7-8 grades (gymnasium) than any other educational degree; rather housewives and unskilled workers; rather people not at all satisfied with their current life; rather people appreciating the government activity as bad;

As we can see that the traits of the people adhering to total pessimism also vary along this period. Nevertheless some common features can be identified. The total pessimists are rather under

educated people, rather pensioners, unemployed or unskilled workers, rather people appreciating the insufficiency of their resources in terms of family income; rather people not at all satisfied with their current life, rather people appreciating the government activity as bad, rather old, rather coming from rural or small urban areas. When the governing party/coalition is right oriented the people adhering to total pessimism are rather left party voters and when the governing party/coalition right oriented the people adhering to total pessimism are rather extreme right party voters.

These sketch portraits of the people adhering to total optimism/pessimism, do not necessary indicate a homogenous, real world, category. Each class should be rather seen in terms of overlapping strata of people. Nevertheless the people adhering to the extreme categories are rather stable in some types of features. The data suggest that the status resources, the assessment of the present (both vertical and horizontal), and the political orientation play their role in configuring the attitudes people take on the optimism-pessimism continuum. They explain partially why pessimism generally prevails[39] and confirms the main hypothesis.

What makes pessimism/optimism to rise and fall?

To find an answer to this question both the micro/personal level and the macro/contextual level are considered. Partially the answer is already given by the different profiles, described above, of the people adhering to optimism or pessimism[40]. On personal level, high status resources appear to be associated with optimism and low status resources with pessimism; a positive assessment of the present is associated with optimism and negative one with pessimism; also the political orientation seems to be associated either with optimism or pessimism. On the contextual level we have made an exploratory analysis[41] of the links between the evolutions in each category of pessimism/optimism, the influences of the electoral periods, and the general situation given by the Romanian transition, reflected by the changes in the macro economic indicators

A closer look at evolution in the optimist/pessimist's classes (Table 3) suggests associations with the contexts of electoral turning points. Optimism and pessimism increases/decreases in all categories right before and after the 1996 elections – i.e. see October '96 and March '97; a similar situation can be observed after the 2000 elections[42] (see Table 3). These relations have been verified with ANOVA tests. We have created an artificial variable[43] marking the contexts given by the pre

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[39] For the majority of Romanians the transition meant poorness and scarcity of resources (see for instance the UNDP reports for Romania – www.undp.ro)

[40] See also the Annex for the description of all categories

[41] Considered like this due to the limited number of cases

[42] It is possible that the peaks of pessimism from 1999 were influenced by the miners' assaults, which eventually indicated the total lack of capability of the Democratic Coalition to govern the country. Regarding the drop after, is possible to be connected with external events, for instance with the fact that Romania was invited (on 27 January 2000) to start the negotiations to enter the European Union and the recommendations of the European Commission to eliminate the visa requirements for the Romanian citizens entering European Union.

[43] The new variable was called "elections"; The values assigned to "elections" were: 1 for March and October 1996 and for May and November 2000 – considered pre-electoral periods; 2 for March and September 1997 and for May and November 2001 – considered post-electoral periods; 0 else – for non-electoral periods.

and post electoral periods (1996-1997 and 2000-2001) and then tested it against each category of optimism/pessimism. The analysis suggests the presence of the so-called 'honeymoon effect". We have detected associations between the variations in almost all types of optimism and the contexts of political change given by elections, and, a neutral relation in respect with the variations in most of the "pessimists" type categories. The results (see Table A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 in the Annex for details) indicate significant differences, in the variations of total optimism[44], personal optimism[45], circumstantial optimism[46], social optimism[47] and circumstantial pessimism[48], between the non-, pre- and post- electoral periods[49]. Total optimism is significantly higher in the post-electoral periods then in non and pre-electoral periods; circumstantial and social optimism is significantly higher in the post-electoral periods then in pre-electoral periods; personal optimism and circumstantial pessimism is significantly higher in the pre electoral periods than in non and post-electoral periods.

When analyzing the evolution of the phenomenon in respect with the economic trends (see Figure 2 – only for the extreme categories) the resemblances can be easily noticed (see Figure 1): decreases in economic indicators seem to be associated with an increase in pessimism and, vice versa.

Evolution in total optimism/pessimism (average/year)

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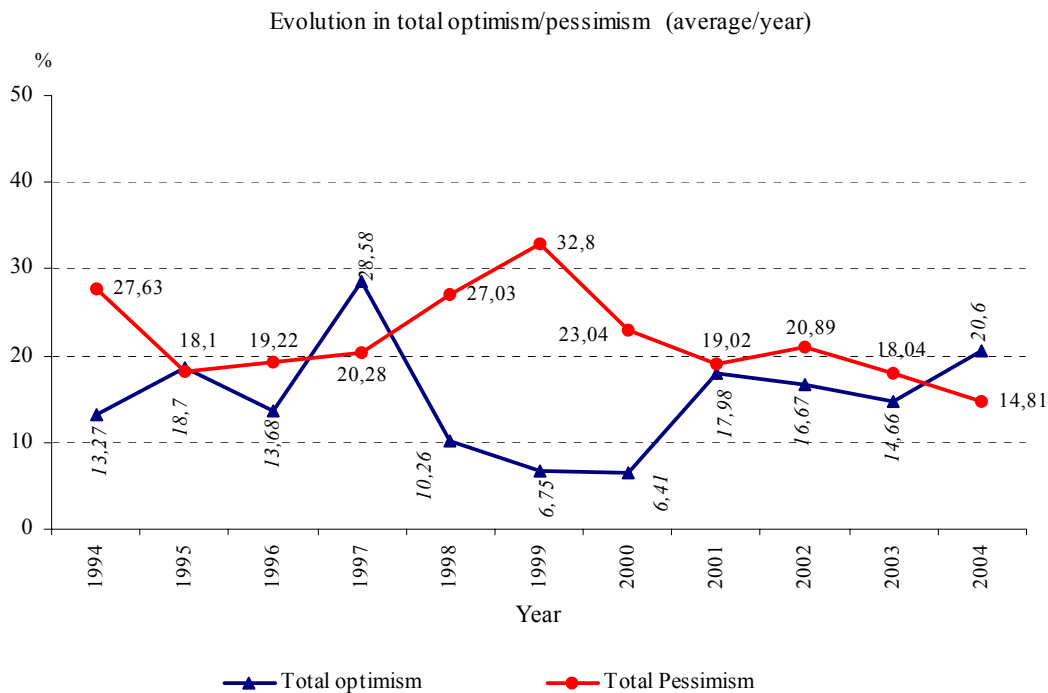
[44] F Sig. = 0.007
[45] F Sig. =0.003
[46] F Sig. =0.027
[47] F Sig. =0.011
[48] F Sig. =0.004
[49] We have used a sig. level of .05 for all statistical tests

We have verified these relations using correlation tests. First we have computed a yearly average for each category and then we have tested it against the economic indicators (GDP per capita in USD at PPP; indices of real salary earnings; registered unemployment rate). Except the total pessimism/optimism, none of the other categories was found significantly correlated with these indicators. The analysis indicates that the total pessimists' category is more sensitive to the changes in the economic factors than the total optimists[50]. (Table 4) Actually these results are explainable when we take into consideration the fact that the persons who adhere to this category are more vulnerable in socio economic terms[51]

Table 4

	GDP per capita in USD at PPP	Indices of real salary earnings	Registered unemployment rate
Total optimists	-	-	R= -,659
Total pessimists	R= -,718	R= -,741	R= ,732

Data suggest a linear relation between unemployment and total pessimism and an inverse relation between the latter and the GDP per capita in USD at PPP and the indices of real salary earnings.

To resume, the optimists seem to be more sensitive to circumstantial changes, like the contexts of political change given by elections, while the pessimists appear to be more sensitive to economical changes. Since the tests we have done suggest associations between the evolutions of optimism/pessimism in some categories, the changes in the economic factors and the contexts of political change given by elections, we appreciate that our secondary assumption is partially confirmed.

Concluding remarks

The main objective of our paper was to capture the various attitudes people take on the pessimism-optimism continuum, to indicate their evolution in a ten-year perspective and then to seek some of their determinants. To attain this a new variable was constructed as a combination of two indicators largely used for measuring the individual and the social optimism/pessimism. Our main assumption was that the attitudes of the Romanian people vary on the optimism-pessimism continuum along with: the status resources, their assessment of the present and the political orientation. A subsequent hypothesis assumed associations between the overall alterations of optimism/pessimism and the general evolution of the Romanian economy, and the contexts of political change given by elections.

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[50] The correlations are increased when 1997 and 2000 are eliminated (as post-electoral years).
[51] See the characteristics of the people adhering to total pessimism in the previous chapter

An overall perspective of the evolution of optimism/pessimism phenomenon in the last decade shows that for many Romanians, pessimistic attitudes generally prevail. Only on very few occasions the various types of optimistic oriented attitudes overcome the pessimistic ones. This made us to think about a "pessimistic society" as a dominant mental space.

The "popular" belief that a pessimist is an informed optimist is rather refuted by our analyses which indicates that these categories[52] rarely overlap in terms of individual resources and perceptions[53]. Our results subscribe to the perspective which suggests an association[54] between ones "dominant" status and the optimistic attitudes he/she takes. Therefore optimistic orientations associated with high status categories, as our analyses indicate, should not be a surprise; better individual resources generally means better opportunities and a better understanding of the social life. On the contrary, people who tend to adopt a pessimistic attitude are more vulnerable and more exposed to the risks transition brings: loss of the lifetime job security, unemployment, poverty, diseases, etc. Various studies[55] show that in Romania the people belonging to one or more of the following categories: old, low educated, unemployed, rural areas residents (our total pessimists) are rather past oriented, tend to disregard democracy as a new social order, are passive and dependent and have a paternalistic understanding of the state. These are the underprivileged categories of transition, highly exposed to reforms and thus their pessimistic orientation is comprehensible. In other words our results confirm on the one hand the assumed relations between the attitudes people take on the pessimisms-optimism continuum and their resources (be they status indicators or perceptions[56]) meaning that less resourceful one is more likely is to have a pessimistic attitude; and on the other hand the effects the economic respective political settings (including here the situations generated by the electoral contexts) have on increase or decrease in optimism/pessimism.

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[52] especially the extreme categories
[53] see the Annexes
[54] see T.E. Dow jr. (1966:14) ; I. Krastev et al (2003)
[55] i.e. see POB Presentation Booklets 1996-2004 at www.osf.ro
[56] A cultural explanation could also be considered and we acknowledge that it is possible that actually not the rise and fall of the economic indicators or individual resources make ones optimist or pessimist but the way he/she is used to perceive their role in fulfilling his/her wishes.

Table A1

Test: Bonferoni

Dependent Variable	(I) elect	(J) elect	* Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Total optimism	post electoral	non electoral	8,77692	3,03822	,029
		pre electoral	13,23500	3,75735	,007

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table A2

Test: Bonferoni

Dependent Variable	(I) elect	(J) elect	* Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Personal optimism	pre electoral	non electoral	3,11346	,81284	,004
		post electoral	3,52500	1,00524	,008

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table A3

Test: Bonferoni

Dependent Variable	(I) elect	(J) elect	* Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Circumstantial pessimism	pre electoral	non electoral	4,56115	1,23889	,005
		post electoral	5,13250	1,53213	,011

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table A4

Test: Bonferoni

Dependent Variable	(I) elect	(J) elect	* Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Circumstantial optimism	post electoral	non electoral	,99385	,56670	,289
		pre electoral	2,08500	,70083	,024

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table A5

Test: Bonferoni

Dependent Variable	(I) elect	(J) elect	* Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Social optimism	post electoral	non electoral	1,57923	,61436	,058
		pre electoral	2,53750	,75977	,011

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table A6:

1994 March

	Personal optimism	Circumstantial pessimism	Dispositional optimism	Stable	Diffuse pessimism	Circumstantial optimism	Personal pessimism
Sex		Male 2.2		Female 3			Female 2.4
Education							Less than 7 grades 3.0
Occupation		Business owner 2.6	Office worker 3			Military 2.6	Housewife 2
Type of locality	50-199 thou inhabitants					Below 10 thou inhabitants 2.5	
Evaluation of government activity			Good 8.2		Bad 3.4	Good 2.6	
Appreciation of the results of the economic policy of the government	Cant appreciate 2.1		Positive results next year 6,9	Cant appreciate 7.2	Negative results next year 4.9		Cant appreciate 4.8
Current life satisfaction	Satisfied 2.1		Satisfied 5.1		Not too satisfied 2.2		
Family income evaluation			Enough only for those things strictly indispensable for living 2.9	Enough for everything we need and some savings 2.9			
Voting behaviour		Participate 3.5		Not decided 6.1			Not decided 4.4
Political orientation	Left 2.12		Left 4.4		Right 3,43		

Table A7:

1995 March

	Personal optimism	Circumstantial pessimism	Dispositional optimism	Stable	Diffuse pessimism	Circumstantial optimism	Personal pessimism
Age	Under 24 years 4.5						
Sex				Female 2.3			
Education			Post high school 2.4				
Occupation	Student 3.6	Unemployed 3.0	Technician/ skilled worker 3.9				
Type of locality				Urban <20 thou inhabitants 2.2			
Appreciation of the results of the economic policy of the government			Positive results next year 3.2	Cant appreciate 5.9	Negative results next year 3.8		
Current life satisfaction			Satisfied 2.1				
Family income evaluation		Enough for everything we need and some savings 2.9					Not enough for living 2.2
Voting behaviour		Participate 2.4					
Political orientation		Right 2.0	Left 2.1		Right 3.2		

Table A8:

1996 March

	Personal optimism	Circumstantial pessimism	Dispositional optimism	Stable	Diffuse pessimism	Circumstantial optimism	Personal pessimism
Age	Under 24 years 3.9	25 -34 years 2.0	55 - 64 years 2.0	25 -34 years 3.5	35 -44 years 2.1		
Sex	Women 2.2			Women 2.3			Women 2.2
Education	High school 2	Vocational 2.4	Post high school 2.4	High school 3	University 2.4		
Occupation			Employee with university degree 3.4	Technician/ skilled worker 2.9	Employee with university degree 2.0		
Type of locality					Urban between 30 and 100 thou 2.4		Urban >200 thou 2.3
Appreciation of the results of the economic policy of the government			Positive results next year 5.0		Negative results next year 4.4		
Current life satisfaction	Very satisfied 2.1		Satisfied 4.0	Satisfied 2.2			Not too satisfied 2.3
Family income evaluation		Enough for everything we need and some savings 2.1	Enough for a decent living 3.1			Enough only for those things strictly indispensable for living 2.3	
Voting behaviour	Undecided 2.4		Participate 2.4				Undecided 2.7
Political orientation		Left 2.6			Right 3.4		

Table A9

1997 March

	Personal optimism	Circumstantial pessimism	Dispositional optimism	Stable	Diffuse pessimism	Personal pessimism	Social pessimism
Age	Under 24 years 3.2	Under 24 years 3.5				44 thru 54 2.0	44 - 54 years 2.0 & 55-64 years 2.5
Education	High school 2.3	Gymnasium 3.3	University 6.8		High school 2		Gymnasium 5.2 vocational school 2.3
Occupation		Unemployed 2.1	Employee with university degree 6.4	worker 3.7			Pensioner 2.0
Type of locality		Urban between 100 and 200 thou 2.4			Rural 2.3		Rural 4.3
Current life satisfaction					not too satisfied 2.4	not too satisfied 2.0	not at all satisfied 7.7
Family income evaluation	Can buy expensive items but if saving 3.6		Enough for a decent living 2.4	Enough for a decent living 2.3		Not enough for living 2.4	Not enough for living 8.0
Political orientation			Right 2.4	Left 2.2			

*No significant findings on *Circumstantial optimism*

Table A10:

1998 June

	Personal optimism	Circumstantial pessimism	Dispositional optimism	Stable	Circumstantial optimism	Personal pessimism	Social pessimism
Age		Under 24 years 2.2				>65 years 2.0	44 thru 54 2.8
Education	Vocational school 2.5	Vocational school 2.5			University degree 2.6	Elementary school 2.9	Elementary 3.6 Gymnasium 2.5
Occupation	Entrepreneur 2.3	Entrepreneur 2.3	Worker 2.1	Functionaries 3.3	Technician/ skilled worker 3.1 employee with university degree 2.6 entrepreneur 2.3	Agriculture worker 3.7	Technician/ skilled worker 2.8 worker 2.3
Type of locality	Urban >200 thou 2.5	Urban between 30 and 100 thou and 2.4				rural 2.8	Urban between 30 and 100 thou and 2.4
Appreciation of the results of the economic policy of the government	Positive results next year 2.5		Positive results next year 5.7				Negative results next year 12.0
Evaluation of the government activity	good 2.1	good 2.3					
Current life satisfaction		Very satisfied 2.5 satisfied 3.7	Satisfied 3.9			Not at all satisfied 4.5	Not at all satisfied 8.5
Family income evaluation	Can buy expensive items but if saving 2.7	Enough for a decent living 3.3	Can buy expensive items but if saving 2.0	Enough for a decent living 2.3		Not enough for living 2.7	Can buy expensive items but if saving 2.7
Political orientation			Right 4.9				

*No significant findings on *diffuse pessimism*

Table A11:

1999 October

	Personal optimism	Circumstantial pessimism	Dispositional optimism	Stable	Diffuse pessimism	Circumstantial optimism	Personal pessimism	Social pessimism
Age	Under 24 years 3.7	Under 24 years 3.3 & 25-34 years 2.4			Under 24 years 2.0		>65 years 4.3	55 to 64 years 2.8
Sex			Men 2.3	Women 2.5			Women 2.4	
Education	High school 2.8	University 3.7	University 2.1			University 3.8	No school 3.4	Elementary 2.9
Occupation	Employee with university degree 3.0	Entrepreneur 2.5				Employee with university degree 3.5	Agriculture worker 2.6	Agriculture worker 3.3 daily employee 2.4
Type of locality			Urban < 30 thou 2.8				Urban; 30 to 100 thou 2.0	Rural 2.8
Evaluation of the government activity			Good 4.7					
Current life satisfaction	Not too satisfied 2.3 satisfied 3.5	Very satisfied 2.2 satisfied 4.1	Very satisfied 2.0 satisfied 7.6	not too satisfied 3.0	Not too satisfied 2.4			
Family income evaluation	Enough only for those things strictly indispensable for living 2.4	Enough for a decent living 3.5	Enough for a decent living 3.9 can buy expensive items but if saving 2.0	Enough for a decent living 3.8				Not enough for living 8.7
Political orientation	Right 5.0				Right 2.2	Left 4.7	Left 2.3	Right 5.0

Table A12:

2000 May

	Personal optimism	Circumstantial pessimism	Dispositional optimism	Stable	Diffuse pessimism	Circumstantial optimism	Personal pessimism	Social pessimism
Sex			Men 2.4				Women 2.0	Women 2.2
Education	Vocational 2.5		University 3.4		Post high school 2.0		Elementary school 2.0 high school 2.2	Gymnasium 2.2 & elementary 3
Occupation				Agriculture 3.6		Employee with university degree 2.6		
Type of locality				rural 2.4			Urban between 100 and 200 thou 3.1	rural 3.3
Current life satisfaction	Satisfied 2.1 & very satisfied 6.2		Satisfied 3.5	Satisfied 2.3	Not too satisfied 2.9		Not at all satisfied 2.3	
Family income evaluation	Enough only for those things strictly indispensable for living 3.0 & can buy expensive items if saving 2.5	Enough for a decent living 4.1	Enough only for those things strictly indispensable for living 2.3 enough for a decent living 2.2	Enough for a decent living 2.3	Can buy expensive items if saving 2.3			Not enough for living 5.2
Political orientation		Right 3.9	Right 5.0					

Table A13:

2001 May

	Personal optimism	Circumstantial pessimism	Dispositional optimism	Stable	Diffuse pessimism	Circumstantial optimism	Social pessimism
Age	Under 24 years 2.2	Under 24 years 5.1					>65 years 4.3
Sex	Women 2.6			Women 3.6		Men 2.4	Women 3.2
Education			High school, post high school 3.6 & university 2.8			University 2.2	Elementary 6.7
Occupation		Student 2.4		Agriculture 2.5		Pensioner 3.0	
Type of locality	>200 thou 2.1						Rural 3.3
Evaluation of the government activity					Good 3.4		
Current life satisfaction		Not too satisfied 3.1	Satisfied 5.1		not too satisfied 3.7		Not at all satisfied 5.8
Family income evaluation	Can buy expensive items if saving 2.4	Can buy expensive items if saving 2.3	Enough for a decent living 3.5		Enough only for those things strictly indispensable for living 2.3		
Political orientation					Extreme right 2.1		

*No significant findings on *personal pessimism*

Table A14:

2002 June

	Personal optimism	Circumstantial pessimism	Dispositional optimism	Stable	Diffuse pessimism	Circumstantial optimism	Social pessimism
Age	Under 24 years 5.8 & 24 - 35 years 3.3			>65 years 2.2			
Sex				Women 2.8			Women 2.4
Education			High school, 2.7 & university 3.9		High school 2.9	Post high school 2.2	Elementary 3.4
Occupation	Employee in services sector 2.0		Employee with university degree 3.6/ functionaries 2.6			Technician/ skilled worker 2.5	Agriculture 3.3
Type of locality			>200 thou 2.3	Rural 3.0	100 - 200 thou 2.6 & 30-99 thou 2.2		Rural 3.3
Evaluation of the government activity	Good 2.8		Good 2.2				
Current life satisfaction		Satisfied 2.1	Satisfied 5.8		Not too satisfied 2.1		Not at all satisfied 4.9
Family income evaluation		Enough for a decent living 2.1	Enough only for those things strictly indispensable for living 2.7 & enough for a decent living 2.6				Not enough for living 2.2
Political orientation			Left 3.3				

*No significant findings on *personal pessimism*

Table A15:

2003 May

	Personal optimism	Circumstantial pessimism	Dispositional optimism	Stable	Diffuse pessimism	Personal pessimism	Social pessimism
Age	< 24 years 2.4	< 24 years 6.2 & 24 - 35 years 3.5	55 - 64 years 2.5	>65 years 2.2		55 - 64 years 2.0 & >65 years 3.4	
Sex						Women 3.0	Women 2.0
Education		High school, 3.7	Post high school 2.8 & university 6.6			Elementary 4.6	Gymnasium 2.9 & no school 3.0
Occupation	Student 2.1	Student 5.3	Entrepreneur 2.1/ employee with university degree 4.3/ functionaries 2.7				Housewife 2.9
Type of locality			>200 thou 2.8	Rural 3.4		Rural 2.5	Rural 2.5
Evaluation of the government activity		Good 2.7	Good 4.4		Bad 3.8		Bad 2.2
Current life satisfaction			Satisfied 8.0		Not too satisfied 4.4	Not at all satisfied 3.1	Not at all satisfied 4.2
Family income evaluation		Enough for a decent living 2.7 & can buy expensive items but if saving 3.0	Enough for a decent living 3.3 & can buy expensive items but if saving 2.4		Enough for a decent living 2.0	Not enough for living 3.4	Not enough for living 2.2
Political orientation		Right 2.5	Left 2.1		Right 2.0		

*No significant findings on *Circumstantial optimism*

Table A16:

2004 May

	Personal optimism	Circumstantial pessimism	Dispositional optimism	Stable	Diffuse pessimism	Circumstantial optimism	Personal pessimism	Social pessimism
Age		Under 24 years 5.9 & 24 - 35 years 2.1		>65 years 2.2		55 - 64 years 2.3 & >65 years 2.7	>65 years 2.9	
Sex				Women 2.4		Women 3.0		
Education			Vocational 2.7 & university 4.1					
Occupation	Entrepreneur 2.9	Student 5.9	employee with university degree 4.5/ technician/ skilled worker 2.8			Worker 2.2	Pensioner 3.2	
Type of locality				100-200 thou 2.4& <30 thou 2.3	>200 thou 2.5			
Evaluation of the government activity					Bad 2.1			
Current life satisfaction		Satisfied 2,6 &very satisfied 2.2	Satisfied 3.2		Not too satisfied 4.9	Not at all satisfied 3.4	Not at all satisfied 6.0	Not at all satisfied 4.3
Family income evaluation			Enough for a decent living 2.6		Enough only for those things strictly indispensable for living 6.7		Not enough for living 3.3	Not enough for living 6.1

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Jitka Laštovková
At Home in Borderland

<div style="text-align: right">

Motto:

Cestička k domovu
známě se vine -
hezčí je, krásnější
než všecky jiné.

I kdybych ve světě
bůhví kam zašel,
tu cestu k domovu
vždycky bych našel.[1]

(Karel Václav Rais)

</div>

The following lines try to introduce "home" in social and individual construction of Czech-Bavarian borderland inhabitants in the way how it was presented in interviews aimed mainly at perception of regional historical landmarks. Presented results are based on data collected during the year 2004 within the Czech-German project "Historical Landmarks in Identification of Borderland Regions". It includes 45 biographical interviews with inhabitants of Czech side of the Czech-Bavarian borders, which means southern and south-western parts of Bohemia - surroundings of towns Klatovy, Prachatice, Domažlice, Tachov and Cheb.

Home awareness and mental construction of home is a specific issue of Czech border regions: these regions are characterized by nearly total exchange of population after the World War II. Many of their problems are therefore explained by social and local "out-rooting" of inhabitants. Displacement of German inhabitants from the Czech border area and successive coming of Czech citizens from the inland is considered as one of the key event for this topic.

The area covers 6,800 km^2 (nearly 9% of the whole the Czech Republic area) and approximately 340 thousand inhabitants live there. As one of the results of displacement of German inhabitants, density of population is relatively low: only 60 % of pre-war number of the population is living there nowadays. Another result we can see in the regional age structure: population of this area is relatively young, there is bigger proportion of 0 – 15years-old group than of 65 and more-years-old group in the borderland.

The structure of regional economy shows very weak position of industry in this area: it is less than 2 %. On the other hand, three types of activities are above average: 1. public administration and military, 2. agriculture, 3. accomodation and hotel industry.

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[1] The simplifying translation of sense of these popular Czech rhymes is:
Road to my home, / goes in so well know way, / I like it much more than any other ways. Even if I lost myself in the wide world, / I would always find this way to my home.
K.V. Rais (well known author of Czech national rebirth in 19. century.)

Relations to the region

The relations to the area are then built up on the basis of relation to physical environment and its inhabitants (either former or current or future) – let us call it socio-ecological perception. Interviews show different combination and cohesion of both dimensions, dependent on psychosocial characteristics of a speaker.

- ➢ Dimension of the landscape, nature, often in the aesthetic sense, but also in dynamic perception (means weather):

    But the nature here is wonderful, you know.

    Mr. Vojtěch, 87 years old

    Let me say one thing, I was simply enchanted by Vltava river near Horní Planá… when I am sitting on the high-seat by Chlum and watching the piece of the river, how it flows, I am absolutely satisfied.
    But we are angry sometimes because of the weather here. During the early spring, down the hills everything is green and here everything is grey.

    Mr. Teodor, 66 years old

- ➢ Social relations including family relations – either satisfactory or not, evaluating of membership in/affiliation to social groups within the region
- ➢ Economic dimension – relations to tangible assets, mainly real estate, perception of region per economic terms

    I don´t want to move, I have a house here.

    Mrs. Magda, 77 years old

- ➢ Dimension of profession often bears an ideological conviction and applies especially to former Border Guard

    So what to say to the boundary itself – I have kind of closer relationship to this border area, apart from ten years of my service, when I served here, in this place, I got to know practically whole border from Všeruby to Kvilda and far back to Modrava…and now I am really glad if I can take skis and go with my children. I say: Here it is, now there is nothing already, but here I served in 1955.

    Mr. Kamil, 68 years old

    We like the place here and we are satisfied here and I have to say personally I am proud to be a border guard and I am proud to be from Volary.

    Mr. Jarmil, 81 years old

- ➢ Awareness of roots – the question of relations to region is taken as non-relevant for respondents born in the region and for those, whose families came from there. Relations are perceived as automatic, taken for granted and self-evident. Awareness of roots is interpreted as the only and sufficient condition.

    I was born here in Domažlice seventy seven years ago, my father and my

mother came from Domažlice, my family came to Domažlice in 1600 from Germany.

<div align="right">

Mr. Otakar, 77 years old
</div>

So I come from Strakonice, so I have always tended to like this area.
<div align="right">

Mr. Vojtěch, 87 years old
</div>

➢ Dimension of culture – mainly in an aesthetic sense (architecture, historical landmarks):

> *And the haylofts in the landscape were very nice, it is kind of rarity in Volary, but I am afraid it is too late now. These cottages where we are sitting now are interesting.*

<div align="right">

Mr. Stanislav, 57 years old
</div>

…but also in an ideological sense (history, tradition) *(*for example Mr. Václav – comes from Prague and now lives in Javorná, where he worked as chronicler, he is a keen historian specialized in history of Šumava Mountains.*)*

➢ Lifestyle accomplishment – relation based on "mission" (voluntary modesty, Christian mission…)*:*

> *The reasons to move were simply because of the environment, it was the main reason, because we used to live in Plzeň where the environment is not optimal. We wanted to create kind of new model of lifestyle then the urban one.*

<div align="right">

Mrs. Linda, 38 years old
</div>

➢ In case of Šumava Mountains, it is referred to some kind of magic, non-rational reasons impossible to define

> Question*: And why didn´t you stay in Prague after your studies?*
> Answer*: At first I wanted, but you know, this Šumava Mountains rather attract.*

<div align="right">

Mr. Jakub, 58 years old
</div>

> *Well, person who once gets accustomed here, he can hardly leave, or he can´t leave at all. Somewhere you can get accustomed, and you can leave but not here.*

<div align="right">

Mr. Teodor, 66 years old
</div>

> Question*: Have you ever thought about moving somewhere else from this region?*
> Answer*: I thought about it many times, but it tempted me back here again, I don´t know why, it seems there is some kind of magnet here.)*

<div align="right">

Mr. Horymír, 42 years old
</div>

It was said that relation to the region is always connected with the relation to its inhabitants. That is why the displacement of Germans was determinant, forming power not only for new-comers, but also for original population, because their social environment was completely changed.

<div align="center">

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</div>

*...and when we were leaving Hofmanky in the morning, the secretary came and said: "here is an order, you are staying, you can´t leave for Germany", it meant we were not going to the "*lager*". Well, my mum was shocked, she didn´t want to stay here not for anything in the world because she didn´t speak Czech, she was used to these people... So imagine, she (my best friend) is leaving on the hay-wagon and we are staying. You know, it was strong experience, when we saw everybody leaving and we were the only ones left in Hofmanky. Everything was empty, just cows stayed and nobody was anywhere, it was horrible... You can't imagine how you feel when you lose everything in one moment. We were lucky that then we went to the Czech school.*

Mrs. Aneta

The native inhabitants also very intensively reflect "out-rooting" of the region, the lack of historical and cultural consciousness among new-comers and their children, too. From their point of view it seems the new inhabitants were building the new world regardless of the old one.

In Moravia, everything has always belonged to someone, but here we are still building it. Today's generation says home, but the first generation, they had null Ahnung. It was like in Eldorado here, they didn't respect anything. The next generation grew up in it - „I can break anything it is after Germans". And the third generation doesn't know how to deal with it..

Mrs. Eliška, 65 years old, (ethnic German)

On the other side the new-comers mostly declare gradual, but in the end of the day, very intensive identification with the region and they do not realize their insufficiency in the eyes of autochthons. They are also speaking about out-rooting of the region, but they never refer it to themselves and to their social surrounding. From this point we can assume that the "out-rooting" is a cliché now. It explains many social problems, which originate somewhere else.

Vandalism appears here maybe more often than in the original Czech areas, because here people still have on minds that it is after Germans that it is not ours. And I don't like it, I really suffer when I see the condition in which is our castle park for example...I adopted Horšovský Týn as my town and I am saying again that I am local patriot.

Mr. Vít, 64 years old

Nevertheless there occurs the question of legitimacy of "autochthony" - is it necessary to be born in the region or is enough time sufficient? Who makes decision about it? Most of the respondents from first generation of new-comers are not sure about their rights to their patriotism and positive connection to the region where they live is not taken for granted.

Well, I became domesticated here, I have felt home here already; I am nearly patriot of this town and surroundings.

Mrs. Markéta, 61 years old

Regardless of the time, which the speaker spent in the region, a kind of abnormal situation in

borderland was reflected. Speakers often adverted to Moravia and southern Bohemia, where the exchange of population never took place. Mainly in contrast with these traditional Czech regions, the out-rooted situation of the borderland areas occurs most obvious.

> *It is about the gradational little identification with the town. This is kind of work that my colleague in Southern Bohemia doesn't have to take care of. There, when people leave because of the job, it is sure that they will come back.*
>
> *Mr. Daniel. 41 years old*

Construction of home in "outrooted" area

It is necessary to say that relations to the region does not mean home automatically: from my point of view, social construction of the meaning of the term home involves just positive connotations (I don't mean that all memories and experiences are necessary good, but the general relation to home is positive) – negative or impassive relation means that home is not home anymore. The term home is possible to see as social construct according to dominant discourse in social sciences. It is culturally and historically determined – we can talk about home in the meaning of shelter, in so called western civilization dimension of relation between social and natural is also necessary, home means combination of territory and community. But home has also its time dimension: it is the place where we live and we do care about its future (and mostly also a place, which history and traditions we respect).

The definition of the term home in the UNIVERSUM encyclopedia (2000) is following: "The residence, in which man lives, which is full of intimately known things and people, to which has man personal emotional relationship, that gives him feeling of rear, safety and security." (UNIVERSUM 2000, p.439) The same encyclopedia mentions ability of territorial extending, respective narrowing of the concept of home. It can involve just a flat, but is possible also to extend it to the whole community, landscape, region or the whole country (homeland, in Czech "domovina"). Sociological view of home is nearly identical with the common language plus W. Brepohl identified three spheres in which home is developing: biological, regional and language-perceiving.

In the case of language and language perceiving it is possible to recognize two levels for Czech language: 1. "home" as an ideological construction, 2. "at home" (be at home, go home…) as a question of everyday life, living reality. It depends on context and situation, if home adverts to sacred or profane (in the sense of Durkheim´s theory). Because of comparative character of the research it is necessary to mention German term Heimat, that connotes very emotive relationship and consciousness of roots (to some extent we can compare it with the first meaning mentioned above) and is unambiguously distinguished from the term zu Hause – home in the sense of everyday life. This distinction also shows cultural determinacy of the term home.

So what is the meaning of home constructed by inhabitants of Czech-Bavarian borderland

60 years after the end of World War II?

The home is mostly associated with:

➢ The residence – pragmatic approach to home, "home is where I hang my hat"

> *Well, my home is here already. I was born near Jindřichův Hradec and we*
> *go to see it sometimes, but it is not my home anymore. I am alien there, and*
> *also people there exchanged. Home is here, in Volary.*
>
> <div align="right">Wife of Mr. Teodor:</div>

➢ The family – either original, where are socialized values and language, which later helps to create the feeling of home:

> *I am convinced, and life confirms it, that only with dead of mother we kind of*
> *losing that home.*
>
> <div align="right">Mr. Kryštof, 67 years old</div>

Procreative family was mentioned more often. Usually it means the household, perceived as the profane everyday life.

> *Because I changed my residence several times during my life, so for me*
> *home means primarily my family. I guess we would be able to live anywhere*
> *else, the relation is not so necessary.*
>
> <div align="right">Mrs. Linda, 38 years old</div>

➢ Birthplace - it means not only a place, where a man was born, but also a place where he/she established first social contacts, where he/she grew up. This category is relevant only for people that live somewhere else then their birthplace is. It is typical for first generation of new-comers – they went for holidays "home", they wanted to be buried at „home".

> *It is the case of the old ones. They have moved here and still consider their*
> *residence in some village somewhere else as their home and they still*
> *remember it none the less, that now they are residents of Aš.*
>
> <div align="right">Mr. Jan, 68 years old</div>

According to speakers it is also the case of Sudet Germans:

> *It is like with Sudetens. They also come here and they still have their*
> *Heimattreffen here, even though they have lived for 60 years somewhere else*
> *in Germany... If they are still alive, they are at my age around 70 years and*
> *still remember that they lived here before.*
>
> <div align="right">Mr. Jan, 68 years old</div>

➢ Theoretically we can construct also concept of home defined by institution, in this case by church or by army. It didn't appear in interviews specifically, probably because it was not topical for any speaker, but we can anticipate it for example in the biographies of former Border Guards. Institution and its particular form largely determinates territorial as well as social dimension of existence of its members and it can contribute to their definition of home in this way.

Territorially large and also very universal concept of home as country or Europe or the whole world practically didn't appear– home was usually perceived in "living" connections. There was only one exception – feeling of solidarity and belonging to Central European area:

> *Question: How would you describe your home?*
>
> *Answer: Central Europe. You know, I realized strange thing in 1968. That we are not only Czechs, but we belong to this Central Europe. It was in 1968.*
>
> <div align="right">*Mr. Vincent, 60 years old*</div>

We can say that home concept is in all cases to a certain extent formed by social relations with the neighborhood, it is question of social relations.

> *I will tell you, your home is where you live your active life. That Chlum u Třeboně is nice, I live through a lot there, but I have no more contacts there. Now I live here, found my feet here and I have friends here.*
>
> <div align="right">*Mrs. Blanka, 83 years old*</div>

The importance of aesthetic point of view (here it means a semblance of territorial dimension) is visible from the fact that speakers noticed similarity of landscape between their birthplace and their residence very often.

> Question*: What means Cheb to you?*
>
> Answer*: In the first place my job, my family, because I like the school… and the surroundings is very similar to Liberecko, mountainous, nice, broken landscape, climate conditions are crumby as well. For me it is enough to go to Liberec four times a year.*
>
> <div align="right">*Mr. Ivan, 61 years old*</div>

The topic of safety and security connected to home and often emphasized in imaginative literature and also in dictionaries appears in interviews very rarely. The reason is probably the fact that they were not adequate in context of interviews (originally aimed at regional historical landmarks) so it was not necessary to expand it. This topic was verbalized just in the case of return from war, in context of extreme experiences that meant absolute danger and insecurity.

> *But my home, it is Michalovy Hory. You know, it is since the war, I joint up in the year 1939. If you experience war, you desire nothing else than home.*
>
> <div align="right">*Mr. Ferdinand, 85 years old*</div>

Possibilities of concept of home as the residence and the place evoke question of doubled home, either for new-comers or for displaced Germans. Also speakers feel potential controversy between these two concepts and often defense their own point of view and make clear their disagreement with "the opposite".

> *I consider home the place where I live. I come from Vysočina, so I can consider Vysočina my home, but I don't live there anymore, I said goodbye there, sometimes I come back to my nest, but I am home here, because I am in daily contact with people here.*

The home can be also perceived as a question of decision:

> *Even if you have your roots somewhere else, I am home here definitely. I am kind of patriot, I think you can recognize it. So, when I decide to live here, I have had to decide and have been interested in local history and so… because not everybody is able to become rooted here. People who live here, they are hidden in their houses and they don't take care about anything.*
>
> *Mr. Felix, 66 years old*

In Czech context "doubled home" seems a legitimate construction for the first generation, involved in exchange of population, but not for following generations, because their birthplace and residence are the same. But Mrs. Hana (ethnic German, 72 years old) is saying to this problem: "*Czech inhabitants can hardly understand what is called Heimat and homesick.*" She refers to strong memory culture and cohesion, which Czechs are not able to feel. Even in Central European area we can find reflected cultural differences in idea of home.

Duration in time from the temporal point of view is also important for the concept of home. For example Jandourek says (2001, p. 65): "Home is possible to create and it is not bound to incommutable place or persons". In the interviews we can also recognize the concept of home as a residence as a question of time – as a process. To be somewhere home is for new-comers a process of "becoming", for natives it is a state. A reflection of adaptation process*:*

> *It means six months full of permanent snowfall during the winter. In the neighborhood where I did not know anybody. But it was matter of one year or so and then I took kindly to this region and I can say I quite love it here.*
>
> *Mrs. Otýlie, 65 years old*

Question*: And what crosses your mind when we say home?*
Answer*: Well, now Halže already. But it was Šumava Mountains, Vlachovo Březí before.*

> *Mrs. Jarmila, 71 years old*

Historical events such as displacement construct this issue as generation issue. It is reflected in this form:

> *When I was younger and my children were small, I used to took them to Vysočina, where is my home. First when my son was there and we were going round the Vysočina and I showed him some nice places and said: It is so beautiful, isn´t it? And he said: well, daddy, it is nice, but Šumava is nicer. In this time I got to know that his home is here and he will prefer his birthplace as well as I prefer my birthplace.*
>
> *Mr. Kryštof, 67 years old*

Chosen spatio-temporal dimension involves also question of the future. It is usually not perceived as something, what should impeach home, as for example UNIVERSUM encyclopedia and Velký sociologický slovník predicate (mentioned above). The other way round, people, when speaking about the future are formulating their ideas much more as restoration of homes in borderland, taking roots of next generations. In the interviews the future appears actually more often

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than the history. It probably relates to the fact, that history is not "own" for speakers, in literal sense it can not be theirs. And it is possible to think about future in this way. Faith to overcome to some extent abnormal state, which occurred after displacement of Germans and restoration of original condition, is obvious.

It will take long time before people will come back and will call it home here
… Young people have an opportunity to travel… A lot of them are leaving.
And we will see, if this generation returns. I guess they will. That the place
where they were born will attract them in some way.

Mr. Daniel, 41 years old

It is possible to see this conviction as a declaration of trust in traditional social order, which, while constructing social reality, according to speakers holds. The consciousness of home and relationship to it is taken for granted. Even in the case that it is unbalanced in some way, the march of time directs it toward restoration.

Feast of homeless?

In the discourse of social science gradual disappearing of importance of home is discussed, mainly its territorial dimension in consequence of processes of modernity connected with migration of population etc. "Life in contemporary society is connected with minimizing relationships to one place… Emotional relationship to locally defined home is outweighed by others social and often mainly economic motivation." (Velký sociologický slovník 2000, p.219). The same source cites also W. Moebus, according to him, home is losing its stability, it is not fixed anymore and it is becoming transportable. It also invalidates the importance of social relationships in the neighborhood which are loosened and they are losing prestige. Jan Keller characterizes postmodernity as a feast of homeless, as an experiment of aesthetisation of homeless mentality. Identity is becoming disadvantageous, important is flexibility, the term home is completely impeached by globalization. Also Zygmunt Bauman in his postmodern life-styles refers to a Tourist and a Tramp/Vagabond – they both are characterized by absence of home. The Tramp wanders aimlessly, seeking for temporary stations; the Tourist leaves his home in the name of new adventures and experiences. They both resist any relation or responsibility, which means home, the Tourist is taking his home with him in contrast with the Vagabond who is homeless. "…it is still less evident, where is "the right home" and what should differentiate it from the rest of the world. There must be home somewhere to let us feel everywhere else "away from home"… We need home as a postulate; home as a pardon; home as an excuse." (Bauman 1995, p.53). But it seems that interviews give us evidence about intensive building of homes in borderland in many cases, so it means contradictory process to the one mentioned in literature above.

But lived borderland reality shows, that we still feel the necessity to specify our relation to the place where we live, to define our home and that territorial closeness is still important (even if not the only) factor for building social relationships. Regardless to the motivation (including the

economic one) of people to come to borderland they eventually declare, mostly very intensive and positive, relation to the region, which means home for most of them. In short, according to another idea of Jan Keller and regardless to intellectual construction of social scientists, ordinary social actor mostly flows through their life on their own social float by course of proved patterns and categories of traditional society.[2]

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[2] Another possible explanation is that everything is just question of time, because this area still lives in conditions of early modernity and late modernity (postmodernity) has not come yet there. Although some respondents declare clearly postmaterialistic values in Inglehart´s terms, at least in some cases it could be true… But it is a question for another study.

Melinda Dincă
Social Identity Construction. Ethnic and Regional Self- and Hetero-Identification in Rural Communities of Timiş County, Romania.

Introduction

"Being Romanian" does not mean only the legacy of a certain ethnicity, language and tradition along a genealogical line, but also their representation, namely a sum of culturally created products.

The construction of the individual identity takes place in primary socialization processes. In this way personality, social gender, kinship, ethnicity could be named primary identities and these identities will remain more and permanent in front of the life changes than other identities.

The social identity is approached today in sociology as a social process. Jenkins (Social Identity 2000) for example, considers identity as dynamics in which relationships of similarity and dissimilarity are permanently established between individuals, communities, between individuals and communities. Identity is theorized as the result of a dynamic process. It is seen as the product of the action and the existence of concrete structures of opportunity. The identities are "projected" and constructed in the relationships field. (Ritzer & Smart 2001).

The interactionists are the first to approach the idea of a socially constructed identity. E. M. Lipiansky (1991) offers a good illustration of that, through a study of French national identity. He wants to decipher the image of French identity and the fundamental concepts that condition it in moments of crisis threatened from the inside by the phenomenon of immigration and from the outside by globalization, by the European identity and the "reunified German colossus". Lipiansky underlines the fact that identity becomes an urgent issue when faced with internal conflicts, profound mutation (e.g.: unemployment, disorganized urbanism, immigration). Identity does not consist only of a relationship with oneself but, also, with the other (the privileged "other" in the case of France is Germany). At all levels of identity the cohesive element is represented by the image constructed by the community, whereas suggests the study of auto- and hetero-images, loaded with all these history, ought to be the way towards identity construction (Gavreliuc 2002, p. 315). The transformations that appear in a person's social identity presuppose continuous and complex processes, the redefinition of the dimensions of race, gender, property, religious affiliation, abilities or disabilities.

Data sources and Methodology

In social disciplines, the term of identity is generally explained through the association of people with groups, structures or social categories (age, gender, class, ethnicity, etc.). It is important to notice the distinction between auto-identification (what they believe that they are and the

guidelines they identify with) and hetero-identification (the way in which they are identified from the outside).

Our study has been achieved by encompassing two perspectives of social identities: the ethnic identity configuration and regional identity configuration of the population in rural areas of Timiş County, Romania. The two investigative sequences have been approached using the same types of research instruments (Bogardus social distance scale, Thurstone scale etc.) and starting from convergent objectives and criteria: aspects of social identity from rural environment (auto- and hetero- identification).

The study taken shape from projecting and applying a sociological investigation by questionnaires. The sample consisted of 1200 subjects from 22 Romanian rural towns and villages from Timiş County. The questionnaires were distributed so as to cover all the types of rural communities from the county selected according to the geographical distribution in the areas and the socio-demographical composition of the population (the structures of the population according to religious and ethnic belonging, age, gender and education).

The availability of the interviewers to participate in the current research was the second criteria of the selection. The data gathering took place between 1st and 15th July 2004 by a team of students - interviewers of the Sociology - Anthropology Department, West University of Timişoara. The centralization, interpretation and statistical analyses of the data were done by the author of the study.

Timiş County, Romania

In order to fully understand the significance of research result, we have to give some clarifications in connection to the specificity of the investigated population:

From administrative, territorial, political and financial point of view Romania is divided in 42 counties. Historical regions of Romania, which we currently know: Banat, Ardeal, Muntenia, Dobrudja, Moldova and Oltenia, have been established in the 12th century. Timiş County belongs to the Banat region.

The geographical and historical region knows nowadays as Banat had, along the centuries, several names. Firstly, we have "Banat of Severin". Creation of the feudal kingdom at the Oriental gates, the Banat of Severin – as other banats – use to military link the southern territories which were conquered by the Hungarians, and were conceived as equivalent of those mark of the German borders. The Banat of Severin appears as military and administrative formation at the beginning of the 18-th century. There are more testimonies about the Banat region in the 17-th century, extremely interesting for the name they are circulating as for the ethnic character of the region. The Banat region under Ottoman occupation war bearing the name of Valahia (from a Southern-Slavic source). For all the inhabitants of the region and for all the countries, the name known and recognized as valid for this geographical region is nowadays, as it was the last three centuries, the one of Banat. This name doesn't indicate a political or a military option, but sanctions the name of a province, well delimitated geographical and complex from historical point of view: the Banat.

The area of Banat is of 28 562 square kilometers, of which 18 966 belong to Romania, 9 276 sq. km to Serbia (a third part) and a corner in the north-western part, at the confluence of Mureş and Tisa, belongs to Hungary (284 sq. km). (Buzărnescu, Pribac, Neagu, Buzărnescu Ana 2004)

Data analysis

By correlating factual data (ethnic and religious configuration of the investigated communities, languages spoken within the community, stability of population /migrations, educational knowledge, occupations and other characteristics of social-economic status) we have identified three types of rural communities: (1) homogenous *communities*: geographically - territorially isolated in the rural environment, with population belonging mainly to the same ethnic group, to the same religion, with rare migration experiences, atypical to the community; (2) *communities with cultural diversity*: in general situated in the proximity of towns (Timişoara, Lugoj, Deta, Buziaş, Sînnicolau Mare, etc.), with high dynamics of migrations and (3) atypical communities: which do not frame within the two above stated types, with a population that includes ethnic or regional groups, atypical for Banat region (Ukrainians colonized via Maramureş, Roma groups that replace the displaced German populations, etc.), with massive migrations followed by periods lacking migratory significant flows, with a population that identifies itself as belonging to other regional groups than Banat.

We shall exemplify below each of these three types of communities:

Becicherecu Mic is a *typical community adjacent to a town, a community with cultural diversity*. Average sized community taking into account the number of inhabitants and households. Community located in the proximity of an urban center – Timişoara (the historical center of Banat region). Only 28% of the inhabitants have been born in Becicherec. Most of the immigrants come from Timişoara (18%).

Jamu Mare is a *typical community far from urban environment*. Average sized community taking into account the number of inhabitants and households. Community located at a certain distance from the urban environment – Timişoara and Reşiţa (Reşiţa is a city in the county of Caraş-Severin, near the county of Timiş). 42% of the inhabitants have been born in Jamu Mare. Most of the immigrants come from Timişoara (5.2%) and Resita (6.5%).

Ştiuca: *atypical community – cultural diversity*. Average sized community taking into account the number of inhabitants and households. Only 8,3% of the nowadays inhabitants have been born in Ştiuca. Most of the immigrants come from Poienile de sub Munte (Poienile de Sub Munte is a locality in the county of Maramureş, in northern part of Romania) (52.1%) and Lugoj (city in the county of Timiş) (18.8%).

Personal identity – TST

The research results have indicated main categories of self-identification and hetero-identification of rural social groups from the county of Timiş. These categories appeared by

grouping the over 980 attributes issued by respondents to open questions of self-/hetero-identification. These items appeared by using a variant of the *Twenty Statements Test* (Iluţ 1999) elaborated by M. Kuhn in 1985 for identity investigation ("Please formulate 3 distinct words, phrases or sentences that characterize you personally, completing each time the sentence "I am..."; "Please formulate 3 distinct words, phrases or sentences that represent attributes of each ethnic group from our country: They,.... are" and similarly for regional groups). TST application aimed to highlight some group identity trends by statistical processing of the obtained outcomes. We have subjected to study three identity groups: personal identity, identity of ethnic groups and identity of regional groups.

Figure 1. Self-identification of the subjects
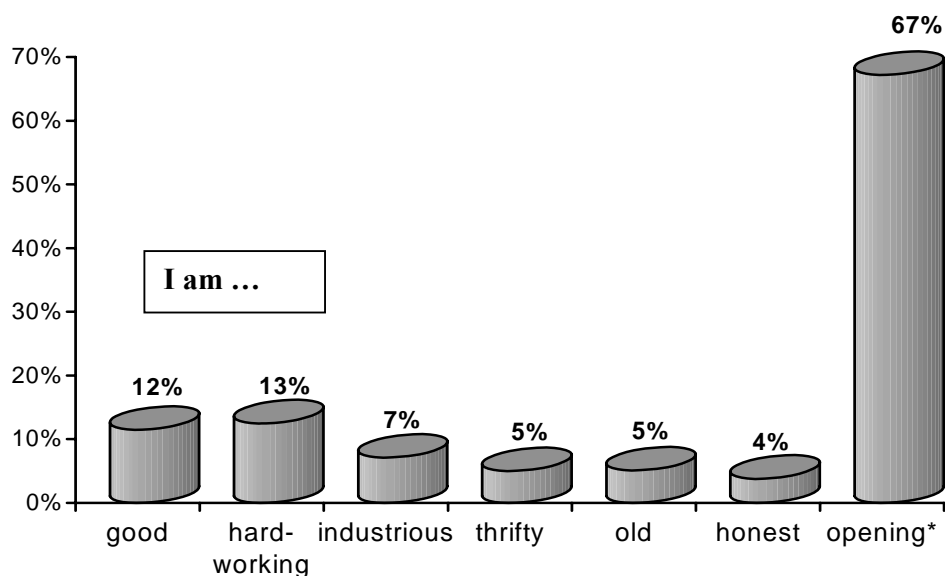
*opening means the category with the highest incidence sums up positive self-assigned features that reflect:

    - Opening towards "the other"

    - Availability, cohesion, solidarity, community spirit

    - Activism for community

    - Positive evaluation of the community conduct through personality, character and temperamental features

In this case, of personal identity (Figure 1), self-identification of rural people from the county of Timiş, re-confirms us one of the general principles of Henri Tajfel's Social Identity Theory (SIT): „individuals try to acquire and maintain positive social identity" (Tajfel & Turner 1986, p.16).

But self-identification also reflects a feature of the county's population: people are old. Counties of Arad and Timiş have an aged population, especially in last 20 years, much more accentuated compared to other counties of Romania. In Banat this situation holds significant cultural component: people value welfare, wealth. Bequest should not be divided between several heirs. There is a regional say: "Why families from Banat have always a single child? Because they cannot have half."

The self-assigned features have been grouped in 20 categories according to the types of community relations – social interaction and prescriptions of social status.

Table 1. Examples of positive & negative self-assigned attributes issued by respondents to open questions of self-/hetero-identification

Positive self-assigned attributes (category "opening")					
helpful	unselfish	kind	earnest	good	good neighbors
warm	honest	friendly	with traditions	nice	good-hearted
useful	sincere	human	one of ours	open-hearted	available
haughty	good hosts	generous	hard-working	generous	family people
do not steal	do not lie	polite	hospitable	industrious	kind-hearted
Negative self-assigned attributes					
aggressive	hostile	indifferent	unsociable	vulgar	noisy
quarrelsome	selfish	indolent	mean	disorganized	disrespectful
avaricious	unprincipled	lazy	cold	reserved	run from work
querulous	unserious	lacking discipline	shame for the village	unfriendly	lawbreakers

Ethnic identity through self-identification – TST (sub-sample of Romanians)

Following pictures show data about sub-sample of Romanians: self-assignments of Romanians (how do Romanians see themselves), which is the social distances established by the respondents of Romanian nationality (between them and the other ethnic groups from the community the live in) and how do Romanians see others (members of other con-inhabiting ethnic groups).

Figure 2. National self-identification
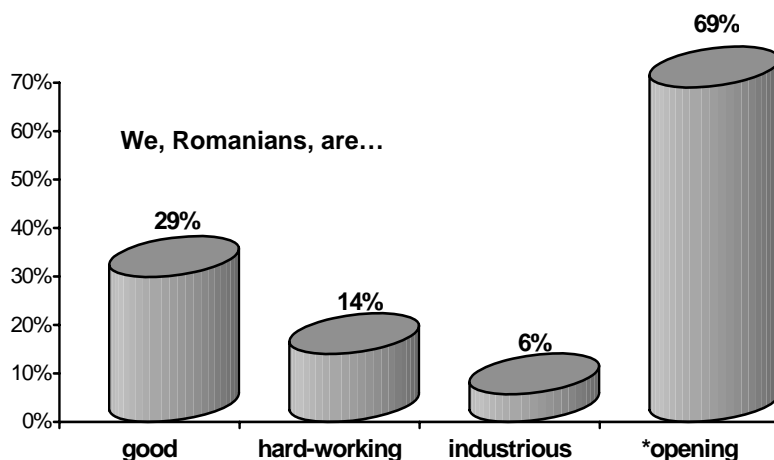
Note: for this graph only the sub-sample of Romanian-ethnic subjects has been used

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In the same way as personal identity, national self-identification (Figure 2.) keeps same positive attributes: good, hard-working, industrious, opening.

Ethnic identity through social distance – Bogardus scale (sub-sample of Romanians)

For ethnic and regional identity we have additionally the Bogardus scale in order to evaluate social distance. Results have offered an evaluation of the eight ethnic groups (Romanians, Hungarians, Serbians, Germans, Roma, Bulgarians, Jews and Slovaks) and of the five regional groups (people from Banat, Oltenia, Ardeal, Moldavia, Muntenia) as to the level of accepted intimacy ("Do you agree.... Do you accept...: 1. To marry with..., 2. To have as closest friends..., 3. To be neighbors on the same street..., 4. To work with you in the same company / organization..., 5. To live / move in the same village / commune as yours, 6. To be Romanian citizens, 7. To be expelled from Romania ?).

The most reduced social distance is represented by marriage acceptance. Graphically is represented here by the lighter lower bar. From down to top of the graph, the social distance increases up to the maximum: the wish of expulsion (represented through the darkest color: black).

Figure 3. Ethnic identity through social distance – Bogardus scale
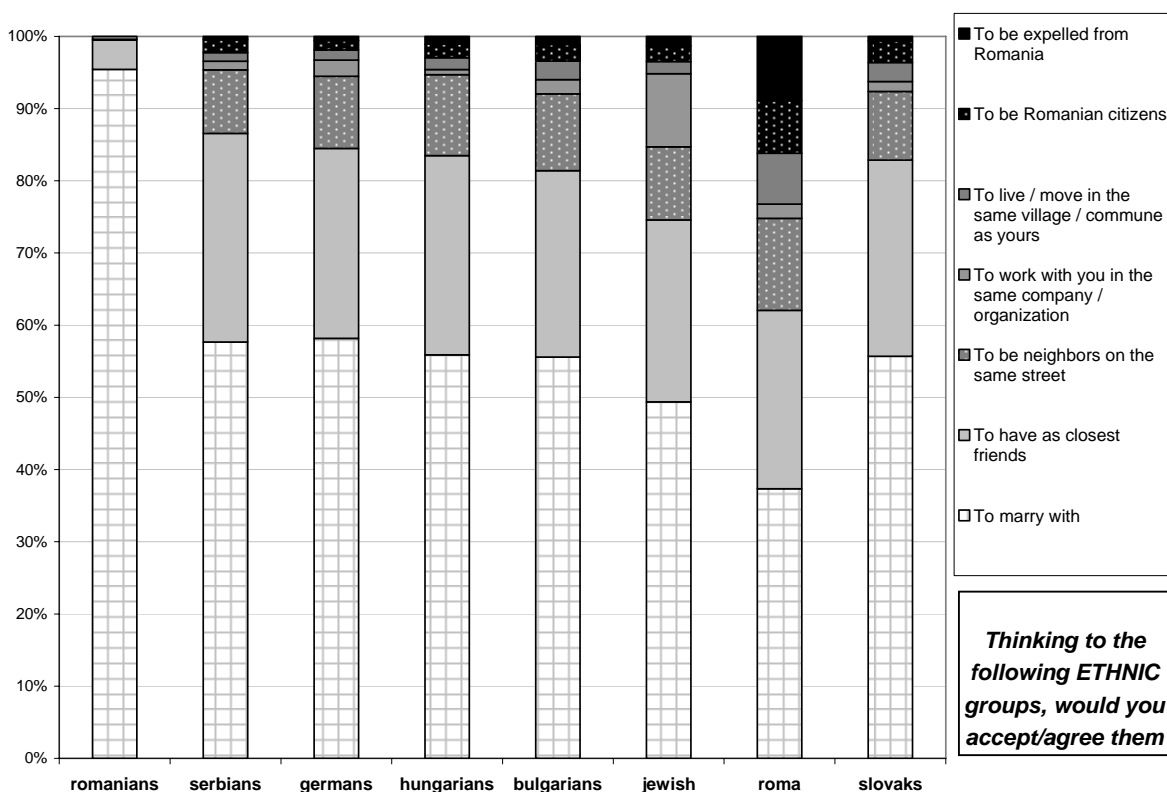
Note: for this graph only the sub-sample of Romanian-ethnic subjects has been used

As Romanians perceive (Figure 3), social distance is more reduced between them and the members of their own ethnic group: 94% from Romanians would marry with Romanians. Most of
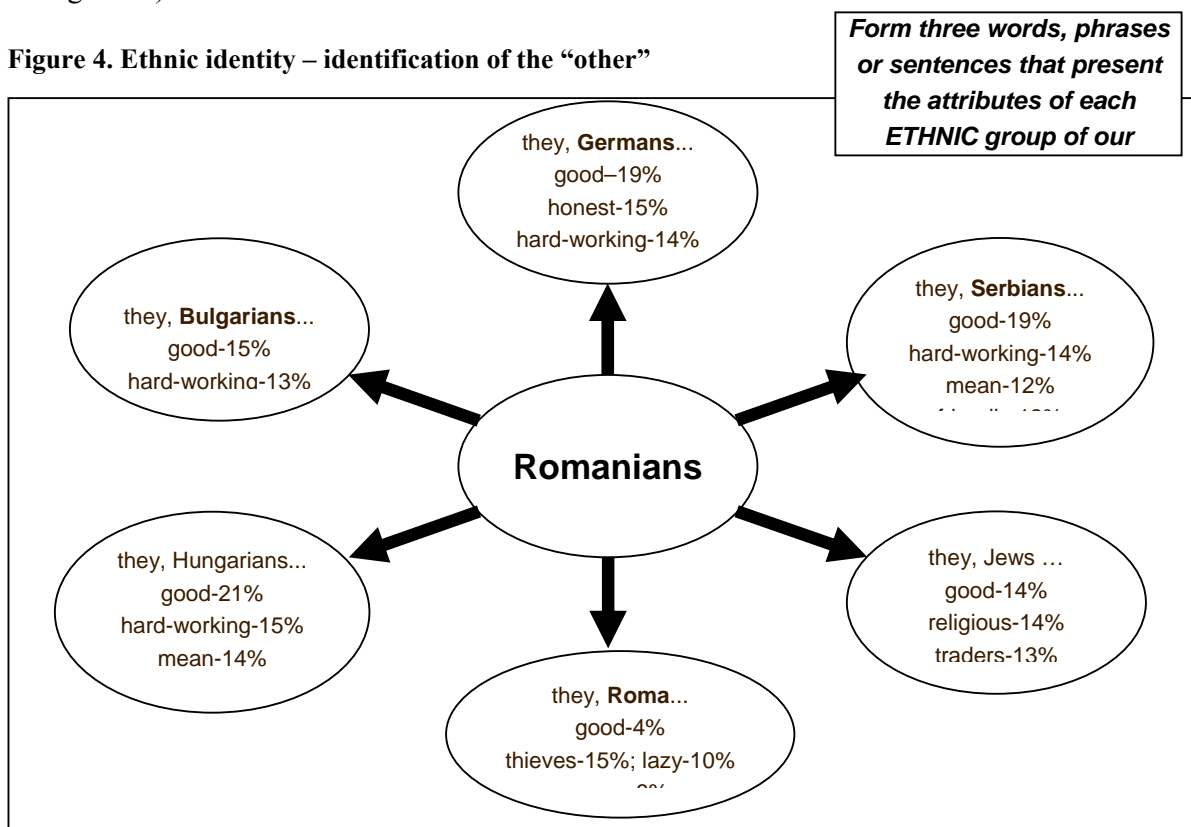
Romanians exhibit intense attitudes of social acceptance towards all other ethnic co-inhabiting groups: 45% to 50% of Romanian state that they would marry with members of other ethnic groups, excepting the ethnic group of Roma. The largest distance is between them and the group of Roma (7% from Romanians want that Roma be expelled from Romania and only 30% would accept them as spouse).

Generally, the results of this item are good news. Obviously highly known discrepancy between the expressed, stated opinion of somebody and his/her action warns us on any too optimistic interpretation of a possible social trend, based only by the statement of the attitude.

Ethnic identity – identification of the "other" – TST (sub-sample of Romanians)

Generally speaking, the appreciations of Romanians towards other ethnic groups are positive (Figure 4). However, we notice several stereotype representations: Germans are honest and cold, Jews are good traders and belong to a distinct religious group (through which it distinguishes itself from the other ethnic groups), and Roma are thieves and they do not work (one should remember that being hard-working, industrious, thrifty represents for people of Banat from the rural area a strong value).

Figure 4. Ethnic identity – identification of the "other"

Form three words, phrases or sentences that present the attributes of each ETHNIC group of our

they, **Germans**...
good–19%
honest-15%
hard-working-14%

they, **Bulgarians**...
good-15%
hard-working-13%

they, **Serbians**...
good-19%
hard-working-14%
mean-12%

Romanians

they, Hungarians...
good-21%
hard-working-15%
mean-14%

they, Jews …
good-14%
religious-14%
traders-13%

they, **Roma**...
good-4%
thieves-15%; lazy-10%

Regional identity through social distance – Bogardus scale

Following images exhibit data related to the sub-sample of people of Banat: self-characterization of people of Banat (how the people of Banat self-perceive), which is the social distance established by people of Banat (between them and other regional groups of Romania) and

how the people of Banat perceive other people (members of the other regional groups).

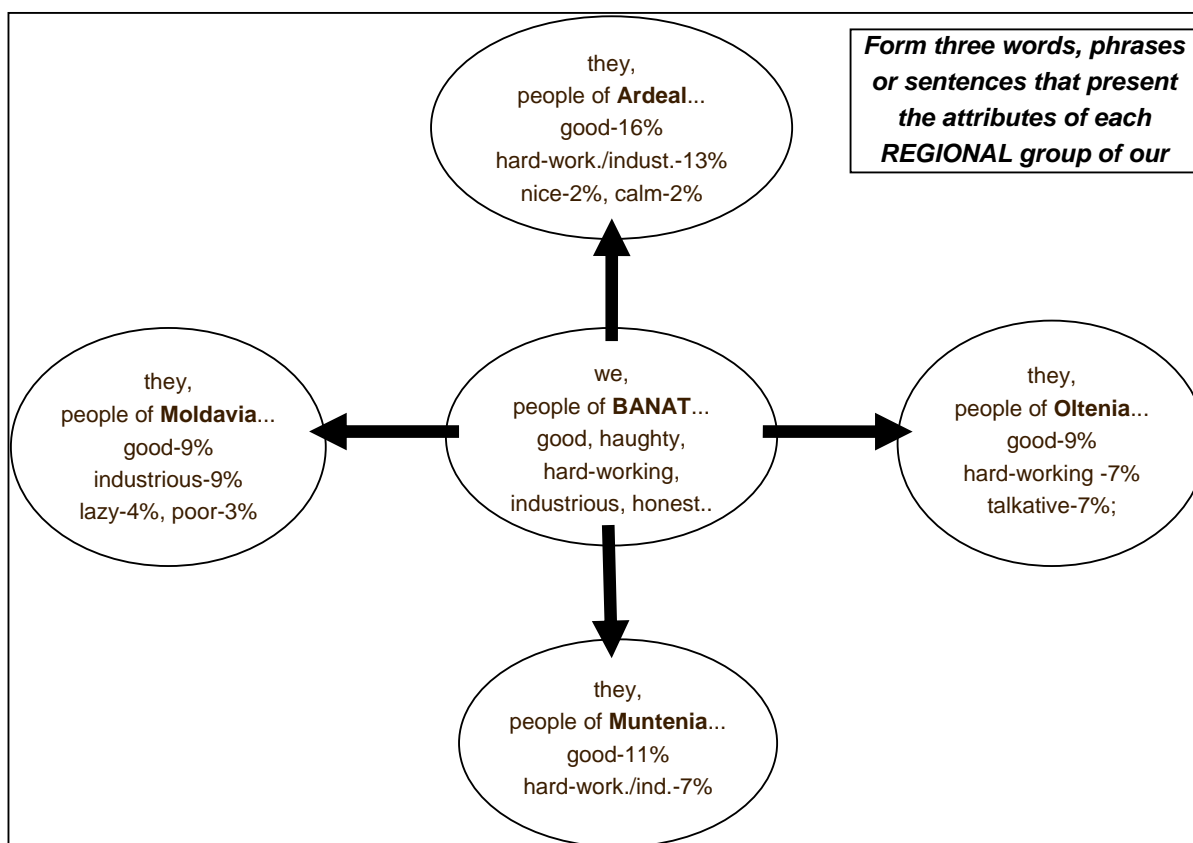**Figure 5. Regional identity through social distance – Bogardus scale**
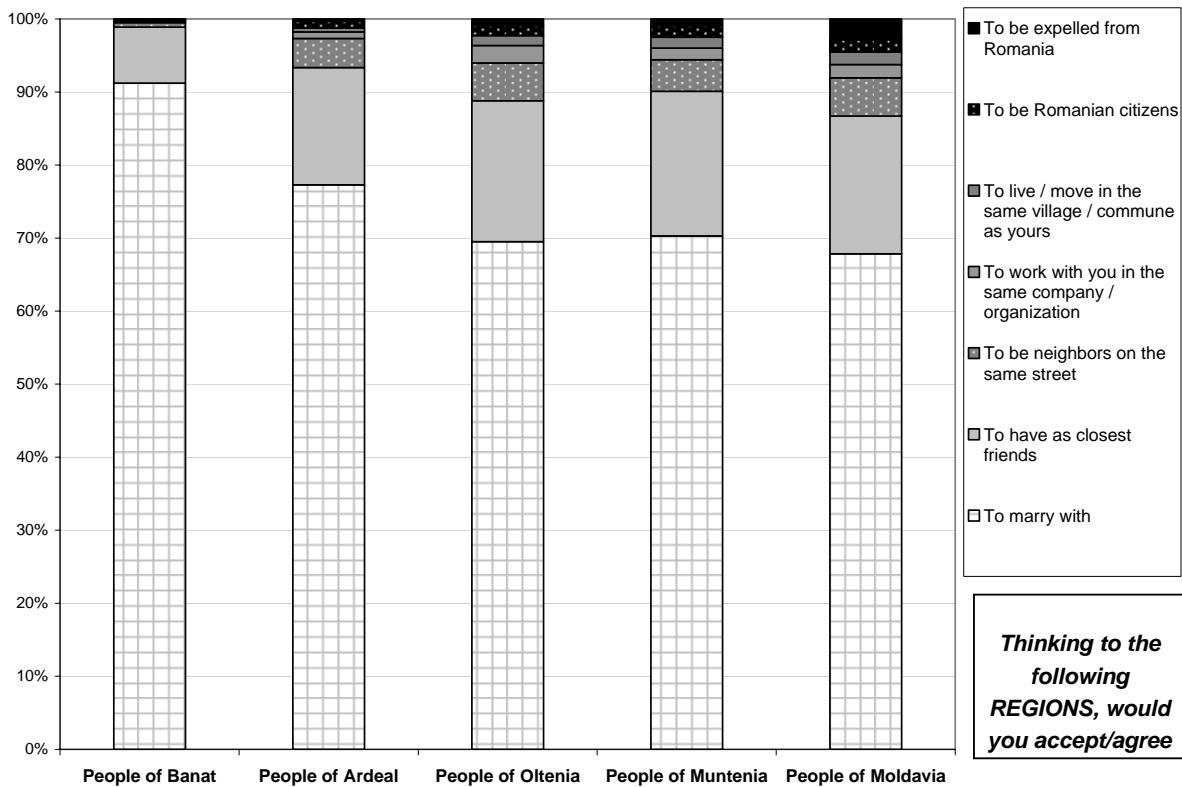
The appreciation of the people of Banat towards other regional groups (Figure 5) is a positive one. However, let note that Ardeal is significantly closer than the other provinces, while Moldova attracts the most negative representations.

Regional identity through self-identification and identification of the "other" - TST

In this case too, self-identification of the people of Banat is positive: 80% from the people of Banat seem themselves good, haughty, hard-working, industrious, honest (Figure 6.). Haughtiness is another cultural element specific to the region of Banat: people of Banat are proud and "the top" in their folk songs, dances, celebrations...

However, in this case also appear several stereotypes: people of Ardeal are calm, people of Oltenia are quick, and people of Moldavia are poor and lazy. This is highly consistent with the previous findings: the lazy and poor Moldavians are also the ones that are farer, according to the Bogardus scale. On the other hand, the people from Ardeal attract mainly positive representations. They were also the closer ones on the Bogardus scale, and are the closer ones geographically speaking, but also they share most years of common history with the Banat people.

Figure 6. Regional identity through self-identification and identification of the "other"

they,
people of **Ardeal**...
good-16%
hard-work./indust.-13%
nice-2%, calm-2%

Form three words, phrases or sentences that present the attributes of each REGIONAL group of our

they,
people of **Moldavia**...
good-9%
industrious-9%
lazy-4%, poor-3%

we,
people of **BANAT**...
good, haughty, hard-working, industrious, honest..

they,
people of **Oltenia**...
good-9%
hard-working -7%
talkative-7%;

they,
people of **Muntenia**...
good-11%
hard-work./ind.-7%

Conclusions

The social identity is made up of "qualities" of the person and the group to which individual belongs because in general social identity tends toward a positive value.

In general, people tend to show, to display a socially desirable "image" of their group, to build a positive social representation of the in-group.

Therefore, identity is made up of qualities or positive attributes of the group the individual belongs to, attributes that re re-configured in an optimal structure in order to offer its members a positive self-esteem in every new social situation. That explains the high value of the answers regarding the positive attributes of their regional group: 80% (Fig.6).

People from Timiş County prove to be tolerant. They display positive stereotypes towards most of the ethnic groups cohabitating in the region, each of them being characterized trough the same main attributes: hard-working, openness, goodness. Only the Roma population is defined as a stranger in the Banat puzzle.

Also, the social representations related to the other Romanian regions are generally positive. Mainly Ardeal is represented in positive, but the others too, with Moldova lagging a little bit behind.

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The identity of being "bănățean" (from Banat) becomes in such a way close to the one as being Romanian citizen.

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THEA KACHARAVA, GIORGI KIPIANI
Inner Space of Ethnic Minority Adolescents and Psychological basis for Minority Integration in Society[1]

The aim of this study is to reveal the peculiarities of identification and construct systems in ethnic majority and minority adolescents, living in Georgia. Ethnic minorities comprise nearly 30% percents of the population in Tbilisi, the capital city of the country; Armenians comprise 15%, and most of them study in Russian language schools. Presented work concerns following issues: Do they (ethnic minority - Armenians) feel that they are integrated in Georgian society; do adolescents living in post-Soviet period feel that they are Europeans? It's interesting that most of them study in Russian language schools up to day, which can be seen as a factor of resistance in the process of integration in Georgian society, as the state language in the country is Georgian.

Armenians are a minority group in Georgia, and as such they are more likely to use their group membership and inter group comparison to achieve self-assertion/ self-affirmation. Georgians are members of the majority group in Georgia, and as such, they may not need to engage in social comparisons involving their ethnic group to the same extent, and Georgian in Russian school mostly are adolescents from bi-cultural families, so we expected that these three groups would be differentiated by peculiarities of self-concept regarding their identifications.

In the research there were used following methods: (1) a Repertory grid technique of self-identification based on G. Kelly's Personal Construct Theory (the method is semi-projective and gives a possibility to reveal adolescents real attitudes toward themselves and other important objects using indirect technique) and (2) the method - Relative Subjective Importance Task by Barrett M. (Barrett M, 1996, Wilson &Barrett 1996). The sample consisted of 107, 15 years old adolescents from three different groups: Georgian (ethnic majority, n=30) adolescents studying in Georgian schools and Georgian (mostly from mixed families, n=37) and Armenian (ethnic minority group, n=40) adolescents studying in Russian schools[2].

In a repertory grid technique, the following elements were given to each child for personal construct elicitation: local (city), ethnic (Georgian, Russian, Armenian) and religious (Christian, Muslim) identifications, father, mother, self, ideal self. At the beginning of the interview we were asking adolescents their name, surname, in which class they were studying. Then we explained that this was a research, we would give them some questions and they had to answer them. The answers wouldn't be right or wrong, and we wouldn't give any evaluation to their performance. Then we were spreading the 10 cards (with names of elements on it) in front of the adolescent in a different

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[2] Kelly was concerned to create a new approach which still had as its focus of convenience the psychological approach to the person as opposed to a sociological approach. The method can be used in two ways: group and personal. So this is unlike to affect the results to a very large extent, since elicit cinstructs are theoretically consistent.

randomized order for each individual. We were giving them some explanation about each card, (about their meaning, for example the card „ideal self" means your ideal, to which you would look like).

Then we were giving the card „self" to the adolescent asking him/her: „Which of the other cards do you think is more similar to you by character". He/she could choose any card from the rest of 9 cards, for example: „mother". Then we were asking: „what do you think you both have similar by character?" He/she had to said some concrete quality, some adjective or behavior form, which characterized them both, for example „merry". Then we were asking him/her to say opposite of the word - „merry", he/she answered „sad". And then he/she had to say which card from these cards is the „saddest", for example „father". In this case elicit construct was: „merry-sad".

After that, the adolescents were evaluating each card/element by using the scale (1-7) and gave them appropriate scores (we also explained to adolescents how to work by scale). We did this procedure 5 times with "self" identification and then same with „ideal self" identification 3 times. Data collected from each subject were entered into a separate two-dimensional matrix, or „grid", with a column for every element and a row for every construct. Each row-column intersect contains a score (from 1 to 7), indicating which score of a given construct applies to a particular element.

Table 1. The two-dimensional matrix (grid) resulting from data collecting (partial detail for the first subject)

element / construct	Georgian	Russian	Armenian	Muslim	Christian	Father	Self	Ideal-self	Mother
Merry{7}-sad {1}	6	5	4	2	6	6	4	7	4
Kind{7}-evil{1}	6	3	2	3	7	7	6	7	7

Then we investigated the relative subjective importance of the adolescents various self-categorizations, their feelings about national and religion in-groups and out-groups and for these purposes there were used following measures:

- Relative Subjective Importance Task
- Measurement of Degree of Identification with National group
- Measurement of National Pride and National Collective self-esteem.

The research objectives were

- To investigate the identification structure and the system of personal constructs in ethnic majority and minority adolescents living Georgia
- To reveal the peculiarities of "self" and "ideal self" patterns in Georgian and Armenian adolescents studying in Georgian and Russian schools
  Received data have been elaborated by statistical programs SPSS and WebGrid.

Results

Importance of ethnic identification in adolescents

For Georgians from Georgian school, the ethnic card is a part of „self" cluster, while for Armenians and Georgians in Russian school the ethnic card is excluded from „self" cluster. According to Social Identity Theory (Yajfel 1981, Oakes, Haslam and Turner 1994) we expected that, for the minority group, the ethnic identity would be more salient, but our expectations haven't been approved by these data. For the ethnic majority adolescents studying in Georgian schools, their ethnic group is closer to „self" than in the minority group.

In the group Georgian from Georgian schools, „self" cluster involves „Christian". In the other groups, „Christian" isn't so close to „self" cluster. „Christian" is the more important card for Georgian adolescents, then for Armenians, but in all groups there are statistically significant correlations between „self" and „Christian" estimations.

For Georgians from Russian schools, the „self" cluster involves parents and "Christian". In comparison with Georgians from Georgian schools, the ethnic group is excluded from "self" cluster.

For the ethnic minority (Armenian) adolescents, „self" correlates with „Georgian"(.509**). The elements correlated with „self" are identical for the Armenian from Russian schools and for the Georgian adolescents studying in Georgian schools. In Armenians group there is no correlation between „self" and their ethnic group "Armenian".

It is also very interesting that Armenian's „ideal self" correlates with „Georgian"(.390*). It means that the estimation of "ideal self" and „Georgian" are interdependent categories.

We can conclude that „Georgian's" place in self-concept of Armenian adolescents is very important. Their „self" and „ideal-self" correlate with „Georgian", and there is no correlations with „Armenian". By repertory grid data 16 adolescents haven't chosen „Armenian", from them 10 adolescents haven't identified themselves with any ethnic group. From 24 adolescents, who have chosen „Armenian" card for identification, according to the method of repertory grid 11 have chosen the second ethnic group (8 with Georgian). It's interesting that from 40 adolescents according to measure „The adolescent's self-categorizations", 34 of them have chosen only „Armenian". *When question is given in direct style, they choose only „Armenian", but when question concerns their personal similarity with others, they also choose „Georgian" and „Russian".*

Supra-national identifications

The importance of being European is equal for three groups. It is interesting that for adolescents identification - "Caucasian" is more often selected in Russian schools and is more important for Armenian adolescents (p<0.005). The difference between choices of "European" and "Caucasian" very small in Georgian schools, when the differences in Russian schools are significant. We can conclude that importance of being European is more important for adolescents from ethnic majority studying in Georgian schools. Identification with "Asian" has the lowest rankings.

Table 1. Identification with supranational categories

	Georgian (Georgian Education Schools)	Georgian (Russian Education Schools)	Armenian (Russian Education Schools)
European	53%	46 %	45 %
Caucasian	56 %	78 %	83 %
Asian	17 %	22 %	18 %

National Pride and Public Collective Self-esteem

There are no differences in expressing National Pride between groups. Half of the respondents in the three groups announce that they are very proud of being Georgian/ Armenian. There is a tendency in the Georgian group from Georgian school, that they are prouder for being Georgians in comparison with the adolescents from Russian schools.

Qualitative analysis of "self" and "ideal-self"

According to qualitative data there are also some differences in the patterns of "self" and "Ideal-self" images in the groups.

According to the three groups in the process of characterizing "self" images there were elicited constructs with humanistic, interpersonal, emotional, moral, connected with faith and visual appearance contents. Georgian adolescents from Russian schools also characterized themselves with patriotic, intellectual and assertive contents in comparison with the Georgians from Georgian schools. Perhaps these differences indicate that (1) when adolescents receive education in Russian language, they have to be more assertive for gaining self-affirmation in Georgian society; (2) socio-cultural environment of Russian school has its effect on the formation of construct systems in adolescents. When Armenian adolescents characterizing themselves, they use constructs with content of positive attitudes toward Georgia. This aspect isn't accentuated in other groups, because "Georgians" are in-group for them. As for Armenian, they estimate the out-group – "Georgians" – positively and this attitude is important for them.

In the process of characterizing the image of "ideal self" there were elicited constructs with the following categories: humanistic, interpersonal, emotional, assertive, intellectual and connected with "personal independence" contents. The constructs connected with faith and visual appearance (which were important in "self" image) lost their importance when adolescents characterizing "ideal self", and more important become constructs concerning intellectuality and independence. Adolescents do not use in "ideal self" constructs with emotional content, because in the case of the "self" image these constructs had negative context for them.

Georgian adolescents from Georgian schools elicit constructs connecting with faith (behavior) in "ideal self" image, and Georgian from Russian schools - constructs with patriotic content.

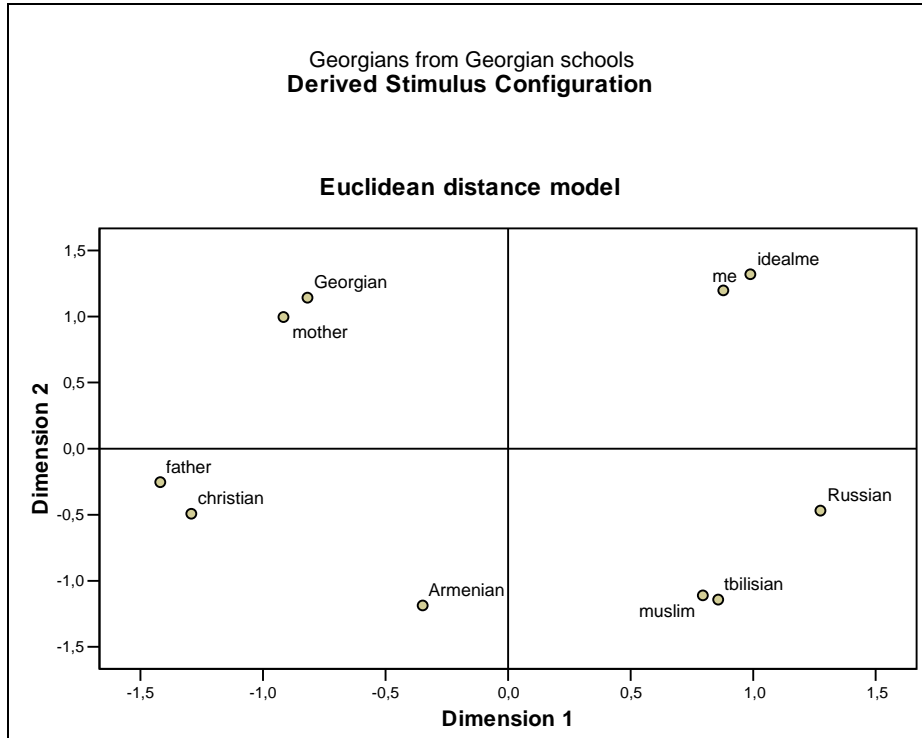**Figure 1. Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) for 'Georgians from Georgian schools'**

Georgians from Georgian schools
Derived Stimulus Configuration

Euclidean distance model

Figure 2. Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) for 'Georgians from Russian schools'

Georgian from Russian schools
Derived Stimulus Configuration

Euclidean distance model
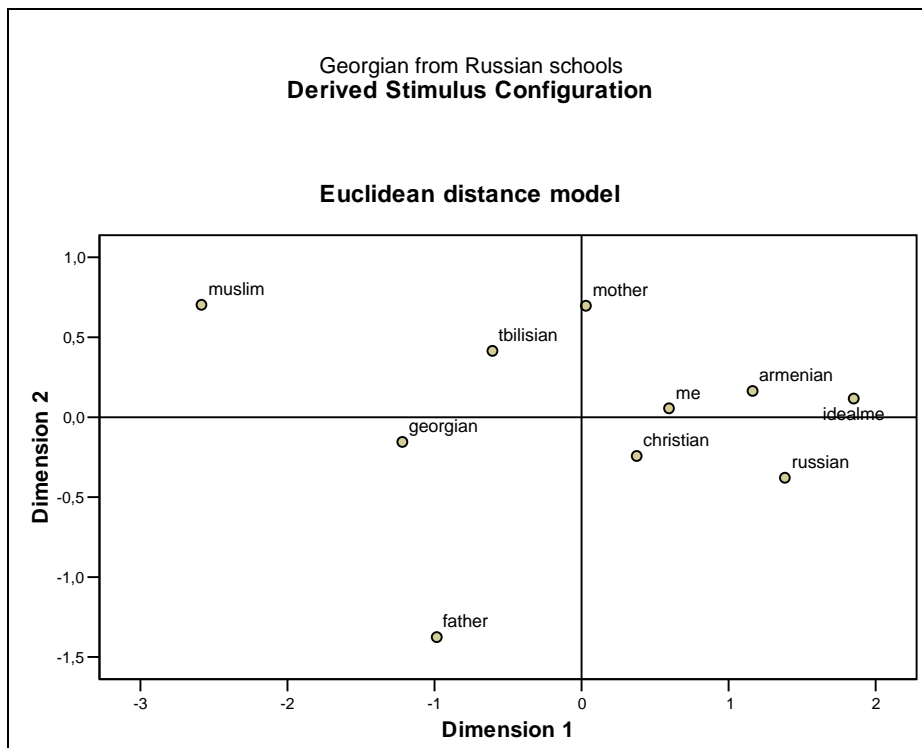
Figure 3. Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) for 'Armenian from Russian schools'

Derived Stimulus Configuration, Armenian in Russian schools

Euclidean distance model
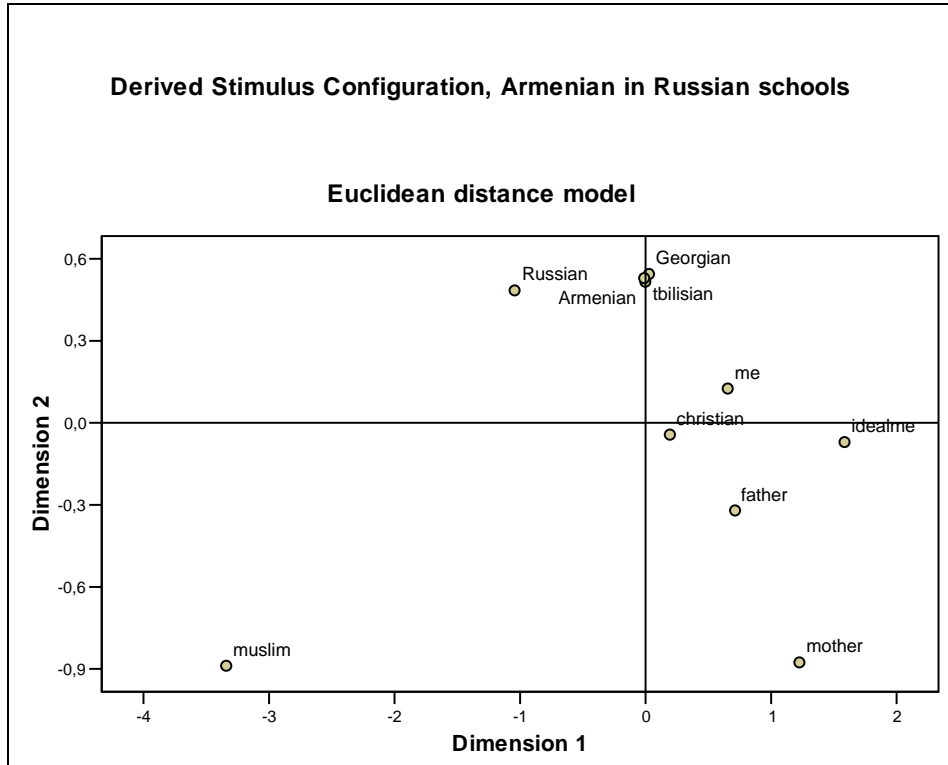
Figure 4. Hierarchical cluster analysis for Georgian adolescents studying in Georgian schools


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Dendrogram using Average Linkage (Between Groups)

                    Rescaled Distance Cluster Combine


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


  Georgian   3
  Tbilisia  10
  me         1
  Father     7
  Mother     6
  Christia   8
  idealme    2
  Russian    4
  Armenian   5
  Muslim     9
```
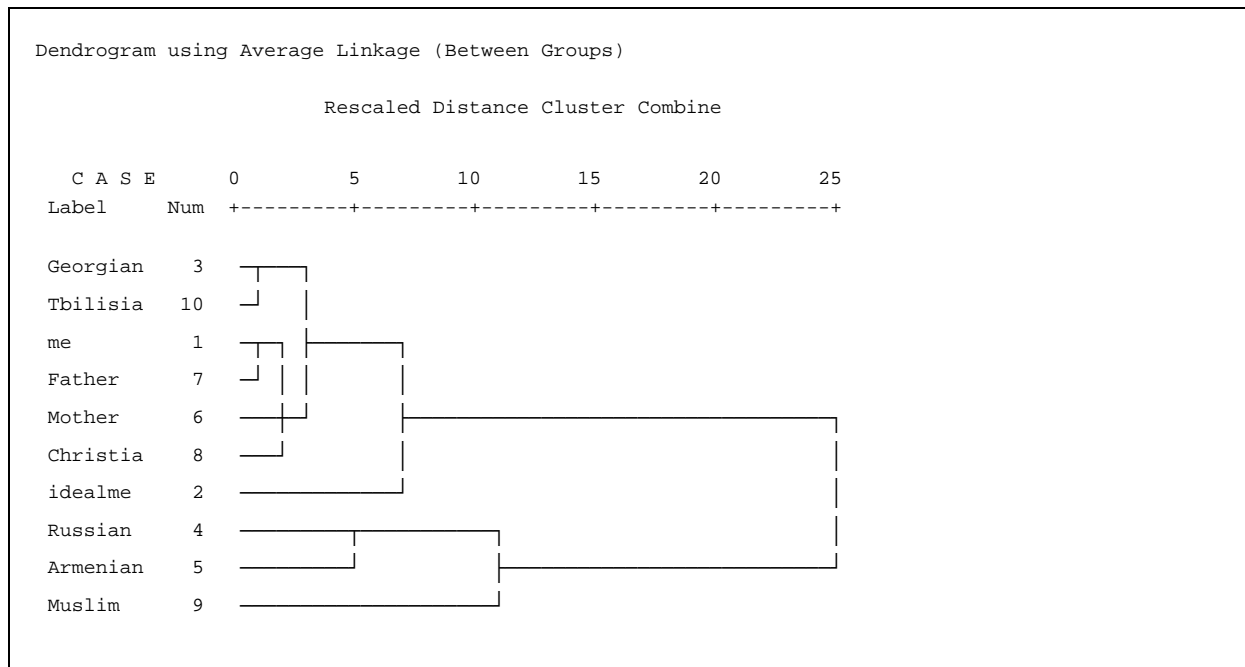
Figure 5. Hierarchical cluster analysis for Georgian adolescents studying in Russian schools

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Dendrogram using Average Linkage (Between Groups)

                    Rescaled Distance Cluster Combine

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

  me          1    ─┐
  Father      7    ─┘ │
  Mother      6    ───┴─┐
  Christia    8    ─────┴─┐
  idealme     2    ───────┘         │
  Russian     4    ─┐               │
  Armenian    5    ─┴─┐             │
  Georgian    3    ───┴─┐           │
  Tbilisia   10    ─────┘           │
  Muslim      9    ─────────────────┘
```
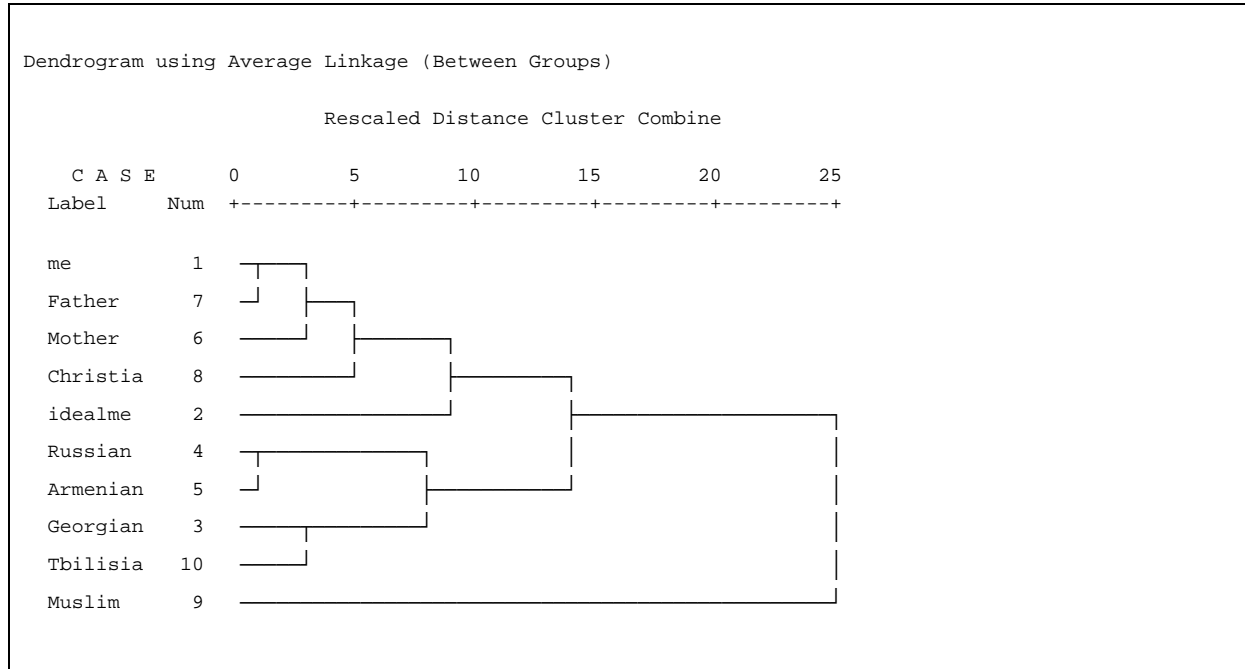
Figure 6. Hierarchical cluster analysis for Armenian adolescents studying in Russian schools

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Dendrogram using Average Linkage (Between Groups)

                    Rescaled Distance Cluster Combine

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

  Georgian    3    ─┐
  Tbilisia   10    ─┤
  Christia    8    ─┴─┐
  Armenian    5    ───┴─┐
  me          1    ─┐   │
  Father      7    ─┴─┐ │
  Mother      6    ───┤ │
  Russian     4    ───┘ │
  idealme     2    ─────┴─┐
  Muslim      9    ───────┘
```
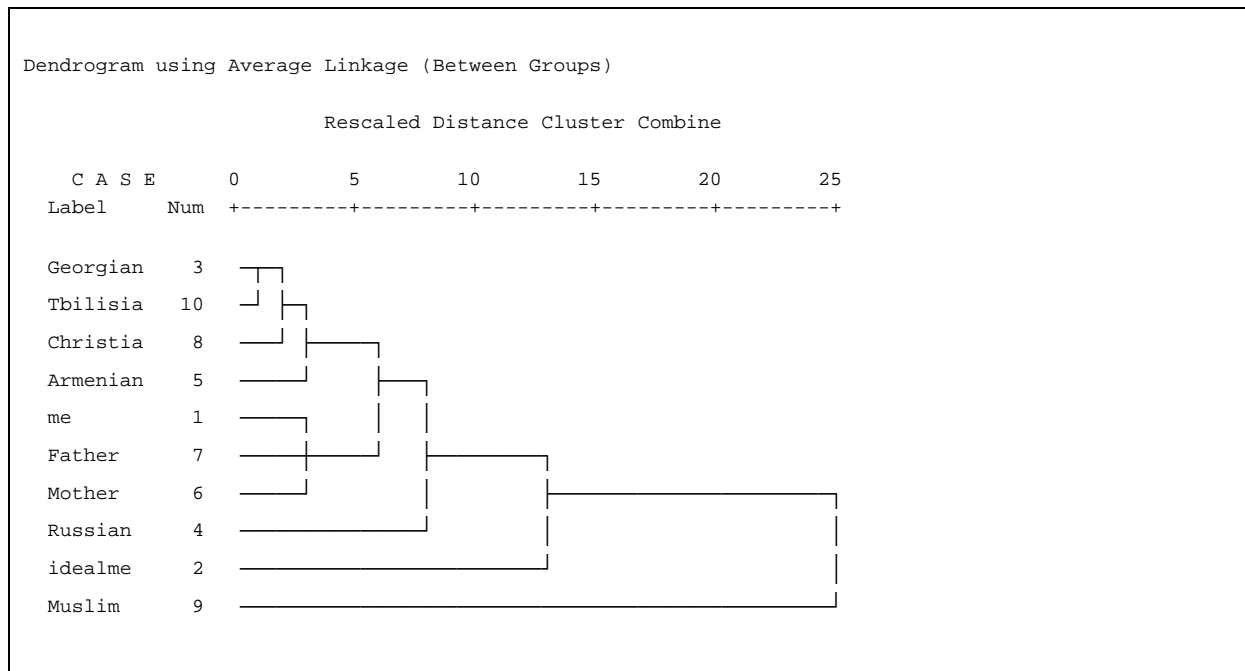
Conclusions:

1. As correlations of "self" and "ideal-self" with ethnic majority groups in Armenian adolescents show there are some pre-conditions for ethnic minority adolescents for the integration in Georgian society.

2. The readiness for integration is more salient in Armenian adolescents, than in Georgians. According to Multidimensional Scaling and Hierarchical Cluster Analysis we can conclude that place of „Georgians" in inner space of Armenian adolescents is very important. Ethnic in-group and out-group (Georgians) are estimated similarly, which means their positive attitudes toward ethnic majority.

3. The importance of being European is equal for three groups; as for being Caucasian, for adolescents studying in Russian school being Caucasian is more important than in Georgian school.

4. Caucasian identification for Armenian adolescents is the better bases for integration in The Georgian society, than European identification.

Magdalena Lesińska
The influence of different factors contributing to the construction of the ethnicity of minority group. The case of Roma populations

The issues concerning minorities and relations between minorities and majorities have recently moved to the forefront of nationalism theory. Although, ethnically plural societies have occurred throughout human history, it is only today that the issue of ethnicity and relation between ethnic groups has become an important question, especially in the face of recent awaking of ethnic consciousness and ethnic struggles. Nowadays, ethnic groups do not remain silent, they seek to be heard and recognized. The defeated and the oppressed fight for the legal recognition, for better social and political position within state structure and try to preserve the culture, language and traditions which create their specificity and distinguish one ethnic group from the others. The phenomenon of ethnic groups and their place in human society and culture constitutes a fascinating field for study.

In this article I will look closer at fragment of the theory connected the interactions between minorities and majorities. I will explore the different processes that seem to be involved in generating and maintaining these relations and their influence on the ethnicity construction and self-identification of minorities. This text will evaluate the process of construction ethnicity in the case of Roma minorities in the European countries. I will examine different factors: historical, social and political which have influenced this process in time, and show how they affected the self-identification of these two groups and their specific relations with the majority.

The construction of the ethnicity of the minority group is a long –term process, which is shaped both by group self-definition and by host society expectations on a particular minority. In the relations between a majority and minority there are many different factors which have an influence on mutual recognition and further, on the acceptance or rejection (marginalization) the minorities by the majority. In the first part of the article, I would like to provide the short theoretical framework connected to the terms: ethnicity and its markers: language, religion, myths of origins, shared history etc.; ethnic group and ethnic identity. Further, I will answer the question what kind of significant factors and how they have influence on the ethnicity and functioning of the minorities.

It is difficult to describe all the factors which potentially construct the ethnicity: racial and cultural differences, language and cultural barriers, social and political separation, historical events; these are only a few of them. To observe their influence more carefully I will focus my further attention to the examination of the specific example: the Roma populations. I have chosen this specific group not by the accident, they are very interesting examples of minority groups and show well how complicated different alliances could be created through history and how different factors contribute to a continually evolving social process, which undoubtedly ethnicity constructing is.

Roma have usually been perceived as strangers, they were marginalized by host societies. They have not been integrated, they rather adopted (or even were forced to adopt) to some extent only the basic standards of majority way of life. The Roma ethnic traditions and nomadic way of life on the one hand, and the rejection by majority on the other, are commonly presented reasons

why Roma have never been perceived as insiders and they themselves never identified with host society as well. Obviously, it is not a sufficient answer, it has to be taken into consideration the great differentiation among Roma groups, another question is if we can discuss about Roma ethnicity at all, is it justifiable to use this term in the case of a population where it is difficult to discuss about any collective identity based on ethnicity, about sharing culture, common past, myths of origin and language? I will examine these issues in this article, as well as the impact of stereotypes and prejudice, distinct way of life and politics of the state towards Roma on ethnicity of this population.

The basic terminology: ethnicity, ethnic group, ethnic identity.

Ethnicity as a term has appeared in the literature quite recently. The meaning of this word is ambiguous, in the introduction to the book '*Ethnicity. A Reader*' edited by Hutchinson and Smith there are many examples of its understanding which can be encountered in the literature. Ethnici*y* can mean generally 'the essence of an ethnic group' or 'the quality of belonging to an ethnic community or group' (Hutchinson and Smith 1996, p.4-5). The word derives from the ancient Greek term *ethnos,* which referred to distinct groups of people, non-Greeks. In common understanding, the ethnicity *refers to aspects of relationships between groups which consider themselves, and are regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive* (Eriksen 1993, p.4). The crucial point which must be stressed here is that the ethnicity is a social process shaped both from the inside and the outside: by self-definition of the members of the ethnic population and by ascription of other groups. Ethnicity, what must be clear here too, is **a process**, meaning that how an ethnic group is perceived and how the members perceive themselves change over time; there are no timeless sociological facts or cultural norms. This process and the factors which have an active influence on it are the substance of this article.

The unusual power of the markers of the distinctiveness contributing to ethnicity is explained convincingly by Harold Issacs (1975, p.32), as he says:

> 'These are the common holdings of the group of which the baby becomes a member, the social features, the 'shared samenesses' that enter in all their complex ways into the making of the individual ego identity. (…) The baby acquires **a name**, an individual name, a family name, a group name. He acquires the **history and origins** of the group into which is born. The group's culture past automatically endows him, among other things, with his **nationality** or other condition of national, regional or tribal affiliation, his **language**, **religion**, and **value system** – the inherited clusters of mores, ethics, aesthetics, and the attributes that come out of the **geography** or **topography** of his birthplace itself, all shaping the outlook and the way of life upon which the new individual enters his first day'.

From the term 'ethnicity' certain important concepts have emerged such as ethnic identity, ethnic origins, ethnic conflict and ethnic group; and they need to be presented here as well. *Ethnic identity* refers to the individual or collective level of identification with a culturally defined

collectivity, like any other form of identity, it is not only the question of knowing who an individual or a group is subjectively, but how they are seen from the outside. E*thnic origin* means a sense of ancestry and nativity of the members of the ethnic group through their parents and grandparents (Hutchinson and Smith 1996, p.5). Another comment must be made here, ethnicity is often perceived as a source of conflict. Ethnic groups do not remain in a fixed position within the socio-political system, they often fight for achieving different goals: recognition, better social position, access to economic resources, political autonomy etc. However, *ethnic conflicts* are usually perceived as political struggles for territory and power, and in this context the ethnic group can be perceived as a group of interest. Nevertheless, the psychocultural impact of these struggles (the fight against the dominance of majority culture, language and traditions in order to preserve its own minority identity) could not be neglected in the examining the group conflicts, there is no legitimacy to label all the conflicts as 'ethnic' (Glazer and Moynihan, 1967, pp 6-7).

Among useful concepts connected to phenomenon of ethnicity, one of the most relevant is the concept of 'ethnic group'. In his classical work Max Weber (1947, p.389) provides a very important interpretation of this term. According to him, ethnic group is

> 'a human group that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; controversially, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists (…) in our sense ethnic membership does not constitute a group; it only facilitates group formation of any kind, particularly in the political sphere. On the other hand, it is primarily the political community, no matter how artificially organized, that inspires the belief in common ethnicity'.

The Weber interpretation goes beyond the narrow understanding of the ethnicity and its foundations and includes the dynamism of the process of its creating and developing. He stresses the fact that formation of ethnic group can offer a base for political action by the group and on behalf of the group. This could be observed clearly in the case of Roma political movements and their activity.

In the literature there are many definitions of *ethnic group*, below I quote the six main features of ethnic group according to Anthony D. Smith, this characterisation seems to be more static. These features are:

- ➢ a collective proper name, to identify and express the characteristics of the community,
- ➢ a myth of a common ancestry, it includes an idea of a common origin in time and place and it gives the sense of roots and continuity,
- ➢ shared historical memories of a common past, these include the legends, stories about heroes, events and their commemoration,
- ➢ one or more differentiating elements of a common culture, which does not have to be specified but normally includes religion, customs, and language;

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> ➢ an association with a specific 'homeland', not necessarily its physical occupation by the group, it could be a symbolic attachment to the land of ancestors;
> ➢ a sense of solidarity with significant sectors of the population (Smith 1991, p.21).

Whatever definition of ethnicity or ethnic group we use, one of the key elements of these terms is the orientation to the past. A sense of historical allegiance means a sense of belonging and the loyalty to a particular ancestry and origins, of historical continuity and sharing specific cultural traditions connected to religious beliefs and practices, language and territory.

As A. D. Smith (1986, p.15) implies, the core of ethnicity '*resides in this quartet of 'myths, memories, values and symbols' and in the characteristic forms or styles and genres of certain historical configurations of populations'*. And this impact of the past distinguishes ethnicity from other forms of social identity based on present or future orientations such as citizenship, occupation or political commitments (de Vos 1995, pp27-28). The importance of these elements which characterize ethnic membership such as myths of origins and historical memories will be discussed more broadly later on, together with the specific examples Roma group examined in this article. Especially, I will present in this context the doubts concerning the usage of the term 'ethnic group' and ethnicity in the case Roma people raised by the scholars dealing with these populations (Stewart 1997). Here, I only make a short comment on the role of the myth of origins, historical memories, language and territory in constructing the ethnicity of the group.

Common myths of origins, shared historical memories and language are very powerful instruments contributing to the construction and maintenance of the ethnicity. To consciousness of the roots and the history of one's group provides not only the knowledge of the provenience but also a sense of continuity in which individual can find the personal and social meaning of one's existence. Although I will use the term 'ethnicity' to examine group relations, it has to be kept in mind that this term has both individual and collective levels. The individual level emerges especially when ethnicity is defined in the narrow sense, as a subjective feeling of continuity with a real or imagined past.

> 'Ethnicity is related to the individual need for a collective continuity as a belonging member of some group. The individual senses some degree of threat to his or her own survival if the group or lineage is threatened with extinction. Ethnicity includes a sense of personal survival through a historical continuity of belonging that extends beyond the self (…) in its deepest psychological level, ethnicity is a sense of affiliative survival'(de Vos 1995, p.25).

Maybe here is an explanation why ethnicity has such a power to mobilize people and why ethnic conflicts are so bloody and aggressive. Mythological interpretations of origins also explain the differences between the groups and provide the justification for such differences. Shared historical memory binds both the individuals into the group and the generations through the time providing the continuity from the past into the future (de Vos and Romanucci-Ross, 1995, p.357).

Another crucial element is language, it is one of the major characteristics of the group. Its power is connected not only with the crucial role in the communication by the members of the group as a powerful vehicle of transmission of information, but it is also a component of culture and

a visible symbol of distinctiveness. Language constitutes the existence and continuity of a group, and is one of the strongest ties connecting the fellow members together. At the same time, language enables us to distinguish 'us' from 'them', it creates a clear boundary between groups. The final element is territory, it may be a central issue to maintain ethnicity, but its role could be also minimal or even nonexistent in the case of nomadic population or diaspora groups. The territorial concept has more of symbolical role, it is connected to the place of the group roots, to a mythical 'homeland', and its influence on ethnicity should be investigated in this context, especially in the case of dispersed populations living in many places.

Frederick Barth's theory of ethnic groups.

Before looking at the relations between ethnic groups, between minorities and majority from both the sociological and anthropological perspectives, it is necessary to provide a basic review of the theory of inter-group relations. In the introduction to the book *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. The Social Organization of Culture Difference* Frederick Barth defines the concept of ethnic group, its empirical characteristics and the group boundaries, and develops a model for the study of ethnic relations. His theory is very useful for the understanding and interpretation of inter-group relations, different factors influencing mutual contacts and group consciousness.

One of Barth's main assumptions is that groups do not exist in geographical and social isolation, the ethnic group rather maintains its culture facing and interacting with other groups. He especially emphasizes the fact that for analyzing the ethnic relations, the priority is to understand how and why the ethnic boundaries were created and exist, rather than to study the cultural content of the ethnic population. He strongly emphasizes the fact that the primary feature of ethnic group is that this is a category of ascription by others and identification by the members themselves; '*a categorical ascription is an ethnic ascription when it classifies a person in terms of his basic, most general identity, presumptively determined by his origin and background, to the extent that actors use ethnic identities to categorize themselves and others for purposes of interaction, they form ethnic groups in this organizational sense'* (Barth 1969, p.13).

According to Barth, the term ethnic group in anthropological sense is generally understood as a population which:
  ➢ is largely biologically self-perpetuating,
  ➢ shares fundamental cultural values, realized in overt unity in cultural forms,
  ➢ makes up a field of communication and interaction,
  ➢ has a membership which identifies itself, and it is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order (ibidem, pp.11-12).

For Barth the crucial term in examining the phenomenon of ethnic groups are ethnic boundaries. The boundaries define the group, not a culture that it encloses(ibidem, p.15). Firstly, they establish the internal criteria of membership in order to recognize insiders and outsiders; secondly, the social life of the group takes place within the ethnic boundaries, they define the

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relations and the patterns of behavior of the fellow members. In other words, ethnic boundaries help to identify a person as an insider of a particular ethnic group (the fellow member), and at the same time, they constitute the barriers to distinguish the others as strangers (the outsiders, members of another ethnic group).

Moreover, the ethnic boundaries do not have to be based on the territorial ones, they are basically psychological in nature and they are not totally closed. As Anthony Cohen stressed in his classical book 'The Symbolic Construction of the Community', the groups boundaries may have different nature: '*some like national or administrative can be statutory and enshrined in law, some may be physical, expressed, perhaps, by a mountain range or sea, some may be racial or linguistic or religious. But not all boundaries, and all components of any boundary are so objectively apparent. They may be thought of, rather, as existing in the minds of their beholders'* (Cohen 1985, p.12). Cohen's main argument is that whether or not the structural and territorial boundaries have influence, the reality of the community lies in its members perception of the vitality of its culture; people construct community mainly symbolically and the consciousness of community is, therefore, strictly related with the perception of these boundaries.

Ethnic groups are seen both as cultural units and social organizations, they are based on persisting cultural differences, their members have in time more or less frequent interrelations. These contacts imply a situation where groups of different cultures have a common set of codes and values which allows them to communicate. According to Barth (1969, p.16), the persistence of contact between different ethnic groups requires, on the one hand, the criteria and signals for identification, and on the other, the existence of a structure of channels for interaction which allows the persistence of cultural differences. Ethnicity is not created and developed in isolation, on the contrary, it is defined through intergroup relations, highlighted through the boundaries, and it may change through time.

Most ethnic groups change their boundaries slowly and imperceptibly. Taking into consideration the power of ethnicity both at the individual and collective level, it is obvious that the process of change may take even generations. Although ethnic identity is generally acquired at birth, the changes are possible; they are the matter of degree. At the personal level, the linguistic or religious conversion is not really problematic, individual can join a new group for example by intermarriage and be perceived as a member of the community; but the permanent modification of group self-ascription and, what is much more difficult, the change of perception of the population by other groups is a long lasting and very complex process. As I noticed before, ethnic boundaries are obviously not absolute ones, and ethnicity is an on-going process.

The concept of ethnic boundaries, which draw the demarcation line and distinguish the populations, makes us focus on the relations between groups. The variability of the intergroup relationships will be discussed briefly in the next part, focusing on the minorities-majorities connections in society and their mutual influence.

The factors which influence the construction of ethnicity of minorities living within majorities.

As it was already suggested, group boundaries can become either stricter or looser, more or less open or closed. A group can have strict or flexible criteria of membership; it can be more or less acculturated to the norms of some other group, more or less internally cohesive, and more or less ethnocentric or hostile to other groups. And these features characterize both the minority and majority groups.

It is impossible to review all the variables of minority-majority relations, which concrete form they may take, what factors prevail and what further implications they may have lead to. Such factors range from the size and power of the groups and historical background to geographical characteristic and style of life. The attempt to cover all of them sufficiently is extremely difficult in this limited space. In this part I will mention some of the factors influencing ethnic inter-group processes and briefly discuss the most relevant ones as a theoretical background for the analysis of concrete examples in the next parts of the article.

As far as majority-minority relations are concerned, the nature of these relations varies with many different variables. Some of the variable, connected to the term ethnicity and ethnic group boundaries such as the role of possessing different origins, history, language, religion and value system were already mentioned. Here I will add some others, which can be described as cultural, political and social. They are based on van den Berghe's typology of conditions favouring assimilation (1987, p.218). These factors will be also discussed more specifically during the examination of Roma case. To take all of them into consideration is necessary in the analysis of the influence of different factors contributing to the construction of ethnicity.

Cultural similarities and the readiness of the majority to assimilate the minority.

This factor was already mentioned several times, however, it is a crucial one and it is worth elaborating it more carefully. Generally speaking, a minority is more closely accepted the closer its culture approximates that of the dominant group. Assimilation into the majority culture is less complicated and shorter if the minority shares religion, language, traditions and myths with the majority. However, as Thomas Eriksen (1994, p.136) properly noticed, cultural differences or similarities are analytically elusive, they cannot be measured, and there are certain political and moral dangers connected with analyzing the cultural differences between groups. According to him, emphasis on these differences may contribute to reification of culture and reproduce native ideology and native stereotypes.

Nevertheless, the preservation of the minority culture which is completely different from the majority one, could be simpler in this sense that the assimilation for minority members within the mainstream society would be extremely difficult. The fact of strong and visible 'otherness' creates tight networks within the minority group, but it is also a reason why host societies perceived them as outsiders *par excellence,* and as a result they were very often persecuted. Roma are the well–known example of this process.

Politics of the state towards minorities and the lack of the mother state.

Roma are one of those minorities which do not possess a 'mother country'. This fact has a` crucial role in their political situation within the countries they inhabit. In the past, just as nowadays, the politics of the states have been strongly fixed on the protection of the interests of the dominant group at home state and also abroad. Bilateral advocacy between countries on behalf of the mutual minorities is one of the main forms of right protection, including not only the rights to culture, language and identity, but also the financial and material support is crucial for minority development. At the same time, minorities without their mother country as a protector are excluded from this form of guardianship. Moreover, Roma groups have always been endangered by the more or less aggressive and intensive politics of assimilation conducted by the states they have lived within, during the communist times, the Roma were forced to settle down.

The influence of modernization as a threat to ethnic boundaries (urbanization, mass migration to the cities, intermarriages, second generation and the loss of cultural ties with the group).

The global changes, connected especially with economic growth and urbanization, have had an important influence on minorities' life. At the beginning the minorities groups were very often excluded from the process of modernization, but in time even in small villages in the backwaters "the wind of change" has appeared and encouraged the process of assimilation. Lech Mroz (2001, p.261) in his article about Polish Roma '*Poland: the clash of tradition and modernity*' notices that in the result of economic and political changes many families of mountain Roma moved to towns and came into contact with former nomads groups – Kalderasha or Lovara. Although, the distance between particular groups still exists, especially in social memory, but it is not as strong as it used to be. Intermarriage became more common and the Roma groups are now tie by kinship and affinity ties.

The extent of visibility.

According to van den Berghe (1987), the greater the phenotypic similarity between the members of the groups, the more likely intensive and positive contacts are to take place; the group is readier to accept biologically related individuals and populations than the phenotypically distinctive. The physical differences, which have the roots in biological facts, are very powerful in drawing boundaries vis-à-vis the others, who thereby become the outsiders. The divisions between the Blacks and the Whites, or Roma and non-Roma have, among others, biological roots.

The nature of mutual contacts and historical relations.

This factor is closely connected with the positive or negative mutual perception between host society and minorities, and relates to the question whether they are relatively friendly and cooperative. The intensity of discrimination, the absence or presence of value and power conflicts, and existence of stereotypes and prejudice have a powerful impact on interrelations. Stereotypes are especially crucial in defining the boundaries of ethnic group. They inform the members of the

virtues of his or her own group and the vices of the others, in many cases they imply the superiority of one population over the others. The importance of categorization, how people perceive the others not as individuals but rather as members of social groups, the process of stereotyping and creating the prejudice have been in the center of interest of social psychology for along time (see classical works, e.g. Allport 1954, Tajfel 1981). Prejudice and stereotypes are both a consequence of and a reinforcement for the existence of in-groups and out-groups, which contains the distinction between 'us' and 'them'. The role of stereotypes and prejudice will be discuss more detailed in the case of Roma population.

The way of life (nomadic or settled) and the extent of the territorial dispersion and concentration; the relative size of the minority and the dominant group

There is no clear dependence that settled groups are more simply to integrate and acquired the features from host society than the nomadic ones. The example of Roma groups in Poland shows that social and cultural boundaries between settled mountain Roma and their neighbours were much more stronger than in the case of the nomadic groups, and the intermarriages between Roma and non-Roma, although extremely rare in both cases, they were much rarer in the case of settled Roma than of nomadic groups (Mroz 2001, p.261).

It could be said that the smaller group is in the relation to the majority, the more process of assimilation or rejection is less complicated, smaller populations are usually lower status group and more dependent because they have less resources and power, the majority acts as a magnet and small groups can melt into it quite simply. Here the rule is simple, the bigger the minority's share in the general population and its capacity to organize, the greater is the possibility to remain its ethnic identity protected.

Although, ethnicity is an extremely ambiguous term, very difficult to define in any precise way, it is also a very useful concept suggesting a dynamic situation of variable contacts and mutual influence between ethnic groups. I will use the term ethnicity as an aspect of social relationship between groups whose members consider themselves as culturally different from the others with whom they have more or less intensive interrelations. In summary, every group has its own boundaries which mark the beginning and the end of the community, they generally have symbolic meaning and they are created and developed under the influence of the fellow members as well as the relations with other groups play crucial role in this process.

I have examined the factors which contribute to ethnicity in the sense of an interplay of the self-identification of members and the perception of other groups. These factors can be related with cultural markers of ethnicity: language, religion, common myths and historical memory shared by the group, which could be more or less distinctive from markers possessed by other groups. Here I also discussed some social and political factors strictly connected to the relations between majorities and minorities in society which have a powerful impact on the ethnicity of these latter. Following this, in the next part I will undertake a more detailed examination of the definitional considerations I made in the first part using the specific example the Roma population.

The Roma case.

The Roma are the largest minority in Europe and, according to public opinion polls conducted in most European countries, the most hated one[1]. For centuries they have lived on the margins of societies; Roma populations are still one of the first places on the list of rejected and marginalized minorities group.

What are the reasons of the common negative perception of Roma by other groups? What main elements have contributed to the distinctiveness of Roma in the eyes of outsiders and have been the base of ethnic boundaries between Roma and non-Roma populations? These are the main questions which I will answer in this chapter. Before I do it I will briefly present the characteristics of the Roma groups in Central and Eastern Europe and point out the difficulties involved in the discussion about this very specific group of people: their diversity and problematic classification. In case of the Roma population it is extremely hard to avoid some generalizations connected to the fact of disputable perception and description of the Roma population as one entity. To put a statement that Roma have always been rejected by the host society is arguable, because exceptions can always be found among this very diversified population. This danger and the complexity of the Roma issue will be borne in mind in the following discussion.

What I intend to do here is to look closer at the factors which through the time have had the most powerful impact on the construction and maintenance of Roma ethnicity, even if the usage of the term 'ethnicity' in Roma case is questionable. I elaborate on this problem in the first part of this chapter. I will discuss the role of the distinct way of life connected also with the visibility and cultural differences of this group, the influence of stereotypes and prejudice in the negative perception of Roma by the members of other groups and politics of the authorities towards Roma as factors contributing to Roma ethnicity. These factors, and many others too, have had a powerful impact on the construction of ethnic boundaries in the case of Roma, which have had the tendency not to disappear, but become even stronger and more visible, especially, in the current intensive process of creating a common Roma identity and unity, in which the crucial role is played by Roma elites.

Who are the Roma?

There are a variety of terms describing Roma as a social formation. Some characterize them as a national, ethnic or cultural group, some others as a social class or stratum, or simply as a deviant social group (Szuhay 1995, p.112). I will start with a brief presentation of the most important facts about Roma and the problems connected with definitions and classifications of this population.

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[1] I use the term 'Roma' to signify Romani people in general to avoid the designation Roma/Gypsies/Sinti.

It is an extremely difficult task to estimate the number of Roma living in particular European countries. Different sources mention different numbers, ranging from seven to eleven million dispersed all over the continent (Endangered Minority 2002, p.14). The fact that reliable figures are not available is connected with the common state practice of not registering Roma or using the different definitions, as well as with the fact that Roma often do not declare themselves as Roma in state censuses fearing discrimination, or simply do not understand the questionnaires. To give an overview of the Roma population, I quote the numbers using the data from the Report of Minority Rights Group (Liegeois and Gheorghe, 1995, p.7). The European states with the largest number of Roma are Romania (from 1,800,000 to 2,500,000), Spain (from 650,000 to 800,000), Bulgaria (from 700,000 to 800,000), Hungary (from 550,000 to 600,000) and Slovakia (480,000-520,000).

The first Roma groups came to Europe from the East in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Early upon their arrival in Europe it was a common belief that this groups' roots are in Egypt. Although there is no concrete evidence and the ongoing debate on the Roma origins lasts, the wide spread assumption is that the true origins of Roma are India (Fraser 1992, pp 10-32). This myth is popular among Roma intellectuals and leaders, even if the latest historical knowledge does not provide any conclusive evidence for this link. Roma groups travelled from one region to another, some of them abandoned the nomadic way of life, settled down and adapted their work practices to local demands. It can be assumed that the encounters of different groups of Roma with other peoples were quite regular and, as a result, cultural and linguistic exchange took place and led to the greater diversification of the Roma groups. Language, customs and style of life have been in the constant process of adopting elements from other societies; consequently, groups differ among themselves, because of the different influences which come from distinct groups of non-Roma. The tradition of adaptability – in social, geographical and occupational terms has contributed significantly to Roma ethnicity.

The internal diversification of Roma is, on the one hand, the key to understanding every Roma-related issue, and on the other, the key problem in its analysis. The term Roma or Gypsies has been used to label such different and diverse groups, that there is difficult to uphold the idea that they are a population with a distinct culture. I fully agree with the point made by Marushiakova and Popov (2001, p.33) at the beginning of their article, which itself is an attempt at presenting the internal structures of present Roma population in the Central and Eastern Europe, that '*to understand the ethno-social structure, ethno-cultural features and problems of the Gypsies in present Central and eastern European countries*', certain circumstances need to be taken into consideration. First of all, Roma '*is a specific ethnic community – an intergroup ethnic community-which (...) is divided into a widespread archipelago of separate groupings, split in various ways into metagroups, groups and subgroups, each with their own ethnic and cultural features. Sometimes these groupings are even opposed to each other and their problems are frequently completely different in nature and therefore cannot be generalized*'. The second crucial point stressed by them which has to be kept in mind is that in the examination of any Roma issue the cultural and historical context of Roma life and the context of the social and political situation in a

certain region or country and in a certain period of time has to be taken into account. This is the reason why in the further examination of the present day of Roma population and the factors contributing the Roma present ethnicity I will focus on the situation in the Central European countries, where some similar patterns can be found, in spite of their distinctive characteristics, and the danger of generalization.

Ethnicity 'under construction'.

As it was mentioned in the first chapter, the most important markers of ethnicity of a group which are the basis for the members of this group to regard themselves and be regarded as culturally different are language, religion, history and origins, and the value system. An attempt to describe Roma ethnicity leads to two basic problems. The first is that most of these elements are 'under construction', in the sense that its elements are not consistent and are in the process of permanent creation. Moreover, they are not shared by all the members of Roma population. The second problem is that ethnicity is a past-oriented term and among ordinary Roma the sense of the origins and their own history is disputable as it will be explained later.

Language is always an important distinguishing feature of an ethnic group. Whatever description of Romani we take here, whether it is a group of closely related languages or rather a single language with numerous dialects, the most important is that there have never been one single Roma language and there are perhaps more than sixty Romani so-called - dialects (Fraser 1992, p.301). The differences between dialects are very often significant, mostly because there have been constant borrowings from the different host cultures. Nowadays there are long-term efforts to establish and popularize a standardized version of the literary Romani, but this marker of Roma ethnicity can be described as 'under construction'. The quest for a standard language is one side of a desire of the Roma (or more precisely, some Roma) to find the way round the diversification within their own population. The other attempts aim to reconstruct and outspread the consciousness of shared origins and common history (Hancock 1999). This is a real challenge for Roma elite, without this consciousness it is hard to talk about the Roma as an ethnic group, but it is evident that the obsession with origins and history concerns only this small group of self-proclaimed Roma leaders. Ordinary Roma people simply ignored their roots and history living in the present, and what makes them special is that they are happy about it. Stewart's (1997, p.28) observations among the Hungarian Roma allow him to formulate the opinion that except the educated Roma elite, the ordinary Roma do not possess an ethnic identity, in the sense that '*for them, identity is constructed and constantly remade in the present in relations with significant others, not something inherited from the past'*. In his works about Hungarian Roma Stewart, suggests that looking for ties with the mythical homeland is the idea important only for a small group of Roma intellectuals, while ordinary Roma create an alternative autonomous imagined space connected with horse dealing activities, *brotherhood*, demarcated residence, songs etc.

The religious sphere is a good example of the ways in which this group adapt to the world around them and absorbs new values from the outside. Roma have a tendency to accept the religion

popular in the country in which they have resided for some time (Mroz 2001, p.261; Szuhay 1995, p.116). Therefore, there are Catholic Roma, different types of Protestant and Orthodox Roma and large numbers of Muslim Roma. This readiness to change the faith sometimes causes accusations of lack of true piety and certain eclecticism which combines the elements of different religions and traditional Roma beliefs and practices.

The main factors contributing to Roma ethnicity.

Below I present some factors which contribute significantly to Roma ethnicity. They are strongly connected with mutual relations between Roma and other groups, taking into account the fact that Roma ethnicity has been constructed vis-à-vis non-Roma people – the *gadze*. I will discuss only a few of these factors here: the role of the Roma system of values (concept of defilement), Roma way of life, influence of stereotypes and state politics towards Roma.

A. Concept of defilement.

The concept of defilement has always played a fundamental role in creation and maintenance of the Roma value system and the distinction between them and the others. The Roma system of purity and dirtiness and its significant role in the every-day-life has become widely recognized relatively recently. The pollution beliefs, the fundamental division between what is pure and what is dirty is seen as a core element of Roma cultures, serving to express and reinforce the ethnic boundaries and to draw a fundamental division between Roma and *gadze*. Even though this concept is known by various names in Romani and despite some differences, the code itself is remarkably consistent. It explains all interactions between male and female, Roma and *gadze*, it pervades all life, relates to persons, objects, parts of the body, food, even topics of conversations (Mirga and Mroz 1994, pp.145-150). Although nowadays it is difficult to honour all the rules, *gadze* are still unclean by definition as they ignore the code, and anything occupied by them earlier presents a danger of pollution. Therefore, the code serves as a system of regulations concerning the every-day-life of Roma and isolates them from intensive, intimate contacts with non-Roma. Moreover, it could be said that Roma define themselves in the opposition to the *gadze,* who are perceived by them as *'less fully human as the Roma'* (Stewart 1997b, p.232). This distinction builds a closed boundary, with the of opt-out possibility being very difficult. Joining the Roma and being perceived as Roma is easy enough for the outsider, s/he has to just adopt the rules and values of the Roma group and s/he will be treated as a fully assimilated fellow-member; if a Roma leaves the group, s/he will be stigmatized as unclean and rejected by the other Roma.

B. Distinct way of life, visibility and cultural differences.

Not living in particular areas but scattered around and not possessing a home-state, and the specific way of life distinguish Roma from other minorities. The symbol and the basic distinct characteristic of most of Roma groups was travelling. Although only a small percentage of Roma

still practices the traditional nomadic way of life, and many Roma groups have been sedentary populations for generations, some even for centuries, their ancestors were travellers and the Roma culture and traditions have roots in nomadism.

Permanent travelling was a fundamental factor in the lifestyle of a significant number of Roma communities for generations. The history of this population is the history of movement; it created the basis for traditions and values shared by the Roma but also gave rise to activation of the policies of the states to which I return in the following section, such as exclusion, discrimination, or containment. A deeper examination of the roots of the nomadic way of life is out of the scope of this text. Here I will point out only two important aspects of Roma traditional way of life in movement. Firstly, travelling made closer contacts possible, contacts both with other Roma and non-Roma communities, but also permitted separation when conflicts arose and environment proves to be hostile. Secondly, and this is closely connected to the first point, if nomadism has been a crucial element for Roma, symbolizing freedom, lack of attachment to places, time and events, for non-Roma it was also a basis for their rejection (Liegeois 1986, p.132). It was based on the old rooted fear among sedentary people that nomadism is dangerous and perverse, something contradictory to stability and a commonly respected way of life. But, although this negative point of view was widespread, numerous people also envied Roma, and there is still a well known positive romantic image of Roma as an independent individual, colourfully dressed musician and dancer moving freely from place to place maybe without money, but also without sorrow, sadness or grief.

A complete examination of the phenomenon of Roma travelling requires an encyclopaedia. As Guy properly notices, saying about the complexity of the issue of nomadism and persecution in the case of Roma in Czechoslovakia, that so many different circumstances must be taken into consideration to try to examine the nature of these phenomena that not only the general answers are difficult to provide but even particular ones are not easy to give (Guy 1998, p.14). Nevertheless, the way of life connected usually with nomadism was undoubtedly one of the most visible markers of Roma distinctiveness and one of the most powerful factors contributing to its ethnicity. However, what must be also stressed here is that, 'nomadism is neither entirely a product of Roma culture, nor entirely the source of that culture. The two are closely linked, notably because these communities have, by choice or obligation, always had to make mobility a factor in their lifestyle' (Liegeois and Gheorghe 1995, p.17).

One of the visible markers of the distinct way of life, besides travelling but closely related to it, have been the occupations practiced by Roma, such as horse dealers, blacksmiths, fortune tellers, musicians etc., however, this was not characteristic this group only. As Willems and Lucassen (2000) notice, all of these occupations were also practiced by non-Roma, the specific feature of Roma occupations is connected to a combination of the following characteristic: family as a working unit, travelling with the family and self-employment. 'People who practiced such a way of life were very likely to be labelled by the authorities as Gypsies. The power of definition has been so strong since the fifteenth century that it became very difficult for people to escape from it, moreover, it could easily lead to development of ethnicity: people began to feel that they are different from others and so began to cultivate their own way of life and the symbols attached to it'

(ibidem, p.266). Following this point, the process of constructing ethnicity is reflexive, certain norms and features ascribed to one's group motivate one to self-identification with them and to their cultivation as markers of one's distinctiveness.

Although the ethnic boundaries between Roma and other groups have caused isolation, Roma have never been self-sufficient. They have been dependent on the larger economy, within which they possessed their own active space. As Okely notices, Roma '*can only survive as a group within the context of a larger economy and society, within which they circulate supplying occasional goods and services, and exploiting geographical mobility and a multiplicity of occupations*' (1983, p.30). What I suggest here is that Roma have never been self-contained from the *gadzo* world. They have always had to adapt themselves to the changes in the dominant economic and social order; and the specific occupations possessed and practiced by Roma are connected strictly not only with their mobility and economic sources but also depend on the needs of the societies.

C. The influence of stereotypes.

The process of building and reproducing the stereotypes and prejudice against Roma started in the settled populations right from the moment of Roma arrival to Europe. It was a simple mechanism to build stereotypes about unknown and strange people, a false image about the group with visible distinctiveness which they did not try to hide. As Fraser (1992, pp 124-125) properly notices, the common images were connected strongly with the fact of visual uniqueness and with the effect it had on settled society: '*their dark skins made them seem ugly and reprehensible; their long hair and ear-rings and outlandish attire were offensive to many (...) Gypsy attire becoming a paradigm for the exotic*'. Besides the unusual look and different way of life, the character of settled societies played a crucial role in this process. Roma represented an obvious negation of all the essential values and premises on which the dominant morality of the European societies was based and therefore was immediately perceived as a danger to the community.

Prejudices against Roma have a long history; they are well known and deeply rooted; through the centuries a whole image has been created in the form of a crude stereotype. A whole arsenal of names and negative adjectives can be quoted here; they do not vary much in different societies and different languages, and have much in common with the image of dirty, culture-less, deceitful, lazy theft and cheater. The verbs derived from the word 'Gypsy' or local variants of it mean simply 'lying' or 'cheating' in a great number of languages. The false images of this population among the *gadze* have had a crucial impact; they have determined and justified attitudes to Roma, how they have been perceived by the others and how they have been treated by them.

The false black-and-white image of Roma quickly became widely accepted. It was reproduced initially by oral stories, and then by literature and varied media, where public opinion could find a confirmation that their negative opinions about *these people* were true. What is more serious, there was no will to change this situation, the vicious circle of reproducing the stereotypes and prejudices from generation to generation has never stopped for good. As Liegeois (1986, p.139) correctly notices, Roma '*are not defined as they really are, but as socio-political requirements say*

they have to be'. The powerful role and impact of stereotypes is examined by Hancock (1997), who stresses the fact that even people who never met a Roma in their life are able to describe a detailed picture of how Roma look like, live and what they are. Moreover, this image is so strong that it became institutionalized in Western tradition and became an integral part of Western cultural heritage.

D. The politics of the authorities towards Roma groups.

Examining the Roma history the final conclusion which comes to mind is that persecution and marginalization has been an integral part of their history ever since they arrived in Europe (Barany, 1998, p.6). From the fifteenth century, being a Gypsy/Roma has been a sufficient reason for punishment, flogging or imprisonment, even if their economic and cultural contribution to the host societies were well known as traders, musicians and craftsmen. In Fraser or Liegeois' and many other works a detailed description of politics conducted by the authorities towards the Roma groups and the hostility of the societies can be found. According to Fraser (1992, p.128), although the details were different, the fairly consistent pattern of relations with host societies could be noticed: sporadic signs of rejection and resistance could be observed relatively soon after the arrival of Roma in any country of Europe, and the conflicts usually became more widespread within ten or twenty years. Moreover, the first edicts connected with expulsion or with repression of Roma were issued from a few decades to a century after their first arrival in a country.

Reading the works examining the Roma rejection and repression by the host states and societies from the Middle Age till the present times, a very depressing picture is created[2]. The picture which shows alarming uniformity in the responses of most populations to the presence of Roma, from the exclusion and marginalization through expulsion, slavery, and containment to the final step of anti-Roma politics – the systematic extermination during the Nazi period when at least half million Roma were killed. As Liegeois (1986, p.134) writes, '*from France to Czechoslovakia, from Spain to the Soviet Union, from fourteenth to twentieth century it is the same story: whether aim is assimilation or rejection, the policies adopted towards Gypsies were always negative'.* The pattern of rejection is quite a simple mechanism: the majority is conscious of its superiority to the minorities and it takes its own values, style of life and culture as common rules which minorities should respect and conform to, if not, they will be rejected, isolated or forced to assimilate. Even the fact that Roma were evidently needed by the societies from the economic point of view did not protect them from being physically separated and stigmatized, or forced to assimilate in any region in Central and Eastern Europe.

Generally speaking, leaving aside the underlying differences among the particular regions of Europe and different periods of time, the history of Roma can be seen as the history of rejection, persecution, forced assimilation, or exclusion. This kind of picture prevails strongly in the reader's mind after reading the literature about Roma. However, what must be kept in mind is that this

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[2] The diversity of state policies toward Roma in the history and in present times, and 'traditional' and 'national' patterns in the relations between Roma and host societies are presented very well in e.g. Marushiakova and Popow's or Willems and Lucassen's articles.

picture is much more complicated, Roma were not everywhere physically separated and stigmatized. Especially the situation of Roma in socialist countries is an interesting case to examine the state politics towards their assimilation in the societies. Nevertheless, it is understandable that this part of Roma existence had and still has a powerful impact on their consciousness as one group. Following their politics against Roma the authorities put together different groups into one category and to a large degree stimulated the feeling among the victims that they had more in common than they thought. This effect is especially visible in the perception of Roma persecution during the Nazi period (Willems and Lucassen 2000, p.252). In the case of Roma there are no collective, shared myths of ancestry and historical memories about the heroic moments and the group's brave heroes, which create a historical foundation for other ethnic groups. That is the reason why the Roma intelligentsia has emphasized the role of myth of origins and India as a homeland. The history of persecution partly fulfills this role, it built a group consciousness and solidarity, and is a '*binding principle*' (ibidem, p.269). Even the song adopted as Roma national anthem is a lament about social exclusion and ostracism of Roma by other groups.

In my opinion, the statement that the history of the group, even as the history of persecution, plays a significant role in building group integrity and contributes to its ethnicity could be true under one condition: that these historical memories are commonly known among the members of the group, and that they are interested in gaining this knowledge. But the fact is that for the vast majority of Roma the issue of common identity, their history or matter of origins are neglected, the priority for them are pragmatic concerns of work, housing, safety, and providing for family.

The political and social changes of the last decade have undoubtedly improved the legal situation of the Roma. Most countries recognized them and gave them the official status of ethnic minority, but this did not lead to visible progress in mutual relations between Roma groups and host societies. The reports prepared on the Roma situation in European countries by varied human rights organizations are alarmed about the tragic social situation of these people and always stress the fact that intolerance and hostility towards Roma are increasing. Examples of prejudice and violence are well known, and can be found all over Europe.

To sum up, what are the results of the mutual contacts of Roma groups with the host society? The answer could be: the strategy of adaptation, which means that through the ages of rejection and marginalization, in spite of the internal diversification and problems with defining ethnic markers common to the whole group, Roma have nursed their autonomy by adapting to the dominant cultures but preserving a social and cultural distance reinforced by the hostility with which they were treated by the *gadze*. They have been remarkably successful in preserving their distinctiveness, based mostly on the specific way of life and the system of values, and in adapting to changes in the world outside in order to remain the same. Roma have paid a high price for their distinctiveness and strong ethnic boundaries - ages of being the pariah of the European societies living on their margins.

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Conclusions

My aim in this article was to examine the main factors which have influenced the construction of ethnicity of the ethnic groups. I did it on particular example of the Roma populations. I presented the impact of the different factors on the relations of these groups with the host societies they live within, and their role in the self-perception and the ascription in the case of this group. I looked closer at the nature of the mechanisms of rejection and marginalization in the case of Roma focusing on the main factors which have influenced these processes.

Ethnicity is not static but something that is constantly shaped and reconstructed. That is why it is such a fascinating phenomenon. In case of Roma the process of its construction is even more interesting and worth deeper elaborating because of its complexity and the fact that it is taking place in front of our eyes. Why are Roma such a fascinating example of an ethnic group? Maybe because of their lack of homeland, shared group identity, and consistent ethnicity they constitute in the eyes of scholars, especially those connected to nationalism, a *kind of awful historical mistake, a blot on the parsimonious schema of 'one people, one state' with which we try conceptually to order Europe today'* (Stewart 1997a, p.84).

The fact that Europe's Roma are extremely heterogeneous population makes problematic any general description of this group. They belong to many different, and often antagonistic, clans and tribes, with no common language or religion. Their self-proclaimed leaders have often proved quarrelsome and unable to come to an agreement. Their sense of Roma groupness is constructed vis-à-vis non-Roma people and this division plays a fundamental role in an ongoing process of creating both Roma unity and Roma ethnicity. The influence of this perception of Roma from outside as one entity helps them in self-recognition as unity, however, the negative face of this image must be kept in mind here. The long centuries of existence of Roma in Europe have been the time of persecution and discrimination they have experienced. This has had a powerful impact on, on the one hand, self-perception and, on the other, on the way how they were seen by the other groups.

Examining Roma case I focused mostly on the factors which have contributed to the distinctiveness of this population and have been the base of ethnic boundaries between Roma and non-Roma populations. The role of the concept of defilement, distinct way of life, visibility and cultural differences has been very important, as well as other factors: the influence of stereotypes and the variety of politics of the states towards Roma groups. The negative representation of Roma and, in consequent, their marginalization and their rejection by the host societies have had a crucial impact on the self-perception of Roma as a unity.

The recent efforts to construct a common Roma identity are strictly connected with the role of Roma elite, which represent whole population at the national and international level fighting for its recognition and the rights for Roma. However, their crucial aim is to create and promote Romani culture, shared identity and language. A present discourse among Roma elite about its role and its perception of Roma issues helps to realize how problematic and complex process of constructed Roma as entity is.

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Ana Bleahu
Political Participation of Roma Minorities in Romania[1]

One of the essential characteristics of a consolidated democracy is the political participation. The issue of participation in the political life raises a lot of normative questions: Who participates? How do the citizens participate? Which are the consequences and the efficiency of participation? To what extent do the citizens feel that they are represented by the leading elites? Starting from this complex conceptualisation, this study aims to approach the issue of the political participation of the Roma ethnics living in Romania. The general objective is thus to describe the behaviour of political participation of the Romanian Roma ethnics. The main interest of the paper consists in analyzing the mechanisms of Roma political participation, particularly the political Roma infrastructure, the formal and informal power hierarchies, the functional and structural links between national-level party leaders and local Roma representatives in Romania.

Theoretical premises

The concept of political participation is a very comprehensive concept. Robert Dahl (2000) shows that the political participation of an, as large as possible, number of people involves the existence of eight guarantees, namely: the freedom to establish organizations and to belong to organizations, the freedom of expression, the right to vote, the eligibility for public office service, the right of the political leaders to compete for supporting votes, alternative sources of information, free and correct elections, the institutions that develop de governmental policies should not depend on votes and on other manners of expression of the preferences.

Participation can be analysed from two perspectives: the visible participation and the latent participation (Pasquino, 2002, p.24). The first type of participation, the visible one, may be defined as an ensemble of attitudes that tend to influence – in a more or less direct manner – the decisions of the people holding the power within the public system or within the political organizations considered separately, as well as their election, given the prospects of keeping or changing the structure and values of the system of the dominant interests (Pasquino, 2002, p.3). The other type of participation, the latent one, presumes the existence of a public opinion interested in politics, which, due to different reasons (either due to the satisfaction towards the good functioning of the political system, or due to the lack of trust in one's capacity to act), gets into action rather seldom and not in a constant manner, but which, nonetheless, has the capacity to participate.

The analysis of the phenomenon of political participation of the Roma ethnics in Romania will be performed at two levels: approach the phenomenon of active, visible political participation (the manner of fulfilling the eight fundamental criteria delimited by Dahl) and reconsideration the political participation of the Roma ethnics from the perspective of its performance and efficiency.

Methodological premises

The main methods to be used are: the secondary analysis of the Central Electoral Bureau and in the analysis of the references to the Romanian Roma ethnics included in the election programs of the different political parties; semi-structured interviews with Roma leaders and in focus-groups with Roma ethnics in several communities.

The paper will also refer to the current legislative framework on the right of the minorities to organise and be represented within the political structures at the national level, to the evolution of the political organizations of the Romanian Roma ethnics, to the level of representation of the Roma minorities in hierarchical and geographical profile, a brief analysis of the 2004 elections considering the participation of the Roma minority and the identification of some mechanisms of excluding the Roma from the political participation.

Minorities and minority organisations in Romania

The level of participation of the society members to the political life, their efficiency and responsibility is tied directly to the manner in which the political system functions.

The basis and functionality of the political structure in Romania are regulated by several legislative acts such as the Constitution of Romania and the acting electoral legislation.

According to article 40, pct. 1 of the Constitution of Romania and with the acting electoral legislation, the citizens have the right to freely associate in political parties, but the legal conditions to establish a party may actually make it difficult to benefit of this right. The Law of the political parties from January 2003 (Law no. 14/2003), compared to Law 27/1996 hardened the conditions of establishing a political party. If according to the law of 1996, only 10,000 founding members from 15 counties, with at least 300 persons from each county were enough, the 2003 law of the political parties raised the number of founding members to 25,000 from at least 18 counties, with at least 700 members from each county. We may say that the freedom to associate in a political party was limited by hardening the conditions of establishing a political party.

According to Law 43/2003 on financing the activity of the political parties and the elections, all the political parties receive annually subsidies from the state budget. The parties that have representatives in at least one of the two Parliamentary Chambers receive an extra basic subsidy, which summed up represents one third of the budgetary subsidies given to the political parties. Furthermore, each Parliamentary party receives a subsidy proportional to the number of mandates; however, no party can receive a subsidy larger that five times to basic subsidy. It is therefore very difficult for a freshly established party to cope financially in the political competition with the parties that already have representatives in the Parliament.

For a minority, other than the Magyar one[2], it is very difficult to obtain, by elections, mandates in the Parliament, considering that the minimal number of mandates for one county is 4

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[2] The percentage of Hungarians in the 22 millions of the Romanian population is between 6 and 7%, while the other minorities count for about 3%, according to the 2002 Census. However, Roma many leaders claim a much higher proportion for the respective minority.

for deputies and 2 for senators, while the maximal number, for counties with large population such as Prahova and Iaşi, is 12 for deputies and 5 for senators[3].

According[4] to the article 62 from the Constitution of Romania, the organizations of the citizens belonging to the national minorities, that do not obtain mandates in the Parliament by elections, have the right to one seat of deputy according to the law. Only that Law 373/2004 for the election of Chamber of Deputies and of the Senate, compared to the similar law 68/1992, hardened the conditions of access to the mandate of deputy stipulated in the article 62 of the Constitution of Romanian. Thus, if according to the 1992 law, the citizen organisations belonging to a national minority that did not obtain by elections at least one mandate of senator or deputy, have the right to a seat of deputy provided they obtained at least 5% of the valid votes cast at the national level for the election of a deputy, the 2004 law raised this level to 10%. Furthermore, according to law 373/2004, the citizen organizations that are already represented in the Parliament are advantaged. They do not have to produce, such as the extra-parliamentary organizations belonging to the national organisations are requested, lists with at least 15% of the members of that particular minority, without exceeding compulsory, however, 25,000 members from 15 counties and from Bucharest, provided that there are no less than 300 persons from each county and from Bucharest.

Figure 1. Level of representation of the selected minorities within the central state structures related to the overall number of candidates (% of candidates of ethnics groups from total political candidates at national level)
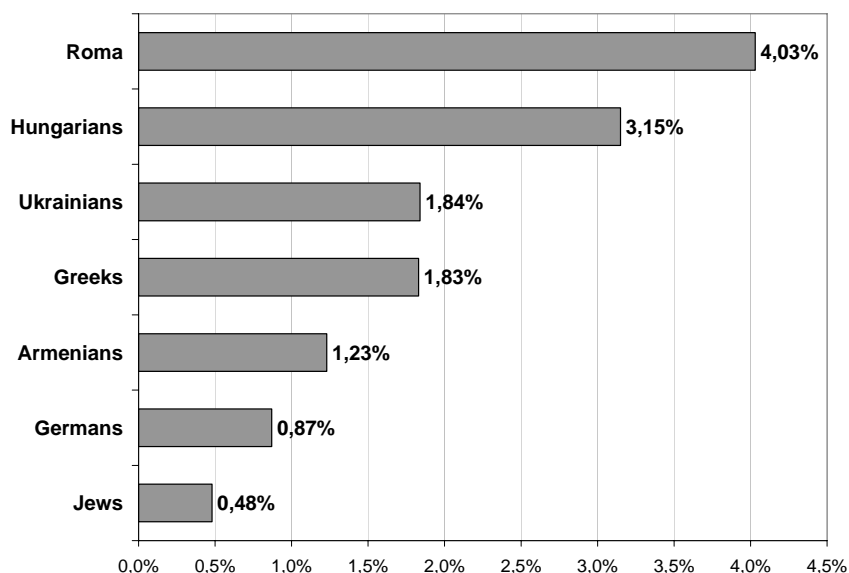
Source: The calculations were performed using the official data from the Central Electoral Bureau and from the National Institute of Statistics. Only the largest ethnic minority groups were considered.

Overall, 24 parties and political alliances and 28 organizations of the national minorities participated in the 2004 general elections in Romania. Therefore, 18 mandates from the overall 314

[3] See Law 373/2004 for the election of the Chamber of Deputies and of the Senate, Appendix 1.
[4] The analysis of the election legislation was made by Valeriu Frunzaru

seats of the Chamber of Deputies went to the organizations of the national minorities, other then Hungarian (the Hungarian party get 22 seats by itself). All minorities were extremely active enlisting 3283 candidates (while all the other political parties from Romania enlisted 6704)[5].

Figure 1 shows that, at the national level, the Roma were the minority with the highest number of enlisted candidates[6].

The number of candidates enlisted by the different ethnic minorities was not proportional to the overall population of that particular minority. Therefore, the most politically active minority were the Armenians (one of ten Armenians from Romania was enlisted as candidate for the Chamber of Deputies or for the Senate).

Figure 2. Level of representation of the selected minorities within the central state structures related to the overall population of the particular ethnic minority (number of candidates enlisted by the different ethnic minorities reported to the overall population of that ethnic minority)
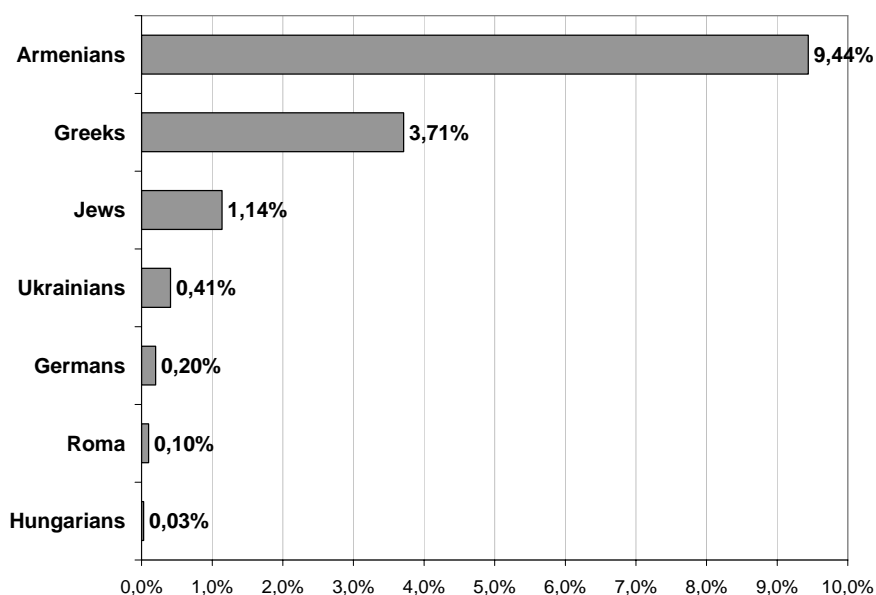
Source: The calculations were performed using the official data from the Central Electoral Bureau and from the National Institute of Statistics.

Most minorities from Romania (Magyars, Armenians, Greeks, Hebrews, Germans, Russians, Lippovanians, Ruthenians, Serbians, Slovaks and Czechs, Turkish-Muslim Tartars, Ukrainians) were represented in the 2004 elections by just one political organisation. The Croats, Italians, Poles and Roma were represented by 2 organisations each, while the Bulgarians, Macedonians and Turks were represented by 3 organisations each.

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[5] About 90% of the Romanian population declared Romanian ethnicity at the 2002 Census. Therefore the almost 50% of the enlisted candidates by ethnic organizations out of the total number of candidates indicate a quite high rate of political activisms. However, one should also note that some of these enlistments were done by well-known Romanian personalities, who profited of opportunity to try to secure a place in the Romanian parliament.
[6] The considered minorities are the largest minority groups in Romania.

The Roma and Roma organisations in Romania

The Roma living in Romania never had, until 1990, a direct political participation and in their name (Burtea, 2003).

> "we, the Roma, are young in politics. The year of our birth as politicians representing our ethnic group, is 1990. The Magyars had their broadcasts, their papers[7], their papers, their schools even before 1990, we did not exist. They were supported by Hungary. In 1990, we just had two sociologists which to bring in front. " (Roma leader).

The beginnings of the civic and political organization of the Roma minority were set in the inter-war period, during the manifestation of the democratic liberties.

The first Roma organisation was established in 1926[8] in Clabor. The General Association of the Romanian Roma was established in 1929. In April 1933, Calinic I. Popp Şerbănoiu, established the "General Association of Gypsies from Romania", which released a "Call to all the Gypsies from Romania". This "call" included demands for cultural and social rights: access to education, skilled professional training, publication of a paper for the Roma minority, set up canteens for the poor, homes for the homeless, free health care and juridical assistance, etc.

The General Union of the Romanian Roma (UGRR) was established in 1933 under the leadership of A. Lazaroiu-Lazarica. Gheorghe Niculescu headed UGRR as of May 1934 until 1948, when it was abolished by the communist authorities. UGRR was the most important Roma organisation and the only one that acted cross country. If we are to believe the statistics of the Union, in 1939 it had 40 County branches and 454 local centres with a total of 784,793 members[9].

During 1948-1989, the Roma were not counted with the cohabiting nationalities, so that he first Roma civic organisations were established only after the fall of the communist regime.

During 1970 – 1997 the Roma were simply ignored.

A program of the Romanian Communist Party, called "Gypsy Integration" unfolded during 1977-1983 through the Ministry of the Interior. The program included the "Platform of measures to provide jobs for the Gypsies and to integrate them socially", which stipulated the following actions: 1. recoding of the Gypsy population and making them sedentary; 2. providing jobs for them; 3. provide decent dwelling conditions for them; 4. improve the health care and social assistance; 5. improve their cultural life and their educational level; 6. solve organizing issues.

The communist regime was not interested in the existence and functionality of an authentic multicultural opening. The collocation of "cohabiting nationalities" and that of "Magyars, Germans and other nationalities" reduced the ethnic heterogeneity and diversity to two ethnic groups: the Magyars and the Germans.

> "Ceauşescu considered the Roma as being Romanians, they had jobs, they gad dwellings, they had the necessary to keep their family. After the revolution, the acknowledgement of the Roma as

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[7] The first Roma publications appeared in 1990: „O glaso al rromengo", supplement of „Baricada" review, (Timişoara); „Aven amentza" (Bucureşti), headed by Vasile Ionescu; „Şatra" (Slobozia), headed by Gheorghe Păun Ialomiţeanu; „Neo drom" (Sibiu), headed by Florin Cioabă; „Divano Romano" (Sibiu), headed by Luminiţa Mihai Cioabă.
[8] "Neamul Ţigănesc" newspaper appears
[9] see, Breviary of Roma history

minority was the only good thing to us, but this brought along discrimination. On the time of Ceausescu it never happened not be employed because you were Roma, but now even in the papers it writes that they do not employ Roma. We have more rights now, with the democracy, but this is just rain water, the Roma minority became impoverished and more discriminated." (Roma leader)

Several Roma organisations were established after 1990. Their number, size, time of existence and relevance on the political stage fluctuated from one year to the next one. Usually, they coagulated around the activity of some charismatic Roma activists. The geographical distribution and the intra-ethnic heterogeneity supported the concomitant establishment of organisations in several locations throughout the country.

"Deva is the cradle of the first Roma movements. It is from here that the idea of the "Democratic Union of the Romanian Roma" started, which turned into the General Union of the Roma, leaded by a lawyer." (Roma leader, Hunedoara County)

"Sibiu was even in the time of Ceausescu the place from where we were in touch with the power. It was here that the rightful Roma leaders developed. It is from here that the idea of political organisation emerged (Roma leader, Sibiu County)

This diversity of Roma political organisations is the expression of the existence of different intra-ethnic communities and it may be regarded as proving the correctitude of the democratic political game: "it is a paradox to ask the Roma something that no democratic state accepts in relation with itself: a single party system". Jean Pierre Liegeois, 2003)

The different Roma organisations visible on the Romanian political stage (that is, the organisations which had candidates for the Chamber of Deputies and for the Senate, as well as the lengths of their Parliamentary life (participation in national elections) are shown in the table below.

Table 1. Roma organizations established after 1990 and the voting years when they have been active

Political Parties	1990	1992	1996	2000	2004
The Democrat Union of Roma from Romania	X	X	-	-	-
The Society of Roma from Bucharest	X	-	-	-	-
The United Democrat Rudari and Lăutari of Rudari and Lăutarilor Roma Party from Romania	X	-	-	-	-
The Party of Gipsies from Romania	X	X	-	-	-
The Democrat Christian Party of Roma from Romania from Romania	X	-	-	-	-
The Democratic and Free Union of Roma from Romania	X	X	-	-	-
The Party of Roma	-	X	X	X	X
The General Union of Roma from Romania	-	X	-	-	-
The Union of Roma	-	-	X	-	-
The Community of Roma Ethnics from Romania	-	-	X	-	-
The Union of Roma form Constanta County	-	-	X	-	-
The Christians Center of Roma from Romania	-	-	-	X	-
The Alliance for Roma Unity	-	-	-	-	X

Source: Central Electoral Bureau and the National Institute for Statistics

The emancipation movement of the Romanian Roma started in 1990, when (cred că ai vrut să zici when, nu once?) the main Roma organisations, the Democratic Union of the Roma and the Bucharest Roma Society, merged and Ion Onoriu was elected as president.

The Democratic Union of the Roma decided to self-abolish in 1992, due to the conflicts of vision and differences in the approach of the Roma issues. The Roma movement broke down and its leaders established their "personal" organisations: Ion Onoriu, Gheorghe Răducanu and Gheorghe Ivan transformed the Bucharest Roma Society into the Roma party: Ion Cioabă proclaimed himself as "International Roma King"; Nicolae Gheorghe established the Ethnic Roma Federation, thereafter the Roma Centre for Social Intervention and Studies "Romani CRISS"; Vasile Ionescu established the "Cultural Federation for Roma Emancipation – Aven amentza" and thereafter the Roma Centre for Public Policies", while Nicolae Bobu and Dumitru Bidiia established the General Union of the Romanian Roma.

Table 2. Votes obtained by the Roma political organisations in the 1996, 2000 and 2004 elections for the Chamber of Deputies.

Political Organisations	The number of eligible vote ballots			% of eligible vote ballots from total eligible ballots		
	1996	2000	2004	1996	2000	2004
The Party of Roma [10]	82.195	71.786	56.076	0,67	0,66	0,55
The Christians Center of Roma from Romania		12.171			0,11	
The Aliance for Roma Unity			15.041			0,14
The Union of Roma	71.020			0,58		
The Community of Roma Ethnics from Romania	5.227			0,04		
The Union of Roma fromConstanța County	640			0,01		
The Social and Cultural Associations of Roma	439			0,00		

<u>Source</u>: The calculations were performed using the official data from the Central Electoral Bureau and from the National Institute of Statistics.

Overall this period, all the Roma political organisations accumulated less than 1.4% of the votes cast throughout the country. The highest level was scored in 1996, while the 2004 elections brought back the proportion of votes to the level of 1990 when the Roma political organisations scored less than 0.6%. Figure 3 shows the proportion of national votes scored by the Roma political organisations at different elections.

Under the conditions in which about 2% of the Romanian population stated to be Roma ethnic, we may infer that the Roma ethnics cast their vote for other parties, particularly for the Social Democrat Party. This decrease of the votes cast for the Roma political organisations was the consequence of two very important political events: the protocols concluded with the Romanian

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[10] from „Partida Social-Democrată a Romilor".

Social Democrat Party[11] (1999 and 2004) and the disagreements within the Roma political elite.

Table 3 Votes cast for the Roma organisations

Electoral years	The number of votes of all Roma organisations		% of votes of Roma organisations from the total votes for	
	Chamber of Deputies	Senate	Chamber of Deputies	Senate
1990	80.418	25.412	0,59	0,18
1992	116.108	0	1,07	0,00
1996	159.082	160.106	1,30	1,30
2000	83.957	2.045	0,77	0,02
2004	71.117	19.109	0,70	0,19

Source: The calculations were performed using the official data from the Central Electoral Bureau.

The 1999[12] protocol concluded between the Roma Party and the Romanian Social Democrat Party was *"a serious step for the Roma ethnics, it was for the first time in the history of the Romanian Roma, that a Roma organisation concluded an alliance with an important political party. This was the moment of the full political acknowledgment of the Roma"* (Roma leader)

According to this protocol[13], the Romanian Social Democrat Party undertook to solve the social problems of the Roma and to appoint representative of the Roma organisation in two central administrative offices. Thus, the Emergency Ordinance 137/2000 stipulated the prevention and control of all the forms of discrimination, while the Government decision 430/2001 provided the Government strategy for the improvement of Roma situation, elaborated in direct partnership with the Roma associations.

The Roma political organisation with the longest political life is the Roma party. After 2000, the Roma Party, under its new name of Social Democrat Roma Party (PRSDR) has the only parliamentary seat according to the stipulations that provide for the parliamentary representation of minorities in case they do not succeed to accumulate the minimal set election level.

Largely due to the fact that the Executive consulted exclusively PRSDR, this organisation got to be acknowledged as sole representative of the Roma at all levels, even in enforcing the recruiting procedures for employment in positions of public servants, where the PRSDR candidates are simply accepted, ignoring the standard administrative procedures. In the opinion of some Roma activists, the fact that the Government relied exclusively on one political organisation representative for the whole array of Roma political and civic organisations resulted in the breaking up on the Roma NGOs[14].

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[11] The Social Democrat Party was established on June 16, 2001, by fusion between the Romanian Party of Social Democracy and the Romanian Social Democrat Party, based on the Political Protocol concluded between the two parties on September 8, 2000
[12] *Asul de trefla*, no. 80, 1999: 17-19.
[13] The protocol of collaboration and political partnership of the Romanian Social Democrat Party and the Social Democrat Roma Party
[14] Report: Monitoring the EU accession process: monitoring the minorities, OSI, 2002

1999 was a landmark for the political participation of the Roma. The new strategy adopted by the Roma leaders was to "donate" the votes of the Roma ethnics to the Romanian Social Democrat Party. The Roma electorate proved to be very disciplined. The exit polls showed that about 80% of the Roma supported the Romanian Social Democrat Party's candidate for Presidency.

> "I received a phone call from the town hall, from the Roma Party, and they told us not to enlist one of our candidates for the town hall and to support the candidate of PDSR. I told all the people from the community what they have to do" (Roma leader, Călăraşi County).

> "we relied on the Roma. I sent the car to bring them in… they were out searching for scrap iron in the villages. I knew they would vote for us and they actually did it" (Romanian leader, Călăraşi County)

The second factor that caused the reduction of the votes cast for the Roma political organizations was the dispute between two reputed leaders (Nicolae Paun and Madalin Voicu). *"if we ended to quarrel just like this between us, the people loose their confidence and go for the Romanians" (Roma leader, Sibiu County)*

2004 national elections

The elections from 2004 brought in the forefront of the Romanian political stage two of the Roma political organizations: the Social Democrat Roma Party and the Alliance for Roma Unity: *"the Gypsies should also act in policy, not merely act as the politicians tell them" (Roma leader, Divers, 132, September 2003)*

An opinion poll conducted during October 5-15, 2004 by a group of Roma students from within SNSPA, at the request of PRSD and under the guidance of Roma NGOs[15] showed that about 70% of the Roma preferred the Social Democrat Roma Party, 5% would vote with the Alliance for Roma Unity, 3% with the Christian Roma Centre and 1% with the Community of Roma Ethnics.

At the 2004 elections, the Alliance for Roma Unity scored 19109 votes for the Senate, that is 0.18% of all the valid votes and 15041 votes for the Chamber of Deputies (1.14% of the valid votes), while the Social Democrat Roma Party scored 56076 votes (0.55%) for the Chamber of Deputies. PRSD did not participate in the elections for the Senate.

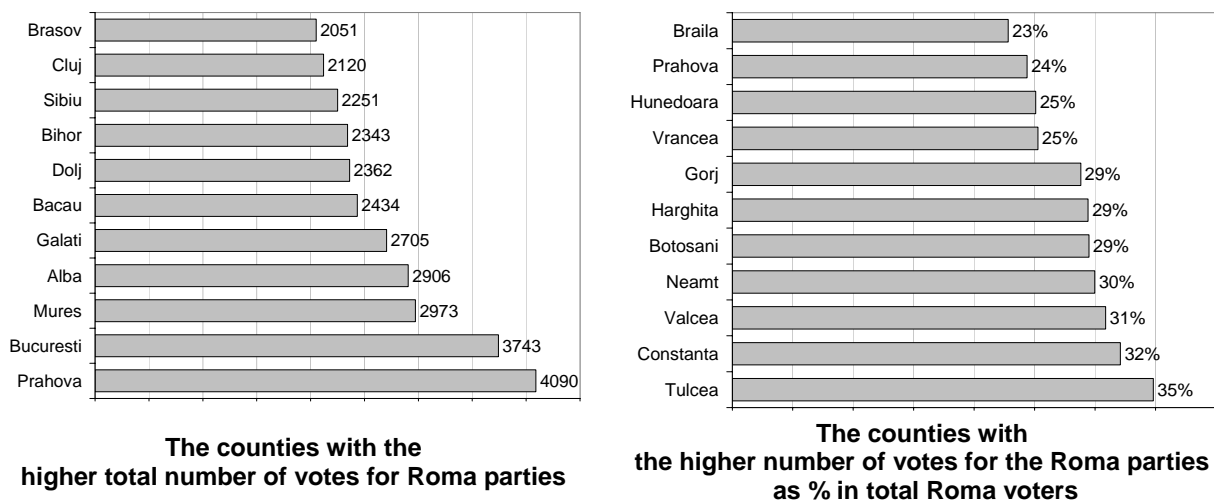## Geographical distribution of the votes cast for the two Roma organisations in the 2004 elections

The votes cast for the two Roma organisations were unevenly distributed across the cpuntry. The counties with the highest proportion of Roma population (according to the 2002 Census) did not necessarily score the highest number of votes. The most efficient counties as political participation (that is the counties that coagulated the Roma votes for either of the political organisations) were Tulcea, Constanţa, Botoşani, Harghita, Neamţ and Vâlcea. The highest absolute

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[15] http://www.impactingorj.com/Arhiva/Octombrie2004/impact25.10/national.htm.

number of votes for the two parties were produced in Prahova, Mureş, Alba and Galaţi Counties

The Roma party is more homogeneously represented in the territory compared to the Alliance for Roma Unity. The latter does not seem to be active in counties with an important number of Roma populations, such as Mures, Cluj and Prahova.

Figure 4. Votes cast for the two Roma political organisations (cumulated) in the 2004 elections

The counties with the higher total number of votes for Roma parties	The counties with the higher number of votes for the Roma parties as % in total Roma voters

Source: The calculations were performed using the official data from the Central Electoral Bureau and from the National Institute of Statistics.

Candidates and representatives

18 organisations of the ethnic minorities from Romania gain one seat of deputy each, as they have benefited to the law[16], even if they failed to get more votes than the normal electing threshold.

The political organisations of the minorities should join forces and build minority unions, which to provide the necessary political force. Even so, under the given conditions, the only chance of the civic organisations representing the minorities to obtain a seat in the Romanian Parliament are, either to associate with another party, or to benefit of the seat of deputy assigned to the national minorities.

In the 2004 elections, the Alliance for Roma Unity had 340 enlisted candidates: 105 for the Senate and 235 for the Chamber of Deputies, while the Roma Party had 211 enlisted candidates, all of them for the Chamber of Deputies[17].

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[16] They obtained at least 10% of the valid votes cast at the national level for the election of a deputy, and fulfilled the other conditions included in the Constittion and the Electoral Law, as I have describe them earlier in the paper.

[17] (2) The norm of representation for election in the Chamber of Deputies is one deputy to 70,000 inhabitants.
(3) The norm of representation for election in the Senate is one deputy to 160,000 inhabitants.
(4) The number of deputies and senators that are elected is determined by relating the population of each

The Roma Party enlisted 5 candidates for each county (except for Vrancea, where there were 6 enlisted candidates).

According to their votes, the Roma organisations were assigned a seat, which was occupied by Nicolae Păun, from the Social Democrat Roma Party.

The Roma candidates for the Chamber of deputies were much younger than the candidates of the other parties. 33% of the candidates of the Alliance for Roma Unity and 41% candidates of the Social Democrat Roma Party were under the age of 35, compared to 26.9% calculated for overall candidates. 2.7% of all the candidates of the Alliance for Roma Unity enlisted for the Senate are under the age of 35 (the national percentage is also 2.7%).

Discussions and conclusions

Starting in 1990 there was a wide variety of Roma political organisations as expression of the intra-ethnic heterogeneity specific to this ethnic group. In time, the political organisations of the Roma minority gathered under 1.4% of all the votes, nation wide (peaking in 1996), most of the balance of votes going to the Social Democrat Party. There is a large number of candidates – representatives of the Roma for the Chamber of Deputies and for the Senate, with a rather balanced geographical distribution in Romania. Despite this evidence, the Roma minority displayed a minimal efficiency of its political participation.

From the viewpoint of the participation of the formal policy, all the norms of the real democratic politic game are observed: political organisations, a stressed dynamics of establishment and regrouping of these organisations, followed by crystallization with polarisation between the traditionalists and non-traditionalists.

The Roma political organisation with the longest political life is the Roma Party, which, as some say is *"a party somehow imposed from the top"(Roma leader)*. In the opinion of some Roma activists, the fact that the PSD government relied exclusively on one political organisation representative for all the range of Roma political and civic organisations, led to the breaking up of

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electoral circumscription to the norms of representations stipulated at paragraphs (2) and (3), to which one seat of deputy or senator is added for what exceeds half of the norm of representation, provided that the number of deputies is no less than 4 and that of senators is no less than 2.
Art. 4. — (1) According to the present law, the meaning of *national* minority is that ethnic group that is represented in the Council of National Minorities. (2). The organisations of citizens belonging to a national minority defined according to paragraph (1), legally established, that did not obtain in elections at least one seat of deputy or senator, have the right, jointly, according to article 62, paragraph (2) of the Constitution of Romania, republished, to a seat of deputy, if they scored, nation wide, a number of votes equal with at least 10% of the average number of valid votes cast nation wide for the election of one deputy.
(3) The organisations of national minorities represented in the Parliament may enlist candidates.
(4) Other organisations of national minorities defined according to paragraph (1), legally established, may also enlist candidates, by presenting to the Central Electoral Bureau, no later than 3 days from the time when it was formed, a list of members including at least 15% of the total number of citizens who, at the last census, stated to be members of that particular ethnic minority.
(12) By derogation from the provisions of article (5), paragraph (8), the organisations of national minorities may submit the same list of candidates for the Chamber of Deputies in several electoral circumscriptions.

the Roma NGOs. The attempt to unify them remained a constant and permanent desire (Working Group of the Roma Associations, Cartel 430). In the Roma political world, the diversity, as expression of the reality of different communities, should be regarded as a positive force and should not be diminished by insisting on the partnership, seen as uniformity and unanimity (Liegeois, 2003).

The Roma organisations did not have an electoral platform during the November 2004 general elections. Among the non-Roma political organisations, the only one which presented an electoral offer for the Roma minority was the PSD+PUR Union, offer whose roots are in the collaboration protocol between PSD and the Social Democrat Roma Party. UDMR, as organisation that represented the Magyar minority in elections, proposed an electoral offer that defended the right of the minorities having however, a specific content related to the Magyar minority from Transylvania, the key formula being "cultural autonomy".

The Roma electorate is very poor - 80% of the Roma live in various degrees of poverty (World Bank, 2003, p. 35), it has a very low educational level, it is excluded socially and civically, it is stigmatised and discriminated. It is therefore obedient, easy to handle and sensitive to social issues.

The political participation is not an internalised act, an approach of whose importance the individuals are aware of. The political participation of the Roma is reduced to the act of casting a vote, most of them participate in voting, although they do not believe in its efficiency. The participation in voting is motivated as being a form of getting certain specific civic rights: *"PSD gave us social aid, so I voted it"*. The option for a party is not, many times, an individual decision, but rather a decision taken at the level of the communities, characterised by homogeneity of tradition, language, history and problems. An issue that can not be neglected is that many Roma could not participate in elections because they did not have IDs.

The political information and decision are delegated to the community leaders *"we do as we are told, our counsellor asks and finds out with which it will be better for us and then we vote"* (Arges County). There are also alternative levers of information and formation of the political attitudes and orientations, such as religion (in the Adventist, Jehovah witness and Pentecost communities).

The political participation of the Roma is self-perceived as a form imposed from the top to the bottom, the Roma electorate does the policy of the Roma elites, a policy at the central level, concentrated, with poor branches at the local level. The active core of the Roma political parties is very low in numbers. Usually, they are charismatic community leaders that appointed themselves as community leaders or have been appointed and legitimated by different (formal or traditional) structures of power strange to the communities. Even within the active electorate there is a lack of interest for the political doctrines. Many of them are not enlisted legally, formally, in the party, although they are entirely dedicated to the group interests. They don't have party cards and they pay no member fees. The political mobilisation is done from the leader towards the electorate, the electorate responds, it reacts, it does not initiates and acts.

The main electoral themes used to courtship the Roma electorate by non-Roma parties were

related to punctual solving of some community problems (supply of electric power, dwellings, utilities).

Discrimination and political correctitude are declared even by the Roma leaders as inefficient electoral themes. The poverty and multiple social problems of the Roma electorate makes it to loose sensitivity to the political messages such as doctrinal orientation of the parties, elaboration of a coherent, long-term program *„the Roma must not do real policy, they should turn as the wind blows because they need to be helped, irrespective of who is governing" (Roma leader).*

Not assuming their ethnic affiliation by the Roma elite may be a mechanism of exclusion of the actual politic participation of the Roma ethnic *"some of us, after they get to the top, they forget where they started from. Even if they stay in touch with us* [the Roma]*, they do it in secret, an in public they do not admit they are Gypsies. (Roma leader)*

The true force of changing the mentality concerning the shift from a culture of the overlapping political participation, to the actual political participation is represented by the "sub-political" organisations - using the concept of Giddens (2002) - that is the Roma NGOs. The establishment of organisations and associations for the Roma is a significant shift, a break from the old tradition. Currently, the establishment and expansion of the Roma elites by sub-political mechanisms is in progress. However, there are dissensions at the local and national level between the educated elite and the traditionalist leaders on the one hand and the politician Roma and the NGO representatives, on the other side. Both sides displayed attitudes of ignoring, lack of consideration *"We, the stupid ones, make policy, while the others (from NGOs) make money"* (Roma leader).

Non-Roma organisations force and support a more efficient political participation of the Roma. There has been and there still is a real national and international pressure for the formation of Roma leaders. The national and international political and social actors imposed the emergence of representative Roma leaders for the establishment and continuation of the dialogue. Public servants representing the communities have emerged at the local level by political decisions (such as the elaboration of the Strategy for the Roma). The National Strategy for the improvement of Roma situation favours the establishment of an institutional infrastructure that might be the nursery for the future Roma political leaders.

The international organisations stressed the legitimating of the leaders due to the necessity to have a credible and acknowledged Roma partner. On the other hand, however, the involvement of the international organisations distorts the national mechanism of political participation, they remove the motives of the Roma elites to assert and involve on the national political stage *"we, among us* [the Romanians and the Roma] *known what is the other one worth. We must prove it to the other people abroad" (Roma leader).*

The interests of the Roma elite shifted from the national to the international level. There is a particular concern of the Roma organisations for the international agendas. The political games from the national political stage may seem lacking of interest and uninteresting to the Roma elite. This current climate of making everybody hyperaware of the "Roma topic" needs precautions.

At the strict level of the political life, the EU accession of Romania will create a pressure for

the increase of the activity of the Roma organisations and political parties. This will occur both at the central level (concerning the local governing) and at the local level, where, according to the principle of subsidiary, the resources and decision are expected to concentrate. The state will have to encourage the Roma (and other minorities) organisations and associations to become more active within the process of policies and projects construction, implementation and assessment. The activity of the Roma parties and organisations will have to result in the social inclusion of the Roma.

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YANA LEONTIYEVA
Minority organizations as possible mediators for civic participation of migrants. The example of Ukrainians in the Czech Republic.

The main goal of this essay is to contribute to the study of Ukrainian community in the Czech Republic. In this article I propose the overview of the contemporary Ukrainian migration to the CR and a short description of some of the activities of the Ukrainian minority associations in CR. In the conclusions to this paper I try to estimate the potential of these Ukrainian organizations, granted with the civic and political rights, to be the intermediates in the relationship between the new Ukrainian migrants and the Czech population. This short contribution is based on the findings of the study of the integration of Ukrainians in CR[1] and the preliminary results of the research project of the civic participation of migrants in CR[2]. I also used some findings from my master thesis defended at Charles University in Prague in 2004 focused on the social distance between the old and the new waves of Ukrainian immigration in CR.

Migration context in the Czech Republic

Immigration is a relatively new issue for the Czech Republic. Before 1989 it was predominantly an emigration country and even today Czech society still remains rather homogeneous in terms of ethnicity and nationality. After the fall of the communist regime the Czech Republic, together with the other central European states, faced the challenge of becoming an attractive destination country. In the late 80s there were about 30 thousand citizens of other countries residing in Czechoslovakia. During the middle 90s the migration legislation in CR was very liberal and, since the economic situation of the country was higher comparing to the eastern neighbours, especially the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union, the number of migrants grown rapidly within the last decade. In 1994 the Czech Alien police, the department of the Ministry of Interior of the CR registered 104 343 foreign citizens. Within the next 10 years that number more than doubled. The slight decrease in the constantly increasing trend was observed only between 1999 and 2000, when the official numbers dropped from 228.862 to 200.951 in one year. This was mainly the result of the visa implementation for the migrants from the central European countries like Ukraine, Russia and Moldova. (Czech Statistical Office)

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[1] The research within the pilot project "Integration of Foreigners and Support of Organizations and Associations of Foreigners in the Czech Republic" implemented for the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the CR in 2003 was focused on Ukrainians, Vietnamese and Armenians in Prague and Central Bohemia. This was a qualitatively designed research aimed to analyze the level of social integration of chosen ethnic communities. The author uses the finding from the 51 interviews with 51 Ukrainians, half of which was conducted in the native language of the respondent and half in Czech.

[2] One thematic block of the project "Political and Legal Institutional Framework of the Czech Republic and its Changes in the Context of the Accession to the EU" supported by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the CR (reg. number 1J004/04-DP1) is focused on migrants and minorities in CR.

Nowadays the share of migrants out of the total population in CR is still relatively smaller comparing to the most of the European countries. The total number of foreigners legally residing in the CR is around 250 thousand (31.12.2004). According to the OECD and Eurostat statistics by the end of 2002 the share of the foreigners was 19,9% in Switzerland, 8,8% in Austria, 8,9% in Germany, 4,5% in Great Britain, 4% in Portugal and 2,7% in Italy. Nevertheless, the Czech Republic, where foreign citizens represent 2,3% of the total population, has the biggest share of migrants among other Central European countries: Hungary - 0,9 %, Slovak Republic - 0,5% and Poland - 0,1%. (Czech Statistical Office, Trends in International Migration 2004).

Migrants and minorities in the Czech law

Czech immigration policy is much more oriented on short-term immigration. According to the existing law there are two main types of residence permits (aside of the refugee and the asylum seeker status) granted to the foreign citizens, who reside legally on the territory of the CR: permanent and temporary. Temporary (long-term) residence permit is granted only for the period up to one year with the possibility of prolongation on the territory of the CR. The main purposes for this permit are employment and entrepreneurial activity along with family reunion and study. It is a very strict definition of the prerequisite for the working visa – the work permit, which is closely connected to one concrete employer. That is why temporary residence permit for the purpose of wok could be easily terminated without any consideration of the number of years spent in the CR. The permanent residence permit gives a foreigner an automatic right to work. The main obstacle for gaining this permit is the requirement of ten years of continuous residence on the territory of the CR. The policy of naturalization in the CR is also very restrictive. One of the principal requirements to the applicant is at least five years of the permanent residence permit on the territory of the CR. In reality that means that an ordinary migrant without Czech ancestry or spouse should wait for a fifteen for the Czech citizenship. [Trends in International Migration 2004, Leontiyeva, Černík 2005]

In contrast to foreigners, ethnic and national minorities in the Czech Republic have much more rights. The Act on Rights of Members of National Minorities (entered into force in 2001) defines them as ”community of citizens of the Czech Republic who live on the territory of the present Czech Republic and as a rule differ from other citizens by their common ethnic origin, language, culture and traditions“ and at the same time „show their will to be considered a national minority for the purpose of common efforts to preserve and develop their own identity, language and culture“ and „express and preserve interests of their community which has been formed during history“. The same act obliges the state to provide subsidies in order to sustain the culture, traditions and languages of the national minorities. (Černík, 2005)

The Czech state financially supports the development of minority media, mainly print and radio. Besides, the minority law obliges local municipalities and regional governments to create councils for national minorities, which should consist of a minimum of half of the representatives of the national minorities. At the governmental level there is a council for national minorities, which

consists of representatives of recently recognized national minorities: Slovaks, Germans, Poles, Roma, Bulgarians, Croats, Hungarians, Ruthenians, Russians, Greeks and Ukrainians. In general, national minorities in the Czech Republic have instruments to maintain their civil rights and satisfy their cultural needs. However, the narrow definition of national minority by the Czech law excludes not only non-Czech citizens, but also Czech citizens of non-traditional migrants' origin, like for example the Vietnamese. (Leontiyeva, Černík, 2005)

Ukrainian immigration before 1989

The Ukrainian immigration to the CR has a long history. The first evidence of Ukrainians on the Czech lands is dated back to the 16th century. After the annexation of the Halych and Bukovyna regions to the Austrian Empire Ukrainian workers came for the seasonal work to the Czech and Moravian farms and homesteads. At the turn of the 19^{th}-20^{th} century intellectuals from Halych started to arrive mainly to Prague and other big cities within the Austrian part of the Hapsburgs. The large part of those cultural elite abandoned their native country for the political reasons. During this time the representatives of the Ukrainian cultural and social life in the Czech lands were mainly highly educated scholars, which studied in Příbram and Prague. (Zilynskyj, 1995)

Within the first decades of the 20^{th} century the Ukrainian immigrants' community was wondrously well organised and very successful in maintaining cultural heritage. Numbers of text-books, vocabularies and encyclopaedias were published on the territory of the CR. There were several gymnasiums, preschool and nursery institutions, the university and the high pedagogical institute, Ukrainian theatre and even the Academy of Arts. At that time several ethnic associations of different aims and scopes were established. Unfortunately Nazi and especially Russian occupation of the Czechoslovakia caused the forced closing down of the Ukrainian associations. The development of the Ukrainian culture on the Czech lands was interrupted till the early 90s, when after a long break the first Ukrainian minority association was founded. Unfortunately, as a result of this restriction the large part of the Ukrainian migrants assimilated and fused with the majority population. (Zilynskyj, Kočík, 2001)

Ukrainian immigration today

The representatives of the "older" waves of Ukrainian migration are partly registered by the last national population census held in 2001. By the results of this census almost 10% of the citizens identify themselves as non-Czech. The largest part of those people claimed themselves to be Moravians or Silesians. Since these self-reported nationalities are usually not regarded as distinct linguistic groups, they are usually not considered to be a national minority. The total proportion of minority citizens in the CR in 2001 turns out to be less then 6%. (Czech Statistical Office) The

most frequent national minorities registered by the population census are listed in the table 1. Unlike the "new comers", Ukrainian minority representatives are mainly women (62%) in declining years (Zilynskyj, Kočík, 2001).

Table 1. Most frequent national minorities in Czech Republic, 2001

Slovaks	173 042
Poles	39 277
Germans	36 087
Hungarians	11 540
Roma people	13 078
Ukrainians	5 501
Russians	2 910
Vietnamese	721

Source: Population census 2001 (Sčítání lidu, domů a bytů 2001)
Notes: 1. The statistics is for the Czech citizens (including those with dual citizenship)
        2: Moravian and Silesian nationalities are not presented in the table

Speaking of Ukrainians without Czech citizenship, they present one of the most important migration communities in the CR. According to the official statistics they comprise approximately one third of all foreigners with long term and permanent stay permits in CR (see table 2).

In contrast to the beginning of the last century, today Ukrainian immigration to the CR has mainly economic short term or circular character. Majority of Ukrainians in the CR are economically active males mostly in the productive age. Different studies show that the dominant pattern for the economic migration from the Ukraine is to arrive singly in order to support families who continue to live at home (Wallace, 2002, Drbohlav, Janská, Šelepová, 2001, Horáková, Čerňanská, 2001). Ukrainians are mostly occupied in demanded, but not attractive for the native population, low-paid unskilled jobs (hard manual and auxiliary works mainly in construction and hard industry for men; cleaning services and manual work in food processing and textile industry for women). (Czech Statistical Office)

Due to the relatively long and complicated procedure of obtaining a work permit the large part of the economically active Ukrainians in the CR prefer a trade license, which is easier for them to obtain. The trade license holders often take the advantage of this relatively free status to enter the shadow labour market, at the same time many of those "businessmen" are actually in the position of the classical employees occupied in the same manual jobs.

Table 2. Most frequent foreigners in CR, 2004

Permanent residence permits	
(most frequent nationalities)	99 467 (39%)
Vietnamese	*20 689*
Slovaks	*16 976*
Ukrainians	*13 262*
Poles	*11 511*
Temporary residence permits	
(most frequent nationalities)	154 827 (61%)
Ukrainians	*65 001*
Slovaks	*30 376*
Vietnamese	*13 490*
Poles	*4 754*
Total number of foreigners	254 294

Source: Czech Statistical Office, December 2004

The important characteristic of the nowadays immigration into the CR is its significant illegal (undocumented) component. According to the different estimation there are up to 200 thousand of Ukrainian citizens, who reside in the CR without valid residence permit. Another important phenomenon related to the Ukrainian labour migration is so-called "client system". This system became the dominating pattern for the Ukrainian labour migration in the CR. The mediator or the "client" recruits unskilled, flexible and cheap labours often from the settlement or region of his/her origin. Aside from the jobs and accommodation arrangement services, "client" often provides the protection from the organized crime. Mentioned services are not free-of-charge. According to the reports of the different Ukrainian informants, "clients" charge for their services from 15 to 50 percents of the monthly salary (!). Since the agreement between the "client" and the Ukrainian employee is based on personal contacts and sometimes even on informal oral agreement (the employers often do not have the copy of the signed contract and are not very well aware of their rights) the salary often depends on the "behaviour of the employee" and the "kindness" of the "client". Client is contracted with Czech partners for different work projects so that the Czech employer neither has to arrange any work permits, nor to pay any taxes or insurance payments of the foreign employees. This makes the foreign labour even more profitable and demanded on the Czech labour market. On the other side, it makes the migrants to be even more dependant on the good will of the mediators. (Leontiyeva, Černík 2005; Luptak, Drbohlav, 1999)

Ukrainian Minority Organizations in Czech Republic

Organisations, which are targeting immigrants in the destination country, on the one side provide help and counselling and support the migration inflow, but on the other side, they exist

because of this immigration. One of the examples of quasi-legal institutions, which have very strong material/financial interest in the increasing migration trend are Ukrainian "clients" described above. Good examples of the official institutions helping immigrants in the destination country are different non-profit non-governmental organisations. The Czech NGOs oriented toward foreigners are often criticised for being engaged mainly in the projects and activities connected with the protection of the asylum seekers' rights (Černík, 2003). It is worth to mention the certain positive shift toward improving the integration and promotion of the rights of the foreigners' in the state and non-governmental sector. Though, in reality there is no effective centre or even a hot telephone line for foreigners, who needs legal and social consultancy. That is why Ukrainian labour migrants could only rely on the help of their relatives, friends and other acquaintances. Building up the social networks is a very important "survival strategy" and the "ticket" to the successful integration into the labour market. As it was already mentioned such non-institutional support is not altruistic and often leads to submitting, even slavery relationship.

In fact, migrants in fact do not have many opportunities to fight for their rights in the CR. The Ministry of Interior of the CR, which is authorised to register civic organisations, actually denies rights for civic associations of foreigners as not qualified for simple registration procedure and therefore required to apply for a special permit. The procedure of application for that permit is rather bureaucratic and very uncertain. In order to avoid it the foreigners must take a practical solution and to find three Czech citizens who would agree to participate as co-founders. (Černík, 2005; Uhl, 2003) The representatives of national minority, who already gained Czech citizenship, could be the most appropriate candidates. Thus, encouraging the foreigners' integration into minority associations could be helpful at least to ensure the formal registration of the organisation.

Nowadays there are four active Ukrainian association active on the territory of the CR: *The Ukrainian Women Association* (*Sdružení ukrajinských žen)*, *The Association of the Ukrainians and the Supporters of Ukraine* (*Sdružení Ukrajinců a příznivců Ukrajiny)*, *The Forum of Ukrainians of the Czech Republic* (*Fórum Ukrajinců ČR)*, *The Ukrainian Initiative in the Czech Republic (Ukrajinská iniciativa v ČR)*.

Two first named organisations are relatively small structures, associating mainly the representatives of the "older generation" of the Ukrainian migrants. Their low annual budget is covering a couple of local activities focusing mainly on maintaining national traditions and celebrating traditional Ukrainian holidays. Ex-chairwoman of the *Women Association* published series of books dedicated to the outstanding personalities among Ukrainian immigrants. *The Association of the Ukrainians and the Supporters of Ukraine* is running the amateur choir, which perform on the local Ukrainian events.

The Forum of Ukrainians is a relatively young (established in 2001) but very ambitious association consisted mainly of the young Ukrainian students who met on the internet forums. The first activities of the organisation were concentrated around the public demonstrations and organisations of the protests again the human right violation in Ukraine. The association has declared a wide program of activities, including the protections of the

rights of the Ukrainian migrants, founding Ukrainian schools, organising cultural events etc. Though, only few of the declared goals were fulfilled by now. *The Forum of Ukrainians* organised a couple of music concerts and in 2003 participated in filming the documentary about Ukrainian migrants in the European countries. One of the most successful projects of the organisation is the Ukrainian football club, which plays in a local league. In 2003 the association publicized itself in media with the incident of the discrimination of the Ukrainians at one of the Czech disco. The same year they organised the press conference called "The development of the Ukrainian community in the CR: the break-through the barrier of the disregard". Unfortunately it did not bring any "break-through" and till today this association is often treated as rather "young rebels" and their activities still did not find any substantive support from the Czech state.

The Ukrainian Initiative in the Czech Republic is one of the oldest and the most active Ukrainian associations. It is considered to have a trustworthy reputation and thus it is generously supported by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Culture and Municipal council of the Prague city. In the early stage of its more then decade existence *Ukrainian Initiative* concentrated its activities mainly satisfying the needs of the national minorities. Nevertheless, within last 3 years there was an attempt to strengthen with the young generation of the ethnic Ukrainians and Czechs, who are interested in the promotion of the Ukrainian culture in the CR. At the present time *Ukrainian Initiative* is realising series of the large-scale projects including annual Ukrainian Culture days, multicultural events, thematic lectures, seminars and conferences, youth club, native language courses for young Ukrainian children, exhibitions, concerts, and, last but not least, publishing the oldest Ukrainian magazine in the CR called *Porohy*.

The detailed analysis of the activities of the Ukrainian associations showed that the interests of the vast majority of Ukrainian labour migrants are rather not presented. In fact, Ukrainian labour migrants are practically not aware of any associations of their compatriots. Moreover it is a certain gap between naturalised members of the Ukrainian minority and the new-coming Ukrainian immigrants. This gap is based not only on the "generation conflict" but to the certain extend also on cultural misunderstanding. The representatives of minority associations are naturalised intellectuals and sometimes elderly people. On the one side they are usually very nostalgic and patriotic towards Ukraine. On the other side, they are rather distancing from their "problematic" Ukrainian compatriots in CR. Some of the ethnic organisations (like *Ukrainian Initiative* and *Forum of Ukrainians*) are covering non-citizen members of communities. But even so these associations don't seem to be very successful in finding a visible response from their migratory compatriots. The important limitations are the finance sources, which actually determine the character of activities held. Thus, for example, such important issues as education, social assistance and legal counselling do not correspond with the aims of the most of the subsidy programs. (Leontiyeva, 2004).

Despite of mentioned above I believe that Ukrainian associations still have the potential of becoming the mediators for Ukrainian migrants. Some of the resent activities

foreshadow the possibilities of the co-operation if the future. In 2003, *Ukrainian Initiative* took part in the project for prevention illegal immigration and helped distributing the information leaflets with the legal advices for Ukrainian migrants in the CR. Besides, within the pilot project "Integration of Foreigners and Support to Organizations and Associations of Foreigners in the Czech Republic" they participated on the preparation of the Ukrainian version of the web-pages, which include practical information about life and work in the CR (www.domavcr.cz). Besides, in co-operation with the Ukrainian Embassy this association prepared the brochure with the complete consular information at the important emergency telephone numbers. The brochure distributed in several companies with Ukrainian employees, on board of the buss lines to and from Ukraine, in front of the Ukrainian cathedrals in Prague and surroundings and in other public places. The political events in Ukraine during the presidential elections 2004 became the important stimulus for building up the co-operation between Ukrainian organisations, which united their members and efforts for the public demonstrations to support so-called "Orange revolution". The series of massive demonstrations in Prague brought together people of the different cultural and social backgrounds, and happened to become the most significant Ukrainian public event in the CR within the last decade.

<u>Conclusions</u>

In this short contribution I tried to look upon the Ukrainian minority associations as possible intermediates in the relations between the new Ukrainian migrants and Czech population. The encouraging foreigners' integration into minority associations could be helpful to ensure the legal aspect of the associations' formation. Besides, minority representatives seem to be much more integrated into the life of majority society and, in case of effective co-operation, members of minority associations could share with the newcomers the "know how" of the effective co-existing with the majority of the Czech society, which does not seem to be prepared to welcome new Ukrainian migrants. Taking into consideration above suggestions, one should keep in mind that mentioned strategy is much harder to implement in case of "non-traditional" migrants of nationalities, which was not granted with the minority status. Besides, a certain distancing between some of the Ukrainian associations and Ukrainian migrants brings new challenges. As it was mentioned, the support of the Czech state toward minority association is mainly concentrated on satisfying the primarily cultural needs of national minority representatives. But even thought, the examples given above illustrated the slight change in strategies of some associations, which try to raise awareness about their activities among migrants and to satisfy the needs of the new-comers.

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