

# Habilitation thesis (Teză de abilitare)

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## English Abstract

Character Count: 5.246 (imposed limits: 4-6000 characters)

The goal of this text is to present my research agenda for the next few years, through the lenses of my past activity. The reader learns about my research interests and finds out how they contribute to set up a personal program in the study of social change, particularly targeting value change in individuals, and using international migration as natural experiment (Dinesen, 2011). My intentions for the future are to analyze how contextual factors and changing the social environment may impact on social values. I argue that change occurs during adulthood as well. I plan to employ quantitative analyses on longitudinal cross-sectional and on panel data to show that international migrants adapt to the new context in which they live.

My basic argument is that value formation is dependent on at least two points in time. The first is early socialization, as almost any theorist of modernization argued. Children grow up in environments defined by different levels of material security, impregnated with different cultural norms, ruled by different social norms. They perceive different levels of security, which determines their value orientation towards very abstract sets of values such as modernity, traditionalism or postmodernity. The second important moment is current time. Within the society of residence, institutions act as models to be followed (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Gundelach, 1994); material security, particularly experiencing moments of recession or high inflation (Inglehart and Baker, 2000; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005), determines adaptive reactions (Welzel, 2007); and cultural norms shape normative behaviors and attitudes (Newsom and Richerson, 2007). Individual-level resources (such as material resources, education or social capital), as well as social values themselves, play important roles in structuring representations and feelings on security in any of this two moments. (The same is valid for any moment over the lifetime. However, for simplicity and due to space constraints, the entire presentation focuses only on the two moments that I have mentioned). Such resources (human capital, social capital, material capital and values themselves) do influence value formation and change, and the focus of my past research and publications were related to these individual level factors. Currently, I started to analyze in depth the contextual determinants, and I use international migration to study what happens to individuals when they change the societal context. This is the main research idea that I have for the next few years.

The structure of the text is imposed by the law. The first part provides a general overview of my research activities and publications. I use this long introduction imposed by the law, to explain how my past experience serves my personal future research agenda, which is detailed in the second part. *I start with a* brief discussion around my career track. It may be used as a rough guide, complementary to my CV in its purpose to argue on my academic interests. *The second section of the first part* aims to better structure the information included in my CV considering the research directions that my publication followed. The CV presents categories of publications depending on their type: ISI papers, other peer-reviewed journal papers, authored books, edited books and journal issues, chapters in books, etc. This narrative description of my publications is more than a list of outcomes. It starts with a short argument on what holds together

my publications. I describe my view on social change and value change, arguing that material resources, human capital and social capital are key determinants in value formation. I present my approach to the values change, and to the three types of capitals. This creates four distinct subchapters, in which I classify my past publications.

For some of my publications I go in detail, discussing their conceptual bases, hypotheses, methodology and findings. However, I do not insist much on their content, which is publicly available, in journals, books or reports, and most of it can be downloaded from my personal website (<http://web.bogdanvoicu.ro>). Instead, I often prefer discussing how the respective publication adds inputs to my perspective over value change, or to my understanding of material resources (in fact: representations over material resources), human capital, or social capital. I also mention how my work contributes to existing knowledge and advances in social sciences. Again, I do not insist on this. The fact that I have published in peer-reviewed journals and there are at least 150 citations to my work that I have found in the past few years gives sufficient information on the quality of these publication. The implication in consultancy projects in the productive sector or to governmental bodies speaks about the usefulness of my past work.

In the second part of this text, I address my future research plans. Here, I go in further detail with the conceptual background, and I shortly explain what I intend to do from a methodological point of view. Unfortunately, the regulator's option to impose a very low upper limit for this second part, do not allow me to develop it as I would have wanted.

## Rezumat în limba română

Număr de caractere: 5.212 (limite conform „ghidului de abilitare”: 4-6000 caractere)

Scopul acestui material este de a prezenta planul meu de cercetare pentru următorii câțiva ani, privit din perspectiva activității mele trecute. Cititorul poate afla din text despre interesele mele de cercetare și despre modul în care acestea se articulează pentru a constitui un program de studiu al schimbării sociale, concentrându-se în special la nivel individual, pe analiza valorilor sociale și pe utilizarea migrației internaționale ca experiment natural (Dinesen, 2011). Intențiile mele de viitor sunt de a studia modul în care factorii contextuali, în principal schimbarea mediului social, determină schimbări ale valorilor sociale. Argumentez că schimbarea apare și în timpul vârstei adulte. Vreau să utilizez în acest sens metode de natură cantitativă pe date longitudinale comparative și pe date panel, arătând cum migranții se adaptează noului context în care trăiesc.

Principalul argument este că formarea valorilor depinde de cel puțin două puncte în timp. Primul moment este cel al socializării primare, așa cum susțin mai toți teoreticienii modernizării culturale. Copiii cresc în medii definiți prin modele diverse ale securității materiale, impregnate cu norme culturale diferite și supuse acțiunii unor instituții sociale specifice. Ei percep în mod diferit nivelul de securitate al mediului în care evoluează, acest lucru având impact asupra orientărilor lor către modernitate, tradiționalism sau postmodernitate culturală.

Al doilea moment important este cel curent, societatea în care indivizii locuiesc în prezent. Instituțiile acesteia furnizează modele de urmat (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Gundelach, 1994); nivelul de securitate materială, în mod particular experimentarea de momente de inflație ridicată sau recesiune (Inglehart and Baker, 2000; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005), determină reacții adaptive (Welzel, 2007); normele culturale modelează comportamente și atitudini normative (Newsom and Richerson, 2007). Resursele de la nivel individual (incluzând resursele materiale, educația și capitalul social), precum și valorile sociale în sine joacă un rol important în a structura reprezentări și sentimente de asupra securității personale și sociale în oricare din aceste două momente. (Concluzia este validă pentru oricare moment din timpul vieții. Din motive de simplitate și dat fiind spațiul restrâns al acestei prezentări, prefer ca în întregul material să discut doar despre cele două momente amintite). Aceste patru categorii de factori (valorile însele, capitalul uman, cel social și cel material) influențează prin urmare formarea și schimbarea valorilor. Ele au stat în centrul atenției activităților și publicațiilor mele de până acum. În prezent, am început să analizez determinanții contextuali ai formării și schimbării valorilor, folosind migrația internațională pentru a studia ceea ce întâmplă cu indivizii atunci când schimbă contextul social. Aceasta este direcția de cercetare pe care o proiectez pentru următorii câțiva ani.

Structura acestui material este cea impusă de lege. Prima parte include o privire de ansamblu asupra activităților mele de cercetare și publicațiilor din trecut. Folosesc lunga introducere impusă de lege (prin „Ghidul orientativ pentru realizarea tezei de abilitare”) pentru a explica cum experiența din trecut servește

agendei de cercetare viitoare, care este detaliată în a doua parte a textului de față. *La început* prezint o scurtă discuție despre ruta profesională urmată. Ea poate fi utilizată ca un ghid sumar, complementar CV-ului în scopul acestuia de a identifica interesele mele academice. *A doua secțiune a primei părți* încearcă să structureze mai bine informația inclusă în CV, prezentând direcțiile de cercetare urmate de publicațiile realizate. CV-ul organizează publicațiile în funcție de tipul lor: articole ISI, alte articole în jurnale peer-reviewed, cărți de autori, cărți coordonate și numere de jurnal coordonate, capitole etc. Descrierea narativă a publicațiilor este mai mult decât o listă de produse. Ea începe cu un scurt argument despre ceea ce ține laolaltă aceste publicații, despre firul roșu care le unește. Schițez perspectiva proprie despre schimbarea valorilor sociale, despre modul în care capitalul uman, cel material și cel social contribuie la schimbare. Prezint de asemenea abordarea pe care o am în legătură cu cele trei tipuri de resurse și cu valorile sociale în sine. Aceasta duce la constituirea a patru capitole distincte, folosite drept criteriu de clasificare în prezentarea publicațiilor.

Unele dintre publicații sunt prezentate mai detaliat, discutându-le bazele teoretice, ipotezele, metodologia și rezultatele. Totuși, încerc să nu insist mult pe conținutul fiecărui text în parte. Toate aceste publicații sunt disponibile în domeniul public, în jurnale, cărți sau rapoarte. Majoritatea pot fi descărcate de pe pagina mea personală de Internet (<http://web.bogdanvoicu.ro>).

Prefer în schimb să arată cum publicația respectivă furnizează elemente de intrare pentru perspectiva pe care o propun asupra valorilor sociale sau asupra modului în care înțeleg resursele materiale (mai exact: reprezentările despre resursele materiale), capitalul uman, sau capitalul social. Menționez și cum lucrările mele contribuie la cunoașterea existentă și la progresul științelor sociale. Nu insist nici asupra acestui aspect. Faptul că am publicat în jurnale peer-reviewed și că sunt peste 150 de citări la lucrările mele pe care le-am identificat în cei mai recentți câțiva ani, oferă suficiente informații asupra calității acestor publicații. La rândul ei, implicarea în proiecte de consultanță pentru mediul privat sau pentru agenți guvernamentale vorbește de la sine despre utilitatea imediată a experiențelor de lucru anterioare.

În a doua parte a textului, prezint planurile de cercetare viitoare. Aici merg mai în detaliu cu descrierea background-ului teoretic, și explic pe scurt ce intenționez să fac din punct de vedere metodologic. Din păcate, opțiunea legiuitorului de a impune o limită maximă redusă pentru această parte, nu îmi permite să o dezvolt așa cum mi-aș dori.

## Part 1: The past career and achievements

# THE ROAD TO SOCIAL CHANGE

Character Count: 162.597 (imposed size by the law: 150.000-250.000 characters)

Note:

This thesis follows the structure requested by the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research. It comprises two parts. The first one was required to include between 150.000 and 300.000 typographic signs, being much longer than the second one, which is limited to maximum 25.000 signs. The first part should describe my professional pathway and achievements, focusing on the products published after the PhD graduation. The second one should lead the reader in my plans for future professional development.

The second part is easier to write: its output might be very useful as part of future publications. The first part, however, which is much longer, faces difficulties in providing an efficient product. It is highly unlikely that a peer-reviewed publication would publish an autobiography mixed with an academic text that presents past findings. There is almost nothing new in this first part, except for putting together and explaining why and how my previous publications are part of a more or less focused research agenda. Therefore, this first part should have a simplistic structure, which fulfills three requirements. First, it provides an overview of my main research topics and goals, and explains how my past activities fit the respective aims. Second, it describes the previous works, and summarizes their findings. However, this task is mostly obsolete, since all the described findings have already been published in peer-reviewed journals and books, which are easily accessible in the public domain. Ten of them are even included in the habilitation file, as required by the Ministry of Education and Research. Third, I permanently add boxes which list main academic and consultancy projects that have been subsumed to the themes that I describe in the text. I think that this helps the reader to easier connect the text with the CV, and shows how the respective projects reflected in benefits for my academic interests.

## Overview

In 1996, before receiving a BA in sociology, I started to work as academic researcher within the Research Institute for Quality of Life. I am still employed by the same institute. During these years I was also teaching for various universities, and I have provided consultancy to various governmental and supranational agencies, NGO's and think tanks, as well as private companies. I was addressing many issues, but most of them were related to social change (particularly value change), social capital, poverty, and human capital formation.

My career is a not very obvious journey in the land of social change. My main interest is how society change and how their change triggers change in individuals. However, societies are not abstract beings; they are made of individuals and groups. Therefore, my interest is directly related to how individuals change. It is not any type of transformation that I am paying attention to, but the cultural ones, more precisely looking to value formation and change.

This long text is a kind of commented résumé, as coined out by one of the protests against the provisions of the habilitation law<sup>1</sup>. I start with briefly presenting my employment track, but I avoid a chronology or a simple listing of my activities, either academic or non-academic. Such information is already included in my CV, also available in my habilitation file, but also publicly on my website (<http://web.bogdanvoicu.ro>). Instead, I prefer to stress the connections between my past jobs and the topics of interest for my research. I do not offer many details, but I sketch how past activities contribute to my personal development as a researcher of social change, particularly of value change.

Then, I begin to present my past results with discussing what social values are, and how I contributed to their understanding. I focus mainly on how individual and societies change considering the individual-level factors, since the contextual-level ones are part of my future research agenda, to be presented in the second part of this thesis.

The theory of modernization, in its various variants, is core for my quest. They do not create a homogenous body of literature. Over time they were praised, contested, considered dead, and resuscitated and amended (see Arts, 2011; Arts & Halman, 2003; Welzel, 2007). In the past decades, the theories of modernization become again salient due to the increasing availability of data and computer power to analyze large-scale comparative surveys (Arts & Halman, eds., 2004; Ester et al, 1994, Ester et al, 2006; Pettersson & Esmer, eds., 2008; Vinken, et al, eds. 2004; Halman & Voicu, 2011), as well as to the influential literature on the late modern society (Giddens, 1990; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002).

The sources for values change are located at two important levels: individual and context. Among individual factors of value formation two are salient. One of them relates to material conditions. They are said to be important particularly during formative years of early socialization (Inglehart, 1997; Mannheim, 1958), but also during adulthood (Arts, 2011; Inglehart and Baker, 2000; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005). The other individual-level factor of value change is education. It becomes important as a source for knowledge, for better understanding the world and life, for acquiring certain rationality to direct attitudes and behaviors (Inkeles, 1969).

At context-level, social institutions and cultural norms shape values and determine constant value change and adaptation (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, particularly chapter 12; Gundelach, 1994; Inglehart and

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.petitiononline.ro/petitie/1755957/>. The protest, initiated by the Department of Foreign Languages in the University of Bucharest, had collected 459 signatures in two weeks, from 7<sup>th</sup> of May when initiated, to 22<sup>th</sup> of May, when I have accessed the link.



Welzel, 2005; Newson & Richerson, 2009; Welzel, 2007). Constant interaction with society may lead to faster change at individual level. From this point of view, social capital may be another factor to be considered when analyzing value formation.

Human capital, material resources, and social capital are the three key terms to define the bulk of my previous work as a researcher in social sciences. They represent landmarks for my road to analyze social change. Table 1 summarizes the directions in which I have developed analysis. I have started with *poverty*, a fashionable issue in the mid-1990s Romania, but quite soon I become more attracted to feelings of poverty and wellbeing. Since then, subjective wellbeing and the various related concepts (life satisfaction, happiness etc.) are important to my preoccupations. The interest in *human capital* relates mainly to educational capital (and far less to biological capital). Bearer of knowledge, education is the main engine of change within modernization theory. Increasing access to education during childhood, promoting lifelong learning, and decreasing inequalities between social strata may be strategies to catalyst social change. Studying cross-country (and particularly cross-European) differences in levels of education, and studying education systems enabled me with a broad view over the topic. The *social capital* debate is probably known enough to require no further reference. Frequently meeting friends, but also strangers who share common interests, trusting their opinions, being confident in institutions increase the exposure to new idea and values, and forge social change both at societal and individual level. My interests were related to social capital formation, and particularly to its embeddedness in cultures of participation.

**Table 1. Individual-level factors of value change and how they are reflected in my previous work**

<u>Resource/mechanism</u>	<u>Type of analyses</u>	<u>Key domains</u>	<u>Key concepts in my publications and research projects</u>
Material conditions	Studying distribution and representations on material conditions	Material resources	Poverty, relative deprivation
		Subjective wellbeing	Life satisfaction, subjective relative deprivation, happiness, subjective measures of poverty
Education	Studying human capital distribution and formation	Educational capital/stocks	Cross-country comparisons of education stocks.
		Education systems	Trends in attending higher education, higher-education policy, inequality of access to education, student achievements, institutional arrangements in pre-university education, drop-out.
Social capital	Studying consequences of social capital for development and change	Community development, civic society, confidence in institutions, bridging and bonding social capital	Cultures of participation, volunteering, associationalism, social trust, confidence in institutions, friendship, community studies.
	Levels of social capital		
	Predictors of social capital		

My perspective on science is to provide neither a theoretical, nor an empirical approach. I am not a social theorist, who develops nice intriguing arguments on social change and uses reports by others to (partially) confirm how theory works in practice. I am neither an adept of grounded theory perspective, and I am not starting from empirical evidences to construct more general and abstract relationships. My option is to build theoretical explanation that I immediately test using quantitative or qualitative data. Most of the time I employ quantitative methods, but I also make use of qualitative ones when necessary.

Empirically looking at change in individuals is not an easy task. The ideal solution would be to use *panel data*, collected from large samples, with frequent measurements over long periods of time. However, such data are still rarely available and access to it is many times limited. Therefore other approaches might be considered. *Longitudinal analysis* is one of them. It supposes analyzing how indicators change over time, and searching for explanatory variables suitable that might be employed to validate the theory. *Cross-sectional analysis* might also be meaningful, if the compared entities (let suppose that they are countries) differs when considering evolutionary paths. For instance, let assume that there is a common pattern of change from traditionalism to late modernity. Let also assume that one have access to cross-sectional data from a set of societies that follow this common pattern but are at different stages of their transforming. Therefore, controlling for predictors of change would roughly simulate the longitudinal analysis, but using cross-sectional data, and considering characteristics that may be variant from a society to another independent of the studied pattern of change. Finally, cross-sectional analysis may also be analyzed at individual level, in a *multilevel* environment<sup>2</sup>. I have used in my works all this four types of approaches, summarized by Table 2. They were equally applied in my studies on social values, social capital, human capital and subjective wellbeing.

**Table 2. Types of (preliminary) analyses of change**

<b>Approach: label</b>	<b>Approach: short description</b>	<b>Type of data</b>
Panel	Analyzing change of specific indicators measured for the same individuals at different moments in time	Panel data
Longitudinal	Analyzing the trends to be noticed in the levels of various indicators over time.	Longitudinal
Comparative	Analyzing levels of indicators in various societies, and then assessing how change may have been occurred, based on associations with, for instance, level of development in different societies.	Cross-sectional
Multilevel	Comparative analysis, controlling for levels of different predictors manifests at country or community level	Cross-sectional

\* I have employed all these approaches at individual level, or to explain variation at individual level. In few cases, I have also employed longitudinal country-level analysis.

Let summarize what the following sections bring. First I present a narrative history of the path followed by my career. I do not insist in presenting dates and employment details. They are already included in my CV. Instead, I prefer to explain how the projects in which I was involved contributed to my current research

<sup>2</sup> This approach is considered to be also fruitful when producing theory to be later tested (Arts, 2011). As I will argue in the following sections, it implies simultaneously considering the impact of macro-level and micro-level factors in value change.

interests, how they lead to previous publications, and how my future research agenda (to be presented in part II of this habilitation thesis) may benefit from this experience.

I begin the presentation of the main research direction in which I was active until now, with defining values and discussing value formation and change. Then I focus on the individual-level resources that concur to an emerging theory of capitals which may explain value formation and change. I refer, one at the time, human capital, material resources and representations of material resources, and social capital. In this part I do not refer to context-level factors, since they are the target of my future research agenda, described in the second part of this presentation.

The presentation of each research directions follows a similar logic: it starts by mentioning the paradigm that I opt for. In order to do this, I employ short descriptions and references to works that define the state of art in the respective field. Then, I sketch out what I consider to be my contribution to the knowledge in the respective area. I refer to implication in projects that analysed the respective topic. In the end, I briefly present the main results of the papers that I have published and are related to the respective topic.

Let also note that this long review of my work is not including all the products that I mention in the CV. some of them are left behind. Although they are interesting as well and include contributions to knowledge, I preferred to keep this part as short as the formal rules allowed, in order to facilitate the lecture. I also do not offer any detail on the impact of my papers, as reflected by the citations. Based on the yearly reporting that I had to do for the Research Institute for Quality of Life, I would say that there are between 150 and 200 citations to my works (excluding self-citations) that I have identified in the last few years.

## Employment track

I got employed by **the Research Institute for Quality of Life** 16 years ago, in 1996. The Institute, known by its Romanian acronym – ICCV, is part of the Romanian Academy of Science. Its main mission is to provide research outputs to Romanian society, supporting its development. Academic research is the main tool to fulfill this mission. Therefore, publishing in academic peer-reviewed journals, in peer-reviewed book are the main outcomes. Expert support for various legislative and executive bodies is also frequent. Quality of Life is broad concept. Considering its determinants, the scope of the research promoted by the Institute becomes very broad. At the core, there are analyses of subjective wellbeing, social policy, social development, and social values. Overtime, I was dealing with all this topics, accumulating at least basic knowledge in each of the four fields.

Postcommunist transition was a hot issue for the entire Romanian society. This was naturally reflected in the research activities of ICCV. Understanding transition means understanding social change (Sztompka,

1993). My PhD thesis states a similar position. Therefore, one of the recurring themes in any research activity within the Research Institute for Quality of Life is social change. For my activity, this is also highly relevant. For instance, considering the five research grants that I have been coordinating since 2005, all of them directly refer to social change.

Starting 1999 I am part of the (then emerging) Romanian Group for Studying Social Values (see <http://www.iccv.ro/valori/index.htm>). The Group focused initially on analyzing data collected through European Values Survey (EVS) and World Values Survey (WVS). Romania is part of the two researches, with ICCV being the local partner. Our team coordinated and carried out data collecting activities in 1999, 2005, 2008, and currently we do the same for the 2012 wave of WVS. In 2005 and 2012 I have assumed the role of principal investigator. ICCV also carried out data collection in 1993 (the 1990-1993 joint wave of WVS and EVS). In 1997, part of our group was involved in a similar project but outside WVS or EVS.

Data collecting is only the pretest for building a Group on Social Values. Our activities imply mainly comparative and longitudinal research in the field of values, using mostly the EVS and WVS data, but also other large-scale surveys such as the European Social Survey, the Eurobarometer, or the European Quality of Life Survey, as well as national surveys, such as the Public Opinion Barometer series run by the Soros Foundation between 1994 and 2007. The Group, though was never formalized through a legal status, extends beyond ICCV, including researchers from the universities of Sibiu, Cluj, and Köln.

Starting 1999, I have constantly **teaching** in various universities, including Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu (since 2001, Department of Sociology), National School for Political Science and Public Administration (2010 and 2011, Doctoral School), University of Bucharest (1998-2000, 2004 and 2005 – Department of Sociology, respectively 2001-2008 – Department of Education Science), Eastern University, Saint Davis, Pennsylvania (2003, „Pathways to leadership” MBA program). I was teaching mainly quantitative methods, at various levels, but also social policy, social development, community studies. Starting 2008 I was teaching only at graduate level (MA and PhD).

Apart from teaching in university, I have also provided **training sessions** in social statistics in various contexts, including employees of private organizations (GfK Romania, Vodafone Romania) and of research institutions (Research Institute for Education Science, Bucharest; CEPS/Instead, Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg). Some of these training sessions were 5-6 days long, others were organized as one-day events. My CV offers more details in this sense.

Both teaching and the training session helped me to better develop and better understand the topics that I was presenting, particularly increasing my communication skills and my ability to use quantitative techniques. The latter are reflected in my publications.

#### *International Higher Education*

- *EUA Trends 2010*, survey of the European higher education institutions for the European Universities Association (October 2008 – July 2009). Tasks: Coordinator, database design, data analysis, reporting.
- *EUA Trends V*, survey of the European higher education institutions for the European Universities Association (October 2005 – July 2006). Tasks: Coordinator, research design, database design, data analysis, reporting.
- Member (representing the European University Association) in the Bologna Follow Up Group workgroup on data collection for the social dimension of the Bologna process to create the European Higher Education Area (2006-2007)
- Expert for the project „Private Higher Education in Europe and Quality Assurance and Accreditation from the Perspective of the Bologna Process Objectives”, Designed and implemented by UNESCO-CEPES in collaboration with “Leon Koźmiński” Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management (LKAEM) and The World Bank. Tasks: coordination of data collection (survey of private universities in 12 European countries), analyzing the survey data, reporting. (July-November 2005)

#### *Romanian Higher Education*

- Expert in various projects of ARACIS and UEFISCDI supporting Romanian Ministry of Education in its attempt to propose an evidence-based ranking of Romanian university sector. (March-October 2011)
- Senior expert for the project „Quality assurance in Romanian higher-education in European context. Developing the quality assurance management at systemic and institutional level” implemented by ARACIS (Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education). Tasks: coordination and research design for the quantitative research (three national representative surveys targeting undergraduate university students, university teachers, and employers), sampling for the first two surveys, data analysis, reporting. (January – October 2011)
- Senior expert for the project „Sociologist on the Labor Market” (POSDRU/18/1.2/G/17293), University of Bucharest. Tasks: coordination and research design for the quantitative research (survey of the University of Bucharest graduates in Sociology between 1990 and 1998), coordination of data collecting, data analysis, reporting. (May 2010 – March 2011)
- Senior expert for the project *Sociological study on the relation between higher education qualifications and the demand of the labor market*, carried out by ACPART (National Agency for Higher Education Qualifications and Partnership with the Socio-Economic Environment) and financed by the EU and Romanian Government, through ESF-POSDRU. (October 2009-September 2010). Tasks: research design (three surveys: university graduates, employers, recruiting agencies), data analysis, reporting.
- Senior expert for the project *Active adaptation of university education to the labor market demands*, implemented by CEDU 2000+ at the ARACIS request. Tasks: coordination and research design for the quantitative research (surveys of the Romanian employers and recent university graduates from four fields – Law, Mechanical Engineering, IT, Communication Science), coordination of the data collecting, data analysis, reporting. (January – July 2009)
- Senior expert for the project *Doctoral Studies in Romania. Organizing the doctoral Schools* implemented by CNCSIS/UEFISCSU (National Commission for University Research). Tasks: coordination and research design for the quantitative research (surveys of the Romanian rectors, vice-rectors and deans), coordination of the data collecting, data analysis, reporting. (January – May 2009)
- Member of the project team „Educational policies in higher education”, Open Society Foundation, Bucharest. Tasks: research design, data analysis, reporting. Assessing the state of the Romanian higher education system by surveying the opinions of university staff and students. (January-June 2007)

In the 1990s, 2000s, and even today, there is a widespread representation that salaries in the academic field (no matter if university or research institute) are too low, at least as compared to aspirations and

needs, and relatively to other countries. Two typical routes in Romanian academic careers were the answer, constituting consistent coping strategies. People had the tendency to follow one of them, or even both. The first route implies extra-teaching: beside the regular teaching obligation, teaching staff used to assume more teaching hours, receiving extra-payment. Many times, the extra-teaching hours were equal to the normal teaching obligations, but they were quite often two or even three times more when considering time costs. In recent years, the law tried to limit such strategy. The second strategy was to undertake consultancy projects. This was my strategy as well.

I have provided consultancy to about twenty different organizations, including Ministries and other state agencies, international donors such as the World Bank, the United Nations organizations (UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO etc.), the European Commission, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, various NGO's and think tanks (Soros Foundation, WYG, LDK, Center Education 2000+, World Vision, Frederich Ebert Stiftung, European University Association, etc.), and private companies (Renault Technocentre, Versailles, France; Petrom, Ploiești-Bucharest, Romania). A full list of contracts is available from my CV, which also includes brief descriptions of the tasks that I have fulfilled. In the following I will briefly address the themes of these activities.

Despite the high number of consultancy contracts that I undertook, the topics were rather selective. Many of them were related to various aspects of the education systems, and helped me to better understand how human capital form, and to directly observe the practice in this field. Since education is one of the main engines of social change (see next sections), this was beneficial for my interest in mechanisms of change.

Box 2. Examples of consultancy projects in the field of pre-university education and lifelong learning (selection, starting 2005)

<i>Drop-out</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Senior expert for the project “Dropout and Continuation rates from lower to upper secondary, in small towns”, CEDU 2000+/UNICEF, August-November 2009. Tasks: coordination, research design, data analysis (20 case studies), reporting, policy recommendations.</li><li>- Expert in the project <i>The transition and the completion rates by education levels. School level’s Perspective</i>, implemented by CEDU 2000+ at the request of the Romanian Ministry of Education, within the framework of the Rural Education Project. Tasks: research design, data analysis, reporting. (June-December 2008.)</li></ul>
<i>Teacher training</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Expert for the project <i>Professionalizing the teaching career – new competencies for education stakeholders in Dâmbovița and Buzău counties</i> (POSDRU/87/1.3/S/62624), Dâmbovița School Inspectorate. Task: research design (impact study), data analysis, reporting. (December 2010-March 2013).</li><li>- August 2008 – June 2009. Expert in the project <i>Technical Assistance to Support The National Centre For Staff Training in Pre-University Education</i> (NCPTE), developed by WYG International on the behalf of NCPTE. Tasks: designing the impact studies for training courses, data analysis, reporting.</li><li>- Expert as quantitative data analysts for the project <i>Impact evaluation and dissemination of the results of PHARE programs – Access to education for disadvantaged groups</i>, implemented by LDK at Ministry of Education’s request. Task: research design (impact study of training programs), quantitative data analysis, reporting. (January-November 2009).</li></ul>
<i>Lifelong Learning</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Senior expert for the project <i>PREZENT! Stimulating participation to lifelong learning of the employees at risk: informing, awareness, and access to quality lifelong learning</i>, carried out by the Institute of Education Science, and financed by the EU and Romanian Government, through ESF-POSDRU, January-May 2010. Tasks: contribution to research design (surveys of employees at risk and of their employers), data analysis, reporting.</li></ul>

The consultancy projects listed in Box 1 and Box 2 have the common feature that they refer to education, in its various forms. More than this, almost all implied both theoretical approaches and empirical analysis, in most of the cases supposing as well data collecting activities. Their outcomes include extensive reports, also listed in my CV and sometimes published as peer-reviewed volumes. The quality of such gray literature is not as high as in the case of academic papers, but it still include interesting findings which I have often used to develop peer-reviewed publications. I think that mentioning the respective activities is worthy due to their potential for innovation and to the fact that they have allowed a closer contact with the world that I have also studied in academic research.

Many of the projects mentioned in Box 1 and in Box 2 involved coordinating teams, designing the research, deciding on data collecting from representative samples, and on how to use important financial resources. Some are also directly related to policy, and advising decision-makers on policy issues, particularly in the field of higher education.

The second topic frequent in my consultancy contracts is development, particularly community development. I focused mainly on how community change and how social capital might be a factor for positive evolutions. Box 3 mentions five such studies that I have been coordinated or co-coordinated. All of



them involve teams of minimum 10 researchers, supposed designing the entire research, including the data collecting instruments, and analyzing the data. Reporting was in some cases directly aimed to policy. Though in some of the mentioned projects social capital or civic participation were not necessary the core issue, they were always import part of the study.

### Box 3. Examples of consultancy projects: community studies, including assessing social capital and civic participation

- Coordinator of *Need Assessment in 14 Romanian Villages*, case studies in 14 rural localities, with recommendation for community development projects, at the request of OMV-Petrom (April-August 2008). Tasks: coordinator, project design, reporting, policy recommendations
- Coordinator (along with Mălina Voicu and Raluca Popescu) of *Need Assessment in Eight Romanian Villages*, case studies in eight rural localities, with recommendations for community development projects, at the request of OMV-Petrom (February-June 2007). Tasks: coordinator, project design, reporting, policy recommendations
- Co-coordinator (with Mălina Voicu) of the research team for the study *"The European Village"*, contracted by ICCV for DC Communication and EU Delegation in Bucharest. (March-October 2005) Tasks: coordinator, research design (6 community studies), data analysis, reporting.
- Senior expert for the project *"Dropout and Continuation rates from lower to upper secondary, in small towns"*, CEDU 2000+/UNICEF, August-November 2009. Tasks: coordination, research design, data analysis (20 case studies), reporting, policy recommendations.
- Expert in the project *The transition and the completion rates by education levels. School level's Perspective*, implemented by CEDU 2000+ at the request of the Romanian Ministry of Education, within the framework of the Rural Education Project. Tasks: research design, data analysis, reporting. (June-December 2008.)

## On value formation and change

### Defining social values

I do not intend to spend much time defining social values. However, the concept is used in a multiplicity of facets, both at individual and collectivity level, in normative or evaluative manners, as such or through their properties, having different meanings in economics and philosophy. Therefore, clearly stating from the beginning the approach would be beneficial.

There is not much consensus around values. In sociology, they were defined in many various ways, starting with the classic approaches of Rokeach (1968, 1973), Kluckhohn (1951), and Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) and up to date (Arts, 2011; Ester et al., 1994; Ester et al., 2006; Featherstone, 2011; Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004; Jagodzinski, 2004; van Deth & Scarbrough, 1994). In the following I use the term to designate individual orientations towards desirable, which are not directly observable, imply cognitive, affective and evaluative elements, and manifest through attitudes and behaviors. This is the option that I have made in my chapter on Sociology of Values, included in Lazăr Vlăsceanu's textbook on Sociology published by Polirom in 2010. I briefly present the respective book chapter in the final section of this chapter on value formation and change.



There are some features of values that deserve mentioning at this point, since they will be employed to describe my professional trajectory. The most salient is the fact that values are not directly observable. As latent traits, they provide consistent patterns of thinking and lenses to understand world. They link together in chains of interconnected values, usually consistent, and direct behaviors and attitudes. Observing behaviors and attitudes gives the researcher the opportunity to derive conclusions about the properties of the social values that underlie their manifestations. Second, values are conceptions upon desirable, involving ordering preferences in personal hierarchies. Third, they are stable traits, resistant to change. Their change is mostly adaptive and depends on changes in the social environment and in individual knowledge and experiences. Fourth, values are socially determined, being dependent to social transformations and interactions with other people and with collective norms and institutions.

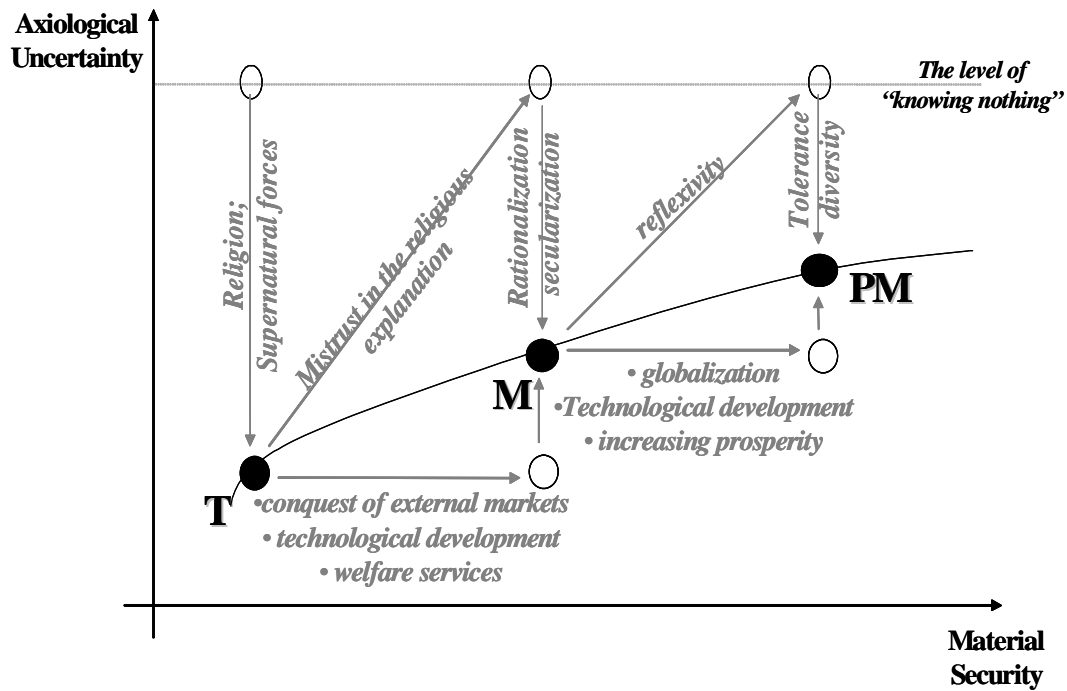
### Value formation and change

Classic modernization theories assume that people change values with advancements in science and technology (Kumar, 1999; Inkeles & Smith, 1974; Weber, 1978). Better understanding of the laws that govern society and nature increase the feelings of material security and allows more open orientation towards life. In Figure 1, the later is labeled as axiological uncertainty. In traditionalist societies it is reduced by explaining everything through supernatural intervention. Increasing material security leads to a higher ability to take risks. Secularization comes as an answer that allows rational planning. Questioning science's powerful effects leads to improving science itself, to better understand and control environment and to even more openness and focus on self-expressing and self-fulfillment (Beck & Beck-Gersheim, 2002; Giddens, 1990; Giddens, 1991; Kumar, 1995; Lash, 1990; Welzel, 2007).

At individual level education is key. It increases flexibility and capacity of rational approach, as well as diversification of life-goals. It happens not only during formative years, but also during adulthood. Inkeles (1969) noted that factory should be conceived as a school for modernity, since it represents an environment in which workers were both accumulating knowledge and learning the social norms of rational organization.

Material resources add, being extremely important during formative years (Inglehart, 1997), when contribute to feelings of security and make people focus on fulfilling superior needs. They are also important during adulthood, when periods of instability can lead to retreat to more traditional values (Inglehart and Baker, 2000).

Figure 1. Social change and risk change in the history of mankind



Reproduced from Bogdan Voicu. 2005. *Penuria Pseudo-Modernă a Postcomunistului Românesc. Volumul II. Resursele* [The Pseudo-Modern Penury of the Romanian Postcommunism. Volume II. The Resources], Iași: Expert Projects.

Values are social; they depend on socialization and, as I already argued, on constant interaction with others. Therefore social capital might be considered as a third individual-level resource which contributes to value formation and change. This may be supported by appealing to classic works, like the reference group theory (Merton, 1961) or Blau's (1994) more general discussion on groups and inter-group relations. Individuals belong to groups, and groups tend to be cohesive, including life style, behaviors, attitudes, and values. Conformity to group values increase the centrality of the member, while not conforming gradually leads to marginalization and even exclusion.

Rokeach (1968, 1973) observation that values are consistent in individuals leads to a fourth element that may contribute to value formation and change. Changing of social values in a specific field may determine changing in other fields as well.

Sandu (1996) suggested that social values might be conceived as manifestations of a symbolic capital, which roughly overlapping Bourdieu's definition of symbolic capital. Therefore, value formation may be seen as depending, at individual level, on four types of capitals. This is the red thread which links my journey to value change, seen as a particular case for social change. Until now I focused on these four individual-level factors, being interested in how they change, how they differ across societies, which impact they may have. Recently I have started to look at the contextual level determinants of values and behaviors. Discussing the contextual determinants is the part of the journey that I plan to do in the future years. I address the topic in the second part of this text, as formally required in the Indicative Guide for Writing the Habilitation Thesis published by CNATCDU on its internet website (<http://www.cnatcdu.ro/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Ghid-de-abilitare-2012.pdf>).

I stop here with this summary presentation of the background in social values. A more detailed text is valid in the second part of this habilitation thesis, when I discuss my current and future research agenda.

### Presenting some of my publications

My endeavor in the field of social values started long ago, in 1997, and uninterruptedly continued since. I have initially looked at theoretical developments in the modernization theory, postmodernization and reflexive society, as well as neomodernization. After 2004, I focused on the case of Romania, seen in a comparative perspective. I was probably the first to discuss Romanian changes to cultural modernity since the few attempts that preceded my work remained mainly at theoretical level (Chiribucă, 2004; Roth, 2002; Vlăsceanu, 2001) or discussed only very particular values, such as orientation towards democracy (Sandu, 1996) or tolerance (Sandu, 1999). Also, I have opted to analyze Romania in comparative perspective, always looking at the patterns and paths followed by other European countries.

Nowadays, I consider these attempts as first steps to better understand social change. They were latterly completed by analyzing particular values, the impact of values in various fields, and, more recently, by the interest towards contextual determinants of change, that I will introduce in the second part of this habilitation Thesis.

### Defining values

Bogdan Voicu. (2010). Values and the sociology of values, pp. 249-294 in Lazăr Vlăsceanu, coordinator, *Sociology*, Iași: Polirom. (in Romanian language)

This 2010 book chapter in Romanian language summarizes my view on social values. The book has as main audience (Romanian) students in social science, and the chapter was designed accordingly. It focuses mostly on defining values and their properties, as well as presenting the main empirical contemporary works in the area, including Ronald Inglehart's concept of postmodernization and postmaterial values (Inglehart, 1990; Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005), Schalom Schwartz's human values inventory (Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz, 1994a; Schwartz, 1994b; Schwartz, 2004) and Geert Hofstede's five dimensions of culture (Hostede, 1980; Hostede, 2000; Hostede, 2001). The chapter briefly describes how value change occurs, and which are the consequences of social values, but does not enter much in such details.

The text does not bring much to existing knowledge, but, in my opinion, it has the merit to propose a structured view on social values, ad to link past research to contemporary one, also referring empirical

works based on the two important value surveys (World Values Survey – WVS, respectively European Values Survey – EVS)

### Changing values in Romania: a comparative perspective

Bogdan Voicu, Mălina Voicu, eds., 2007. *Valori ale românilor: 1993-2006. O perspectivă sociologică* [The Values of the Romanians: 1993-2006. A Sociological Perspective], Iași: Institutul European. English edition: 2008.

Bogdan Voicu, Mălina Voicu. 2007. Introducere. Despre studiul valorilor [Introduction. On the study of values], in B.Voicu, M.Voicu, eds., 2007: 9-28.

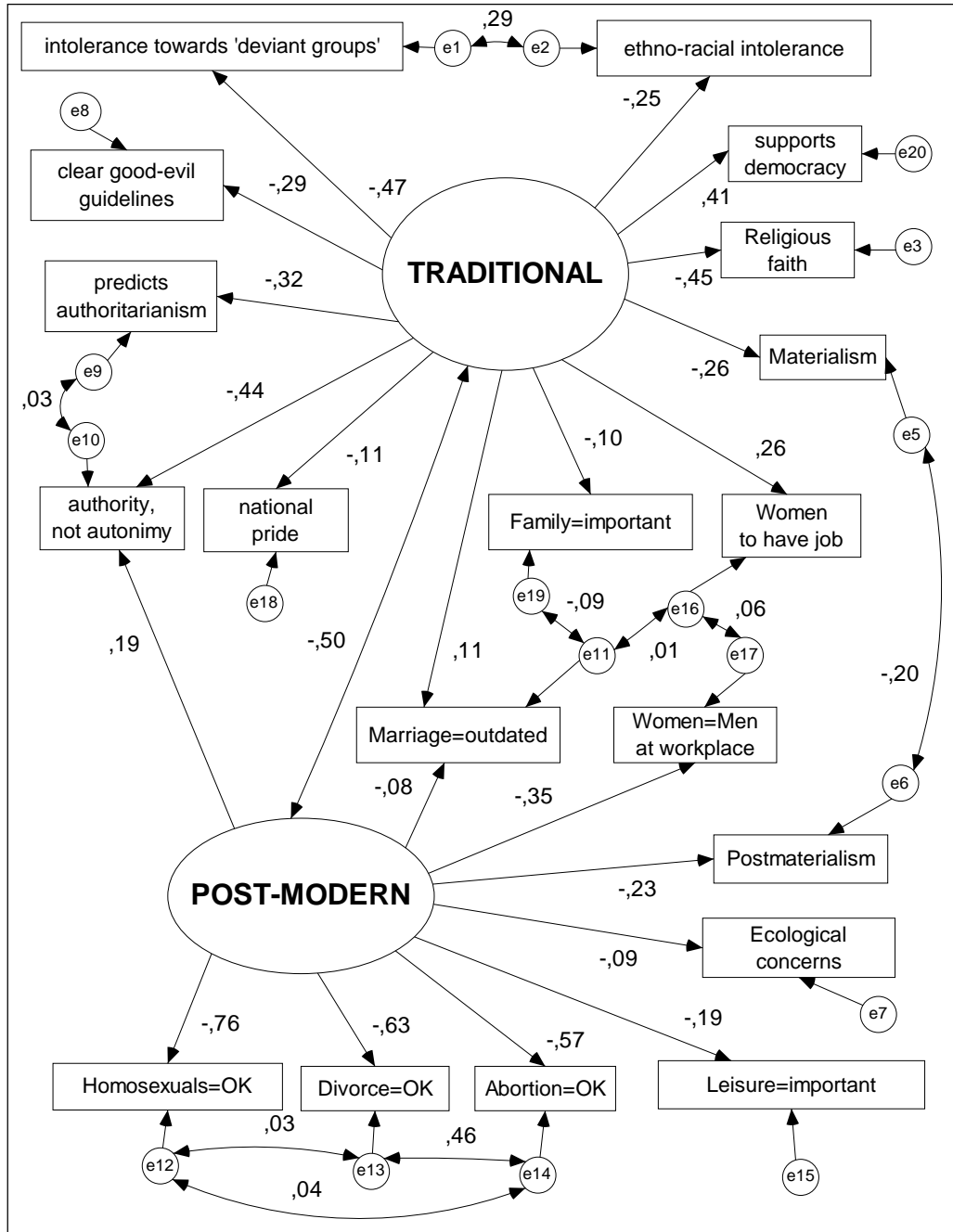
Bogdan Voicu. 2007. Între tradiție și postmodernitate? O dinamică a orientărilor de valoare în România: 1993-2005 [Between tradition and postmodernity? A dynamic of the value orientations in Romanian: 1993-2005], in B.Voicu, M.Voicu, eds., 2007: 271-318.

Mălina Voicu, Bogdan Voicu. 2009. Continuities and discontinuities in social values in postcommunist Romania, *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai - Sociologia*, vol 1: 161-178. (indexed in Academic Search Premier / EBSCO database)

To focus on changes from traditionalism to modernity in Romanian values is not a new theme in my work, but continues on the direction developed during my PhD thesis. The above **collective book** addresses various value change in postcommunist Romania, using the 1990-1993, 1999-2001 and 2005-2006 waves of values surveys. In the introduction we review several theories of values, present European Values Survey and World Values Survey as research programs, and sketch the main tendencies to be noticed in postcommunist Romania.

In **my chapter**, I argue that modernization and postmodernization are not necessary orthogonal, but interdependent processes, which, in double-risk (Rinkevicius, 2000) pseudomodern (Sztompka, 1993) societies simultaneously happen. SEM models are used to prove the respective relation, using EVS and WVS databases from 1993, 1999, and 2005 (see Figure 2). I also discuss some particular values, and their change in Romania, at aggregate level, from 1993 to 2005. I present trends in tolerance, work values, religious values, environmental attitudes, orientations towards democracy, gender values, etc., permanently comparing Romania to other European societies. Then I discuss differences between various status groups within Romanian society and across Romanian regions.

Figure 2. A two-factor model of analysis for the social value spheres (1999)



**Data source:** EVS/WVS 1999-2001. N=52258. All the coefficients have been allowed to vary freely, with the exception of the covariance between the two factors (traditionalism and post-modernity) which was fixed at 0.5. Goodness of fit indexes: IFI=0,988; CFI=0,988; RMSEA=0,048. The coefficients on the arrows are standardized estimates, and are significant at  $p=0,05$ .

**Figure source:** Bogdan Voicu. 2007. *Între tradiție și postmodernitate? O dinamică a orientărilor de valoare în România: 1993-2005* [Between tradition and postmodernity? A dynamic of the value orientations in Romanian: 1993-2005], pp. 271-318 in B.Voicu, M.Voicu, eds. *Valori ale românilor: 1993-2006. O perspectivă sociologică* [The Values of the Romanians: 1993-2006. A Sociological Perspective], Iași: Institutul European. English edition: 2008.

Within the literature on transition, there are four transformations of postcommunist societies which are often studied: marketization, democratic institutions, changes in the orientation of external affairs and international relations, transformations of social structure (Chiribucă, 2004; Kuzio, 2001; Lavigne, 2000;

Nodia, 1996; Ray, 1997; Sandu, 1996, 1999; Sawka, 1999; Szelenyi and Kostelo, 1996; Vlăsceanu, 2007). Observing the trends in values, my paper claims that they should be considered together with the process of modernization and postmodernization, which provides a fifth transition.

**The 2009 paper** written with Mălina Voicu compares value patterns in Romania and in the Mediterranean countries. We use WVS and EVS data, and we look to changes in values related to family formation, gender equality, tolerance, religious beliefs, work, preference for autonomy as opposed to authority, comparing changes from 1990 to 2005 in various European countries as well as in the Mediterranean (North African) ones. At the time we have argued that “Romania knew a slight increase in orientations towards modern values [...]. Mediterranean countries may experience similar processes in the future.” Although we have not referred the Arab revolution, but changes in values, the two are likely to be related.

#### Impact of religious values on gendered behaviors in the case of housework sharing

- Mălina Voicu, Bogdan Voicu, Katarina Strapcova. 2009. Housework and gender inequality in European countries, *European Sociological Review* 25(3): 365-377. [JCR Impact factor (2009): 0.816]
- Bogdan Voicu, Mălina Voicu, Katarina Strapcova. 2007. Gendered Housework. A Cross-European Analysis, *Sociologia - Slovak Sociological Review*. Vol. 39, no. 6 (2007), p. 502-521. [JCR Impact factor (2007): 0.116]
- Mălina Voicu, Bogdan Voicu, Katarina Strapcova. 2008. Housework's division in 24 European societies: a cross-national comparison. *Calitatea Vieții*, Nr 3-4/2008, 268–283. (indexed in Index Copernicus Database, Sociological Abstracts / ProQuest database)
- Mălina Voicu, Bogdan Voicu, Katarina Strapcova. 2006. Housework and gender inequality across Europe, *IRISS working papers*, 2006-11, <http://ideas.repec.org/p/irs/iriswp/2006-11.html>

The above three papers published in peer-reviewed journals include an implicit conception of consistency of social values in their impact on behaviors. The main argument (included in the European Sociological Review paper) is that religious beliefs lead to gender imbalanced sharing of chores in heterosexual couples across Europe. Also, country-level technological development reduces gender imbalance in couples. We use multilevel models (hierarchical linear models) on ESS 2001 data set, also controlling for predictors described in the three types of theories important in the field: relative resources theory, gender ideology, ecological theories (the later ones focus on influences of country level variables). We show that religious values are important for gendered-behaviors, and that their effect is opposed to the one of equalitarian gender values. The results are summarized in Table 3.

The other two papers replicate the analysis using different methodologies (the paper in *Calitatea Vieții*), or different data sets (the paper from *Sociologia – Slovak Sociological Review*). The working paper includes a discussion upon measurement issues, trying to compare different ways to capture time spent for housework and gender imbalanced within couple, as employed by European Social Survey (ESS) and by European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS). We conclude that the two measures can be used complementarily and, at aggregate level do lead to similar hierarchies across Europe. We also show that at individual level, no matter the measure employed, the effects of individual and contextual predictors remain unchanged, at least as sign and level of signification, if not as intensity.

**Table 3. Multi-level regression models for housework sharing: dependent variable difference between women and men in the weekly time dedicated to housework (unstandardized regression coefficients)**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	14,05***	10,04***	12,04***
<b>Country level indicators</b>			
Pay gap (hourly, country level)		-0,09	-0,07
Family/children benefits		-0,09	-0,08
Technological innovation index		9,7**	3,22
% catholic		0,04*	0,04*
% orthodox		0,09**	0,09**
<b>Individual level indicators</b>			
Total time dedicated to housework	0,46***	0,46***	0,28***
Education	-0,38***	-0,38***	-0,39***
Income	-0,08	-0,07	-0,06
Age	-0,02	-0,02	-0,02
Not officially married	-1,07*	-1,07***	-0,86**
Number of children less than 13 years old	0,08	0,07	0,06
Woman better educated	0,07	0,02	0,05
Man better educated	0,94***	0,89***	0,83***
Man - no job, woman - has job	-13,26***	-13,24***	-13,25***
Man - no job, woman - no job	-1,49	-1,44	-1,30
Man - has job, woman - no job	8,65***	8,65***	8,65***
Woman's working hours	-0,11***	-0,11***	-0,03
Man's working hours	0,11***	0,11***	0,11***
How religious you are	0,10	0,09**	0,08*
Church attendance	0,18	0,17	0,22
Household - equal duties (value orientation)	-1,34***	-1,34***	-1,30***
Labor - equality (value orientation)	-1,17***	-1,18***	-1,15***
<b>Interactions</b>			
Innovation × total housework			0,42***
Innovation × women working hours			-0,17***
<b>Explained variance</b>			
$R_1^2$	0,577	0,580	0,584
$R_2^2$	0,739	0,811	0,833

\* $p \leq 0,10$ ; \*\* $p \leq 0,05$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq 0,01$ .  $R_1^2$  is the proportional reduction of error for predicting an individual outcome;  $R_2^2$  is the proportional reduction of error for predicting a group mean (see Snijders & Bosker, 2002 [1999]).

Source: Mălina Voicu, Bogdan Voicu, Katarina Strapcova. 2009. Housework and gender inequality in European countries, *European Sociological Review* 25(3): 365-377. [JCR Impact factor (2009): 0.816]

## The impact of values: school achievements and working time

Bogdan Voicu. Cross-country comparisons of student achievement: the role of social values, manuscript.

Bogdan Voicu. 2010. The Impact of social values on education achievements. Implications for education policy, pp. 386-406 in Emilian M. Dobrescu and Nicolai Iancu, editors, *Education policy. Relevance and efficiency*, București: Eurolobby. (in Romanian language)

The two papers address the same idea of average student achievement embeddedness in cultural norms existing within each country. The argument is loosely defined and tested (through logistic regression on specific sets of countries) in the first research note. The second paper (still a manuscript) further develops the idea. I claim that parental values (child-rearing values) widespread in a society form a cultural norm that is manifest in schools as hidden curricula. Teachers, parents and students are part of society; therefore their values and behaviors depend on society's values. A country rich in authoritarian values is likely to promote such values and corresponding teaching practices in school, and the student achievements will be lower than in a society rich in values promoting autonomy. Particularly the belief that pupils should learn religious faith has negative impact on country-level student achievements in surveys like PISA, PIRLS, or TIMSS. At the opposite, societies where many people think that pupil should learn responsibility tend to better perform in large-scale surveys of student achievements. Cross-classified models show that the relation is stronger when considering achievements in mathematics. I will present more details on these two papers in the section on student achievement in the sub-chapter on human capital formation.

## The impact of values: working time

Bogdan Voicu. 2008. Social values, working time and the future of society, pp. 141-158 în Otto Neumaier, Gottfried Schweiger, Clemens Sedmak, editors, *Perspectives on Work: Problems, Insights, Challenges*, Munster, Hamburg, London: LIT Publisher Group.

Bogdan Voicu. 2006. Work and life balance, in Ioan Mărginean, ed., *Quality of Life in Bulgaria and Romania*, European Foundation for Improving Living and Working Conditions, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 43-48.

The first paper in the list includes another macro-level analysis. I claim that changes in work values come together with a transformation regarding the preferences for long working time. In past century, people stressed less and less work and emphasized self-expressing and self-fulfillment. Consequently, the number of working hours decreased, leaving more room for lifelong learning, for spending more time in initial education (also supported by increasing wealth and life expectancy). The process is likely to continue, producing consequences for labor market, pension systems, family arrangements, and education systems.

The paper uses insights from sociology of values (Zanden, 1994; Schwartz, 1999; Inglehart, 1997; Haagenars et al., 2003; Elizur & Sagre, 1999; Ros et al., 1999), economics (Becker, 1965; MacInnes, 2006; Reynolds and Aletraris, 2006; Stier and Lewin-Epstein, 2003), the work-life balance debate (Thompson & Bunderson, 2001; Leitner and Wroblewski; 2006; MacInnes, 2005; MacInnes, 2006; Roe and Ester, 1999; Hildebrandt and Littig, 2006). These three perspectives provide the background to observe two important transformations in European societies: the shrinking number of working hours, respectively the work ethos, which comprises a declining importance given by individuals to work, both in absolute terms, as well as



compared to other life domains. I use Eurostat data to document the first and the value surveys for the second. The analysis refers the period starting with 1981, due to data availability, but it also address longer trends.

Then I assume that the change in behaviors (shrinking working hours) is due to value change. The mechanism lies in the values manifestation through behaviors. The trends for the two data series, computed at country level, are similar. Since I lack series of data on other important controls (economic output, unemployment growth, women employment, part time share in total employment, and diffusion of technological innovation in the respective society), I opted for cross-sectional analysis. I built up OLS and SEM models, using data for European societies around 2002. It showed up that, even when controlling for various objective factors, the effect of work values on working hours is salient.

Considering the trends in working values and technological innovation, I conclude that the process of shrinking working hours will continue and that this will lead to important changes in everyday life, in time to access education, for the social security systems, for designing the working place itself etc.

The second paper, part of a report, does not directly address the topic, but provide similar comparative data, and contribute to the idea that less modern societies spend more time working.

#### Publications before 2004

- Bogdan Voicu. 2005. *Penuria Pseudo-Modernă a Postcomunismului Românesc. Volumul I. Schimbarea socială și acțiunile indivizilor* [The Pseudo-Modern Penury of the Romanian Postcommunism. Volume I. Social change and individual actions], Iași: Expert Projects.
- Bogdan Voicu. 2005. *Penuria Pseudo-Modernă a Postcomunismului Românesc. Volumul II. Resursele* [The Pseudo-Modern Penury of the Romanian Postcommunism. Volume II. The Resources], Iași: Expert Projects.
- Mălina Voicu, with Bogdan Voicu. 2002. Gender values dynamics. Towards a common European pattern?, *Romanian Journal of Sociology*, XIII (1-2): 42-63.
- Mălina Voicu, Bogdan Voicu. 2002. Studiul valorilor europene [European Values Study], *Calitatea Vieții*, 2002, 1-2.
- Bogdan Voicu. 2001. România pseudo-modernă [Pseudo-modern Romania], *Sociologie Românească*, 2001, 1-4, pp. 36-59.
- Bogdan Voicu. 1999. Modernitatea între tradiție și postmodernism [Modernity between Tradition and Postmodernism], *Revista de Cercetări Sociale*, 3-4/1999: 179-204.

This text should refer to my work which is done after receiving the PhD title. However, since many of the results that I have published after 2005 are partially based on previous work, I think that listing the pre-doctoral degree publications may help to better understand my professional evolution. This is the aim of this very short sub-section.

## Main contributions to knowledge

Let summarize the above sections, presenting very brief what I consider to be my main contribution to knowledge in the field of social values. The bellow ideas were already discussed in the previous sections, but listing them may make easier assessing my achievements. I would say that three contributions are important:

- The idea that modernization and postmodernization are not orthogonal is not new, but I think that I am among the very few to test it empirically.
- The relationship between religious values and gendered housework sharing is the second important contribution. It was developed with two other colleagues (Mălina Voicu and Katarina Strapkova). The idea was new to the literature when publishing our papers, and confirms consistency of social values.
- The impact of societal-widespread child-rearing values on student achievements at aggregate level is also a field which was completely unaddressed in the past. More, except for a few papers (Fensham, 2007; Minkov, 2007), cultural determinants were rarely considered in the case of students achievements.
- Presenting data on value trends in Romanian society is rare in local literature. Though it did not bring much to knowledge, I think that it was important to increase awareness on the topic in the local social scientists' communities.

## Human capital formation

### Background: a few notes about existing literature and my interests in the field

My interest in human capital, a well-established concept (Becker, 1964; Kiker, 1971; Mincer, 1993; Schultz, 1993, Hackman, 1999, Davenport, 1999) refers to its capacity to change, eventually rapidly. I refer mainly the educational side of human capital, being interesting both in aggregate stocks of education (for instance percentages of higher-education graduates at country level), and in individual level outcomes. The aggregate level is the main point of interest, since it creates cultures of educational capital, in which people evolve and build their own educational strategies, which finally lead to changes in social values.

In this field, there are three types of issues which raised my attention and directed my research in the past ten years. The first is inequality of access to higher education. The second is drop-out. The third is school-achievements, both in pre-university and in university education. The fourth is setting up the university system, such as to promote quality outputs which, in turn, may affect social change.

**Inequality of access to higher education** is an important issue in educational research, no matter if it comes from sociology, educational science, economics, or political science. In the past decades, expansion

of university education raised a lot of concerns and hopes (Clancy and Goastellec, 2007; Brennan, 2008; Shavit, 2007; Buchmann and Hannum, 2001; Blossfeld and Shavit, 1993; Hatos, 2006; Trow, 1972; Trow, 1999; Kivinen et al., 2007; Teichler, 2008; Koucký et al., 2007). On one hand, a better educated population is more likely to increase productivity. On the other hand, the old question if everybody should go to college, and of the mismatch between education and labor market was constantly addressed. Addressing the topic of inequality of access added on public and academic agenda, being triggered and triggering the discussing on university rankings and high differences in quality between and within educational systems.

Two explanations are important in the field. The maximal maintained inequality (MMI) theory (Raftery and Hout, 1993) claims that inequality of access is manifest until a certain point than it starts decreasing. MMI finds its roots in the classic discussion on reproducing social structure (Coleman et al., 1966; Blau and Duncan, 1967; Boudon, 1973, 1974; Mare, 1981). Children of better off families have higher chances to better perform in school, due to more resources in the family, which may pay for the studies, provide a friendlier climate for education, and offer access to a social network of friends in which the norm is to spend more time in education. This happened even in the apparently meritocratic and equalitarian communist societies (Blossfeld and Shavit, 1993; Hanley and McKeever, 1997; Ganzeboom and Nieuwbeerta, 1999; Hanley, 2001; Kessler, 2003).

MMI advanced the hypothesis that this also happens in higher education. The dominant strata within society tend to be the first to profit from university expansion. Its offspring are the first to fill in the supplementary places that are created in universities. Their better school achievements help, giving a supplementary advantage as compared to lower social strata. However, when expansion goes beyond a critical point, lower strata also increase their access to higher education. Therefore, in the first phase of expansion, inequality continues to grow (Paterson and Iannelli, 2007; Arum et al., 2007).

A second theory, efficiently maintained inequality (EMI) says that inequality continues to increase even after the critical point of expansion was reached (Lucas, 2001). In fact, inequality does not disappear, but transform itself, from vertical inequality in horizontal inequality. Expansion of higher education brings more differentiation between and within universities (Ayalon et al., 2008). Some faculties are more precious than other, and within faculties some departments offer better off competences. For instance Law leads to higher social status than Social Science, while among social sciences, Social Work is less valued. Children from better off families will mostly opt for better universities, and, within those universities, for more prestigious faculties, where they will choose the more attractive disciplines. Their chances to be accepted in such positions are higher, and inequality of access continues to manifest.

These mechanisms may lead to a more unequal society, with impact on developing different social values in its strata. From here my interest to the topic, expressed for the moment in a paper that I will present in the next section.

Opposed to graduating university, at the other end of the educational system, lies the failure to graduate any type of education. **Drop-out** and **early drop-out** constitute the second topic for my interest in the formation of human capital. There is well-established literature to address the process, focusing mainly on its causes and on the preventing policies (Beatty et al, 2001; Christle et al, 2007; Dunn et al., 2004; CMHS, 2007; Entwistle, 2005; Goldsmith & Wang, 1999; Lee & Burkam, 2003; Lehr et al, 2004; Jigău, coord., 2000; Hatos & Săveanu, coord. 2009; Hatos, 2009; Montecel et al., 2004; Martin e al. 2002; Schargel, 2003).

My interest was mainly related to the factors which make early school leavers to renounce attending school systems. They group in three large categories: pupil and family related, community related, and school related. As in the case of achievements or higher education attending, pupil and family are the most important. Resources to keep children in education, precedent in the family, psychological safety provided at home, disrupted families, early entrance on the labor market are just few of the mechanisms which underline the pervasive influence of the family. Community provides social norms, patterns to be followed in education career. In some communities, schooling has less importance, and pupil are less likely to attend and graduate more than compulsory levels, and even compulsory levels might be unlikely to be considered in certain communities. Then it is the school and its preparedness to deal with children at risk, the quality of the human resources, and even the attractiveness of the facilities and the type of activities it proposes.

In a paper from 2000, co-authored with Lucian Pop<sup>3</sup>, we have shown that family-related factors are salient in Romanian education as well. In the more recent studies, that I have described in the next section, I have also shown that family is important, followed by community, but also school may change the picture through various non-monetary incentives to prevent drop-out. Particularly an appropriate school culture is important and may help not only in ensuring school attending, but also shaping values.

The same types of factors are to be found when considering **school achievements**. Family, communities and schools are the main actors in the process (Adolfsson & Henriksson, 1999; Barber, 2006; Birenbaum et al., 2005; Creemers and Kyriakides, 2008; Givvin et al., 2005; Lavonen & Laaksonen, 2009; Rutkowski & Rutkowski, 2009). At country level there are regulations, but also a culture which may boost or not school efficiency (Leung, 2002; Kjærnsli & Lie, 2004: 284; Birenbaum et al, 2005; Givvin et al., 2005; Fensham, 2007; Minkov, 2008). One of my recent arguments (see the section on own contributions) is that culture is pervasive and influence school achievements using the same mechanisms invoked in the social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) and used by the scholars of hidden curriculum (Apple, 2004; Cornbleth, 2002; Snyder, 1971).

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<sup>3</sup> Lucian Pop, Bogdan Voicu. 2000. Grupuri de risc și cauze ale neparticipării școlare [Risk groups and causes of scholar non-participation]; in Mihaela Jigău, coordinator, *Învățământul rural din România: condiții, probleme și strategii de dezvoltare* [Romanian Rural Education: Conditions, Problems and Development Strategies], Education Sciences Institute, Ministry of Education, and Open Society Foundation, București, October 2000 (second edition: UNICEF, 2002). The English edition of the report: Mihaela Jigău, editor – *Rural Education in Romania. Conditions, Challenges and Strategies of Development*, Bucharest, MarLink, 2002. The Romanian version of the paper was also published in the collection „*Romanian Sociology: 1990-2000*”, edited by Romanian Association of Sociology, at the 1st Congress of Sociology and Social Work, Bucharest, December 2000

I firstly studied variations of student achievements in the end of the 1990s, when I co-authored a paper with Lucian Pop on school performance of rural schools in Romania<sup>4</sup>. At the time we have used school-level data and locality characteristics to predict average scores in national standardized tests. We have proved that all theories in the field apply, and that community characteristics, including parents' education, are more important as compared to school characteristics. We have also shown that, despite popular belief in Romanian education system, when controlling for various factors, remote localities better perform as the one closer to big cities. In the latter, better off parents send their children to schools in the nearby towns, deterring the quality of the familial background among those who remain to study in the home village.

Later on, in my PHD thesis I addressed the topic from the point of view of country averages, noting that economic and technologic development strongly correlate with country-averages as reported by large scale surveys of student achievements such as PISA, PIRLS, or TIMSS.

In the past few years I have authored new papers in the field (see the next section). I started by focusing on Romanian results, this time in school Olympiads. There is a widespread opinion manifest in the education system as well as in the population that Romanian pupils are one of the best performers in such contests. Romanian education system and population highly prize such performers. Before 1989, they were used to show supremacy of the communist organization of society upon the capitalist one. Nowadays, discussions about the necessity to have schools for geniuses are recurrent in Romanian media. In a report from 2007<sup>5</sup> I have shown that the stereotype is at least partially based on unverified data. Considering school Olympiads, and comparing to other countries, Romania is a good performer in mathematics and information technology, an average one in physics and among the last countries participating in the contests devoted to Biology and Chemistry. The high number of hours devoted to mathematics in the pre-university curricula may be enough to explain the respective achievements, which are rather the exception, not the rule considering the overall performance of the Romanian education system.

In another analysis I study cross-country variation of student achievements in the well-known PISA, PIRLS, and TIMSS. I conclude that, along with other factors, differences are determined by the widespread social values common in the respective country.

Since achievements are the most accessible comparative indicator of school outcomes, and education is a determinant of social change, their study helps me to better understand the mechanisms which underline societal change.

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<sup>4</sup> Bogdan Voicu, Lucian Pop. 2000. Rezultatele școlare [Pupils' performances], published in Mihaela Jigău, coordinator, *Învățământul rural din România: condiții, probleme și strategii de dezvoltare [Romanian Rural Education: Conditions, Problems and Development Strategies]*, Education Sciences Institute, Ministry of Education, and Open Society Foundation, București, October 2000 (second edition: UNICEF, 2002). The English translation of the report was published as: Mihaela Jigău, editor – *Rural Education in Romania. Conditions, Challenges and Strategies of Development*, Bucharest, MarLink, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Mircea Comșa, Claudiu D. Tufiș, Bogdan Voicu. 2007. *Romanian University system. Opinions of the teaching staff and of the students* [in Romanian language], București: Fundația Soros România & Editura Afin. ISBN: 978-973-7714-35-0 (126 pages) [[http://www.osf.ro/ro/documente.php?id\\_document=455](http://www.osf.ro/ro/documente.php?id_document=455)]

**Institutional arrangements in university education** are another key to human capital formation in the era of expanding access to BA degrees. In the past years I was often involved in two types of projects. The first relates to comparative assessment of progress towards Bologna goals in building the European Higher Education Area. The second is related to reforming Romanian Higher Education System. I will start with the later.

Expansion of university education implies a strong pressure towards diversification (Codling and Meek, 2006; Geiger, 1996; Huisman, 1995; Huisman, 2000; Jones, 1996; Meek, 2000; Miroiu and Andreescu, 2010; Neave, 2000) accountability, and careful and control for efficiency. The later raise the issue of mismatch between qualifications and labor market and stresses the importance of tracing graduates (Pearson et al, 1993; Battu et al, 1999; Sloane et al, 1999; Allen et Velden, 2001; García-Espejo and Ibáñez, 2006; di Pietro & Unwin, 2006; Allen and de Weert, 2007; Green, 2007; Karakaya et al, 2007; Teichler, ed., 2007; Barros et al, 2011).

In the past two decades, many *tracer studies*, including comparative ones were undertake. Their aim was to show if graduates find niches on the labor market accordingly to their qualifications, aiming to support universities to better adjust their offer to students and employers. Germany and England, for instance, promote year studies of graduates, while, in the 2000s, several comparative tracing studies become well-known to the scholars in the respective area: CHEERS (11 European countries and Japan), REFLEX (12 Western Europe countries, Japan, Estonia and Czech Republic; the project was later replicated in Russia, Mexico and Colombia), HEGESCO (five Eastern Europe countries - Poland, Slovenia, Turkey, Hungary, Lithuania) (Schomburg and Teichler, 2006; Teichler, ed., 2007; Allen and van der Velden, eds., 2007; Allen and van der Velden, eds., 2009; Samo, ed., 2009). Until recently, Romanian universities were not carrying out extensive tracer studies. As I argue in the following sections, I am part of those who promoted the method effectively producing tracer data and reports.

Following the same increasing societal interest towards higher education, I was also involved in several projects which aimed to analyze the *Romanian higher education system*. They are part of a grey literature that describes, for the first time in Romania, how students, teaching staff, employers and general population think about the state of university education. Such literature is informative and, though not particularly innovative, it provides background information on the state of the system. This was later exploited in assessment of specific areas of higher education (for instance the above-mentioned tracer studies), as well as in documents of education policy, as I will exemplify later in this sub-chapter. It also provides useful insights when considering potential social changes affecting the society as a whole.

Box 4 list my contributions to reports describing the situation of Romanian higher education. All listed products derive from projects in which I was in charge with coordinating or co-coordinating the quantitative research design. Sometime quantitative methodologies completed the picture. In several cases I also acted as coordinator or co-coordinator for the entire project.

EXTENDED REPORTS (PUBLISHED IN BOOK FORMAT)

Several chapters in Mihai Păunescu, Lazăr Vlăsceanu, Adrian Miroiu, eds. (2011). *The Quality of Romanian Higher Education*, Iași: Polirom (ISBN: 978-973-46-2308-2) [in Romanian language]

pp. 71-75 : Bogdan Voicu, Methodology

pp. 91-115. Bogdan Voicu, Claudiu Tufiș, The Education Process

pp. 116-141. Bogdan Voicu, Claudiu Tufiș, From studentship to labor market

pp. 142-151. Bogdan Voicu, Raluca Rusu, Human resources in universities

Lazăr Vlăsceanu, Gabriel Hâncean, Bogdan Voicu, Claudiu Tufiș. 2010. *The Barometer of Higher Education Quality 2009: Statistics, analyses and opinions about the State of Quality in Romanian Higher Education* [in Romanian language], București: ARACIS & QualMedia, ISSN 2066-9119

Mircea Comșa, Claudiu D. Tufiș, Bogdan Voicu. 2007. *Romanian University system. Opinions of the teaching staff and of the students* [in Romanian language], București: Fundația Soros România & Editura Afin. ISBN: 978-973-7714-35-0 (126 pages) [[http://www.osf.ro/ro/documente.php?id\\_document=455](http://www.osf.ro/ro/documente.php?id_document=455)]

OTHER REPORTS / WORKING PAPERS

Claudiu Tufiș, Bogdan Voicu. 2010. *Opiniile studenților (nivel licență), cadrelor didactice și angajatorilor privind starea învățământului superior* [Opinions of BA students, teaching staff and employers on the state of higher education] pp. 121-306 în Lazăr Vlăsceanu, Adrian Miroiu, Mihai Păunescu, Gabriel Hâncean, coord., *Barometrul calității 2010. Starea calității în învățământul românesc*, ARACIS, București.

Bogdan Voicu, Vlad Achimescu. 2009. *Opiniile rectorilor și decanilor privind starea învățământului superior* [Deans and Rectors: opinions about the state of the higher education], București: ARACIS.

Claudiu Tufiș, Bogdan Voicu. 2009. *Opiniile studenților (nivel licență), cadrelor didactice și angajatorilor privind starea învățământului superior* [Undergraduate students, university teachers, and employers: opinions about the state of the higher education], Bucharest: ARACIS.

Bogdan Voicu, Claudiu Tufiș, Paula Tufiș. 2009. *Adaptarea activă a educației universitare la cerințele pieței muncii Raport de analiză a datelor cantitative culese de la angajatori, recrutatori și absolvenți* [Active adaptation of university education to the labour market: an analysis of quantitative opinion data collected from employers, graduates, and recruiting agencies], București: CEDU 2000+ & ARACIS.

Bogdan Voicu, Claudiu Tufiș, Mălina Voicu, Marian Vasile. 2009. *Studii Doctorale în România – Organizarea Școlilor Doctorale. Studiul cantitativ. Raport asupra opiniilor conducătorilor de doctorat și doctoranzilor din România* [Doctoral studies in Romania: opinions of the Ph.D. students and of the Ph.D. tutors. A quantitative analysis], UEFISCSU, București.

The main findings are easy to be listed. Romanian universities are not among the performers in university rankings, and in scientific peer-reviewed publications. No matter the domain, Romanian economy is not among the most innovative or productive, but rather lags behind most European countries. There are not very many university graduates in the active population, and the university sector is continuously on the top of the public agenda by accuses of nepotism, plagiarism, fake diplomas, corruption. Despite all these, the attitude of population, students, employers, and teaching staff is rather positive. All these categories are confident that the university sector is quite efficient and at least comparable as performance with its Western counterpart. However, a slight decrease in these optimistic opinions started to be noticeable after 2009.

Considering competencies, most students and employers consider that faculties and universities do a good job in assisting student to achieve abilities useful on the labor market. Employers are less confident as compared to students, graduates, or teaching staff, but overall they are rather optimist than negative. Teaching staff is the category to rate the university sector with the highest marks. The same positive representations are related to almost any activity or process in the university sector, from teaching to facilities.

The other area of interest related to higher education is related to **comparatively studying European systems**. However, I was more reading than publishing in the area, being interest by differentiation and convergence of European systems. The topic received a relatively high political and academic interest in the past decade, due to its impact not only on the education systems, but on the society as a whole (e.g. Capano and Piattoni, 2011; Reichert, 2010; Stausberg, 2011; Štech, 2011; Teichler, 2009; Teichler, 2011; Teichler, 2012; Tauch, 2011; Trahar, 2011). My interest also derives from empirical work in the field. There are four important projects in which I was in charge with data collecting and reporting (see Box 5 for their listing), but only one led to academic publishing. In all this projects the methodology was similar: we have been collecting data from rector's office in European universities. EUA studies tried to be a census of European Universities, assessing their progress towards Bologna goals. The main results mention a strong tendency towards convergence in European higher education systems (Reichert and Tauch, 2003; Reichert and Tauch 2005; Crosier, Purser and Smidt, 2007; Sursock and Smidt, 2010). The UNESCO-CEPES project has similar results regarding private universities, and is detailed in the next section.

#### Box 5. Comparative projects of analyzing European higher education systems in which I was involved

- *EUA Trends 2010*, survey of the European higher education institutions for the European Universities Association (October 2008 – July 2009). Tasks: Coordinator, database design, data analysis, reporting.
- *Private Higher Education in Europe and Quality Assurance and Accreditation from the Perspective of the Bologna Process Objectives*, designed and implemented by UNESCO-CEPES in collaboration with “Leon Koźmiński” Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management (LKAEM) and The World Bank. Tasks: coordination of data collection (survey of private universities in 12 European countries), analyzing the survey data, reporting. (July-November 2005)
- *EUA Trends V*, survey of the European higher education institutions for the European Universities Association (October 2005 – July 2006). Tasks: Coordinator, research design, database design, data analysis, reporting.
- *Trends in Learning Structures in Higher Education (III)*, conducted by European University Association. Tasks: designing of the databases, statistical analysis of the data. (November 2002 – March 2003)

## Own publications

### General papers

Bogdan Voicu. 2007. Capital uman [Human capital], in Cătălin Zamfir, ed. 2007. *Enciclopedia dezvoltării sociale* [The Enciclopedy of Social Development], Iași: Polirom: forthcoming.

There is not much to say about this book chapter. I mention it here because it has the merit to put together



my perspective on human capital. It aims to introduce the concept to students and practitioners, as well as to the general public. I review the literature written on social capital, then I discuss the levels of social capital in Romania, always comparing to other European countries.

### Inequality of access to higher education

Bogdan Voicu, Marian Vasile. 2009. Inegalitățile rural-urban și masificarea educației superioare din România (*Urban-rural inequalities and the expansion of the Romanian higher education*), pp. 119-144 in Adrian Hatos, Sorana Săveanu, eds., *Educația și excluziunea socială a adolescenților din România* [Education and social exclusion among Romanian teenagers], Oradea: University of Oradea Press.

\* The paper was also translated in English and published as Bogdan Voicu, Marian Vasile. 2010. Rural-Urban Inequalities and Expansion of Tertiary Education in Romania, *Journal of Social Research & Policy*, 1(1): 5-24. (indexed in Index Copernicus Database, Sociological Abstracts / ProQuest database, Academic Search premier / EBSCO Database). Though the English translation would have required further proofing, it may be used a source for more detailed explanation of our conceptual set up and findings. A shorter presentation follows in the next paragraphs.

The paper discusses the trends in accessing higher education in Romania, focusing on the rural-urban discrepancies. The idea is simple: we look to the percentages of students in seven broad cohorts, defined by birth year: before 1927; 1928 – 1942; 1943 – 1954; 1955 – 1963; 1964 – 1972; 1973 – 1981; after 1982. Then we analyze the rural-urban differences, in the light of MMI (maximal maintained inequality - Raftery and Hout, 1993) and EMI (efficiently maintained inequality – Lucas, 2001) theories. Our basic assumption is that rural-urban differences depend on historical factors which shaped education system and limited, respectively encouraged access during the communist regime and the transition years. We showed out that MMI explanation is more suitable, while EMI have at most recently started to manifest.

The analysis encounters several difficulties related to data. First, there is no official reporting or publicly available data that would allow assessing such differences starting from large samples, such a census. Therefore we use pooled data resulting from three similar surveys carried out in 2006 and 2007 by Soros Foundation on national representative samples. The resulting dataset includes information on the place of birth the place of residency, the education of the parents etc.

Second, there is a methodological issue with identifying the region of provenience when becoming a student. Place of birth may be affected by errors: hospitals are located mainly in urban areas, and most of people are born there. In the ID, the place of birth is most often the place where the hospital is located, not the locality where the new born will actually live and socialize. More, if a children from a rural family spends the time during upper secondary in the city where the highschool is located, when joining university, should the respective student considered as coming from a rural or an urban area. We finally decided that place of birth roughly define the rural students, and, with necessary caution, we have used it as referential.

Third, there was the decision to split up population into cohorts. We have designed them such as to reflect changes in the education policy and political conditions. During communism, the later were an important factor to limit access of certain categories to higher education.

Using logistic regression models (dependent variable: have accessed higher education), we have tested our basic hypothesis, controlling for parental background, and gender. Our findings indicate that rural-urban inequalities were strong all over the analyzed period (defined by the time when each cohort was supposed to access university). A small decrease in inequality is manifest in the 1960s, while in the 1990s, the expansion of higher education lead to a booming inequality, confirming MMI. 2000s brought a relative saturation of education demand from the urban population, allowing decreasing inequalities of access. This is the time when is likely that EMI started to manifest its influence, but at the time of our study there was no available data to actually test the assumption.

The paper has at least two merits. It is the first to discuss rural-urban inequalities of access to university education using empirical evidences. On the other hand, it is the first paper to address the topic of the effects of 1990s higher education expansion in Romania. Also, the uses of historical arguments is extremely rare for the Romanian education system, therefore the paper provide a source for understanding the evolution of the respective system.

#### Drop-out and early drop-out

Bogdan Voicu, coord. 2009. *Early school-leaving. Potential prevention measures* [in Romanian language], București: Vanemonde, ISBN 978-973-1733-15-9

Bogdan Voicu, (coord.), Ovidiu Voicu, Anca Nedelcu. 2008. *Rata de trecere de la un ciclu educațional la altul și rata de absolvire a unui ciclu educațional. Perspective la nivelul școlii* [Transition rates to the next education cycle and promotion rates. School level perspectives], Raport către Unitatea de Management al Proiectelor pentru Învățământul Preuniversitar, Coordonator Componenta 3, București: CEDU 2000+.

The two above-mentioned reports follow similar structure, but refer to different populations. The first one targets urban communities with high prevalence of drop-out and early-drop-out, while the second describe the same phenomenon in rural areas. Both reports result from studies that I coordinated at the request of the Romanian Ministry of Education, and with logistic and financial support from the Center Education 2000+ (shortly CEDU 2000+, a think tank located in Bucharest), also supported by UNICEF in the case of the first study.

Methodology was basically the same. We have selected fourteen, respectively twenty schools with high drop-out rates, located in various parts of the country. Teams of two or three researchers carried out qualitative fieldwork in the area, assessing community features and school characteristics, interviewing local authorities, informal community leaders, school teachers and principals, parents, students who continued education at upper secondary level and student who leaved school after completing the lower-

secondary, students who dropped out and/or their parents. The whole picture resulting from the 14, respectively 20 case studies leads to the main conclusions of the report, lately converted in policy recommendations.

As expected, family characteristics proved to be the main cause for drop out. Lack of financial possibilities, numerous children, low education in the family, early involvement on the labor market, alcoholism, prostitution, disrupted family and lack of comfort from the family are the most important perturbing factors for the school track. Community features add. Long distances to upper-secondary schools, exposure to climacteric hazards are the objective obstacles. They are however marginal as compared to a local culture that may promote early marriage for young girls, earning money as manual laborer, or prostitute, or in criminal activities, discrimination against certain ethnic or religious groups etc. School often fails to address such issues due to a mix of factors. Many times there are invoked safety issues, but school attractiveness (in terms of both resources and activities) also matters. More important, we often noticed the lack of preventive action, due to a culture of non-intervention when risk of dropping out becomes visible. Many school teachers and principals claim or act as it is not their job to intervene in such situations, and that their task strictly refers to teaching, understood as transmitting information.

Our findings also suggested that one of the most mediatized stereotypes in Romanian society does not hold true. Romania currently experiences a huge international migratory outflow for work, involving about a tenth of its total population and probably more of its active population. Many of such migrants are, at least in the initial phase, circulatory (temporary) migrants. They leave Romania and live for a while abroad, gathering money and sending remittances back home to their families. There are cases of children prevented from such families who drop-out school and involve in criminal activities. Such situations constantly made first pages in Romanian newspapers in the 2000s, feeding the opinion that transnational families are disruptive and lack proper environment for raising children. Our data showed up that this is the case in those families who already experienced problems before migration. Otherwise, remittances often provide resources that the respective children would have no chance to access, and prevent the risk of school leaving.

### Student achievements

Mircea Comşa, Claudiu D. Tufiş, Bogdan Voicu. 2007. *Romanian university system. Opinions of the teaching staff and of the students* [in Romanian language], Bucureşti: Fundația Soros România & Editura Afin. ISBN: 978-973-7714-35-0 (126 pages)  
[\[http://www.osf.ro/ro/documente.php?id\\_document=455\]](http://www.osf.ro/ro/documente.php?id_document=455)

The report exploits the results of a set of two representative surveys targeting actors in Romanian university education. The surveys were designed by the authors, at the request of the Soros Foundation Romania. The respective Foundation also financed data collection. The two samples included BA students from all Romanian universities, respectively teaching staff in the respective universities.

In one of the preliminary chapters of the report, I have described the preuniversity education in Romania. The explicit goal was to describe students before entering university, in order to give a first hint of their pre-existing competencies. For this, I have considered two types of indicators related to student achievements. Both are measured in comparative way. The first one refers to country-average scores resulting from PISA, PIRLS, and TIMSS. Romania was compared to other countries, then bivariate correlations were employed to suggest which country level factors, depicted in the literature may predict student achievement.

The second indicator is performance in the school Olympiads. Though data is publicly available, there is not so much use in comparative sociology of the respective information. Each school Olympiads provide results by participant and by country on the Internet for each year since their first occurrence. Country-averages are easy to compute. The series may be aggregated either as rankings, or after normalization. Then, comparison across disciplines or longitudinal analysis can be performed.

I was interested mainly in descriptive statistics, and, unfortunately, I had not the time or the space to enter in further details. My main findings show that the public stereotype that the Romanian education system produces high-level performers might be only partially true. The public perception is highly biased by the media, which presents each medal in the International Olympiad as a great achievement, unique by itself. Nevertheless, each such performance is a great achievement, but its uniqueness is disputable. About half of the participants in each such contest receive medals. Therefore better indicators of performance should be used. Above, I have briefly described how such indicators may be computed. The respective procedure, and the idea of using them instead the number of medals, which prove to have very low variance, could be considered as an original contribution to the knowledge.

Bogdan Voicu. Cross-country comparisons of student achievement: the role of social values, manuscript.

Bogdan Voicu. 2010. The Impact of social values on education achievements. Implications for education policy, pp. 386-406 in Emilian M. Dobrescu and Nicolae Iancu, editors, *Education policy. Relevance and efficiency*, București: Eurolobby. (in Romanian language)

I have already discussed, in a previous section, the background of these two papers. I mention them here only to point out their contribution to the study of student achievement, insisting now on methodological aspects. The main merit is the cultural embedding of school achievements. I have argued that the values which are widespread in a society determine pupil performance. This is visible mainly in comparative analysis.

Therefore I have used data from TIMSS, PIRLS and PISA, together with results from the European Values Survey and World Values Survey. I set up a macro-level dataset including four types of information: (1) average scores recorded in 29 large scale surveys of student achievements (this is the dependent variable) which were collected between 1999 and 2009; (2) information on the survey that collected the data for the dependent variable: each survey is defined by its source (TIMSS, PIRLS or PISA studies), the age of the

students (8 graders or 4 graders), the topic (reading, mathematics, science), the year when data was collected; (3) average percentages of people indicating support for four types of child-rearing values (religious faith, obedience, independence, responsibility), as resulting from WVS and EVS (I employ the classic item measuring child-rearing/parental values: each respondent had to choose 5 items that he/she considered important from a list of 10 possible qualities which might be useful to be learned by children); (4) information on other country-level determinants of school achievements, as derived from literature: economic development (GDP/capita), education stock (percentages of adults with university degrees, average of graduated school-years in adult population), education policy (percentage of public spending on education) etc.

For each student achievement survey in the data set I have add the information on value orientations numbered with (3) in the above list using the closest available year. For instance, for data collected through PISA 2009, EVS 2008 was used as data source. The other independent variables (4) were collected for the nearest available year (in the case of economic output), respectively as average values for the studied period (for the education-related indicators).

The second paper (already published) is mainly descriptive. I have used there, as main independent variable, a summative score that I have computed following Inglehart (1997) and Hagenaars et al (2003). The score reflects the opposition between autonomy and authority values, with independence and responsibility counting for the first, and religiosity and obedience for the second. OLS models were employed for each survey that was available at the time of publication, showing that variations of cultures (given by the parental values) determine variations of student achievements. The main disadvantage of the method is that allow comparing only few societies at the time (their number is limited to the number of countries participating in a PIRLS, PISA, or TIMSS wave), and only in a specific topic. However, for descriptive purposes it was a more useful manner to present data.

The first paper in the above list is chronologically the second that I have elaborated. It is still under review, and I hope that I will publish it soon. To overcome the above-mentioned disadvantages, I decided to analyze all information simultaneously and to decompose the effects of the authority-autonomy independent variable.

The decision to decompose the index was related to failing to prove that it is invariant over societies and years. In fact, there are completely different covariances, even if considering solely the sign, between the four independent values, no matter if analyzing the country level or the individual level (respondent level).

Analyzing all information may increase methodological complexity, but has the advantage to allows considering in the same time more societies (up to 67, for which full information is available), and to compare scores in mathematics, reading, and science, and different age students (4 grader and 8 graders). In total, there are 919 cases in the data set.

There are three levels on which variables may be considered: (a) dependent variable (student achievement) and the main independents (child-rearing orientations towards religious faiths, obedience, independence, respectively responsibility), as well as economic output, which vary from an year to another; (b) they are nested in the survey characteristics; (c) they are also nested in the structural educational conditions of the country, which I have considered as a stable feature in time. The survey level (b) and the country level (c) are not hierarchical to each other; therefore I have employed cross-classified models.

The results confirm expectations (better described when first presenting the two papers, on the section on social values). Autonomy values, particularly responsibility, lead to better student achievements. Authority values, particularly religious faith, have negative impact. This negative impact is even stronger when considering the achievements in mathematics.

The result is important for scholars on student achievements, confirming the conceptual models which consider country-level as a sources for variation in school efficiency (Creemer and Kiriakides, 2008) and adding to the only two papers that I am aware of (Fensham, 2007; Minkov, 2008) to specifically indicate cultural characteristics as a predictor for achievements. The paper also contributes to knowledge proposing a way to merge data provided by different sets of surveys, designed with different purposes.

The next step will be to run similar analyses on student level, and to show that within country variation does not change the findings related to between-country differences.

#### Institutional arrangements in Romanian higher education: tracing studies

Bogdan Voicu (coord.). 2011. *Sociolog pe piața muncii. Traietoriile absolvenților de sociologie de după 1990* [Sociologist on the labor market. Tracer studies of post-1990 sociology graduates at the University of Bucharest], București: Universitatea din București.

Bogdan Voicu, Claudiu Tufiș, Mălina Voicu. 2010. *Absolvenții recentți de învățământ superior și integrarea lor pe piața muncii* [Recent university graduates and their integration on the labor market], ACPART (Agenția Națională pentru Calificările din Învățământul Superior și Parteneriat cu Mediul Economic și Social), proiectul DOCIS, București.

Coauthor of several chapters in Mihai Korca, ed. 2009. *Education of quality for the labor market* [in Romanian language], București: Editura Universitară. ISBN: 978-973-749-758-1.

My work in three above reports builds around tracer studies. All three are based on research projects in which I have co-coordinated (with my colleague Claudiu Tufiș, from the Research Institute of Quality of Life of the Romanian Academy of science) the part devoted to tracing graduates. The studies were carried out in an environment increasingly concerned with the destination of university graduates, in which international comparative graduate studies (e.g. CHEERS, REFLEX, HEGESCO – see the above description of background in the previous sub-chapter) set up new standards of assessing efficiency of higher education. In Romania, tracing graduates was a new activity. There were only a few mini-studies, initiated by

universities or faculties such as Babeş-Bolyai in Cluj, the Polytechnic University of Bucharest, or the Academy of Economic Studies in Bucharest.

In the report coordinated by Professor Mihai Korca, we have designed a preliminary tracing study, interviewing convenience samples from four fields of study: Mechanical Engineering, ITC, Law and Communication Science. For each of the four fields there were about 100 respondents who filled in our questionnaires. The respondents were BA graduates in the past five years, from various Romanian universities. Our aim was to check for the mismatch between labor market requirements and competencies of graduates, but also to prepare future tracing studies. The findings were rather informative, confirming the expectations: graduates had positive representations on own competencies and were evaluating with high marks the Romanian education system and the Universities where they had graduated.

The 2010 report had a different aim. The beneficiary was ACPART, a Romanian governmental agency in charge with setting up the list of qualifications and specializations in higher education and to assure their correspondence with labor market demand. ACPART wanted to know if there might be big discrepancies between the 325 BA specializations recognized in Romania (by law). We have designed a survey in which some 5500 graduates from the past 5 years were interviewed, in such a way that more than 200 specializations would be represented in the sample by at least 10 respondents. A probabilistic sample of employers was also drawn. The findings revealed the same optimistic view over Romanian education, the fact that graduates are generally positively assess their competencies, and that their confidence is shared by employers, though at lower intensity.

As compared to the other two, the 2011 report is a real tracer study. More, it actually increases the scope of the existing tracing studies, as reported in the literature. Our target was to assess efficiency of the University of Bucharest in providing sociology graduates to the labor market. We have decided to interview all graduates starting with 1990. The starting year was easy to choose: before 1990, in Romania, sociology was forbidden to produce graduates. The previous cohort to receive a BA in sociology graduated in the 1970s. Between 1990 and 2009, some 2343 students graduated sociology at UB. Half of them graduated after 2005: large promotions (with a peak of over 300 students) and generations graduating simultaneously due to overlapping systems (Bologna and pre-Bologna cohorts) contribute to the respective situation. Our aim was to see if institutional changes in the Faculty life (splitting from the cohabitation with the Department of Psychology and the one of Education Sciences, changing personnel in at least two important moments, changing campus etc.) or in the curriculum (changes from 5 years long BA to 4 years and then to 3 years) had any impact on the graduates' chances to integrate on the labor market. We have also decided to extend the investigation including, as control group for recent graduates, the most recent two classes of sociology alumnae at the University of Oradea and at the Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu. Therefore the report also served as input for the policies undertaken by these universities.

The design was simple: we have reconstructed the lists of graduates, and using social networks like LinkedIn and Facebook, and key informants in every class, we have set up a list of e-mail addresses of the graduates. Data collecting activities lasted two months, and included several reminders to those who postponed answering. In the end, the received responses covered 28% of the graduates in the University of

Bucharest (with higher rates for recent years), 48% in the University of Sibiu and 28% in the University of Oradea.

My tasks were to coordinate the whole research and to report on five topics: usefulness of achieved competencies, geographic mobility of the graduates, most appreciated teachers, lifelong learning, and incomes.

I will present results in only two of these fields: usefulness of achieved competencies relative to the labor market request, respectively incomes. The integration of the graduates on the labor market seems to be difficult to correctly assess. There are many graduates, particularly in the newest classes, that self-rate as not having enough knowledge for the jobs they have, no matter if they define the respective job as requiring or not a BA in sociology. On the other hand, particularly newer graduates declare that they know 'too much sociology' as compared to their job requirements. This may be related both with job specifications and complexity, but also with a time effect: older generations might have been understood in time that they do have the necessary competencies, or they have been adjusting their aspirations such as to reduce cognitive dissonance, or maybe the newer larger classes of graduates face difficulties to find appropriated jobs.

The apparent mismatch between competencies and qualifications is likely to come rather from a deficit of preparation within the university for the future career. In fact, University of Bucharest, as almost all Romanian universities, is deficient in providing much counseling, and relations with students are extremely formal. This became more important when large classes of students were enrolled.

The situation seems common to many departments in Romanian universities. Expansion of higher education increased the number of students, but not the size of the teaching staff and diversification also failed to occur. Would this have an impact on value change? The answer is probably positive. In fact, mass access to higher education should speed up the process of changing towards modern and postmodern values. However, lack of appropriate education may decrease the effect.

Coming back to the studies reviewed in this section, I would say that they have contributed to promoting tracing studies in Romanian education. Even if this is far from being new in the international research, the findings may be used for assessing the impact of higher education systems similar to the Romanian one on value formation and change.

Considering the income of the graduates (see Table 4), one may notice no unexpected determinant. However, it is important to see that working during BA studies lead to better off positions, and that the difference maintain overtime. The result is consistent with the ones resulting from the other two above-mentioned studies (the report for ACPART and the one coordinated by Mihai Korca). On the other hand, data from the same reports says that employers prefer graduates who already have working



experience. Working during studies, means decreasing the time spent for studying, and may lower the quality of effective education. Starting from here, there are multiple policy implications that I have developed in the above reports. However, my current question, to be subject for further research is how this situation affects the impact of education on values. Is the work-studying ambivalence leading to retreat towards more traditional values (due to decreasing confidence in education usefulness) or, by contrary, helps developing rational values, forcing individuals to carefully plan their life during this intense stage of simultaneously working and studying?

Table 4. Predicting income variation for graduates of sociology from the University of Bucharest

Model:	OLS			MLM		MLM, only RO	
	b	beta	Sig.	b	Sig.	b	Sig.
<b>Independente variables</b>							
(intercept)	5316,5		***	3958,4	***	6740,3	***
Education level of the most educated parent	-16,1	-0,02		83,4	+	78,3	+
<i>Born in Bucharest</i>	34,8	0,01		-108,6		142,9	
<i>Male</i>	212,7	0,03		99,2		137,7	
<i>Older than his colleagues (in the same class)</i>	-119,9	-0,02		362,3		246,2	
Index of the quality of graduated highschool results during highschool	-142,9	-0,04		129,4		152,4	
<i>Highschool type: real</i>	-4,9	-0,04		2,6		5,2	
<i>Highschool type: real</i>	153,3	0,03		54,8		-121,3	
Frequency of attending courses during faculty	-206,6	-0,06		-81,6		-87,4	
Frequency of involving in extraschool activities (during BA)	129,0	0,04		-5,0		-7,9	
Was working during BA	129,7	0,10	+	156,1	**	150,6	**
Was among the first in his class	8,8	0,07		9,2		15,8	*
<i>Graduated BA of 3 year length</i>	-33,7	0,00		-428,7		-329,3	
<i>Graduated BA of 5 year length</i>	-706,8	-0,08		-1475,7	*	-1616,3	***
Class (year)	-252,5	-0,39	***	-237,2	***	-268,5	***
<i>Has another BA</i>	158,3	0,02		-64,5		-290,0	
<i>Has a MA degree</i>	-138,8	-0,03		-303,7		-205,5	
<i>Has a PhD degree</i>	279,2	0,04		-150,6		-309,8	
<i>Has MA or PhD in other domain</i>	336,7	0,06		110,6		217,8	
<i>Living abroad</i>	2200,6	0,25	***	1158,9	+		
Feels like being a sociologist	260,1	0,08		-28,3		-136,7	
<i>Employed</i>	1524,6	0,17	***	1628,8	***	1218,4	***
<i>Works in public sector</i>	-1287,7	-0,21	***	-891,6	*	-1161,1	***
<i>Entrepreneur or self-employed</i>	1970,3	0,15	***	1804,4	*	1370,6	+
<i>Works in Market-research or Data collecting agencies</i>	345,2	0,05		596,9		652,8	+
<i>Works in Human Resources</i>	57,6	0,01		574,3		546,0	
<i>Works in Advertising/Media/Communication</i>	223,2	0,03		-367,8		-93,6	
<i>Works as Independent Consultant</i>	-32,6	0,00		216,1		690,4	
<i>Works in the NGO sector</i>	-585,7	-0,04		-412,9		-44,8	
<i>Works in services (selling, real-estate, insurances, other business)</i>	-116,8	-0,01		-333,8		-131,3	
<i>Works in productive sectors (agriculture, industry etc.)</i>	399,4	0,04		198,9		375,0	
<i>Works in the academic sector</i>	136,8	0,02		-85,7		395,8	
<b>CONTEXT: GDP/capita in the county/country of residence (EURO, current prices 2009)</b>				0,1	**	0,0	

Type of model: OLS=ordinary least squares regression; MLM: multilevel model, including the context variable (fixed effect); MLM, only RO: the same as previous, but only graduates living in Romania were considered.

Source: Bogdan Voicu, 2011, Veniturile absolvenților de sociologie [Incomes of sociology graduates], pp. 183-188 in Bogdan Voicu (coord.). *Sociolog pe piața muncii. Traiectoriile absolvenților de sociologie de după 1990* [Sociologist on the labor market. Tracer studies of post-1990 sociology graduates at the University of Bucharest], București: Universitatea din București.

## Institutional arrangements in Romanian higher education: tracing studies

Lazăr Vlăsceanu, Bogdan Voicu. 2006. Implementation of the Bologna Objectives in a Sample of European Private Higher Education Institutions: Outcomes of a Survey, *Higher Education In Europe*, Vol. XXXI, No. 1, 2006: 25-52. (ISSN 0379-7724) (Indexed in ERIC, EBSCO etc.)

The paper exploits a survey of private universities carried out by the authors, with UNNESCO\_CEPES support, in private higher education institutions from twelve European countries (Austria, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Estonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Ukraine, Russia). The Bologna process was our main focus, and we tried to show if private universities may follow the same path as the public one considering the ongoing transformations of the European university system(s). We have considered ten goals of the Bologna process: Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees; Adoption of a system essentially based on two cycles; Establishment of a system of credits; Promotion of mobility; Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance; Promotion of the European dimension in higher education; Higher education institutions and students; Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area; Doctoral studies and the synergy between the EHEA and ERA. For each of them we have provided descriptive statistics for the private universities, and we have compared them with the public universities, as described by data provided by EUA Trends III (the European University Association's survey of European higher education institutions done in 2003). The findings suggest that Private universities were implementing the Bologna process at a slightly lower pace as compared to the public sector. However, in some domains – such as quality assurance – private higher institutions manifested a stronger interest and convergence as compared to state-owned ones. Though descriptive, I think that the paper was an interesting source for policy makers in higher education.

## Other publications

Bogdan Voicu, Simona Lupu. 2009. Education services, pp. 168-190 in Marian Preda, ed., *Social Risks and Inequalities in Romania. The Report of the Presidential Commission for Analyzing Social and Demographic Risks*, Iași: Polirom. (in Romanian language)

This book chapter is in fact my contribution to the report of the Presidential Commission for Analyzing Social and Demographic Risks. The chapter reviews the main aspects in Romanian education and in the education system. The approach is that school is embedded in society, and the aim is to provide to general public and decision makers a view on the system and with possible policy recommendations. The entire book is a report written in this perspective. I mention the contribution here in order to show how I employ in public debate the findings of other papers. The above-mentioned chapter addresses topics like drop-out, student achievement or higher education reform.

## Synthesis of main contributions

If I would choose the most important contributions to knowledge development in the above papers and reports, my options would include the following:

- The empirical evidences that me and my co-author (Marian Vasile) provided when analyzing rural-urban differences of access to higher education. As mentioned, this was the first academic paper to actually analyze, otherwise than theoretically, such discrepancies in the Romanian society. The

specificity of the respective society lies in the repressive character that communism had in preventing access to higher education, while claiming equality of citizens and completely free and universal access to education and bursaries. We showed out that the reproduction of social structure continued to function even under such unusual circumstances. More, we proved that higher education expansion in the 1990s followed the logic of the maximal maintain inequality hypothesis.

- The dismissal of the Romanian public opinion stereotype that circulatory migration for work involving parents increases the probability of their offspring to drop-out or early drop-out. I have also showed that drop-out and early-drop out are often community determined, and suggested that an efficient policy should address integration in education system of the parents which drop-out school at their time.
- Also related to drop-out is the idea that school-factors refer mainly with lack of preparedness of teachers and professors to early detect and prevent such comportments. This is primary due to avoiding responsibility in the field and an elitist culture regarding educators: they often describe themselves as transmitting information, and not social workers. A strong schooling culture promoting the respective perspective seems to be present among teachers.
- School International Olympiads provide on the Internet a lot of information that may be used with comparative purposes. This information is almost unexplored in comparative sociology. As I have argued, I have proposed a procedure through which such information may become useful for research, and I have used it for descriptive matters.
- Testing for the cultural embeddedness of student achievement, I added to the only two papers that I am aware to address the topic.

## Material resources: life satisfaction and related works

### Background

My interest towards appropriate measuring of material resources and individual wellbeing/poverty relates to the main mission of my long time employer, The Research Institute for Quality of Life of the Romanian Academy of Science. Also considering the basic assumptions of most modernization theories experiencing material security, particularly during formative years, leads to modern or postmodern values. This view is common to many scholars on postmodernity, risk society, reflexive modernity, late modernity, etc. (Arts, 2011; Beck, 1994; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2001; Giddens, 1990; Inglehart, 1997; Lash, 1990). However, they do not necessary refer to objective measures of material condition, though this are extremely important, as I will latterly argue. It is mainly the *feelings* of security which matter. If one feels secure, the respective person tend to be more open, to assume certain axiological uncertainty. This leads me to the study of subjective wellbeing.

In 2006 I have published two papers mostly elaborated during my PhD stages, in which I review the subjective and consensual methods for measuring poverty<sup>6</sup>. I mention them here not with the aim to

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<sup>6</sup> The two papers are:

Bogdan Voicu. 2006. Abordări subiective și consensuale ale sărăciei (II). Despre deprivarea relativă [Subjective and consensual approaches of poverty (II): On relative deprivation], *Calitatea Vieții*, 3-4/2006: 233–251.

present, but due to the fact that I base the beginning on this chapter on the developments that I have already published there.

Well-being is simultaneously relative and subjective (Halleröd, 1995; Halleröd, 1996; Halleröd et al., 1997; Mack and Lansley, 1985; Nolan and Whelan, 1996; Piachaud, 1987; Townsend, 1979; van den Bosch, 1993; Viet-Wilson, 1987; Whelan, 1993). It reflects in which measure one is satisfied with what he/she has, but satisfaction depends on needs and aspirations. Needs are socially determined (Townsend, 1979: 913). One defines own needs and aspiration depending on relevant others' needs, aspirations and possibilities, but also as compared to current and foreseen resources. Therefore it refers to *subjective* aspirations and needs, but these aspirations and needs depend on *consensual* standards selected by community or society, and are *relative* to the possibilities to fulfill these standards among relevant others in personal reference groups.

**Table 5. Subjective and consensual approaches to assess poverty**

	Consensual (inter-subjective)	Subjective non-consensual
Direct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ 'Objective' relative deprivation</li> <li>◆ CSP approach to measuring subjective poverty (CSP – Antwerp)</li> <li>◆ The representative citizen method (the versions proposed by Rainwater, respectively Walker)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Self-labelling as poor</li> <li>◆ Subjective poverty indicator (ICCV)</li> <li>◆ 'Subjective' relative deprivation</li> </ul>
Indirect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Self-estimation of the minimum needed income (LSPL - Leyden)</li> <li>◆ Leyden poverty line (LPL)</li> <li>◆ The representative citizen method (Vaughan's variant)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Subjective life-standard (ICCV)</li> </ul>

Source: Bogdan Voicu. 2006. Cât de săraci sunt românii: abordări subiective și consensuale [How poor the Romanians are: subjective and consensual approaches], *Calitatea Vieții*, 1-2/2006: 93-116.

Table 5 list some approaches which consider relativity, consensually, and subjectivity in measuring poverty. If interested in wellbeing, one may try adding to the list life satisfaction. However, the concept is simultaneously consensual and subjective, and would be difficult to include it among the methods to measure poverty.

Subjective wellbeing, life satisfaction, happiness may be considered as covering the same conceptual area (Bălțătescu, 2005; Christoph & Noll, 2003; Diener & Suh, 1997; Easterlin, 2001; Phillips, 2006; Pop, 2010; van Praag & Ferrer-i-Carbonel, 2008; Veenhoven, 1993; Veenhoven, 2007). In the past few years, life satisfaction was in the focus of my research, and I think that this is the part that is useful to introduce here in some detail. My interest grew around how overall life satisfaction and domain satisfaction interlink. Both sides are equally consensual, subjective, and relative. The question is which one is first: the overall feeling

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Bogdan Voicu. 2006. Cât de săraci sunt românii: abordări subiective și consensuale [How poor the Romanians are: subjective and consensual approaches], *Calitatea Vieții*, 1-2/2006: 93-116.

of being satisfied or the satisfaction with particular domains such as family, education, health, social relations, work, housing, income. Second, there is a question related to changing life satisfaction under the influence of contextual factors.

Bottom-up and top-down models were usually employed to explain the relation between the overall life satisfaction and the domain satisfactions (Diener, 1984; Leonardi et al, 2004; Mihalache, 2008). The first mentioned theory is the most intuitive. It supposes that the overall life satisfaction is a product resulting from satisfaction with each domain. If people are satisfied with their income, they enjoy the quality of housing, think that have the education that they want, positively rate own health, love their neighborhood, and are extremely happy with their job, it is likely that they will be highly satisfied, as a general state of mind. Therefore the life satisfaction is constructed from the bottom, component by component, as a sum of all domain satisfactions (Andrews and Whitney, 1976; Böhnke, 2005; Campbell et al, 1976; Delhey, 2004; Diener, 1984; Schimmack et al, 2002).

The second approach sees the overall life satisfaction as a determinant for each domain satisfaction (Brief et al., 1993; Costa and McRae, 1980; Diener, 1984; Rode, 2004; Schimmack et al, 2002). From this perspective, being satisfied with your life in general determines higher levels of satisfaction with, for instance, housing, no matter which are the objective housing conditions. Nevertheless, the later will also model satisfaction with housing, but psychological consideration will determine people to be more or less satisfied. Life satisfaction becomes a personality trait, a personal tendency to be happy and satisfied

More recently, there is an increasing literature searching for a reconciliation of the two perspectives. In the paper coauthored with Cosmina Pop that I describe in the next section, we labeled this perspective as the “integrated model”. As we have argued in the respective paper, Brief et al. (1993), Heady et al (1991), Leonardi and his colleagues (1999, 2004), Schimmack et al (2002) proposed theoretical models or empirical research that may fall under this label. The overall life satisfaction may be a general tendency to be more or less happy which impact on each domain satisfaction, but it also depend on the effect that objective condition bring. This effect is mediated through the satisfaction with each domain. Therefore the relation between the overall life satisfaction and domain satisfactions is one of interdependence. They are expressions of a mechanism to mutually adapt satisfactions in each domain depending on the others, of a general predisposition to be satisfied or not considering *all* life aspects. Cummins’ (1993) argument on permanent adjustments of life satisfaction and the empirical works mentioning strong correlations between all this variables (Lance et al, 1989; Casas et al., 2004; Hsieh, 2008) support such a model.

### Presenting some of my publications

Bogdan Voicu, Cosmina Pop. 2011. Measuring Life Satisfaction: Top-Down vs. Bottom-Up Approaches, *Calitatea Vieții* (Quality of Life) 2/2008: in print. (indexed in Index Copernicus Database, Sociological Abstracts / ProQuest database)

This paper is my main recent product in the field of life satisfaction. Its purpose is methodological. It focuses on the relations between the overall life satisfaction and the domain satisfactions. We argue that the inter-domain relations might be considered as well, in the integrated model. Then we have tried to test

the three approaches using data from European Quality of Life Survey 2003, a cross-European comparative research with data collected from probabilistic samples in the 27 EU countries and Turkey<sup>7</sup>. For this we have employed Structural Equation Modelling. The bottom-up approach was designed as a linear regression, with the overall life satisfaction item (“All things considered how satisfied would you say you are with your life these days?”) being explained by the seven domain satisfactions: education, present job, present standard of living, accommodation, family life, health, and social life. In the top-down model we simply changed the sense of the arrows in the path diagram, overall life satisfaction determining each domain satisfaction. In the integrated model we have assumed that a latent variable, called “general satisfaction” manifests (determines) the observed overall life satisfaction and the domain satisfactions.

We have then modeled each of the approaches in different scenarios: first we have included only the observed items of life satisfaction (the overall life satisfaction and the seven domain satisfactions), as well as the necessary unobserved variables imposed by the above-described models. Then we have added control variables related to objective conditions in each of the seven domains. Finally, we have run the same models eliminating from analysis the job satisfaction (many respondents had no job to refer to).

The results were somehow disappointing: none of the models displayed fully acceptable goodness of fit indexes. However, the integrated models systematically had a much better fit than the other two. I am currently working on another paper in which I show that the low goodness of fit was actually due to ignoring priming effects. This is further confirmed on different data. We have done an experiment in a Romanian survey in which the order of the items measuring domain satisfaction was not the same for all subjects, being randomly changed. In this case, the integrated model arrives to have an acceptable fit, while the top-down and the bottom-up models do not.

Bogdan Voicu. 2012. The impact of presidential elections on life satisfaction, pp. 235-258 in *Mircea Comşa, Andrei Gheoghiţă, and Claudiu Tufiş. Alegerile prezidenţiale 2009*, Cluj: Presa Universitară Clujană [in Romanian language]

Presidential elections may be conceived as a total phenomenon. Should they impact on the levels of life satisfaction of the voters? This is the central question that I address in this paper. In Romania, elections are markers for cycles of confidences in institutions and optimism. Immediately after the electoral campaigns, people have the feeling that the new government has a better plan to rule the country, and they invest more trust in the democratic institutions (Comşa, 2005: 174-175; Sandu, 1999, Mihaylova, 2004).

Though there is literature to connect life satisfaction to political outputs, particularly to the welfare arrangements (Alvarez-Diaz et al., 2010; Pacek, 2009; Radcliff, 2001; Ridge et al., 2009), to the best of my knowledge, no study addresses the impact of elections and electoral campaigns. The satisfaction with political life, a domain satisfaction which is not among the usual seven domains to be tested, is quite often investigated. Anderson (1998), Upmane and Sebre (2010), van Klaveren et al (2004), van Praag and Ferrer-i-Carbonell (2008) discuss various measures of political satisfaction. Many of them are particular, referring, for instance satisfaction with democracy, or satisfaction with current government. However, it seems that

<sup>7</sup> The survey is repeated every 3 years, being financed by the European Commission, through the Eurofund (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions). In each wave, data were collected in societies which are EU members and in the accession/candidate countries.

all the measures of political satisfaction are strongly interrelated.

On the other hand, as compared to the seven main domain satisfactions (housing, social life, family, education, health, income, work), political life is farer from individuals, belonging to a system in which people do not necessary participate. Therefore, though the other domain satisfactions and the overall life satisfaction should be correlated to political satisfaction, the connection should be looser than the rest of the interdependencies to be noted among domain satisfactions and between each domain satisfaction and the overall life satisfaction. This means that, in an integrated model of life satisfaction, the political satisfaction should have a lower loading than other domain satisfactions.

**Table 6. Levels of life satisfactions, for the supporters of the three most popular candidates, before and after elections**

Satisfaction with...	Moment of measurement	Before elections intended to vote with...		
		Mircea Geoană	Crin Antonescu	Traian Băsescu
OVERALL LIFE SATISFACTION	Before 1st election round	5,70	5,83	6,17
	After 2 <sup>nd</sup> round	6,35	6,62	7,12
Personal education	Before 1st election round	6,86	7,46	7,22
	After 2 <sup>nd</sup> round	7,26	7,67	7,67
job	Before 1st election round	5,85	7,03	6,47
	After 2 <sup>nd</sup> round	6,63	7,07	7,01
living standard	Before 1st election round	5,60	5,91	6,22
	After 2 <sup>nd</sup> round	6,17	6,50	6,91
Housing conditions	Before 1st election round	6,97	7,42	7,39
	After 2 <sup>nd</sup> round	7,46	7,69	7,91
Family life	Before 1st election round	7,78	7,93	8,08
	After 2 <sup>nd</sup> round	8,22	8,25	8,44
Personal health	Before 1st election round	6,53	6,72	6,78
	After 2 <sup>nd</sup> round	6,77	7,07	7,24
Social life	Before 1st election round	5,81	6,03	6,29
	After 2 <sup>nd</sup> round	6,44	6,96	6,84
Political life	Before 1st election round	3,26	2,91	3,65
	After 2 <sup>nd</sup> round	3,48	3,95	5,01

\* Only for those having an occupation.

Traian Băsescu, the incumbent, won second round in front of Mircea Geoană, with a small margin. Crin Antonescu had a better than expected score in the first round, and openly supported Geoană in the second round. However, the electors of each of the three candidates experienced increases in average levels of life satisfaction and domain satisfaction. The figures are computed for the panel sample.

Source: Table 4 in Bogdan Voicu. 2012. The impact of presidential elections on life satisfaction, pp. 235-258 in *Mircea Comşa, Andrei Gheoghiţă, and Claudiu Tufiş. Alegerile prezidenţiale 2009*, Cluj: Presa Universitară Clujană

Elections are intense moments in which the attention of the entire society, or at least of an important part of it, focuses on common issues, on the battle to gain votes. The end of the process represents the denouement of a story that everybody was waiting. No matter if the supported candidates won or not,

population should increase at least temporary levels of satisfaction. The poll is also the most visible sign of people controlling their own destiny and the population voting has the symbolic confirmation that everything is OK. Therefore I was expecting that after elections, no matter if the supported candidates won or not, or even if one has participate to the vote, one's life satisfaction and domain satisfactions will increase. The voters of the winner should naturally be even more satisfied than the others.

To test these hypotheses I have employed panel data provided by the joint project "The 2009 Romanian Presidential Study" involving the CNCS grant PNII-IDEI 2174/2008 hosted by Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj (coordinator: Mircea Comşa) and the Soros Foundation. Respondents from a national probabilistic sample were interviewed before the first round of presidential election from 2009. Three weeks later, after the second round of elections, the same respondents were again interviewed. Attrition rate was lower than 10% and it was not related to the variables important to the study.

Descriptive statistics confirmed the hypothesis related to the increasing levels of life satisfaction. I have set up a more complex SEM model, including variables measured before and after elections. Overall life satisfaction, political satisfaction, and the other domain satisfaction were included in an integrated model of life satisfaction. Control variables related to interest to politics, voting behavior, and socio-economic status were gradually added. The hypotheses found full support.

This leads to a series of new questions which open the door for more research in the field: would presidential elections differ from other types of elections (local, legislative, for the European parliament)? Is the change in life satisfaction reflected in changes in social values? How long such changes are likely to last?

Mălina Voicu, Bogdan Voicu. 2006. Cât de bine se simt orășenii în locuințele lor [How well the Romanians rate their dwellings], in Dumitru Sandu, ed., *Viața socială în România urbană* [Social life in urban Romania], Iași: Polirom: 55-76.

Bogdan Voicu. 2006. Satisfacția cu viața în satele din România [Life satisfaction in the Romanian villages], in Dumitru Sandu, coord., *Eurobarometrul rural: valori europene în sate românești*, Fundația pentru o Societate Deschisă & Delegația Comisiei Europene la București, p. 7-20.

The two above papers have various common characteristics: both refer to life satisfaction and domain satisfactions; both analyze empirical data provided by survey financed by Soros Foundation; both are rather descriptive in their scope; both present otherwise unexplored data, in a field which was rarely if anytime analyzed for the case of Romania. More important, in the context of this thesis, both papers are prerequisites for developing the two publications referring to life satisfaction that I previously described in this sub-chapter.

**The first paper**, co-authored with my colleague Mălina Voicu, focuses on the case of satisfaction with housing conditions in Romanian urban areas.

Objective indicators show that housing quality in Romania is much lower than almost anywhere in Europe (Alber et al, 2004; Dan & Dan, 2003; Lux, 2003; Mărginean et al., 2006; Pascariu, Stănculescu, 2003; Voicu & Voicu, 2005). However, from this perspective, towns are much better than villages, and the households are



much more frequently owners of their dwellings than in almost any European country. Therefore the inhabitants of urban areas have to face three types of comparison: (1) they live better than in villages, but (2) worse than in Europe, while (3) they do own a house or apartment.

The paper starts by presenting a short history of housing in contemporary Romania, insisting on the communist period, and the reparatory measures in the beginning of the 1990s. Lack of access to property was compensated in the early 1990s, by distributions of the housing stock to the population at very low costs. The policy, common to other ex-communist countries, created an extremely large category of owners, a very tiny share of renters. However, many owners had no resources to invest in improving their houses, and common goods were difficult to be produced and promoted in extremely heterogeneous block of flats.

In its second part the paper present descriptive indicators of satisfaction with housing, including satisfaction with the size, utilities, neighborhood etc. On all this indicators the average is positive indicating high levels of satisfaction. This is confirmed using EQLS data: Romanian are more satisfied with their housing conditions than most Europeans, though the quality of their dwellings, as already argued, is among the poorer, if not the poorest.

Looking for explanations, we built up a factor score to describe housing satisfaction in our sample, and we employed hierarchical linear models to identify the main effects at individual and locality level (Table 7). The findings indicate that the housing satisfaction dependents mainly on the surface of the house and on the overall life satisfaction. If living in a block of flats, the age of the building and the quality of the neighbors become more important than overall life satisfaction. However, the latter maintain its important effect

**The second paper** that I have mentioned in the above box, is a research note that targets the rural population. It describes how life satisfaction and domain satisfactions varied in the 2000s, and which their current level was in 2005. The main data source is the “Rural Eurobarometer 2005”, a survey initiated and financed by Soros Foundation, and designed by a team in which I was part. The probabilistic sample, representative for the rural population allowed drawing conclusions about various segments of the rural area. As in the case of the previous paper, I have employed permanent comparisons with other European countries, using data from the Eurobarometer 64 (October – November 2005). I have also make comparisons with the urban population. The findings were simple: rural Romanian was less satisfied as compared to the urban one, and far less satisfied as compared to Europe. Despite a poor social life and difficult housing, the two domains, along with personal safety, attracted a majority of answers to indicate high levels of satisfaction.

The explicit assumption of the paper is that overall life satisfaction and domain satisfactions are interdependent, being expressions of a general propensity to be satisfied. This is not necessary a stable personality trait, but is determined by various personal and contextual factors. The paper computes a factor score to describe this general satisfaction and analysis it in bivariate associations with potential factors. The public for this paper was rather non-academic, and the level of sophistication was kept low. However, I have chosen to present it here, as being the first paper during the analyzed period in which I present the conception over the integrated model, even if not in very much detail and not referring to alternative models such as bottom-up and top-down.

Table 7. Predictors of housing satisfaction, depending on the type of dwelling (house/villa vs. apartment in block of flats)

Lives in a ...	b (HLM model)		beta (OLS model)	
	House/villa	Block of flats	House/villa	Block of flats
<b>INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</b>				
Access to utilities (factor score)	(0,05)	(0,02)	0,06	0,03
ln(dwelling size – square meters)	0,42	0,59	0,29	0,22
Endowments (factor score)	0,09	(-0,03)	0,11	0,00
Year of building	(0,00)	0,01	0,13	0,14
Years since household lives in the current dwelling	0,01	(0,01)	0,14	0,11
Owner	0,34	(0,15)	0,16	0,02
Defines the area as „urban”	(-0,09)	(-0,01)	-0,08	-0,01
Defines the area as „good neighborhood”	(0,02)	0,20	0,01	0,12
Noisy neighborhood	(-0,02)	-0,07	-0,05	-0,09
Travelled abroad after 1989	(-0,08)	(0,05)	-0,04	0,00
Born in rural area	(0,10)	(0,07)	0,04	0,05
Born in other village	(0,09)	(0,04)	0,03	-0,01
Overall life satisfaction	0,21	0,11	0,19	0,10
Sex: feminine	(0,02)	(0,06)	0,01	0,01
Education	(-0,02)	-0,03	-0,05	-0,08
Ln(Income)	(0,13)	(0,11)	0,10	0,05
# of household members	-0,10	-0,16	-0,16	-0,20
<b>LOCALITY LEVEL</b>				
Size	-0,02	(0,00)	--	--
Average size of dwellings (squared meters)	(-0,01)	(-0,00)	--	--
R <sup>2</sup> (individual level)	30,4%	20,3%		

All predictors are significant at  $p \leq 0,05$ , except for the ones in gray fonts and in the brackets. Those in black fonts and bracketed are significant at  $p \leq 0,10$ . 23 outliers (very old houses – from the XVI-th century, or larger than 200 square meters were not considered in the analysis).

Source: Mălina Voicu, Bogdan Voicu. 2006. Cât de bine se simt orașenii în locuințele lor [How well the Romanians rate their dwellings], in Dumitru Sandu, ed., *Viața socială în România urbană* [Social life in urban Romania], Iași: Polirom: 55-76.

### Synthesis of my main contributions to knowledge

- To my best knowledge, the existing literature does not include empirical test of the models that describe the relation between the overall life satisfaction and the domain satisfactions. The paper that I have co-authored provides such a test, and indicates the better fit of the integrated model.
- Assessing the impact of political elections on the levels of satisfaction is unique in the existing literature. It provides original findings and also validates the integrated model for explaining the relation between life satisfaction and domain satisfactions.

## Social capital

Social capital is a relatively new concept in the social science. Its “founding fathers” started to write on the topic in the 1980s or early 1990s (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 1993). The term was coined out a little earlier by the economist Glenn Lourry (1977), but Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam are the ones to be considered as main scholars to establish the field. The concept is not new, but rather a contemporary refinement of the old *gemeinschaft-gesellschaft* distinction (Pichler and Wallace, 2007). So, it would be more precise if we assume that social capital was rediscovered in the 1980s, rebranded and launched as an important factor for social development, particularly salient in the World Bank’s policies. Putnam’s 1995 paper on *Bowling Alone... and Fukuyama’s book on Trust...* (1995) make the term visible outside the academic world. Its uses become very fast so many and people employed it within such a broad scope, that the concept risked being very vague (Portes, 1998). In the mid-2000s there were over 400 academic papers published each year to address the topic (Hardin, 2005).

I do not intend here to discuss in depth about what social capital is, how it can be conceived, and with which purposes. I have already done it in my book on social capital that is briefly presented in the next section. There are also very many books or papers which do the same (Adam & Rončević, 2003; Dagsupta and Serageldin, eds., 1999; Halpern, 2005; Matějů & Vitásková, 2006; Meulemann, 2008; Mihaylova, 2004; Paxton, 2003; Pichler and Wallace, 2007; Putnam, 2001; Portes, 1998; Portes, 2000; Robinson et al., 1999; Sandu, 2003; etc.). I will simply state that I consider social capital as a constituent of social structures, manifest through trust and sociability embedded in specific norms of cooperation. Trust and relations might be ether formal or informal, therefore addressing four main types of manifestations: participation to voluntary organizations, meeting friends, confidence in in institutions and social or generalized trust. The later may be conceived as the propensity to trust others, particularly strangers.

The social capital debate was mainly boosted by the positive effects of the social capital (see for examples Dagsupta and Serageldin, eds., 1999). Although the potential negative effects cannot be ignored (O’Connel, 2003; Portes, 2000), promoting social capital proved to be important for producing the public good, for an efficient public administration, for social development as a whole. At individual level, social capital was related to its capacity to convert in material and human capital, following the initial hypothesis of Bourdieu (1986) and Coleman (1988). Particularly *bridging* social capital, which connects people outside their main group of appurtenance, is said to be important, being often opposed to the *bonding* social capital, considered poorer in useful information and producing social cohesion in lower extent (Putnam, 2001; Woolcock, 2000).

The literature on social capital developed in five main directions: finding appropriate measures (Alexander et al., 2012; Delhey et al., 2011; Ermisch et al, 2009; Soroka et al., 2006; Sturgis and Smith, 2010; Torpe and Lolle, 2010; Ulzurrun, 2002; van der Gaag and Snijders, 2005), discussing trends, particularly in the US (Paxton, 1998; Putnam, 2000; Uslaner, 2002; etc.), assessing positive outcomes (see for instance the works of World Bank’s Social capital Initiative group), and discussing the social capital fabric, that is the various

factors to determine creation of social capital and/or its manifestations (Alessina and La Ferrara, 2002; Bădescu and Neller, 2006; Delhey and Newton, 2005; Freitag, 2003; Putnam, 2007; Halman & Luijk, 2006; Hooghe, 2007; Kesler and Bloemraad, 2010; Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005; Meulemann, 2008; Neller, 2008; Newton, 1999; Paxton, 2007; Portes and Vickstrom, 2011; Rothstein, 2003; Schofer and Fourcade Gourinchas, 2001; Stolle and Hooghe, 2004; Uslaner, 2011; ; Wilson, 2009), and searching to identify cultures of social capital (Bădescu and Sum, 2005; Fidrmuc and Gërkhani, 2008; Paldalm and Svendsen, 2001; Pichler and Wallace, 2007; Spencer, 2011; Uslaner and Bădescu, 2003; Voicu and Rusu, 2012). I have addressed all the five direction but lately I focused on the discussion about cultures of social capital, searching in international migration the possibility to use it as natural experiment to test the presence of such consistent cultures (see part II of this thesis).

## Presenting some of my publications

### Consequences of social capital: welfare attitudes

Bogdan Voicu, Mălina Voicu. 2011. Social Capital and Attitudes towards (Welfare) State across Europe, *Revista de Cercetare și Interventie Socială*. 33: 72 – 90. [Impact Factor: 0,789 (computed for 2010)]

This co-authored paper addresses the relation between welfare attitudes and social capital. Previous literature focused rather on the consequences of the welfare arrangements for the social capital formation (Giddens, 1998; Kuhnle & Alestalo, 2000; Kumlin, Rothstein, 2005; Rothstein, 2001; van Oorschot et al., 2005; van Oorschot et al., 2006; Wolfe, 1989). Another important stream of papers observed the interdependence between the welfare regimes and the welfare attitudes (Edlund, 1999; Evans, 1996; Gelissen, 2002; Svallfors, 1997; Taylor-Gooby, 1995; van Oorschot, 2000). Our aim was to complete this triangle by adding the missing side, discussing the effects of social capital indicators on the attitudes towards the welfare state.

We have built our hypothesis considering the general literature which addresses the factors to contribute to welfare attitudes formation (Alt, 1979; Andersen et al., 1999; Andreß & Heien, 2001; Caughlin, 1980; Derks, 2004; Durr, 1993; Gelissen, 2002; Hasenfeld & Rafferty, 1989; Iversen & Soskice, 2001; Jacoby, 1994; Jæger, 2006; Linos & West, 2003; Koster, 2007; Orlof, 1993; Peillon, 1996; Saunders, 1988; Shivo and Uusitalo, 1999; Svallfors, 2003). It considers either self-interest, either ideology as drivers for attitudes towards the state. At country level, the institutionalization hypothesis says that the existing shape of the welfare state determines corresponding welfare attitudes. People learn how the redistribution functions and their values reflect the interiorizing of the respective pattern.

Our argument on the impact of social capital relied on these mechanisms. We have claimed that individuals which have a large safety net of friends that they often contact, are less likely to have an interest to high redistribution. The same will happen with those who have a high level of generalized trust: a large state will be ineffective for them since society could take care of itself through informal arrangements. On the other hand, members in voluntary associations would rather value the creation of the common good through

formalized tools, such as the state. We have also expected that confidence in institutions will boost support for a broader scope for the state.

**Table 8. Multilevel regression models for the attitudes towards the welfare state in Europe**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
intercept	6.47 ***	6.49 ***	3.69 *	3.03 +	3.22 +	2.60 +
<i>Individual level</i>						
meeting friends		<b>-0.15 **</b>	<b>-0.15 **</b>	<b>-0.14 **</b>	<b>-0.14 ***</b>	<b>-0.15 ***</b>
generalized trust		<b>-0.15 ***</b>	<b>-0.15 ***</b>	<b>-0.14 ***</b>	<b>-0.15 ***</b>	<b>-0.15 ***</b>
membership in associations (assn)		<b>0.09</b>	<b>0.10</b>	<b>1.50 ***</b>	<b>1.36 ***</b>	<b>1.36 ***</b>
confidence in institutions		<b>-0.02</b>	<b>-0.02</b>	<b>-0.02</b>	<b>-0.02</b>	<b>-0.02</b>
age					0.00	0.00
education	-0.06 ***	-0.06 **	-0.06 **	-0.05 ***	-0.06 ***	-0.06 ***
relative income	-0.11 ***	-0.11 ***	-0.11 ***	-0.11 ***	-0.12 ***	-0.12 ***
self-positioning in political scale (right)	-0.12 ***	-0.14 ***	-0.14 ***	-0.14 ***	-0.14 ***	-0.14 ***
woman	0.31 ***	0.26 ***	0.27 ***	0.26 ***	0.24 ***	0.24 ***
materialist	0.27 ***	0.29 ***	0.28 ***	0.28 ***	0.29 ***	0.29 ***
unemployed	0.31 ***	0.40 ***	0.41 ***	0.42 ***		
retired	0.12 +	0.15 +	0.15 +	0.15 +		
not in the labor force	-0.02	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01		
<i>Country level</i>						
Public Social Expenditure (SOCEXP)			0.28 **	0.35 ***	0.34 ***	0.38 ***
SOCEXP <sup>2</sup>			-0.01 **	-0.01 ***	-0.01 ***	-0.01 ***
GINI			0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03
GDP/capita (thou)						-0.03 *
Unemployment Rate						0.02
<i>Cross-level interactions</i>						
SOCEXP*(assn)				<b>-0.14 ***</b>	<b>-0.14 ***</b>	<b>-0.14 ***</b>
SOCEXP <sup>2</sup> *(assn)				<b>+0.00 ***</b>	<b>+0.00 ***</b>	<b>+0.00 ***</b>
R <sub>1</sub> <sup>2</sup>	0.010	0.043	0.086	0.089	0.087	0.091
R <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup>	0.006	0.030	0.563	0.594	0.595	0.635

$R_1^2$  is the proportional reduction of error for predicting an individual outcome;  $R_2^2$  is the proportional reduction of error for predicting a group mean (Snijders & Bosker, 2002). The figures represent unstandardized regression coefficients. There are 32 observations on the second level. In the models which include age as independent variable N=32322, otherwise N=32381. ICC=9%. The effects of social capital indicators are in bolds. Italics indicate control dummy variables.

Source: Table 2 in Bogdan Voicu, Mălina Voicu. 2011. Social Capital and Attitudes towards (Welfare) State across Europe, *Revista de Cercetare și Interventie Socială*. 33: 72 – 90.

The results, depicted in Table 8 support our hypothesis, except for the final one. We have used hierarchical linear models, on the EVS/WVS 1999-2000 data set. The effects are as we expected, except for the confidence in institutions. This produces consequences for the complicated triangle between social capital, welfare attitudes and welfare state. The last two are interdependent. When the scope of the state is larger, the literature tends to prove that social capital is boosted, both in formalized and less formalized forms.

The first ones are likely to strengthen the welfare state, in a consistent culture of bridging social capital. The second ones act in the opposite direction. A further investigation of the informal relations may help to the debate.

### Social capital and its consequences for development

Bogdan Voicu. 2008. Social capital as factor of durable development, *Calitatea Vieții* 1-2/2008 (85-105). (indexed in Index Copernicus Database, Sociological Abstracts / ProQuest database)

Bogdan Voicu. 2008. The risks of development policies based on social capital formation, *Sociologie Românească* 1/2008:11-25. (indexed in Index Copernicus Database, Sociological Abstracts / ProQuest database)

The above two papers are reviews of existing literature, which is later particularized in policy recommendations for the case of Romania. The first paper underlines the benefits of using social capital for social development projects. It also presents data on social capital at individual level, drawn from the *Quality of Life Diagnosis*, a periodical survey of the Research institute for Quality of Life. The second paper insists on the potential negative effects and misuses of social capital for development projects in a society and or in communities which are rather parochial or dependent, in the terms of Almond and Verba (1966). I use examples drawn from international literature (O'Connell, 2003; Durlauf, 1999) and own observations when evaluating various development projects, to underline the risk of a mimic use of social capital, only declarative and emptied of substance, as described in Verdery's (2003) discussion about "double moral" in Romanian society or Ledeneva's *blat* metaphor (1998).

### Cultures of social capital and determinants of social capital

The papers that I present in this section related mainly to determinants of social capital. However, all of the, include a short discussion about how social capital is culturally determined.

Bogdan Voicu, Monica Șerban. 2012. Immigrant participation in voluntary associations across Europe, forthcoming in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. [5 Year Impact Factor: 1.424]

This paper discusses the participation of international migrants in voluntary organizations. The bulk of existing literature focuses on participation in immigrant organizations (Schoeneberg, 1985; Lucassen and Penninx 2009; Sassen-Koob 1979; Schmitter, 1980; Handy and Greenspan, 2009; Kosic 2008; Vogel and Triandafyllidou 2007; Schrover and Vermeulen, 2005). A few papers (notably Alesynska, 2007 and de Roois, 2011) discuss involvement in other associations. We have contributed to this debate considering all types of associations and, separately, expressive, instrumental-utilitarian, respectively religious organizations. We have argued that initial differences between types of associations may disappear in time: migrants would become more and more similar to natives in their associational behaviour if staying longer in the host society. The effect has been explained through cultural assimilation processes. We claimed that expressive associations, which have less standardized rules across cultures, may add uncertainty to the already

uncertain life that migrants may have facing the rules of a new society. Therefore we have expected that involvement in expressive associations to be lower at the beginning of stay in the host society.

To test our hypotheses, we have employed the ESS01 data set. We have designed multilevel regression models. The results are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9. Multilevel logistic models for membership in various types of associations: not-standardized regression coefficients**

Independent variables		Dependent	Membership in any association	Instrumental utilitarian	Expressive	Religious or church related
Intercept			-5,21 ***	-9,03 ***	-5,01 ***	-8,13 ***
<i>Individual level</i>						
Immigrant experience	less than 1 year		-2,54 **	-3,08	-1,96 *	-1,81
	1-5 years		-1,09 ***	-0,02	-1,18 ***	-0,45
	6-10 years		-0,78 *	-0,60	-0,8 *	-0,73
	11-20 years		-0,35	-0,66 †	-0,72 ***	-0,45
	21 and more		-0,22	-0,18	-0,15	0,11
	second generation of migrants		-0,03	+0,00	-0,02	0,15
Resources, opportunities	age		0,06 ***	0,09 ***	0,04 ***	-0,00
	age <sup>2</sup>		-0,00 ***	-0,00 ***	-0,00 ***	+0,00
	gender (women=1)		-0,35 ***	-0,05	-0,42 ***	-0,02
	children under 18		0,01	0,33 ***	-0,02	-0,00
	children under 6 in household		-0,19 **	-0,23 *	-0,18 **	-0,04
	employed		0,47 ***	0,64 ***	0,20 **	0,11
	student		0,62 ***	0,86 ***	0,56 ***	0,58 *
	working hours		0,01 **	0,02 ***	0,00	-0,00
	living with partner		0,17 **	0,29 ***	0,20 **	0,06
	education		0,10 ***	0,16 ***	0,07 ***	0,04 **
TV use		-0,04 *	-0,11 ***	-0,03 **	-0,06 **	
Social capital	meeting friends		0,38 ***	0,21 **	0,41 ***	0,23 *
	generalized trust		0,11 ***	0,10 *	0,08 **	0,08
Values, ideology	right (left-right scale)		-0,02	0,02	-0,01	0,01
	religious belief		0,01	+0,00	-0,02	0,20 ***
	church attendance		0,48 ***	0,21 **	0,34 ***	1,57 ***
	protestant		0,51 ***	0,38 ***	0,23 **	1,27 ***
catholic		-0,00	0,16	0,05	0,80 ***	
Defining situation	self-labeling: minority		-0,06	0,07	-0,00	0,22
	feeling lonely		-0,15	-0,08	-0,25 **	-0,19
	life satisfaction		0,03 **	+0,00	0,05 ***	-0,00
<i>Country level</i>						
	GDP/capita, PPP ('00000)		2,31 *	4,72 **	2,95 *	1,57
	% members in associations		1,77 **	-0,38	0,91 †	1,58
	immigrant stock		0,09 **	-0,04	0,10 **	0,18 **
ICC			21%	14%	21%	15%

\*\*\*p≤0.005; \*\*p≤0.01; \*p≤0.05; †p≤0.10.

Source: Bogdan Voicu, Monica Șerban. 2012. Immigrant participation in voluntary associations across Europe, forthcoming in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.

One of the additional hypotheses claimed that a rich culture of associationism would determine higher involvement in associations. The effect is significant when considering bringing social capital, as expressed by involvement in expressive or in instrumental-utilitarian associations. The result is an important prerequisite for my interest towards contextual determinants of values and behaviours, which is described as future research agenda in the second part of this habitation thesis.

Monica Șerban, Bogdan Voicu. 2010. Romanian migrants to Spain: in or outside the migrant networks - a matter of time?, *Revue d'études comparatives Est-Ouest*, 41(4): 97-124. [Impact factor, 2009: 0.333]

This paper looks at the migration networks and discusses the dynamics of the relations in the migrant communities. Social networks are often a determinant factor in the initiation of migration behaviors (Arango, 2000a, Massey et al. 1998). They continue to manifest their influence after migration, migrants being involved in supporting new incoming flows, particularly from home society (Boyd, 1989; Massey et al., 1987; Gurak and Caces, 1992; Espinosa and Massey, 1999; Tilly, 1990; Tilly, 2007). Our paper investigates this issue from the perspective of how long a migrant continues to be involved in migration networks. Our claim is that interest to involve in such networks decreases with the time spent in the host society. Assimilation, emphasis of local networks, need for increased comfort, saturation of potential recipients of help tend to decrease involvement in migrant networks. However, in the initial phase of migration, affiliation needs lead to increased involvement in helping other migrants (our measure for migrant networks).

Data collected from a sample of roughly 900 Romanian migrants to four Spanish communities located around Madrid provide the opportunity to test for our hypotheses. We have employed OLS regression. The results (displayed in Table 10) confirm our initial expectations. The involvement in migrant networks increases immediately after arriving to host society (in our case, Spain), and starts decreasing soon after. The peak is approximately after 15 months for hosting and 11 months for job finding. In the case of lending money, the helping behaviour starts decreasing after 3.8 years (46 months).



Table 10. Results of the regression models: standardised regression coefficients

Independent variables		Dependent variables			
		Hosting	Finding a House	Finding a Job	Lending Money
Time	Time since coming to Spain (years)	0.414 ***	0.017	0,193 +	0,010
	Time since coming to Spain: squared	-0.346 **	0.019	-0.174	-0.069
Structure of social relations	Frequent interaction with Romanians (immigrants) in Spain	0.069 +	0.091 *	0.139 ***	0.106 **
	Relations with Spanish people	0.025	0.068	0.162 ***	0.022
	Relations with non-Romanian migrants to Spain	0.106 **	-0.012	0.052	-0.009
Language skills	Self-rating of Spanish proficiency	0.011	-0.042	-0.066 +	-0.045
Contacts with Romania	Frequent phone contacts with Romania	0.093 *	0.098 **	0.077 *	0.075 *
	Visits from Romania (past 12 months)	0.141 ***	0.002	0.006	0.017
	Visiting Romania (past 12 months)	0.053	0.161 ***	0.084 *	0.097 **
	Frequency of sending remittances	-0.033	-0.030	-0.116 **	-0.029
	Intends to return to Romania	-0.043	-0.008	0.037	-0.016
Initial migration	(initial) Network migration	0.021	-0.026	0.006	0.011
Personal characteristics & resources	Female	0.010	-0.100 **	-0.128 ***	-0.079 *
	Year of birth	0.004	-0.104 *	-0.063	0.014
	Education	-0.079 *	-0.035	-0.050	0.015
	Net monthly income	0.011	-0.026	-0.006	0.162 ***
Explained variation	R <sup>2</sup>	0.095	0.087	0.143	0.085
	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.075	0.067	0.124	0.065

\*\*\* p≤0,001; \*\* p≤0,01; \* p≤0,05; + p≤0,10. Source: Monica Șerban, Bogdan Voicu. 2010. Romanian migrants to Spain: in or outside the migrant networks - a matter of time?, *Revue d'études comparatives Est-Ouest*, 41(4): 97-124.

Bogdan Voicu, Mălina Voicu. 2009. Volunteers and volunteering in Central and Eastern Europe, *Sociologia. Slovak Sociological Review* 41(6): 539-563. [Impact factor: 0.173]

This paper uses WVS/EVS 1999-2001 data to discuss lower levels of volunteering in Eastern Europe. The paper employs multilevel models to show that the effect of living in former communist societies on the propensity to volunteer continues to manifest even after controlling for the usual determinants of voluntary participation in associations. However, the effect becomes insignificant when controlling for the presence of the participation culture. In the light of this thesis, this is further support for the need to contextualize behaviors and attitudes.

Bogdan Voicu. 2010. *Social Capital in Romania at the beginning of the Milenium: Traveller in the no-friends land?*, Iași: Lumen (in Romanian language).

This book collects papers on social capital that I have wrote in the past 10 years. The exception is the final chapter in which participation in associations, social trust, confidence in institutions and frequency to meet friends are separately predicted. The aim is to show that they are embedded in the participatory culture of the country of residence, and that East and West do not share the same type of culture. I use an argument

from Roesler (2003) to indicate that it is likely that the patterns to exploit land in the seventeenth century were different in the East and in the West. West of Elba, Europeans used to face common issues regarding cropping, which involved common action. In the East, the property was mainly of landlords, with no common decisions to make. Lack of cooperative customs, I argue, is likely to be a source for the nowadays deficit of participative culture to be found in the East.

### Community studies: measuring bridging social capital in rural communities

I briefly summarize in this section some of the papers reporting on participation and trust in small Romanian communities.

#### EDITED JOURNAL ISSUE

*Sociologie Românească*, 2010, VIII (2): Community Studies. (indexed in Index Copernicus Database, Sociological Abstracts / ProQuest database)

Bogdan Voicu. 2010. Community and community studying, *Sociologie românească*, VIII (2): 3-7. (indexed in Sociological Abstracts / ProQuest database)

Bogdan Voicu, Daniel Arpinte, Claudia Petrescu, Mihnea Preotesi, Cristina Tomescu. 2010. Research notes on studying rural communities in current Romania, *Sociologie românească*, VIII (2): 118-144. (indexed in Sociological Abstracts / ProQuest database)

In 2010 I have edited this issue of *Sociologie românească* journal. It resulted from a long term interest to community study. When a student and shortly after I was active in the studies carried out in rural Romania by Professor Vintilă Mihăilescu. Later, my interest in social capital and participation, and the opportunity to carry out empirical research in small communities merged, and providing interesting data to feed the hypotheses that I latter tested in quantitative analyses. This edited issue of *Sociologie românească* resulted from a call for papers that we have addressed to Romanian and international community. A little more than a third of the received papers were accepted, sometimes after several rounds of double blind-peer reviews and answers to comments. The opening paper in the journal is my presentation of the journal. The paper that I have co-authored proposes a mixed-methods approach to community study.

#### EDITED BOOK

Mălina Voicu, Bogdan Voicu, coordinators. 2006. *Satul românesc pe drumul către Europa* [Romanian village on its way to Europe], Iași: Polirom.

Bogdan Voicu. 2006. Participare, spirit comunitar, capital social [Participation, community action, social capital], în Mălina Voicu, Bogdan Voicu, eds. 2006. *Satul românesc pe drumul către Europa*, Iași: Polirom: 41-56.

Bogdan Voicu. 2006. Viață comunitară și acțiune colectivă în cele șase sate [Community life and collective action in the six villages], în Mălina Voicu, Bogdan Voicu, eds. 2006. *Satul românesc pe drumul către Europa*, Iași: Polirom: 211-221.

The book exploits community studies carried out by six teams of researchers, in six different rural communities in Romania. Our teams entered repeatedly in the six communities, during an entire year (2005), tracing the impact of complex communication campaign. Social capital was part of the study in each of the six villages. The first of my two chapters describes the state of art in studying social capital at

community level, the reasons for the chosen methodology, and launch hypothesis related to the impact of a communication program undertaken by EC delegation in Bucharest to raise awareness on the importance of participative behaviors. The second authored chapter analyses the results of the six case studies, summarizes their main conclusions regarding participation and trust in the six communities. I conclude that the communities are different with respect to social capital, and the difference may be resulting from a long-time history of participation in the respective localities.

Bogdan Voicu, Dana Nițulescu. 2007. Rahova-Uranus: un „cartier dormitor”? [Rahova-Uranus: A 'dormitory neighbourhood'?), *Calitatea Vieții* nr. 3-4/2007: 253-281.

In this short paper, my colleague Dana Nițulescu and I exploit data from a small research that we have carried out in the Rahova-Uranus neighborhoods in Bucharest. We have designed the research and coordinated it. A team of four BA students carried out in depth interviews with young inhabitants in the area, to assess how they perceive and use their neighborhood. We concluded that Rahova-Uranus is rather a neighborhood where people come to sleep. Lack of leisure facilities and of any type of public space, except for newly built park, contributed to the situation.

### Synthesis of my main contributions to knowledge

- Analyzing the impact of existing social capital at individual level on welfare attitudes is new to the current literature. In the paper written with Mălina Voicu and published in *Revista de Cercetare și Intervenție Socială*, we have shown that formalized social capital determines attitudes more favorable to a broader scope of the state. At the opposite, less formal social capital has the opposite effect.
- Immigrant participation in the associations than the ones of migrants is rarely analyzed in the literature. The paper coauthored with Monica Șerban to be published by *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* contributes to this literature. It provides information on differences induced by different types of voluntary organizations, on the effect of the time spent in the host society, and also indicates that the cultures rich in associationism provide participatory patterns which are followed by their members.
- The curvilinear impact of length of staying in the host society on immigrants' participation in migrant networks is an original idea that I have developed with my colleague Monica Șerban in the paper published by *Revue d'Études Comparatives East-Ouest*.
- In several of my papers I have claimed that a participative culture is to explain differences in individual participation in various European societies. I tested the argument when comparing East and West, or when assessing immigrant participation in associations.

## Part 2: Current and future research agenda

### CONTEXTUAL DETERMINANTS OF VALUE CHANGE

Character Count: 24.742 (imposed size by the law: 15.000-25.000 characters)

I do not define my research agenda for the next few years as a compact project, but as a flexible one. However, there is a core to my interest, which I have already started to pursue, and which I describe in the next 25.000 characters. It is more likely that several smaller projects will derive from here, but the bellow-research program will be the glue to link them together.

#### Overview

My main interest is social change, particularized for the case of international migrants. They grow up in a certain *origin* culture than travel to a new *host* society. The main question is how this double contextuality determines values, attitudes and behaviors. I start from theories of social values. Two streams of literature become important, dealing with modernization, respectively, institutionalization as source for value formation and change (Arts, 2011; Gundelach, 1994; Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart & Baker, 2000). I use them to build up a general conceptual framework in which values become dependent on material conditions and the cultural context during formative years, on the institutional context in which they live, and on the cultural norms in their host society. This conceptual framework applies to any individual. However, it is easier to test it employing Dinesen's (2011) idea to use international migration as a vast natural experiment. The basic hypothesis is that migrants' values, attitudes and behaviors continue to depend on the culture of origin, while they gradually integrate into the culture of destination and become similar to native population. This leads to a double-contextuality, also shaped by several structural conditions in the two societies.

I use four different fields to test the hypotheses: civic participation and social trust (A1), welfare attitudes (A2), housework sharing (A3), school achievements (A4). A1 (through social trust) and A2 directly address values and value change. A1 and A3 address behaviors, seen as manifestation of values. In A3, the impact of gender values is also considered. A4 refers a particular behavior, related to resource accumulation. The respective resource is extremely important in value change (Beck & Beck, 2001; Giddens, 1990; Inkeles, 1969) and may lead to changes in second generation migrants. The four fields are chosen such as: (a) to cover both values, their manifestations (behaviours and attitudes), and their determinants, like human capital, which acquisition may lead to further convergence to the patterns in the host society; (b) to address different spheres of life, including public and private ones; (c) to fit my previous research and publication experience; (d) to include domains for which at least reasonable measurements are already included in the available international comparative surveys.

## On value formation and change

Being social, the values of individuals are formed within the 'social factory' provided by collectivity. Considering the potential for values to change, scholars proposed two alternative models. The first conceives culture as persistent and stable trait, leaving little room if any for change (Hofstede, 2001; Schwartz, 1994). In the second, culture becomes an adaptive tool that allows individuals and humankind to survive and prosper, changing accordingly to changes in social environment (Ogburn, 1973; Inglehart, 1997). The focus of this project is on value change. Without ignoring the first approach, I will discuss mainly this second stream of literature, particularly reading it through the lenses of the interest for the impact that social context may have on individual values.

Within this literature, the best known theory of value change is to be found in the theories of modernization. They provide two important mechanisms for values formation. The first claims that values are created mainly during primary socialization and tend to remain unchanged over the entire lifetime (Inglehart, 1997). The second argues that values change during adulthood as well, due to the pervasive influence of social institutions such family patterns, welfare arrangements, or the linguistic and cultural homogeneity of the nation (Gundelach, 1994; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002) or to (rapid) changes in material conditions (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

The first approach finds roots in Mannheim's (1952) theory of generations: society change when generations change. In Mannheim's view, what generations have in common is a shared life experience, which extends over the entire lifespan, and makes contemporaneity less contemporaneous, but embedded in the past. Inglehart's (1997) hypothesis of value formation and the generation theory share this idea of embeddedness of values in generations. However, for Inglehart, the material conditions within society and family are the ones to determine value formation during primary socialization. Growing up in an abundant world leads to more postmaterial values, while scarcity would emphasize material values. Such values are difficult to change during adulthood.

Including primary socialization as main source for value formation is common for almost all scholars on social values. Many of them add the possibility of value change at mature years, the second above-mentioned approach. Classic modernization theories assume that increasing knowledge determines the possibility to rationally understand and plan life, and culture changes during this process (Inkeles, 1969; Welzel, 2007). Science advancement is reflected in education and exposure to technological progress. They change individual's (shared) perspectives and, reshuffling representations on the social environment, led to value change. Such change does not occur solely during formative years. Inkeles (1969: 213-214) described factory as a "school for modernity" where informal learning occurs. He stressed that, exposing people to various knowledge, both school and factory provide learning structures, as well as organization patterns. One may extend the idea to the increasing life-long-learning that contemporaneity experiences. It transforms learning into a durable process which changes values in a persistent manner.

The postmaterialist theory relies rather on subjective interpretations of the social conditions. Such interpretations are mediated by factors like knowledge and mastering the social context. Continuous learning and exposure to knowledge may change the individual relations to the world, increasing (or decreasing) its feelings of security and contributing to value change. Society in itself, through social networks, media, cultural consumption, daily life as a whole is an increasing source of learning. Consequently, if it is rich enough in information, it may constantly offer fuel for change.

Another source of change during adulthood is the (sudden) change of objective conditions within society, such as periods of recession and uncertainty (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). When confronting to changes that impede developing the usual life style and fulfilling the certain levels of security, people start adopting “those values that fit given external conditions” (Inglehart, Welzel, 2005: 38). This solves their dissonance between expectations and possibilities, allows them to better cope with the new situation. Scholars on late modern, postmodern, reflexive modernity, and risk society, like Giddens (1990) and Beck & Beck-Gernsheim (2002), also describe cultural changes as adaptive, i.e. as responses to the transformation of material and institutional conditions. This introduces to the current discussion a third contextual source for change, along with material conditions and existing knowledge: institutions. Gundelach (1994: 38) noted that “countries are characterized by different institutional characteristics and these institutional characteristics have impact on values of the population”, and coined out family patterns, the welfare arrangements and the linguistic and cultural homogeneity of the nation as relevant social institutions. According to Beck & Beck-Gernsheim (2002, ch. 12) internalization of existing institutions, no matter if family, state, or market, is the one that shapes values. They provide daily-life patterns and propose values different from the traditional ones.

The above discussion leads to three important assumptions regarding value formation and change: (a) social values form during primary socialization, but may change over time; (b) values have adaptive function, and this is one source of change: they change in order to better cope with a changing social environment; (c) learning is another source of change, and society – as embedding knowledge, is a source for learning. I argue that, within the modernization theories there is explicit incorporation of at least two contextual factors that may lead to changing values is individuals. (1) Material conditions act as opportunities or barriers for change. (2) Social institutions provide patterns for values to be learnt, and impose constraints to cope with, activating the adaptive functionality of value and value change.

I add a third element: (3) cultural norms, seen as the dominant social values that are shared by people within a certain society. They create a general reference framework for individuals, and may implicitly force them to consider and adopt at least partially. For instance, a society with wide-spread religious values will tend to influence individuals who are part of it or who become part of it to take over such values, adapting to existing social conditions, in order to integrate or to cope with their situation. As compared to social institutions, which can also be defined as wide-spread social values, what I call ‘cultural norms’ is not or much less formalized through sets of written laws. They act more in the sense of the group norms. If one does not follow them, one risks tacit marginalization or even exclusion outside the group.

Cultural norms are important when considering international migrants. When traveling from a society to another, cultural norms change along with institutional environment and the material conditions. However, very often, the cultural norms in the country of origin continue to be part of the relevant context. Contemporary communication and transportation allows it. Flights became increasingly affordable, boosting connectivity to the home social network, while satellite TV and Internet smoothen continuous embeddedness in the culture of the country of origin.

This is the soil in which the current project plants its seeds: studying individual change under conditions of international migration. The question is if and how long the origin continues to produce effects, and if the gap between the cultural context in the country of origin and the one in the country of current residence is important in determining values and behaviors.

Several recent papers also explicitly considered context as shaping values. They refer to specific values. Neller (2008) focuses on social trust, Gelissen (2007) analyses environmental attitudes, Voicu & Constantin (2012) discuss gender values etc. As Arts (2011) noted, these papers structure an emerging multilevel approach to analyzing values and value change, which implies combining of the hypothesis of formative socialization and the one of institutionalization. This is the general idea and the research stream that the present project follows. Without neglecting the individual-level effects such as education and exposure to knowledge, I consider individuals as dependent on contextual factors.

## Assimilation and transnationalism

Assimilation theories are useful for my project adding potential interaction effects. The effect of host, respectively origin culture on individual values may depend on factors like the stock of immigrants in host society, the size of own migrant group, the intensity of contacts with origin, the residential dispersion (suggesting that effects at community level should be considered as well).

All theories of assimilation focus on material and easily detectable aspects, which describe inequalities between ethnic groups: occupation, school attendance and achievement, income, housing. They also provide hints regarding the mechanisms through which the minorities groups adopt standards of the dominant groups(s). With other words, this is how immigrants start displaying similar characteristics, including social values, as the native population in the host country.

Classic assimilation theory (CAT) is normative, and reduces everything to a situation in which poor migrants move to a better developed and homogenous host society. This is not the case anymore: in their late modern transformation, societies become more diverse, and differences are increasingly accepted, being reinforced to be respected by formal institutional frameworks. The size of migrant ethnic groups is large enough to establish important reference groups, such do the Turkish in Germany, the Portuguese in

Luxembourg, or the Romanians in Spain. Not all migrants are low-skilled, and often the host society is not much more developed as compared to origin.

Two streams of literature reshaped CAT (Esser, 2010), redefining it to suit a more fluid postmodern world. Segmented assimilation theory (SAT) (Portes et al., 2005; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006) denies CAT's reductionisms, adding new outcomes to the assimilation process: the minority ethnic group keeps its distinct identity, although this might change, and selective acculturation occurs. Migrants start forming their own (quasi-)ethnic groups, start to behave as natives, but keep identity, while internal stratification occurs within group. The new assimilation theory (NAT), keeps the strong assumption of complete assimilation, but states that there is no longer only one segment of the society which offers a dominant pattern to be learned by newcomers (Alba & Nee, 1997, 2003). Society is diverse, and assimilation may follow different patterns. A mainstream culture continues to exist, as a binder for the society. It also is the pillar around which assimilation eventually occurs. Contrary to SAT, internal stratification of the ethnic group is a marginal outcome, without impact on the assimilation.

## Particularizing the theoretical background: the four fields

**Social trust & participation.** Trust is a moral value (Uslaner, 2002), and it was described as part of the values expressing postmodern orientations (Inglehart, 1997). Two streams of literature discuss importance of context in trust formation: one gives priority to primary socialization, the second underline the importance of current context (Dinesen, 2011; Rothstein, 2003; Stolle and Hooghe, 2004). Consequences of international migration on trust were often considered, the debate being boosted by Putnam's (2007) paper. However, the cultural luggage of migrants was rather rarely addressed in the past. Recently, several papers focused on the topic, being argued that the culture of origin and even the one of the ancestors leaves a strong footprint on civic orientations (Bagno, 2006; Dinesen, 2011; Dinesen & Hooghe, 2011; Nannestad & Svendsen, 2005; Rice & Feldman, 1997; Soroka et al, 2007; Uslaner, 2008). Most of these papers use macro-level analysis, to show that there is correlation between average levels of trust of immigrants in a specific society, and the ones in their home country. Dinesen & Hooghe (2011) also consider the impact of the host culture, but do not get in further details.

Participation in associations is often studied in multilevel environment (Meulemann, 2008). Migrant involvement in associations and differences to native population is usually explained using various individual factor and some contextual ones (Voicu & Șerban, 2012). The references to the embeddedness in origin culture are rare. When present, they address mainly the aggregate level, not controlling for the structure of migrant population (e.g. Rice & Feldman, 1997; Bagno, 2006), or reducing the scope of analyses to a specific country (Voicu & Rusu, 2012).

**Welfare attitudes.** Most of the literature connecting welfare attitudes and migration focuses on impact of increasing stocks of immigrants on the attitudes of (native) population (Eger, 2010; Finseraas, 2008; Mau &



Burkhart, 2009; Schierup et al. 2006; Sundberg, 2011; van Oorschot, 2010). To the best of my knowledge, only three studies explicitly investigate immigrants' welfare attitudes: Bonin et al (2006), Dacnygier & Saunders (2006), Bergh & Fink (2009). Others (Borjas, 1993, 1999) assume that one of the reasons to migrate is the "welfare magnet" represented by the benefits in the host countries. None of these studies considers the cultural double-contextuality as an explanatory factor, although the welfare magnet explanation might be developed in the respective direction. On the other hand, social policy analyses discuss the interdependence between the welfare attitudes and the welfare regimes, and the welfare attitudes embeddedness in local culture (Edlund, 1999; Evans, 1996; Gelissen, 2002; Pfau-Effinger, 2005; Svallfors, 1997; Taylor-Gooby, 1995; van Oorschot, 2000). Asking if immigrants' welfare attitudes aren't also originated in their origin culture becomes legitimate. The cultural gap might be even more important for those migrants who drastically change context, migrating, for instance, from a residual welfare regime to a social-democratic one.

**Housework sharing.** The cultural embeddedness of couple behavior, and the fact that housework sharing is expression for gender values, made me considering the topic as interesting from the perspective of this project. Previous studies on domestic work among immigrants (Falicov, 2007; Goldscheider et al, 2011; Huschek et al. 2011; Min, 1992, 2001; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1993, 1999; Macial et al, 2009; Parrado & Flippen, 2005; Yu, 2006) noticed differences to native population, which seem to converge towards the double-contextuality that I claim. The above-mentioned studies refer to specific ethnic groups of immigrants, or to a specific society, usually to both. Testing for the relation in comparative perspective will increase knowledge in the field, and will strengthen my theory.

**School achievement.** The impact of home country is usually conceived as deriving from the language spoken at home, seen as indicator for closeness to the host country (Entorf & Minoiu, 2004; Fossati, 2011). Current data availability (particularly careful measurement of home country in PISA) makes it possible. Rangvid (2007), Azzolini et al (2012), Zynovieva et al (2008) noticed this in the case of Denmark, Italy and Spain. They showed that the usual individual and contextual determinants of school achievements explain only partly the immigrant-native gap, and speculated that school culture and composition may account for the rest. , I would expect that the school culture of achievement depend on the cultural traits of pupils and their families. Other previous studies on immigrant achievements within particular societies like Germany (Kristen & Granato, 2007), Norway (Fekjær, 2007), Israel (Leopold & Shovit, 2011), or Belgium (Phalet et al. 2007) show that the impact of parental cultural capital on students achievement is lower for specific immigrant groups, but not for all. This might be indeed the effect of cultural differences, which decrease the cultural capital ability to travel and to convert in the educational capital of the migrants' children. The size of the cultural gap between origin and host may play an important role. Serbia's reverse situation, with immigrants overachieving as compared to migrants (Šori et al, 2011), as well as the South-Asians in Canada and the US (Abada & Tenkorang, 2009; Zhou & Kim, 2006; Zhou & Xiong, 2005) may also be explained considering the cultural luggage that immigrant bring to the host society.

## Main contributions to knowledge development

Scholars of political attitudes and behaviors suggested proposed three different theories to explain the patterns that immigrants follow. They include *resilience* (political attitudes and behaviors are acquired during early socialization, therefore migrants do not change; Sears & Valentino, 1997; Ester et al., 2006), *exposure* (migrants change at contact with host institutions; White et al, 2008), and *transferability* (migrants adapt their values and behaviors acquired at origin and use them in the host environment; Simpson Bucker, 2005; White et al., 2008). Voicu & Rusu (2012) showed that such approaches may also be useful when considering participation in civic associations.

My project extends this idea, and enriches it by explicitly adding the cultural norms as part of the context. I propose a broader conceptual framework of value change, suggesting that such frameworks applies to all individuals, no matter if international migrant or not, and focuses to structural conditions that may influence the process. Developing such a framework is my **first goal**. It includes developing the hypotheses related to various interactions between the double-context and its structural conditions, as well as to the distance between the two contexts. Testing the general theory in the four specific fields is the **second objective**. Some specific additional hypotheses have to be developed and tested in each of the fields as well. In all of these fields there are studies that partially cover my type of approach. However, none of them does it completely, covering both the influence of host and origin while controlling for other individual and contextual determinants. My preliminary hypotheses and results suggest that the general connectivity of origin to its migrants may lead to increasing the effect of origin culture; the higher the stock of immigrants in the host society, the higher the impact of its culture would, particularly due to diversity and flexible dominant culture; also, older migrants will change less, due to longer exposure to origin culture; when migrating to a more modern society, the change is faster. I have no space to develop these assumptions here. They are completely new or at most rarely explored in the existing literature.

## Methodology

Considering the double contextuality, one needs as predictors both indicators for origin (OI) and for the host society (HI). Comparing across countries, impose using comparative datasets. EVS 2008 is one of the few large-scale surveys to provide information about where respondents were born (the name of the country). It includes respondents from 47 hosts and 152 origins, and will be the primary individual-level data source for analyzing civic participation, trust, and welfare attitudes. EVS 2008 does not provide information on housework sharing, but ESS does. PISA will be used in the case of student achievement. For ESS and PISA several waves will be pooled in order to increase the number of level-2 cases (both origins and hosts).

WVS/EVS 1999, 2005, and 2008 waves provide information for 84 societies, covering the origin of all natives and some 90% of the immigrants in the EVS 2008. This data will be used to derive OI (such as, for instance, the percentage of people in the origin country which display social trust). The 1999-present waves

of TIMSS, PIRLS and PISA will be used to derive OI referring school performance. Indicators for host culture (HI) will be computed similarly.

Each of the two contexts is three-folded, including material conditions, institutional frameworks, and cultural norms. Considering the origin, it might be difficult to reconstruct comparable information regarding the institutional frameworks and material condition at the birth of each respondent. However, it's not the institutions and conditions at birth which currently produce effects, but their consequences, the social values of the respective generations. Therefore, the cultural indicators are enough to control for the effects of origin. Other country level indicators will be retrieved from the public data sets (OECD, World Bank, UNDP, IMF, Transparency International, Freedom House etc. Each individual being nested in both origin and host, cross-classified (multilevel) models will be employed.

Cross-sectional data has the advantage of higher number of immigrants and contexts. However, panel data would be more useful. For civic participation there is such data available (PSELL2), for the case of Luxembourg. Though old, such data was not exploited in the proposed sense yet. For PSELL2, HLM models will be employed, all individuals being nested in their origin contexts, and I will investigate individual change over time (1996-2000). Such analyses will complete the ones using EVS 2008 data.

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