

YOUTH STUDY ROMANIA 2018/2019

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YOUTH STUDIES SOUTHEAST EUROPE 2018/2019:

“FES Youth Studies Southeast Europe 2018/2019” is an international youth research project carried out simultaneously in ten countries in Southeast Europe: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia. The main objective of the surveys has been to identify, describe and analyse attitudes of young people and patterns of behaviour in contemporary society.

The data was collected in early 2018 from more than 10,000 respondents aged 14–29 in the above-mentioned countries who participated in the survey. A broad range of issues were addressed, including young peoples’ experiences and aspirations in different realms of life, such as education, employment, political participation, family relationships, leisure and use of information and communications technology, but also their values, attitudes and beliefs.

Findings are presented in ten national and one regional study and its accompanying policy papers, which have been published in both English and the respective national languages.

YOUTH STUDY ROMANIA 2018/2019

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1

INTRODUCTION

Why are we interested in the attitudes and behaviour of young people? Youth are important to study because age has been shown to be a strong predictor of a wide range of beliefs, knowledge and actions, and because teenagers and young adults tend to change faster when external conditions change. But also knowing what people do at a young age is important for the future. Research has, for instance, shown that young people who participated in the Vietnam protests are also more likely to protest later (Jennings, 2002). Not all types of behaviours are predicated to stay stable over a lifetime, however. Winston S. Churchill supposedly once observed that anyone who was not a liberal at 20 years of age had no heart, while anyone who was still a liberal at 40 had no head. With small variations, this saying has been attributed to Benjamin Disraeli, King Oscar II of Sweden, George Bernard Shaw, Georges Clemenceau, and many others.¹ It captures the widely shared belief that individuals change their political and social views as they grow older, but also the fact that there is a strong life-cycle pattern. To what extent are these views supported by empirical research? It would appear that it depends. While some authors claim that adolescents' attitudinal patterns remain relatively stable throughout the life cycle, others argue that answers provided by adolescents in political surveys have but a limited predictive value when it comes to their future attitudes and behaviour. Marc Hooghe and Britt Wilkenfeld have tackled this question by examining political trust, attitudes toward immigrants' rights and voting behaviour in eight European countries, and found that country patterns with regard to political trust and attitudes toward immigrant rights are already well established by the age of 14. Yet, they found less indications for stability in the relation between intention to vote and actual voting behaviour.

Although the persistence of adolescents' political attitudes and behaviours into adulthood is a perennial concern in research on developmental psychology, the empirical research has inherent limitations. One of the problems is that only a very small

proportion of youth studies include non-Western societies. Another limitation stems from the fact that the past contexts of youth socialisation tend to differ from current ones, which means that longitudinal studies with a longer timespan before first and last observations, which are ideal from a methodological point of view, are likely to suffer from obsolescence.

This study aims to address both types of problems. It is based on survey data on a sample that is representative for 15-to-29-year-old residents of Romania, and is part of a broad comparative research that includes nine other countries from southeast Europe, an under-researched and overlooked region with only scarce systematic data and analyses: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia. The analyses are structured by four categories of topics: (1) Education and employment, (2) Socioeconomic status and mobility, (3) Socio-political attitudes and political engagement, (4) Family life and leisure time.

At the same time, Romania in 2018 presents several characteristics that amply justify its importance for studying its young citizens. First, it is a society that faces significant democratic risks. There is a virtual consensus that Europe has slipped into a "democratic recession" in which new and old democracies alike have fallen victim to a "powerful authoritarian undertow" (Diamond 2014, Mudde 2013). In Europe, the governments of Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Austria have incorporated nationalist and neo-right policies that are seeping into their political institutions (Greskovits 2015).

Second, the rise of illiberal politics coincides, on a global level, with growing income inequality (Piketty 2014; Keeley 2015), and the literature maintains that inequality is harmful to democratic governance in both developed and post-transitional political systems (Fukuyama, Diamond, and Plattner 2012). Romania has not been immune to pressures toward illiberal democratic governance in the face of economic inequality. Whereas the European Union has seen relative stability in income distribution with an average Gini coefficient hovering near 31.0 for a decade,

Romania has averaged a Gini coefficient of 35.2 over the same period, with the latest figure being 37.4 in 2015 (European Commission 2017). During the 1990s, the Romanian Gini coefficient level was on par with Sweden at 22.7. Using the income quintile ratio (S80/S20) as an alternative measure, Romania (= 7.2) is well above the European Union average (= 5.2) and one of the most unequal countries among the 28 members.

Third, poverty and inequality are even more severe in the case of Romanian youth (Bădescu and Sum 2015). The young people neither in *employment* nor in education and training (NEET) indicator, which corresponds to the percentage of the population of a given age group and sex who are not employed and not involved in further education or training, shows that Romanian youth is facing one of the most difficult transition from education to work among the EU countries (Figure 1.1.).

The Romanian case is unusual in that it displays the second greatest differences between levels of education (after Malta), with Romanian's NEET rate for those persons having an intermediate level of education being 6 times higher than the one for those persons with a high level of education. Also, Romania exhibits one of the biggest differences in rates between cities and rural areas, with a gap of 12.6 percentage points.

Finally, another question regards the intensity and efficiency of youth political participation. The paradox of a society that has had the second highest growth rate among the EU countries over the last 20 years, but whose young citizens are among those facing the most precarious conditions, can be explained to some extent by a very unusual age distribution, the result of a 1966 law that banned abortion, resulting in double the number of

new-borns for a couple of years, and low fertility and high emigration after 1990. Data provided in Figure 1.2. show that percentages for youth are much smaller than those for middle-age citizens, especially those persons between 40 and 50 years old.

A lower percentage of the total population means less voice, which is then reflected in policies that tend to ignore this section of the population. Youth political participation has the potential to amplify this voice and, by doing so, to compensate for the demographic disadvantage. Yet, young generations are often depicted as disengaged from politics, apathetic and lacking interest in public matters (Quintelier 2007). An alternative view is that the young are not necessarily less active than the older generations, but what differs is their preference for specific types and channels of participation (Hooghe & Boonen 2016; Stolle & Hooghe 2005). Such preferences may be rooted in the specific understanding that young people have about citizenship and their means, as citizens, to influence public decisions (Dalton 2008). The growth of Internet communication and social networks provides new opportunities for youth to become active online or to reinforce their offline participation with Internet-mediated activism (Vissers & Stolle 2014). In addition, involvement in contentious forms of political participation is an important area where the young are particularly visible (Burean & Bădescu 2014).

This study aims to make a contribution in these debates by focusing on the case of young Romanians. By evaluating their attitudes, norms, values and behaviour, we will assess to what extent generational replacement is a key process driving social and political change, and what it portends for the future of democracy in Romania.

FIGURE 1.1: **Young people neither in employment nor in education and training, 15 to 29 years of age (NEET rates)**

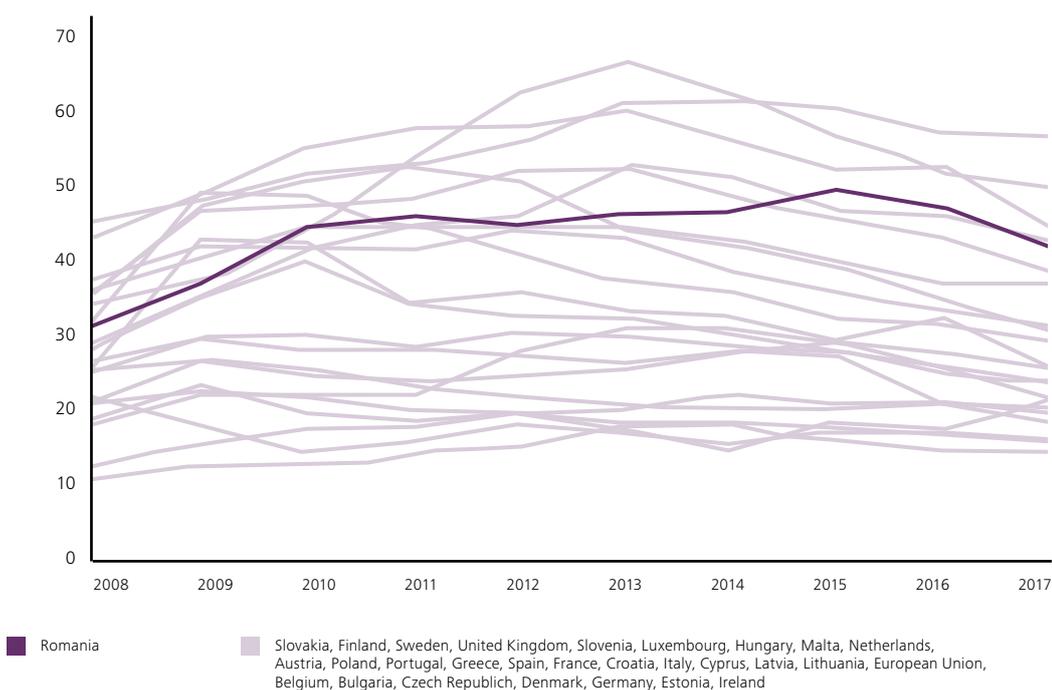
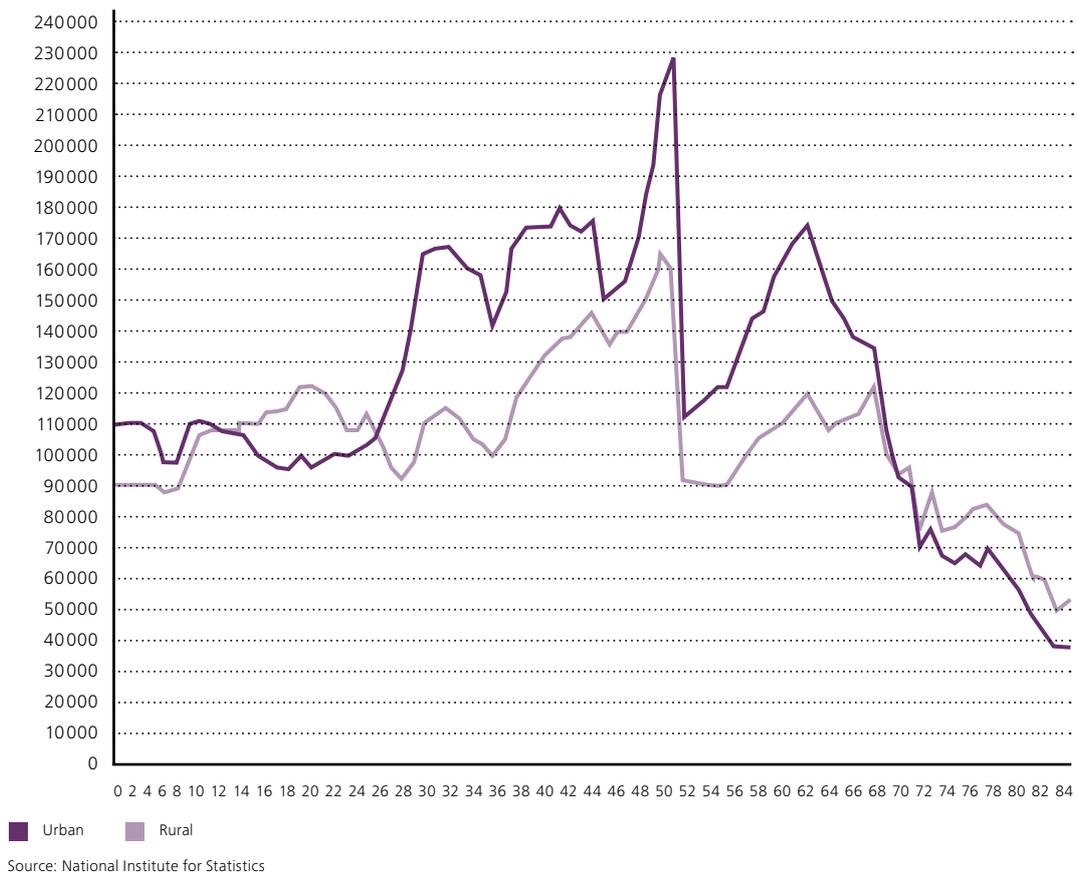


FIGURE 1.2: Resident population by age and urban/rural residence as of 1 January 2017



2

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The study of young people is important because it gives us an idea of a country's future, but also of how a country treats its most vulnerable at present. The topic is important not only in order to obtain a picture of existing disparities between youth, but also because, as mainstream academic research shows both in Romania and other countries, the socio-economic levels of young people as they are developing is one of the most influential factors in the description of their economic, social and political development in the course of their lives (Jennings and Niemi 1974; Niemi, Hepburn, and Chapman 2000; Chetty et al. 2014). Today's socio-economic context may greatly influence not only the beliefs and attitudes of today, but also those of the future.

More precisely, research on socialisation has shown that the socio-economic context in which young people find themselves during the "impressionable years"² will largely determine many of the attitudes and beliefs that they will hold for the rest of their lives (Neundorf and Smets 2017). For this reason, social mechanisms that connect certain social, economic or political beliefs to the broader societal context or individual traits also need to be identified for Romania. A more efficient understanding of such socialisation effects could contribute to developing a more cogent answer to the age-old question of what makes Romania different. The generation under study here is also relevant to post-communist Romania and its inherent institutional and societal transformation. The oldest respondents incorporated in our study were born in 1989, at the very end of the communist regime, while the youngest were born in 2004, within sight of Romania's accession to NATO and the European Union.

From this perspective, the general study of young people and society provides us with two important benefits: 1. A better understanding of the effect of age, or how respondents at a certain age interact with the socio-economic context and 2. A cohort or

generational effect, or how a certain generation of respondents who were exposed to similar instances of socialisation may have developed a certain set of attitudes or social beliefs.

As research in this field is still relatively in its infancy in Romania, this chapter aims to explore some of the mechanisms identified in the broader socialisation literature in the Romanian context, such as the effects of subjective and objective measurements of welfare, fears and hopes, religiosity and ultimately the extremely relevant subject of migration. Seeing that Romania has been one of the countries most exposed to migratory outflow in recent years in the European Union, the study of youth and the determinants of migration is one of the more relevant topics of research in the country.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF WELFARE IN ROMANIA

The survey includes multiple measurements of financial welfare, one of them relative, focusing on a personal comparison with a perceived average, while another one focuses on a Eurostat-like definition of family-level welfare by type of expenses.

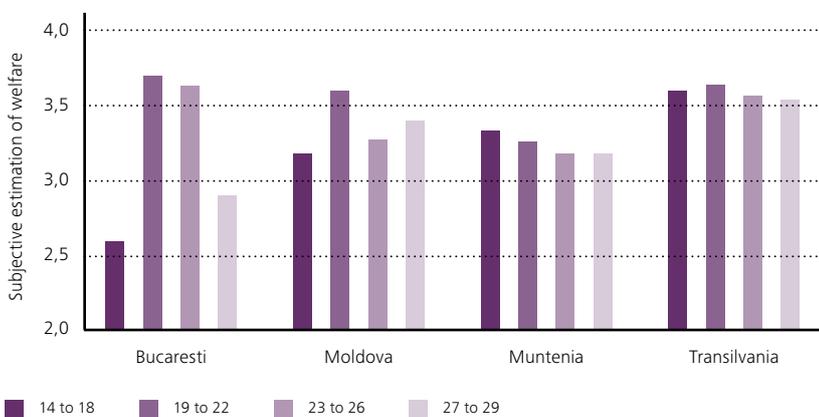
As expected, the relative indicator has an almost perfect normal distribution, with most people placing themselves at the average level, while the family welfare indicator suggests that more than 80 per cent of families consider themselves to have enough money to be able to cover expenses for bills, food and clothing.

Apart from these indicators, our research also offers a more objective indicator of possession of goods, which is also different from the above two indicators. This indicator is inspired by the Eurostat measurement for material deprivation and measures how many of the following goods the respondent's household

FIGURE 2.1 A: Objective and subjective plotting of welfare by region and age



FIGURE 2.1 B: Objective and subjective plotting of welfare by region and age



possesses: 1. A house or an apartment; 2. A mobile phone; 3. A personal computer; 4. A home Internet connection; 5. A bicycle; 6. A motorcycle; 7. Air conditioning; 8. A dishwasher; 9. A washing machine; 10. An automobile.³

The distribution of goods across the population seems to be relatively uniform, with about 20 per cent of all people between the ages of 14 and 29 living in households with less than five of the goods queried. The goods indicator is even less correlated to either of the previous ones, displaying correlation levels around 0.16, which indicates that the self-assessment of one's financial affluence is connected to more than just ownership of goods. Instead, there's a feeling of poverty that is more related to an inherent comparison with other people in the community, as well as social origin and aspirations.

The differences between the two can be clearly seen in Figure 2.1. We can observe that objective access to goods tends to decrease with the passage of time, as young people move out of their family's household, where they have benefited from the welfare of the family, to start their own household or family. The decrease in access to goods with the passing of time appears to be mildest in Bucharest, which is also by far the richest region of the country and also a major university centre of the country. Youth

from other regions tend to move to the largest cities in the region or toward Bucharest, thereby making people who stay behind after a certain age appear significantly less well-off.

On the flipside, subjective estimations of welfare seem to be more stable across time/stages of maturity, which also underpins the idea that the subjective estimation of welfare is connected to more than just immediate access to material goods. The one exception to this rule seems to also be Bucharest, which exhibits a greater variation. Still, this variation is not statistically significant, which could be most easily explained by the high rate of change in the population of Bucharest, especially after the age of 20.

Indeed, the strongest driver of these differences in welfare is not age, but parental education. Regression models indicate with a high level of significance that young people both of whose parents have more than a high-school diploma tend to be much better off, both in subjective and objective terms.

Regarding the factors that drive the difference in levels of subjective and objective welfare reported, the most important and constant differentiating factors seem to be the size of the municipality and parental education of the respondents. The two may very well be connected, as larger cities tend to attract more

FIGURE 2.2 A: **Objective and subjective welfare by country**

Objective Welfare Representations

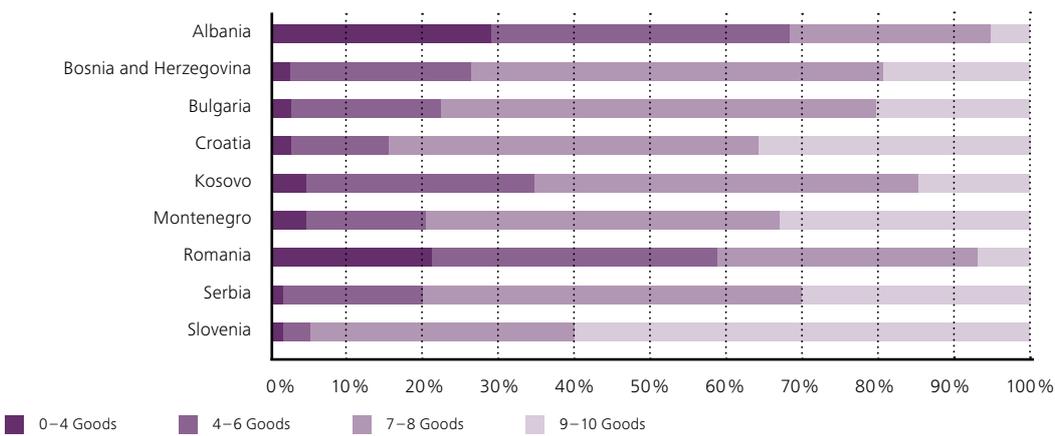
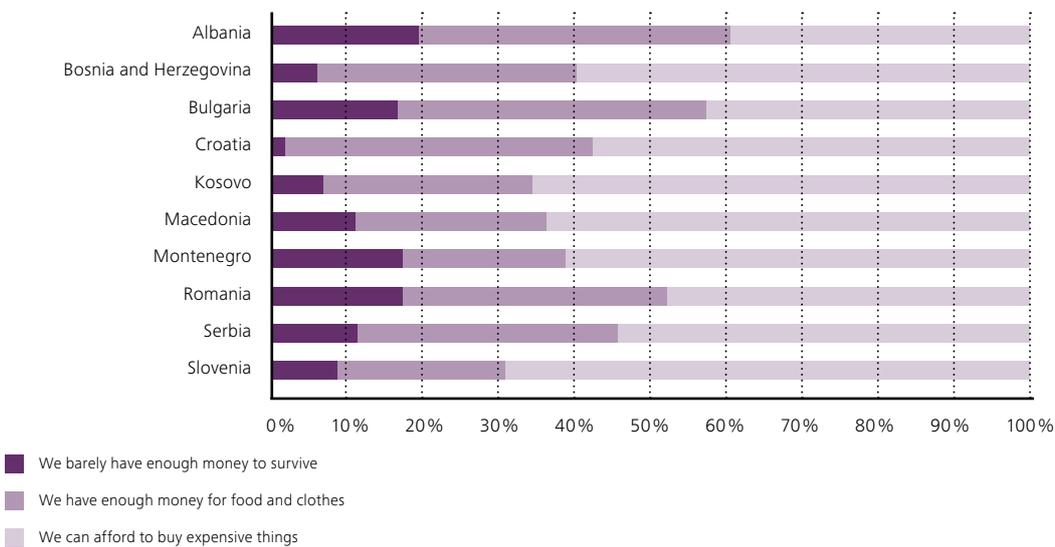


FIGURE 2.2 B: **Objective and subjective welfare by country**

Subjective Welfare Representations



educated people, therefore accounting for both the pull factor for educated parents and better access to goods, respectively a more positive estimation of subjective welfare. There are some things to note in this relationship, though. While parental education has effects on both varieties of welfare, these effects are independent of each other, as confirmed by regression analysis. In other words, it is likely that parental education itself has two types of independent effects on the estimation of a respondent’s welfare: 1. More educated parents tend to own more goods, but also 2. More educated parents socialise their children to feel better off, independently of how many goods they own (Jennings and Niemi 2014; Chetty et al. 2011).

Another interesting dynamic factor to observe is the one pertaining to the effect of age. Advances in age seem to have a negative effect on objective welfare, but a small positive effect on subjective welfare (which is also significant in regression analyses). More simply put, while older respondents tend to own few-

er goods, especially as they are starting a new household, they also seem to see themselves as being less poor the more independent they become.

Another extremely important finding illustrated in these results is the fact that poverty (both objective and subjective) seems to be characteristic not only of rural areas (population under 5,000 people), but also of small and very small towns (both 5–10,000 people and 10–100,000 people).⁴ While this finding is not particularly novel, especially in research concerning poverty in former communist countries, it does confirm that anti-poverty measures are needed not only in rural Romania, but also in smaller towns, many of which have been artificially upgraded from village status to achieve a higher rate of urbanisation (European Commission 2017; The World Bank 2018; Tesliuc, Grigoras, and Stanculescu 2015). While about 25 per cent of the population of 14-to-29-year-olds live in villages with fewer than 5000 inhabitants, another 37 per cent of this segment of the

population live in towns and small cities of between 5000 and 100,000 people.

As we can see in the country-by-country comparison in Figure 2.2., the finding that objective and subjective welfare are not aligned seems to be generalizable. While respondents from Romania, Bulgaria and Albania believe themselves to be significantly poorer than respondents from other countries, GDP/capita figures show that is not the actual case, with Kosovo and Macedonia being significantly lower. Clearly, subjective estimations of welfare go beyond actual economic conditions and are also closely connected to private cultural factors, such as pride and desirability. The tentative hypothesis that subjective representations of income are related to the country's inequality level could be seen as passing the first empirical test, with Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia and Slovenia ranking exactly according to the most recent developments of the income quintile share ratio of inequality. More research into the topic would be necessary to further validate this hypothesis.

On the other hand, we can also see that plotting of objective welfare does not fully align with GDP/capita figures, either, although variation seems much less limited in this case.

PERSONAL AND SOCIETY-LEVEL PERSPECTIVES OF THE FUTURE

Inherent in the discussion about the socio-economic situation of young people is a discussion about their expectations for the future. Here our research identifies three different types of general expectations: respondents' expectation about what the future will bring to them personally, what the future will have to offer for the country in general and what the future has in store for the people of Romania. These three different types of expectation allow us to better understand the dynamics of young people and their involvement and expectations about the future.

TABLE 2.1: Population-, society- and personal-level perspectives on the future

How do you see the economic situation of Romanian people in the future?	How do you see the future of Romanian society in general?	How do you see your personal future?
32	28	4
31	26	16
37	46	80

Data in Table 2.1. show that there is a significant distinction between the three different perspectives on the future. While young people believe their personal future will almost certainly improve, they are less certain when it comes to the future of the country or the people. This difference, while being a reliable sign

of self-reliance, also translates into apprehension on the part of young people that their aspirations may push them to leave the country or, at the very least, become detached from the realities of the entire Romanian society (Tesliuc, Grigoras, and Stanculescu 2015). This finding echoes the well-known economic diagnostic that Romania's development is unequal, with a few major urban university centres which have grown at a faster pace than anywhere else in Europe, and the rest of the country, which has tended to become poorer, older and is still overly-reliant on agriculture or low-productivity industry (Tesliuc et al. 2014; Hanley 2000; Sandu et al. 2004).

Even if most young people expect their future to improve, there are significant within-group differences, the most notable of which is connected to one's educational aspirations. As

Two important factors that influence young people's expectations about the future are their subjective incomes and their ages. People who tend to see themselves as poor and unable to deal with their expenses are, as expected, significantly less hopeful about their future. The same holds true for those who are objectively less well-off. As expected, the category least hopeful about the future is the poorest category. In addition, another differentiating factor in terms of confidence in the future seems to be age. While young people up to the age of 22 seem more confident about their future, optimism seems to dwindle with the passage of time – and dramatically so after the age of entry into the labour market. Young people between 27 and 29 years of age, while still generally optimistic, are also on average significantly more temperate in their optimism than younger cohorts.

As we can see from Table 2.2., Romania's case does not seem to be unique in the region. Most young people from the countries studied report seeing their personal future to be much better than the present. What is more, this belief seems even stronger in countries that are currently in a more desperate situation, such as Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro. We see a similar effect of current development on evaluations of the future for the country as a whole, although – just as in the case of Romania – it seems young people are much more certain that their own situation will improve than they are that the overall country's situation will improve. As we can see, young people from Albania and Kosovo seem much more confident that their countries will also fare much better in the future. The only countries where respondents seem not very convinced of the future seem to be Slovenia, which is a country that has already reached Western European economic development levels and further development at the same pace seems unlikely, and Macedonia. While reasons for this reticence toward Macedonia's future are likely to be complex, they may also be connected to the dispute the country has had over its name (at the time that data was being collected for this survey) with Greece, which had prevented the small Balkan country from entering NATO and EU negotiations in the past. Serbia and Bosnia & Herzegovina seem to also be relatively sceptical about the future of their countries, for reasons most likely connected to internal and regional political issues.

TABLE 2.2: Perspectives on personal, national and population-level future by country

	Alba- nia	Bosnia and Herze- govina	Bul- garia	Croatia	Kosovo	Monte- negro	Roma- nia	Serbia	Slove- nia	Total
How do you see your personal future in 10 years?										
Worse than now	1,7	3,1	2,1	1,8	2,5	2	3,5	1,9	2,5	2,4
Same as now	8,8	13,4	14,9	27,7	7	5,9	16,2	6,8	12,8	13,3
Better than now	89,5	83,5	82,9	70,5	90,5	92,1	80,3	91,3	84,7	84,4
How do you see the future of your country in 10 years?										
Worse than now	16,2	19,8	13,7	11,5	9,8	20,7	28,1	27,4	37,2	20,3
Same as now	24,4	36,4	28	39,9	20,6	22,5	26,4	28,8	36,1	30,3
Better than now	59,4	43,7	58,3	48,6	69,6	56,8	45,6	43,8	26,7	49,5
How do you see the economic future of people from your country?										
Worse than now	15,6	21,4	17,9	17,9	11,4	23,6	32,1	31,6	26,4	22,4
Same as now	34,4	34,5	34,3	44	31,1	35,2	30,9	41,5	48	36,9
Better than now	50	44,2	47,8	38,1	57,6	41,1	37	26,9	25,6	40,7

DESPITE UNCERTAINTY ABOUT FUTURE, RESPONDENTS ARE SATISFIED WITH THINGS

Satisfaction with various elements of life seems to be not only relatively high, but also relatively uniform. On a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being not at all satisfied and 5 being very satisfied, only 5 per cent of respondents generally rate their satisfaction below level 3. What is more, most of the response categories have an average reported satisfaction of around 4 out of a maximum of 5, with the exception of satisfaction with one's job, where many respondents were excluded because of lack of employment or too young age.

TABLE 2.3: Satisfaction with various aspects of life

Score 1 to 5	Score	Std. Dev.
Satisfaction with family life	4,431	0,885
Satisfaction with education	4,179	0,983
Satisfaction with friends	4,105	0,940
Satisfaction with job*	3,928	1,125
Satisfaction with life, in general	4,342	0,808

*if the case

The satisfaction scores seem to be generally high and underpin a general feeling of personal contentment. Self-reported satisfaction scores generally tend to take into account one's long-term acceptance of the country's social or economic context and a reductionist perception of one's own faults. So, for example,

although we see high levels of satisfaction with one's education, respondents also tend to declare themselves critical about the Romanian educational system, saying it is corrupt and not well adapted. Self-reported satisfaction in these fields is also relatively consistent with individualism and detachment from the woes and problems of broader society. While respondents accept that this broader society suffers from certain weaknesses, which they readily identify and criticise, they see themselves as having overcome these weaknesses to lead a relatively satisfactory life.

For this reason, it is not necessarily surprising that feelings of satisfaction are not structured by any of the major covariates we take into account in this report.

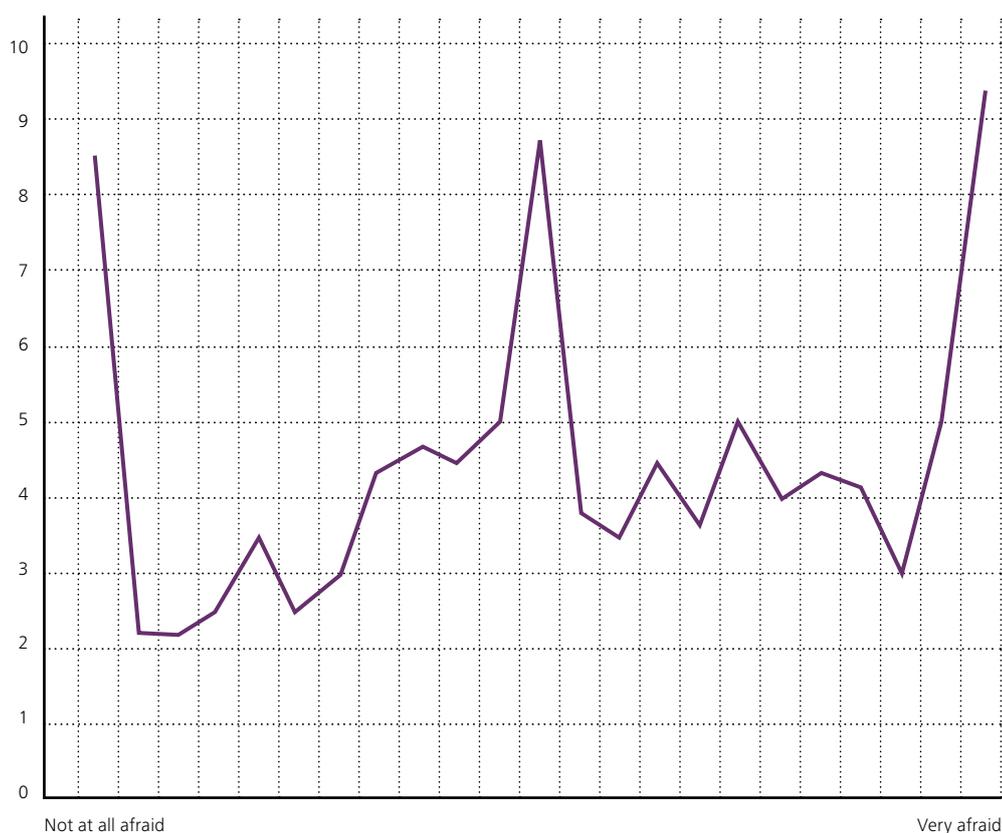
THE FEAR FACTOR

Connected to the societal analysis of young people in Romania, our research has also evaluated the level of fear that respondents have regarding certain issues. These issues were selected so as to cover a wide array of potential sources of fear, such as: violence, robbery, sickness, losing employment, terrorism, war, climate change and pollution, poverty, migrants, social injustice and corruption.

In Figure 2.3., we have added all of the fears together and have plotted them according to intensity on an additive scale. Respondents could answer that they are somewhat afraid, which yielded a score of 1, or that they were very afraid, which yielded a score of 2. The graph plots the number of fear points on the horizontal axis and the percentage of the population on the vertical axis. Therefore, we can see that we have two groups that are at the two extremes of the distribution, with approximately 8 per cent of respondents saying they are not at all afraid of any of these issues, and approximately 9 per cent at

FIGURE 2.3: Additive scale of fear by percentage of population

Fear index – Additive scale



the other extreme of the distribution, saying they are extremely afraid of each and every one of the issues under query.

The rest of the distribution seems to be relatively bell-shaped, with a majority of respondents placing themselves at the middle, in the area of moderate fear for all of the issues in question. It is important to note at this point that about 70 per cent of the respondents say that they are extremely afraid of at least one of the eleven items under question.

TABLE 2.4: Individual fear scores and standard deviation for the population

Variable	Score	Std. Dev.
Fear of violence	0,85	0,79
Fear of robbery	0,90	0,81
Fear of terrorism	0,92	0,85
Fear of migrants	0,94	0,80
Fear of war	1,01	0,83
Fear of illness	1,12	0,83
Fear of unemployment	1,13	0,81
Fear of pollution/climate change	1,19	0,77
Fear of social injustice	1,29	0,77
Fear of poverty	1,30	0,76
Fear of corruption	1,41	0,76

In terms of the most relevant fears, we can see from Table 2.4. that the largest such fear is that of corruption, closely followed by the fear of poverty and social injustice.

THE CORRUPTION ISSUE

The indicators that do show a higher score mark a potential vulnerability to a politically motivated discourse based on fear. The strongest fear identified, that of corruption, seems to have also been stoked by recent protests and social movements against corruption within Romania. It seems to be a fear of societal-level corruption that is also connected to one's willingness to accept or give bribes, but to a much lower degree than expected. As we can see from Table 2.5., a full 50 per cent of respondents who believe corruption is always justified also report themselves to be extremely afraid of corruption. In this case, the hypothesis of corruption as a structural issue in Romania is greatly emboldened by the fact that it is feared even by the people most likely to find it justifiable – therefore it is considered more or less a trait of society rather than a behaviour that one can or should try to escape from.

TABLE 2.5: **Fear of corruption by justification of accepting/giving a bribe**

To what extent are you frightened of Corruption?				
	Not at all	Somewhat	A lot	Total
Total	16,3	25,2	58,5	100
Justification of Accepting/giving a bribe				
Never justified	15,4	23,9	60,7	100
2	13,8	29,2	56,9	100
3	12	33,3	54,6	100
4	21,5	23,1	55,4	100
Always justified	34	17	49,1	100

Pearson $\chi^2(8) = 20.5661$ Pr = 0.008

Our data show that fear of corruption is an issue especially for respondents who have higher educational aspirations. About two-thirds of people who want to pursue tertiary education report themselves to be very afraid of corruption, compared to only 40 per cent of those who are only interested in lower secondary or vocational education. Of course, this issue is also related to economic efficacy. Respondents who want to pursue more education are better embedded into society and therefore depend more directly on its proper functioning, whereas respondents who do not want to pursue education are likely to be less adapted to society and subsequently less immediately afraid of how corruption could affect them.

MIGRATION PLANS AND PERSPECTIVES

Migration has been a contentious issue in Romania since the fall of communism, but the importance of the issue has greatly increased in recent years. According to a UN International Migration Report between 2007 and 2015, around 3.4 million Romanians have emigrated, placing the country in second place globally regarding the emigration growth rate between 2007 and 2015, after Syria. Clearly, Romania's migration problems have greatly increased since the country was officially admitted to the European Union and its citizens were allowed to freely move and obtain employment across EU Member States (Sandu 2016; Sandu, Toth, and Tudor 2018).

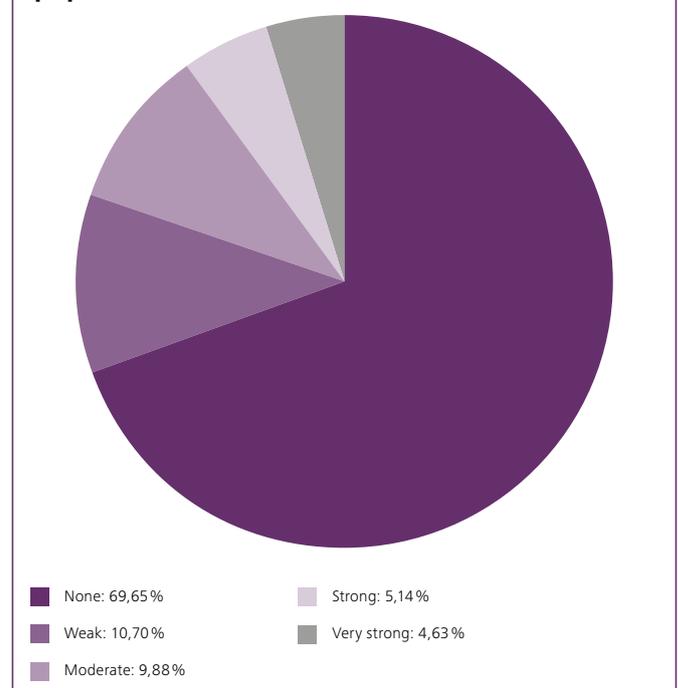
Confronted with poverty and lack of opportunities in the country, migration was a path opted for by many young people. In fact, current research estimates that over 80 per cent of migrants who have left Romania have indeed been of prime working age⁵. The traditional migration literature has established that migration tends to happen before the age of 40, with studies in North America showing that migration intentions recede after this age (Constant and Zimmermann 2013; Sherrod, Torney-Purta, and Flanagan 2010). Still, the reason cited is often inherent legal or bureaucrat-

ic difficulties in the transition, which is likely of a lesser concern to EU Member States.

Migration is an extremely important topic to discuss in Romanian society, for its scale and the greater context of the country make migration extremely important for multiple areas of study. Most often, migration is studied as a mechanism in which potential Romanian labour moves abroad, thus reducing the size and capacity of Romania's national economy. Secondly, migration is studied as an anti-poverty instrument, both through its capacity to provide economic opportunities to people who are otherwise among the most marginalised groups in Romania, but also as a function of remittances that Romanian workers abroad generally send to the country.

As we can see from Figure 2.4., about 70 per cent of the population of Romanian youths between 14 and 29 years of age do not desire, at this point, to move to another country. Compared to 2014, the figures seem to have changed remarkably, as fewer young Romanians are considering a move. While in 2014 about 60 per cent of Romanian youths had some desire to leave the country for more than 6 months, the figure in 2018 appears to be at 30 per cent. This large disparity could be easily ascribed to the fact that Romania was still under economic duress in 2014 and has now registered several years of stronger economic growth, but is also likely to be a survey effect.

FIGURE 2.4: **Strength of desire to leave Romania by population**



On closer inspection, our data allow us to also better understand which groups are more likely to plan to migrate. One of the strongest relationships illustrated is that between age and desire to migrate. Respondents who are in the 14-to-19-year-old age group have a much higher likelihood of reporting wanting to leave the country, while this desire seems to decrease with age.

Clearly, the decline is due to at least two factors that are worth noting: 1. As respondents age, they become more embedded in Romanian society and are less likely to want to leave anymore, regardless of their earlier plans; 2. With the passage of time, respondents who have an intense desire to leave are more likely to actually leave and not be included in our demographic groups any longer.

The most interesting findings seem to be related to the affluence of the respondents who report wanting to leave. As we can see, perhaps counter-intuitively, the data show that respondents with better access to goods have a higher likelihood of reporting a desire to leave. Similarly, parental education seems to also have a similar effect, with a more marginal level of statistical significance. The explanation for this dynamic is likely connected to the particularity of the decision-making process which is under query here. Respondents from more affluent families are more likely to desire to leave as a personal choice which is related to development, education, better employment opportunities or other things. Respondents from less affluent families tend to leave less as a choice that is thought-out and planned and more as a necessity which arises from their inferior access to employment or opportunities. Also, worse-off youth tend to have worse access to foreign languages and bureaucratic efficacy, which would encourage them to report that they want to migrate for long periods of time. Instead, they are more likely to migrate for shorter periods of time, in connection with particular work patterns or opportunities abroad (Sandu 2016).

TABLE 2.6: **Strength of desire to leave by age, region, goods ownership and parental education**

Strength of desire to leave Romania for more than 6 months					
Total	69,7	10,7	9,9	9,8	100
	None	Weak	Moderate	Strong	Total
Age group					
14 to 18	54,8	18,1	14	13,1	100
19 to 22	67,8	8,3	11,3	12,6	100
23 to 26	72,8	9,8	8,7	8,7	100
27 to 29	80,9	7,4	6,3	5,5	100
Pearson chi2(9) = 45.2400 Pr = 0.000					

Region of the Country					
Bucuresti	62,5	8,3	13,9	15,3	100
Moldova	67,6	8,8	11,1	12,5	100
Muntenia	68,6	11,5	10,4	9,5	100
Transilvania	73,7	11,6	7,6	7	100
Pearson chi2(9) = 12.7070 Pr = 0.176					

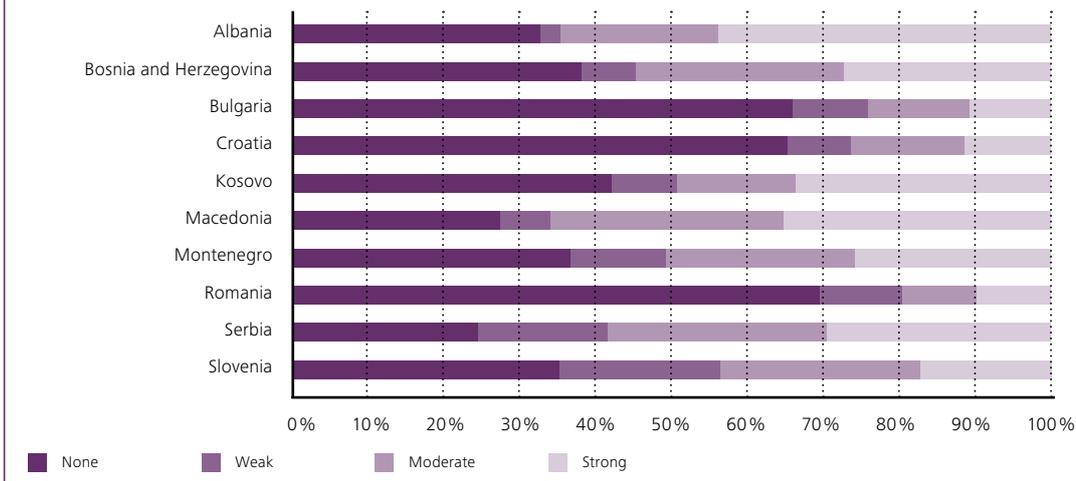
10 Point Scale of Consumption Goods Ownership					
0–4 Goods	84,6	6,2	3,1	6,2	100
4–6 Goods	69,4	8,5	11,9	10,2	100
7–8 Goods	66,2	14,6	9,2	9,9	100
9–10 Goods	47,6	17,5	15,9	19	100
Pearson chi2(9) = 45.3477 Pr = 0.000					

Parental Education Level					
Parents less than highschool	75,5	9,4	7,7	7,3	100
One parent more than highschool	69,3	10,2	11	9,5	100
Parents more than highschool	60,7	16,2	10,3	12,8	100
Pearson chi2(6) = 11.4183 Pr = 0.076					

Even more, we can see that Romanian youth are not alone in their desire to migrate. In fact, they desire to migrate to a much lesser extent than youth from non-EU countries. While Romanian youth who have a strong desire to leave total about 10 per cent of the cohort, this figure jumps to 44 per cent in Albania, 35 per cent in Macedonia and Kosovo (Figure 2.5.). Indeed, most EU Member States under study here seem to have an understated desire to migrate, as they are currently in a good position to stay in their own countries and benefit from the economic growth that was expected from EU accession.

The above-mentioned dynamics are also confirmed by the follow-up question for those who leave regarding the timeline

FIGURE 2.5: Strength of desire to migrate by Country



when they are planning to be leaving the country. We can of course expect migration to be more likely when it is planned to happen at a sooner point in time. The more the time of departure is delayed, the less likely it is that migration will actually take place. Indeed, as we can see in Table 2.6., younger respondents rarely plan to leave within the next 6 months up to two years, while older respondents are generally dedicated to the idea of leaving soon. Although females tend to report a desire to migrate that is

similar in intensity to males, the latter tend to have a greater likelihood of migrating. This may be due to inherent disparities in migration-related problems that affect females much more, such as issues of security or trustworthiness.

All in all, respondents with more access to goods and more plans for education tend to desire to leave more, but respondents with less access to goods tend to plan to leave sooner, as their needs tend to be restrictive and immediate.

TABLE 2.7: When to migrate by gender, age, aspired educational level and goods ownership

Within how long time do you imagine leaving the country?							
Total	13,2	15,1	14	12,7	1,1	43,9	100
	Within the next 6 months	Within the next two years	Within the next five years	Within the next 10 years	More than 10 years from now	Don't know	Total
Sex of the respondent							
Female	8	18,4	16,7	13,2	0	43,7	100
Male	17,8	12,2	11,7	12,2	2	44,2	100
Pearson chi2(5) = 14.2276 Pr = 0.014							

Age group							
14 to 18	6,6	14	17,4	18,2	2,5	41,3	100
19 to 22	20,4	11,8	15,1	15,1	1,1	36,6	100
23 to 26	12,5	18,8	12,5	9,4	0	46,9	100
27 to 29	16,4	16,4	8,2	3,3	0	55,7	100
Pearson chi2(15) = 28.2395 Pr = 0.020							

What is your aspired level of education?							
Lower Secondary/ Vocational	30,8	23,1	15,4	0	0	30,8	100
High School	24,4	20,9	10,5	5,8	1,2	37,2	100
Bachelor University	1,2	8,2	15,3	18,8	0	56,5	100
Post Graduate	4,8	13,3	19	21,9	1,9	39	100
Pearson chi2(15) = 66.9243 Pr = 0.000							

10 Point Scale of Consumption Goods Ownership							
0–4 Goods	13,6	13,6	4,5	4,5	2,3	61,4	100
4–6 Goods	11,5	18,3	20,6	14,5	0	35,1	100
7–8 Goods	11,5	14,5	10,7	16,8	1,5	45	100
9–10 Goods	25	13,9	19,4	8,3	2,8	30,6	100
Pearson chi2(15) = 27.8004 Pr = 0.023							

The salience of the class issue is also visible in the envisioned length of the stay abroad. Regression analyses show that there is a substantively large (and marginally statistically significant) difference in the envisioned length of stay between groups.

Thus, female respondents who have access to more goods in Romania and those who have a higher aspired level of education tend to want to stay for longer periods, while the other respondents are more tempted to even leave for trips shorter than a year. More so, we can see that the most common means of preparing one's departure abroad is to contact friends or relatives who live abroad. While it would be difficult to fully grasp the mechanism of migration intended, we can see that more than 70 per cent of respondents who have actually contacted friends or relatives abroad have educational aspirations that do not go beyond high-school level. Half of them have also attempted to contact poten-

tial employees. Instead, potential migrants with higher educational aspirations tend to have not done many things to prepare for their move to another country. More than 60 per cent of respondents who say they have contacted potential school/universities aspire to attain post-graduate education.

TABLE 2.8: Length of stay and preparation for departure by population

For how long would you plan to stay abroad?		What have you done to prepare your move to another country?	
Less than a year	13,48	Contacted friends/relatives who live abroad	17, %
One to five years	23,72	Received funding scholarship	0, %
Five to ten years	11,59	Contacted potential schools/universities	4, %
Ten to twenty years	9,7	Contacted potential employers	6, %
Don't know	41,51	Contacted the embassy	1, %
Total	100		

Finally, we can see that migrants show an overwhelming intention to migrate to EU Member States. Of the 71 per cent of respondents who have expressed a preference for a particular country to which they would like to relocate, 60 per cent chose an EU country. Germany is the favourite country of young Romanians who have a desire to migrate, while Great Britain comes in at a close second.

TABLE 2.9: Preferred country of destination for migration by population

What country would you prefer to move to?	
Austria	2,96
Denmark	2,43
Finland	1,08
France	8,09
Germany	18,87
Great Britain	14,29
Italy	7,82
Netherlands	1,89
Norway	2,16
Sweden	1,62
Switzerland	2,16
USA	7,82
Other	8,89
I don't know	15,63
No answer	4,31

MAIN RESULTS

- How rich or poor young people feel is generally not only determined by how much money they have or how many goods their household has at its disposal. Poverty is a more general sentiment that transcends one's material situation and is also related to the young person's relative position in society. Those who tend to feel discriminated against also tend to feel poorer. Similarly, those who live in environments with considerable inequality also tend to feel poorer.
- Parental education has a major effect on the outlook of young people. Respondents who come from families where parents are more highly educated tend to be more ambitious with their educational aspirations and feel less poor, even when they do not necessarily have access to a lot of goods in the household. Growing up in a household with more highly educated parents seems to have a very strong effect on a child's development, as academic research has shown before with regard to other countries. Romania suffers from the relatively reduced number of highly educated households, though.
- Young Romanians tend to be extremely confident about their own futures, but less confident about the future of their countrymen and the country itself. This difference in outlook is due mainly to the ease of migration, which seems to be considered to be a good fall-back option for the future by most respondents if their life in Romania does not yield the results they are expecting. The belief that migration to a Western country would sort out governance or civic problems may accelerate the unwillingness of young Romanians to participate in civic and political life. Many young Romanians are not emboldened to participate in the politics or civic life of the country because of this lack of attachment to the community.
- There seems to be a high incidence of fear within the 14-to-29-year-old population of the country. Young Romanians seem to be more fearful of almost everything than people in the region. The greatest such fear is that of corruption, closely followed by the fear of poverty and social injustice. The strongest fear identified, that of corruption, seems to have also been stoked by recent protests and social movements against corruption within Romania.
- About 30 per cent of 14-to-29-year-olds in Romania have some desire to migrate away from Romania for at least 6 months. The score is relatively low for the region and has dropped steeply compared to 2014 figures, when almost 60 per cent of young Romanians were thinking of migration. Migration intentions seem to decrease with age and, while males and females report the same desire to migrate, females are significantly less likely to have made plans or have contacted someone. On the other hand, most young Romanian females who do want to migrate do so to add to their education, while males seem to be more interested in work opportunities.

- Most of the desire to leave and plans to do so are connected to feelings of poverty and lack of access to consumer goods. The most likely explanation is that many young Romanians decide they need to leave the country to access a better life. Younger migrants are almost exclusively from the poorest strata of society, while older migrants tend to be split up evenly between job and education-seekers. The overwhelming majority of would-be migrants want to stay within the EU, especially in Germany and Great Britain.

3

FAMILY, SOCIETY AND SOCIAL TRUST

Sociological research on youth is increasingly preoccupied with issues of social trust or proximity to certain groups and social distance or rejection of certain groups. The underlying hypothesis in this thinking is that the social values and habits that young people develop with in their formative years will be the values that they will espouse in the future as well. Multiple factors can influence these values and beliefs through a process that is better known as socialisation or the development of an understanding about the world (Neundorf and Smets, 2017). Some of these factors are related to the family, while others are more connected to friends, media, education or others. Young people learn from multiple sources to develop these values and ideas.

In this chapter, we will explore some of these issues, the changing role of the family, expectations about demography and social roles which will influence the future of Romanian society. This chapter will also have to take into account the important chronological particularities of this cohort. Due to EU accession, the windfall of Internet access and many other factors, including the fact that almost all of our respondents were born after Romania's anti-communist revolution, there is an expectation that we are witnessing a different demographic cohort. In recent years, young people in Romania have been more connected to their peers in Western countries than ever before in the history of the country. Their potential to borrow beliefs and values, ideas about marriage, discrimination or other issues of modernity is an important question for the future that has generally been left unanswered for Romania.

THE FAMILIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE – TODAY AND TOMORROW

Non-marital relationships seem to be highly prevalent in extremely small municipalities (under 5,000 people) and in extremely large municipalities (over 500,000 people – in this case, Bucharest). While the trend is similar, the reasons behind this may very well be different. Normally, life in smaller communities is generally associated with a high domestic workload (mainly agricultural), which pushes young people to seek out a partner early in order to increase the efficacy of one's household. Also, young people in rural areas tend to become independent sooner. On the other end of the spectrum, life in major cities such as Bucharest generally delays the point in time when young people consider marriage. While 19 per cent of people in our sample report that they are married, only 10 per cent of young people in Bucharest report the same. Young people delay the moment they get married in order to finish their education, find a well-paid job, improve their economic standing, etc.

The influence of age in one's relationship status is relatively intuitive and extremely elastic. As we can easily see from the table, young people between 14 and 18 years of age are generally not married, and at the most are in a relationship (generally not living together). As they advance in age, the prevalence of being in a relationship increases and some young people also get married. After the age of 23, more and more respondents are married or in live-in relationships. The generational cycle finishes with people between 27 and 29 years of age, half of whom are married and another quarter of whom are in relationships (for the first time more live-in relationships) and 1 per cent of the sample also report that they are divorced.

TABLE 3.1: Relationship status by parental education level, goods ownership, sex, age and size of municipality

What is your current relationship status?						
	Single	Married	Live-in partner	Relationship, not living together	Divorced	Total
Total	56	19	9	15	0	100

Population of Municipality						
Under 5000 inhabitants	55	20	11	15	0	100
5–10.000 inhabitants	58	24	5	12	0	100
10–100.000 inhabitants	56	23	9	12	0	100
100.000–500.000 inhabitants	56	14	9	19	1	100
More than 500.000 inhabitants	56	10	14	20	0	100
Pearson chi2(16) = 32.4587 Pr = 0.009						

Age group						
14 to 18	86	0	3	11	0	100
19 to 22	67	5	5	22	0	100
23 to 26	51	18	12	19	0	100
27 to 29	25	50	16	8	1	100
Pearson chi2(12) = 353.1705 Pr = 0.000						

Sex of the respondent						
Female	50	25	8	16	0	100
Male	63	13	10	14	0	100
Pearson chi2(4) = 28.3425 Pr = 0.000						

Scale of Material Goods Ownership						
0–4 Goods	40	38	11	11	0	100
4–6 Goods	61	15	8	16	0	100
7–8 Goods	61	10	9	20	0	100
9–10 Goods	57	21	8	13	2	100
Pearson chi2(12) = 85.2364 Pr = 0.000						

Parental Education Level						
Parents less than highschool	49	27	11	12	0	100
One parent more than highschool	58	17	9	16	0	100
Parents more than highschool	60	11	8	20	1	100
Pearson chi2(8) = 25.3218 Pr = 0.001						

List of material goods
House/apartment
Mobile telephone
Personal computer
Internet at home
Bicycle
Motorcycle
Air conditioning
Dish washing machine
Washing machine
Car

The relationship between material welfare and relationship status also tells us something about the meaning of family life in a country such as Romania. Close to 22 per cent of 14-29-year-olds in Romania have access to less than 5 of the material goods considered important for a comfortable life, which we will call severely

materially deprived similar to the Eurostat indicator. This group of people also tends to be married at a much greater rate than any of the other groups under study. This finding is not entirely surprising since recent work on marginalised and poor communities in other countries has shown that poor tend to also increasingly

perceive early marriage as a way to overcome poverty, though with a much lower level of success (Goffman 2014)”

These dynamics are also belied by the final covariate in Table 3.1., which shows that respondents both of whose parents have not finished high school tend to be more likely to get married before the age of 29, accounting for 27 per cent of the sample. At the opposite end of the spectrum, respondents both of whose parents have university degrees tend not to marry before the age of 29, with only 11 per cent of them being married.

When the respondents are asked how they see themselves in the future, the differences between subgroups are much less prevalent. Across all the groups analysed, about 90 per cent of respondents see themselves married with children in the future⁶. Also, we see that respondents who perceive themselves and their household as poor (“Barely enough money to survive”) are somewhat less determined to marry in the future (85 per cent compared with the average of 91 per cent). Instead, they see themselves more likely to live together out of wedlock and have children.

THE PLAN TO HAVE CHILDREN

Table 3.2. illustrates how many children the respondents have, divided up by the subgroups already discussed. This table further shows the path-dependency of marriage, with 75 per cent of married couples already having at least one child, but also indicates the increase in number of births out of wedlock – 12 per cent of people are in a domestic partnership. The data also points to a greater likelihood of having children for respondents who live in municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants, with about 25 per cent of youth in these places already having at least one child. At the opposite end of the spectrum, only 5 per cent of people between the ages of 14 and 29 living in Bucharest have had a child⁷.

TABLE 3.2: Current number of children according to parental education, goods ownership, sex, age, size of municipality and civil status

Current number of children					
	None	1	2	3 or more	Total
Total	82	11	6	1	100

Current status					
Single	99	1	0	0	100
Married	24	49	24	4	100
In a partnership	88	7	4	1	100
Pearson chi2(6) = 548.8061 Pr = 0.000					

Population of Municipality					
Under 5000 inhabitants	77	13	8	2	100
5–10.000 inhabitants	74	18	7	2	100
10–100.000 inhabitants	83	11	5	1	100
100.000–500.000 inhabitants	88	8	4	0	100
More than 500.000 inhabitants	95	3	3	0	100
Pearson chi2(12) = 30.0528 Pr = 0.003					

Age group					
14 to 18	98	2	0	0	100
19 to 22	94	3	2	0	100
23 to 26	84	11	4	0	100
27 to 29	54	28	15	3	100
Pearson chi2(9) = 204.4962 Pr = 0.000					

Sex of the respondent					
Female	76	14	9	2	100
Male	88	9	2	0	100
Pearson chi2(3) = 29.6831 Pr = 0.000					

Scale of Material Goods Ownership					
0–4 Goods	64	21	13	2	100
4–6 Goods	85	10	5	1	100
7–8 Goods	92	5	2	0	100
9–10 Goods	84	11	5	0	100
Pearson chi2(9) = 73.8167 Pr = 0.000					

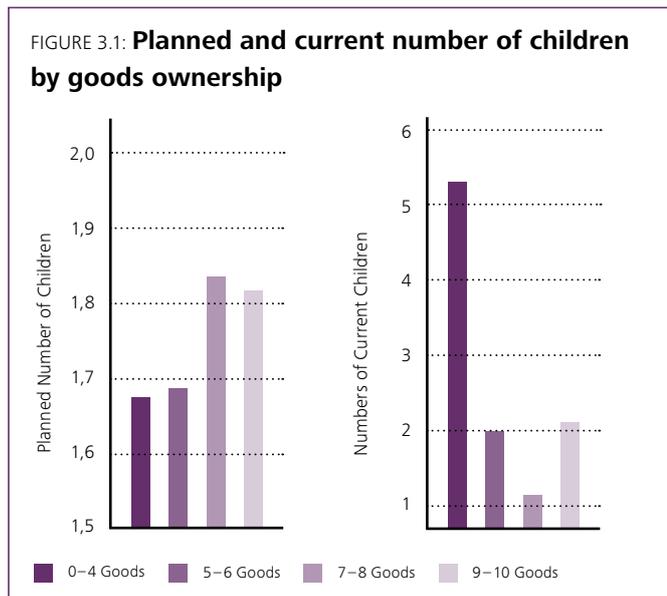
Parental Education Level					
Parents less than highschool	71	17	10	2	100
One parent more than highschool	87	9	3	1	100
Parents more than highschool	90	4	5	2	100
Pearson chi2(6) = 43.3910 Pr = 0.000					

Finally, the material deprivation scale and the parental education scale both confirm that people who are materially less well-off and whose parents have not finished high school are more likely to have children by the age of 29. This is not a novel finding, Romania being one of the countries with the highest level of child poverty not only in Europe, but in the world (Tesliuc, Grigoras,

and Stanculescu 2015; Tesliuc et al. 2014; Gábos et al. 2015; World Bank 2018; World Vision 2018).

The planned number of children also helps to shed some light on the situation. About one-quarter of respondents say that they do not know how many children they plan to have. Of those who do offer a figure, the general mean is 1.8 children, which is signif-

icantly below the number of births per woman required to keep the population constant (2.2 births per woman), but also significantly higher than Romania's current number of births per wom. What is surprising in this context is the extent of the difference



between the current number of children and desired number of children of respondents according to material welfare. As we can see in Figure 3.1., respondents who have access to 0–4 goods tend to have more than twice as many children as respondents with access to more goods. At the same time, we

can see that respondents with access to 0–4 goods tend to plan to have fewer children than people with access to more goods. More simply put, although poorer respondents plan to have fewer children, they also tend at present to have more children than non-poor respondents. This situation could be explained by the fact that respondents who tend to have children extremely early also start a new household earlier in life and are inevitably poor when they do so.

A more structural explanation for this situation could be that poorer respondents tend to have more children sooner compared to richer respondents because they are socialised to get married earlier, have less knowledge of and access to sexual education and adhere more closely to traditional gender roles.

Table 3.3 shows the situation of the actual and planned number of children by country. We can see that young people from Romania tend to have slightly more children at present than young people from other countries in the region. In fact, Romania and Bulgaria seem to be head-to-head to this contest, while countries with a much higher fertility rate, but also worse economic prospects, have young people with fewer children within the 14-to-29-year-old bracket.

The situation changes dramatically with regard to the planned number of children, where we see that more economically developed countries also tend to plan far fewer children. In fact, Romanian youth are on par with Slovenia and close to Croatia with regard to persons not planning to have any children at all in the future.

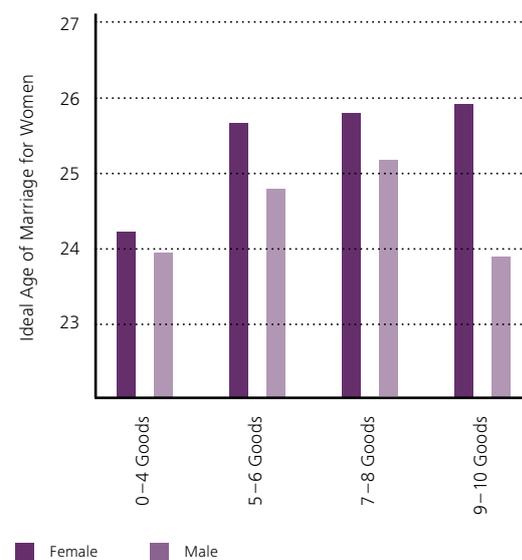
TABLE 3.3: Current and planned number of children by country

	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulgaria	Croatia	Kosovo	Montenegro	Romania	Serbia	Slovenia	Total
Current number of children										
None	91,2	87,7	81	86,7	90,6	89,7	82	93,3	91,1	87,2
1	4,9	8,2	14,3	8,2	4,3	7	11,5	3,9	5,2	5,2
2	3,6	3,4	3,7	3,8	4	2,9	5,5	2,4	2,8	4,1
3 or more	0,3	0,7	1,1	1,2	1,2	0,5	1	0,4	0,9	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Planned number of children										
None	2,8	0,9	0,5	8,4	0,7	5,8	10,8	3,8	10,4	4,6
1	6,1	8,4	14,5	10	2,4	3,7	17	4,4	9,4	8,4
2	61,9	61,4	71,4	56,9	44,9	38,2	58,4	51,9	53,3	56,3
3 or more	29,2	29,3	13,7	24,6	52	52,2	13,8	39,9	27	30,7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

ASPIRATIONS TO MARRY – WHEN AND WHY

There is a clear tendency for respondents who live in smaller municipalities, households with a lower goods ownership and a lower parental education level to believe that women should marry younger. Apart from this stratification, we can also see a consistent difference in the estimation of the ideal age of marriage for women between men and women, which is compatible with an international trend in family life (Becker and Becker 2009). There is an extremely consistent difference between genders in the estimation of this ideal age of marriage for women, with men generally believing women should get married one year younger. Segmentation points in the direction of intersectionality, with women respondents from larger cities or richer households seeing a minor increase in this difference, which belies the fact that women in such circumstances perceive themselves as having more opportunities for development which they need to take advantage of before getting married. As we can see from Figure 3.2., respondents from households that are poorer in terms of material goods tend to believe that women should marry earlier, regardless of their own gender. As the material prosperity of households increase and the occupational or educational opportunities of women improve, we can identify a significant difference between genders in opinions regarding the ideal age for marriage, with women tending to see this ideal age later than men.

FIGURE 3.2: Ideal age of marriage for women by goods ownership



Another relevant point to stress is the increased difference in the ideal age of marriage between genders. Although female respondents believe the ideal age of marriage is higher for both genders, they still believe that a man should marry about 2.5 years later than women. This difference is consistent with the difference identified in the 2014 FES youth study, where an almost identical difference between ideal ages for marriage was identified (see Table 3.4.). The main differences between 2014 and 2018 seem to be driven by a change of heart in female respondents, who have now pushed back the ideal age of marriage for females by almost a year and for males by 0.3 years.

This change underlines the increase in occupational and educational opportunities that have become available and important

to be exploited before marriage, especially in the opinions of women.

TABLE 3.4: **Ideal age of marriage for women and men by size of municipality, goods ownership and parental education**

Ideal Age of Marriage for Women				Ideal Age of Marriage for Men			
	Female	Male	Total		Female	Male	Total
Total	25,5	24,5	25	Total	27,9	27	27,5

Population of Municipality			Population of Municipality				
Under 5000 inhabitants	25,1	24,4	24,8	Under 5000 inhabitants	27,8	26,7	27,2
5–10.000 inhabitants	24,9	23,8	24,3	5–10.000 inhabitants	27	26,6	26,8
10–100.000 inhabitants	24,8	24,5	24,7	10–100.000 inhabitants	27,4	27	27,2
100.000–500.000 inhabitants	26,3	24,9	25,7	100.000–500.000 inhabitants	28,6	27,4	28,1
More than 500.000 inhabitants	26,3	25,4	25,8	More than 500.000 inhabitants	28,1	28,1	28,1

10 Point Scale of Consumption Goods Ownership			10 Point Scale of Consumption Goods Ownership				
0–4 Goods	24,1	24	24,1	0–4 Goods	26,9	26,6	26,7
4–6 Goods	25,7	24,7	25,2	4–6 Goods	28,3	27,2	27,8
7–8 Goods	25,8	25,2	25,5	7–8 Goods	28	27,6	27,8
9–10 Goods	25,9	24	25	9–10 Goods	27	25,9	26,5

Parental Education Level			Parental Education Level				
Parents less than highschool	24,5	23,9	24,2	Parents less than highschool	27,1	26,2	26,7
One parent more than highschool	25,9	24,8	25,3	One parent more than highschool	28,4	27,4	27,9
Parents more than highschool	26,1	25,6	25,9	Parents more than highschool	27,8	27,6	27,7

DESIRED TRAITS IN A PARTNER

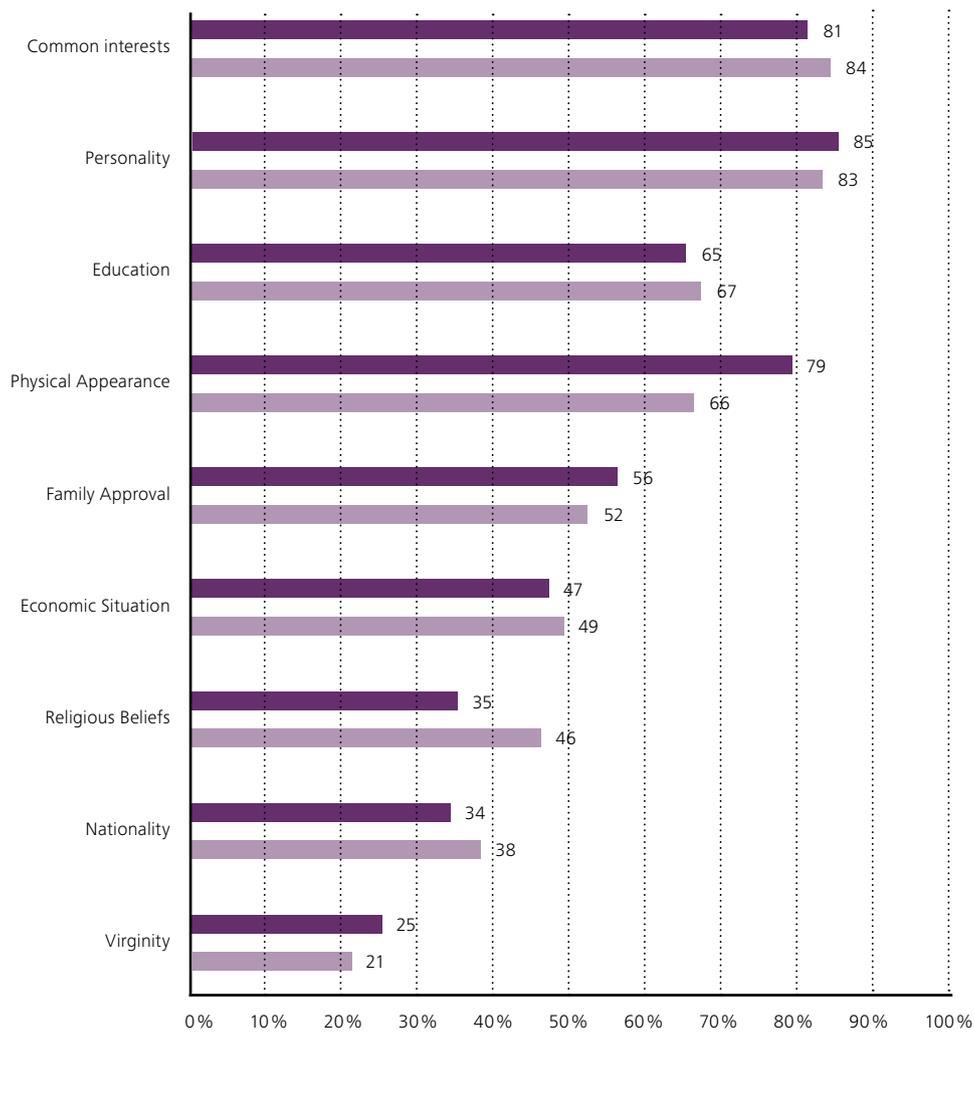
As we can see from Figure 3.3., the factors desired in one's choice of a life partner have not changed radically from the 2014 study. Young people nowadays are driven by relatively similar values and desires, underpinning a certain social stability that has endured. The main differences seem to be recorded with regard to physical appearance, with youth in 2018 less interested in this factor than youth in 2014, and religious beliefs, with youth nowadays being significantly more interested in religious compatibility with their partner.

The Table 3.5. shows that there is a consistent difference between genders in the importance of traits when choosing a partner. The only trait that is more important for men than it is for women seems to be the trait related to physical appearance, where 71 per cent of men say this is important, as compared to only 61 per cent of women. Conversely, women seem to care significantly more about almost everything else, especially education, economic situation and religious beliefs.

TABLE 3.5: **Importance of factors in the choice of partner by gender**

How important are the following factors to your choice of a marriage partner			
	Females	Males	Total
Common Interests	86	82	84
Personality	86	81	83
Education	72	63	67
Physical Appearance	61	71	66
Family Approval	55	50	52
Economic Situation	53	45	49
Religious beliefs	49	42	46
Nationality	41	36	38
Virginity	21	21	21

FIGURE 3.3: **Important traits in choosing a marriage partner, comparison between 2014 and 2018**
How important are the following factors to your choice of a marriage partner?



SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR AS A GENDERED ISSUE

Responses to questions of a sexual nature remain differentiated by gender, but show a significant levelling off compared to the data recorded in the 2014 questionnaire. Males tend to report having been exposed to multiple partners overall (and at an earlier age) than females. Clearly, questions about sexual behaviour are likely to be exposed to certain confounding factors: a desirability bias, making certain respondents more likely to over-report the number of sexual partners and other respondents to under-report this number or refuse to answer. In comparison to 2014, we see that both genders have greatly increased the rate of non-response, in general as a factor of age and current relationship status. As such, older respondent and respondents who are married or in a committed relationship tend to report that they are uncomfortable answering this question. Another potential confounding factor seems to be related to the region the re-

spondent lives in, with respondents from Transylvania, a region that is relatively conservative in religious terms, tending to decline to answer at a greater rate than respondents from other regions. Also, respondents from more educated families tend to refuse to answer the question more often, while respondents who own more consumer goods tend to be more forthcoming, which is mainly a factor of age and relationship status. Finally, personal church attendance seems to influence sexual behaviour in terms of limiting the number of partners, but not necessarily in terms of how comfortable the respondents are in interacting with the topic.

TABLE 3.6: Number of partners by gender, age, region, parental education, goods ownership and church attendance

	No sex	One partner	Multiple partners	Not comfortable to answer	Total
Total	15,60 %	21,0 %	28,9 %	34,5 %	100,0 %
Sex of the respondent					
Female 2018	18,8 %	27,8 %	18,3 %	35,2 %	100,0 %
Female 2014	28,0 %	36,0 %	27,0 %	9,0 %	100,0 %
Male 2018	12,3 %	14,2 %	39,7 %	33,9 %	100,0 %
Male 2014	18,0 %	19,0 %	56,0 %	7,0 %	100,0 %
Pearson chi2(3) = 71.9049 Pr = 0.000					

Age group					
14 to 18	51,2 %	14,9 %	8,3 %	25,6 %	100,0 %
19 to 22	10,0 %	24,5 %	29,3 %	36,1 %	100,0 %
23 to 26	4,2 %	20,1 %	41,5 %	34,3 %	100,0 %
27 to 29	0,7 %	24,3 %	33,6 %	41,4 %	100,0 %
Pearson chi2(9) = 335.2448 Pr = 0.000					

Region of the Country					
Bucuresti	17,1 %	23,2 %	28,0 %	31,7 %	100,0 %
Moldova	15,0 %	24,3 %	29,6 %	31,0 %	100,0 %
Muntenia	16,4 %	23,1 %	31,8 %	28,6 %	100,0 %
Transilvania	14,6 %	16,3 %	25,6 %	43,5 %	100,0 %
Pearson chi2(9) = 22.4505 Pr = 0.008					

Parental Education Level					
Parents less than highschool	11,0 %	24,6 %	27,2 %	37,2 %	100,0 %
One parent more than highschool	18,3 %	20,9 %	31,1 %	29,7 %	100,0 %
Parents more than highschool	13,8 %	15,2 %	24,6 %	46,4 %	100,0 %
Pearson chi2(6) = 23.3199 Pr = 0.001					

10 Point Scale of Consumption Goods Ownership					
0–4 Goods	7,7 %	25,8 %	24,9 %	41,6 %	100,0 %
4–6 Goods	15,4 %	20,7 %	28,5 %	35,4 %	100,0 %
7–8 Goods	21,2 %	19,2 %	34,8 %	24,8 %	100,0 %
9–10 Goods	18,2 %	21,2 %	24,2 %	36,4 %	100,0 %
Pearson chi2(9) = 35.9697 Pr = 0.000					

Church attendance apart from weddings and funerals					
Never or less than once a year	16,3 %	13,3 %	42,9 %	27,6 %	100,0 %
Only for Christmas or Easter	14,1 %	22,0 %	29,9 %	33,9 %	100,0 %
About monthly	10,2 %	25,9 %	23,5 %	40,4 %	100,0 %
Once a week or more	26,4 %	23,3 %	15,5 %	34,9 %	100,0 %
Pearson chi2(9) = 48.4106 Pr = 0.000					

As Table 3.6 shows, the issue of abstinence also used to be largely gender-dependent, as exhibited by 2014 research, but no longer registers significant differences in responses between males and females.

Similar to the 2014 research, we see that young respondents tend to be more preoccupied with abstinence than older respondents.

Most likely this is a result of the parental education respondents receive, which is overwhelmingly geared toward sexual abstinence at a young age. Once respondents reach adulthood, we see a change of heart regarding abstinence that endures in time, with about 50 per cent of respondents generally considering abstinence an unnecessary burden or an outdated concept.

One of the most relevant indicators regarding sexual behaviour for the overall public health situation of a society is the use of contraceptive methods, which we can see in Table 10. As we can see, there is a small difference between the genders in terms of awareness and information regarding contraceptive methods, but also in terms of sexual activity. What is most worrying about this difference is that it is not due to age alone, as males persis-

tently report across all age groups that they are not informed about contraceptive methods, whereas women who are not informed seem to cluster at the under-18-year-old age group. What is more, the respondents who report never using contraceptive or birth control methods seem to only increase with age in a relatively even manner between genders.

TABLE 3.7: **Sexual abstinence by gender, age, size of municipality and church attendance**

What do you think about sexual abstinence before marriage?						
	Virtue for both genders	Virtue for girls	Unnecessary psychological burden	Outdated concept	Refuse to Answer	Total
Total	13,5%	9,6%	9,5%	36,8%	30,4%	100,0%

Sex of the respondent						
Female 2018	11,8%	10,6%	9,7%	37,6%	30,2%	100,0%
Female 2014	26,0%	18,0%	8,0%	37,0%	11,0%	100,0%
Male 2018	15,3%	8,6%	9,4%	36,0%	30,7%	100,0%
Male 2014	17,0%	13,0%	11,0%	45,0%	12,0%	100,0%
Pearson chi2(4) = 3.7667 Pr = 0.438						

Age group						
14 to 18	17,4%	13,6%	6,6%	25,2%	37,2%	100,0%
19 to 22	15,3%	8,4%	10,0%	36,5%	29,7%	100,0%
23 to 26	11,1%	8,0%	12,1%	43,3%	25,6%	100,0%
27 to 29	11,2%	9,0%	9,0%	40,7%	30,2%	100,0%
Pearson chi2(12) = 34.3145 Pr = 0.001						

Population of Municipality						
Under 5000 inhabitants	16,5%	14,4%	8,8%	31,6%	28,8%	100,0%
5–10.000 inhabitants	14,4%	7,5%	5,9%	33,2%	39,0%	100,0%
10–100.000 inhabitants	11,3%	10,8%	11,7%	28,4%	37,8%	100,0%
100.000–500.000 inhabitants	14,0%	5,5%	11,8%	47,8%	21,0%	100,0%
More than 500.000 inhabitants	6,1%	8,5%	7,3%	50,0%	28,0%	100,0%
Pearson chi2(16) = 61.5457 Pr = 0.000						

Church attendance apart from weddings and funerals						
Never or less than once a year	11,7%	10,7%	12,2%	41,3%	24,0%	100,0%
Only for Christmas or Easter	13,6%	9,8%	10,4%	39,9%	26,4%	100,0%
About monthly	9,0%	10,2%	6,6%	36,7%	37,3%	100,0%
Once a week or more	20,2%	7,0%	6,2%	22,5%	44,2%	100,0%
Pearson chi2(12) = 39.0618 Pr = 0.000						

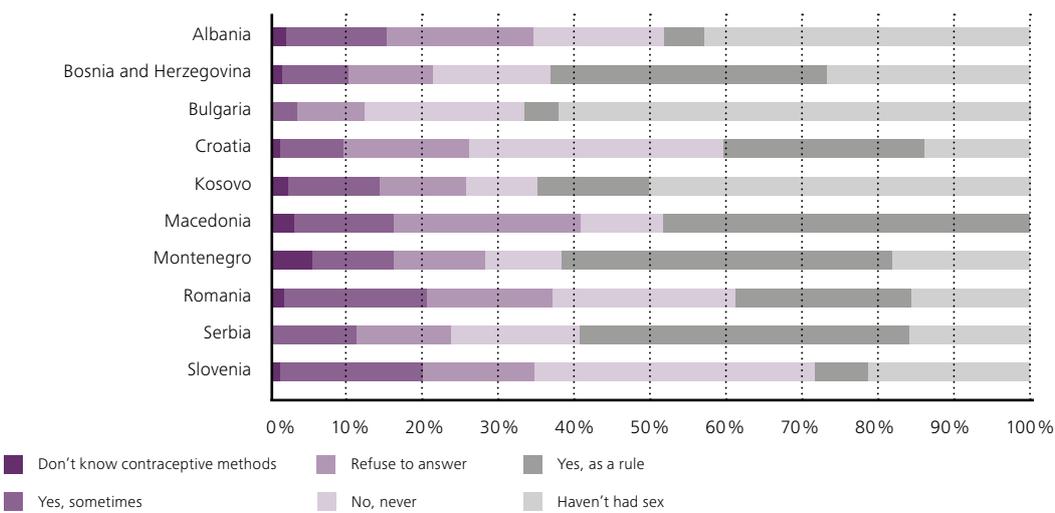
The refusal to use contraception is once again relatively independent of religiosity and church participation, similar to perceptions regarding abstinence before marriage. Respondents who attend church services less than once a year report a statistical propensity to not use contraception that is on par with respondents who attend church once a week or more. Again, this shows a propen-

sity for a type of traditionalism that is relatively independent of religious behaviour.

Our findings show that although respondents who are in a relationship or marriage use contraception more rarely, at least 15 per cent of single respondents are in the same situation. Most of them are respondents who have an active sex life, with multiple

FIGURE 3.4: **Contraceptive and birth control use by country**

Do you use contraceptive or birth control measures?



partners. This situation further underpins a need for the state to step in and offer more sexual education to young people so that they may better control their sexual and family life, even if they are born in smaller, rural municipalities and/or in families where parents have less education.

A comparison between countries in use of contraceptive measures shows us that Romania and Slovenia have the biggest problems with the use of contraception. About 20 per cent of the population of the two countries admit to either not being acquainted with contraceptive measures or not using them.

SOCIAL DISTANCE TO FAMILY AND SOCIETY

Social trust is traditionally considered to be a precondition for any sort of social cooperation (Hirschman 1982), community-building (Putnam 2001) and even capitalism (Polanyi and Maclver 1944) (Polanyi and Maclver 1944). In fact, the concept of trust as an essential prerequisite for society was noted by Adam Smith. In order to build bonds that can lead to a well-functioning society, individuals need to be open to cooperate with people they are not necessarily intimately familiar with (Gambetta 2000, 1988). Trust in strangers may therefore be an important factor in determining the future development of a society. Still, former communist countries have been traditionally plagued with extremely low levels of trust in both the state as well as in other individuals (Ockenfels and Weimann 1999; Mishler and Rose 1997; Badescu and Uslaner 2004). The reasons for this lack of trust are relatively straightforward and connected to the repressive nature of the state in communist times and the extremely broad network of informants in these countries.

This study offers us the opportunity to query respondents who have – at the very most – experienced only the first year of their

lives under communism. Their perspectives on trust are thus free from direct exposure to the repressiveness of the regime, but they still show extremely low levels of social trust in unfamiliar persons and institutions. Our question here evaluates social trust on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being not at all and 5 being very much). In the following section, the analysis mainly uses the mean score of trust by group. While we also add the comparison with 2014 figures, we need to note that it is not necessarily forthcoming⁸.

As Table 3.8. shows, though, our respondents conserve a very limited level of social trust in individuals who are outside of the family, be it primary or extended.

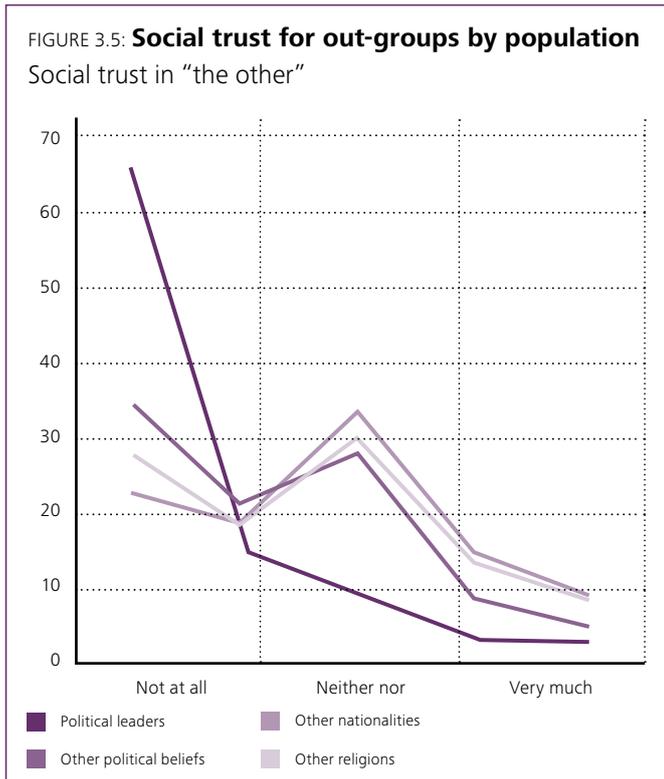
TABLE 3.8: **Social trust by year of research**

Trust in	Mean trust (1 to 5) 2018	Mean trust (1 to 5) 2014
Primary family	4,75	4,69
Extended family	3,92	3,93
Personal friends	3,62	3,62
Neighbours	2,80	2,73
Colleagues	3,12	3,05
Political leaders	1,61	***
People of other religions	2,54	2,81
People of other political beliefs	2,24	2,73
People of other nationalities	2,71	2,65

Personal friends, with regard to whom respondents have the absolute liberty to choose by themselves, are less trusted than individuals within the respondent’s extended family, who they often-times spend much less time with. This situation shows how even

when Romanian youth are free to choose who to congregate with, their trust tends to be limited by family ties. This type of phenomenon clearly inhibits the potential of individuals to fully cooperate with people outside of the family and thus greatly reduces the potential for communitarianism.

Trust in colleagues (in education or work) seems to be moderate and relatively close to the level of trust in friends, which further underpins the weak level of social trust for individuals who are chosen by the respondents as opposed to those he associates with for other reasons. Trust in neighbours seems to also be relatively limited.



In addition, social trust does not seem to vary significantly with any of the usual confounders that we have analysed in this chapter. Gender, municipality size, subjective income, ownership of goods: none of these seem to affect social trust in any significant way. Instead, the only minor variations identifiable are related to the age of the respondent and the education of the parents. Therefore, respondents coming from families with less-educated parents seem to be consistently (though only marginally significant) less trusting than other categories. This difference is likely to be explained by educational and social opportunities. Young people with more educated parents tend to also be more socially active, have more friends, travel more and therefore develop interactions with people outside of their family, hence reducing the social distance toward otherness.

In addition to this, there seems to be a small positive effect of living in Transylvania on overall social trust on a statistically significant scale. Most likely the effect is due to the fact that Transylvania is a region with a significantly higher level of ethnic and religious diversity.

We can see how Romania is a relative outlier in the region, at least with regard to trusting the extended family more than friends are trusted. Indeed, only Romania, Albania, Kosovo and to a smaller extent Macedonia seem to align with this structure. Whereas in Albania and Kosovo higher level of trust in the family may be a historical vestige and a result of recent wars, Romania has no similar explanation.

Political leaders seem to be distrusted almost unilaterally by youth in countries in the region, but figures regarding social trust in people of other religions are surprising. Again, Kosovo, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and to some extent even Macedonia are countries that have recently been through armed conflict that was considered to be connected to religious differences. Nonetheless, regardless of this recent history, young people in these countries seem more trusting of people of other religions than youth in Romania or Bulgaria.

TABLE 3.9: Social trust by country, mean scores

Social trust, Scale from 1 to 5										
	Family	Extended family	Friends	Neighbors	Colleagues	Political leaders	People of other religions	People of other political beliefs	People of other nationalities	Social trust average
Albania	4,9	3,8	3,6	2,2	2,9	1,5	2,9	2,2	2,6	2,96
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4,7	3,9	4,1	3,6	3,6	1,9	3,3	3	3,3	3,49
Bulgaria	4,8	4,1	4,2	3,1	3,5	1,7	2,6	2,8	3	3,31
Croatia	4,6	3,9	4,2	3,2	3,6	1,9	3,3	3,1	3,3	3,46
Kosovo	4,9	3,9	3,7	2,9	3,2	1,5	3,1	2,5	2,8	3,17
Macedonia	4,8	3,8	3,7	2,6	3,1	1,9	3,1	2,6	3,2	3,2
Montenegro	4,9	3,5	4	2,6	3,2	1,7	3,4	2,9	3,3	3,28
Romania	4,7	3,9	3,6	2,8	3,1	1,6	2,5	2,2	2,7	3,01
Serbia	4,8	3,6	4	2,7	3,2	1,5	3	2,7	3,2	3,19
Slovenia	4,7	3,8	4,2	2,6	3,2	1,6	3	2,8	3,2	3,23
Total	4,8	3,8	3,9	2,8	3,3	1,7	3	2,7	3,1	3,23

SOCIAL DISTANCES TO HYPOTHETICAL GROUPS

Generally viewed as a corollary of social trust, social distance is usually measured on a Bogardus scale, with the intent being to assess people's willingness to engage in social contact with members of diverse social groups. In our research, we measure social distance on the basis of answers given by the respondents to the question of how they would feel if people from certain social groups would move to their neighbourhood. The question is meant to evaluate the reaction of respondents at the notion of interacting with members of various social groups. The respondent can choose to answer on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is very bad and 5 is very good. Similar to social trust, for the purpose of this analysis, we will show the mean score of social distance by social group. Here we will also add the standard deviation score for the mean to illustrate the variation in responses.

As we can see from Table 3.10., there is a clear separation between the acceptability of two groups. One group is made up by relatively conventional socio-demographic categories, such as a local family with many children or a retired couple, and is considered very socially acceptable by the respondents, with most categories yielding mean scores over 4 on a 1-to-5 scale. The one exception appears to be the Western family, which also scores high compared to the other social groups analysed here, but is significantly below the conventional Romanian national demographic groups.

TABLE 3.10: Social distance from archetype groups, mean score from 1 to 5

How would you feel if the following would move to your neighborhood?		
	Mean	Std. Dev.
Local family with many children	4,24	1,10
Student group	4,16	1,13
Retired couple	4,00	1,22
Western family	3,41	1,38
Homosexual couple	2,43	1,47
Roma family	2,68	1,44
Refugee family	2,56	1,40
Drug addicts	1,60	1,16
Former convicts	1,71	1,21

Secondly, in the socially unacceptable group we see two levels of rejection or projected social distance. Firstly, homosexual couples, Roma families and refugee families tend to score around 2.5 on the 1-to-5 scale of social distance. This could be interpreted as a slight rejection by the respondents. Secondly, we see an overwhelming rejection being assigned to possible neighbours who are drug addicts or former convicts. Homosexual couples seem to be somewhere between the two groups, somewhat closer to the family/couple group.

Regarding the explanatory variables, socio-demographic variables tend to account for an important part of the variation in the social distance indicator for the first group of variables, while the second group of variables is better explained through parental education and, therefore, family socialisation. The influence of parental education should not be surprising in this context. As in the situation of social trust, respondents who grow up and socialise in families with a richer educational background tend to also develop significantly more opportunities to interact with individuals from other social groups and generally tend to become more tolerant of otherness.

DISCRIMINATION AND ITS PERSISTENCE OVER TIME

In close connection to the previous two indicators, discrimination is also an extremely important social indicator which perhaps partially explains feeble social trust levels and reinforces social distance. Compared to 2014, it appears that about the same proportion of the population feels it has been exposed to some discrimination in recent times. About 40 per cent of respondents say they have felt discriminated against at least sometimes. What changes is the intensity of discrimination or the proportion of respondents who say they have felt discriminated against many times, which has decreased from 18 per cent in 2014 to 12 per cent in 2018.

Of those who feel discriminated, it is also important to note that only 13 per cent have felt discriminated against for only one reason. This means that more than a quarter of young Romanians between the ages of 14 and 29 have felt discriminated against for more than one reason, which marks how massive the problem of intersectionality, or discrimination against the same groups for multiple reasons, is in Romania. Most of this intersectionality brings together issues of poverty and ethnic discrimination, and is most likely among young ethnic Roma people. In addition, another

classic staple of intersectionality is gender and education or ethnicity and language spoken. More studies on this topic need to be conducted in Romania so as to better understand the multitude of sources of discrimination that work in conjunction to stratify the young population.

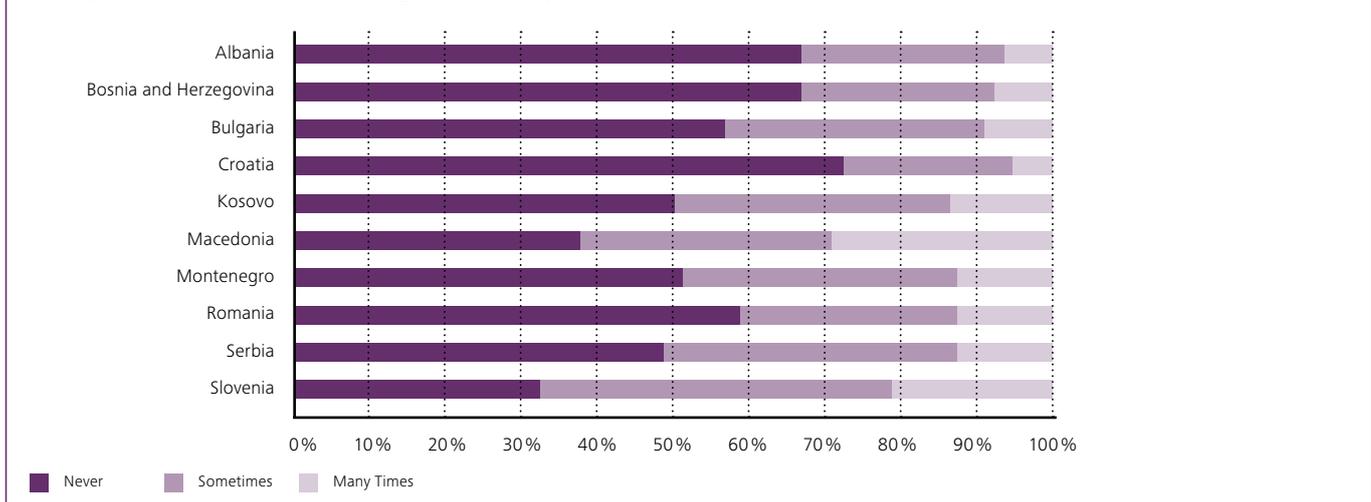
The figures below show that discrimination is reported fairly often among young people in the region. While Romania is not the country which reports the highest occurrence, the levels recorded are still relatively high.

As in 2014, the most widely identified reason for discrimination is one’s economic situation. Closely behind, other reasons for discrimination are one’s age, one’s education and one’s gender. An important feature in this list is definitely the fact that we are recording a high level of discrimination for political beliefs even if young people in Romania report themselves to be extremely disinterested in politics. This high level of discrimination on the basis of political beliefs is yet another reason to believe that Romania in general – and young Romanians, as a corollary – are going through a phase of considerable political polarisation.

TABLE 3.11: Occurrence of reasons for being discriminated against by population

Reason for discrimination	Percentage
Gender	12,7
Economic	25,1
Age	21,4
Religious beliefs	8,7
Ethnicity	8,03
Education	13,2
Social engagement	11,4
Political beliefs	10,4
Regional origin	9,7
Sexual orientation	2,6
Language	5,7

FIGURE 3.6: Occurrence of discrimination by country
Have you ever felt discriminated against? (Any type of discrimination)



Regression analyses show that the two constant confounders for all types of discrimination that are felt by at least 10 per cent of the sample are subjective income and educational aspirations. Research on discrimination has long argued that people who perceive themselves to be discriminated against also have a higher propensity to perceive themselves to be poorer as an effect of marginalisation. What is yet to be clarified in the Romanian case is the causal mechanism behind it: are people who are poor more likely to feel discriminated against or does discrimination make individuals see themselves as poorer? As we have seen in a different part of this report, subjective estimations of income have little to do with objective measurements of goods ownership or economic status. Poverty is very much a social construct that is indeed heavily influenced by access to financial resources, but has many different other facets that are not strictly economic. Discrimination, social trust and social distance are very likely some of these facets and their future study would be extremely relevant for a better understanding of Romanian society.

MAIN RESULTS

- Young Romanians are strongly differentiated by level of urbanisation in terms of their desires to start a family. While those who live in smaller municipalities see marriage as the first step toward building welfare and prosperity, those living in larger cities postpone marriage to a later date, after they have finished their education, found a good-paying job, etc. As a consequence of this stratification, most young married couples tend to be extremely poor both objectively and subjectively. On top of this, poor families also tend to have children earlier, even when they were not planned and tend to have a scant understanding or usage of contraception. About 90 per cent of respondents see themselves married with children in the future. Most of those who do not want to marry tend to see themselves as poor.
- While poorer respondents say they want relatively few children and richer respondents say they want slightly more children in the future, currently poorer respondents in smaller municipalities have a rate of childbirth that is double or more than in the case of richer respondents. Only 5 per cent of people between the ages of 14 and 29 years of age who are living in Bucharest report having a child, whereas about 25 per cent of those living in municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants report having children. The poor tend to have children earlier in their life and economic development and may therefore be more likely to struggle because of the birth of children. In this case, it is imperative that public services start focusing on this demographic aspect as well in the future.
- The attitudes of young respondents toward abstinence seem to have become slightly more permissive and young people have become less worried. This development stems primarily from a change of heart among young women, who are no longer as worried about pre-marital abstinence. While in 2014 about 18 per cent of them believed that pre-marital abstinence was a virtue for females only, in 2018 only about 10 per cent of them hold this belief. Similarly, while 26 per cent of young females believe abstinence was a virtue for both genders, the belief is now held by only 12 per cent of respondents. Importantly, this development seems to no longer be as influenced by religiosity, with even females who report a relatively high level of church attendance having softened their stance on pre-marital abstinence. Instead, the driver of conservative beliefs seems to increasingly stem from a non-religious type of gender traditionalism that is present in most regions and municipality sizes, especially in small and middle-sized cities.
- About 20 per cent of 14-to-29-year-olds report either not knowing what contraception is or not using it in general. Most of the respondents exhibiting this low use of contraceptives come from cities with populations of fewer than 100,000, especially from poorer families where neither parent has finished high school. Although most of the persons who report not using contraceptives are in steady relationships or marriage, about 15 per cent of them report being single and having an active sexual life, with multiple partners.
- Similar to 2014, young Romanians seem to be wary of non-family social relations and tend to trust their friends, whom they choose and can cultivate connections through, less than they trust people in their extended family, whom they interact with rarely. This situation is relatively unique in the region, with only Albania and Kosovo recording a similar constellation. Overall, social trust among young Romanians is one of the lowest in all the countries in the region and underpins the marked social tension within Romanian society.
- About 40 per cent of young Romanians report having felt discriminated against at least sometimes. What is impressive about this is that respondents who report feeling discriminated against and who come from relatively well-educated families or from larger cities tend to develop significantly higher educational aspirations. Most likely, this comes from a mechanism of overcompensation that has been identified with certain demographic groups in certain situations.

4

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

EDUCATION

The first section of this chapter examines education and covers three main topics: the discussion of young people's educational status, attainment and aspirations; the performance, aspirations and school-life experience of youth who are currently enrolled in education and the way in which young Romanians assess the quality of the educational system that they currently are or used to be a part of.

A number of recent trends relating to the Romanian educational system point to both positive and worrisome developments. In 2017, Romania's rate of early school-leavers (the percentage of population aged 18–24 whose highest attainment is lower secondary education and who are no longer involved in education or training) was the third highest in the European Union (18.1 per cent).⁹ What is more, early school-leaving is particularly widespread in rural areas.¹⁰ Rural-urban discrepancies are not limited to early school-leaving, but are also evident at younger ages in students' evaluation results.¹¹

The 2016 Human Development Report showed that in Romania, the rate of *enrolment* in tertiary education in 2015 was 53 per cent.¹² In other words, more than half of the population of tertiary school age was registered in some form of higher education. At the same time, according to Eurostat, Romania was, in 2017, in last place among EU countries with regard to the share of the population aged 30–34 with tertiary educational *attainment* (26.3 per cent, compared to the EU average of 39.9 per cent).¹³ Graduation from institutions of higher education was more widespread among women in 2016; the proportion of women aged 30–34 who have attained tertiary education exceeded that of men by 3.7 per cent.¹⁴

Romanian universities are soundly integrated in the framework of student exchange programs; the Erasmus Plus program is ac-

cessed yearly by thousands of Romanian students who benefit from the experience of studying abroad.¹⁵

The current report covers some of these important aspects relating to participation in education, attainment and educational inequalities, with a focus on youth aged 14 to 29.

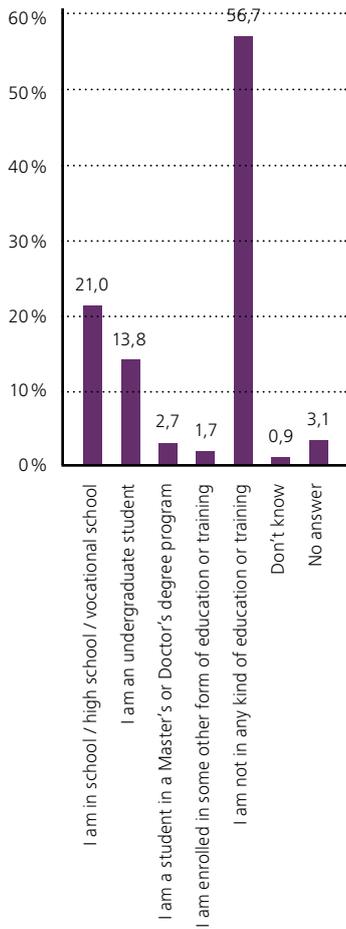
Educational status, attainment and aspirations

We begin the presentation of FES 2018 results on education by looking at the current educational status of youth.

Figure 4.1 shows that nearly 57 per cent of the young people included in the sample are currently not actively enrolled in any kind of education or training. As expected, educational status is linked to the actual life stage of the young respondents. For example, about 85 per cent of those from the youngest group (14–18) are currently in pre-university forms of education, which is foreseeable, given the age. As age increases, apart from the corresponding educational status anticipated in relation to the age group, one finds increasing percentages of youth who are not presently enrolled in education (50 per cent among the 19–22 group to 91.7 per cent among the oldest ones).

How about the educational level already completed by young Romanians? Data represented in Figure 4.2 describe their current attainment, indicating that most respondents report having thus far completed the secondary level of education (high school).

FIGURE 4.1: **Current educational status among youth** (per cent of the entire sample)



We expect to find once more a visible age effect, as a normal consequence of educational attainment depending on individuals' life stage. Indeed, such a relationship is revealed by the data. At the same time, one can observe that even in the age groups above 18 years of age there are respondents whose highest current level of attainment is solely primary school (although their share is comparatively lower than in the youngest age

group and is by no means the dominant level within the specific age intervals).

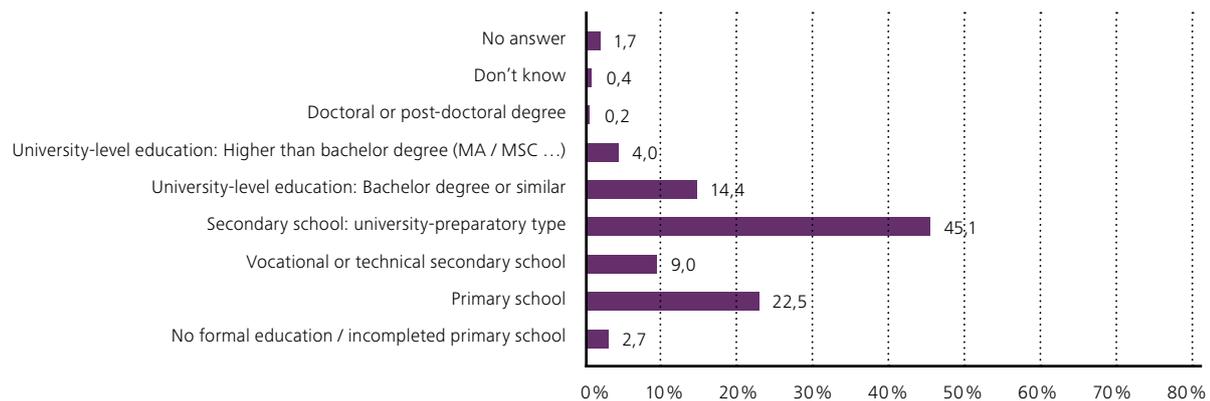
In agreement with what we already know about the gender factor in choosing the technical/vocational track of education, the survey data finds that more young men completed technical schools than women. More women than men report having completed BA or MA levels of university education.

A further question for the young respondents regarded their highest educational aspirations. Most young people aim for higher education (BA degree or higher) and their aspirations seem to be influenced among other factors by gender and by their parents' educational capital.

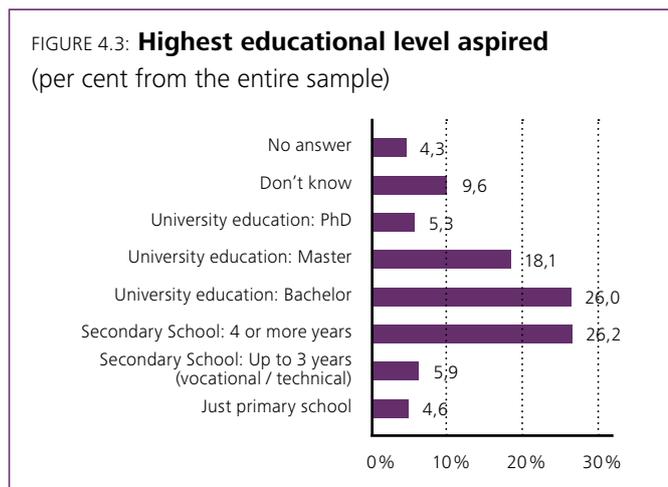
After eliminating non-responses, we find that 57.5 per cent of youth aim to attain BA degrees or above. Further examination of data also reveals associations between young people's aspirations and their demographic and family backgrounds. Among respondents coming from families where both parents have university-level education there are no cases of aspirations to primary education or to vocational schooling. The comparatively lower share of respondents coming from university-schooled families that aim at secondary level education (high-school) is explained by the different distribution of youths' orientations towards higher education levels. In particular, university levels higher than BA (MA and PhD) are aimed at by more respondents from well-educated families. Region-wise, the largest shares of respondents who aim at degrees higher than BA are found in Bucharest. MA level studies are sought of more by women than by young men. 58.7 per cent of the entire sample (68.8 per cent after the exclusion of non-responses) say they are very confident that they will succeed in reaching the aspired educational level.

An attentive examination, based on regression analysis, allows us to test more rigorously the impact of factors that prompt aspiration to higher education (BA, MA or PhD). Accordingly, the likelihood of aiming for a higher education degree is indeed higher in the case of women and increases along with parents' educational attainment. In addition, home cultural capital (estimated by the number of books in the parental house) exerts a significant influence on aspiration to higher education, suggesting that

FIGURE 4.2: **Highest educational level completed** (per cent from the entire sample)



exposure to cultural content during the formative years has an impact on how young people project their educational future.



The findings on the impact of gender on educational aspirations prompted a further question about the applicability of this pattern to the other countries included in the survey. Indeed, data show that in all but two countries (Kosovo and Slovenia), higher

percentages of women than of men aspire to pursue higher education (Figure 4.4.). This may be, at least in part, an indication of greater pressures perceived by women to obtain through education high qualifications that will ease their access on the labour market or that would enhance their chances for well-remunerated jobs. It is worth to notice that Romania has the lowest proportion of young women who aspire to pursue higher education among all countries in the study, and the second lowest (after Bosnia and Herzegovina) for young men.

Young people who are actively enrolled in education at present

In this section, we are interested in the relationship between young people's current educational attainment (highest education level already completed) and their further aspirations. Data in Table 4.1. shows that, except for the respondents who already possess a PhD, within each category of current attainment, there are considerable shares of young people who aspire for levels of education higher than that presently reached (the grey cells mark the percentages of youth in whose case the completed educational level matches their highest aspirations).

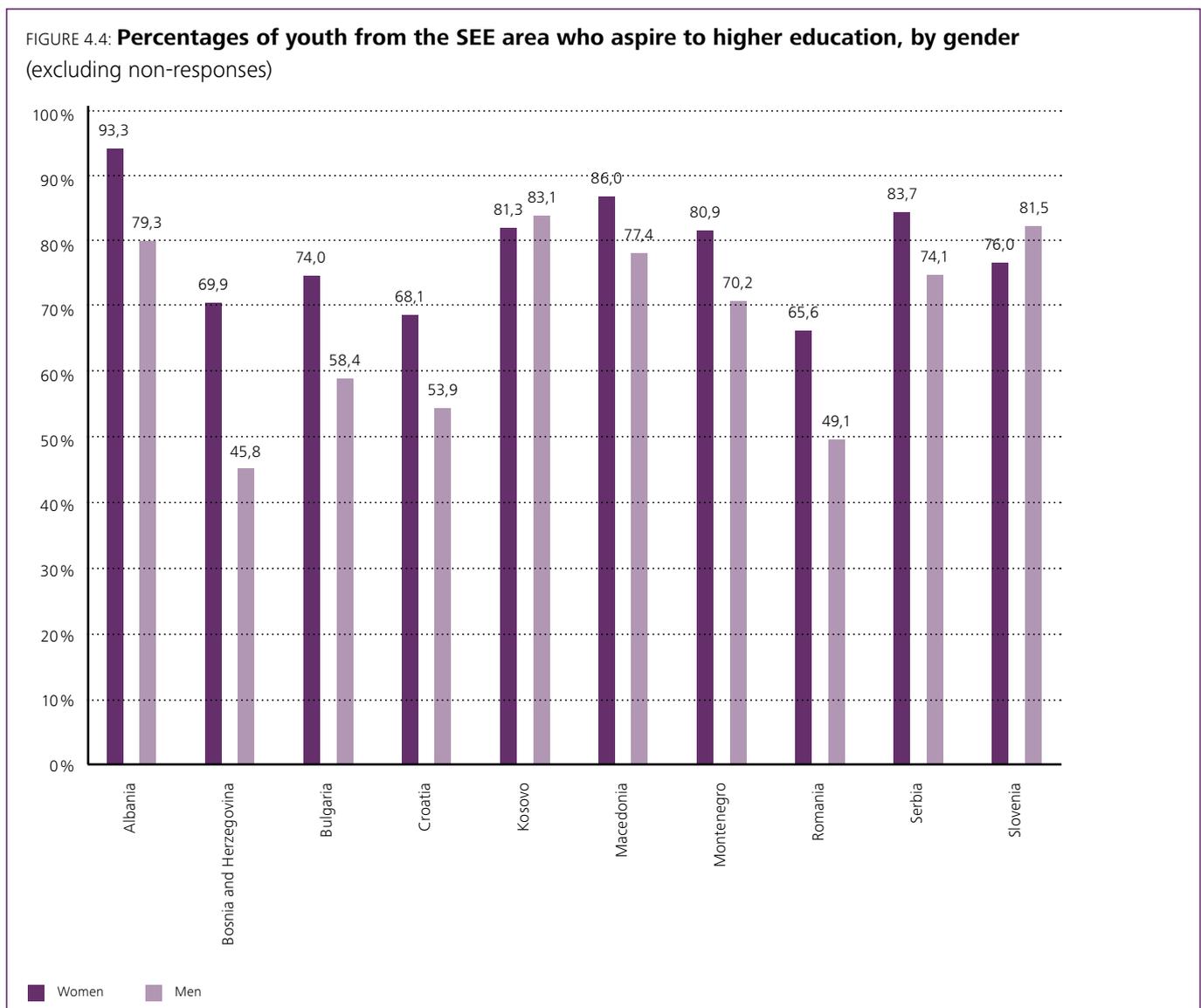


TABLE 4.1: Aspirations of youth currently enrolled in education according to the highest educational level completed (per cent excluding non-responses)

Aspiration	Just primary school	Vocational/ technical education	High school	University BA	University MA	University PhD
No formal education/ incomplete primary school	6.7		26.7	26.7	20	20
Primary school	1.3	4.4	23.8	41.9	21.9	6.9
Vocational/technical		9.1	63.6	27.3		
High school			7.2	40.7	41.9	10.2
University BA				17.9	64.3	17.9
University MA					60	40
University PhD						100

Further surveying of young respondents whose educational training is ongoing looks at the amount of effort invested in individual study at home. Most young people report studying at home daily for one to two hours. There is no significant variation regarding the time invested in individual learning depending on the educational level at which respondents are currently enrolled. However, more young women than men report studying at home for about two to three hours.

Young people were also asked about their average school marks in the past academic year. Table 4.2. shows the relationship between students' academic performance and attributes of their home environment. Similar percentages of the young people who offered a valid answer regarding their average score (i.e. excluding non-responses) indicate the intervals (7–8) and (8–9) as reflecting their most recent school results. Young women tend to report higher average annual scores than their male counterparts.

TABLE 4.2: Students' average scores in the past academic year (per cent excluding non-responses)

	5–6	7–8	8–9	9–10	Total
Sample	3.6	38.8	38.5	19.1	100
Parents' education					
Both parents less than high school		50	39.2	10.8	100
Other situations	5.3	38.1	38.9	17.8	100
Both parents more than high school		21.1	36.8	42.1	100
Assessment of household well-being					
We don't have enough money for basic bills (electricity, heating...) and food	35.7	28.6	28.6	7.1	100
We have enough money for basic bills and food, but not for clothes and shoes		42.4	45.5	12.1	100
We have enough money for food, clothes and shoes but not enough for more expensive things (fridge, TV set, etc.)	3.8	47.1	37.5	11.5	100
We can afford to buy some more expensive things but not as expensive as car or a flat, for instance	1.9	34.3	36.1	27.8	100
We can afford to buy whatever we need for a good living standard	1.4	31.4	40	27.1	100
Sex					
Male	6.8	48.4	32.3	12.4	100
Female	1	31	43.7	24.4	100

* Bold-faced figures show statistically significant differences

Data also show significant correlations between students' performance and their parents' educational background, particularly with respect to the highest scores (the interval 9–10); a larger percentage of youth coming from families where both parents have university-level education report having achieved higher scores compared to the rest of the respondents. In addition, a higher percentage of students who evaluate the financial status

of their household in negative terms report that their annual average is within the range of 5 to 6.

In addition, data show a strong positive correlation between the amount of individual study at home and the annual average scores reported by respondents (value of Gamma coefficient of correlation 0.348).

Young people's assessment of the Romanian education system

The respondents were asked to assess the Romanian educational system, with reference to (1) the overall quality of education, (2) their opinion on the existence of fraudulent practices in the examination procedures and (3) the perceived match between educational training and the job market. The results show that only a modest share of young people report being very satisfied with the educational system and more than a quarter strongly agree that the evaluation system is in some cases vitiated by corruption. About 44 per cent of young people in the survey believe that the educational system is not well adapted to the requirements of the job market. Approximately one-quarter of the respondents said that they performed a practical position or internship within the framework of their educational programme.

Assessing employability

We close with a brief section that prefaces the second part of this chapter, related to employment, by examining from a comparative perspective the way in which young people from southeast European countries perceive their chances of finding their way onto the labour market.

First of all, young people who are still enrolled in some form of education were asked to assess how difficult it is to find a job after graduation. The results in Table 4.3. show the percentages of young people who are very optimistic about these prospects. Romanian youth are, in this overall picture, most confident about a successful transition to the labour market.

TABLE 4.3: **Percentage of youth who think that it will be very easy to find a job after graduation (percentages of the entire samples of educationally active youth)**

Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulgaria	Croatia	Kosovo	Macedonia	Montenegro	Romania	Serbia	Slovenia
10.6	3	9.5	15	11.3	13.9	16.9	24	16.2	13.7

Another aspect that young people were asked about, regardless of their current educational status, relates to the match between

the preparation provided by the educational system and the requirements of the labour market.

TABLE 4.4: **Percentage of youth who think that the educational system in their country is well adapted to labour-market requirements (percentages of entire samples)**

Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulgaria	Croatia	Kosovo	Macedonia	Montenegro	Romania	Serbia	Slovenia
22.8	22.1	14.3	41.2	28.4	23.4	16.2	33	21	28

Croatian and Romanian youth project the most optimistic picture of the ability of education to provide the skills required by the labour market.

MAIN RESULTS

- Our data show that 59 per cent of the young respondents are not currently in any kind of education or training. In the 2014 edition of the FES survey, the share of youth no longer active in education was 53.5 per cent.¹⁶
- There is a clear association between current educational status and young people's age; among young people aged 27 to 29, we find the highest share of respondents who have left the educational system (91.7 per cent). The effect of age is also marked in relation to respondents' highest level of educational attainment.
- Most young people aim for higher education (BA degree or higher) and their aspirations seem to be influenced among

other factors by gender (the likelihood to aim for a university degree is greater in the case of women) and by parents' educational capital.

- There are additional noticeable gender-related differences as indicated by the data. First of all, more young women than men report being currently enrolled as undergraduate students and more men are at present not engaged in educational training. Secondly, more women than men report having completed BA or MA levels of university education. Additionally, completion of vocational or technical tracks is reported by more young men than women.
- Regarding youth who are still enrolled in education, we found that within each category of current attainment, large shares of youth aspire for levels of education higher than that already completed. About one-quarter of students enrolled in different levels of education are very optimistic about the perceived prospects of finding a job after graduation.
- Most students report annual average scores placed in the intervals 7–8 (38.8 per cent) and 8–9 (38.5 per cent), while

young women fare better than men in this respect. There are also indications of a link between students' results and their parents' education: a large percentage of youth from families in which both parents have degrees higher than high school report having average scores of 9 to 10. Moreover, a greater percentage of students who assess the financial status of their household in negative terms report that their annual results are in the lowest score interval (5–6).

- About two-thirds of youth who are still active in education consider that the day-to-day school climate is in differing degrees hard and stressful; data does not reveal significant differences that current educational status or gender exert over this perception. However, significantly higher percentages of students whose average scores are among the lowest (5 to 6) report that the school climate is very hard and stressful, suggesting that low school performance can generate anxious attitudes towards school.
- Strong satisfaction with the overall quality of education in Romania is reported by a modest portion of the youth surveyed (about 15 per cent) and the general assessment of the quality of education is related to young people's perceptions of the fairness of examination procedures and the match between educational training and the requirements of the job market.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The issue of high and persistent unemployment among youth in Europe has been a recurrent phenomenon since the early 1980s, but extremely critical in recent decades, especially after the Economic Recession and the European Debt Crisis. In addition, addressing this issue with its specificities has become more and more important in recent years.

One reason for this is related to the fact that the impact of both economic and debt crises in Europe is greater on youth than adults, especially in terms of their patterns of employment and their unemployment rates. (Blanchflower and Freeman, 2017) In this respect, Bell and Blanchflower (2011) pointed out that youngsters have greater sensitivity to these phenomena mostly because they have less specific human capital or less experience. Dolado et. al. (2015) argued that there are a lot of differences in these patterns among countries in Europe, and that they are mainly caused by the type of educational system a country has (poor school-to-work transition, high number of NEETs, vocational training) or by the type of labour market institutions a country has (fixed-term contracts, minimum wage, etc.).

Another reason for analysing youth employment is related to the fact that unemployment during the early stage of a working career (and especially long-term youth employment) has a strong negative effect on future labour outcomes. Even in the case of short-term unemployment, going from one temporary to another job makes youngsters unable to capitalize on their human capital or accumulate substantial working experience. At the same time,

the depreciation of human capital takes place at particularly higher rates during the initial stages in the working career, and therefore the most common patterns of employment among youth becomes very important for their future labour opportunities. (Hernanz and Jimeno, 2017)

When looking at the Romanian context, the issue is even more relevant since employment opportunities as well as labour-market institutions are related to young persons' decision to migrate to other countries. Indeed, Horvath (2008) argues that the migration of young people from Romania is very much connected with their problematic and prolonged transition to adulthood, mainly due to their difficulty in finding a job, as well as the high level of job insecurity.

In this section, the analysis focuses on the following aspects relating to youth and the employment market: 1) Patterns of youth employment, 2) Aspirations vs Reality: the relation between profession, occupation and activity sector, 3) Finding and choosing a job, 4) Voluntary initiatives.

Patterns of youth employment

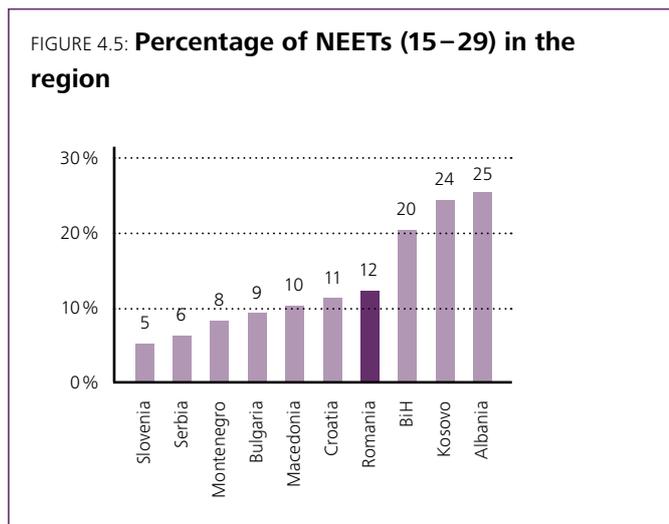
More than one-third of our sample have a full-time contract (42.9 per cent) with either a permanent contract (39.6 per cent) or temporary one (3.3 per cent). Men tend to have more full-time contracts than women (40.9 per cent of full-time permanent contracts are with men and 38.3 per cent with women). Out of all this sample, 25.2 per cent have no job and are not looking for one, while 9.8 per cent have no job but are not actively looking for one. From those that do not have a job and are not looking for one, there tend to be more women (30.1 per cent compared to 20.6 per cent for men). In addition, women tend to be more prevalent than men in the category of those who are undergoing occupational training (5.8 per cent out of the total sample). Even though the sample focuses only on youth, 3.5 per cent of them mentioned that they are self-employed.

From all the regions in Romania, young people living in Transylvania have the highest percentage of permanent full-time contracts as well as the lowest unemployment rate. At the same time, young people from Moldova tend to have a higher percentage of occasional/temporary jobs, as well as the highest unemployment rates. This could be explained as being due to the large percentage of rural areas in that region, as well as the prevalence of agriculture as main economic sector in the region. Not surprisingly, the younger respondents are, the lesser their chance of obtaining any form of employment. In addition, men tend to have lower rates of unemployment and more full-time contracts or occasional jobs than women.

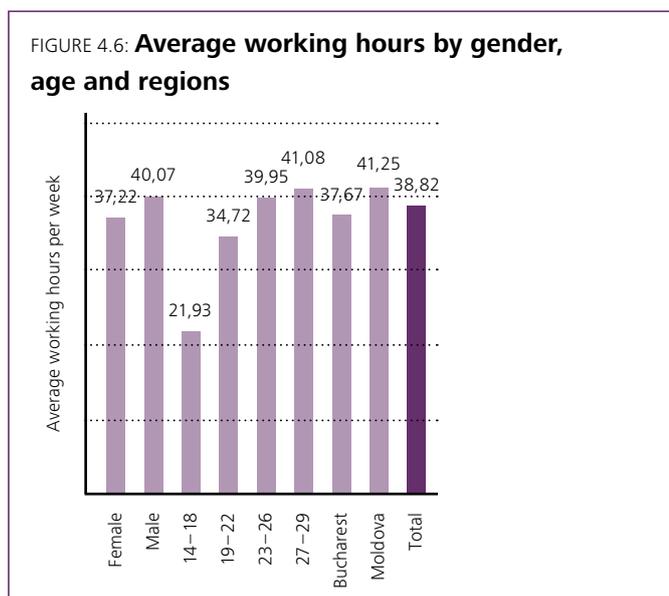
A rather alarming situation regarding youth unemployment in European Union is that of the NEETs, an acronym which designates persons who are not enrolled in education or undergoing other forms of training, nor are they employed. In 2016, for instance, almost one in five (18.3 per cent) of youngsters aged 20–34 were not in employment or undergoing education or training.¹⁷ The current study shows that in 2018, in Romania, 12.3 per cent of

young people (15–29) were NEETs. The figures are smaller than the EU average because the present study also included the 15–18 age group, which is mostly enrolled in some form of education.

The chart below also shows that a significant percentage of young people in poorer countries of the region, especially –Albania, Kosovo and BiH – are not undergoing schooling or training, nor are they in employment. An interesting situation is the case of Romania, where even though young people are in better socio-economic situation than persons in the countries mentioned above, there is a large percentage of young people who are neither in the educational system or employed.



Those who are employed work on average 38.82 hours per week, while 72.9 per cent of these persons work 40 hours or less. Male respondents work, on average, 3 more hours than women, while those living in Moldova work, on average, one hour more than the total population included in the study. In terms of age, the younger people are, the fewer hours they work. Youngsters between 14–18 work on average 21.93 hours a week, while those between 27–19 work 41.08 hours per week.



As mentioned in the previous section, almost 35 per cent of the sample have no job, while a quarter of persons surveyed are not even looking for one. In terms of the reasons for unemployment, 13.9 per cent of the unemployed believe that there was no appropriate job in their region, while 11 per cent indicated that their educational level was not high enough. Youngsters living in Transylvania and Moldova are more critical towards themselves and their education than respondents in Bucharest in terms of the reasons for not finding the appropriate job.

Aspirations vs reality: the relationship between profession, occupation and activity sector

Data show that Romanian youngsters (15–29) tend to be in a position to work at a job that is not what they have been trained for. While 31 per cent stated that they work in their occupation, more than one-third of respondents (36.6 per cent) do not work in their area of educational training. In addition, men tend to work more in occupations which they have not been trained for (39.3 per cent compared to 33.5 per cent for women). This is most probably related to the fact that men also tend to be engaged more in part-time jobs. Still, an interesting fact is that 14 per cent of the respondents state that they have not been trained in any profession. This reveals again, their rather pessimistic approach towards the education system.

As data show there is a trend in all SEE countries for young people to work in jobs that are not in their line of occupation. The average for SEE countries is 42.5 per cent, while the highest percentage is for both Serbia and Kosovo (55 per cent).

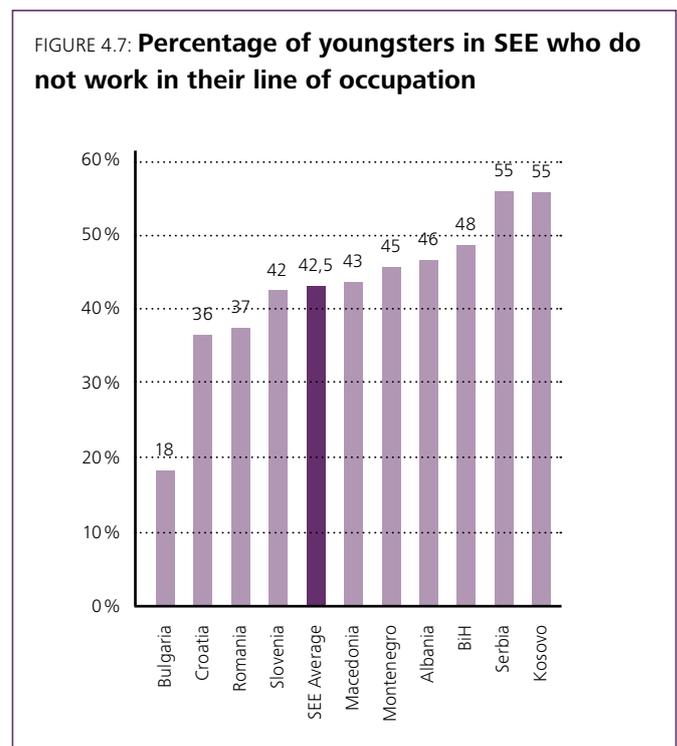
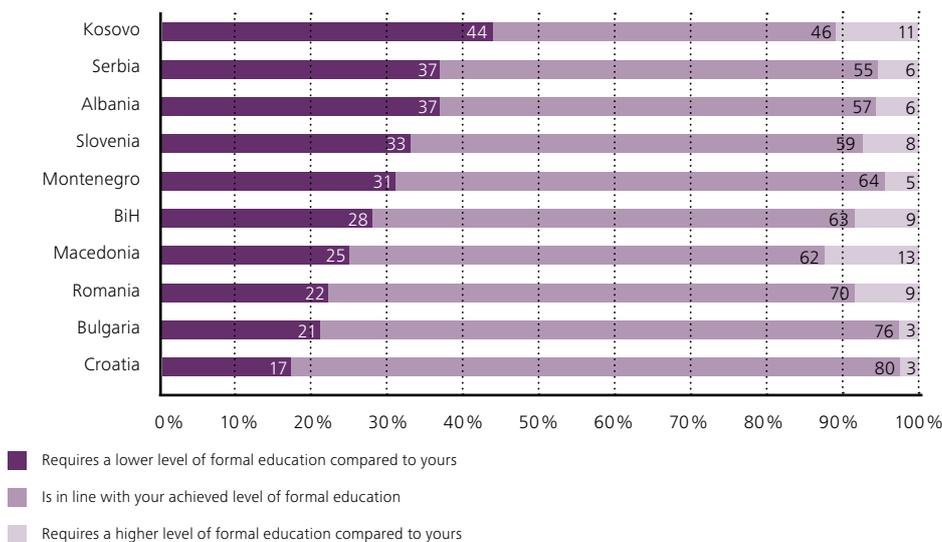


FIGURE 4.8: **Formal education requirements applying to young people's jobs in the SEE region**
(per cent from the entire sample)



At the same time, one in five young Romanians (21.8 per cent) consider themselves to be overqualified for their jobs. The fact that such a high percentage of them do not work in their occupation or feel that they are overqualified for their jobs may lead to dissatisfaction and to lower predictability in terms of future career.

Looking at the entire SEE region, one can easily see that over-education is another dimension of a skills mismatch (Figure 4.8). As data shows, it constitutes a significant problem in Kosovo, Serbia, Albania and BiH – countries which register some of the poorest labour market performance in the region. The high prevalence in Slovenia could be explained by a high incidence of part-time employment.

Finding and choosing a job

When it comes to finding a new job, young Romanians believe that the most important thing is to have a good level of education (54.6 per cent), followed by luck (53 per cent) and acquaintances, like friends and relatives in good positions (44.3 per cent). The least important factors are education and work expertise (22.6 per cent) and party membership (13.4 per cent). Still, when comparing regions, one can easily identify some important differences. In terms of the importance of acquaintances and good connections, young people living in Bucharest and Walachia consider these to be more important than those persons living in Transylvania or Moldova do. In a similar way, they also attach the greatest value to having a good level of education. An interesting result is that there is a greater percentage of young people living in Transylvania than the percentage of the total population who consider party membership to be an important aspect in finding a job. (15 per cent compared to 13.4 per cent of the total population).

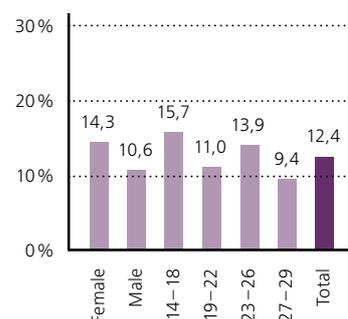
When asked what are the things that value the most when choosing a job, the respondents attach the greatest value to job security (84.2 per cent) and the income/salary they receive

(82.5 per cent) or even the career opportunities a job can offer them in the future (73.4 per cent).

Voluntary initiatives

Only 12.4 per cent of young Romanians have volunteered in the last 12 months, compared to 31 per cent of young people in the European Union¹⁸ (Figure 4.9). Still, the younger they are, the more engaged they are in voluntary activities (15.7 per cent in the age group 14–18 compared to 9.4 per cent in age group 27–29). At the same time, girls tend to be more engaged in voluntary activities than boys.

FIGURE 4.9: **Engagement in voluntary associations by Romanian youth** (per cent)



Out of those persons who were involved in voluntary activities, almost half of them engaged in school/university activities. This is not surprising, as the vast majority of our respondents are enrolled in some form of education. In addition, with a substantially lower percentage, they are either involved in associations and clubs (9.6 per cent), in non-governmental organisations (11 per cent) or other youth organisations (10.3 per cent). They are the least involved in labour unions (1.3 per cent) and political parties (3.5 per cent).

MAIN RESULTS

- More than one-third of young Romanians (15–29) have a permanent full-time or part-time contract (42.9 per cent), while a quarter of them have no job and do not intend to find one. Compared with EU countries, young Romanians are above the average (15.2 per cent), but below the worst situations, countries like Spain (33.8 per cent), Greece (43.2 per cent) or Italy (31.9 per cent). In addition, of all the regions in Romania, young people living in Transylvania have the greatest percentage of permanent full-time contracts as well as the lowest unemployment rate, while those from Moldova tend to have a higher percentage of precarious jobs, as well as the highest unemployment rates.
- Average working hours per week are 38.82, lower than the official working hours per week, which is 40 in Romania. Approximately 10 per cent of respondents work 50 hours or more per week, compared to a quarter who declared the same number of working hours in 2014. This means that in 2018 fewer young people work overtime each week compared to 2014.
- A rather alarming situation regarding youth unemployment in European Union is that of the NEETs, meaning those persons who are not enrolled in education or undergoing other forms of training or employed. Here, the data show that a significant percentage of young people in poorer countries of the SEE region, especially Albania, Kosovo and BiH – are outside of schooling, training or any form of employment. Even though Romania is not among the poorer countries in the region, it displays a rather high percentage of NEETs. In addition, results show that there is a significant negative correlation between being a NEET and socio-economic indicators, parents' level of education attained and the place of residence (urban vs. rural).
- More than one-third (36.6 per cent) of respondents do not work in the occupation they are trained for. Men tend to work more in professions in which they were not trained (39.3 per cent compared to 33.5 per cent for women). This is most probably related to the fact that men also tend to be engaged more in part-time jobs. Besides the fact that a high percentage of young people do not work in their occupation, they also feel that they are over-educated for the work they are doing. All these aspects are important, since they can lead to great dissatisfaction and less predictability in their future career.
- The level of education, luck, acquaintances and good connections are considered to be the most important aspects in finding a job. In terms of the importance of acquaintances and good connections, young people living in Bucharest and Walachia consider this to be more important than those living in Transylvania or Moldova. In addition, young people living in Transylvania tend to consider party membership to be an important aspect in finding a job. (15 per cent).
- Only 12.4 per cent of young Romanians were involved in voluntary activities in the last 12 months, compared to 31 per cent of the youngsters in European Union. The younger they are, the more engaged they are in voluntary activities (15.7 per cent for the age group 14–18 compared to 9.4 per cent for the age group 27–29). This is the case because most people who are involved in voluntary associations do so while they are students.

5

LIFESTYLE AND LEISURE

The research included a series of questions relating to young people's lifestyle, the preferences for leisure time, as well as their common behaviour and experiences. The analysis is broken down into the following sections: 1) Leisure time and social life, 2) the Internet and social networks, 3) First-time experiences, 4) Relationships with parents and school during childhood, 5) Risky behaviour and sexuality.

LEISURE TIME AND SOCIAL LIFE

The importance of leisure-time activities in the psychological, cognitive and physical development of young people is widely acknowledged. Still, these assumptions are conditioned by various factors. In addition, available evidence suggests that the type of leisure activities pursued by young people can also influence their future social relationships and competences. Along these lines, studies show, for instance, that being involved in rather transient and solitary leisure activities have no or only a low impact in this respect.

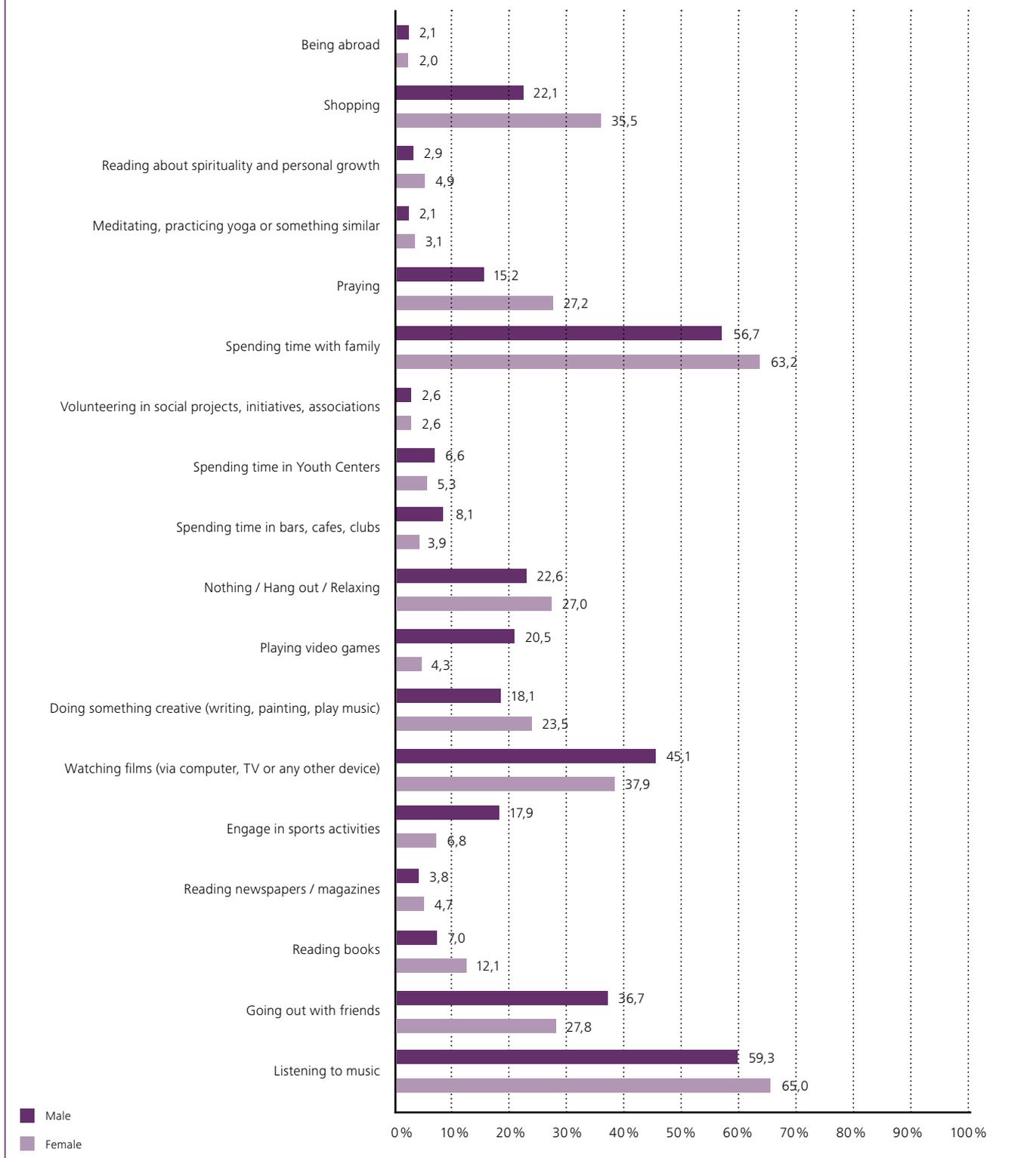
In the context of young Romanians, data show that the most common leisure-time activities they are involved in are of a rather solitary nature. Thus, 62 per cent of them prefer to listen to music, 41.6 per cent to watch films and 28.7 per cent to go shopping. At the same time, they also prefer to spend their leisure time with family (59.9 per cent) and friends (32.3 per cent) (Figure 5.1.). In addition, data show that young Romanians do not prefer creative or physical activities, since only 12.5 per cent engage in sports activities and 20.7 per cent prefer to do something creative in their leisure time. Moreover, they are not eager to participate in either structured or self-development leisure-time activities. In this respect, only 2.5 per cent of them

volunteer and 6 per cent attend activities at youth centres. These results are extremely important, since they indicate limited chances for meeting young people who are different from them, and also few possibilities to exercise their socio-emotional skills.

In terms of gender differences, girls prefer to go shopping, pray, listen to music or to spend time with their families, while boys prefer to engage in sports activities, watch films and play video games. In fact, the biggest difference between boys and girls in terms of their most common leisure-time activity is evident in the case of playing video games.

Moreover, even though the general assumption is that there is a clear divide between young people in communities smaller than bigger cities, data show that differences in the Romanian case are rather small and do not substantially change the country map. Still, some slight differences can be identified, mostly in connection with either financial capacity or infrastructure facilities. In this respect, the biggest differences are to be found in the case of spending time either with family or friends. While young people who live in bigger cities prefer to either spend time with friends or listen to music, young people who live in smaller communities (the size of a village) prefer to spend time with their families. At the same time, the bigger the city is, the more likely respondents are to read books. Still, a more interesting picture emerges when we compare the regions they live in. Thus, those living in Bucharest are the most active and engaged in leisure-time activities, while those in Moldova or Walachia are the least engaged. More precisely, 48.8 per cent of young people living in Bucharest spend their leisure time with friends, while only 23.1 per cent of young people living in Moldova do the same thing. At the same time, even though the percentage of young people who read books is low in general, there is an obvious difference based on the region they come from:

FIGURE 5.1: Preferred leisure-time activities by gender.



14.5 per cent of young people living in Bucharest compared to 4.4 per cent of young people in Moldova read books.

A large part of the Romanian youth prefer to be involved in rather sedentary leisure activities instead of active ones. More than three quarters of them spend at least one hour per day watching TV.

The more educated their parents are (both parents have an education above high school) the fewer hours they spend watching TV every day, while the less educated their parents are, the

most likely they are to spend more hours watching TV every day. Moreover, girls tend to spend a slightly more hours watching TV than boys. At the same time, young people from Transylvania spend the least time watching TV, while those from Bucharest and Walachia spend the most time watching TV.

INTERNET AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

Only fewer than 4 per cent (3.8 per cent) of young Romanians have no regular Internet access, while 64.6 per cent of them have access all the time and 95 per cent of them have access every day, or almost every day.

Data show that the younger respondents are, the more time they spend on the Internet in a day. At the same time, if both of their parents have education lower than high school, respondents tend to spend less time on the Internet per day than in other cases. At the same time, young people living in Transylvania tend to spend fewer hours on the Internet than those living in Bucharest or Muntenia. Young people from Moldova exhibit the highest percentage of young people who do not spend any time on the Internet.

As data shows, leisure time and Internet use are interrelated in the sense that most Romanian young people use the Internet for their preferred leisure-time activities. Most of them use the Internet to communicate with friends (84.6 per cent) or to use social networks (79.7 per cent). In addition, another large portion of them use the Internet to download/listen to music (59.3 per cent) or download/watch movies and videos (52.4 per cent). In this respect, only 8.2 per cent of respondents use the Internet for online banking and 12.8 per cent for online shopping. One positive aspect is that 55.1 per cent of respondents use the Internet for school, education and work-related purposes.

Use of the Internet is also related to traits and the education of the family. In this respect, 49.7 per cent of youngsters both of whose parents do not have a high-school education mentioned that they never use the Internet for education, school or work, while only 10.8 per cent of those both of whose parents have graduated from high school or higher stated the same. At the same time, 27.5 per cent of those respondents whose parents have not graduated from high school use the Internet often for social networks, and only 8.5 per cent of those with educated parents use it for the same reason.

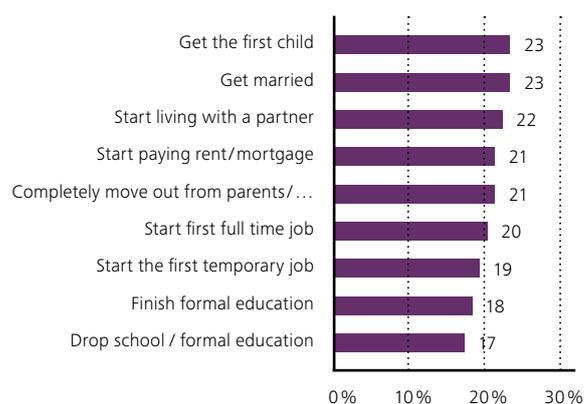
Since a great number of young people use the Internet for social network platforms, special attention should be addressed to exploring this issue. One aspect related to social networks is that of the number of friends one has in the most commonly used social network. In this regard, 24.7 per cent of respondents have up to 200 friends, while 29.5 per cent have between 201 and 500 friends, and the vast majority (36.6 per cent) of them have more than 500 friends.

TRANSITION FROM CHILDHOOD TO ADULTHOOD. FIRST-TIME ADULTHOOD EXPERIENCES

The transition from childhood to adulthood is usually characterised by some crucial steps, such as leaving the parental home to study or work, being materially independent, moving in with a partner or getting married, and having children or not. Among

these, data show that leaving the parental home displays significant differences among EU Member States. In this respect, in most northern and western European countries, on average young people leave home in their early twenties, while in southern and eastern Europe the average age for leaving home is late twenties or early thirties.¹⁹ In our data, less than one-third (27.3 per cent) of young people (15–29) moved out from parents' household completely, while only 20.8 per cent started paying rent or mortgage. From those that moved out of the parental household, the most common age was 21 (Figure 5.2.).

FIGURE 5.2: The most common age for different ways of reaching adulthood



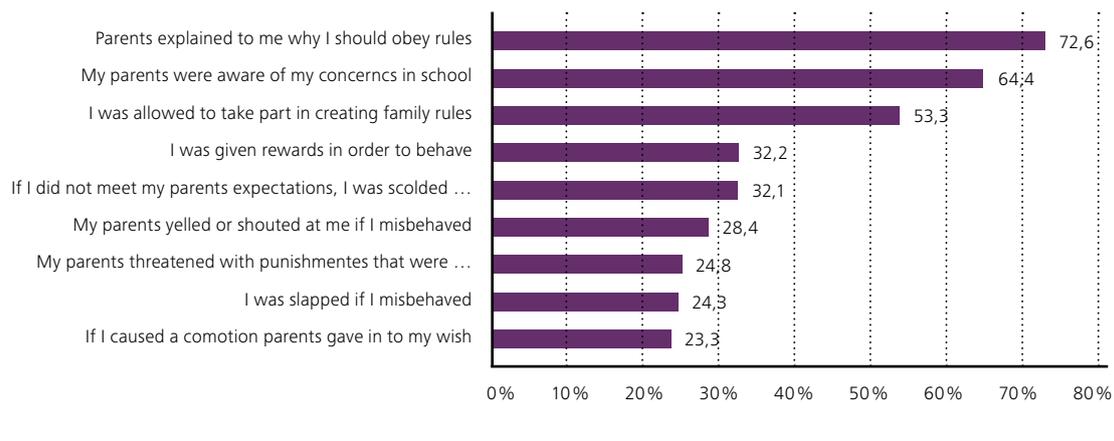
In addition, starting work or getting married and having a child are also important steps in becoming an adult. In this respect, less than 30 per cent mentioned that they started living with their partner, while only 19.5 per cent got married and 16.6 per cent had the first child. For these respondents, the most common age for either getting married or having a child was 23. All this means that young Romanians prefer to start their families later in life. A different situation is when it comes to being materially independent. More than half of young Romanians (15–29) stated that they had already started a full-time job, and the most common age for this was in the early twenties.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS AND SCHOOL DURING CHILDHOOD

The type of relationships youngsters had with their parents during childhood as well as their behaviour at school are said to have a great impact on their behaviour and attitudes today. Being raised in an authoritarian family has a major impact on the way young people see themselves as important actors in a society, as well as their guiding values. Our data show that even though their parents told the respondents to obey rules, 72.6 per cent of youngsters answered that their parents explained them why they should do so, and most importantly, 64.4 per cent of them were allowed to take part in establishing family rules. In contrast,

FIGURE 5.3: **Parent-child relationships**

How often did the following occurred to you ...?



24.3 per cent stated that they were slapped for misbehaving, and 28.4 per cent were shouted at. Still, data show that 47.1 per cent of respondents agree that people need strict discipline from their parents, while only 24.9 of them disagree with this statement (Figure 5.3.). This means that when evaluating their relationship with their parents, a large percentage of respondents have authoritarian views themselves.

In terms of school behaviour, more than one-third of respondents stated that they cheated on tests, while 25.8 per cent skipped classes without their parents knowing it. Having such a large percentage of respondents skipping classes or cheating means that they might not consider school an important institution in their further development.

MAIN RESULTS:

- More than half of the Romanian youngsters spend their leisure time listening to music, followed closely by those engaged in watching films and hanging out with friends and family
- Only 2.5 per cent of them volunteer and 6 per cent attend activities in youth centres, while 9.6 per cent of them use their leisure time to read books.
- Young people living in Bucharest are the most engaged in leisure-time activities, while those from Moldova are the least engaged.
- A quarter of respondents spend more than four hours a day watching TV, while in 2014 only 10 per cent of them spent the same amount of time watching TV.
- A vast majority of respondents have access to the Internet, and more than half of young Romanians use the Internet more than four hours a day, compared to only 38.3 per cent in 2014.
- Those respondents both of whose parents have a high-school education or higher tend to spend fewer hours watching TV and more hours on the Internet.
- 44.9 per cent of young people in Moldova use the Internet for school, education or work, while 65.4 per cent of those living in Bucharest use it for the same purposes.
- The most common age for school dropout is 17. 65.5 per cent of those persons that dropped out of school did so between the ages of 14 and 18.
- 47.1 per cent of respondents agree that people need strict discipline from their parents.

6

RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

This chapter is focused on young people's religious values and behaviour. The first section offers a description of young people's religious practices and orientations, while the second part of the chapter raises questions about the impact of young people's religiosity on their orientations regarding family and sexuality.

The Romanian population is consistently found by international studies (World Values Survey, European Values Study) to display some of the highest levels of religiosity in the region, and newest survey data (for example the recent Pew Research Center report from 2017²⁰) confirms that religious belief in Romania is pervasive.

How do young people approach religious practice and belief? Data from the World Values Survey (wave 6, 2012) shows that 75 per cent of young Romanians aged up to 29 considered themselves to be religious persons, while 91 per cent said they believe in God. Regarding religious practice, in the WVS data 15 per cent of the young respondents said they attend services at least once a week and almost half (49 per cent) pray at least once a day.

The FES 2018 survey collected information on young people's religious affiliation and about two dimensions of religiosity: a behavioural dimension (assessed in terms of frequency of attending religious services and frequency of prayer) and an attitudinal dimension captured by a question asking respondents how important God is in their lives.

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AND RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT AMONG YOUNG ROMANIANS

Our data show the most common denomination of young Romanians is Eastern Orthodox (87.8 per cent), which is fairly unsurprising in the context of a predominantly Eastern Orthodox soci-

ety. Roman Catholicism (4.8 per cent) and Protestantism (2.4 per cent) are reported by comparatively much smaller percentages of young people. Along these lines, we know from the data provided by the most recent population census (2011) that the Eastern Orthodox confession has the dominant position among religious confessions of Romanians (86.5 per cent of individuals identified themselves as Orthodox).²¹

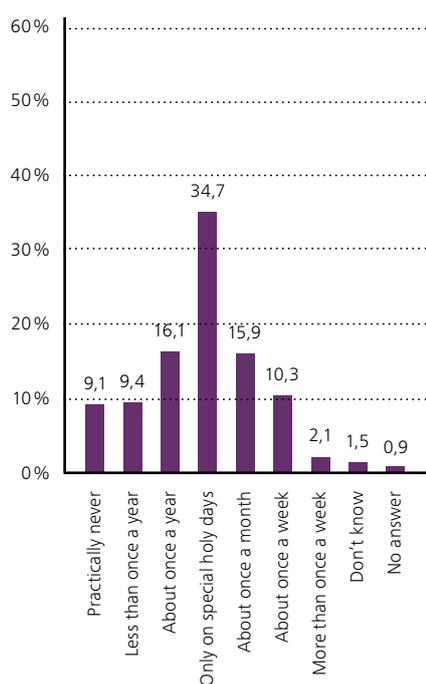
Looking at this by region, Wallachia appears to be the most homogeneous area, with nearly 95 per cent of respondents identifying themselves as Eastern Orthodox. Transylvania is more diverse in terms of denominations, in relation to its ethnic composition; it accounts for the largest shares of Roman Catholics (8.9 per cent) and Protestants (5.8 per cent) and comparatively speaking the smallest percentage of Eastern Orthodox youth (78.1 per cent).

Generally, only 1.9 per cent of young people reported that they were not affiliated with any religious denomination. Bucharest accounts for the largest portion of youth who say they do not belong to any denomination.

Although a very small percentage of young people indicate that they do not have any religious affiliation, affiliation alone is not automatically synonymous with meaningful attachment to religious values or with intense engagement in religious practices. Moreover, religiosity is a multifaceted construct that involves complex sets of beliefs, values and behaviours, and is likely to be influenced by various factors related to one's upbringing and life experience.

Figure 6.2 shows that frequent attendance (once a week or more than once a week) is reported by approximately 12 per cent of the youth included in the sample. More than a third of the young people only attend church on special holidays and about 9 per cent say they never attend religious services (Figure 6.1.).

FIGURE 6.1: **Frequency of attending religious services**
(per cent of the total sample)



In the next step, we ask whether frequency of church-going is influenced by respondents' demographic attributes. In order to ease the presentation of data, the seven categories of service attendance have been re-grouped in three levels of frequency: 'never or rarely' (never to about once a year), 'sometimes' (on special holidays or about once a month) and 'often or very often' (once a week or more). The results in Table 6.1. show the degrees of variation of service attendance by respondents' area and place of residence, age and gender.

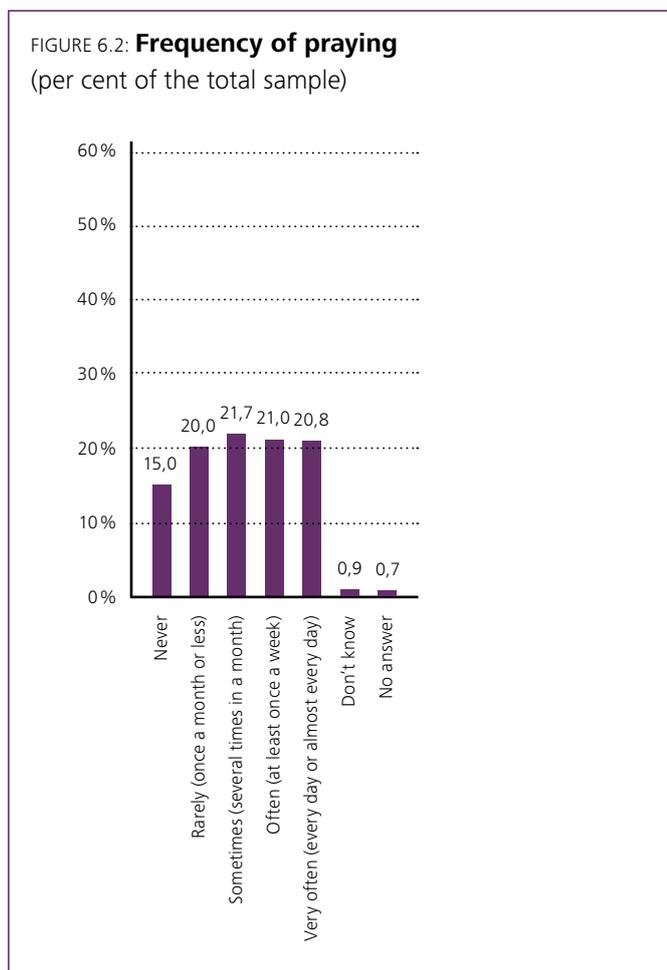
TABLE 6.1: **Frequency of attending religious services by respondents' residence, age and gender**
(percentages excluding non-responses)

	Never or rarely	Sometimes	Often or very often	Total
Sample	35.5	51.8	12.7	100
Locality size				
< 5000	27.1	55.9	17	100
5000–10,000	31.3	60.1	8.6	100
10,000–100,000	39.2	48.9	11.9	100
> 100,000	44.7	44	11.3	100
Region				
Bucharest	50	42.3	7.7	100
Moldova	27.5	55.9	16.7	100
Wallachia	37.1	55.2	7.7	100
Transylvania	35.5	48	16.5	100
Age group				
14–18	38.9	47.4	13.7	100
19–22	36.6	49	14.4	100
23–26	35.6	52.7	11.7	100
27–29	31.6	57.1	11.3	100
Sex				
Male	44	46.1	9.9	100
Female	26.7	57.8	15.5	100

* Statistically significant differences in bold

Respondents from small communities (fewer than 5000 inhabitants) report lower percentages or very low percentages of church attendance, particularly in comparison to respondents from small or big cities. Consistently, the highest percentage of youth who attend services often or very often (17 per cent) is found in small communities. The table also shows some regional variation in church attendance, with Bucharest being the region with most respondents who report *no or very low service attendance*. The difference is notable particularly with regard to youth from Moldova. Lastly, frequent attendance of services is more widespread among women than men.

A further behavioural dimension of religiosity relates to the *frequency of prayer*. The figure below shows that about 42 per cent of young people from the sample pray *often or very often* (Figure 6.2.) Compared to church-going, praying seems to be a more widespread practice, most likely due to its more private nature, which does not confine it to being practiced at a church service.



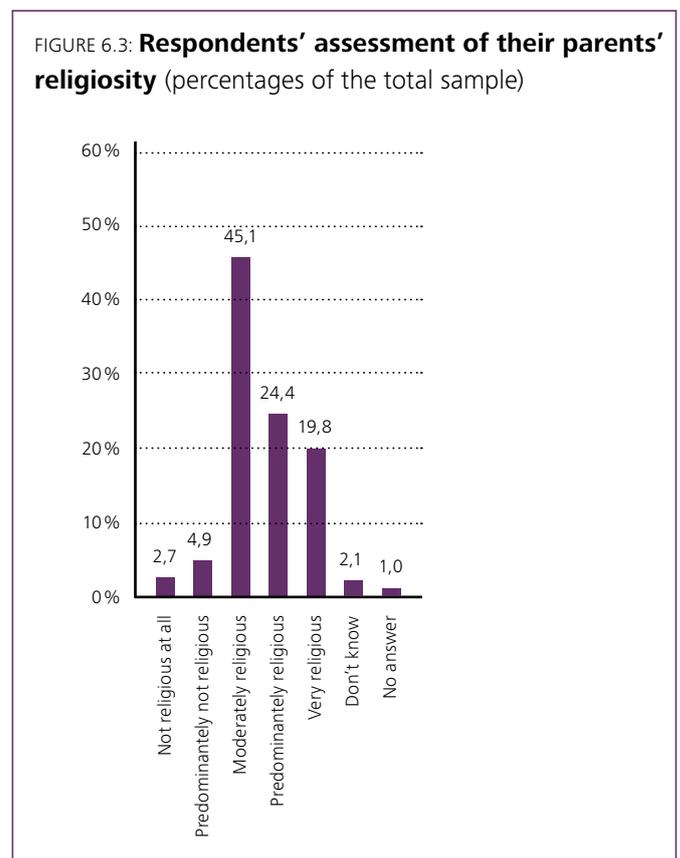
Communities that exceed 10,000 inhabitants display larger percentages of youth who report they never or rarely pray. Bucharest is the region with the highest percentage of respondents for whom praying is either a rare practice or not practiced at all, whereas Transylvania stands out as the area with the largest percentage of respondents who report praying often or very often. Just as in the case of church-going, age does not signifi-

cantly influence praying. What does make a difference is gender, as young women are more fervent prayers than young men.

A second dimension related to religiosity concerns the way in which young people assess the importance of God, which can be considered a measure of religious belief. Respondents are asked to assign a score that would reflect the importance of God in their lives, on a 10-point scale, with 1 being "not important at all" and 10 designating "very important". This approach is often used in international studies. For example, data collected from the general population by World Values Survey (2012) showed that 64 per cent of the Romanian sample consider God to be very important, while for the age group up to 29, the percentage in the aforementioned study was 53 per cent.

The FES 2018 data show that 62 per cent of young respondents believe God to be very important in their lives.

In addition, the survey included a question about youth's assessment of their parents' religiosity. The answers are shown in Figure 6.3.



Most respondents report that their parents are *moderately religious*, and a comparable share of young people consider their parents to be either *predominantly* or *very religious*. Only a small minority assess that their parents are not religious at all (2.7 per cent). The regions with the highest percentages of respondents whose parents are predominantly or very religious are Moldova (54.3 per cent) and Transylvania (50.9 per cent).

Our data allow us to ask whether parents' religious orientations matter in shaping young people's own beliefs and practices.

Youths from families in which the parents are predominantly religious or very religious are significantly more engaged in frequent praying and attendance of services than young people whose parents are less engaged in religion. In addition, more respondents whose parents are moderately to very religious tend to believe that God is very important in their lives, compared to young people who come from non-religious families. We may then conclude that, at least with regard to the religious dimensions covered in the study, data provides support for the argument that religious socialisation within the family is an important process.

RELIGIOSITY AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS FAMILY LIFE AND SEXUALITY

The second section of this chapter explores the relationship between young people's religiosity and their opinions on several aspects regarding family life and sexuality.

Considerable numbers of young people believe that being married and having children is very important. Religion as a criterion in choosing one's partner is considered to be 'very important' by 29 per cent of the respondents. Are there any discernible links between these attitudes and youth's religiosity? The results represented in Table 6.2. clarify these issues, while also exploring the effect of parents' religiosity on the viewpoints expressed by young people.

TABLE 6.2: Importance of family-related aspects according to religiosity (percentages excluding non-responses)

	How important is being/getting married					How important is having children				
	Not important at all	2	3	4	Very important	Not important at all	2	3	4	Very important
Importance of God in one's life										
"Very Important"	2.7	2.4	9.8	18.2	66.9	3	1.8	7.7	15.8	71.7
Other answers	6.9	9.3	17.3	24.2	42.3	6	8.5	15.9	20.3	49.2
Frequency of attending services										
Never/rarely	7.8	6.3	19.3	25	41.7	7.2	5.2	13.8	20.4	53.4
Sometimes	2.7	4.3	9.8	19.3	63.9	2.6	3.5	10.6	16.9	66.3
Often/very often	4	3.2	7.3	14.5	71	3.1	4.7	3.9	13.4	74.8
Parents' religiosity										
Non-religious/predominantly non-religious	10.4	7.8	15.6	19.5	46.8	13.3	4	14.7	20	48
Moderately religious	4.4	5.3	16.3	24	50.1	3.8	4.7	14.6	19.3	57.6
Predominantly religious or very religious	2.7	4.1	9	18.2	66	2.9	4	6.5	15.8	70.8

* Statistically significant differences in bold

The results show several correlations between young people's religiosity and their stances on family life. Great importance being assigned to God correlates with a great importance being assigned to marriage and having children. Moreover, smaller percentages of young people who never or rarely attend religious service report that marriage and children are very important in their lives. In addition, being brought up in predominantly or very religious families appears to contribute to young people's great emphasis on the importance of marriage and having children.

Concerning the use of religion as a criterion for choosing a marriage partner, age and gender do not have an impact on this particular stance; however, frequent church attendance and a religious family context matter in assessing religion as a very important benchmark for selecting the marriage partner.

A further set of attitudes that is likely to be influenced by religious values regards sexuality. Young people were asked about their opinion on abstinence before marriage. More than one third of the respondents consider premarital abstinence to be an obsolete norm and less than a quarter of them believe it to be a virtue, either for both genders or solely for girls. More young men than women think that premarital abstinence is a virtue for both genders.

The last two items under scrutiny relate to young people's opinions on the justifiability of abortion and homosexuality. Opinions on these matters commonly form a cluster of substantial parts of the population towards the end of the spectrum that describes attitudes of rejection. Data from World Values Survey (2012) showed that well over half of Romanian respondents up to 29 years of age consider both abortion and homosexuality to be

'never justified'. Recently, in the Romanian context, the talk on homosexuality (particularly in connection to the notion of same-sex marriage) has resurfaced as part of the wider debate on stipulating in the Constitution that family is established through the marriage between a man and a woman (not between 'spouses', which, according to advocates of the initiative, is a vague construction that leaves room for interpretations).²²

The FES survey included questions about young people's stances on abortion and homosexuality, fashioned similarly to the approach used by World Values Survey referred to above. Table 6.3 shows the distribution of answers that indicate abortion and homosexuality are 'never justified'. Rather large proportions of the young people who offered a valid answer reject both abortion and homosexuality, while religion-related variables have specific influences in this regard.

Young people for whom God is very important and those who attend services frequently are more inclined to reject abortion, compared to less religiously committed respondents. The pattern of rejection is consistent across all age groups. An important observation regards the absence of notable differences between men and women in their negative assessment of abortion.

As far as the attitude towards homosexuality is concerned, there is a significant difference in accepting homosexuality between young people raised in non-religious families and those brought up in predominantly/very religious contexts. Last but not least, comparatively more men than women consider homosexuality to 'never be justified'.

TABLE 6.3: **Rejection of abortion and homosexuality by gender, age and religion-related variables (per cent excluding non-responses)**

	per cent of youth reporting that abortion is 'never justified'	per cent of youth reporting that homosexuality is 'never justified'
Sample (excluding non-responses)	36.9	47.9
Sex		
Male	37.5	52
Female	36.1	43.8
Age group		
14–18	35.8	42.5
19–22	37.4	44.4
23–26	35	52.1
27–29	39.4	51.4
God's importance in one's life		
"Very Important"	45	55.9
Other answers	22.5	34.1
Frequency of service attendance		
Never/rarely	33	44.2
Sometimes	35.7	48.3
Often/very often	48.8	56.1
Parents' religiosity		
Not religious/predominantly not religious	33.8	33.3
Moderately religious	29.4	47.1
Predominantly religious or very religious	43.9	49.9

MAIN RESULTS

- About 63 per cent of youth from the entire sample report that God is very important in their lives.
- High importance assigned to God is associated with strong valorisation of getting/being married and of having children. In addition, in line with the expectations about the impact of religiosity on issues that are commonly filtered through moral norms, we find larger percentages of youth who reject abortion and homosexuality among those who state that God is very important in their lives.
- Most young people attend religious services only on special holidays (34.7 per cent), while the percentage of those who go to services at least once a week is about 12 per cent. Prayer is comparatively speaking a more widespread practice, with nearly 21 per cent of youth reporting that they pray every day or almost every day. In terms of regions, Moldova and Transylvania have the largest shares of youth who report frequent or very frequent attendance of services and Transylvania also stands out as the area with the largest proportion of young people who pray often or very often. Women are found to be more engaged religiously than men; they pray regularly and attend religious service more often. This finding is consistent with the results of the 2014 edition of the survey, which showed women to be more involved in church-going, prayer, confession and fasting.
- Having a predominantly religious or very religious family background has a strong influence on young people's religious belief and engagement. The socialising influence of family is also visible with regard to young peoples' stances on the importance of marriage and of having children.

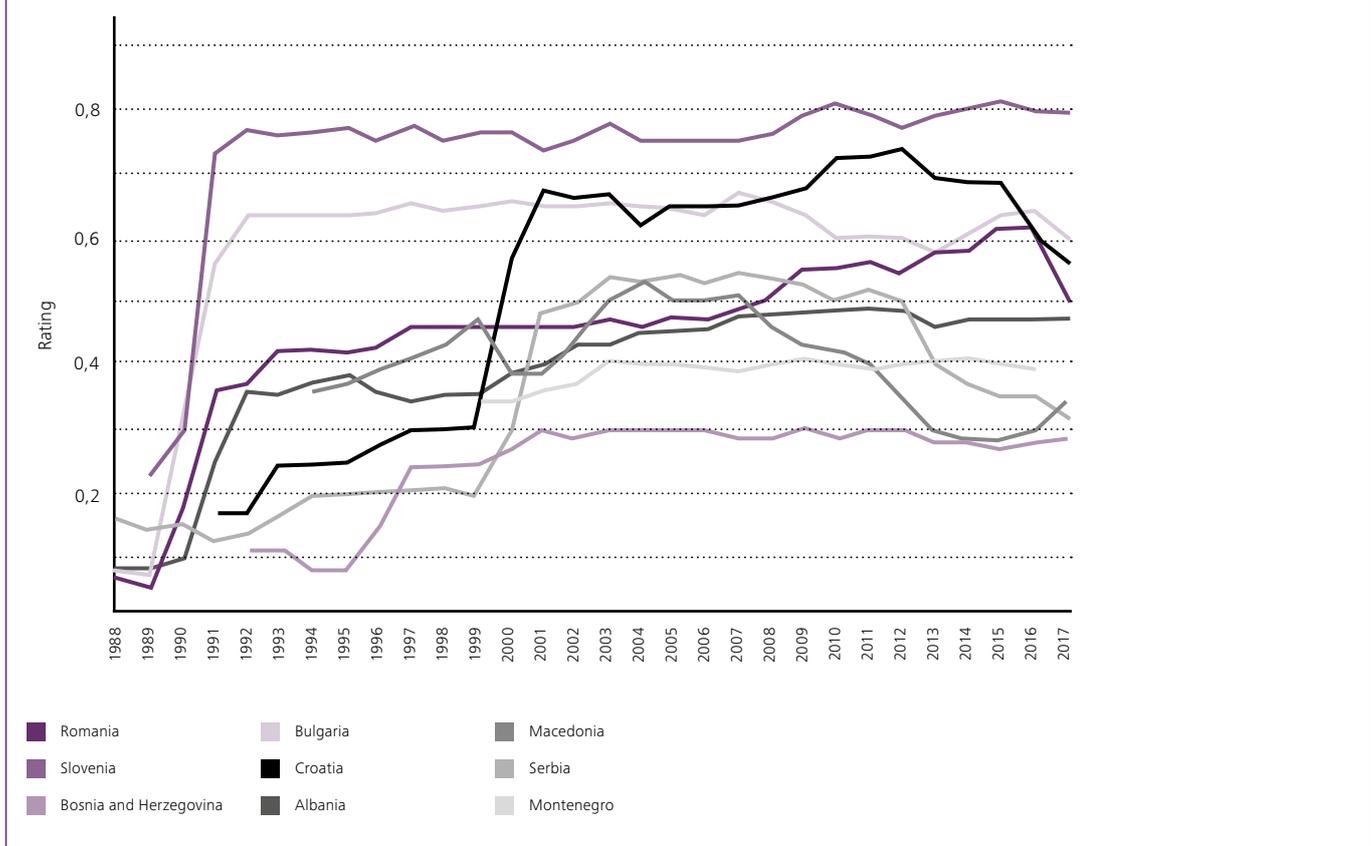
7

DEMOCRACY AND SOCIOPOLITICAL ATTITUDES

There is a growing debate on what the current trends of democracy and freedom are in the world. Drawing on Freedom House indices, Larry Diamond (2015: 143, 149) concluded that “Democracy has been in a global recession for most of the last decade, and there is a growing danger that the recession could deepen and tip over into something much worse” (2015: 153). More recently, Puddington and Roylance (2017: 106) came to the same conclusion, finding that since 2005 the proportion of countries showing an improvement in political rights and civil liberties was much lower than the proportion of countries exhibiting a decline in these areas. The Varieties of Democracy project or V-Dem, which is a comprehensive database of empirical assessments of 174 countries based on a number of indicators that measure the different aspects and dimensions of democracy, and which are characterised by high validity and reliability in comparison with other measurements of democracy, provides further support for the democratic recession thesis. V-Dem data allows one to build a Liberal Democracy Index, measuring to what extent the ideal of liberal democracy is achieved in each country. It assesses the extent to which individual and minority rights are protected against the tyranny of the state and the tyranny of the majority by taking into account constitutionally protected civil liberties, rule of law, independence of the judiciary, and effectiveness of checks and balances. The index shows a decline in six of the countries in our study, stability in two, and improvement in one. Romania has the steepest decline, between 2016 and 2017, and the second greatest drop on the index after Croatia, between 2015 and 2017 (Figure 7.1.).

The analyses in this chapter address several key aspects of the political culture of young Romanians, and are based on the assumption that the quality of liberal democracy in a society is influenced by the attitudes, values and norms of its citizens. We shall examine the level of political legitimacy, political tolerance, political interest and engagement, ideological and policy preferences as well as their determinants and the ways they are interrelated.

FIGURE 7.1: The V-Dem Liberal Democracy Index for nine South-East European countries, between 1988 and 2017.



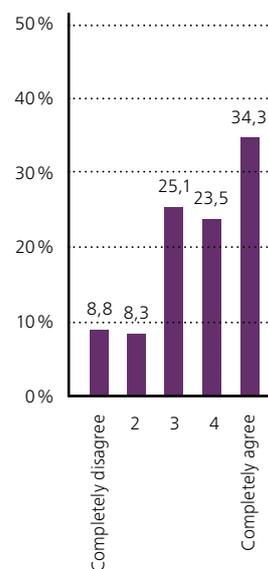
LEGITIMACY AND QUALITY OF DEMOCRACY

Political legitimacy has been argued to be an important prerequisite for the quality and stability of democratic governance. According to the hierarchical model of support for democracy, there are two levels of legitimacy. The first and higher level refers to the value of democratic regimes. If the majority of the citizens do not show a commitment to democracy and simultaneously advocate an alternative to it, then there is a crisis of democratic legitimacy as well as pressure for the institutionalisation of this alternative (Van Beek, Fuchs, Klingemann 2019).

The survey included two questions that seek to estimate this level of political legitimacy: the view that “democracy is a good form of government”, and the view that “under certain circumstances dictatorship is a better form of government than democracy”. More than half of the respondents agree that democracy is a good form of government, whereas less than 20 per cent disagree (Figure 7.2).

Gender, age and, surprisingly, level of education do not correlate with the view on how good democracy is as a form of government. The level of support is negatively correlated with the size of the community of residence and is lower among youth from households with the greatest numbers of goods²³.

FIGURE 7.2: Level of agreement with the statement “Democracy is a good form of government in general”



At the same time, less than one-quarter of respondents agree that under certain circumstances dictatorship is a better form of government than democracy (Figure 7.3.).

FIGURE 7.3: Degree of agreement with the statement “Under certain circumstances dictatorship is a better form of government than democracy”



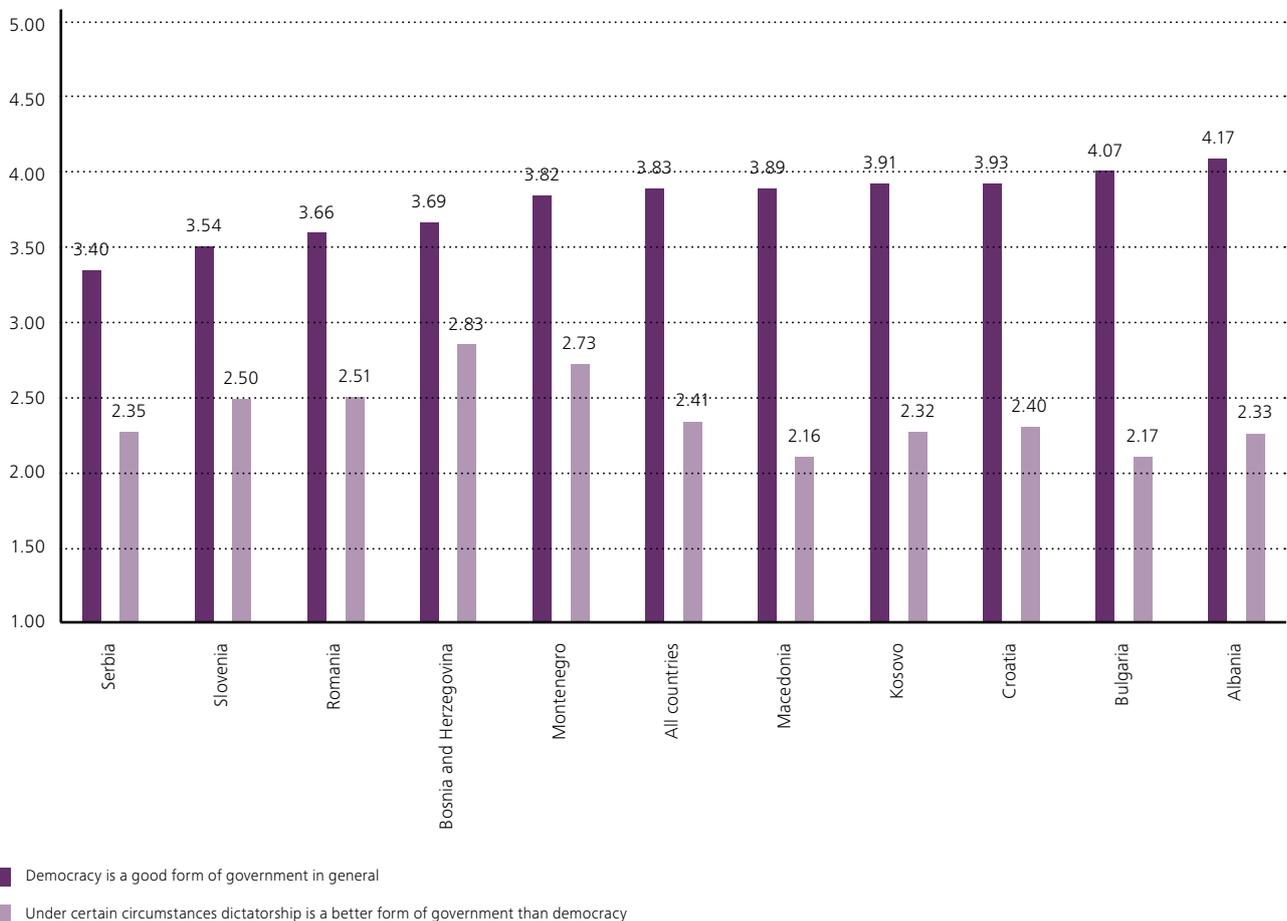
Age, level of education, size of locality and family wealth do not correlate with the view that under certain circumstances dictatorship is a better form of government than democracy. Gender has a statistically significant effect: the proportion of boys who show complete agreement with the statement is double the one for girls (14 per cent, compared to 7 per cent).

These two questions that assess political legitimacy were used to build an aggregate measure with three categories: low, medium and high levels of legitimacy. Gender, age and education were found to have statistically significant effects: girls and those with university education tends to have more positive views about democratic regimes, whereas older respondents are more likely to have extreme views (negative or positive) than the rest of the sample.

When compared to the other nine southeast European countries that are part of the comparative study, Romania has one of the lowest levels of support for the statement “Democracy is a good form of government in general” (the third lowest), and one of the highest levels of agreement that “Under certain circumstances dictatorship is a better form of government than democracy” (the third highest) (Figure 7.4.). The differences between countries are rather small. Nevertheless, it is worrying that Roma-

FIGURE 7.4: The mean level of agreement with the statement “Democracy is a good form of government in general” and the mean level of agreement with the statement “Under certain circumstances dictatorship is a better form of government than democracy” for 10 countries.

(1 is ‘completely disagree’, 5 is ‘completely agree’)



nia has values that are less favourable than those of countries with worse-functioning democratic institutions and with a more difficult post-communist transition.

The second level of political legitimacy does not refer to democracy as such, but to the democracy of the country in question. The more citizens support democracy in their own country, the more legitimacy this political system has. A low level of citizens support increased transformation pressure, which can produce very different results. In one case, the pressure can target an improvement of the democratic regime in the country; this is the case when citizens do not support the regime in their own country, but express a preference for democracy as such. Klingemann (1999, 2014) refers to this phenomenon as “critical citizens” or “dissatisfied democrats.” The other case is when the democratic regime of one’s own country has low support and the authoritarian alternative is preferred over democracy as such. Low levels for both types of legitimacy result in transformation pressure in the direction of the authoritarian alternative.

The survey estimates the second type of political legitimacy by asking what the view of the respondents on the status of democracy, the rule of law and the status of human rights in Romania is. The distributions are shown in Figure 7.5. to 7.7. and indicate that, in each case, the percentages of those who have positive views are lower than the percentages of those who are critical.

FIGURE 7.5: **How good or bad, in the respondents’ view, is the status of democracy in Romania?**

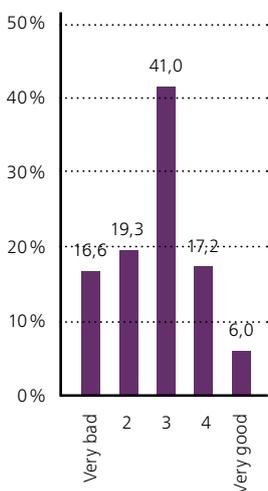


FIGURE 7.6: **How good or bad, in the respondents’ view, is the status of the rule of law in Romania?**

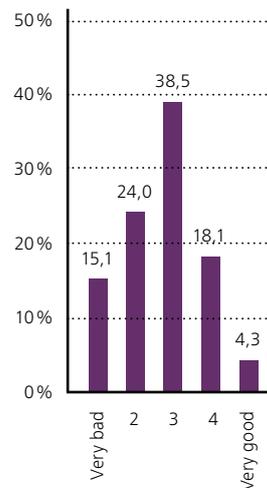


FIGURE 7.7: **How good or bad, in the respondents’ view, is the status of human rights in Romania?**

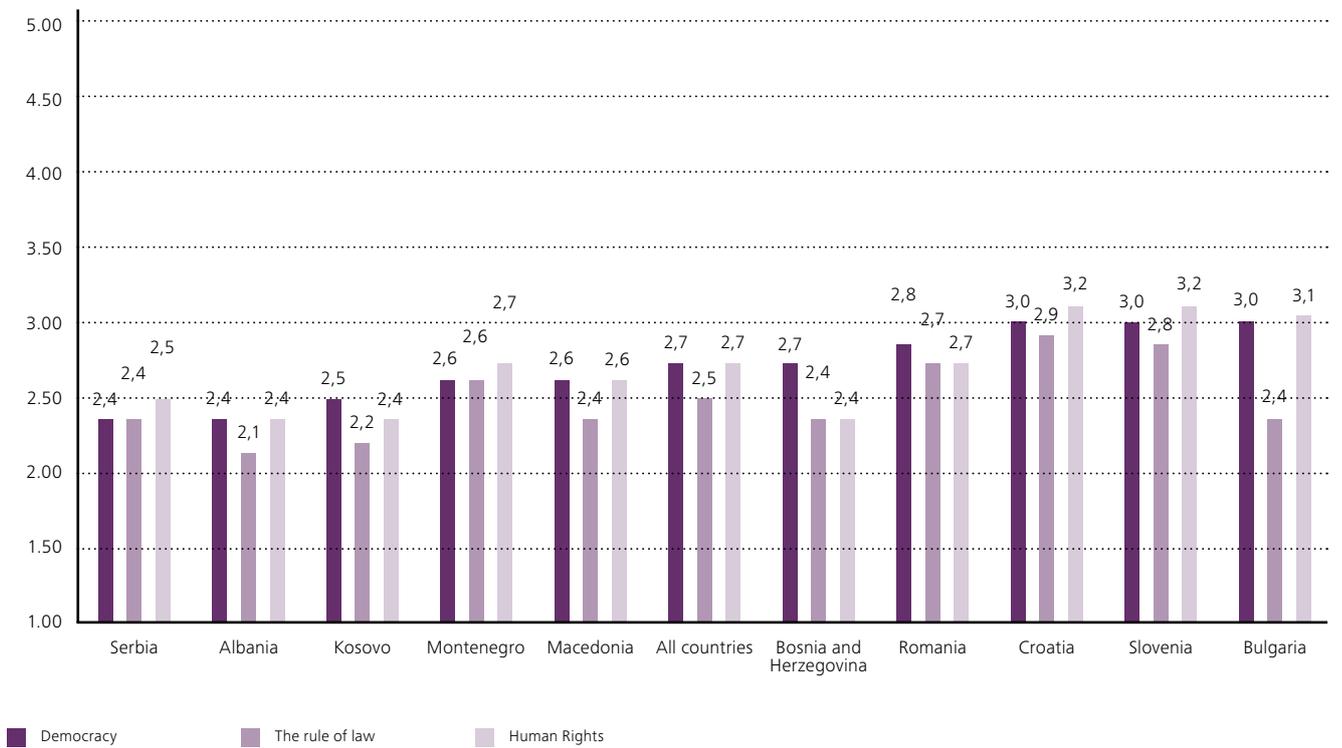


What is the proportion of “dissatisfied democrats”, those who support democratic regimes but are critical of democracy in Romania, from the total sample? 10 per cent of the sample fall into this category, having positive views on democracy per se but negative ones about democracy in Romania, whereas 5 per cent are critical of democracy in general and in Romania. The respondents who are older and better educated have a higher chance of being “critical democrats” than the rest of the sample: it is 12 per cent for those above 22 years of age compared to 6 per cent for those below, and 14 per cent for those with higher education, compared to 7 per cent for those with less than high school.

In a comparison to the other nine southeast European countries that are part of the comparative study, Romania has the lowest levels when it comes to assessing the status of democra-

FIGURE 7.8: **The mean values for assessments of the status of democracy, rule of law, and human rights in the country of the respondent, for 10 countries.**

(1 is a 'very bad' status, 5 is a 'very good' status)



cy among the EU countries, although these are higher in comparison to non-EU countries, and higher or equal to the mean figures for the entire sample (Figure 7.8).

POLITICAL TRUST

Political trust is another key component of political culture that describes how well democratic governance functions.

The survey estimated the level of trust in 20 institutions and organisations, both national and international (Table 7.1.). The overall view is negative, with no category receiving a majority of positive assessments (category 4 and 5, out of five). In the case of three political institutions operating at the national level, the majority of respondents selected the lowest level of trust (category 1, out of five): national parliament (50.2 per cent), national government (54.9 per cent) and political parties (54.9 per cent). Only the army and church received more positive assessments by respondents than negative ones (40 per cent vs. 29 per cent for the army, and 39 per cent vs. 34 per cent for the church).

TABLE 7.1: Trust in institutions and organisations.

	How much do you trust ...?					
	Not at all				Fully	(Don't know) (No answer)
	1	2	3	4	5	98
The President	38.1	16.7	20.7	11.9	4.9	7.7
National parliament	50.2	22.7	14.4	4.1	2.0	6.6
National Government	54.9	18.7	11.8	5.0	2.8	6.8
Civil society organisations	38.0	20.7	17.9	8.1	3.8	11.6
Political parties	54.9	22.4	10.9	2.8	1.9	7.1
Local government	36.8	17.9	20.9	10.1	6.7	7.5
Army	17.2	11.3	23.5	24.2	15.3	8.5
Judiciary (courts)	29.2	16.6	24.5	15.1	5.1	9.5
Police	21.5	19.5	25.8	18.9	7.3	7.0
Church, religious institutions	19.9	13.9	21.2	21.6	17.4	6.0
Media in your country	25.7	20.6	22.9	14.3	9.0	7.4
Trade unions	35.0	20.7	16.3	8.6	2.9	16.5
Big companies	27.6	19.5	20.8	11.9	6.7	13.5
Banks	28.2	15.5	20.2	11.9	8.7	15.6
Volunteer movements	28.2	15.5	20.2	11.9	8.7	15.6
European Union	20.0	15.0	27.4	16.5	10.4	10.8
United Nations	20.7	16.2	24.3	14.7	8.0	16.1
OSCE	20.9	16.2	22.3	10.1	7.1	23.4
NATO	20.5	13.8	23.3	15.2	9.4	17.7
IMF	30.6	18.5	19.5	7.1	4.1	20.3

A statistical analysis of these responses shows that they reflect to a large extent a broader perspective on political, social and economic institutions which can be predicted using a unique dimension²⁴. In other words, when the views of a respondent on several institutions are known, this information allows us to predict his/her views on the other institutions with a fair degree of precision. This implies that the responses to the 20 questions can be combined in a composite index that measures the level of institutional trust, and the determinants of this index can be assessed. The level of education, educational aspirations and family wealth each have a positive effect on institutional trust, with levels that are 25–30 per cent higher for the top categories compared to the lowest.

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

The views on the rights of minority groups capture a central aspect of a liberal perspective on society. Our survey asked respondents for eight types of groups whether they had too many, enough or not enough rights. The answers are shown in Table 7.2. The largest proportions of responses show support for the present level of rights: the mean of the proportions saying “enough rights” for the eight groups is 39 per cent. A slightly lower share is in favour of granting more rights: the mean percentage for those saying “not enough rights” in the eight groups is 37 per cent. On average, only 10 per cent of the responses believe that the minority groups have too many rights. However, distributions across groups are very dissimilar: only in the case of LGBT people and ethnic minorities are the percentages of those who support more rights smaller than those who say that they have too many rights; in the case of disabled, poor, young people and children, the majority of respondents believe that they should have more rights.

TABLE 7.2: Level of support for granting rights to minority groups.

	Not enough rights	(Enough rights)	Too many rights	(Don't know / no answer)
	1	2	3	98
Women	28.2	55.5	5.9	10.4
Ethnic minorities	14.8	41.7	28.5	15.0
Homosexuals/LGBT people	19.0	33.8	22.9	24.3
Disabled people	52.7	30.0	2.9	14.4
Poor people	56.7	28.8	3.6	10.8
Religious people	16.2	54.0	11.4	18.4
Young people	54.8	32.6	4.5	8.1
Children	50.5	35.9	4.2	9.4

An analysis of what influences views regarding the rights of the minority groups produces remarkably few statistically significant correlations between attributes of the respondents and attitudes on minorities. It is not unexpected that girls tend to support expanding the rights of women, and that respondents that are highly religious would like religious people have more rights. It is surprising, however, that family wealth is not correlated with views on poor people’s rights, and especially that education of the respondents and parental education do not have a systematically positive effect on attitudes regarding rights across minority groups. Education only has a positive effect in the case of disabled people, whereas both parental education and education of the respondents are negative correlated with views on ethnic minorities.

The attitudes of respondents regarding the political rights of the eight types of minorities can be combined as an index of political tolerance, with values ranging between 0 (lowest level) and 1 (highest level). When compared to the other nine southeast European countries that are part of the comparative study, Romania has a mean value on the index that is fourth lowest – lower than the value for the entire sample (Figure 7.9.). Romania has the second lowest level of support for the rights of ethnic minorities after Bulgaria, and the third lowest overall support for the rights of poor people (after Croatia and Slovenia). At the same time, it has the highest level of support for the rights of children.

POLITICAL INTEREST AND ENGAGEMENT

Respondents were asked to what extent they are interested in politics in several types of contexts: at the local level, at the national level, in the EU, in the United States, in Russia and in general. The distributions of responses suggest that politics play a very marginal role in the lives of most Romanian youth (Table 7.3.). Politics at the local level elicits the most interest, and politics in Russia the least. 61 per cent of the sample have little or no interest in politics for each of the six categories, and only 20 per cent say that have great or very great interest for at least one

category of contexts. Parental education and level of education of the respondent are positive predictors of political interest, whereas religiosity has a negative effect.

FIGURE 7.9: Mean values in an index of political tolerance for 10 countries. (0 is the lowest tolerance, 1 is the highest).

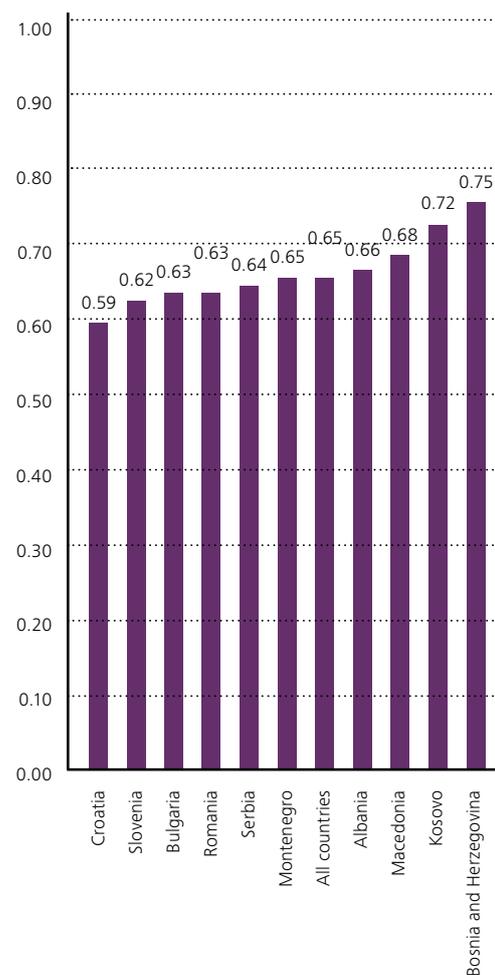


TABLE 7.3: Interest in politics in several types of contexts

	Not interested at all				Very interested	(Don't know/ No answer)
	1	2	3	4		
Politics in general	62.3	14.1	11.8	6.1	3.1	2.5
Politics in the EU	61.0	14.9	13.1	4.8	3.4	2.8
Politics in Romania	55.4	15.4	14.0	7.3	5.1	2.8
Politics at the local level	54.4	13.9	13.5	9.0	6.5	2.7
Politics in the US	68.0	13.7	10.1	3.3	1.8	2.9
Politics in Russia	72.8	12.2	8.2	2.3	1.6	3.0

In addition, respondents were asked if they were involved in several types of participatory activities: signing a list with political requests, participation in demonstrations, volunteering, working for a political organisation, boycotts for political or environmental reasons, and participation in online political activities. Those who answered negatively were asked whether they would be

willing to participate. Both levels of participation and interest in participation are low, with participation in protests being the most popular form of activism (Table 7.4.). Less than one-quarter (22 per cent) of the sample were involved in participatory acts, and only 20 per cent of those who were not expressed their willingness to participate in the future.

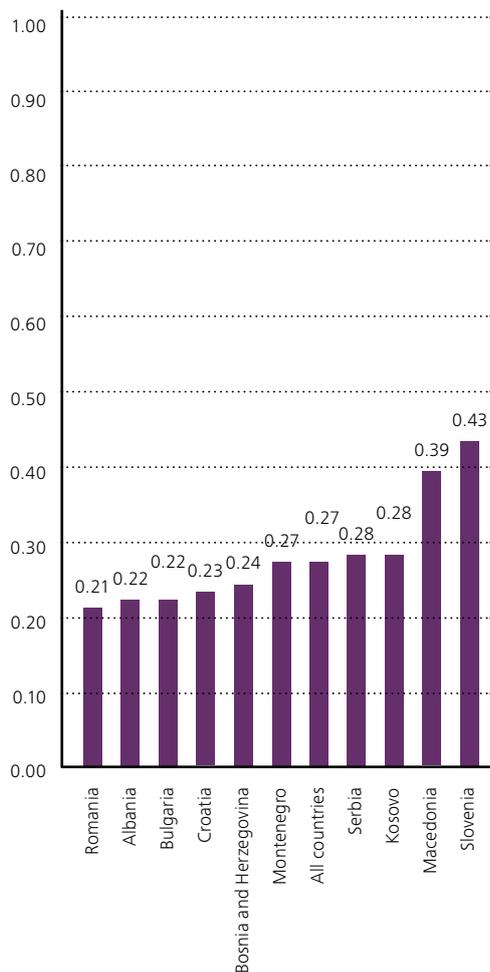
TABLE 7.4: Involvement in political participation and willingness to participate

	No	No, but I would	Yes	Don't know/ No answer
	1	2	3	98
Signed a list with political requests/ Supported an online petition	80.7	6.6	9.1	3.5
Participated in a demonstration	78.0	7.6	11.2	3.2
Participated in voluntary or civil society organisation activities	80.1	8.6	8.2	3.2
Worked in a political party or political group	88.8	5.9	3.0	2.4
Stopped buying things for political or environmental reasons	86.6	4.7	5.2	3.4
Participated in political activities online/ in social networks	86.4	3.6	7.0	3.0

The level of education is the most important predictor of political participation: 45 per cent of the respondents who graduated from higher education participated at least once, compared to 12 per cent of those who did not finish high school. The second strongest predictor is religiosity, with those who say that God is important in their life being less participatory and less willing to participate.

In comparison to the other nine southeast European countries that were part of the comparative study, Romania has the lowest percentage of respondents who were politically engaged. Only 21 per cent of Romanian respondents declare that they have participated in one or more of the six forms of political participation assessed in the survey (petitioning, protests, volunteering, working for a political party, boycotting, online political activities), compared to 27 per cent, the mean value for all ten countries, and 43 per cent, the value for Slovenia (Figure 7.10.).

FIGURE 7.10: The proportion of respondents who have participated in at least one of six types of political activity, for 10 countries.



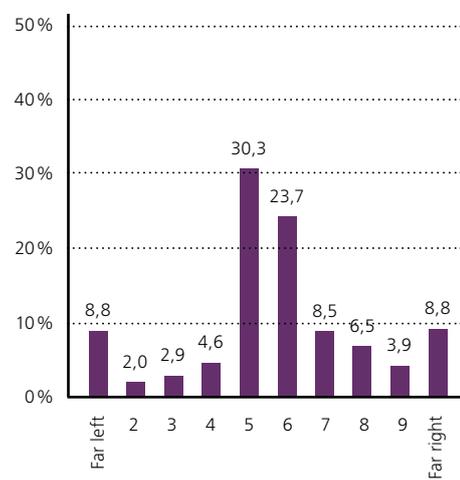
IDEOLOGY AND POLICY PREFERENCES

It is generally assumed that party leaders and candidates can transmit useful information on policy programs by structuring their ideas along a limited number of dimensions (Downs 1957). Even more, it has been asserted that most party policy positions can be synthesised into a unique dimension, in this way reducing information costs to a minimum (e.g. Robertson 1976, Budge et al 2001). The left-to-right dimension has been found to be most common across consolidated democracies. Empirical studies have shown that most citizens living in democratic societies are able to place themselves and to locate political parties on the left-to-right spectrum, and vote accordingly (ex. Sum and Badescu 2005). In addition, studies based on representative surveys, expert judgments (Laver and Hunt 1992, Huber and Inglehart 1995) and content analysis of party manifestos (Budge and Klingemann 2001, Laver, Benoit and Garry 2003) found a generally high level of consistency in using left-right dimension by both political actors and citizens. Thus, one’s ideological orientation

plays a key role in explaining the process through which citizens evaluate and choose among competing candidates and parties. The meaning of “left” and “right” varies cross-nationally, but generally these terms have specific ideological connotations relating to social class and resource distribution. As a schema, the left-right continuum serves as a simple and efficient mechanism with which to map the political space through which citizens and political parties communicate (Knight 1985; Fuchs and Klingemann 1990; Hinich and Munger 1994). However, previous research shows no tendency towards convergence between East and West in terms of ideological identification. On the contrary, whereas in the West reliance on a mono-dimensional left-to-right plotting of political parties has seen a slight increase, in the East the percentage of people able to place the main parties on a left-to-right scale in correct order as well as the proportion of people exhibiting a consistency between ideological distance and party preference has decreased.

The respondents in this research were asked to place themselves on a left-to-right ideological scale (Figures 7.11). The mean value is 5.7, very close to the middle of the scale, whereas the median (the value assigned by the respondent in the middle of the distribution) is 6. When the analysis is restricted to the top 20 per cent of subjects in terms of political interest, both the mean value of the left-to-right placement and percentage of those who chose ‘far right’ are far higher: 6.1 and 11.4 per cent, respectively.

FIGURE 7.11: Self-plotting on the left-to-right scale (1 – far left, 10 – far right).



When compared to the other nine southeast European countries included in the comparative study, Romania has a mean value in self-placement on the left-to-right scale that is third highest following Bulgaria and Kosovo (Figure 7.12).

FIGURE 7.12: **The mean values for self-placement on the left-to-right scale for 10 countries.**

(1 – far left, 10 – far right)



The questionnaire included a series of three questions assessing preferences for redistributive policies and the role of the state in economy and society. The questions and the results are summarised in Table 7.5., and show strong support for redistribution and a strong state. An analysis of the determinants of these questions shows that the respondents who are less educated and more religious tend to show stronger support for redistribution than the rest of the sample. Stronger correlations are to be found between the level of education and the view that poor and rich should have more equal income, and between religiosity and support for an increased role of government in ensuring that everyone is provided for.

TABLE 7.5: **Attitudes on the role of the state in economy and society.**

	Totally disagree				Totally agree	(Don't know)
	1	2	3	4	5	98
Incomes of the poor and the rich should be made more equal	3.4	3.3	12.1	22.2	55.7	3.4
Government ownership of business and industry should be increased	6.2	4.6	12.7	19.9	47.5	9.1
Government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for	1.2	1.7	10.1	17.0	65.9	4.1

None of these three questions is correlated with self-placement on the left-to-right scale. This finding is surprising, since it runs counter to the results that are based on adults from the Western countries, where people who favour a stronger role of government and increased redistribution by the government tend to place themselves on the left-hand side of the ideological scale. At the same time, views on immigration correlate with self-placement on the left-to-right spectrum in a way that is commonly found in Western societies, but only among those respondents who state that they are interested in politics:

among the top 20 per cent in terms of political participation, those who say that the government should focus more on the fight against illegal immigration tend to place themselves towards the right.

The absence of a tendency for people on the left-hand part of the spectrum to favour increased redistribution more than people on the right is not unique to Romania. Among the ten countries included in our study, only Bulgaria and Slovenia exhibit this pattern, whereas Croatia, Kosovo and Macedonia display the opposite correlation (people on the right favour more

redistribution). At the same time, support for the fight against illegal migration is greatest among people on the right-hand part of the spectrum only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Slovenia.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ATTITUDES REGARDING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

An analysis of how views on democratic governance, political engagement and ideological preferences interact offers a clearer perspective on the meaning of democratic governance in the view of Romanian youth. Correlations between the legitimacy of democracy in general, legitimacy of democracy in Romania, po-

litical tolerance, political participation, self-placement on the left-to-right spectrum, support for more equal incomes between rich and poor, and support for acceptance of more refugees in Romania only display weak patterns and several unexpected links (Table 7.6.). The two types of democratic legitimacy are positively correlated, but only weakly ($r = 0.17$), whereas political interest and political interest are much more strongly linked ($r = 0.34$). A surprising finding is that self-placement along the ideological scale is not correlated either with preferences on income distribution, or with the view towards allowing more refugees in the country.

Another result that is worth outlining is that youth with stronger political opinions, and those who have a great interest in politics and exhibit high levels of political participation tend to support democracy and, at the same time, to oppose the idea of reducing the income gap between poor and rich.

TABLE 7.6: **Correlations between legitimacy of democracy in general, legitimacy of democracy in Romania, political tolerance, political participation, self-placement on the left-to-right spectrum, support for more equal incomes between rich and poor, and support for acceptance of more refugees in Romania**

	Pearson Correlation						
	Democracy in Romania	Political tolerance	Political interest	Political participation	Left – right	More equal incomes	More refugees
Democratic legitimacy	.170	-.063	.076	.108	-.033	-.038	.032
Democracy in Romania	1	-.246	.119	-.026	-.039	-.072	.119
Political tolerance	-.246	1	-.120	.034	.089	.195	-.081
Political interest	.119	-.120	1	.342	.042	-.215	.116
Political participation	-.026	.034	.342	1	.074	-.144	.025
Left – right	-.039	.089	.042	.074	1	-.046	.024
More equal incomes	-.072	.195	-.215	-.144	-.046	1	.062

* Statistically significant correlations in bold

MAIN RESULTS

- More than half of respondents agree that democracy is a good form of government, whereas less than 20 per cent disagree. At the same time, 23 per cent of respondents agree that under certain circumstances dictatorship is a better form of government than democracy.
- When compared to the other nine southeast European countries that are part of the comparative study, Romania has one of the lowest levels of democratic support.
- The survey estimates the level of legitimacy of Romanian democracy by asking what the view of respondents is towards the status of democracy, the rule of law and the status of human rights in Romania. The results show that in each case the proportions of those who have positive views are smaller than the proportions of those who are critical. In a comparison to the other nine southeast European countries that are part of the comparative study, Romania has the lowest values in assessing the status of democracy among EU countries, although these are higher than in non-EU countries, and higher or equal to the mean values for the entire sample.
- Levels of trust in institutions and organisation are low, with neither of these having a majority of positive assessments. In the case of three national parliament, national government and political parties, more than half of the respondents indicate the lowest level of trust. Army and church are the only institutions for which a greater percentage of respondents have a positive assessment than those with negative ones.
- Support for the rights of minorities is a key component of a democratic political culture. A greater share of young Romanians support the present level of rights for most of the minority groups, whereas about one-third support extending current rights. In the case of LGBT people and ethnic minorities, however, the percentages of those persons who support more rights are smaller than those who say that they have too many rights. When compared to the other countries in this study, support for the rights of minorities in Romania is lower than in the overall sample. Romania has the second lowest level of support for the rights of ethnic minorities, and the third lowest overall support for the rights of poor people.
- The survey data suggest that politics play a very marginal role in the life of most of young Romanians. Politics at the local level elicits the greatest interest, whereas politics in Russia shows the least. 61 per cent of the sample have little or no interest in politics, whereas only 20 per cent of respondents say that have a great or very great interest in at least one category of political issues. Moreover, both participation and interest in participation are low, with participation in protests being the most popular form of activism. Less than one-quarter of the sample were involved in participatory acts, and only 20 per cent of those who were not expressed a willingness to participate in the future. In comparison to the other countries that are part of the comparative study, Romania has the lowest percentage of respondents who are politically engaged.
- The respondents in this research placed themselves on a left-right ideological scale with a mean value that is close to the middle of the scale, slightly to the right. When compared to the other countries that are part of the comparative study, Romania has a mean value in self-placement on the left-to-right scale that is third closest to the right. At the same time, young Romanians appear to attach very little meaning to self-placement on the left-to-right scale in terms of mapping policy preferences.
- Young Romanians who have stronger political voices, those having a great interest in politics and high levels of political participation tend to support democracy and, at the same time, to oppose the idea of reducing the income gap between poor and rich.
- The level of education is one of the strongest predictors of political attitudes and behaviours. Respondents with university-level education tend to have more positive views about democratic regimes. Also, those who are better educated have a greater chance of being “critical democrats” than the rest of the sample by showing support for democracy per se and critical views on democracy in Romania. Additionally, the level of education is the most important predictor of political participation, and better-educated persons tend to support the view that poor and rich should have more equal incomes. However, it is surprising that education of the respondents and parental education do not have a systematically positive effect on attitudes towards minority groups. On the contrary, both parental education and education of respondents are correlated with negative views towards ethnic minorities.

8

CONCLUSIONS

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

- Living in environments with high levels of inequality has a negative effect on the subjective wealth of young people.
- Young Romanians tend to be extremely confident about their own futures, but less confident about the future of their countrymen and the country itself. This is due mainly to the ease of migration, which is considered to be a good fall-back option for the future by most respondents if their life in Romania does not yield the results they are expecting.
- About 30 per cent of 14-to-29-year-olds in Romania expressed a desire to migrate away from Romania for at least 6 months, a score that is relatively low for the region and constitutes an abrupt drop from 2014 figures, when almost 60 per cent of young Romanians were thinking of migrating.
- Most of the desire to leave and plans to do so are connected to feelings of poverty and lack of access to consumer goods. Younger migrants are almost exclusively from the poorest strata of society, while older migrants tend to be split evenly between job- and education-seekers. The overwhelming majority of would-be migrants want to stay within the EU, especially in Germany and Great Britain.

FAMILY, SOCIETY AND SOCIAL TRUST

- Young Romanians are strongly differentiated by level of urbanisation in terms of their wishes to start a family. While those who live in smaller municipalities see marriage as the first step toward bringing about welfare and prosperity, those living in larger cities postpone marriage for a later date – after they have finished their education and found a good-paying job.
- Most young married couples tend to be poor both objectively and subjectively. In addition, poor families also tend to have children earlier, and tend to have a scant understanding or use of contraception.

- The attitudes of young respondents toward abstinence seem to have become slightly more permissive compared to 2014. This trend appears to no longer be as influenced by religiosity, with even females reporting a relatively high level of church attendance having softened their stance towards pre-marital abstinence.
- About 20 per cent of 14-to-29-year-olds report either do not know what contraception is or do not use such generally speaking. Although most respondents who report not using contraceptives are in steady relationships or married, about 15 per cent of them report being single and having an active sexual life with multiple partners.
- Similar to 2014, young Romanians seem to be wary of non-family social relations and tend to trust their friends, whom they choose and through whom they can cultivate connections, less than they trust people in their extended family, whom they interact with rarely. Overall, social trust among young Romanians is one of the lowest for all countries in the region.

EDUCATION

- Most young people aim for higher education (BA degree or higher) and their aspirations seem to be influenced among other things by gender, with a greater likelihood of aiming for a university degree in the case of women, and by parents' educational capital.
- Young women tend to have better school results than young men. In addition, parental education and family wealth have positive effects on school performance.
- About two-thirds of youth who are still in education have negative views on the school atmosphere. The majority of respondents complain about a lack of fairness in examinations and a poor match between the educational training and the requirements of the job market.

- The most common age for dropping out of school is 17. Two thirds of those respondents who have dropped out of school did so between the ages 14 and 18.

EMPLOYMENT

- Even though Romania is not among the poorer countries in the region, it has a high percentage of NEETs.
- More than one-third of respondents do not work in the occupation they are trained for. In addition, a large percentage feel that they are over-educated for the work they are doing.
- The level of education, luck, acquaintances and good connections are considered to be the most important aspects in finding a job.
- Only 12 per cent of young Romanians were involved in voluntary activities over the last 12 months compared to 31 per cent in the European Union.

LIFESTYLE

- More than half of young Romanians spend their leisure time listening to music, followed closely by those engaged in watching films and hanging out with friends and family
- A quarter of the respondents spend more than four hours a day watching TV, a significant increase since 2014, when only 10 per cent spent the same amount of time watching TV.
- The vast majority of the Romanian youth have access to the Internet, and more than half of them use the Internet more than four hours a day, compared to only 38.3 per cent in 2014.

RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

- About 63 per cent of young people from the entire sample report that God is very important in their lives.
- Great importance being assigned to God is positively correlated with strong valorisation of getting/being married and having children, and negatively correlated with views on homosexuality and abortion.
- Having a predominantly religious or very religious family background correlates with young people's religious beliefs and engagement.

DEMOCRACY AND SOCIO-POLITICAL ATTITUDES

- Politics seems to play a very marginal role in the lives of most of Romanian youth. Both levels of participation and interest in participation are low, with participation in protests being the most popular form of activism. Less than one-quarter of the sample were involved in participatory acts. In comparison to the other countries that are part of the comparative study, Romania has the lowest proportion of respondents that were politically engaged.
- More than half of young Romanians agree that democracy is a good form of government, whereas less than one quarter disagree. At the same time, 23 per cent of the respondents agree that under certain circumstances dictatorship is a better form of government than democracy. When compared to the other nine southeast European countries that are part of the comparative study, Romania has one of the lowest levels of democratic support.
- Percentages of those who have positive views on the status of democracy, rule of law and the status of human rights in Romania are smaller than the shares of critical respondents. In a comparison with the other nine southeast European countries that are part of the comparative study, Romania has the lowest values in the assessment of the status of democracy among EU countries, but is higher in this regard than non-EU countries.
- Levels of trust in institutions and organisation are low, with none of these obtaining a majority of positive assessments. Army and church are the only institutions for which the percentages of respondents with positive assessments are greater than those with negative ones.
- A majority of young Romanians supports the present level of rights for most of the minority groups, whereas about one-third support an expansion of current rights. However, in the case of LGBT people and ethnic minorities, the percentages of those who support more rights are smaller than those who say that they have too many rights. When compared to other countries in this study, Romania has the second lowest level of support for the rights of ethnic minorities, and the third lowest overall support for the rights of poor people.
- The respondents in this research project located themselves on a left-to-right ideological scale with a mean value that is slightly to the right, but close to the middle of the scale. At the same time, Romanian youth seem to attach very little importance to self-placement on the left-to-right scale in terms of plotting policy preferences.
- Young Romanians who have stronger political voices, those having a great interest in politics and exhibiting high levels of political participation, tend to support democracy and at the same time to oppose the idea of reducing the income gap between poor and rich.

- The level of education is one of the strongest predictors of political attitudes and behaviours. The respondents with university-level education tend to have more positive views of democratic regimes. In addition, the level of education is the most important predictor of political participation, and better-educated persons tend to support the view that poor and rich should have more equal incomes. At the same time, education of the respondents and parental education do not have a systematically positive effect on attitudes regarding minority groups. On the contrary, both parental education and education of the respondents have negative views on ethnic minorities.

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FOOTNOTES

[1] It even inspired a 1929 play by Kenyon Nicholson, "Before You're Twenty-five", based on the remark that if you are not a Socialist before you are 25 you have no heart and if you are a Socialist after you are 25 you have no head.

[2] While there is a broad agreement as to the existence of the "impressionable years", researchers are split as to what age segments this refers to. Most evaluations cover the 14-to-25-year interval, though.

[3] While normally owning a house or an apartment would be of much greater importance than other types of goods, due to the post-communist legacy of mass ownership, about 97% of the sample under study own at least one house or apartment.

[4] Because of the unconventional residential factors characterising Romania (e.g. many rural areas artificially transformed into urban areas by decree; post-industrial cities aggressively depopulated), we chose to separate municipalities by size rather than adopt a traditional binary urban/rural approach.

[5] See <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/8926076/3-28052018-AP-EN.pdf/48c473e8-c2c1-4942-b2a4-5761edacda37>

[6] The subgroups that yielded statistically equal results were excluded from Table 2, as well as all the subsequent tables. If covariates are missing from correlation tables, they can be safely assumed to be statistically insignificant.

[7] Again, as in the case of marriage, our data can only describe what young people do by the age of 29, not what they do in their lifetime. It is perfectly possible that young people who have not married by the age of 29 will still marry at rates comparable to other groups, but at a later age. The Romanian National Statistical Institute confirms this has been the case for previous generational cohorts.

[8] The 2014 question on social trust was formulated on a 1-to-10 scale, which was reduced to a 1-to-5 scale here for the purpose of comparability. No Cronbach alpha test was available.

[9] http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Early_leavers_from_education_and_training.

[10] [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Early_leavers_from_education_and_training_by_degree_of_urbanisation,_2017_\(%25_of_population_aged_18-24\)_ET18.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Early_leavers_from_education_and_training_by_degree_of_urbanisation,_2017_(%25_of_population_aged_18-24)_ET18.png).

[11] European Commission. 2017. 'Education and training monitor 2017 – Romania', https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2017-ro_en.pdf.

[12] UNDP. 2016. *Human Development Report 2016. Human Development for Everyone*. New York: UNDP, p. 230.

[13] http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Educational_attainment_statistics.

[14] http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Gender_statistics.

[15] Erasmus + Annual Report 2016 – Statistical Annex: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/about/statistics_en.

[16] Sandu, D., Stoica, C.A. & Umbres, R. (2014). *Romanian Youth: concerns, aspirations, attitudes and lifestyle*. Bucharest: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, p. 66.

[17] http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training, last accessed on 25 July 2018.

[18] Flash Eurobarometer 455. European Youth, 2018, available at: ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/.../82294, last accessed at: 5th of June 2018.

[19] http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Being_young_in_Europe_today_-_family_and_society, last accessed 15 July 2018.

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[21] http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/publicatii/pliante%20statistice/08-Recensamintele%20despre%20religie_n.pdf

[22] <http://coalitiapentrufamilie.ro/de-ce-este-necesara-revizuirea-constitutivei-romaniei/>.

[23] Among those living in households with 8–10 categories of goods (out of 10), only 35% have a positive view on democracy as a form of government, compared to 60% in the other groups.

[24] An exploratory factor analysis with the 20 variables shows that one factor explains 50% of the total variance.

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