

Ailenei, Dorel; Cristescu, Amalia; Angelescu, Coralia

## Conference Paper

# The impact of behavioural structure of Romanian population on economic and social cohesion.

50th Congress of the European Regional Science Association: "Sustainable Regional Growth and Development in the Creative Knowledge Economy", 19-23 August 2010, Jönköping, Sweden

### Provided in Cooperation with:

European Regional Science Association (ERSA)

*Suggested Citation:* Ailenei, Dorel; Cristescu, Amalia; Angelescu, Coralia (2010) : The impact of behavioural structure of Romanian population on economic and social cohesion., 50th Congress of the European Regional Science Association: "Sustainable Regional Growth and Development in the Creative Knowledge Economy", 19-23 August 2010, Jönköping, Sweden, European Regional Science Association (ERSA), Louvain-la-Neuve

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/118971>

### Standard-Nutzungsbedingungen:

Die Dokumente auf EconStor dürfen zu eigenen wissenschaftlichen Zwecken und zum Privatgebrauch gespeichert und kopiert werden.

Sie dürfen die Dokumente nicht für öffentliche oder kommerzielle Zwecke vervielfältigen, öffentlich ausstellen, öffentlich zugänglich machen, vertreiben oder anderweitig nutzen.

Sofern die Verfasser die Dokumente unter Open-Content-Lizenzen (insbesondere CC-Lizenzen) zur Verfügung gestellt haben sollten, gelten abweichend von diesen Nutzungsbedingungen die in der dort genannten Lizenz gewährten Nutzungsrechte.

### Terms of use:

*Documents in EconStor may be saved and copied for your personal and scholarly purposes.*

*You are not to copy documents for public or commercial purposes, to exhibit the documents publicly, to make them publicly available on the internet, or to distribute or otherwise use the documents in public.*

*If the documents have been made available under an Open Content Licence (especially Creative Commons Licences), you may exercise further usage rights as specified in the indicated licence.*

# **The impact of behavioural structure of Romanian population on economic and social cohesion.**

**Authors:** *Professor Dorel Ailenei, PhD*  
*Professor Coralia Angelescu, PhD*  
*Assistant Amalia Cristescu, PhD Candidate*

*Department of Economics and Economic Policies*  
*Academy of Economic Studies form Bucharest,*  
*Romanian Regional Science Association*  
[dorel\\_ailenei@yahoo.com](mailto:dorel_ailenei@yahoo.com)  
[cristescu\\_amalia@yahoo.com](mailto:cristescu_amalia@yahoo.com)

**Abstract:** The transition to market economy has represented both for Romania and other Central and Eastern European countries an emphasis on economic and social inequalities. The authors consider it is necessary to identify a path pass from chaotic inequalities to a state of economic and social cohesion that would allow to Romania recovery fast the gaps beside the developed E.U. countries. To identify the behavioural structure of Romanian population we designed a national survey. Once identified this structure we can determine the contribution of behavioural types to the economic and social cohesion state and we can estimate the possibilities of change in the medium-term of behavioural structure according with economic and social changes caused by the transition to a market economy. For this, we will correlate the levels of satisfaction of human needs from Maslow's Pyramid with the degrees of participation in economic and social life by means of fuzzy implication functions. Thus, we can achieve a better highlighting of the economic and social cohesion factors at national and regional level, and on this basis we can obtain a profile of national and regional cohesion state. The authors consider that the success of Romania's E.U. integration depends primarily on the behavioural profile of the population. The question arises is: E.U. integrates a "cohesive zone" or integrates behavioural types in relation to the standards of the European citizen.

**Keywords:** behavioural structure, regional profile of economic and social cohesion

**JEL classification:** R<sub>10</sub>, Z<sub>13</sub>

## **The theoretical framework of defining types of behavior**

Recently, the interest in the study of human values shared by different social groups and individuals has increased enormously both in Europe and worldwide; there are many surveys that address values issues and the way they structure behaviors: World / European Values Survey - WVS / EVS, European Social Survey - ESS, International Social Survey Program - ISSP, European Quality of Life Survey - EQLS New Democracy Barometer – NDB, International

Comparative Political Parties Project, Euro barometer, Programme for International Student Assessment - PISA.

Literature presents the axiological system as the basis of the attitudinal behavior. Parsons (1937) defined values as the ultimate drive of the actions taken by individuals and collectivities, as defining elements for social life. Kluckhohn (1951) emphasized the values' power of influence on the ways of selection of the action means and goals available. The attitudes refer rather to specific objects and situations, while the values represent guidelines associated to some more general classes of objects and situations (Hofstede, 1980, Schwartz 1999, Ester and others, 2006). Beyond the diversity of opinions on the role the values have in defining the types of behavior, there can be revealed four major models that represent the basis of underlaying the quantitative methodology of our study:

### ***The theory of the basic human values***

The crucial aspect that makes a distinction between different types of values is the motivational typology of the goals that people have during their lifetime. Shalom H. Schwartz, extracted a set of ten basic motivational values, yet comprehensive, derived from three universal requirements of the human condition:

- the needs of the individuals as biological organisms;
- the need to coordinate the social interaction;
- the need of the groups to survive and live on welfare.

When choosing these ten basic values there were taken into account the essential values recognized by the worldwide existing cultures. Each of these basic values can be characterized by describing its central motivational goal (table 1)

Table 1 Behavior values and ITS specific items

<b><i>POWER</i></b>	<i>Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources</i> (social power, authority, wealth, preserving one's own public image)
<b><i>ACHIEVEMENT</i></b>	<i>Personal success achieved by proving one's competence in line with the social standards</i> (successful man, capable, ambitious, influential)
<b><i>HEDONISM</i></b>	<i>Search and gratification for one's own pleasure</i> (pleasure, enjoyment of life, self-indulgence)
<b><i>STIMULATION</i></b>	<i>Emotion, novelty, life challenge</i> (dare, diversified and exciting life)
<b><i>SELF-DIRECTION</i></b>	<i>Independent thought and action, creation, exploration</i> (creativity, freedom, independent, curious, choosing one's own goals)
<b><i>UNIVERSALISM</i></b>	<i>Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection of nature and the welfare of all people</i> (liberality, wisdom, social justice, equality, world peace, a beautiful world, unity with nature,

	protecting the environment)
<b>BENEVOLENCE</b>	<i>Preserving and enhancing the welfare of the people the person is in frequent personal contact with</i> (helpful, honest, forgiving, loyal, responsible)
<b>TRADITION</b>	<i>Respect, commitment and acceptance of the customs and ideas of the traditional culture or religious ideas</i> (humble, accepts his/her share of life, devout, respect for tradition, moderate)
<b>CONFORMITY</b>	<i>Restraint from actions, dispositions or impulses that might offend or hurt others or might violate the social rules or expectations</i> (polite, obedient, self-discipline, respect for parents and elders)
<b>SECURITY</b>	<i>Safety, harmony and stability of the society, of the relationships and the self</i> (family security, national security, social order, cleanliness, favors reciprocity)

Schwartz defines the ten values as universal and exhaustive. Then, he notes that they are grouped by two polar axes, and have something, that the Israeli psychosociologist calls “*high nature value orientations*”, at their two extremes. The first axis opposes openness to change (explaining the self-direction, the stimulation and a part of the hedonism) and conservation (which groups the traditionalism, the security and the conformity). The second axis contrasts self-enhancement (the power, the achievement and a part of the hedonism) with self-transcendence (the universalism and the benevolence). The author also explains the dynamics of the relationship between the ten variables. For example, the actions determined by the basic values have psychological, practical and social consequences and they may come to loggerheads or be congruent with the actions that are expressed by other values of the ten given. However, the attempt to express the achievement values can be compatible, for example, with the attempt to express the power values.

The figure below reflects the relations of congruence and conflict between the ten basic values of the theory. The circular arrangement represents the motivation continuum. The closer two of the ten values are, the closer the motivations supporting the effort to achieve these values are. The more distant two of the ten values are in the chart, the more antagonistic are the motivations behind them. Such a structure results in two orthogonal dimensions: self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence and openness to change vs. conservation. In the first dimension, the values referring to power and achievement are opposed to the values referring to universalism and benevolence. In the second dimension, the values referring to self-direction and stimulation are opposed to the values referring to security, conformity and tradition.

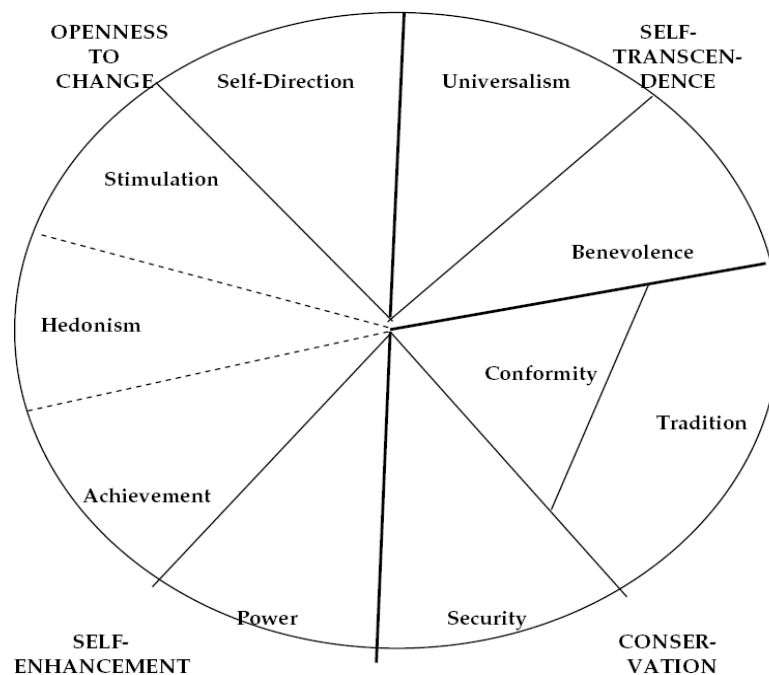


Figure 1. Theoretical model of relations among ten motivational types of values

### ***The marginal theory of time distribution***

In the approach proposed by Weber, the worker's decision to increase – more or less – his effort in order to further increase his/her revenue is modeled by the action of an attitudinal complex whose ethical-religious original determination underlay's the crystallization of a "modern" or a "traditionalist" behavioral profile. The traditionalist economic behavior, which prefers less work rather than a perquisite is a brake on the labor productivity growth. A more pragmatic approach to such an economic behavior is the "cost – benefit" analysis, made from a marginal perspective. Thus, if we consider cost as the working time spent by the employee, it will correspond with a benefit represented by the salary obtained during this time. On the other hand, the employee's leisure time can be considered a benefit whose cost is the salary that could have been obtained by using this spare time as working time. The two terms of the relation are under the influence of some factors acting in opposite directions. These factors produce *the substitution effect* and *the income effect* – as they are called by the marginal theory of the trader's time distribution.

Wage growth increases the cost of leisure time, thereby leading the individual – by the effect of substitution – to work more and make use of less leisure. The income effect works in reverse as opposed to the substitution effect, which greatly simplified by an explanatory scheme would translate as: wage growth brings the individual more wealth, the new statute making him request more leisure time, which is considered a superior good and the consumption of which becomes necessary when – according to the Maslow's pyramid model of needs – the consumption of the other inferior goods was satisfied by the level of wealth attained. If the

substitution effect is dominant, the wage growth leads to an increased labor supply. If, however, the income effect is dominant, the employment rate will be an inverse ratio to the wage level.

### ***Geert Hofstede's theory and the cultural dimensions***

Hofstede is interested in the comparative study of cultures in the centre of which he places values. His early studies were focused on the values of the IBM employees. Hofstede noted that, regardless the characteristics of the individuals he examined, some value patterns tend to reproduce themselves in a similar way according to the nationality. Hence the idea of comparative studying cultures rather than individuals. He identifies five universal value orientations, which can be studied in any society; he also aims at globally characterizing each country depending on its position in the five dimensions identified. Initially, *the factorial analysis* of the resulting indices allowed Hofstede to identify four value dimensions and then (in 2001) a fifth one, around which the Dutch researcher develops his theory of values.

The first value dimension *Power Distance 12*, is a measure of the inequality representations in the originating society of the respondents. We are talking about a polar dimension, whose lower extreme value orientation goes towards equality and its upper extreme is inequality-oriented. Those cultures with a short "*distance to power*" are characterized by the need to continuously legitimate power. There has to be a permanent relation between the moral and/or legal bases of the power actions. In such societies, parents tend to treat their children as being equal; the elderly are not a priori considered superior to younger people; education focuses on the student and not the teacher, organizations are developed horizontally rather than hierarchically; governance is done democratically, not autocratically; the income inequality is rather low; corruption is a rare phenomenon; etc.

The second dimension identified by Hofstede, *Uncertainty avoidance*, involves the individuals' target to take on and accept the risks or avoid them. However, there is taken into consideration primarily the extent to which uncertainty is a source of pressure on the daily life. The societies that chalk up high scores on this dimension have a low tolerance to uncertainty, respond more emotionally, and are normative. On the other hand, in the societies where uncertainty is accepted as part of the everyday life, individuals are more tolerant, more open to different points of view, they develop less formal rules and more flexible ones.

The third dimension, *Individualism vs. Collectivism*, contrasts the individual-centered orientation with the collectivity-centered one. In the individualistic societies, each person is responsible for his/her own welfare. In the collectivist societies, the emphasis is laid on group integration, on defining and treating individuals according to their group membership and not their own individuality, education means learning how to do things (on the other hand, in the individualistic societies, the purpose of education is to learn how to learn by developing the ability to adapt to a wider variety of contingencies).

The fourth dimension, *Masculinity versus Femininity*, involves the value orientation towards equality and, respectively, gender inequality. In the "masculine" societies, men and women fulfill different roles: the presence on the labor market (men have dominant roles, the cultural model requiring them to work, while women can build a career, but their social recognition does not depend on it), in politics, in children's education (fathers are in charge of facts and mothers are in charge of feelings and emotions).

The last value dimension, the fifth one, *Long Term vs. Short Term Orientation*, focuses on the distinction between expecting gratifications and making long-term action plans,

respectively short-term ones. Short-term-oriented societies are focused on tolerance and respect, share values and attitudes indicating a clear, normative line between good and evil; traditions are sacred; actions are initiated without following a plan. By contrast, in long-term-oriented societies, children must learn the spirit of economy, good and evil are defined according to circumstances and traditions are also adaptable.

### ***The Ronald Inglehart theory regarding the change of value systems***

*Ronald Inglehart* is the one that proposed the most influential theory of value changes, theory aimed at explaining the proliferation of value orientations towards post-materialism - seen as the central value of postmodernism. The two major assumptions on which Inglehart bases his explanation, assumptions that are directly linked to Maslow's pyramid of needs, are the following:

*The rarity hypothesis*, hypothesis stating that individuals' preferences reflect the socio-economic environment in which they live. Those who live in rich societies will be less concerned with satisfying their lower level of needs and rather focused on self-enhancement and self-expression. Therefore, their value orientations will be post-materialistic.

*The socialization hypothesis* assumes that the value orientations will strongly depend on the living conditions that the individuals have during childhood and adolescence. This way, the inter-generational differences, caused by the wealth experienced in pre-adulthood, can be explained. Inglehart (1971) was to predict a "silent revolution" of changing value orientations from materialism to post-materialism. He was mostly concerned with the political implications of the value changes. The reduced orientation to post-materialist values instead of materialistic ones was to be reflected in a greater support for leftist ideas, a poorer political participation, a greater interest in civic participation, environmental concerns etc.

### **Empirical analysis**

#### *The aim of the research*

The aim of this questionnaire-based survey is to identify the structure of the behavioral types for the Romanian population. The survey will be nationally representative for the 18-year-old population and above.

#### *The method used*

In order to collect information there will be used a **standardized questionnaire** (Appendix A). Face to face interviews will be conducted at the household level. The main dimensions addressed in the questionnaire are presented in the table below:

ANALYZED DIMENSIONS	MONITORING INDICATORS USED
<b>FAMILY AND WEALTH</b>	<p>The importance attached to the main aspects that define the family, social and professional life of a person.</p> <p>Family typology.</p> <p>The number of children between the ages of 0-18.</p> <p>The number of persons in the household.</p> <p>Attitudes regarding the role of men and women in the family.</p> <p>Respect for traditions and family values.</p> <p>The level of satisfaction regarding the evolution of the respondent's life until the investigation.</p> <p>The level of satisfaction regarding the respondent's financial situation.</p> <p>Evaluation of the respondent's wellness.</p> <p>Evaluation of the respondent's housing situation.</p>
<b>CIVIC AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION</b>	<p>The importance attached to the main aspects that define civic and social participation.</p> <p>Agreeing with a number of statements of the popular culture, which express the values defining social life and civic participation.</p> <p>Reposing confidence in a number of international and national institutions.</p> <p>Involvement in activities designed to improve the economic and social situation of their community in particular, or their country in general.</p>
<b>PARTICIPATION ON THE LABOR MARKET</b>	<p>Identifying the respondent's occupational status.</p> <p>The typology of the respondent's job position.</p> <p>The level of education needed for that position.</p> <p>The main branch of activity of the institution the respondent works for.</p> <p>Expressing the extent to which a series of statements about the workplace suit or not to the respondents.</p> <p>Identifying the main reason why the respondents have a job at the time of the investigation.</p> <p>Identifying the main reason why the respondents do not have a job at the time of the investigation.</p> <p>Willingness to have a job or not.</p> <p>Motivating this desire.</p> <p>Nominating some aspects that the respondents without a current job consider to be important at the workplace.</p> <p>The net salary that the respondents think they deserve considering their professional training.</p> <p>The net salary that the respondents think they deserve irrespective of their professional training.</p>



<b>SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES</b>	The role of education in influencing a person's life.
	Sex.
	The age of the respondent.
	Marital status.
	Ethnicity.
	Residence (urban / rural).
	County.
	The last school the respondent graduated from.
	The last school the respondent's spouse / partner graduated from.
	The respondent's employment status.
	The respondent's spouse / partner employment status.
	The main income provider of the family.
	The family's net income in the previous month

In order to conduct the survey, there has been selected a national sample of 1875 people from all developing regions of Romania. The investigation is ongoing and the preliminary processing of the information collected so far seems to confirm the relevance of the studying methodology. The results of the research will be revealed by the end of July so that they will be presented at ERSa Congress.

### **References:**

- Hofstede, Geert. (1980). *Culture's Consequences, International Differences in Work-Related Values*, Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Hofstede, Geert. (2001). *Culture's Consequences, Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Hofstede, Geert. (2002). *Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context*, published in *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, Editors: Walter J. Lonner, Dale L. Dinnel, Susanna A. Hayes, and David N. Sattler, studiu accesat online la data de 24.11.2009 <http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~culture/hofstede.htm>.
- Inglehart, Ronald, Christian Welzel. (2005). *Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*, New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Merton, Robert King. (1949). *Social theory and social structure; toward the codification of theory and research*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.
- Parsons, Talcott. (1937). *The structure of social action: a study in social theory with special reference to a group of recent European writers*. New York ; London: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc
- Rokeach, Milton. (1973). *The nature of human values*. New York: Free Press.
- Schwartz, Shalom. (2004). *Mapping and Interpreting Cultural Differences around the World*, în Vinken ș.a., eds., 2004, p.43-73.
- Sandu, Dumitru. (1996). *Sociologia tranziției. Valori și tipuri sociale în România*, București: Editura Staff.
- Vlăsceanu, Lazăr. (2007). *Sociologie și modernitate. Tranziții spre modernitatea reflexivă*, Iași: Polirom.

World/European Values Survey – WVS/EVS, [www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu/](http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu/)  
European Social Survey – ESS, [www.europeansocialsurvey.org](http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org)