LEADERS AND LAGGARDS:
GOVERNANCE, CIVICNESS AND ETHNICITY
IN POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Political Science
University of Toronto

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This comparative study maps the factors that influence the operation of Eastern Europe post-communist local government. A comparison of four Romanian county councils over the 1996-1999 period revealed important differences in the way they conducted their internal affairs, formulated and implemented policies, and responded to the citizens' queries, despite the fact that on paper all these local governments had similar attributions and responsibilities. As this study contends, the differences in the performance of county councils were partly explained by differences in the sociostructural complexion of the communities in which they operated. Counties where citizens were more interested in politics and community affairs, had higher levels of civic engagement and associationalism, were more trusting and tolerant of their fellow citizens and less prone to resort to corrupt and clientelistic behavior were also the counties where local governmental structures identified and solved the problems of their polities and responded to the demands of their constituents more efficiently. By contrast, counties where citizens were more disinterested in politics, more reluctant to get together in voluntary associations, and more distrustful and intolerant of other people were also the counties where local governments were divided by internal conflicts, and had difficulty in identifying and addressing the problems of the community promptly and with dispatch.
The contrast between the Transylvanian counties of Arad and Mures and the non-Transylvanian counties of Arges and Galati is also the first to bring forth “hard” statistical data documenting the sociostructural divide separating the province of Transylvania from the rest of Romania. The “land beyond the forest” can draw on larger stocks of social capital—trust, norms and solidarity—than the Regat. A possible explanation would rest with the different institutional arrangements historically present in the regions, which gave Transylvania, once part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, an advantage over the Regat, which for centuries remained under the influence of the Ottoman Empire.

The examination of the Mures case also suggests that communities divided along ethnic lines have difficulty setting their differences aside and turning their attention to the manifold economic and social problems they face during the post-communist transition. Crucial for democracy to take hold in Romania, and for local governmental structures to function efficiently and democratically, are those social capital reserves that transcend ethnic boundaries and bring members of different groups together. When the feelings of solidarity are confined by ethnicity, politics remain prone to distrust and conflict.
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Over the years, this thesis also became a sort of family business in which my old friends from Romania were drawn. My husband read and reread each and every draft, even carefully scrutinizing the boring statistical part, and made valuable suggestions throughout. He put up with my long dissertations on current Romanian events even when not interested in the subject, helped me survive my fieldtrip and encouraged me with a smile whenever I saw no end in sight. My sister left her own research aside to check several Montreal libraries for references and materials I needed urgently, and my mother inquired periodically about the thesis and helped me several times. While in Romania my good friend Iustina Sora and her partner took care of me by feeding me, photocopying various materials and offering their views on politics in Arges. Mariana and Catalin Lozneanu frantically arranged their bright new apartment to welcome me, and guided me through the cities of Braila and Galati. Razvan Zaharia helped transfer my unnecessarily big luggage from the train station to the bus station in Bucharest. He and his wife Rodica housed me while in the capital, as did Cos Buzoi and his family in Constanta and Dorin and Rodica Sonoc in Deva. The Universitatea de Vest “Vasile Goldiș” of Arad, the University of Tirgu Mures and two universities in Galati rented me rooms at very affordable rates. To all of them I owe big thanks.
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Abbreviations

AUR  Alliance for the Unity of Romanians (Alianta Unitatii Romanilor)
CDR  Democratic Convention of Romania (Conventia Democrat a din Romania)
DLPA Department for Local Public Administration
FDSN National Democratic Salvation Front (Frontul Democratic al Salvarii Nationale)
FSN  National Salvation Front (Frontul Salvarii Nationale)
PCR  Romanian Communist Party (Partidul Comunist Roman)
PD   Democratic Party (Partidul Democrat)
PDSR Party of Social Democracy in Romania (Partidul Democratiei Sociale din Romania)
PNL  National Liberal Party (Partidul National Liberal)
PNTCD National Peasant Party Christian-Democrat (Partidul National Taranesc Crestin-Democrat)
PRM  Greater Romania Party (Partidul Romania Mare)
PS   Socialist Party (Partidul Socialist)
PSM  Socialist Working Party (Partidul Socialist al Muncii)
PUNR  Party for the National Unity of the Romanians (Partidul Uniunii Nationale a Romanilor)
RAM  Autonomous Hungarian Region (Regiunea Autonoma Maghiara)
UDMR Democratic Union of Magyars in Romania (Uniunea Democrat a a Maghiarilor din Romania)
USD  Social Democratic Union (Uniunea Sociala Democrat)
CHAPTER 1. Introduction

The 1989 collapse of the European communist regimes has provided social scientists with the rare opportunity to observe the birth of new political institutions and to re-examine the effect of political behavior on institutional change. During the last decade, the vast majority of social scientists, policy advisors and political commentators writing on post-communist democratization has made the argument that what Eastern Europe needed in order to solve its manifold social, economic and political problems were new institutional frameworks inspired from the democratic world. According to this position, Western-style multi-party electoral systems, separation of the legislative, executive and judicial powers, written constitutions and constitutional courts, and local government reorganization programs constituted the best recipes for democratization that the impoverished, conflict-ridden Eastern Europe could adopt. For many researchers the conundrum largely revolved around the pace of adopting Western-inspired institutions, with some arguing for a rapid and others for an incremental institutional reorganization. Despite their often passionate disagreements, these two research strands were more similar than they claimed, since both relied on the implicit assumption that institutions proving to operate democratically and efficiently in one part of the world could be relatively easily transposed in other regions, with similarly positive results. That factors exogenous to the borrowed institutional structure could impact the performance of governmental institutions was only briefly acknowledged and then usually by making reference to the catch-all phrase of “political culture.” Even when recognizing the importance of context and culture, these studies
rarely specified which “habits of the heart” most likely shape the organization and functioning of institutions or the manner in which they are able to do so.¹

This study, by contrast, shifts the theoretical lens to the environment in which institutions are embedded by taking the view that what makes institutions democratic lies not merely in the realm of state institutional arrangements, but also in the realm of the society. The first decade of Eastern European post-communist transition made it abundantly clear that the manner in which new institutions have performed differed significantly from country to country and, in some cases, within the same state boundaries, although their formal structure generally emulated Western models and varied little among countries. Time and time again, Central European countries were shown to have made more headway in their efforts to build accountable and responsible structures than Balkan countries, as the quarterly *East European Constitutional Review* reports and the "Nations in Transit" project sponsored by the Freedom House have found out. Among the questions that need to be answered are the following: How do Eastern Europe's Western-style institutions perform? More specifically, how effective are governmental institutions in that part of the world in identifying and solving the problems of their polities, and how responsive are they to the demands of their constituents? How can we explain the observed differences in their performance when, at least on paper, governmental institutions are virtually identical? Do sociostructural factors impact the daily operation of these institutions? Is

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¹ The school of “path-dependent” transformation has been more aware of the difficulties that a traditionally unresponsive, intolerant and uncivic local political culture might pose for the newly created institutions, and of the unique, historically-determined road a polity might take toward democratization. For example, in his *The New World Disorder: The Leninist Extinction* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992), Kenneth Jowitt argued that forty years of rule by Leninist regimes resulted in a cultural legacy in Eastern Europe that can be expected to undermine both democracy and capitalism. For a succinct presentation of the competing approaches of “historical legacies” and “new institutions,” see Beverly Crawford and Arendt Lijphart, “Explaining Political and Economic Change in Post-Communist Eastern Europe: Old Legacies, New Institutions, Hegemonic Norms and International Pressures,” *Comparative Political Studies* 28, no. 2 (July 1995), pp. 171-199.
institutional efficiency impeded by ethnic conflict, Eastern Europe’s Achille’s heel? Then, what is the interplay between governance, civicness and ethnicity?

To answer these questions, this analysis explores the extent to which sociostructural reserves inform the daily performance of the Western-style local institutions recently adopted in Eastern Europe. In doing so, this study builds on previous analyses suggesting that deeply seated cultural norms bearing on the citizens’ propensity to trust each other, to form voluntary grassroots associations, and to engage in politics and collective action determine how effective and responsive political institutions are. By way of a multi-layered intra-country comparison, this study attempts to show that the relationship between behavioral and attitudinal norms, on the one hand, and the performance of local institutions, on the other, is a direct one. As the evidence presented in the following chapters suggests, counties where the citizens’ political attitudes and behavior come closer to the ideal of a civic community have more efficient and more responsive local governments than counties where distrust, political apathy and particularistic interests prevail. At the same time, the study gauges the extent to which still unbridged ethnic divisions translate into institutional ineffectiveness and unresponsiveness, and shows that regions affected by recent ethnic conflicts remain ill suited to foster the kind of civic ties conducive for social capital.

Research Design and Methodology

To do this, I actively employ comparative politics concepts and techniques to the study of a formerly communist country. The comparative approach framing this analysis recognizes the need to engage case studies centered on Eastern European politics in a constructive dialogue with the research on other regions, in the hope of a mutually beneficial exchange. As several authors
have suggested, comparative research templates that have yielded answers for the post-authoritarian Southern Cone of the 1980s can help students of post-communist systems explain the political processes underway in Eastern Europe, and complement single-case studies relying exclusively on “thick description” with approaches recognizing the similarities between the transitions underway in these two regions. Among the first to acknowledge in the early 1990s that “the East has become the South,” Adam Przeworski reminded us that both regions were characterized by economic backwardness relative to Western Europe, generally ineffective political organizations, weak states and weak civil societies, while at the same time being dominated by large monopolistic concerns, and large public bureaucracies promoting personal and group, rather than universalistic, policy agendas.2

Shortly thereafter, Philippe Schmitter and Terry Karl provided a spirited defense of the view that post-communism is but a variation of transitions from authoritarianism to democracy by arguing that democratization in Eastern Europe can and should be compared with democratization in Southern Europe and Latin America.3 Although not without its critics,4 Schmitter’s and Karl’s view seemed to have been ultimately embraced by political scientists who discussed comparatively the major impediments that the process of democratic consolidations has faced in Eastern Europe, Southern Europe and South America. By joining the growing

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4 Among their most ardent critics was Valerie Bunce, who claimed that differences between regime transitions in the “South” and the “East” were so great that they precluded the making of meaningful comparisons, negating thus the value of such cross-area enterprise. See Valerie Bunce, “Should Transitologists Be Grounded?,” Slavic Review 54, no. 1 (Spring 1995), pp. 111-127, “Comparing East and West,” Journal of Democracy 6, no. 3 (Fall 1994), pp. 87-100, and “Paper Curtains and Paper Tigers,” Slavic Review 54, no. 4 (Spring 1995), pp. 979-987.
number of analyses that recognize the utility of comparative approaches to the study of post-communist realities, this study applies to an Eastern European country like Romania concepts that skillfully illuminated the situation in a Southern European country like Italy.\(^5\)

From a methodological standpoint, this analysis employs a comparison of four Romanian counties. Although the study of comparative politics seems increasingly to privilege cross-national analysis, a number of recent analyses have offered validity to intra-national frameworks by showing that "comparative political research of the broadest philosophical and theoretical implications can be executed within a single country."\(^6\) A cross-county rather than a cross-national focus is preferred because it helps to control for institutional design, and provides a common framework when talking about political arrangements and recent historical experiences. Of course, an intra-country, as opposed to an inter-country, comparison does not necessarily control for institutional arrangements, since federal countries like Russia have allowed a diversity of institutions to operate at the level of regional government in different parts of the country. In the case of Romania, however, an intra-country comparison does control for institutional design because that country is a unitary state that can be considered as a showcase for institutional uniformity. As detailed in Chapter 2, throughout the last two hundred years modern Romania has considered administrative uniformity of utmost importance for counteracting the centrifugal tendencies exhibited periodically by its three main historical provinces. For successive generations of Romanian leaders to allow for even small variations in


formal local governmental structures has been tantamount to exacerbating regional cultural and
economic differences, and consequently to invite the possibility of the country’s dissolution. It
was only very recently, and very timidly, that Romania contemplated decentralization at the
request of the European community and under pressures from below to achieve better
coordination and greater responsiveness in policy making.

With the research questions in mind, the four counties were selected such that they would
be closely similar in terms of their (1) formal institutional arrangements, and (2) economic
wealth and development, but at the same time dissimilar with respect to their (1) geography, (2)
historical experiences, and (3) ethnic makeup. The reason for choosing to control for economic
development is straightforward. Richer counties might have more efficient and responsive local
governments not because they can tap on more sociostructural reserves, but because they have
more resources to begin with. As political scientists demonstrated, institutions which have at
their disposal more financial resources and better qualified staff are able to offer a more
diversified range of services and to respond in a more timely fashion to the queries of their
citizens.\textsuperscript{7} Since economic development is the most important alternative explanation of
institutional performance differences identified in the literature, controlling for it helps us to
discern better the effect of attitudinal and behavioral norms that constitute social capital. The
level of economic development that is chosen is also important, since at high levels of economic
development social capital is more likely to emerge. Although the entire country has suffered the
hardships of post-communist transition, there is great variation among Romanian counties with
respect to their economic wealth/development, ranging from the backward, agricultural

northeastern Moldova to the rich, industrially based western Transylvania. Since counties had to be selected from all three historical provinces but no Moldovan county scored high on this dimension, I chose instead counties that scored medium-high, as measured by their overall 1995 Human Development Index.\(^8\)

Most important for this kind of analysis was the inclusion of cases that were likely to exhibit significant sociostructural differences, and for this reason I selected counties from each of Romania’s distinct cultural regions, Transylvania and the Old Kingdom (Regat).\(^9\) Only in 1918 did the Romanian state come into being, when the Old Romanian Kingdom, which included the regions of Wallachia (also known as Muntenia) and Moldova, incorporated Transylvania.\(^10\)

United in mid-nineteenth century, Wallachia and Muntenia had previously been under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire, while Transylvania had been part of the Hungarian kingdom and later the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The differences between the Southeastern Old Kingdom and the Western Transylvania did not lie solely in their formal institutional arrangements, reflective of the larger political formations to which they belonged, but extended into the economic and cultural realms. Having moved to commerce, manufacture and small industry at an earlier time, by the end of the nineteenth century Transylvania found a measure of economic prosperity that remained unreachable to the predominantly agrarian Old Kingdom. Transylvania also enjoyed a clear advantage in education, as before its 1918 incorporation into Romania it

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8 Conform Raportul dezvoltarii umane in Romania 1996 (Bucharest: Romanian Government, 1996), and also Disparitati regionale in Romania, 1990-1994 (Bucharest: PHARE, July 1996). I thank Sabina Elena Stan (Universite de Montreal) for making these reports available to me.

9 Transylvanians refer to the Old Kingdom, Wallachia and Moldova, as the Regat (which literally kingdom in Romanian). But no resident of the two latter geographical areas would subscribe to such an identity, preferring instead to call themselves Wallachians (munteni) or Moldovans (moldoveni).

10 For consistency and coherence, I have chosen to refer to the two culturally distinct areas of the Old Kingdom and Transylvania as “regions,” and to the historical Romanian lands of Transylvania, Moldova and Wallachia as “provinces.”
boasted a higher literacy rate than the Old Kingdom (51.1 percent compared to 39.3 percent).\textsuperscript{11} Moreover, important differences in ethos set the two regions apart, with Transylvania being more akin to Central Europe and the Old Kingdom retaining many of the norms and mentalities once shared throughout the Ottoman Empire. Two counties were selected from Transylvania, and two from the Old Kingdom (one from Wallachia and another from Moldova). The four counties are geographically dispersed, none bordering each other, and thus can be considered to be independent cases.

Students of history and geography might object to the division of Romania into Wallachia, Moldova and Transylvania, as aside from these larger provinces, smaller ones have been traditionally identified in Romania. Dobrogea is Wallachia's most eastern part, bordering the Black Sea, while Oltenia takes up much of its western part. Crisana and Banat are Transylvania's western and southern lands bordering Hungary and the Serbian province of Vojvodina, while Maramures and Bukovina are located in northern Moldova. But none of these smaller areas are currently recognized as distinct administrative units, and their history largely coincided with that of the larger province to which they belong geographically. Of the four counties included in this analysis, only Arad belongs to one such smaller area (Crisana).

Last but not least, careful consideration was given to ethnic makeup, with both ethnically homogeneous and ethnically heterogeneous counties being included in the analysis in view of discerning the impact of ethnic diversity on both social capital and the performance of government institutions. To date, discussions of social capital have examined almost exclusively communities and groups, relatively homogeneous in terms of their interests, whose members must overcome collective action problems in order to meet their common interests. Shared norms

of trust and cooperation have been presented as means of resolving these problems, but when members of a community subscribe to different identities or share conflicting interests, social capital is harder to come by because inter-personal ties based on trust and rooted in everyday interactions are weak, when not replaced by outward animosity. Racial and, in Eastern Europe, ethnic divisions may impede the accumulation of sociostructural reserves, and may ultimately translate into poorly performing institutions. Ideally, the level of ethnic diversity would have to be manipulated such that within the same region one county would score high and the other low on this variable. Nevertheless, since in Romania only Transylvania included ethnically mixed counties, no matching ethnically heterogeneous county could be selected in the Old Kingdom (Wallachia and Moldova).

Ethnic diversity and ethnic conflict do not necessarily go together. Switzerland, with its German, Italian and Romansche population, is ethnically a highly diverse country fortunate enough to have been spared the chagrin of ethnic conflict, though occasionally relations between its ethnic groups become tense. In the Romanian case, however, ethnic heterogeneity and ethnic conflict do go hand in hand. There the most diverse county was the scene of bloody interethnic clashes whereas the least diverse counties did not witness ethnic conflict. This does not mean that less ethnically diverse countries that avoided outright violence and bloodshed were spared ethnic tensions over resources, identity, patronage and policies. As in other ethnically plural society that allows free expression of political demands, in Romania ethnic tension has been more or less inevitable, although only in very exceptional cases did it lead to violence and open conflict.

The four counties selected for this study, Arad and Mures in Transylvania, Arges in Wallachia, and Galati in Moldova, are among the most economically developed and
industrialized areas of post-communist Romania. Arges and Galati are almost exclusively formed of ethnic Romanians, with other ethnic groups accounting for less than two percent of the population. Ethnic Romanians represent only 52 percent of the Mures population, with ethnic Hungarians making up most of the rest. One-fifth of the Arad inhabitants are non-Romanians, but the county is ethnically homogeneous by Transylvanian standards and does not border Mures. Because of these reasons Arad was included in this analysis. Mures, on the other hand, was chosen both because it was the only county where ethnic conflict flared up into bloody violence after the collapse of communism, and because no other county topped its degree of ethnic heterogeneity. Other Transylvanian counties had a clear majority of the population formed either by ethnic Romanians or ethnic Hungarians. A predominantly Romanian county like Mures was preferred to the predominantly Hungarian counties of Covasna and Harghita in view of the comparisons that had to be drawn with the overwhelmingly ethnic Romanian counties of Arges and Galati.

The county sample also provided a certain amount of geographical diversity, with each county pointing in the four directions of the compass. Arad lies close to the Romanian-Hungarian border, while Galati lies on Romania’s border with the independent Republic of Moldova (historically, Greater Romania’s province of Bessarabia). While Arad and Galati mark the country’s western and the eastern cardinal points, Arges and Mures are situated in southern and northern Romania, respectively (see Map 1 on page 19). A summary of county characteristics in terms of geographic location, economic development, and ethnic diversity is presented in Table 1, while more historical details are included in the final section of the Introduction under the heading of County Descriptions.
Together with King, Keohane and Verba, I believe that "neither quantitative nor qualitative research is superior to the other," and that the best approach is to make full use of both techniques to illuminate a topic and answer a research question. As a result, this study relies on a variety of methods and sources ranging from statistical analysis of survey data to content analysis of press reports and extensive personal interviews with county politicians and key local actors, to name the most prominent. Elusive concepts like social capital, political culture and political behavior were ascertained with the help of not only "hard data" and survey analysis but also of literature, historical accounts, political speeches and press reports.

Table 1: Characteristics of Four Romanian Counties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Arad Transylvania</th>
<th>Arges Wallachia</th>
<th>Galati Moldova</th>
<th>Mures Transylvania</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historical Province</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance/direction of county main town from Bucharest</td>
<td>715 km West</td>
<td>115 km Northwest</td>
<td>233 km Northeast</td>
<td>352 km North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population (1996 Census)</td>
<td>477,711</td>
<td>677,246</td>
<td>641,561</td>
<td>604,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Romanian</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Urban</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development (1995 HDI)</td>
<td>0.773</td>
<td>0.816</td>
<td>0.775</td>
<td>0.793</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I conducted the fieldwork for this study over the January – May 1999 period, spending approximately one month in each county, and deepening my familiarity with the four counties that I already visited or lived in while a Romanian resident. County government officials were generally willing to be interviewed and graciously provided policy information, budgets and statistical materials in each county. Besides the personal interviews I conducted with 33 county councilors and other 18 key local figures, a total of 15 high-school principals in eight localities were kind enough to let me administer my own survey to some 153 to 202 students in each

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county. During my research, I was also able to use survey data provided by the Romanian component of the Opinion Euro-Barometer, which was collected under the aegis of the Bucharest-based Soros Foundation-Romania.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 2 offers a presentation of local government and administration in Romania, with special emphasis on the constellations of historical events that have shaped its traditionally excessive centralism and domination by Bucharest. The presentation details the pre-communist, communist and post-communist legislative initiatives that have defined the nature of the long-standing asymmetric relationship between the center and the counties that continues to be in place today. Among the major caveats of the Romanian local government system identified in Chapter 2 are: (1) an imprecise division of the functions of the state between the center and the counties, (2) the local leaders’ limited discretion and power over policy affecting their counties, (3) weak participation of local residents in the government of their county, (4) unbridgeable ethnic and regional tensions, (5) corruption and patrimonialism, and (6) over-bureaucratization and general inefficiency.

The chapter then examines the interplay between democratization and local government under the leftist and the rightist post-communist regimes of 1989-1996 and 1996-2000, respectively. During the first years of transition local government reverted back to its pre-communist French-inspired structure, underwent the separation of state structures at both central and local levels from the ruling party, and allowed local leaders to be elected by local residents rather than nominated by the center. But subsequently the momentum for reform was all but lost when Romania had to face increased social unrest and a devastating economic recession.
Anticipating the analysis detailed in Chapter 7, my discussion of the local government pays close attention to the role of majority-minority tensions in shaping the post-communist administrative system. Under the leftist rule of President Ion Iliescu, the radicalization of inter-ethnic relations led to insistent demands for local autonomy on the part of Transylvania's ethnic Hungarian minority, and Romania's international isolation following its leaders' unwillingness to decentralize the administration for accommodating these demands. By early 1996, corruption, the hallmark of the Romanian administrative apparatus, was coupled with increased popular discontentment with mayors and councilors failing to solve the concrete problems of their localities, implement the new legislation, and prevent the abuses of local officials.

During the next four years additional steps were taken to make local governments more efficient and accountable, as well as less corruptible and dominated by political interests. With all their drawbacks, the legislative initiatives of the democratic coalition that ruled Romania from 1996 to 2000 moved one step closer to clarifying the responsibilities of each level of government, depoliticizing the administrative corps, and giving local governments a degree of leverage over the local tax base. But decentralization did not amount to more than cosmetic changes until the end of 1999. Wary that financial devolution could prove politically inopportune if it threatened macroeconomic transformation, Romania's leaders have resisted efforts to enlarge the decision making power of local governments, at the cost of perpetuating centralism and restraining legitimate local aspirations for managerial autonomy. Though recognizing that Romanian county councils have limited responsibilities and functions compared to middle-level structures in other countries, this study is interested to uncover not so much what county councils can do but more how they do it, and how sociostructural norms and ethnic acrimony affect their institutional performance.
The next chapter lays down a method of evaluating the performance of local governmental institutions, and compares the county councils of Arad, Arges, Galati and Mures in terms of their overall effectiveness and responsiveness. In differentiating between higher and lower performance governments, this dissertation becomes the first comparative study of the new county-level institutions Romania adopted after 1989. Drawing on the comparative politics literature on institutional performance, personal interviews with councilors and local leaders in each county, local press reports as well as nationwide opinion polls, Chapter 3 employs a total of 25 indicators to compare the policy process, content and implementation of each county council during the 1996-2000 legislature. Aggregate scores summarizing the performance indicators demonstrate that the Transylvanian county governments of Arad and Mures were clearly more successful in their activity than their Old Kingdom counterparts of Galati and Arges. In post-communist Romania, therefore, some county councils have been more efficient than others, though all have had equal chances for success.

Having established that differences in the performance of county councils do exist despite the fact that these local governmental institutions have had the same formal responsibilities and attributions, the remainder of the study seeks to explain them. Recent studies of variations in governance have relied mainly on economic, sociostructural and cultural explanations. Since this

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13 A reader wondered whether I am referring to institutional effectiveness or institutional efficaciousness, and suggested that efficaciousness and effectiveness are not the same thing, although the Webster’s Dictionary does list them as synonyms. For him, an efficacious government would complete all its tasks, while an effective government would complete tasks in the best possible and least wasteful manner. Governments can thus be effective but not efficacious when they perform only some of the tasks best but leave others un-addressed. They can be efficacious but not effective when they perform all the tasks they are supposed to perform without being able to accomplish them in the best possible manner. This research was designed along the lines of effectiveness more than efficaciousness. For each local government key tasks were identified and then the counties were ranked with respect to their success in accomplishing them promptly and with dispatch. Given the financial and time limitations circumscribing this research, an examination of all possible tasks performed by local governments was impossible to carry out. This research strategy is in line with my main concern of uncovering not so much what Romanian local governments were required to do but how they did it.
research design controls for economic complexion, social capital was the main explanatory factor examined here. Note that the concept of social capital was defined broadly enough to include cultural explanations as well. Chapter 4 presents the theoretical framework that informs the way social capital was understood and employed in this study. A recent article by Michael Woolcock claimed that the greatest potential of the social capital concept lies in providing "a credible point of entry for socio-political issues into a comprehensive multi- and interdisciplinary approach to some of the most pressing issues of our time." In reviewing the relevant literature on the subject, this study follows the path begun by Woolcock by actively looking for markers that would help first to define the term, and then to operationalize it by specifying indicators for its constitutive elements. As the discussion in Chapter 4 tries to unveil, the present study can be regarded as falling within the broad category of political culture studies although at the same time it departs significantly from them. Political culture arguments constructed solely around attitudes have often been criticized for their seemingly endless circularity and their implicit assumption that attitudes and behavior are congruent. By aligning behavioral evidence with attitudinal data the present study seeks to provide a more compelling ground for inference than by examining attitudes alone, although it perhaps only imperfectly bridges the "ineluctable epistemic gap . . . between objective behavior and subjective dispositions" to which Harry Eckstein drew attention.15

Using data obtained from surveys of over 700 students in 15 different high-schools, Chapter 5 shows that one decade after the collapse of communism social capital reserves were not uniformly distributed in Romania, but that some counties had more while other countries had

less of them. The chapter ranks counties in terms of the six sociostructural factors Chapter 4 identified: trust, associationalism, interest in politics and community life, civic engagement, law-abidingness, and tolerance. A total of 48 measures employed in previous studies were utilized in order to construct summary indices for each county. The analysis consistently ranks the Transylvanian counties of Arad and Mures higher than non-Transylvanian counties of Arges and Galati. It also shows the high internal consistency of the social capital concept, and the fact that, with one exception, all its constituent elements point in the same direction. The counties characterized by higher levels of trust, tolerance and associationalism were also the counties where bribing and corruption were less widespread. By contrast, counties registering lower levels of membership in associations and participation in elections and other political activities were also more intolerant, distrustful and corrupt.

Students were asked to report the political attitudes and behavior both for themselves and for their parents, but some readers might have difficulty accepting the high-school survey as a reliable instrument for gauging social capital levels of entire counties. Students might have only imperfect knowledge of their parents’ civic engagement and associationalism. Peer pressure might have distorted their reporting, as some students did occasionally show each other their reporting cards, even when asked not to. Students might be familiar with and interested in politics to a much lesser degree than other county residents, and the fact that their families represent only a fraction of the county population might make this group unrepresentative for the local political attitudes and behavior. To document further regional differences in social capital, Chapter 6 employs a more powerful survey instrument, two opinion polls conducted in 1998 and 1999 and surveying a sample representative for the entire Romanian population. Chapter 5 and

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Chapter 6 differ therefore not in terms of the ranking method or the sociostructural measures they use but in terms of the data set on which they rely. An analysis of 37 questions derived from opinion barometers again shows Transylvania’s clear advantage, and Wallachia’s handicap, in terms of social capital. The chapter is the first to bring forth "hard statistical evidence" for the existence of those cultural differences within Romania whose persistence has been noted by so many students of and travelers to that country.

Chapter 7 brings the two factors, institutional performance and social capital, together and explores the extent to which the latter explains the former. Discussions on the causal link between institutional performance and social capital have tended to end in chicken-and-egg-type arguments calling for an examination of both the influence of sociostructural factors on the performance of institutions and of the latter's effects on social capital building. The scope of this study is more modest. Given the novelty of the local governmental structure to Romania, the analysis examines the extent to which social capital informs institutional performance, and entrusts the second causal relationship to future research. The link between social capital and institutional performance is supported by the evidence presented in the beginning of Chapter 7, which suggests that the Transylvanian counties of Arad and Mures, where councils governed better, were also the counties with higher levels of social capital. By contrast, the Wallachian and Moldovan counties, whose councils were unable to replicate Transylvania’s institutional effectiveness and responsiveness, were also the counties with lower levels of social capital.

The discussion then moves to the factor which, in my opinion, accounts for Mures’s handicap in institutional performance compared to Arad. True, when contrasted to non-Transylvanian counties, both Arad and Mures had better governments and higher social capital reserves. But compared to Arad, Mures lagged behind in institutional performance, despite its
apparent high social capital levels, because of lingering ethnic tensions that have characterized the county after the March 1990 inter-ethnic confrontation. These animosities were ultimately brought into the county council, impacting both the selection of the council leadership in 1992 and the daily activity of the council during the 1992-1996 and, to a much lesser degree, the subsequent legislature.

The examination of the Mures case illuminates a new understanding of social capital and institutional performance, and calls for a new operationalization of these two concepts. As previously noted, Chapters 3, 5 and 6 measure institutional performance and social capital with the help of indicators employed in a variety of previous studies. Chapter 7 contends that traditional measures of social capital and institutional performance are blind to major identity cleavages existent within a society, and therefore can overestimate the extent of intra-community norms of reciprocity and cooperation. The deep suspicion dividing its main ethnic groups makes Mures a county where the ethnic Romanians and the ethnic Hungarians lead separate and highly antagonistic lives, although overall they do exhibit greater associationalism, civic engagement and law-abidingness and greater trust toward members of their own ethnic group than do respondents surveyed in the other three counties. Chapter 8 summarizes the conclusions of the analysis, and highlights its significance for the theory of social capital and the understanding of Romanian, and more generally Eastern European, post-communist politics. The conclusion opens with an examination of the link between good governance, civicsness and ethnic conflict and its relevance for the Eastern European democratization effort, and ends by considering the importance of this study for the students of Transylvania.
County Descriptions

ARAD. With a total area of 7,754 square kilometers, the Transylvanian Arad county is the sixth largest Romanian county.\textsuperscript{16} Due to its location in the Western part of the country on the Romanian-Hungarian border, the county is closer to Budapest (which lies 284 kilometers away) and Vienna (506 kilometers) than to Romania’s capital, Bucharest (603 kilometers). As the main gateway for west European travelers entering Romania, Arad’s railway and road network is much denser than that of other Romanian counties. The bases for this infrastructure were laid down by the Austro-Hungarian Empire during the nineteenth century, but the quality of the roads remains below European standards, although after 1994 significant investments were made to modernize it. Arad has several border-crossing checkpoints with Hungary for vehicles and for railway traffic, alongside a small international airport built in 1935 and upgraded in the 1990s to became the most modern in Southeast Europe.

In 1996 ethnic Romanians made up only 80.5 percent of the Arad population, with ethnic Hungarians accounting for another 12.5 percent, and Germans for 1.9 percent.\textsuperscript{17} Although one in five Arad residents are non-Romanians, the county is ethnically homogeneous by Transylvanian standards. Further details on the Arad demographic make-up can be found in Appendix 1.

It was only in 1918 that Arad became part of Romania, after it had belonged to the Hungarian kingdom, alongside the rest of Transylvania, for almost a thousand years. Placed at the crossroads of some important thoroughfares, the town of Arad became a fairly important market on the banks of the Mures river, although it never matched the splendor and vivacity of

\textsuperscript{16} All statistical data in this section was compiled from \textit{Romanian Statistical Yearbook} (Bucharest: Romanian National Commission for Statistics, 1997).

\textsuperscript{17} According to \textit{Encyclopedia Americana} (Danbury: Grolier, 1994), Transylvania’s seven million people are 65 percent ethnic Romanians, 25 percent ethnic Hungarians and 10 percent other minority groups. My own calculations based on the 1996 Romanian census revealed that Transylvania has a total of 7.8 million people, of which 68.8 percent are ethnic Romanians.
its close neighbor Timisoara, which lies some 50 kilometers further south. During the sixteenth century, Arad was conquered by the Ottomans, which transformed it into a Turkish pashalic.\textsuperscript{18}

One hundred years later Arad came under Austrian jurisdiction, and was considered strategic enough that Empress Maria Tereza ordered its old fortress to be rebuilt in the French Vauban style for the use of the imperial army. With the new fortress came the December 1779 evacuation order of Arad town, whose destruction was called for by the need for a free firing zone for the fortress's new heavy batteries. But following numerous petitions to the Viennese court, Arad residents succeeding in delaying the evacuation. Two years later, Emperor Joseph II revoked the order when he realized that the fortress had in fact only minor military importance due to its peculiar location.

Instead of a defense outpost, the fortress became a prison, first for the peasants who participated in the 1784 peasant uprising led by Horia, Closca and Crisan, and immediately after that for hundreds of French revolutionary officers captured by the Austrian interventionist troops in 1789. Sixty years later, in August 1849, the Hungarian revolutionary government of General Kossuth established its residence in the Arad fortress, replaced in October of the same year by an imperial military court which ordered the execution without trial of thirteen Hungarian commanders of the revolutionary army. During the First World War, the Austro-Hungarian army transformed the fortress into an internment camp for thousands of prisoners from occupied countries. Once Transylvania became part of the Romanian kingdom in 1918, the fortress was used as a military unit by the Romanian army and by the Soviet troops during the 1945-1958 period. After the December 1989 collapse of communism, the Arad county council came up with the proposal of upgrading the fortress and transforming it into either a university campus or a

\textsuperscript{18} Valeria Velcea, Ion Velcea and Octavian Mindrut, \textit{Județul Arad} (Bucharest: Editura Academiei RSR, 1979).
public entertainment park but to date the council has been unable to find the necessary financial support.\textsuperscript{19}

The demise of communism brought about a radical transformation of the local economy. Under communism machine building made up the bulk of the county’s industry, but the ever increasing prices of raw materials and the dissolution of COMECON trade arrangements led to a sharp decrease in the volume of industrial production during the 1990s. Most affected were Astra (the largest railway car producing plant in the region), Aris (lathes), UTA (textile), Tudor Vladimirescu Platform (petrochemical refinery) which had to downsize and reorganize their activity. The Platform closed its doors in the early 1990s, while Astra and Aris continued their activity at 70 percent of the capacity. As in other parts of Romania, in Arad the industry has become the main economic sector generating unemployment. The private sector has slowly developed, but it only partly compensated for the losses in the state sector. Today, Arad has two universities, one public and one private, and high-schools providing education in Romanian, Hungarian and German. In 1995, Arad had 248 libraries with 120 thousand subscribers, and 99 thousand radio and 104.6 thousand television subscriptions.

During the last decade, Arad has constantly preferred political parties and candidates of a reformist and democratic persuasion. In the first round of the September 1992 presidential elections, 45 percent of Arad voters cast their ballots in favor of Emil Constantinescu, leader of the reformist Democratic Convention of Romania (\textit{Conventia Democrata Romana}, CDR), and only 25 percent for incumbent Ion Ionescu, representing the National Democratic Salvation Front (\textit{Frontul Democratic al Salvarii Nationale}, FDSN), a loose conglomerate of communist apparatchicks. Constantinescu was also preferred in the second round, when he gathered 58

\textsuperscript{19} See \textit{The Arad Fortress} (Arad: Consiliul Judetean, 1998), and \textit{Județele României Socialiste} (Bucharest: Editura Politica, 1969).
percent of the vote. Four years later the situation remained unchanged, Constantinescu winning 33.8 percent of the vote in the first run and 66.9 percent in the second round, while Iliescu won only 21.7 percent and 33 percent, respectively. In the 1992 elections for the lower chamber of Parliament, the CDR was credited with 36.8 percent of the vote, while the FDSN gathered only 19.2 percent. The nationalist parties together obtained only 15.7 percent of the vote. In 1996, Arad's preference for reformist candidates was even more pronounced, the CDR winning 41.6 percent, the FDSN (by then renamed the Party for Social Democracy in Romania, PDSR) gathered 20 percent, and nationalist parties only 8 percent of the vote.20

ARGES. Of the four counties selected here, the Wallachian county of Arges is the closest to Bucharest. The county's main town, the municipality of Pitesti, is only one hundred kilometers away from the capital, to which it is connected both by railway and by Romania’s only four-lane highway. Arges is a medium-sized county with a total area of 6.826 square kilometers divided between mountains, hills and plains. Pitesti is an industrial town lying at the confluence of two important rivers, Arges and Doamnei. The county is overwhelmingly Romanian, with ethnic minorities accounting for less than one percent of the population. Arges adopts a more conservative outlook, with more marriages and fewer divorces than the national average. See Appendix 1 for demographic details.

Arges acquired some reputation during the tenth century when two of its towns, Curtea de Arges and Campulung, alternatively became the capital of the Wallachian kingdom, including most of southern Romania. Both towns were strategically located at the foot of the Carpathian Mountains constituting the natural border between Wallachia and Transylvania. Both were connected to Transylvanian towns and were thus important for regulating the traffic of goods and

people between the two regions. For a while, the Hungarian kingdom granted control over the Campulung passing to members of the Teutonic order brought from German lands to southern Transylvania to defend its border with Wallachia. The past splendor of Curtea de Arges (literally meaning the Arges court) is visible in the monastic complex built in the fifteenth century by French architects in an eclectic style.\(^{21}\) Around the same time, Pitesti became a fairly important market town, later to host the first Romanian primary school in one of its suburbs.\(^{22}\) But the records Pitesti set were not always enviable. Immediately after communism took hold of Romania, the town became the place of the most dreadful experiment designed to degrade and punish those who opposed Soviet Union and the new political order.\(^ {23}\)

Given its proximity to the capital, and the fact that both Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu launched their political careers there,\(^ {24}\) Arges became a showcase for communist industrialization efforts. Though poor in natural resources in comparison to other counties, Arges rapidly became one of the most developed counties of southern Romania. It was in a Pitesti suburb that the first Romanian car manufacturer, Dacia, was built in the 1950s, and it was in Arges that the second car plant, Aro, was set up shortly after that in the historical town of Campulung. Arges also boasted one of the largest petrochemical refinery, a pet project of Elena Ceausescu, whose curriculum vitae boasted a dubious doctoral degree in inorganic chemistry. None of these large industrial plants closed their doors after 1989, although their performance has left much to be desired, and their arrears reached staggering levels. Dacia halved its personnel and gave up a number of its production lines and adjacent operations not essential for

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its main activity before the French company Renault bought 35 percent of its shares. Today the plant employs some 28,000 people, and the livelihood of many more Pitesti residents depends on its survival. There is an older small university in Pitesti offering degrees in engineering and education, and a newly founded private business school. In 1995, Arges had 625 libraries with 179 thousand subscribers, and 130 thousand radio and 117 thousand television subscriptions.

Since 1989 Arges proved to be a stronghold of conservatism, constantly favoring leftist candidates opting for the maintenance of state control over the economy. This is a rather surprising political option, since a number of Christian Democrat leaders, including Emil Constantinescu, the second post-communist Romanian president, and the leader of the National Peasant Party Christian Democrat (Partidul National Taranesc Crestin-Democrat, PNTCD) Ion Diaconescu, were born in the county or lived there for extended periods of time. In the first round of the 1992 presidential elections, 64 percent of the Arges voters favored conservative Ion Iliescu, while only 21 percent voted for democrat Emil Constantinescu. Iliescu gathered 74 percent of the vote in the second round. Four years later, Iliescu again won the highest share of votes, 42 percent in the first round and 58.4 percent in the second, compared to 25 and 41.6 percent won by Constantinescu. In Arges, Iliescu's victory in the presidential elections was matched by his party's victory in the parliamentary elections. In 1992, of all parliamentary mandates allotted to that county, seven went to the FDSN, and only three to the CDR. Four years later, the PDSR won five mandates, while the CDR won four.

GALATI. This Moldovan county is located at the junction of the Danube river with the two most important Moldovan rivers, Siret and Prut. At the north, Galati borders the independent Republic of Moldova, but because the border corresponds to the Prut river over which no bridge has been constructed yet the county opened only one border checkpoint with the former Soviet
republic. With a total area of 4,466 square kilometers, Galati is the sixth smallest Romanian county. It has a rather sparse network of roads and railways, but also the country’s largest port on the Danube. Its main town, the municipality of Galati, is among the largest in Romania and a fairly important university center aspiring to open its first airport sometime in the near future. Ethnically, Galati is a highly homogeneous county (see Appendix 1 for demographic details).

Historically Galati belonged to the Moldovan kingdom but its bordering of Wallachia meant that at times it was a contested territory between the two. During the sixteenth century Galati came under Ottoman jurisdiction and was transformed into a Turkish administrative raia. Over the centuries the town of Galati became a major port and market facilitating trade between the Ottoman and Russian empires. Its golden age lasted from 1837 to 1874, when the Galati port was declared a free economic zone and was thus capable of giving the town the opportunity to connect to international trade. The town’s modernization according to European standards began in 1836, when special attention was paid to the Danube quay, which had to facilitate the circulation of goods. At the beginning of the twentieth century Galati, especially the shipyard workers' union, became known for its leftist sympathies.

As one of Romania's largest industrial towns, Galati was among the worst hit by the prolonged post-communist economic depression. The county's industrial sector is represented by a shipyard specializing in shipbuilding and ship repairs, and the largest steel complex in the world, Sidex (which accounts for 87 percent of Galati's industrial product). In 1962 the communist regime chose Galati as the location for Sidex because its port allowed for raw

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25 Galati (Galati: Consiliul Judetean, 1999), and Corneliu Stoica, Ion Dragomir and Mihalache Brudiu, Muzee si monumente galatene (Galati: Comitetul de Cultura si Educatie Socialistă al Judetului Galati, 1974).

materials to be shipped in from other communist countries and end products to be exported.\textsuperscript{27} The Romanian state announced in 1999 its intention to offer a fraction of the Sidex shares to foreign investors, but buyers were hard to come by since Bucharest has been reluctant to give up control over a plant it considers of national strategic importance.\textsuperscript{28} The Yugoslav war seriously affected naval transport on the Danube, which remains one of Galati's main revenue sources.

Galati has two universities, a larger public one and a smaller private one. In 1995 it had 330 libraries with 175 thousand subscribers, together with 111.9 thousand radio and 123.3 thousand television subscriptions.

In terms of its political preferences, at the early stages of post-communist transition Galati supported leftist parties and candidates who promised to keep its huge industrial sector afloat, despite the significant financial losses it has registered. In the 1992 presidential elections, leftist candidate Ion Iliescu gathered 55.7 percent of the vote in the first round and 67.4 percent in the second. By contrast, Christian-Democrat Emil Constantinescu gathered only 26.3 percent and 32.6 percent of the vote, respectively. In the parliamentary elections held in the same year, the leftist FDSN won seven mandates, while the rightist CDR only three. Four years later, the gap between right and left closed both in the parliamentary and presidential elections. Iliescu gathering 37.6 percent in the first round, only five percentage points more than Constantinescu, who in the second round won the support of 51.4 percent of Galati voters. The PDSR and the CDR each won five parliamentary mandates.

\textsuperscript{27} Wendy Hollis, Democratic Consolidation in Eastern Europe. The Influence of the Communist Legacy in Hungary, the Czech Republic and Romania (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1999), p. 97, and Dimitrie I. Oancea and Cazimir Swizewski, Judetul Galati (Bucharest: Editura Academiei RSR, 1979).

\textsuperscript{28} Evenimentul Zilei (20 November 1998).
MURES. Located in the north-central part of Romania, Mures is a medium-sized Transylvanian county with a total area of 6,714 square kilometers. The county's main town, the municipality of Targu Mures (Marosvasarhely in Hungarian, Neumarkt in German), lies some 350 kilometers away from Bucharest, and less than 220 kilometers away from the Romanian-Ukrainian border. To this day, Targu Mures remains an isolated town with direct railroad connections neither to Bucharest nor to Transylvania's center, the city of Cluj, which lies less than 60 kilometers to the west. The county is roughly equally divided between urban and rural residents. It is also the most ethnically diverse Romanian county, with 52.1 percent of its population ethnic Romanian and 41.5 percent ethnic Hungarian. Some 52 percent of Targu Mures's residents are ethnic Hungarians (see also Appendix 1).

Like the rest of Transylvania, Mures was traditionally part of the Hungarian kingdom before being incorporated into the Romanian kingdom in 1918. The county's oldest town, Sighisoara, was founded in 1280 by German immigrants around a medieval fortress unique in the region. Targu Mures developed in the early fourteenth century as a market town under the name of Novum Forum Siculorum, the New Szeckler Market, and became the center of the Mures Szeklerland and Transylvania's main judicial court before being devastated in 1658 in a fire set up by invading Tatar troops. Mures residents actively took part in the 1703 uprising and the 1848-1849 revolution.29 As befitting an important Austro-Hungarian center, Targu Mures boasts several impressive administrative building which today house the mayory, the county council, the prefecture and the county public library. In 1753, the town went down into history as the site of the last European witch execution.30


30 Romania Libera (7 December 1999).
When Romania reincorporated northern Transylvania at the end of World War II, the Soviet Union asked Bucharest to set up a Hungarian Autonomous Region, including the three counties where ethnic Hungarians were in a majority: Mures and its eastern neighbors, Harghita and Covasna. The region was reluctantly set up only to be dismantled during the 1960s. The communist authorities sought to dilute Mures' ethnic diversity by encouraging Moldovan residents to immigrate in the county and take up the households abandoned by the local German community that emigrated to the West. When I visited Sighisoara in 1999, a town official reported that there were only 14 Germans left in that historically German town. Although during the Ceausescu regime part of the Mures Hungarian community chose to emigrate, the majority remained in the county, preferring instead to relocate from rural to urban areas. The collapse of communism resurrected ethnic Hungarians' demands for self-autonomous administration, and radicalized the positions of the Romanian local residents, who saw their predominance over the county threatened. In March 1990, Targu Mures was the scene of the most violent ethnic confrontation between Romanians and Hungarians in Romania's recent history. The two ethnic communities remain divided, each represented primarily by an ethnic party, the Party for Romanian National Unity (Partidul Unitatii Nationale a Romanilor, PUNR), and the Democratic Union of Magyars in Romania (Uniunea Democrat a Maghiarilor din Romania, UDMR, Romanian Magyar Demokrata Szovetseg, RMDSZ).

Although Mures has been predominantly an industrial county, its industrial sector was diversified enough not to be affected too badly by the post-communist economic downfall. In contrast to the Old Kingdom counties of Arges and Galati, whose industrial base was set up relatively recently as part of the communist industrialization program, a vast majority of the Mures industrial plants were built on the bases of pre-communist small enterprises and private
ventures. Tirgu Mures has traditionally been a large university center with three reputable large public universities. A private business school was set up in town after 1989. In 1995 Mures had 457 libraries with 159 thousand subscribers, and a network of pre-university schools where teaching is carried out in the Hungarian and German languages.

Since 1989, voting preferences in Mures have been determined by ideological and ethnic cleavages. In the first round of the 1992 presidential elections, leftist Ion Iliescu gathered 12 percent of the vote, rightist Emil Constantinescu 50.7 percent, while the anti-Hungarian candidate, and later mayor of Cluj, Gheorghe Funar, some 32.5 percent. Around 60 percent of Mures voters supported Constantinescu in the second round. The general elections held in the same year saw the two ethnically defined parties, the PUNR and the UDMR, winning six parliamentary mandates each. The CDR won only one mandate, while the leftist FDSN none. Four years later, a majority of the Mures Hungarians lent support to the Hungarian presidential candidate Gyorgy Frunda, who won 32 percent of the total vote, while Iliescu and Constantinescu each garnered only 15 percent of the vote. In the second round, however, Constantinescu outscored Iliescu with 68.8 percent of the vote. As a result of the general elections held in that year, this time the UDMR won six parliamentary mandates, and the PUNR three other. The PDSR and CDR secured only one and two mandates, respectively.

Because a majority of Targu Mures residents are ethnic Hungarians, while ethnic Romanians make up a majority of the county population, the Targu Mures mayor has been a representative of the Hungarian community, while the county council was headed by a Romanian. The two institutions stand side by side in the beautiful Square Roses situated in downtown Targu Mures and make a powerful impression on every visitor. The mayoralty greets visitors with banners in two languages, Romanian and Hungarian. The council, by contrast,
upholds Romanian as the only language used on its building signs, and boasts a statue of
mythical figures Romulus and Remus breast-fed by a she-wolf symbolizing the Romanians'
Latin origins in front of its building. Not present in any other county I visited, the statue wishes
to be a constant remainder of the permanence of Romanians since that territory was part of the
Roman Empire, and a warning to Hungarians that their claims of being the first to settle in
Transylvania, and Mures, are groundless.
CHAPTER 2.
The Development of Local Governmental Institutions in Romania

No comparison of county councils in terms of their institutional performance can be undertaken without first examining the general framework of local government in Romania. This chapter therefore provides a historical overview of the local administration in that Balkan country, discusses the relationship between central and local authorities and among various local level bodies, and examines the interplay between democratization and decentralization during the first decade of post-communism. The presentation also lays down the post-1989 legislative framework relevant for the activity of local governments, and identifies the major constraints under which the Romanian local authorities operate today.

As students of politics have previously noted, the Romanian local government stands apart from that of other Central and Eastern European countries in several important respects. Whereas the Czech, Hungarian and Polish systems rest on a broadly pluralist conception of center-local relations, and the Russian system can simultaneously realize extremes of centralism and regional autonomy, Romania continues to adhere stubbornly to an inflexible centralization reflecting uncertainty rather than confidence within the central government. Adrian Campbell argued that this uncertainty reflects ambiguities in Romania’s geo-political identity and relations with the states it borders.\(^1\) In support of his argument, Campbell reminds us that both before and during communism, the country either forged alliances that occasionally pitted it against its neighbors or pursued a foreign policy resistant to simple categorization. An example would be

\(^1\) Adrian Campbell, “Local Government and the Center in Romania and Moldova,” in Transformation from Below, ed. by John Gibson and Phillip Hanson (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 1996), pp. 73-112.
the fact that days after the demise of the Ceausescu regime, Romanian nationalists proposed the reconstruction of inter-war Greater Romania, which included the Bulgarian northern region of Cadrilater, most of the independent Republic of Moldova and Northern Bukovina, today a Ukrainian territory.

While Campbell’s viewpoint is worth considering, I would argue that even if relations with neighboring countries would improve, centralism is there to stay as long as Romania embraces the concept of “one state, one nation, one language,” and its three provinces espouse centrifugal tendencies. Historically, centralism was Bucharest’s solution to the regional animosity stemming from the long-standing socioeconomic and cultural differences between the better off Transylvania, which traditionally looked at Central Europe for inspiration, and the other two impoverished provinces, always in search for a uniquely Romanian way of life. Moreover, Romanians seem to share the rather paradoxical belief that centralism best quells the demands for self-government put forth by the country’s sizeable ethnic Hungarian minority, the vast majority of which lives in Transylvania. True, such demands arise not merely from the numerical strength of the minority but also from the expanded economic, cultural and educational opportunities offered by Hungary, whose appeal detracts from Bucharest’s control over Transylvania. But domestic, rather than international, politics seems to be the driving force of centralism. This chapter therefore will make the argument that the Romanian resistance to decentralization stems more from a reluctance to recognize ethnic Hungarians’ rights to preserve their identity and culture than from the relations between Bucharest and Budapest. These relations were occasionally determined by, but were not reducible to, the plight of the Transylvanian ethnic Hungarians.

Historical Background: Pre-Communist Local Government Structures

The current local government can be traced to the administrative reorganization undertaken by the Romanian united principalities in mid-nineteenth century. The structure owes its main features to the Law on the creation of county councils and the Law on communal councils, both passed in early 1864 by the country’s legislature. The system established at the time drew on the historical precedents of Moldova and Wallachia, the two provinces that were united in 1859, and won their independence from the Ottoman Empire after the Russian-Turkish war of 1877. The county (județ), ruled by a judge (jude), was a major feature of the Moldovan administrative system under king Steven the Great (1455-1502), who helped Moldova extend its territory, achieve a measure of economic prosperity, and successfully hold at bay the attempts of the Ottoman Empire to conquer the territories north of the Danube river. This administrative structure, which most likely characterized the Moldovan and Wallachian kingdoms from their inception in the fourteenth century, was preceded by a plethora of cnezate ruled by military commanders endlessly fighting against the Hungarian kingdom, when not among themselves.3

The task of the județ representatives of the throne was to maintain law and order and to extract revenue for the king (first called voievod, and later domn). But, as in other corners of Eastern Europe, local leaders were often difficult to control by the throne, and the farther one traveled into the country, the increasingly corrupt and self-interested the county leaders became. The organization of the local apparatus was seemingly designed to co-opt the landowners into government in return for their support for the king’s rule. Because there was no place in this

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3 H. H. Stahl, Organizarea administrativ-teritoriala (Bucharest: Editura Stiintifica, 1969), pp. 15-16. The term of județ was used initially only in Wallachia, the same structure being called tim ur in Moldova, comit at or district in Transylvania, and scăun in Szeklerland.
arrangement for the serf majority, these institutions did little to represent the political will of the impoverished Romanian masses.

In the eighteenth century, the Phanariot ruler Constantin Mavrocordat tried to build up an efficient administration that would give him more direct control over the taxes levied at the time. He did that by way of a census, which for the first time counted the number of able-body peasants later to be taxed, and of a new statute of nobility, which reduced drastically the number of the boyars exempted from taxes. As part of this administrative reorganization, two officials (ispravnici) were assigned to each county. In the hope of ending the old system where officials simply collected what they could from the local population, Mavrocordat's ispravnici were to receive regular salaries. But the reform soon proved unworkable, and the old abuses returned often with a vengeance.⁴

From an administrative viewpoint, however, the Phanariot rulers (1711-1821) went down in history more for the extensive patronage they encouraged than for any reformist accomplishments. Most Romanians like to blame the eighteenth century Greek princes of Constantinople’s Phanar quarter for their comfort with bribery and corruption, but undoubtedly Romanians shared these inauspicious habits of the heart even before the Phanariotes first set foot in Bucharest and Iasi. Venality was rife, as the system of appointment to the Wallachian and Moldovan thrones invariably favored the highest bidder. The offices were up for grabs for those meeting the incessantly increasing demands of the Ottoman sultan and his close advisors. Of all possible contenders, the Phanariotes set up the most ingenious system to participate in sharing the spoils. Entire families would back up a candidate and contribute to the installation fee, often even by contracting substantial debts, in the hope of being handsomely repaid later. The offices

came with great prestige and practically unlimited discretionary powers, allowing the occupants to cover ascension costs and draw a hefty benefit. Holders of the two thrones could levy whatever taxes they considered necessary and could sell the country’s administrative positions in auctions similar to the ones in which they themselves participated in Constantinople. Each administrator under them, from the high dignitaries in Bucharest and Iasi to the petty functionaries in the most remote villages, could do just the same as long as he paid the installation fee and the accompanying bakshish. Perfected over one hundred years, the system led to predictable over-bureaucratization and ridiculously short terms in office, since the more numerous the administrative positions offered at the auction and the more frequent the recalls, the higher the total revenues collected. Transylvania never knew such an institutionalization of administrative corruption and clientelism.

The second major administrative restructuring, which took place in 1864, drew heavily on the French Napoleonic system by introducing the institution of the prefect (prefect), and by retaining parallel administrative and government organs at the county level. The structure included the county as a sub-division of the state administration, but also a legal person and property-holder in its own right. Departing from the previous Romanian arrangements, the 1864 legislation stipulated that the county was presided over not by a single person appointed by the king but by a council, from whose ranks a president was elected. Under this provision, which

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6 Campbell, “Local Government and the Center,” pp. 74-75. When Wallachia and Moldova united, they fused their local government structures. In early 1862, the first premier of the United Principalities, Barbu Catargiu, submitted to the legislature the country’s first administrative decentralization project. The house rejected the proposal, arguing that decentralization could be detrimental for a country that was only recently unified. See Ion C. Filitti, “Despre vechea organizare administrative a Principatelor Romane,” Revista de drept public 2 (1929), p. 157.
sought to stimulate local initiative and activity through grassroots councils, representative
councils were created at both county and town level. But land ownership remained a
precondition for membership in the councils, and this severely limited the broadly representative
nature of the local government.\(^7\)

In line with the French model it sought to emulate, the county council was overseeing the
activity of the mayors, who were elected local state servants. In turn, the county council had its
day to day work closely monitored by the prefect, who was appointed by the central authorities
and represented them in the territory. The prefect could, and often did, suspend county
councilors and overturn the council decisions, not always with very good reasons. The 1864
legislation also introduced the position of secretary, a council-appointed civil servant who was
the head of the local administrative chancellery and secretary of the local and county councils.\(^8\)

With minimal modifications, the position has been retained to this day.

The establishment of a professional, centralized administrative system had significant and
only partly anticipated consequences, the two most important being perhaps the sudden shift of
power from the local land-owning classes to the local administrators and their superiors in
Bucharest, and the enormous leverage the government obtained over virtually all local political
matters.\(^9\) While part of a larger effort to develop the apparatus of a modern state equipped with

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\(^7\) In the mountainous area, where mostly small landowning peasant families leading a communal life lived, the old village assemblies were replaced by administrative structures compatible with a modern state. The assemblies, which often included all village residents, became anachronistic once the population increased and traditional patriarchal social units disintegrated. For an anthropological examination of such a village, see H. H. Stahl, ed., Nerej. Un village d’une region archaïque (Bucharest: Institut de Sciences Sociales de Roumanie, 1940), especially pp. 291-292.

\(^8\) Eugen Popa, Marile institutii ale administratiei publice locale (Arad: Servo-Sat, 1998), p. 23.

all its usual accoutrements, the move did little to prevent the new administrative structures from inheriting the rampant clientelism and corruption entrenched in the old structures.

Perhaps the most vivid examination of the way local administrators operated and were selected before the middle of the nineteenth century was provided by Nicolae Filimon’s classic novel, The New and Old Ciocoi (Ciocoi vechi si noi). Written in 1863, it depicted the picaresque adventures of a shrewd youth who climbed the social ladder by cunningly taking advantage of a system where nepotism, manipulation and deception were systematically placed above any personal merit. According to literary critics, the novel’s main character was inspired by a real life story. Filimon’s main character Dinu Paturica was far from being an isolated case, as attested by other writers. In 1904 philosopher and political commentator Constantin Radulescu-Motru, later an exponent of extreme “traditionalism,” deplored the rapid growth of a self-serving bureaucracy that placed personal benefit above national interests, and lamented the venality of an administrative corps which retained for itself a disproportionately large share of the state budget in order to cover, on taxpayers’ money, its relative comfort. It has clean streets, theaters for its entertainment, schools for training the generations meant to take its place, it looks for its towns’ cleanliness, its positions, pensions and police and in return it offers very little [while] the vast majority of the Romanian people live in huts, without minimal sanitation and security, in misery and poverty.

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10 Nicolae Filimon, Ciocoi vechi si noi (Bucharest: Editura Eminescu, 1984). Ciocoi was a generic pejorative name given by the peasants to enriched officials under the Phanariot system. There is a vast literature on the parvenus ciocoi, including Constantin Radulescu-Motru’s “Psihologia ciocoismului (1911),” re-published in Scrieri politice (Bucharest: Nemira, 1988), pp. 265-276, which argued that even after the Phanariot ciocoi disappeared in 1821, Romanian politics were affected by ciocoism. The term occasionally pops up in Romanian newspapers even today.

11 Among them, the poet Vasile Alecsandri lamented the corruption affecting Wallachia and Moldova, and mocked the sycophantic penchant of the boyars and their obsession with securing official administrative positions in his play “Boieri si ciocoi,” written sometime between 1850 and 1875 and republished in Opere VI (Bucharest: Minerva, 1979).

Clearly, the modern Romanian administration continued to be plagued by the unfortunate afflictions of corruption and clientelism. At the highest level, cabinet members, senators and deputies drew regular salaries as middlemen or members of the boards of directors of the country’s major banks even after losing their political mandates. According to Andrew Janos, between 1895 and 1915 at least one-third of cabinet members and one-fourth of parliament members fell under this rubric. At the lower levels of the administration, the collection of extra-legal revenue took the more blatant form of tithes from shopkeepers, and small “gifts” extracted for each and every service delivered to the population. For the ordinary Romanian peasants, illiterate, malnourished and poor, it was crucial to rally the support of the administrators both to fill in the plethora of required applications, forms and petitions, and to make sure that personal requests were taken into consideration in a reasonably timely fashion. For the officials, rounding up their meager salaries stemmed partly from unmitigated necessity. Whereas in the West the establishment of the administrative system went hand in hand with economic development, the Romanian modern state had emerged long before a modern economy could provide an adequate tax base. As a result, the average income of a Romanian civil servant remained far below the European average, and the difference was often made up by extra-legal collection of revenues.


14 Marcel Gillard, La Roumanie moderne (Paris: Alcon, 1922), p. 108. Radulescu-Motru argued that after the unification of the Romanian Principalities local party politics and administrative reorganization benefited the towns at the expense of the rural areas. According to him, “The country’s administration was centralized to ease the transfer of funds [from villages] to towns.” And he continues on: “for more than half a century liberal institutions were improvised, but they favored the urbanites while neglecting totally the villages. The peasants were stripped of [the old] village decentralization, which could allow them to retain at least part of the taxes they paid to the state . . . The rural areas are in dire poverty because for more than fifty years their budget was spoiled by town politicians.” See Radulescu-Motru, “Taranismul, un suflet si o politica (1924),” in Scrieri Politice, pp. 372-373.
Corruption and clientelism quickly generated over-bureaucratization, as administrators sought to make room on state rolls for their family members, friends, neighbors, and godparents disinclined to continue to toil the land but instead satisfied to cash in small but secure wages and to benefit from lucrative administrative positions.\textsuperscript{15} From its small beginning, the administrative apparatus became so numerous that by late 1880s a British observer noted that “Romania is par excellence the land of officialism, and small country that it is possesses more civil servants than either France or Prussia.”\textsuperscript{16} Under pressure to justify the existence of an over-staffed administrative apparatus, local officials regulated an ever-increasing number of domains, from housing, transportation and sanitation to licenses of all sorts, economic transactions, and tax collection. The trend prompted Radulescu-Motru’s bitter remark that “the [administrative] reforms effected in Romania by the politicians are some for the apparent benefit of current generations and all to the sure detriment of future generations.”\textsuperscript{17}

These powers of regulation and enforcement eventually gave the local administration considerable leverage over the small holding peasants and the landowners. The leverage was both administrative and political, since balloting was open and local administrators were in charge of organizing the elections. This bureaucratic pressure on the electorate was a staple of the Romanian parliamentary system since its inception, but after 1876 the practice became institutionalized and routinized under the self-declared liberal, but in essence oligarchic, government of I. C. Bratianu. Once the administrative and parliamentary systems were integrated, the local bureaucracy was in charge of manufacturing safe majorities to legitimize the


\textsuperscript{16} Diplomat Ozanne, quoted in Janos, “Modernization and Decay,” p. 92.

\textsuperscript{17} Radulescu-Motru, “Cultura romana si politicianismul (1904),” in \textit{Scrieri politice}, p. 177.
regime. After the German king Carol I of Hohenzollern was called upon to take the reign in 1866 it was he, rather than the Prime Minister, who controlled the integrated system.\textsuperscript{18} Elections in the Old Kingdom were notoriously unreliable as measures of public sentiment. Governments were in power through political arrangements rather than popular mandates, with dismissals being equally arbitrary and only occasionally reflecting the loss of popular confidence. By 1890 the practice of changing prefects and a mass of administrative officials at every change of government had entrenched itself as one of the foundations of the existing order.\textsuperscript{19}

Again, the literature best illustrates life outside Bucharest, and sheds light on the powers local officials enjoyed at the end of the nineteenth century. Playwright Ion Luca Caragiale's masterpiece \textit{The Lost Letter (O scrisoare pierduta)}\textsuperscript{20} tells the story of a love letter written by the prefect to the most influential lady in a provincial town. Mistakenly delivered by a drunken postman, the letter becomes the object of tough political bargaining between the leaders of the opposition and the candidate of the ruling party. As readers soon find out with amazement and amusement, the latter also obtained his position after accidentally finding another potentially compromising letter. The play ends happily with the incumbents and the opposition dividing the spoils during elections and concluding that the pie is large enough for everyone. The tragicomedy also reveals the manifold powers enjoyed by the local representative of the central government, the prefect, and his lover, the wife of the town council president, who use threats and promises, but also police violence, in their attempts to prevent a devastating scandal.


\textsuperscript{20} Ion Luca Caragiale, \textit{Opere in doua volume} (Bucharest: Editura Minerva, 1974).
Manifestations of personal and collective greed notwithstanding, it would be erroneous to assume that the nineteenth century Romanian administrators and politicians were totally devoid of higher purpose or long-range perspective. It is nonetheless true that the 1864 changes they introduced set the stage for what would prove to be some of the most enduring challenges to Romanian local governance. One and a half centuries down the road, three major caveats built in the system at that time remain unsolved, and bitterly disputed. The first relates to the precise division of the functions of the state between the center and the counties, and opposes Romania's traditional centralism to a decentralized alternative allowing local authorities to have greater leverage over the way in which problems of local interest are addressed. This is tied to the second challenge, which ponders on how much discretion and power should local leaders be given over policy affecting their own localities. The third unsolved issue relates to the manner in which local residents can participate in the government of their respective county. The challenges, common to many other Eastern European states, were compounded by seemingly unbridgeable ethnic and regional tensions at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The local administrative structure remained virtually unchanged until 1918, the year when by the Treaty of Versailles Romania incorporated Transylvania, previously an Austro-Hungarian province. Greater Romania had almost twice the size and total population of the Old Kingdom, and a heterogeneous ethnic makeup which included the Romanian majority alongside Transylvanian Hungarian and German minorities and smaller Jewish, Roma and other ethnic groups scattered throughout the country. While supported by the major European powers willing to recognize the demands of the province's major ethnic community to live in a united Romanian

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21 Romania was not to enjoy these gains for long. In 1940 Germany forced the return of Northern Transylvania to Hungary. In 1947 a Romanian-Soviet treaty restored Transylvania but took away Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, which became the Moldovan Socialist Soviet Republic, and the Cadrilater, which reverted back to Bulgaria.
country, the incorporation was conditioned by central authorities allowing the ethnically diverse Transylvania to retain at least part of its traditional autonomy. But the promise remained a dead letter, as the political class of the new kingdom, drawn primarily from the ethnically compact southern province of Wallachia, lacked the experience of governing a multinational state. Apprehensions vis-à-vis the new state's simmering domestic ethnic conflicts and uncertain international position prompted the country's leaders to adopt a centralism running counter to the decentralization espoused by Transylvanian ethnic Hungarians and Germans. Keen on emulating its bigger and more prosperous Latin sister France, Romania adopted strict centralization but not the French concept of a civic nation, choosing instead to adhere to an ethnocentrism that made Romanianism the cornerstone of the new nation-state.

Perhaps more significant than ethnic diversity was the persistence of strong Moldovan, Wallachian and Transylvanian regional allegiances, rooted in diverse historical experiences and giving expression to divergent concerns and interests. This meant that Romanians from different provinces did not go along well. Although it shared with the rest of the new country the predominant Romanian character and lack of a strong native bourgeoisie, Transylvania quickly discovered the drawbacks of its transfer from the industrializing Habsburg Empire to the agrarian Romanian kingdom. Disputes arose when politicians and aspiring industrialists from Wallachia looked covetously on Transylvanian resources, and engaged the country on the path of forced industrial development dissociated from the rest of the economy.

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Economics was only part of the story. Transylvanians, primarily the Romanian
Transylvanians, demanded improved access to positions of power and wealth in the kingdom,
and openly voiced their dissatisfaction that the new state continued to be ruled from Bucharest, a
city which they thought had turned into the bedrock of inefficiency and patronage under
prolonged Ottoman dominance. The major complaint of the Moldovans revolved around their
status of second-class citizens, and the central rulers’ reluctance or incapability to redress the
region’s stagnant economy. Wallachians, and especially the Bucharest residents, saw themselves
as the promoters of Latinity and French enlightenment values against the German, Hungarian
and Russian influences pervasive in the other provinces but eroding the Romanian character of
the new state.

Disputes ensued not only because of divergent regional expectations placed upon the new
kingdom, but also because of different regional traditions of governance. Though Wallachia and
Moldova were peripheral to the Ottoman Empire, as Transylvania was among Habsburg lands,
each shared some of the features of the larger political structures to which they had belonged for
so many centuries. There was perhaps less resemblance between the Habsburg capital of Vienna
and Hermannstadt, the Transylvanian German-run town of Sibiu, than between the Ottoman
center of Constantinople and the Wallachian and Moldovan towns of Bucharest and Iasi.25 Yet
nineteenth century travelers and later historians concur in their assessment that Transylvania, on
the one hand, and the Regat (as Wallachia and Moldova are known in Transylvania), on the
other, mirrored however faintly, and several degrees more provincial in every sense of the term,

25 Transylvania has traditionally been known as Ardeal for the Romanians, Erdely for the Hungarians and the land of
the Siebenburger, the seven independent cities dominated by Saxon colonists and run by a burgmeister, for the
Germans. The Moldovan northeastern town of Iasi has sometimes been rendered into English as Jassy.
the outward forms of the contrasting civilizations permeating the two empires. This is how historian Barbara Jelavich described the shocking contrast between the two worlds:

In the eyes of educated Europeans, the Ottoman Empire was a backward, even barbarous state. Ottoman cities were dirty, congested and primitive . . . In questions of style the Habsburg Empire was one of the great centers of Europe. There was also a comfortable middle class. Law and order were assured; bands of robbers did not roam at large. Although corruption exists in all societies, the Austrian service was relatively honest and efficient. General standards of sanitation, cleanliness and order were maintained at high level. In contrast, corruption was blatant in Constantinople [alongside] problems of order and security . . .

Because of these deep-seated ethnic and regional disparities some analysts have argued that despite the strong ethnic and linguistic basis of the Romanian statehood, the history of its foundation meant that a federal arrangement might have been more appropriate than the centralized unitary state to which it consistently has adhered.27

But federalism was not what inter-war Romanian leaders had in mind when confronted with the daunting task of managing the country’s ethnic, economic and cultural diversity. The set of unifying legislative measures adopted immediately after 1918 upheld the country’s strict centralization, Bucharest’s precedence in key domestic policy areas, and the unitary character of the new state placing the Romanian ethnic identity and language at its core. The 1923 Constitution, to date hailed by Romanians as among the most progressive at the time, squarely defined the new state along ethnic lines, and made clear that whatever recognition minority groups received was nothing but a favor granted by the Romanian majority.28 Even the name of the country, Romania, implied an unbroken link back to Dacia, the Thracian land conquered in


28 Constituțunea, Promulgata cu decretul Regal 1360 din 28 martie 1923 (Bucharest: Imprimeriile Statului, 1928). I thank Dr. Ronald Roberson for making a copy of it available to me.
106 A.D. by the Roman emperor Trajan and settled by Roman subjects, ignoring the fact that the Romans' permanence on that territory remained poorly documented. Centralism clearly carried the day in the new basic law, and allowed budding Wallachian industrialists to benefit from a policy that treated Transylvanian firmly as an integral part of the kingdom.²⁹

The 1923 Constitution divided the territory of the new state into counties, and counties into communes. An unclear stipulation read that county and commune councilors were to be elected directly by "the Romanian citizens through universal, equal, direct, secret and compulsory vote and with the representation of the minority" [my emphasis] (Article 108). Not all councilors were elected, since the same article stipulated, without further elaborating, that some of them were "members by right," while others were "co-opted members." Even more importantly, the constitution remained silent on who exactly were Greater Romania's citizens and ethnic minorities. Only a cumbersome process of naturalization allowed foreigners to exercise any political rights. Naturalization requests were to be considered individually by a special governmental commission including the Prime Minister and the president of the Bucharest Appeal Court (Article 7). Only five years earlier, almost half of the country's population qualified as foreigner citizens pledging allegiance to various neighboring empires.

The leaders of Greater Romania adopted additional laws upholding the centralized local governmental system, and establishing a de-concerted hierarchy of local ministerial agencies coordinated by prefects. Among these legislative acts was the July 1923 Law on the civil servants, and the August 1929 Law on the organization of local administration. In an effort to fulfill the requirement imposed by foreign powers, the bills were conspicuously proclaiming the devolution of more power to the lower-tier authorities, but the half-heartedly decentralization

²⁹ Roberts, Rumania, p. 98.
failed to tip the balance in favor of counties and communes. In reality, centralization became even stricter, Transylvania lost much of the autonomy it enjoyed while part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Bucharest zealously guarded its precedence over the rest of the country, despite the leaders’ repeated promises to the contrary. For example, local government responsibilities formally included extensive involvement in education, social assistance and agricultural development, but practically sub-national structures never emancipated from central control. The center continued to provide the bulk of local government revenues, with local taxes and service changes making up the difference.

Centralism aside, the administration remained largely ineffective in its attempts to meet the many challenges faced by Greater Romania, preoccupied more with meeting its group interests. Playwright Caragiale saw the administration as composed of “two great armies. One in power feeding itself, the other waiting starved in opposition.”\textsuperscript{30} Many other Romanians continued to view local government as a parasitic, urban bureaucracy playing an overwhelmingly political role.\textsuperscript{31} The more so since bureaucratic hypertrophy intensified after the World War I, when agricultural stagnation, and the resulting massive inflow of peasants in university centers, gave rise to an “academic proletariat of lawyers and classicists.”\textsuperscript{32} Party proliferation meant that peasants were increasingly recruited by creating official posts for all university degree holders regardless of the economic demands of the country. It is worth mentioning, however, that the administration was not an all-powerful structure. It could function only by pleasing at least some


\textsuperscript{31} Stefan Zeletin, \textit{Burgheria romana} (Bucharest: Editura Cultura Nationala, 1925), p. 77.

important pressure groups and by playing the delicate balance act between the agrarian and mercantile interests dominant at the time.

The local government structure suffered further changes during the 1938-1944 period, when the country was ruled by the dictatorial regimes of king Carol II and Marshall Ion Antonescu, who brought Romania under Hitler's influence and on the Axis side. Under the August 1938 Law on public administration, the commune and the region (tinut) remained the only units of elected sub-national government whilst the counties became purely administrative units of central government and lost the legal personality they had since 1864. These sweeping changes, however, remained ineffectual, as only four years later a new legislative initiative restored to the county councils their previous status.

Local Government under Communism: Excessive Centralism and Erratic Policies

In 1945 a Soviet-style administrative system, complete with its traditional features of dual subordination and consequent drift to increased centralism, was introduced to Romania, which was to become a communist country. The Constitution of August 1947 enshrined a system of relatively powerless local bodies dominated by all-powerful party structures. As the vanguard of the proletariat, the Romanian Communist Party (Partidul Comunist Roman, PCR) was to lead every aspect of life. At the local level, party dominance was translated into practice through the establishment of party organizations at all levels. First there were primary party organizations in all workplaces, then village and town party organizations, and finally county level organizations, with each level being dominated by the next higher level. That the first secretary of the county party organization was the undisputed political leader of the county was to be expected, since the
county party organization was at the top of the territorial hierarchy, subordinated only to the Central Committee of the PCR.

The March 1957 Law on the organization and activity of popular assemblies (sfaturi populare), and the December 1968 Law on the organization and activity of popular county councils (consiliu populaire judetene) were the two communist-era bills most relevant for local administration. The interim Law on popular councils of January 1949 reorganized local government “in view of transposing the concept of the planned economy into practice.” Together with the 1947 Constitution, these laws moved the Romanian administrative structure away from the French and closer to the Soviet model, by doing away with the prefects and the prefectures, and by firmly subordinating state structures to the party at all levels. The communist administrative model virtually denied the existence of a local interest distinct from the central one, and as a result all socioeconomic activity was conducted by the center, with local structures having minimal input.33 Local administration was effectively an extension of central authority, since sub-national authorities were subordinated to the next highest administrative level, and to the corresponding party structures supplanting the administrators’ authority.

In virtue of Article 3 of the 1968 Law on popular councils the organization of local authorities was based on the principle of “democratic centralism,” but the centralism it promoted pre-empted its democratic content. The democratic aspect referred to the elected status of administrators and accountability to their electorate, a more theoretical than practical requirement since only candidates selected by the party could participate in the non-competitive, single candidate elections staged at the time. The democratic aspect also allowed lower level

bodies to make proposals and recommendations to higher organs in policy areas affecting the county or locality. But centralism contradicted this prerogative by compelling lower level bodies to execute the decisions of the next higher level, regardless of the recommendations of lower levels. Moreover, the law stipulated that a higher level body could overturn a decision of a lower body that it considered illegal, and provided local authorities with no clear venues for appeal. Centralism further restricted the local authorities’ position in the administration, by denying them property rights over local assets, which were instead part of the state property. Also, the primary source of revenue for local bodies was Bucharest, and the revenue had to be spent according to the economic priorities of the national plan rather than local priorities.

The laws made the mayor the chair of the executive bureau of the municipal, town or communal popular council, and the first secretary of the local party committee. Similarly, the first secretary of the county party organization was the chair of the executive bureau of the county popular council. Neither the councilors, nor the mayors represented their locality, being instead nominated by the PCR. According to some observers, most Romanian communist-era mayors and county first secretaries were not even residents of the locality or county for which they were nominated. As with other nomenklatura positions, the selection criteria were allegiance to the Communist Party and the pledge to transpose into practice the central plan rather than administrative experience and organizational skills.

Romania’s administrative map was altered several times during the 1945-1989 period according to the whims of successive communist leaders and without any prior consultation with the local population. In September 1950, the communists replaced the two-tier system of the Romanian kingdom, where the county was the upper tier and the town or commune was the

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lower tier, with a three-tier system including regions (regiuni) as the first tier, districts (raioane) as the second, and towns and communes as the third, and lowest, tier. The new structure, which had clear economic and administrative functions, was expected to allow satisfactory liaison with central government and provide a framework for regional development at a time when industrial growth reached few peripheral areas of the country.

By 1956 the number of regions was reduced from 28 to 16 after the authorities realized that resources were insufficient to support industrial complexes in every region, and the ensuing amalgamation eliminated less promising, usually Moldovan, regions.35 The districts were also reduced in number from 177 in 1950 to 146 a decade later to create more satisfactory areas for local economic development during the six-year plan. The amalgamation, however, brought together areas of different economic development and potential, an oversight which ultimately rendered the task of developing so many areas simultaneously too formidable. The three-tier administrative system had additional major drawbacks. First was the fact that the regions directed investment preferentially to the administrative center, which meant that instead of alleviating differences between the economically backward areas and the main industrial complexes, the system in fact perpetuated them. Even more importantly, the regions set up by the communists had little connection with Romania’s traditional administrative structure, which the population was reluctant to give up and continued to refer to.36

In February 1968 the county system was reintroduced through the Law on administrative reorganization, this time with only 39 units compared to 59 before 1945. For David Turnock, the measure seemed to be a compromise between the traditional administrative system and the needs

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of the new economic development strategy for sub-regional complexes, a scale which was hoped to be more realistic for efforts to reduce the disparities in levels of urbanization and industrial production. The pressures on the central government generated by a system with so many tiers eventually led to the elimination of the large regions. The reorganization also renounced the district level administration to avoid excessive dispersal of forces, streamline the administration and facilitate concentration on the communes. At the same time, all 42 towns with more than 30,000 residents and five of the 27 towns with 20,000 to 30,000 residents were elevated to the status of municipalities responsible for planning in the town and surrounding area.

While it seemingly brought a measure of effectiveness into the system, communism failed to address adequately the enduring challenges that local administration had inherited from pre-communist times. If anything, the policies and leadership style of President Nicolae Ceausescu, who ruled the country with an iron fist from 1965 to 1989, greatly compounded Romania’s administrative problems to the point of rendering them almost insurmountable. The patronage system was perpetuated after 1945, as state authorities, enterprises and cooperatives handled administratively tasks that previously were left to the market. The system, which incorporated a richly diversified network of official and unofficial channels, showed a propensity to develop horizontal links instead of granting favors to those at the grassroots. Of course, bargaining power was unevenly distributed throughout the system because only few people could dispose of exchangeable commodities. As Romania’s economic recession deepened, by the late

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1970s it became an accepted fact that serious interventions had to be exchanged for serious offers.\(^{39}\)

If patrimonialism were limited to that, Romania would have qualified as just another case of a phenomenon present more or less throughout Eastern Europe. But Ceausescu’s Romania was a fundamentally different place, akin to Kafka’s absurd Castle in unpredictability and encroachment. As Alfred Stepan explained, the patron of patrons was Ceausescu himself, who treated the country as his personal fiefdom.\(^{40}\) In the brave, new Romanian world, personalism escalated from the appointment of Ceausescu’s wife Elena to the Politburo in 1972 to the notorious “socialism in one family” of the 1980s.\(^{41}\) There were no autonomous career paths in the state apparatus, and officials were “hired, treated, mistreated, transferred, and fired as members of the household staff.”\(^{42}\) The speedy cadre rotation (rotatia cadrelor) prevented nomenklatura members like county first secretaries from building their own power base and acquiring the much needed administrative experience which came along with prolonged service. Deprofessionalized and demoralized, the party apparatchiks saw whatever independent initiative they previously enjoyed reduced to a minimum during the 1980s.\(^{43}\) No amount of servility and


\(^{42}\) Linz and Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition, p. 347.

conformity could guarantee their job security. No degree of institutional autonomy or pluralism was allowed in Romania.

Ceausescu's sultan-like leadership style was clearly manifested in the policies he designed, usually without much technocratic or party help. Some policies hinged on matters of general interest, but others blatantly impinged on the authority of local administrators. Instead of being consulted, Bucharest officials were handed down plans to destroy much of the historic town and to build a new center whose approach routes, central edifice and even the finest architectural details were endlessly designed and re-designed by Ceausescu himself. Overnight, entire villages were wiped out as part of a comprehensive—and worldwide unique—"village systematization plan" which fortunately remained mostly unachieved. Systematization aimed to eliminate the rural-urban divide by brutally razing thousands of traditional villages and forcibly moving peasants into new four-storey apartment buildings without indoor plumbing. The president's other pet projects included the second-largest building in the world, the People's Palace, the superfluous Black Sea Canal, the largest steel complex in the world at Galati, and the oversized industrial complexes built throughout the country as part of a "multilateral development plan." To translate Ceausescu's dreams into reality, county officials were ordered to raise the funds for huge industrial plants whose by-products had no market, raw materials were imported at disadvantageous prices, production capacities remained largely unused, and safety standards were hopelessly inadequate.

Patrimonialism and irrationality went hand in hand with sustained efforts to eviscerate the country's manifold identities. Ceausescu stressed the absolute precedence of the national

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44 The July 1972 PCR National Conference laid the foundations for village systematization, and decided that only one-tenth of the country's villages had potential for development. Residents of all other villages were to be relocated. See Orovenau, Organizarea administrativa, p. 117.
community over the individual, and the organic links between citizens and their leader (Conducator, the Romanian equivalent for the German Fuhrer), together with the fact that regional and ethnic allegiances had no place in communist Romania. The president regarded “Transylvanianism,” a distinctive identity meaning that indeterminate numbers of Romanians and Hungarians of the region felt stronger affinity to Transylvania than to Romania, as a dangerous concept that questioned the unity and integrity of the Romanian nation.45 The challenge posed by Transylvania to a regime intent on homogenizing the entire population helps explain the massive relocation of migrants from Regat to the major cities of the province.46 Possession of such sub-state loyalty was undoubtedly stronger among the ethnic Hungarians, some of whom also strongly identified with neighboring socialist Hungary, than among the Romanians. Hungarians also proved the least assimilating among ethnic minorities, not least because of their sheer number, estimated at around 2 million in a total population of 23 million.

The limited traditions of local government that pre-communist Romania entertained were thus effectively annulled by Ceausescu’s erratic policies. Village systematization, relocation of population and encroachment on local self-government radicalized relations between the ethnic Romanian majority and the country’s main ethnic minority, the Transylvanian Hungarians. Instead of being eradicated, the traditional drawbacks of the administrative system—patrimonialism, lack of representativeness and over-staffing—were perpetuated. The system’s extreme centralization suffocated grassroots initiative without delivering the manifold promises of prosperity made by an over-solicited center increasingly out of touch with local, but also

national, realities. None of these traits were a good omen for Romania in the new era it was about to enter.

Post-Communist Changes during the 1989-1996 Period: The Long Arm of the Past

The sultanistic regime of Ceausescu came to an abrupt end in late 1989, when a palace coup led by second-echelon nomenklatura members coupled with an urban popular revolt forced the president to flee Bucharest in a desperate attempt to save his life. He could not, and on December 25 Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu were executed commando style at the order of new leaders claiming that the revolution's success rested with the destruction of the leader himself, not the creation of new democratic institutions or the dismantling of the country's extensive coercive apparatus. The National Salvation Front (Frontul Salvarii Nationale, FSN), a loose conglomerate of communist apparatchiks and mild reformers, and Ion Iliescu, one-time close collaborator of Ceausescu, emerged as the country's uncontested leaders. The Front had little interest in seriously transforming the political, economic and administrative power structures of the previous era. As though to fulfill the most dire predictions, the Front immediately emulated the PCR organizational structure running, in descending order, from the National Council and county FSN organizations, to town and commune FSN organizations, and Front councils at the

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level of enterprises and institutions. In some cases this meant that entire PCR local organizations proclaimed their loyalty to the FSN.

The first decade of post-communism marked a tumultuous transition period from the party-state administration to a system more representative of local interests. From the beginning, the FSN appropriated the remnants of the communist administrative system, and effectively substituted the PCR control over it with its own. Decree-Law 81/1990 on the organization and functioning of the local administration retained the communist-era local system at the county, municipal, town and commune level but compelled it to conduct its activity “based on and in view of achieving the objectives spelled out in the program of the FSN [National] Council and in the decisions of the Front’s local councils” (Article 2). It was of little solace for the budding Romanian democracy that lower level structures could not include FSN members since their composition was to be established solely by the FSN (Articles 4 and 5). The communist-era dual hierarchical structure remained unchanged, with each administrative level being responsible both to the corresponding local FSN council and to the next highest administrative body (Article 6). The latter could cancel the decision of a lower level body that was “at variance with the laws, decrees and decisions of the new government” (Article 8), a provision which ensured the strict preservation of centralism and the exclusion of the country’s feeble opposition from participating in local governance. With an eye to the Transylvanian ethnic Hungarians, the bill denied geographically compact ethnic groups the right to have representatives in local administration,

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49 Author’s personal interview with A. N., Arges county councilor, 5 March 1999.

50 For the text of the decree, see FBIS-EEU-90-005 (8 January 1990).
although Article 7 read that in areas with significant minority groups the decisions of local bodies will be made known in both Romanian and the groups' mother tongue.

The decree was followed by the lesser known "Guidelines concerning the activity of the FSN territorial councils," which further detailed the new leaders' position on the relationship between state structures and their party. The guidelines unclearly distinguished between FSN local councils and local state administration bodies, giving the former explicit control over the latter. Rather than being party sub-structures, the FSN local councils were "state power bodies" supervising local economic activities ranging from the development of small-scale industry, services and agriculture, the administration of waterways and forests, the coordination of urban and housing administration, local transportation, and environmental protection, to the development of trade activities, public supplies, education, culture, health and social security. The document gave lip service to already existing local administrative bodies, since the FSN councils had overreaching responsibilities. They appointed the local administration bodies, approved the local budget, established local taxes, dismissed the leaders of the local police, and supervised the activity of local public services.

The FSN's tight grip on power created unrest among the societal segments deploiring the thwarting of the ideal of the 1989 revolution: a firm breaking with the dictatorial practices of the communist era. Despite blatant irregularities, the first post-communist elections of May 1990 allowed the country's feeble opposition to secure parliamentary representation. It was at that point that the historical National Peasant Party Christian-Democrat (Partidul National Taranesc Crestin-Democrat, PNTCD) and the National Liberal Party (Partidul National Liberal, PNL),

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51 Published by Adevarul, the heir of the PCR official mouthpiece. The guidelines incorporated many of the provisions of a previous Decree-Law 2/1989 on the creation, organization and functioning of the FSN National Council and local councils. For the guidelines, see Adevarul (18 January 1990).
which dominated the inter-war political scene but were banned by the communists in the late
1940s only to be resurrected in early 1990, begun to have a say regarding the direction of
transitional Romania. Yet in the 1990 poll Iliescu gathered as much as 85 percent of the
presidential vote, and the FSN won 66 percent of the parliamentary vote.⁵²

Among the first bills adopted by the new legislature was the Law on the administration of
counties, municipalities, towns and communes (Law 5/1990), which defined an interim
administrative structure until the organization of the first post-communist local elections.⁵³ The
influence of the pro-Western and pro-democratic parties banned in communist times but
resurrected shortly after December 1989—the Liberals, the Social Democrats and the Christian
Democrats—was manifested in the fact that the law marked an important step away from the
country’s essentially communist administrative structure. At these parties’ request, the inter-war
French-inspired system was reconstituted, and prefectures were set up at the county level as
“organs of state administration” surveying the legality of decisions taken by local authorities
(Article 2). More importantly, the law paved the way for the dissociation of state structures from
the ruling party by dismantling the national unity territorial councils and transferring their
authority to mayoralties and prefectures.

The same spirit inspired the Law on local public administration (Law 69/1991), which
brought increased local representation, but instituted a system leaving much to be desired. Of
most immediate concern was the intricate web of appointments and mandates it established.
Councilors, mayors, and deputy mayors had mandates from the local population, while the
council secretaries were government employees appointed by the prefects. The Department for

⁵² Vladimir Socor, “National Salvation Front Produces Electoral Landslide,” Report on Eastern Europe 1, no. 27 (6

Local Public Administration (DLPA), a powerful structure directly subordinated to the Prime Minister’s office, nominated the prefects. Created in 1991 and controlled by the ruling political party, the DLPA drafts legislation on local government and aspires to coordinate the relationships between local government and central ministries. In the early 2000, the department was reorganized as a ministry.

Tensions mounted when the opposition Democratic Convention (Conventia Democrată din România, CDR), whose main partners were the PNTCD and the PNL, won the February 1992 local elections, while the FSN, by then reorganized as the Party of Social Democracy in Romania (Partidul Democratiei Sociale din România, PDSR), won the parliamentary and presidential elections held later that year.54 When asked to give up its control over local structures, the PDSR obstinately refused to do so. By late 1992, the PDSR-dominated cabinet had already removed from office half of all prefects and deputy prefects. The official reason was the reorganization of the prefectures in line with the new legislation, but strangely enough the move disproportionately affected the prefects who were apparently unable or unwilling to follow instructions from the center.55 The PDSR also launched a concerted attack against mayors and councilors affiliated or sympathetic to the opposition. According to the local press, as many as 133 mayors were dismissed and 264 other resigned on their own during the 1992-1995 period.56

The law allowed the appointment and removal of the prefects to acquire an additional ethnic dimension. In early 1992, when new ethnic Romanian prefects were appointed in Covasna

54 In the September-October 1992 poll, President Ion Iliescu was re-elected with 61 percent of the vote; the opposition candidate Emil Constantinescu gathered 39 percent. CDR won only 21 percent of the parliamentary vote. Due to internal squabbles, in late 1991 FSN split between PDSR, led by Ion Iliescu, and the Democratic Party (Partidul Democrat, PD), led by Romania’s first post-communist Prime Minister Petre Roman.


and Harghita, the ethnic Hungarians complained of the sacking of their prefects, calling it unconstitutional, but the cabinet argued that its actions were well within the authority of the central government. The latter eventually adopted a compromise and sent one Hungarian and one Romanian to each county, as co-prefects to make decisions jointly. Earlier, leaders of the Transylvanian ethnic Hungarian community vowed to disregard the legal stipulation that debates in local councils must be conducted in Romanian, and urged all ethnic Hungarian councilors to speak Hungarian if they held a majority in their local councils. The request ran counter to Article 24, reading that “the local council sessions are carried out in the official language of the state,” which by constitution is Romanian. The ethnic Hungarians also petitioned the Constitutional Court against Article 110 of the law, which required prefects to promote vaguely specified “national interests,” on the grounds that prefects should represent and defend local interests rather than the interests of the country’s dominant nationality. It did not take long for the Court, whose members were ethnic Romanians without exception, to turn down the request.

These incidents marked neither the beginning nor the end of post-communist Romanian-Hungarian tensions. A positive aspect of the 1989 revolution was the inter-ethnic cooperation that brought communism to an end. Anticomunist protests were sparked by the readiness of the Romanian, Hungarian and German residents of Timisoara to oppose the forceful eviction of Reformed Pastor Lazlo Tokes, ordered by the communist authorities to relocate to a small town because of his daring anti-government sermons. But all revolutions devour their children, and in Romania too ethnic conflict replaced cooperation. Soon after assuming the power, the new Romanian leaders appealed to virulent nationalism in an effort to gain additional legitimacy. Convinced that they had waited long enough for the recognition of their rights to education and political representation, ethnic Hungarians formed the Democratic Union (Uniunea Democrată a

Maghiarilor din Romania, UDMR) to protect and expand their individual and collective rights. In some towns they also forcefully appropriated their former schools by evicting Romanian pupils and teachers. Romanians in turn founded the Romanian Hearth (Vatra Romaneasca), a virulently nationalistic grassroots organization whose political arm was the Alliance for the Unity of Romanians (Alianta Unitatii Romanilor, AUR). As Chapter 7 details, hostility exploded into bloody violence in the town of Tirgu Mures on 19-20 March 1990, as Romanians staged counter-demonstrations, and Hungarians responded to defend their demands and justify their impatience.58

The full-blown conflict led to the escalation of Hungarian demands from education in their mother tongue at all levels to the setting up of an autonomous Hungarian region in Transylvania, from recognition of individual rights to endorsement of collective rights. An ethnic Hungarian National Self Government Council denounced as obsolete the concept of the Romanian national unitary state enshrined in the 1991 Constitution, proposing instead “local and regional self-determination, and cultural and individual autonomy” for the country’s minorities.59 The demands were matched by the intransigent and visceral position of the country’s leaders, unwilling to defy a powerful political actor like Vatra, and aware that most Romanians were of the opinion that the UDMR eroded the very basis of their state with its insistence on autonomy on ethnic grounds.60 Consequently, the Law 69/1991 on local public administration made no concessions to the ethnic minorities, and PDSR announced that it will not tolerate “aberrant”


59 FBIS-EEU-95-010 (11 January 1995).

60 According to a 1996 poll, as much as 80 percent of Romanians thought that the UDMR was “anti-Romanian.” See Tom Gallagher, “Nationalism and the Romanian Opposition,” Transition (12 January 1996), pp. 30-32, 72.
proposals to set up "states within Romania." Inter-ethnic relations went from bad to worse in 1994 when the PDSR, under the threat of losing its parliamentary majority, was forced to co-opt to power the overtly anti-Hungarian Party for Romanian National Unity (Partidul Unitatii Nationale din Romania, PUNR), which saw no place for local autonomy.

In its drive for European integration, Romania signed in 1994 the European Charter on Local Autonomy, which seeks to protect and strengthen local autonomy and improve local public administration in member countries in view of building a democratic and decentralized Europe. Half a year later, the DLPA forwarded to the cabinet amendments correlating the Law 69/1991 with both the Romanian Constitution, adopted at a later time, and the European Charter. Though the proposals brought no real decentralization, dissatisfaction with the 1991 law was mounting, as the bill came under heavy criticism for its omissions and commissions. On the one hand, ethnic Hungarians asked for local government representation in proportion to their share in the population, and recognition of the right to use their mother tongue on bilingual street signs and in the local administration. On the other hand, Romanians decried the centralism perpetuated by the law, and demanded a much-needed financial devolution that would allow sub-national governments to retain a larger share of tax revenues. Under pressure, the DLPA drafted a new law.

Parliamentary debates on the new draft law on public administration did not succeed in solving either problem. From the beginning, the language to be used in public administration became a highly divisive issue that eroded relations between Romanian and Hungarian

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legislators and pitted the UDMR against the ruling and opposition parties alike. Ethnic frictions culminated in late 1995 when the upper chamber of the legislature voted Article 54 of the draft law, which referred to the language used by citizens in their contacts with local authorities.\(^{63}\) The Senate decided that the language to be used was Romanian. Members of ethnic minorities could address local authorities, both orally and in writing, in their mother tongues, but written requests and documents had to be accompanied by an officially certified translation into Romanian. Disagreeing with the last stipulation, the UDMR senators walked out of the session hall. In response, Prime Minister Nicolae Vacaroiu, a PDSR leader, reiterated that Romania was ready to ensure the individual rights of all members of ethnic minorities living on its territory, but will not grant them any "special status."\(^{64}\)

The parliamentary majority proved equally unwilling to solve the matter of excessive centralism, although in the end it did give in to the opposition’s demands for outlawing abusive dismissals of popularly elected mayors by government-appointed prefects. During debates, the PDSR apparently became aware that the prefects’ competencies had to be separated from those of local councils and mayors, but considered that the prefects’ control over the administration of local affairs ought to increase.\(^{65}\) The new Law on local public administration (Law 25/1996) closely followed its 1991 predecessor, with two main novelties: prefects could no longer dismiss mayors, and deputy mayors were to be elected indirectly by the local councilors rather than directly by the voters.

\(^{63}\) FBIS-EEU-95-240 (14 December 95).

\(^{64}\) FBIS-EEU-95-240 (13 November 1995).

Under the 1989-1996 PDSR rule the local governmental system suffered important transformations that ensured the separation of state structures at central and local level from the ruling party, and the election of mayors and councilors by local residents, instead of their nomination by the center. A new legislative framework mandated local autonomy as a basic principle of governance, and devolved responsibility for managing matters of local interest to local governments. But with the uncertainty and hardships of major socioeconomic reforms, implementation of local governmental reform soon lost momentum and much-needed legislation on local financial devolution, public asset ownership and operation of local utilities failed to be adopted. The radicalization of inter-ethnic relations led to insistent demands for local autonomy on the part of ethnic Hungarians, and Romania’s international isolation due to its leaders’ unwillingness to decentralize the administration for accommodating these demands. Corruption, recognized by early 1996 as the hallmark of the Romanian administrative apparatus, was coupled with increased popular discontentment with mayors and councilors failing to solve the concrete problems of their localities, implement the new legislation, and prevent the abuses of local officials.

The 1996-2000 Period: Ethnic Accommodation and Legislative Innovation

Against the background of prolonged economic recession, increased poverty, and social despondency with stagnant reforms, the PDSR registered a resounding defeat in the 1996 local and general elections. The new ruling alliance, which included the CDR and the Social Democratic Union (Uniunea Social Democrată, USD), dominated by the Democratic Party (Partidul Democrat, PD), made real progress in appeasing ethnic animosities and complementing

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the legislative framework for local government. From the beginning, the CDR co-opted the UDMR to power, a move vehemently contested by the PDSR and the PUNR as a serious political mistake. According to the staunch anti-Hungarian Vatra Romaneasca organization, the UDMR’s participation in the government would permit that party to create the conditions for territorial autonomy on ethnic grounds, and for Transylvania’s subsequent secession from Romania and incorporation into Hungary. Vatra further prophesied that the appointment of UDMR prefects and deputy prefects in counties with sizeable ethnic Hungarian communities would mean a return to the 1940 Hungarian control over Northern Transylvania. Claiming that the CDR granted the Hungarians rights far exceeding those enjoyed by the country’s other ethnic groups, the Romanian nationalists tried to divert the attention from the plight of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania to the fate of the ethnic Romanians living in the Hungarian-dominated Covasna and Harghita counties, by arguing that the latter were subjected to forced assimilation.\textsuperscript{67} The nationalists’ threats had little echo within the CDR, and the UDMR eventually appointed the Minister of Tourism, the head of the Department for Ethnic Minorities, and the Harghita, Satu Mare and Salaj prefects.\textsuperscript{68}

The most comprehensive effort to meet the demands of ethnic Hungarians was the result of the carefully calculated attempt of Christian Democrat Premier Victor Ciorbea to win UDMR support at a time when the constitutionality of his premiership was vigorously contested by other members of the ruling coalition, including leaders of his own party, the PNTCD. The May 1997 Governmental Ordinance 22 on local public administration was the first Romanian legal act to

\textsuperscript{67} FBIS-EEU-97-316 (12 November 1997).

\textsuperscript{68} FBIS-EEU-96-218 (7 November 1996), and FBIS-EEU-96-242 (14 December 1996).
follow the Council of Europe’s Recommendation 1201 on minority rights. It allowed local councils to use the language of an ethnic minority if at least one-third of all councilors belonged to that ethnic group, and to make their working agenda publicly known in both Romanian and the language of ethnic groups representing more than one-fifth of the local population. Following the same bill, ethnic minorities could use their mother tongue when dealing with local authorities, which in turn could give their answer in the same language. Furthermore, localities where a non-Romanian ethnic group formed the majority had to have signs with the name of the locality, public institutions and local administrative bodies in both Romanian and the ethnic language of the dominant group. Public announcements had to follow the same rule. The bill also allowed Prime Minister Ciorbea to retain his position as the Bucharest mayor, by providing that elected mayors nominated as cabinet members had their mayoral mandates suspended for the duration of the ministerial term but were reinstated if the latter was shorter than the four-year mayoral mandate.

The latter stipulation provoked bitter controversy within the ruling coalition, eventually bringing down both the Ciorbea government and the ordinance. The bill also provoked the wrath of the nationalist opposition parties for allowing the language of ethnic minorities to be used in local administration. Gheorghe Funar, mayor of Transylvania’s largest city, Cluj-Napoca, and former PUNR leader, alleged that the use of Hungarian in local administration and bilingual street signs amounted to nothing short of Transylvania’s Magyarization. Similar concerns were

69 The recommendation was adopted by the Parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe in 1993. Its most contentious provision stipulated that “In the regions where they are in a majority the persons belonging to a national minority shall have the right to have at their disposal appropriate local or autonomous authorities or to have a special status, matching the specific historical and territorial situation and in accordance with the domestic legislation of the state” (Article 11). The Hungarian community of Romania, backed by Budapest, interpreted this stipulation as an international recognition of autonomy on ethnic criteria, an idea that has been staunchly opposed by Bucharest. The document is also available at http://www.minori.it/archivi/sistema/legislativo/europa/rec931201.htm.

70 FBIS-EEU-97-209 (28 July 1997).
voiced by the Senate Commission for Art, Culture and Mass Media, which in late 1997 asked the Senate Commission for Public Administration to declare the bilingual signs that had appeared in Transylvania as "unofficial," and to compel ethnic minorities to produce documents attesting that the Hungarian name they were using for their locality was the "traditional" one.\(^71\)

To its merit, the ruling coalition stood by the provisions expanding ethnic minority rights, and refused to amend the ordinance at the request of Romanian nationalists. But exactly when it seemed almost certain that a majority of parliamentarians will support it, the ill-fated bill received a deadly blow from Emilian Diaconu, who petitioned the Constitutional Court after he lost his position as the vice-president of the Vrancea county council as a result of the ordinance. One year after the bill came into effect the Court overturned it as unconstitutional, accepting Diaconu's view that a governmental ordinance could not overturn an organic law like the Law 69/1991.\(^72\)

Once the ordinance was found unconstitutional, the 1996 law was supposed to come back into effect, but the procedure for invalidating the ordinance was never spelled out. Opinions were divided on whether the unconstitutional ordinance was still binding, with the UDMR arguing that it did, and opposition parties together with the anti-Ciorbea faction of the ruling coalition claiming the opposite. In late 1998, Parliament's lower Chamber of Deputies approved a revised version of the bill from which the stipulation favoring Ciorbea had been removed, with the opposition PDSR and the ruling PD voting against, and the PNTCD and the UDMR voting for.\(^73\)

Practically, it is up to local officials to follow or disregard the ordinance. This is why in some

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\(^{71}\) FBIS-EEU-97-267 (24 September 1997).

\(^{72}\) Adevarul (23 May 1998).

\(^{73}\) Adevarul (21 October 1998).
Transylvanian localities with significant ethnic Hungarian population the bilingual signs are nowhere to be found, while in other places the signs are still up.

The convoluted history of the Ordinance 22 speaks not so much of the rigoristic intolerance of the Romanian nationalists in the PDSR and the PUNR as of the CDR's ambivalent position. The Convention lent a shoulder to the UDMR demands for bilingual signs and the use of the Hungarian language in local administration. Far from being disinterested, the move sought to compensate ethnic Hungarians for their massive vote in favor of Christian Democrat President Emil Constantinescu and for their contribution to the comfortable majority enjoyed by the ruling coalition. Determined to bypass a resistant Parliament forever procrastinating discussions of legislation on the subject, the CDR-dominated cabinet issued the ordinance to give satisfaction to the UDMR. Unfortunately, it also willingly exposed the bill to the wrath of all other parliamentary groups by including the controversial, and unconstitutional, provision that allowed Ciorbea to hold the mayoral mandate and the premiership simultaneously. Though many ethnic Hungarians believed that the bill served more a power-thirsty premier than their collective interests, it is nevertheless true that the ordinance allowed them to have more local presence in some corners of Transylvania.

In mid-1997, President Constantinescu confidently declared that "never before had Romania felt more secure in its independence and territorial integrity," but triumph was short-lived. Demands for local autonomy followed shortly afterwards, when the Hungarian/Szeckler Forum accused the UDMR of passivity and disinterest in the fate of the Transylvanian Hungarian community. The Forum asked the Romanian Parliament in no uncertain terms to recognize local autonomy and self-rule for the Szecklerland, which includes the adjacent Hungarian-dominated

74 FBIS-EEU-97-177 (26 June 1997).
Covasna and Harghita counties of eastern Transylvania. To give weight to its demands, the forum asserted that the residents of the historical Terra Siculorum demand self-determination in accordance with the European Charter Romania had just signed. Participants also protested the massive, and intimidating, presence of Romanian military troops in their region. The response of the Romanian parties of all political persuasions was a resounding no.

Another call for Transylvanian self-government within a federated Romania received the same response. The request, included in a document circulating among intellectuals, was promptly dismissed by Romanian leaders as another Hungarian attempt to obtain collective autonomy. But the text was concerned more with the traditional cultural and economic differences separating Transylvania from the rest of the country. It asserted that Romania's federalization would allow the more economically advanced Transylvania to be integrated more quickly into the European Union, and restricted Bucharest's role into the region to foreign policy and defense issues. Four-fifths of the document's signatories were ethnic Romanians, and the text reportedly stemmed from the 1998 manifesto "I Am Fed up with Romania" written by Romanian separatist Sabin Gherman.

While there remained much room for improvement regarding majority-minority relations in Romania, the democratic rulers met with greater success in complementing the legislative framework pertaining to local government. In mid-1998, a Law on regional development was promulgated in order to diminish regional differences, prepare the institutional framework for Romania's integration into the European Union, correlate governmental policies at the regional

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76 Global Intelligence Update (9 June 1999).
level, and stimulate inter-regional cooperation. The law allowed county councils, in consultation with local councils, to set up development regions (regiuni de dezvoltare) with neither juridical personality nor the status of administrative units. Following the traditional Romanian penchant for over-bureaucratization, several structures with overlapping responsibilities were created for overseeing regional activity. Each region has a deliberative Council for Regional Development (Consiliu de Dezvoltare Regională) responsible for coordinating regional development and for supervising the activity of a newly created non-profit specialized agency. The National Council for Regional Development, headed by the Prime Minister himself, is the deliberative organ of the National Agency for Regional Development, headed by a state secretary. Regional development is to be funded primarily from the state budget and a combination of foreign loans and donations. At the suggestion of local authorities, the National Council can declare some areas as backward regions (regiuni defavorizate) whose development was to be given precedence. The cabinet proposed a development program for backward regions to Parliament, but after waiting half a year for the house to vote it, in September 1998 it issued a governmental ordinance providing for tax breaks as a means for development.

Another piece of legislation answered the claims of local authorities for financial devolution. Even after the collapse of communism, centralism resulted in almost all taxes being collected by the state and then redistributed downwards, a fact explaining why grants from the state budget represented as much as four-fifths of the local government revenues. The arrangement gave central authorities and prefects the upper hand, and allowed counties to

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78 Ziua (8 August 1998).
influence the distribution of funds at the local level. As a result, mayors and councilors whose electoral promises included decentralized power soon found themselves unable to deliver on their mandate. As elsewhere, this has led to popular disaffection with local government, in proportion to the expectation raised in the run-up to the elections. Moreover, the need to restrain the national budget deficit has placed severe limits on the resources available for local discretion. The legislation gave local authorities managerial responsibility for a wide range of services, without allowing them to control the financial means needed to carry out these new functions. The 1999 Law on local finances tried to break the strong dependence of the local administration revenues on the central state budget, but it is still too early to predict whether the bill will really achieve its goal. Hopes that the May 1994 Law on local taxes and duties would help local authorities increase their capacity to generate their own revenues proved groundless.

In an effort to improve the profile of administrators, the leaders promised the replacement of 15,000 central and local employees occupying non-elected positions. Since then, a more effective method of stamping out corruption and improving bureaucratic skills—the Law of the civil servant—was explored. The DPLA drafted such a law in 1997 in an effort to distinguish between the political and the administrative position and training of the civil servants, “clean up” the administration of nostalgic communists undermining democratic reforms, stamp out corruption, and reduce the administrative corps. To protect the 100,000 central and local civil servants of Romania from the vicissitudes created by elections every four years, the law freed civil servants from the obligation to opt for a particular political grounding, while still allowing them to belong to political parties if they so desired.79 Submitted to Parliament in 1998, the draft was adopted two years later amid bitter disagreements and only after barely securing the support

of Romania's major political actors. The reasons why political parties represented in Parliament gave the law a cold shoulder were evident. After losing the 1996 elections, the PDSR saw the vast majority of the civil servants it appointed being replaced by CDR, USD or UDMR candidates. Understandably, the PDSR strongly opposed a bill making the purge of its sympathizers permanent, the more so since opinion poll after another suggested widespread dissatisfaction with the CDR rule. Indeed, the PDSR won the 2000 local and general elections, with a demoralized CDR gathering less than ten percent of the vote. When it became evident that both government and opposition were dispirited with the bill, some local observers ventured to suggest that the law was unwanted because its adoption threatened to remove party leverage on a large pool of appointments which sustain the clientelistic base of the Romanian party system. Part of the same drive, the DLPA recently announced that prefect and deputy prefect candidates are to be selected on the basis of written and oral tests, rather than being simply nominated by a party. Whether the tests will indeed take place and will be free from party influence remains to be seen.

During the last four years additional steps were taken to make local government more efficient and accountable, as well as less corruptible and dominated by political interests. With all their drawbacks, the recent legislative initiatives have moved one step closer to clarifying the responsibilities of each level of government and depoliticizing the administrative corps, while at the same time giving local governments a degree of leverage over the local tax base. But in early 1999 local governments still had to contend with laws, policies, rules and procedures of central control that either predated the reform or were established during the reform years in ways that

80 Adevărul (20 October 1990).
81 Monitorul (17 July 1998).
have caused them to collide with principles of local autonomy. Overall the Romanian administrative transition has been more halting and ad hoc than elsewhere in Eastern Europe.82

The Legal Framework for Local Government

The present local government system in Romania was established through the 1991 Constitution and the 1991 and 1996 laws on local public administration, and has much in common with the country’s pre-communist French-inspired system. The non-hierarchical two-tiered system retains the overlap between local government and local state administration at the county level that characterized both the pre-communist Napoleonic and the communist models, and re-introduces the position of the prefect as the central government’s representative in the territory.

The lower-tier local administration oversees life in 2,948 urban and rural communities. Of these, 2,686 are small rural communities (comune), composed of about 13,000 villages (sate), with an average population of up to 2,000. Other 262 are towns (orase), generally with a population exceeding 10,000. Many are larger villages communists elevated to the rank of towns in an effort to urbanize and systematize the country’s settlements. Along with urban status came important facilities: paved roads, a town cultural center, several blocks of flats, electrification, and running water. But many smaller towns have retained their rural character and village-type infrastructure. Of the towns, 79 urban communities have the status of municipalities (municipii).83 There is at least one larger town in each county, serving as both the county capital

82 Nunberg, “Modernizing the Romanian State,” pp. 53-96.

83 Some 25 cities have a population larger than 100,000 people, eight other have a population exceeding 300,000. Half of Romania’s population lives in small villages, compared to one-fifth in Bulgaria and three-fourths in Hungary. Cf. Romania, Encyclopedic Survey (Bucharest: Romanian Government, 1995).
and the seat of the prefect and county council (according to Article 115 of the 1996 law).

Romania's capital, the Wallachian city of Bucharest, has its own two-tiered system, with one overall city authority and six city districts (sectoare).84

The lower-tier authorities include the mayor (primar) and the local council (consiliul local), both directly elected by secret ballot from party lists or from among independent candidates, according to Article 120 of the 1991 Constitution. The mayors, elected to four-year terms, represent the state in the territory without, however, being subordinated to it. In a radical break with the past, the 1991 Law on local elections for the first time stipulated that elected mayors cannot be revoked by state authorities, though abuses continued to take place, as suggested in the previous section. The mayors also represent their locality in its relations with the courts of law and legal and physical persons from Romania and abroad.85 Articles 40 and 44 of the 1996 Law on local public administration stipulate that as executive authorities mayors are in charge with the implementation of local council decisions, and the daily activity of the local public services. Although mayors are not members of the local council (Article 15), they are expected to attend the meetings of the local council, and present quarterly reports detailing the manner in which council decisions were implemented (Articles 37 and 45). Mayors can notify the prefect if they consider a council decision as running counter to the law, but otherwise the council decisions are legally binding and have to be translated into practice (Article 44). The prefect has the authority to suspend temporarily an elected mayor when the latter is under legal investigation, in which case the deputy mayor will assume the mayor's responsibilities (Article

84 Chapter VI of the 1996 Law on local public administration. For the 1996 Law on local public administration, and the 1996 Law on public elections, see Legea administratiei publice locale. Legea privind alegerile locale (Bucharest: Monitorul Oficial, 1996).

85 Popa and Ciacli, Elemente de drept public si privat, pp. 71-72.
49). In virtue of Article 1 of the 1996 Law on local elections, deputy mayors are elected indirectly by the local councils from among the councilors.

The local councils, also elected to four-year terms, are composed of 11 to 35 councilors, depending on the number of residents of the locality they represent. The two million strong city of Bucharest has 65 city councilors in total. Councilors are not remunerated, but receive a stipend for each council meeting they attend, and are reprimanded when missing more than two consecutive meetings (Article 24). To avoid being dissolved, the local council must meet at least quarterly in public sessions, but usually it meets once a month (Articles 22 and 23). Between council meetings, the day-to-day wellbeing of the locality falls under the mayor’s jurisdiction. The council oversees matters of local importance, approves the local budget, decides what local taxes are to be levied, determines the land plots to be leased to private investors and the public services to be contracted for the locality, and supervises the daily activity and nominates the leaders of economic agents and public institutions subordinated to it (Article 20). To be adopted, most decisions—including those on the local budget—need the support of a simple majority of all councilors. Decisions on urban development, public and private domain administration, and association with other local councils, public institutions and firms require two-thirds of the vote (Article 28). The Romanian legislators saw fit to combine representative and direct democracy in only one case. For long-term loans to be contracted, at least two-thirds of the councilors and half of the residents must support the motion (Article 100).

The upper-tier local government, the county (județ), corresponds to the unit of state administration (prefectura). Romania includes a total of 41 counties, of which 16 are located in

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86 The 1991 Law on local public administration provides that small villages of up to 15,000 people are represented by 11 councilors, towns with 15,000 to 100,000 people by 13 to 17, and cities of more than 300,000 people by a maximum of 21.
Transylvania, another eight in Moldova, and the remaining 16 in Wallachia. The counties are roughly equal in size, but differ greatly with respect to their population, ethnic makeup and economic strength. The upper-tier local government consists of the county council (consiliul județean), directly elected to four-year terms on the basis of party lists (Articles 1 and 6 of the 1996 Law on local elections). Article 4 of the 1996 Law on local public administration reads that the candidates must be residents of the county they want to represent. The number of county councilors varies with the county population, from a minimum of 37 up to a maximum of 45 (Article 16). County councilors receive stipends for each of the council meetings they attend, but are neither remunerated nor required to leave their positions if these do not generate conflicts of interest with their councilor mandate. The council meets in ordinary sessions every two months, and can meet in extraordinary sessions whenever issues important for the county have to be addressed urgently (Article 64).

The council elects from among its members with a simple majority a president, two deputy presidents, and a permanent delegation composed of four to six councilors (Article 67). The president is the head of the local public administration at the county level, and the chair of the permanent delegation (Articles 67 and 70). He implements the council decisions, drafts the annual budget and submits it for the councilors' approval, and has the power to grant loans to the county public institutions and state-owned enterprises whose activity is supervised by the council (Article 71). The permanent delegation examines the proposals initiated by various council

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87 Two Southwestern counties of Transylvania are part of the Banat region (Timis and Caras-Severin). Wallachia includes two South-Eastern counties belonging to Dobrogea (Constanta and Tulcea), and five other counties belonging to Oltenia (Mehedinti, Gorj, Vîlcea, Dolj, and Olt). Article 126 of the 1991 Law on local public administration recognizes Ilfov, the suburban area of Bucharest, as the country's 41st county.

88 Counties with up to 350,000 inhabitants have 37-member county councils, while counties with more than 650,000 people can send 47 representatives to the council. Counties with 350,000 to 500,000 inhabitants have councils composed of 39 members, while those with 500,001 to 650,000 inhabitants have councils of 41 members.
commissions or by individual councilors, and decides which ones are to be included in the meeting agenda (Article 68). As Campbell suggested, the delegation, whose role is not unlike that of the presidium under the former communist system, has extensive formal decision-making power. But like local councils, county councils incur collective responsibility for the decisions they make. Another important member of the county council is the secretary, a non-partisan law graduate appointed by the DLPA to supervise the legality of the council decisions (Article 73). County councils are assisted in their activity by several specialized commissions formed of councilors representing different political parties. While local councils are authorized to deal with most issues of local importance, county councils' responsibilities are restricted to coordinating public services at the county level, a task implying the cooperation of lower-tier authorities. A detailed presentation of these responsibilities is included in the next chapter.

At the same time, each county and the city of Bucharest is under the authority of a prefect (prefect) appointed by the DLPA. As the central government's representative in the territory, the prefect directs public services of central state agencies at the local level, deals with major projects of local importance on a rolling annual basis, coordinates central and local interests, and observes the legality of the county and local council and mayoral decisions (Articles 106, 109 and 110). The prefect's decisions are binding on all public services in the county, including the territorial sub-divisions of central ministries. Annually, the prefects must present to the central government a report on the relevant socioeconomic, cultural and administrative issues facing their county, and to the county council another report detailing the activity of the decentralized public services of the central state agencies (Articles 110 and 112). Mayors and councilors are not explicitly subordinated to the prefect, but the legislation allows the central government to

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89 Popa, Mariile institutii, p. 7. The 1991 Constitution granted county councils the authority to “coordinate the activity of local councils for realizing the public services of county interest” (Article 121).
dissolve a local council at the prefect’s proposal if the council’s decisions run counter the law and “the general interests of the state” or if the council compromises local interests.

The other decision-making body at the county level is the administrative commission (comisia administrativa). The commission is headed by the prefect and includes the county president, the heads of the local public services, and the directors of the state-owned enterprises of national importance represented in the county (Article 116). On an ad hoc basis it may include mayors of municipalities when appropriate. The commission, which meets every three months, designs and implements a county-specific plan of socioeconomic development based on the government’s working program, and seeks to achieve coherence between central and local interests (Articles 116-118).

Conclusion

Although it marked a significant departure from its communist predecessor, the post-communist legal framework for local government leaves some major issues unsolved. Most important are the ambiguous differentiation between local government and local state representatives in terms of their functions and scope of authority, as well as the unclear status and reporting responsibilities and the unspecified financial accountability of the regii autonomes, the public service providers. Legally there is no hierarchy between local and county councils, only different competencies, but a measure of subordination results from the county council’s authority to decide what percentage of the county budget should be allotted to each locality. Neither are the councils formally subordinated to the prefect, but the lack of genuine financial

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90 According to the Law 15/1990 on state-owned enterprise restructuring, the old state enterprises operating in "strategic" areas of the economy were exempted from privatization and instead reorganized as French-style autonomous administrations (regies autonomes) to remain in state hands. The regies autonomes, which can be of either local or national importance, include most public services alongside oil refineries, mines, etc.
devolution means that most functions remain in the control of the center and its territorial representative, the prefect.

The other main dysfunction of the administrative system remains the absence of a set of laws needed to complement the new organizational arrangements. Though local officials were duly elected in 1992, 1996 and again in 2000, the lack of a patrimony law has meant that their authority remained undefined in the important area of local property management. At issue were the previously state-owned buildings and assets to be divided among local bodies. In the absence of specific regulations, the problem was regulated on an ad hoc basis by the provisions of other laws and through gentleman agreements between local administrators. Another draft law put on ice was the law on the organization of the Agency for Rural Development and Planning. In the absence of pro-reform legislation, the fate of agricultural reform was left in the hands of local bureaucrats who benefited from communist-era regulations and largely opposed reforms because they had a stake in maintaining the status quo.

With all its rhetoric of observing local autonomy, the post-communist legislation offers no real emancipation from central authorities, and maintains unbroken Romania’s historical centralism. Fearful that the ethnic Hungarians might fragment the state, Bucharest continues to reject meaningful decentralization and local autonomy. Some Romanian political leaders have pointed to the former Yugoslavia as an example of the pernicious link between decentralization and state disintegration, and have argued that the idea of an “Europe of the regions” has little applicability in the Balkans. ⁹¹ The ethnic issue fuels Romania’s resistance to decentralize, even though its counties adjacent to the Hungarian border were allowed to participate in a new

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program of cross-border cooperation with neighboring Hungarian counties.\textsuperscript{92} Initiated by the
Council of Europe, the program has the potential to strengthen the local government of
participant counties, and consequently to diminish the central authorities’ control. However,
none of the Romanian counties participating in the program has a significant ethnic Hungarian
population whose claims for local autonomy might pose a real threat to Romania’s territorial
integrity. Because of their geographical position in the central part of Romania, the
predominantly Hungarian counties of Harghita and Covasna cannot take part in the program.

Within the Romanian local administration county councils occupy the contested middle
ground between an all-powerful central government continuously encroaching on their activity,
and local authorities incessantly struggling to free themselves from the county and central
control. While formally there is no subordination between prefects and county councils,
Romania’s strict administrative centralization allows the prefects to restrict the decision making
power of county councils by dismissing councilors and revoking council decisions. The
legislation limits the number of cases when prefects can avail of such powers, but the legal
provisions remain vague and interpretations are left to the DLPA, the very structure that appoints
the prefects. Until now, the balance was generally tipped in favor of the center, and a majority of
prefect-council conflicts were settled in favor of the prefect. As this was not enough, many
services are more beholden to the prefect than to the county council president, although by law it
is the latter that coordinates their activity. The practice, which further erodes the authority of the
county councils, seems to be a remnant of the communist past. As students of local government
have noticed, the habit of looking to the center for guidance has conferred a privileged status on
the central government’s representatives at the county level. The fact that the prefects are
appointed, not elected like the county council presidents, makes them more like the first

\textsuperscript{92} Romania Libera (1 November 1999).
secretaries of the county PCR organization, whose positions "carried immense informal power and circumvented the nominal authority of local representatives and officials." While recognizing that Romanian county councils have limited responsibilities and functions compared to middle-level structures from other countries, this study is interested to uncover not so much what Romanian county councils can do but more how they do it, and how deep-seated cultural and sociostructural norms affect their performance. As the next chapter demonstrates, some county councils have been more efficient than others, despite the fact that all of them have had the same attributions on paper.

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93 Campbell, "Local Government in Romania," p. 81.
CHAPTER 3.
Leaders and Laggards: A Comparison of Institutional Performance

While the previous chapter has reviewed the legal arrangements and major characteristics of local government in Romania, this chapter will evaluate comparatively the performance of the councils of Arad, Mures, Arges and Galati, the four counties selected for this analysis. By contrasting the decisional effectiveness and responsiveness of these local governmental structures, the chapter provides examples of what Romanian local governments actually accomplish in their daily activity. It also demonstrates that in that country some of the new representative local governments achieved more than others, although after 1989 they all had undergone the same institutional transformations and, theoretically at least, they all had equal opportunities to succeed.

Central to the study of politics, the question of what exactly constitutes a good government is also one of the oldest with which political analysts have struggled. There are, however, surprisingly few recent studies that can serve as a guide for evaluating the performance of governments in a systematic, non-arbitrary way. Even fewer authors successfully bridged the gap between theory and empirical evidence by suggesting criteria and indicators to operationalize the performance of governments. Two 1971 studies were the first to go beyond the arbitrary judgements of what high performance is that characterized previous treatments of the subject. In the first study, Harry Eckstein set out to describe and compare conceptually the performance of governments on the basis of a common set of reliable measures applicable to

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1 This chapter is dedicated to the memory of late Dr. Rasvan Angheluta, President of the Galati county council, without whose kind and disinterested support it could not have been written.
each and every polity and set of goals. He singled out cabinet durability, civil order, legitimacy and decisional effectiveness as performance criteria. Shortly thereafter, Ted Robert Gurr and Muriel McClelland proposed operational procedures for measuring many of the dimensions of performance outlined by Eckstein. Two decades later, in a study on Italy published in 1993, Robert Putnam provided the most comprehensive and rigorous set of measures for effective government to date. Among the indicators he identified in order to compare different Italian regions were cabinet stability, budget promptness, the use of information services, legislative innovation and reform legislation, and bureaucratic responsiveness. Putnam also looked closely at regional governmental policies in areas ranging from housing and local health to agriculture and industry. Katherine Stoner-Weiss then employed Putnam’s conceptual framework, and some of Gurr’s and McClelland’s measures, to compare the institutional performance of four Russian oblast governments. All these fine studies have provided valuable guidance for the present analysis.

For evaluating the performance of county councils, I tried to select measures conforming to Robert Putnam’s tests of comprehensiveness, internal consistency and reliability. As he explained, any meaningful evaluation of governmental performance should strive to assess across time as many areas of activity as possible, and conclude that a given council is performing well if and only if it scores high on most selected measures. If these conditions are not met, then

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the researcher could pass an erroneous judgement. Important areas of governmental activity could be overlooked if only few measures are employed, and correlations could prove spurious if performance rankings change radically from year to year. Similarly, one can talk summarily of success or failure only if selected indicators rank polities in roughly the same way, that is, if one case scores similarly on almost all measures. To address these issues, I included multiple indicators, looked at the councils’ activity over the entire period since its constitution rather than only the year preceding my fieldwork, and searched for general patterns in county council performance. While every effort has been made to ensure that the mix of measures used here is as broad and meaningful as possible, the analysis suffers perhaps of a weakness to which Putnam drew attention in his study. As it will become apparent in this analysis, some indicators are quantitatively precise, but only indirectly connected to substantive outcomes, while others are less exact, but their relevance to institutional performance is clear-cut. To overcome this problem, a wide set of measures was employed. It is only by considering these indicators collectively, not individually, that a fair rating of the counties and a broad-based assessment of institutional success or failure can be made.6

The county comparison cannot be undertaken without first clarifying the definition of institutional performance employed here and the position this analysis takes relative to other works. Previous studies have identified four major criteria central to the evaluation of governmental performance: legitimacy, stability, decisional effectiveness and responsiveness. In their absence, it has been argued, a government, regime or polity can attain few, if any, of its declared goals. While other authors have made a compelling case for their use, not all of these criteria are relevant in the case of the post-communist Romanian county councils. For instance,

Eckstein and Gurr and McClelland considered legitimacy and stability important because they wanted to include both democratic and dictatorial regimes in their analyses. In *Making Democracy Work*, Putnam employed cabinet stability because he found that the Italian regional governments differed significantly with respect to this parameter. The present analysis, by contrast, is a within-country comparison of four democratically elected local governments that are very similar with respect to their legitimacy. All four county councils were duly elected in mid-1996 in free and fair local elections, and all fulfilled their four-year mandates in having experienced no cabinet instability. Because of the limited relevance of cabinet stability and legitimacy in the Romanian case, this study understands performance as the county councils' effectiveness in adopting decisions, and their responsiveness towards their constituents. In what follows, I am interested to know (1) if councils adopted the decisions necessary to reach as many as possible, if not all, of their declared goals, (2) if their decision making process was frequently delayed due to dissension within the polity, and (3) if they responded to citizens' demands.

Like similar governmental structures in other countries, the Romanian county councils must fulfill manifold responsibilities through their activity. Evaluating decisional effectiveness was traditionally based on a comparison between input and output, with declared goals representing the former and adopted policies the latter. Gurr and McClelland used measures related to the budgetary process, incumbent turnovers and elections, but Putnam argued that performance evaluation should go beyond questions of policy process and ascertain both policy content and policy formulation. Governments should not only conduct their internal operations smoothly and with dispatch, they should also identify social needs, propose innovative solutions, and implement their avowed policy objectives. While this view has the advantage of rigor and comprehensiveness, the distinction between policy process, policy content, policy
implementation and responsiveness is not as clear-cut as it might seem. As Stoner-Weiss rightly observed, statistical information services, for example, can be as easily placed under the rubric of policy innovations/content as under responsiveness.\(^8\) Moreover, the application of Putnam’s policy assessment to the Romanian case is not straightforward, as county councils there have less maneuvering space than the Italian regional governments do. In Romania identifying social needs and proposing innovative solutions is the responsibility of the prefects and of the local branches of the ministries, each in its own field of activity. As such, county councils could score low in terms of policy content even when the legislation enacted by them reflects a capacity to react creatively, coherently and promptly to the issues at hand. With these in mind, I have employed some of the indicators used in *Making Democracy Work*, but chose not to adhere strictly to Putnam’s template for policy evaluation.

An enduring problem faced by all researchers, including those interested in performance evaluation, has been how to match numerical scores to measures in a way that is non-arbitrary, convincing for readers and appropriate for the analysis’s research question and cases. The most obvious solution for this predicament is by contextualizing and interpreting the rather dry numerical scores and rankings with the help of what Clifford Geertz called “thick description.”\(^9\) Therefore, rather than seeing qualitative and quantitative research methods as irrevocably opposite and to a certain extent mutually contradictory, this chapter sees them as complementary and ultimately draws on both.\(^10\) Whereas numerical scores help us rank the four county councils with respect to their institutional performance, descriptions based on personal interviews with

\(^8\) Stoner-Weiss, “Local Heroes,” p. 103.


councillors as well as on archival data provide the background template against which the various scores, scales and rankings can be understood. This chapter roughly follows Stoner-Weiss's scoring and scaling method, by ranking each county on bi-polar quantitative scales ranging from 1 to 4, where 1 is the lowest and 4 is the highest score. Summed scores are then computed for each county across all performance indicators. The higher the summed score, the higher the performance of the county council. The method captures both the number of areas in which a council performed better than the others, but also the degree to which it did so.

Much of the following discussion is based on 33 personal interviews carried over the January-May 1999 period with eight councillors in each of the counties of Arad, Galati and Mures and nine councillors in Arges. The interviews lasted from an hour and a half to three hours each, being conducted either at the county council or at the party headquarters. The councillors were selected such that there was an even spread in terms of their political orientation, membership in specialized commissions of the councils, occupation and age. The chapter also draws on personal interviews conducted over the same period with three of the four county council presidents and seven members of the non-elected executive apparatus. In addition, the section reporting the county councils' responsiveness is based on the results of the Opinion Barometer administered by the Metro-Transylvania agency under the aegis of the Romanian

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11 In terms of party affiliation, the councillors I interviewed were divided as follows: seven members of the National Peasant Party Christian-Democrat (PNTCD), five members of the Democratic Union of Magyars in Romania (UDMR), four members of the Democratic Party (PD), four members of the Party for Social Democracy in Romania (PDSR), and three members of the National Liberal Party (PNL). Additionally, I interviewed two members of each of the Social Democratic Party of Romania (PSDR), the Car-Drivers Party, the Greater Romania Party (PRM) and the Party for the National Unity of the Romanians (PUNR). The Pioneers Party, the Agrarian Democratic Party of Romania, the Socialist Working Party (PSM), and the Ecological Federation of Romania were each represented in the sample of interviewed councillors with one member. Among the councillors I met four were women. With respect to their age, 16.7 percent of all councillors I interviewed were 35 years old or younger, another 16.7 percent were between 35 and 45 years of age, 47.2 percent were between 45 and 55, with the rest (19.4 percent) being older. A higher percentage of councillors interviewed in Galati were retired. The names of the councillors were not disclosed in an effort to protect their identity. The first initial reported indicates the county (A for Arad, R for Arges, G for Galati and M for Mures), while the second indicates the county councillor. For example R.G. is the seventh Arges councilor I quote in the text, not the seventh councillor I interviewed in that county.
branch of the Soros Foundation. The survey was conducted in October 1999 on a sample of 2,019 respondents representative for the general Romanian population.\textsuperscript{12}

County Councils: Organization and Responsibilities

Before ranking the counties with respect to their performance as institutions, a presentation of their organizational structure and responsibilities is in order. In terms of their organization, all four councils followed the general structure set down by the Department of Local Public Administration (DLPA), the central state agency supervising local government (see also Chapter 2). They were formed of councilors elected in the summer of 1996 from various party lists to four-year mandates. Only the Arges council included independent councilors. All councils but Mures included one or two councilors who began their mandates a year after the 1996 local elections. These councilors represented parties belonging to the ruling parliamentary coalition. Because in 1996 local elections were held before general elections, party representatives who won councilor mandates had to give them up after being offered positions in the central state administration. Same-party members occupied the vacant councilor posts. The number of councilors varied with the county population, from 39 in Arad, and 41 each in Galati and Mures, to 45 in Arges. Each council had a president, two vice-presidents, and a permanent delegation elected from among the councilors at the beginning of the term.

The president and vice-presidents of the council headed the permanent delegation (delegatie permanenta), which also included the heads of the six specialized commissions. Each remaining councilor was a member of a specialized commission. The commissions, which were composed of five to ten members, met weekly or bi-weekly. Their responsibilities varied slightly

\textsuperscript{12} I thank Gabriel Badescu of the University Babes-Bolyai of Cluj for giving me access to the raw data.
from county to county in relation to the specific needs the council had to address. In general, every council I visited had commissions specializing in budget and finance; legislation; public works; agriculture, industry, trade and tourism; health care, education and sport; environmental protection; observance of human rights, public order and preservation of historical monuments.\footnote{The Arad commissions, for example, were structured as follows: the commission for socio-economic programs, budget and finance (9 councilors), the commission for urban development, public works, environmental protection and the conservation of historical monuments (9 members), the commission for the administration of public domain, public services, commerce and tourism (5 members), the commission for scientific research, culture, education, health care and sport (8 members), and the commission for law, public order, citizens’ rights and protection of ethnic minority rights (5 members).}

Figure 2: The Structure of County Councils, the 1996-2000 Legislature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislative Side</th>
<th>Executive Side</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President of the Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- has two deputy presidents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- also heads the Permanent Delegation and the auxiliary personnel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- elected in competitive elections in 1996</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- includes 37-45 councilors representing various parties or independent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- meets by law every two months or more frequently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Delegation (delegatie permanenta)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 4-6 members, the heads of the operative commissions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- headed by the President of the Council and the two Vice-presidents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Commissions (comisiile consiliului)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- their heads are members of the Permanent Delegation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- commissions vary from council to council, but generally include: budget and finance, agriculture, health and social welfare, education, trade, sport and culture, law, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information based on the organizational charters provided by the county councils and the Law on the local public administration (Law 69/1991).

The county councils also included an executive apparatus (aparatul propriu), a body of 100 to 200 non-elected public servants organized in departments (directii) whose responsibilities closely paralleled those of the specialized commissions. Elected in virtue of political allegiances,
rather than organizational skills, councilors tended to have little knowledge of the legislation pertaining to local administration or of their county’s socioeconomic position and problems. Because of this, the executive apparatus was generally preparing the initiatives the council discussed. Over the 1996-1998 period, less than one-tenth of all proposals submitted for consideration to the four councils I visited were initiated by the councilors, with all the other being prepared and proposed by the executive apparatus.14 Once the initiatives gained the approval of the secretary of the county councils, who verified their legality, they were submitted for consideration to the specialized commission responsible for the public sphere to which the initiatives related. The commissions met regularly to discuss the proposals and modify them, if necessary. After being okayed by the commission, the proposals were included in the agenda of the general council meeting. As it was explained to me, the commission’s support for a particular proposal did not preclude its rejection by the enlarged council. Apparently there were also cases when proposals were submitted for consideration to the enlarged council without gaining support from any specialized commission. By law, the enlarged council met every two months to debate and vote on the proposals discussed by all specialized commissions. The initiatives were approved if they gained a simple majority of the vote, and were binding from the moment of their adoption, being also published in the county council’s legal digest at a later date.

There were tensions between the executive apparatus and the corps of councilors, but in no county animosities were significant enough to impede the activity of the council. Members of the executive apparatus I interviewed pointed out that the councilors, elected for political reasons

14 In my personal interview with him of 4 February 1999, A. A, member of the Arad county council executive apparatus, suggested that this situation was similar to what happened at the central government level. According to him, only a fraction of the initiatives submitted for consideration to the Romanian Parliament were prepared by the legislators, with the bulk being proposed by the government, the executive structure. Similarly, only a handful of the initiatives discussed by county councils were prepared by the councilors, with the majority coming from the executive apparatus.
and involved with the council on a part-time basis only, generally lacked the administrative experience and commitment needed to fulfill their mandate successfully. One such apparatus member believed that
councilors need at least one year to understand the various problems faced by the county and the council, then in the last year of their mandate they enter the electoral campaign and do not pay attention to the council anymore. Thus, practically they work only two of their four-year mandate. In my opinion, they should be given more time to familiarize themselves with the [county] situation.15

The first to blame for this state of affairs, in the opinion of another member of the executive apparatus, was the selection of councilors from party lists, a process serving the interests of the political clientele with dubious competencies that has been promoted at every level of government since the collapse of communism.16

In their turn, while recognizing it as indispensable for the activity of the county council, councilors frequently complained that the executive apparatus formed a bureaucracy inherited from the communist regime that had little understanding of the political and economic reforms the public administration was called upon to effect in post-communist times. However, the altercations between the two corps were nothing more than isolated cases apparently rooted in the ideological differences separating individual members of the two corps. Indeed, with the exception of the council secretary, all other apparatus members had overt political allegiances frequently translated in membership in various political parties with local representation.17

Ultimately, however, the apparatus had to give in to the councilors’ demands for disclosing information or lending support in the preparation of various documents and proposals, a fact

15 Author’s interview with A. B., member of the Arad county council executive apparatus, February 9, 1999.
16 Author’s interview with A. A., member of the Arad county council executive apparatus, February 4, 1999.
17 My visit to Romania preceded the adoption of the Law on the civil servant detailed in Chapter 1.
attesting, according to the apparatus, to its efforts to avert the complete politicization of the county council.  

The councils had to coordinate the activity of county public services, divide the annual budget they received from the center among towns and villages, decide how various objectives of importance for the county were to be met, serve as a link between the local and central administrations, solve the petitions of citizens seeking restoration of the land and residences confiscated by communist authorities, and establish relationships of cooperation with other structures from Romania and abroad. Although their responsibilities were far reaching on paper, county councils had only supervising authority over the public services and institutions they oversaw. For example, the specialized commission on health care and education discussed various draft proposals pertaining to the county’s health care and education, but their decisions were not binding on the local hospitals, schools or universities. Similarly, the commission on agriculture might approve a proposal for the enlargement or modernization of the irrigation system that could in turn be rejected or left unaccomplished by the state-owned agricultural units operating in the county. Because of their limited input, such commissions seldom met and rarely passed decisions of any significant consequence for the life of the county. Because county councils addressed only a handful of their numerous formal responsibilities, this chapter details only three core responsibilities: budget allocation, economic development policy, and prevention of corruption and organized crime.

Last, it should be stressed that over the last decade the county councils have seen their jurisdiction gradually eroding. Some of their responsibilities were transferred to other local

18 Author’s personal interviews with A. B., member of the Arad county council executive apparatus, and A. C., Arad county councilor, February 9 and 5, respectively.

19 This idea was echoed by R. A., Arges county councilor, in my personal interview with him, March 3, 1999.
administrative bodies, and fewer public services remained under their authority. This erosion prompted many councilors to reconsider the council’s position within the Romanian local public administration, especially its relationship with the prefecture and local councils. Some councilors I met went as far as to suggest that either the prefecture or the county council be eradicated as superfluous. They pointed out that the French-inspired administrative system adopted by post-communist Romania, with its two structures paralleling each other at the county level, fostered over-bureaucratization. Indeed, the county council and the prefecture had departments overseeing roughly the same socioeconomic domains and having unclearly specified, overlapping responsibilities. In addition, the post-1996 decentralization drive, reluctant as it was, eroded the position of the county councils relative to the local councils. As councilors opined, the 1999 Law on local finances will further undermine the most important function of the county council: the allocation of financial resources received from the central government among the local councils. As a larger share of the resources will be left to the localities, the county councils will receive less from the center and as a result will have less budgetary means to distribute to the lower administrative bodies.

Performance Evaluation of County Council Activity

A total of 25 performance indicators were employed for ranking the four counties. In order to have an adequate appreciation of all aspects of council activity, the lens was shifted from internal allocation of authority and the extent to which statistical information services were employed to decisional effectiveness in key policy areas and bureaucratic responsiveness to

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citizens demands. As it will become apparent shortly, not all measures proved useful to
distinguish among the four counties in terms of performance. There was variation among
counties with respect to only 12 of the 25 measures.

A. Internal Allocation of Authority

As students of local government have previously argued, the success with which an
institution meets its goals depends, first of all, on how well it manages its essential internal
affairs. Here a total of six indicators were used to rank the four councils: the selection of the
president, the council’s degree of professionalism, the representativeness of the councilors
(measured as the percentage of councilors from the county’s main town), the time allocated to
making policy as opposed to organizational and personnel decisions, the council’s success in
maintaining quorum, and the weight given to the specialized commissions compared to the
enlarged council. In what follows, I will discuss each of these measures.

1. The Selection of the Executive

The process of selecting a candidate for the council presidency proved to be a good
indicator of the extent of dissension within county councils. As previously noted, county
councilors received their mandates in the 1996 local elections and immediately thereafter had to
elect the county leadership composed of the president, the two vice-presidents and the permanent
delegation. All elected councilors were eligible for the leadership positions, but the successful
candidates had to muster enough support from the various party caucuses represented in the

\[22\] Putnam, Making Democracy Work, p. 65.
council in order to gain the two-thirds of the vote required for nomination. Although all leadership positions came with wide decision-making powers, the county council presidency was by far the most coveted post due to the exposure and leverage it conferred upon both its occupant and the political party he represented. As head of the council, the president ran its day to day activity, headed its executive apparatus, and represented it in its relations with the central government and other counties. More importantly, the president was solely allowed to act as “credit ordinateur” (ordonator de credite) having the power to grant funds to the county public institutions and state-owned enterprises whose activity the council supervised. The president’s position was further elevated in importance by the fact that not all decisions were submitted to the councilors for approval. The maneuvering space and discretion that each president had in this regard were considerable and apparently varied little from county to county. In 1998, for example, in each of the four counties I visited the council adopted around 50 decisions, while the council president adopted four times as many.

In all counties, the councilors elected as presidents had far more administrative experience than their colleagues, a fact that made them a natural choice for the chairmanship. But the process of selecting a candidate for the council presidency was apparently smoother in Arad and Mures than in Galati and Arges (see Table 3.1). This pattern, with the two Transylvanian counties at the top and the non-Transylvanian counties at the bottom, was noticeable with respect to a majority of the performance indicators employed in this study. In Arad the process was conflict-free, requiring less than a month and being completed in the first

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23 Elected county leaders did not have to be confirmed in positions by the President of the country, as was the case in Russia in 1992 when candidates for the interim gubernatorial positions had to win presidential approval. Stoner-Weiss, “Local Heroes,” p. 94.

24 To date, no woman was ever elected as county council president in Romania.
meeting of the full council. There, Dan Ivan managed to secure the presidency with the support of an overwhelming majority of the councilors (two-thirds of the votes were required). His previous term as president of the Arad county council established him as an experienced local administrator and a skillful negotiator, a reputation that served him well when his bid for the presidency was announced in 1996. The fact that in both the 1992-1996 and the 1996-2000 legislatures the coalition to which his Democratic Party belonged secured a majority of council seats also helped the selection to be conflict-free. In Mures, the 1996 reelection as county council president of Ion Toganel, an experienced administrator highly praised by his colleagues, was equally prompt and smooth. Toganel, a PDSR member and the Mures county council president during the 1992-1996 period, gained the support of both the PUNR and the UDMR councilors. The two vice-presidents were elected during the same council meeting, shortly after the 1996 local poll.

While in Arad and Mures the 1996 leadership was promptly elected, a totally different situation unfolded in the non-Transylvanian counties of Arges and Galati. Following the 1996 local elections, most seats in those two councils (more exactly, 47 percent in each) were won by parties that at the time were ruling Romania at the national level: the PDSR, the PUNR, the Greater Romania Party (Partidul Romania Mare, PRM), and the smaller Socialist Party (Partidul Socialist, PS) and Socialist Working Party (Partidul Socialist al Muncii, PSM). The opposition, which included the CDR and the USD, held some 35 percent of the seats in each council. As required by the legislation, the Arges and Galati councils met immediately after the local poll in order to select the leadership but the process proved extremely divisive. The two councils were roughly equally split between the then ruling parties, the opposition and a group of self-avowed “independent” councilors each one of whom represented a small party and claiming to take the
side of neither the government nor the opposition. With no single faction having two-thirds of the vote, it was clear from the beginning that the leadership was to be elected by whatever two groups succeeded in cooperating.

The party with the most seats in the Arges council, the PDSR, gained the support of the small parties in order to nominate PDSR members Ion Mihailescu and Florea Costache as county president and vice-president, respectively. Both candidates had proved to be skillful administrators, Costache as the former county council president, and Mihailescu as the head of the County Finance Direction, the local branch of the Ministry of Finance. In turn, the “independent” councilors were awarded the other vice-president position, eventually occupied by Ion Dumitrescu, the former Pitesti mayor. The move was bitterly contested by the CDR, which argued that the opposition was entitled to this vice-presidency since it controlled more seats than the “independents” (36 percent compared to 24 percent). To give more weight to their demands, the councilors of the National Peasant Christian-Democratic Party (Partidul National Taranesc Crestin-Democrat, PNTCD), the main CDR partner, walked out of the meeting hall and petitioned the administrative courts against what they saw as blatant irregularities in the selection of the Arges council leadership. The move proved to be a gross miscalculation, as the opposition lost any leadership representation and its absence did not impede the selection process, as the PDSR and the independent candidates mustered enough support for their election to be validated.

Similarly controversial and divisive was the selection of the Galati county leadership. There again the PDSR won most mandates in the 1996 local elections and shortly thereafter the

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26 Author’s personal interview with R. B., Arges county councilor, 24 February 1999.
support of the small parties to reelect the incumbent Rasvan Angheluta, a long time administrator with an established reputation, as president. Again, the opposition vociferously contested the nomination and walked out of the session in protest. In the meeting hall remained two-thirds of the councilors who all voted for Angheluta but one of the voters was replacing another CDR sympathizer who earlier announced his desire to relinquish his county councilor mandate for one as a local councilor.  

Dissatisfied that the voter neither walked out of the hall nor opposed the PDSR candidate, the CDR asked the first councilor to reclaim his mandate and thus revoke the voter’s mandate. Months later, the general parliamentary elections of November 1996 saw the PDSR losing popular support in favor of the CDR. After that at the national level the PDSR was in opposition, while in the Galati county council the CDR was. In late 1996, the Galati CDR councilors who walked out of the session hall petitioned the new CDR-appointed Galati prefect with respect to the alleged illegality of the elections for the council leadership. Unsurprisingly, the prefect settled the conflict between the CDR councilors and the rest of the county council in favor of the former, arguing that the election was invalid since one of the voters had no county councilor mandate at the time of the vote. A similar argument was voiced by the Romanian Supreme Court of Justice, which overturned an earlier Galati County Court decision favoring the PDSR’s point of view. As a result, the Galati county council had to reelect its leadership a year after the 1996 elections. Rasvan Angheluta retained the presidency, but the CDR mustered enough support to appoint Mihai Popa as council vice-president in lieu of the vice-president representing the PSM. The latter, in turn, gave in to local tradition and hastened to petition the courts against his dismissal.  

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27 Author’s personal interview with G.A., Galati county councilor, 10 April 1999.  
As this discussion showed, there were significant differences among the four counties with respect to their success in electing the leadership promptly and amiably. In Arad and Mures the county presidents and vice-presidents were elected during a single meeting days after the 1996 local elections. Because of this, both counties received high scores (Table 3.1). By comparison, the selection processes in both Arges and Galati were riddled with unbridgeable divisions among councilors that impeded the council from moving its attention to the economic and social problems facing the two counties. By far, Galati faced the hardest situation of all councils, having to work for almost one year with only 28 of its 41 councilors. In that county there were apparently no adequate channels of communication among the parties represented in the council, and little desire for compromise mostly on the part of the opposition.

2. Degree of Professionalism, Quorum and Time Devoted to Organizational Issues

While other studies have used these three measures with some success, none proved useful in distinguishing between the Romanian counties. The four councils did not differ with

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29 In the leadership selection process, dissension within county councils could be the result not only of party politics, but also of personality clashes between councilors or the economic group interests represented in the council. But in the cases examined in this study, party politics was by far the most important factor determining leadership selection, and also the easiest to document. It is for these reasons that the preceding discussion centered exclusively on party politics. In the case of other Romanian councils, it is possible that personality type and group interests take precedence.

30 Author's personal interview with G.A., Galati county councilor, 10 April 1999.
respect to their degree of professionalism, as councilors were not full-time legislators able, at least in principle, to devote their attention fully to policy matters. In Transylvanian and non-Transylvanian counties alike, the councilors’ involvement with the council was generally restricted to the few meetings they had to attend each month for receiving the stipend. This limited involvement, at least with respect to the time allotted to the issues related to council activity, was determined by the fact that most councilors had to balance busy schedules as full-time employees of various firms and institutions and active members of the political parties they represented. The only exceptions were the council president and vice-presidents, who were full-time administrators for the period of their mandate.

Also, there was little variation among counties with respect to the percentage of councilors with prior administrative experience. In all counties, I estimated that around one-third of the councilors had occupied administrative positions before assuming county councilor mandates in 1996. Of these, less than one-fourth held county councilor mandates during the previous legislature, with the others holding local councilor mandates or various administrative positions in state and privately owned enterprises. The percentages, however, are only estimations. Given the fact that county councils did not release this kind of information, I had to rely on press reports and personal interviews with councilors. Note, however, that my informants tended to be more familiar with the background and administrative experience of the councilors representing the same party as them, while not knowing, and in one case seriously downplaying, the skills of councilors representing other political parties.

In Stoner-Weiss’s study on Russia, some oblasts repeatedly had difficulties maintaining quorum in meetings, but the Romanian county councils did not suffer from this affliction. In

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none of the four counties did councilors mention lack of quorum among the problems faced by the councils. Galati was the only county to report that in the summer of 1996 the council did not have quorum (two thirds of the total number of councilors), but the incident was not due to lack of interest and involvement on the part of councilors. As previously mentioned, at the time councilors belonging to the opposition decided to walk out because of misunderstandings related to the confirmation as council president of a PDSR member. While Romania seemed to be spared by the lack of quorum plaguing the Russian oblast governments, the Romanian councilors’ attendance of the sessions did not necessarily translate into an active fulfillment of their obligations. Many councilors I interviewed claimed that full attendance could have been prompted by more mundane, pecuniary concerns. One respondent even suggested that councilors should not be remunerated, since “they should fulfil their mandate not for material gains but in order to solve the problems of the community,” the more so since they themselves volunteered for the job. The same informant pointed out that councilors’ overall involvement with the council did not warrant stipends amounting to twice the national average monthly wage.\textsuperscript{32}

In Russia, the more time decision-makers devoted to organizational matters, the less time they spent responding to policy challenges. There was, however, little variation along these lines in Romania as in all four counties council meetings were organized in such a way as to minimize the time allocated for organizational decisions. The executive apparatus and the specialized commissions worked out the meeting agenda in advance and handed it down to all the councilors usually one week before the latter met in session. During the meeting of the full council, only after all issues on the agenda were thoroughly discussed could councilors raise new questions. Some of the new issues were discussed on the spot, while others were introduced in the agenda of future meetings. Similarly, few council decisions pertained to issues related to the personnel,

\textsuperscript{32} Author’s interview with A.A., member of the Arad county council executive apparatus, 4 February 1999.
since these generally fell under the president’s jurisdiction. Indeed, in all counties more than two-thirds of the decisions the four county presidents adopted in their own name, but less than 15 percent of those adopted by the full council, were of that nature.

3. Legislative versus Executive Decision-Making

While Romanian councils were similar with respect to their degree of professionalism, success in maintaining quorum and time devoted to organizational matters, there were marked differences in the relative weight given to the specialized commissions compared to the full council. By law, the councils were required to meet every two months in ordinary sessions, while the commissions met whenever their members felt it was necessary. In practice, however, counties organized their meeting schedules differently. At one end stood Arad, where the full council met regularly every month\(^{33}\) and specialized commissions generally met every other week. This arrangement allowed for the majority of the decisions to be brought to the attention of the full council rather than being discussed, modified and voted on by a single commission composed of a fraction of all councilors. To be sure, the proposals still had to follow the usual route, passing from the executive apparatus to the specialized commission and then to the full council, but the latter had the final say. At the other end stood Arges, where the full council met on average only six times per year, with the specialized commissions meeting almost every week. In the words of one Arges councilor, “here the work is done and decisions are made in the commissions.”\(^{34}\) The other two counties, Galati and Mures, fared somewhere in between these extremes.

\(^{33}\) The monthly meetings were alternatively ordinary and extraordinary.

\(^{34}\) Author’s personal interview with R.B., Arges county councilor, 24 February 1999.
There might have been some virtue in the Arges model if councilors had a fair knowledge of the local problems affecting the socioeconomic sectors supervised by the commission they were part of. In that case, the full council could use the commission’s vote as an indicator of the merits of the proposed initiatives. Reliance on commission work would signal the council’s willingness to delegate authority, while a sound and careful analysis of proposals by the commissions would avert over-burdening the full council with problems of less relevance for the life of the county. In practice, however, the councilors had little understanding of the fields monitored by their commission, and they could seldom have an informed appreciation of the issues and problems that the proposals formulated by the executive apparatus tried to address. Not infrequently, a doctor headed the agricultural commission while a high-school teacher was part of the budget commission. In the Galati council none of the members of the commission on legislation had any formal legal training. Occasionally the members’ personal expertise coincided with that of the commission but generally party affiliation was the single most important factor determining commission membership. Indeed, in all counties the educational background of more than half of all councilors did not match their commissions’ object of activity.

Unwilling to pass judgement in areas with which they were unfamiliar, commission members often relied on three cues to make their decision on a specific proposal. They could vote along party lines, if these were specified in any way in advance, follow the bandwagon and choose the option likelier to gain the support of the majority, or embrace the position of the councilor with a better knowledge of the problems addressed in the proposal. While this kind of heuristic voting was to a certain extent present in the commissions of all four counties, in Arges it impeded the presentation of a broader spectrum of local interests to the full council. There,
proposals okayed by the commissions were adopted by the full council usually without any additional discussions that would have given the councilors belonging to other commissions, and sometimes having the necessary background to understand better the proposal, the opportunity to voice their opinions. It is no coincidence that the meetings of the Arges full council were also the shortest and the rarest. Organized every other month, they lasted on average only two hours.

Table 3.2: Legislative versus Executive Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Legislative vs. Executive Process</th>
<th>County Council Rankings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Decisions preponderently discussed by full council; the legislature meets every month</td>
<td>Arad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Councils meet less frequently (7-8 times per year); decisions approved by commissions sometimes overturned by the enlarged council</td>
<td>Galati, Mures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Decisions preponderently discussed in commissions; the legislature meets six times per year on average</td>
<td>Arges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As one local observer remarked, the difference between councils relying in their activity on commissions and those relying more on the full meetings paralleled the difference between a country ruled by decrees and ordinances issued by an appointed government and one where decisions of vital importance were discussed by the elected legislature.35 The example was handy in Romania at a time when the central governments issued an average of a hundred ordinances per year in an effort to unlock a severely delayed reform process by blocking the input the conservative parliamentary opposition could have on issues of vital importance for the country. Given these considerations, I have chosen to rank the four counties according to their reliance on the legislative or the executive side of the county council. Arad, which gave precedence to the county legislature, received the highest ranking denoting a more democratic local government

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35 Author's personal interview with R.C., Arges resident, 20 February 1999.
where councilors representing a larger spectrum of interests could have a decisive say on the proposals. Arges, with its over-reliance on commissions whose activity lacked transparency, received the lowest ranking, while Mures and Galati scored in between, receiving equal rankings of 2.5 (see Table 3.2).

4. Council Representativeness

Counties also proved to be significantly different with respect to the representativeness of their county councils, understood as the ratio between the number of councilors drawn from the county’s main town and those drawn from other localities. Since the council must oversee the life of the entire county, the higher the percentage of councilors from outside the main town the better the council’s understanding of the problems faced by the smaller localities. The life of a county is not reducible to that of its main town, however important it might be. Indeed, one constant complaint of the councilors I interviewed was their colleagues’ perceived lack of understanding of the problems with which the smaller localities had to struggle.

Table 3.3: Share of Councilors from Outside the County’s Main Town

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Share (%)</th>
<th>County Council Rankings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>30 - 40</td>
<td>Mures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Arad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>Arges, Galati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0-10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all four counties the main town was over-represented, sending more councilors to the county council than the main town’s share in the total county population. In spite of this, as much as 31.7 percent of the Mures councilors were drawn from other localities. Some 10.2 percent of the Arad councilors resided outside the main town, but only 4.4 percent in Arges and
as little as 2.4 percent in Galati did so. The Transylvanian counties again scored higher than the non-Transylvanian counties (see Table 3.3).

B. Statistical Information Services

Both Putnam and Stoner-Weiss have employed this measure with the understanding that "other things being equal, a government with better information about its constituents and their problems can respond more effectively."36 Note, however, that in the case of the Romanian county councils, this indicator relates more to the activity of the executive apparatus than to that of the elected councilors. As in other former communist countries, statistical information services are very new to Romania, but there was considerable variation in the scope and breadth of the information available in each county. Before the collapse of the Stalinist dictatorship of President Nicolae Ceausescu, typewriters, photocopiers and fax machines had to be registered with the police, which was keeping files with the letter type for every machine in the country. The collection of and access to information were highly secretive and closely monitored by the communist authorities at both central and county levels. Results of the few surveys administered by party-controlled polling centers together with key statistical indicators such as unemployment and county production output were unavailable,37 replaced with target levels handed down by the Central Planning Commission. In communist Romania, the only statistical information available was offered by the National Statistics Commission yearbooks, which included only a handful of county-level indicators alongside highly doctored, unreliable macroeconomic data.

36 Putnam, Making Democracy Work, p. 103.

Stoner-Weiss employed as a simple test of the breadth of available information services the time in which the oblasts could provide previously unavailable information such as gross oblast product, gross oblast production output and oblast unemployment statistics. In Romania, however, these macro-economic indicators are collected not by the county council but by the county division of the National Statistics Commission, over which the council has no jurisdiction. As such, the fact that a council could provide promptly this kind of information speaks less about its effectiveness and more about the activity of the county Statistics Department and the collaborative relationship between the two structures. Indeed, the more effective the Statistics Department was in its efforts to collect and organize statistical data, the more likely was the council to have such detailed information. Galati outscored by far all the other counties in terms of the indicators it could provide, but this was because the Galati Statistics Department generated promptly comprehensive data on the local socioeconomic life. Mures and Arad came second in this respect, with Arges trailing far behind. Arges also proved to be the most secretive and obstructive county of all, with a high number of permits and authorizations required for releasing even the most basic information. The measure was not used in the final analysis, since it said little about the performance of the county councils.

The councils did collect and generate other kinds of data and information, including general presentations of the local business environment and the regional co-operation agreements in which the county participated. These reports can give a better understanding of the information available to each council and the kind of statistical information services each of

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38 While in the other counties I encountered few problems in contacting councilors, getting access to high-schools in order to administer the surveys and obtaining the background information I considered necessary for my study, in Arges I was always asked to produce authorizations and permits for conducting individual research. Arges was the only county where a councilor told me from the onset that the county leaders will give me “permission” to interview councilors only if my study was “beneficial” for the county and presented the council in a positive light. Fortunately, council president Ion Mihalăescu, a university lecturer, did not impede my research in any way.
them employed. In this respect, Arad came first both in terms of the number of reports made available and in their comprehensiveness.\textsuperscript{39} The other three counties were similar in this respect, but Mures had the information better organized and more readily available, which was not the case in Galati and Arges. Mures was also the first of the four counties, and among the first in Romania, to start collecting and analyzing data on the non-profit organizations that had set up local operations.\textsuperscript{40} Although the two non-Transylvanian counties had some information available, it was more parsimonious and generally lacking in detail. Arad and Mures were also well ahead of Arges and Galati in their efforts to use computers to store and analyze the information.\textsuperscript{41}

Thus, in terms of the publications produced by the county council, the extensiveness of the original data it collected itself, and its processing services Arad and Mures outscores Galati and Arges in all three areas. Arad and Mures produced more publications than the two other county councils, collected more comprehensive original data and had better developed processing services set up years ahead of the other counties. The non-Transylvanian counties accomplished less than the Transylvanian counties, although recently their county councils did start to take advantage of some of these statistical information services (see Table 3.4).\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{39} Part of these reports were detailed in the Raport al presedintelui Consiliului județean Arad privind situația economico-sociala, starea și activitatea administratiei județului la sfârșitul anului 1998. I greatly benefited from a personal interview with Lucia Chijbora, the director of the Arad County Promotion and Development Agency, 5 February 1999.

\textsuperscript{40} See Raport cu privire la starea și activitatea administratiei publice a județului Mures în anul 1998, and Ioan Toganel, “The Informatization of the Public Administration in Mures County,” paper presented at the Seminar on Local and Regional Information Society: Problems of Development in Central and Eastern Europe, Miercurea Ciuc, Romania, 8-9 October 1998.

\textsuperscript{41} Several Galati councilors deplored that council’s handicap in using up-to-date computer programs and statistical packages. Author’s personal interviews with G.D. and G.E., Galati county councilors, 30 March and 1 April 1999.

Table 3.4: Statistical Information Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Services Available</th>
<th>County Council Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Produced own publications; collected extensive original data; and had well-developed information processing services.</td>
<td>Arad, Mures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Fairly large number of publications, comprehensive original data gathering, somewhat developed processing services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Small number of publications; somewhat underdeveloped statistical processing services; limited original data gathering</td>
<td>Galati, Arges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No improvements since 1989 in all three areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Decisional Effectiveness

In one form or another, decisional effectiveness has been employed by all previous studies dealing with performance evaluation. Putnam and Stoner-Weiss looked at decisional effectiveness from the viewpoint of policy process and policy output, scrutinizing both how and what decisions were adopted. The examination of the policy process was included in their studies under the assumption that a frequent procrastination of the decision making process revealed ineffectiveness and dissension that made polities less likely to process effectively even routine pressures. Both authors, however, recognized that policies that were adopted promptly could address issues marginal for the polity, and therefore they also looked at the policy content by contrasting the most important policy pronouncements made by each local government and the degree to which these outputs were implemented. Under this rubric, Putnam included an examination of the provision of publicly supported day care centers and family clinics, industrial policy instruments, agricultural spending capacity, and housing and urban development, among other things.
As previously suggested, the Romanian county councils adopted numerous decisions which were then left un-implemented by the lower local administrative structures or public services. The county councils are not legally permitted to interfere in the activity of the local councils and mayoralties, not even for monitoring the way they used the funds it distributed for various local projects, a major grievance for some county councilors. 43 This limited jurisdiction was further restricted by the fact that most public services tended to view the prefect as the most authoritative figure in the county and to abide by his decisions, rather than by those of the county council’s. This situation was not restricted to any particular county, but characterized Romania as a whole. 44 The precedence of the prefect over the county council president was evident in all four counties I visited, even in those places where the former had a weaker personality and far less administrative experience than the latter. This proved that public services bowed more to the position of the prefect than to the man who occupied it, and this informal subordination was largely due to the fact that the bulk of the public services’ financial resources ultimately came from the center, whose representative in the territory the prefect was. Consequently it was the prefect, not the council, who sometimes knew better the situation in the county. In a telling example, Galati councilors complained that their pleas for the prefect to inform them about the county’s socioeconomic standing and the stage of local investment projects went unanswered and as a result they hardly knew what problems the council had to address. 45 The present analysis pays attention to the particular position of the Romanian county councils and as a result departs significantly from similar studies undertaken previously.

43 Author’s personal interview with G.B., Galati county councilor, 29 March 1999.


45 Author’s personal interview with G.B., Galati county councilor, 29 March 1999.
At first sight, a good indicator for delayed decision making would have been the percentage of proposals whose adoption was procrastinated due to extraordinary deliberation, but the four counties showed marginal variation in this respect. In 1998, for example, less than five percent of all proposals submitted for consideration to the four councils failed to be adopted in the first reading. Note that this indicator gives no idea of the time each decision took from the moment it was drafted by the executive apparatus to its discussion by the full council. Councilors in Arad and Arges, for instance, suggested that by the time a proposal reached the full council, the council president already knew that it had good chances to be adopted. This is how an Arad councilor described the bargaining process facilitating the adoption of proposals:

Before a proposal is to be discussed by the full council, the president talks with the leaders of the parties represented in the council. He calls on them and explores the situation by discussing a lot of issues, including the proposal. Then a little negotiation takes place, and an understanding that parties would lend support to each other with regard to the issues important for both.

Proposals could potentially stagnate in commissions for months before being submitted to the council, since lack of deliberation at the council level did not necessarily mean lack of deliberation within the commissions or the executive apparatus.

Six measures were employed to assess county decisional effectiveness: councilors’ perception of council effectiveness, budget promptness, fund allocation patterns, investment as a spending priority, economic development and prevention of corruption and organized crime. The counties differed with respect to four of the six measures, but there was little variation in their budget promptness and success in preventing corruption and organized crime.

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46 Author's personal interview with Ion Mihaiescu, Arges county council president, 3 March 1999.

47 Author's personal interview with A.D., Arad county councilor, 10 February 1999.
In each county one-fifth of the councilors were asked if they considered the activity of their county council to be effective. By far, the most discontent with the activity of the local administrative structure they were part of were the Arges councilors, 80 percent of whom reported that there was much room for improvement. In contrast, the Arad, Galati and Mures councilors were more satisfied with their councils' activity, blaming the shortcomings on various aspects that the council had no power to improve: the extreme centralism of the Romanian local administration, the lack of funds and incomplete legislative framework, the encroaching position of the prefecture or the restricted role that the county council was allowed to play in the local life. As a result, Arges was given a lower ranking than the rest of the counties, while all others received equal scores. The lower the score, the more dissatisfied were the interviewed councilors with the activity of their council. Council rankings are given in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Councilors’ Perception of Council Effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Councilors’ Perception of Council Effectiveness</th>
<th>County Council Rankings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Most interviewed councilors believe the activity to be generally effective, given the constraints under which the council works</td>
<td>Arad, Mures, Galati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Most interviewed councilors believe the activity to be generally ineffective, given the constraints under which the council works</td>
<td>Arges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Councilors were asked the open-ended question: “Do you believe that the activity of this county council has been effective?” They were prompted to evaluate the entire 1996-early 1999 period. The answers were then compiled for each county.

Eckstein, Putnam and Stoner-Weiss compared budget promptness as a measure of dissension during routine decision-making, and argued that a recurrently delayed passage of the budget might indicate regular ineffectiveness. In Romania, the budget allocation among localities was the single most important decision of the county councils, but the awkward nature of the process made the mere comparison of the time period each council needed for budget adoption a
poor indicator for measuring the county councils’ decisional effectiveness. This was because, according to the legislation, the council had little power to levy taxes but instead received shares of the nationally determined taxes in proportions negotiated on a case-to-case basis with the Ministry of Finance. The funds thus received amounted to four-fifths of the county council’s total yearly revenue, with the rest coming from various local sources. In 1997 and 1998, all four councils adopted their budgets within days of each other, in May and June of each year. Thus the fact that revenues were never handed down to localities earlier than the middle of the year was due more to the Parliament’s procrastination in adopting the state budget than to ineffective local council activity.

While all four councils facilitated a prompt transfer of funds from the central to the local level, there were marked differences in the manner in which financial resources were allocated among localities. Once the center handed down the budget figures to the counties, the county councils had to decide the allocation of revenues among localities as soon as possible, a provision explaining the little variation observed among counties. During this time, the county council was launching negotiations with mayors of the county’s villages and towns. With no income sources of their own, the localities asked the county council for the funds they needed for both new and already started projects. The austerity budgets Romania adopted during the 1996-2000 period meant that most of the demands went unanswered but the main criteria determining the allocation of funds, meager as these were, differed markedly from county to county.

An overwhelming majority of the Arges councilors conceded that in that county political calculations and plain corruption generally determined the fund allocation scheme. Arges was the only county where councilors of all political colors, whether in power or in the opposition, acknowledged that they themselves favored the localities where their party gained most support,
and that their colleagues were doing just the same. No councilor was ready to denounce a practice useful for building political capital, and no one called for its replacement with a non-particularistic prioritization of investments according to their local importance. Apparently, the issue was not so much to put an end to fund allotment along political lines, as to obtain the best possible deal for the towns and villages that voted for one’s own party. In Arges, the pie seemed large enough for everybody to enjoy the spoils according to the principle “I’ll close my eyes and let you give money to two of your mayors, but give to one of mine, too.” The PDSR had the most seats in the council, and therefore more localities that had voted for that party received funds, but a councilor representing the opposition readily conceded that “every party in power would do just the same.” In my interview with him, the Arges council president Ion Mihailescu argued that political considerations played no role in budget allocation, and that more objective criteria determined the amount of funds a particular locality received. According to him, foremost among these criteria was the continuation of projects already started. But councilors belonging to the PD and the CDR lamented that since the PDSR also dominated the Arges county council in the previous legislature a majority of such projects were located in pro-PDSR villages and towns.

In Arges, funds were also distributed according to what councilors described as “interests” (interese, occasionally called dealings, afaceri) of which only part were political. That these interests, promoted by a political party, a group or individuals, existed and played a dominant part in the local life was a fact recognized by all councilors I spoke with without

48 Author’s personal interview with R.D., Arges county councilor, 3 March 1999.
49 Author’s personal interview with R.E., Arges county councilor, 24 February 1999.
50 Author’s personal interview with Ion Mihailescu, Arges county council president, 3 March 1999.
exception. But few were ready to concede that these “interests” were fuelling plain corruption.

As one CDR respondent argued:

Corruption is something illegal, but here these practices are widely accepted and nobody gets punished for them. In fact, you can hardly punish those promoting their own interests because you will have to punish all of us. Not even the PDSR members [of the county council] are corrupt. I would say that their complete control over some local socioeconomic spheres determines their method of governing life in Arges.51

Take, however, the example of the new Arges County Library, a project launched by the county council in early 1992 but never completed. By early 1999 the building of the library already consumed twenty billion lei, although initially it was allotted only five billion lei. Disputed by many councilors and Arges residents as plain inutile as long as the old library was in perfect shape, the project was vigorously endorsed by the PDSR county leaders. According to reports in the local press, however, the council had a vested interest in not completing the works for the new library such that part of the funds could continue to be siphoned off for the more mundane task of building opulent residential villas for the local leaders, their family and their political patrons. The same situation apparently affected the renovation of the County Museum, another grandiose project financed by the county council.52

Councilors belonging to the opposition also complained that the same construction firm, whose general manager was the in-law of a county leader, invariably won all tenders financed by the council even when its proposals were technically inadequate.53 The tenders, organized by the executive apparatus under the supervision of the council leadership, apparently lacked transparency and their rules were fully disclosed not even to the councilors. These reports were

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51 Author’s personal interview with R.F., Arges county councilor, 24 February 1999.

52 Author’s personal interview with R.G., Arges county councilor, 24 February 1999. See also press reports in the local Curierul Zilei and Argesul Liber dailies. The cases of the Arges county library and museum were also reported, most recently, by Romania Libera (22 November 2000).

53 Author’s personal interview with R.E., Arges county councilor, 24 February 1999.
echoed by the local press and confirmed by an engineer with a privately owned, local
colorit, who suggested to me that corruption was the primary factor for fund allotment
in Arges, since those giving larger bribes invariably won the tenders. According to that
respondent, to win a tender financed by the council one had to approach unnamed council
members with the so-called “brick” (caramida) of five million lei (amounting to only US$340
but more than three times the Romanian average monthly salary in 1999). The engineer further
claimed that some mayors protested against the rigged tenders, but the council continued to
disburse funds for the construction of specific objectives only if the mayors promised to work
with the firms handpicked by the council. 54 Apparently tenders were also rigged for the benefit
of certain political parties in whose coffers the successful candidate had to transfer a pre-
negotiated amount of funds.

While for council outsiders the rigged adjudication of tenders and the bribes dominating
the selection were coterminous with corruption, for insiders they represented “material interests
which cut across party lines and are present both in the Arges county council and in the local
council of Pitesti [the county’s main town].” The councilor who made this remark then
proceeded to cite instances when various Arges county council members belonging to both the
government and the opposition had looked for their personal interests. 55 These "interests" also
explained, according to another respondent, the continuing support of the “independent”
councilors for the council leadership whom the latter ingratiated with trips abroad funded by the
council and with personal favors in the form of authorizations for erecting villas or garages on

54 Author’s personal interview with D. F., 28 February 1999.
55 Author’s personal interview with R.E., Arges county councilor, 24 February 1999.
public land.\textsuperscript{56} This was acknowledged, albeit inadvertently, by a county leader and prominent council member, who told me:

There are counties where the council leader represents the PNTCD and he listens only to the PNTCD councilors. There are other counties where the council leader is PDSR and he does just the same. But here all councilors can come to me. If they have a problem I won’t say no to them only because they belong to another party. I try to serve them all.\textsuperscript{57}

If the conversation were to take place in Canada, we could conclude that the county leader was probably trying to explain his willingness to consider as many political viewpoints as possible, but in Romania “to serve” has long acquired the flavor of a patron-client relationship.

Arges seemed an extreme case of a county dominated by corruption and clientelism, an image shared by its residents, not few of whom recognized it as the most corrupt county in Romania. People I met frequently argued that there nothing could be done without pull, bribes and connections, that is, “pile, cunostinte, relații,” a phrase whose acronym, PCR, was reminiscent of the Romanian Communist Party (Partidul Comunist Roman) and the devastating clientelism it promoted. For a councilor, Arges’s unenviable record was a result of the fact that ”Pitesti [the county’s main town] was once a market at the cross-roads where everybody engaged in trade, knew how to bargain and how to conduct dealings [afaceri]. Under communism they continued to do many things on the side [la negru].”\textsuperscript{58}

Arad and Galati also seemed affected by political preference and corruption but to a far lesser extent. In both counties a fair number of the councilors I interviewed argued that political favoritism did not play a significant role in budget allocation or tender adjudication. A Galati councilor who belonged to the opposition and was part of the council’s budget commission

\textsuperscript{56} Author’s personal interviews with R.B., Arges county councilor, 24 February.

\textsuperscript{57} Author’s personal interview with R.H., Arges county councilor, 3 March 1999.

\textsuperscript{58} Author’s personal interview with R.D., Arges county councilor, 3 March 1999.
claimed that when evaluating proposals coming from the localities the commission did not even know the mayors’ political color, as it was interested primarily in the mayors’ administrative experience and past accomplishments.\textsuperscript{59} But the leadership of these two councils was not spared from occasional accusations of political favoritism. In 1998, a quarrel within the PNTCD-PNL-PD coalition dominating the Arad county council, also ruling Romania at the central level at the time, quickly degenerated in such accusations being brought by the PNTCD against the PD, which at the time held the county council presidency.\textsuperscript{60}

Most councilors in those two counties were also adamant that corruption was uncharacteristic for their county, and that if it did exist there its levels were generally below the country average. Of course, “no mayor is satisfied with the share his locality receives, since we [the county council] have only limited funds to distribute.”\textsuperscript{61} Arad and Galati councilors reported far fewer cases of rigged tenders similar to those encountered in Arges, and almost none endorsed a partisan distribution of funds or acknowledged that he or his party would engage in such behavior. In Arad, a councilor went so far as to claim that “in Transylvania there is generally less corruption than in other parts of the country,”\textsuperscript{62} but another council member conceded that corruption affected the Romanian local public administration in its entirety.\textsuperscript{63} In Galati, the councilors also suggested that corruption and “material interests” played a larger part in the main town’s mayoralty than in the county council because the mayoralty “had something to offer to the citizens—commercial space, land plots and apartments—while the county council

\textsuperscript{59} Author’s personal interview with G.E., Galati county councilor, 1 April 1999.

\textsuperscript{60} Evenimentul Zilei (20 July 1998).

\textsuperscript{61} Author’s personal interview with G.C., Galati county councilor, 30 March 1999.

\textsuperscript{62} Author’s personal interview with G.B., Arad county councilor, 8 February 1999.

\textsuperscript{63} Author’s personal interview with A.B., member of the Arad county council executive apparatus, 9 February 1999.
had none of these." Some of them also cited Galati's main economic agent, the SIDEX aluminum processing plant, as the main locus of local illicit activity. The plant is outside the county council's jurisdiction.

In Mures the ethnic makeup of the county council seemed to render the issues of political favoritism and corruption meaningless. The two ethnic groups dominating the council apparently monitored each other so closely that such processes as budget allocation and tender adjudication were transparent and corruption-free. Of the four counties, Mures had the fewest councilors reporting corruption and the highest number of residents believing that corruption was not among the most important issues faced by the county. There, even the tenders were apparently adjudicated on professional competency rather than clientelism. This was explained by the similarity of strength of the two ethnic groups, a parity that lowered the importance of political affinities by keeping ethnicity highly salient at all times.

Table 3.6: The Nature of Fund Allocation: Budget Allotment and Tender Adjudication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Nature of Fund Allocation</th>
<th>County Council Rankings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Transparent, corruption-free</td>
<td>Mures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Less transparent, isolated cases of corruption, clientelism and political favoritism reported</td>
<td>Arad, Galati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lack of transparency, frequent cases of corruption and political favoritism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Total lack of transparency, pervasive corruption, clientelism and favoritism on political grounds</td>
<td>Arges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

64 Author's personal interview with G.D., Galati county councilor, 30 March 1999.

65 Author's personal interview with M.A., Mures county councilor, 17 March 1999.

66 Author's personal interviews with M.B. and M.C., Mures county councilors, 18 March 1999.
The four counties were ranked according to the nature of their fund allocation as measured by the transparency and equitability of their budget allocation and tender adjudication. The county where both processes were most transparent and corruption-free, Mures, received the highest score, reflecting the fact that allocations of funds and assets tended to benefit larger segments of the county population. Mures was followed closely by Arad and Galati where council activity was reportedly less affected by clientelism and political favoritism. Arges received the lowest score due to the partisan, clientelistic nature of fund allocation at the county council level, which benefited only restricted segments of the local population. County council rankings are given in Table 3.6.

Counties also differed with respect to their spending priorities, more specifically, the percentage of the total county budget allocated to investments as opposed to non-performing destinations such as salaries for administrative personnel or the acquisition of cars and cell phones for the use of the administrators. However, the 1998 investment pattern did not warrant regional differences between Transylvania and the rest of Romania. The Galati county came first, with as much as one-third of the county budget invested in road construction and upgrading, the extension of water and gas distribution systems to new villages, and the building of central heating systems for small towns. Galati was followed by Arad, with 24 percent of the total budget invested in similar projects. Mures and Arges came last, with investments taking up only 16 and 14 percent respectively of their total budgets (Table 3.7).67

67 Information on spending priorities was obtained from the 1998 annual reports of the four county councils. Low investment rates have been the norm in post-communist Romania. A press report alleged that in 1999 the Romanian local governments spend three times more on wages and bonuses, and cars, cell phones and television sets than on investment. In that year local governmental structures spend a total of US$1.6 billion, of which investments represented only US$0.3 billion, that is 18.75 percent. Mures and Galati had higher investment rates than the national average. Adevarul (11 February 2000).
County councils had other responsibilities in addition to budget allocation. According to the councilors I interviewed, the two most important policies to which the councils had to turn their attention were economic development and the prevention of corruption and organized crime. Not incidentally, these challenges were also those that the country as a whole has faced after 1989. In the following discussion counties were compared in terms of their council’s efforts to address these two problems rather than in terms of each county’s levels of economic development or corruption. This was because local governments must not be given credit or blame for matters beyond their control. Certainly local economic development depends on many things besides government, entrepreneurial skills and worker diligence among them. 

**County Economic Development Policy.** Challenged by the collapse of the communist era supply lines and inter-county trade agreements, all four counties placed economic development among their priorities. The prolonged recession that affected the entire country since 1990 meant that counties had few resources at their disposal for boosting local economy. While all four counties faced these limitations, there was some notable variation in the way each county understood to encourage private entrepreneurship and to attract investors from other parts of the country and from abroad. Two concrete measures were examined across all four counties: (1) attempts to promote interregional and foreign economic cooperation, and (2) efforts to boost economic activity, especially trade, by setting up free economic zones.
All four county councils participated in a number of interregional and international agreements aimed to facilitate economic cooperation. The most important of them were the regions Romania set up with the help of the European Union's PHARE program in order to encourage regional development and administrative decentralization (see Chapter 2 for a description of the legislative framework). The local Development Agency, on behalf of the Arad county council, has actively sought to maintain a high profile in the PHARE program by securing permission to head the programs prepared by the development region to which it belonged. The Arad county leadership also actively sought out international trade opportunities, and commissioned the initiation of comprehensive development programs and the writings of detailed reports on them. As part of this effort, the leadership encouraged the county councilor representing the local German community to rekindle relations with former Arad residents emigrated to Germany. Arad was also the only county I visited to participate in a transnational cooperation agreement together with two Hungarian counties and the Serbian autonomous province of Vojvodina, taking thus advantage of its privileged geographical position closer to the West. In February 2000, Arad county president Dan Ivan became the head of the Romanian-Hungarian-Vojvodina euroregion. The other counties had a more proactive participation in development regions. Unsuccessful in their efforts to head the regional development programs, these counties seemed resigned to wait for directions from the center rather than take advantage of the new cooperation possibilities opened by the program. Of these latter counties, Galati


69 Each county belongs to a different development region. See Romanian Government and European Commission, Green Paper, Regional Development Policy in Romania (Bucharest: PHARE Programme, 1997).

70 Radio Romania Actualitati (February 17, 2000).

71 Negotiations for selecting the county that will coordinate efforts in each development region proved to be divisive throughout Romania. In a majority of such regions the most populous and economically developed county assumed
showed a tendency to prefer traditional trade agreements limited to cooperation with the Romanian counties that Galati bordered.

Since the Romanian government set up the general framework for free economic zones in 1992, most counties have asked the center for permission to establish such zones. Arad was among the first to set up the Curtici-Arad area, close to the Romanian-Hungarian border and including the Arad international airport, as a free economic zone. Since then, the county has pursued an active policy of attracting investors from Hungary and Germany by granting tax exemptions, simplifying custom procedures, and upgrading the county’s infrastructure and service sector. It also converted the Arad airport so that it would accommodate international flights, and upgraded its flight control center, making it the most modern in southeastern Europe. On its part, Galati reinvigorated its free economic zone, one of the oldest in Romania, in the hope of taking advantage of the Danube’s clear way (allowing the access of medium-sized ships).

Although Mures and Arges have taken steps in this regard, they have been less successful in their efforts to promote economic recovery and to attract major investors, Arges because of its unusual redtape, and Mures because of ethnic divisions and the PUNR’s opposition to foreign, and especially Hungarian, investors on ideological grounds.

Given its concerted efforts to boost economic development, by increasing its interregional and international trade opportunities and by setting up a free economic zone where

the leadership, and this is why Arges and Mures lost their bids. The same fate would have had Arad unless it made a convincing case that a program aimed at strengthening decentralization should be headed by a county other than that which traditionally was considered the economic and cultural center of the region. Wary that the program could erode their autonomy, county councils bitterly criticized the way the regions were set up. The Galati county council president, for example, denounced the PHARE development program as “an aberrant move running counter local autonomy,” an opinion shared by many local Romanian leaders. See Evenimentul Zilei (12 January 1998) for president Angheluta’s statement. Galati, however, concluded bi-lateral collaboration agreements with the French province of Aquitaine in 1997. Rasvan Angheluta, the Galati county council president (1992-2000), was also the first chairman of the Dunarea de Jos development region.

local and foreign entrepreneurs could set up business, Arad was awarded the highest score. The
other three counties received lower scores because their economic development policies did not
seem to be part of a coherent and comprehensive local strategy designed to address long-term
economic challenges (Table 3.8).

Table 3.8: Economic Development Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Economic Development Policy</th>
<th>County Council Rankings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Active search for interregional and international opportunities; coherent economic development policy</td>
<td>Arad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Proactive attitude toward economic development, short-term solutions</td>
<td>Arges, Galati, Mures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Corruption and Crime Prevention. In early 1997 Commissions for Fighting against
Corruption and Organized Crime were set up in each county at the initiative of Christian
Democrat President Emil Constantinescu. The commissions, subordinated to the county councils,
included the county council president, the prefect, the main town’s mayor, and representatives of
the local police, intelligence services (the former Securitate), procuracy and financial guard.
From the beginning, the commissions pledged not to engage in political vendetta but instead to
gather the information needed for curbing two of the most serious problems of post-communist
Romania.73 Commissions were set up in all counties under consideration, but there was little
variation with respect to their success in reaching the declared goals. The commissions
responded to a number of letters charging local administrators and state representatives with
corruption, gathered information on a number of petty criminals, but none had the political will
and the technical skill needed to launch investigations in the most notorious cases of local
corruption. The Arad commission was reluctant to follow the numerous press reports alleging
that Arad mayor Dumitru Branc received hefty commissions for using his administrative position for the benefit of several local entrepreneurs. The reason was the fact that most commission members belonged to the same coalition as Branc, the CDR. In Galati, the commission steered clear of the corruption cases involving the management of SIDEX, the most important local economic agent with representatives in the county council. It also refused to investigate accusations of corruption brought by the local press against Galati mayor Eugen Durbaca. Arges is yet to make light in tender adjudications and the web of “lice” firms siphoning off the assets of the county’s main producers, the car-manufacturer Dacia and the Arpechim refinery, which were both controlled by the Romanian state until recently. Though Mures has registered lower levels of corruption than in other parts of the country, the local “big sharks” are yet to be brought to justice, according to the former head of the local police.

C. Bureaucratic Responsiveness

Bureaucratic responsiveness is understood here as the promptness with which councils address the requests of concerned citizens. Since Romania aspires to be a democratic polity, its local governmental structures should abide by the obligation of fulfilling societal demands. Long gone are the days when county leaders could disregard their need to be accountable to the public, to disclose information on the council’s activity or to ignore local interests on ideological

73 Evenimentul Zilei (14 January 1997).

74 According to a report published by the daily Evenimentul Zilei (12 July 1999), SIDEX allegedly receives raw materials and commercializes its end products through a number of firms controlled by the SIDEX top management. See also Monitorul (18 July 1998).

75 For a detailed report on Arpechim, see Romania Libera (30 October 1999) and Evenimentul Zilei (5 November 1998). For one on Dacia, see Evenimentul Zilei (1 November 1998).

76 Author’s personal interview, 16 March 1999.
grounds in the name of promoting an invented national interest in which local concerns had a secondary place. This section tries to measure the specifically democratic component of county council performance.

From the onset it should be noted that citizen contact with county councils drastically diminished after 1989, when the mayoralties' formal hierarchical subordination to the county council was abolished. Previously, citizens dissatisfied with the decisions of the mayoralties could petition the county council. Further erosion occurred in 1996, when additional responsibilities were transferred from the county council to the local administrative bodies.\textsuperscript{77} Among these responsibilities was the allotment of state-owned apartments, which made for the bulk of the requests with which citizens approached the county council. The council retained decision making power in areas of interest to those seeking to recover their land and residential properties confiscated by the communist regime, and to the private entrepreneurs applying for authorizations to start up businesses.

Since 1996, most Romanian county councils have set up Information Centers for Citizens (Centre de Informatii pentru Cetateni) that can answer general questions about the socioeconomic background of the county, the legislation the county councils are called to implement, the legal documents needed to accompany petitions, and the composition and activity of the council. Generally, the Transylvanian counties were the first to set up these centers, with the rest of Romania following afterwards. In our case, Arad's center was the oldest, followed by those of Mures and Arges, with Galati coming in last. In a bold move, Arad and Mures were also among the first Romanian counties to design web pages for these centers, with Arges following shortly thereafter. Galati, which has yet to take such a step, received the lowest score (see Table

\textsuperscript{77} Author's personal interview with A.A., member of the Arad county council executive apparatus, 4 February 1999.
The information centers remain, however, poorly advertised in all four counties, with only a fraction of citizens knowing of their existence and using their services.

Table 3.9: Information Centers for Citizens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Information Centers for Citizens</th>
<th>County Council Rankings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Offers extensive information for citizens; well organized public audience programs; first to set up web pages</td>
<td>Arad, Mures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Somewhat extensive information; easily accessible; have set up web pages more recently</td>
<td>Arges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Somewhat rudimentary information; no web page</td>
<td>Galati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Basic information; no web page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rubric of bureaucratic responsiveness could also include a measure of access to local leaders, since citizens wanting to present demands must first have access to their representatives in local governmental structures. Robert Putnam, for example, used building accessibility in his study on Italy, and found that it correlated well with other measures of bureaucratic responsiveness. In post-communist Romania also there were significant differences between councils in this respect. Arges was the most accessible of the four councils I visited. One could go in and out of the building at all times without having to secure permission from the guard (portar) downstairs. Next came Arad, where entrance to the building was unrestricted at all times, but one could hardly escape the watchful eye of the guard, who usually wanted to know one’s business. In Mures and Galati, by contrast, the building was literally closed for citizens most of the time. All inquiries were addressed to a guard who would invariably ask the concerned citizen to come back during audience hours. Pre-arranged personal meetings with councilors and council staff had to be confirmed by phone. Even then, in Mures I always had to wait for the guard to unlock the door and give me access to the building.
But unrestricted access to the council building did not guarantee the possibility to meet the councilors. In fact, citizens visiting the council have little chances to meet councilors other than the president and the vice-presidents, the only councilors who are full-time legislators. With these three notable exceptions, councilors have neither offices in the council building nor time slots set aside for public audiences. Consequently, the citizens have to take the additional step of finding out the address and phone number of the firm or political party where the councilor they want to meet could be reached. This is why in the final analysis the counties were ranked with respect not to their building accessibility but with respect to the contact information they were making available to the public. Though the Arges council was the most accessible, the building was poorly organized and basic information needed for contacting the councilors was hard to obtain. In Arad, the guard was always able to point out the days when each councilor was most likely to come by the council and to offer promptly contact information for all the councilors. Mures and Galati stood between these two extremes (for council rankings see Table 3.10).78

Table 3.10: Availability of Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Availability of Contact Information</th>
<th>County Council Rankings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Extensive contact information on councilors; information on when councilors will come by the council</td>
<td>Arad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Comprehensive contact information; no additional information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Basic information</td>
<td>Mures, Galati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No information</td>
<td>Arges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

78 Aware of councilor inaccessibility, some political parties set aside weekly time slots when party members holding councilor mandates could be met at the party headquarters. For example, the PNTCD Arad organization decided that every Wednesday concerned citizens, regardless of party affiliation, may approach the PNTCD councilors with written requests detailing their specific concerns. The party promises to look into the matter and solve it, if possible (Author’s interview with A.E., Arad county councilor and PNTCD leader, 8 February 1999). The PNTCD estimated that half of requests were personal, with the other half being related to legislation and problems of concern for the larger community. These ad-hoc arrangements, facilitating contact mostly between sympathizers and local officials of the same political party, had only recently been set up on an experimental basis. Although in all four counties a fair number of party leaders claimed that their parties were organizing such meetings, in practice they seldom did.
Putnam and Stoner-Weiss argued that bureaucratic responsiveness can be gauged from constituent evaluation of performance, but in the Romanian case the constituents' satisfaction levels alone do not seem to reflect accurately governmental performance. Citizens do not always recognize the limits of governmental activity, the more so in countries like Romania, where different governmental and administrative bodies have poorly defined responsibilities. But citizen appraisals in conjunction with other measures of effectiveness can provide further evidence for governmental performance differences. The present analysis therefore includes a comparison of the four counties in terms of their constituent evaluations of ten policy areas, including housing, education, industrial and agricultural development, health care, employment, living standards, public order, privatization, and reduction of crime and corruption. The comparison is based on the October 1999 Opinion Barometer. For each indicator I established if counties differed significantly among themselves using analysis of variance (Anova), a statistical procedure which treats county as an experimental treatment with, in this case, four levels corresponding to the four counties. Counties shown not to differ significantly with respect to a particular indicator received equal rankings.  

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79 The analysis of variance (Anova) compares the four mean scores simultaneously. Multiple t tests could be used to uncover differences between means, but this test procedure is tedious and time-consuming, and the probability of falsely rejecting at least one of the hypotheses increases as the number of t tests increases. Thus, for example, although the probability of a Type I error was fixed at .05 for each individual test, when comparing four means the probability of falsely rejecting at least one of those tests is as large as .30. Anova provides a single test of the hypothesis "all four county population means are equal," rejecting it for values located in the upper tail of the F distribution, and accepting it for all other values. Accepting the hypothesis thus means that the means were not statistically different. But when the hypothesis is rejected, we only know that at least a pair of means differs significantly, without knowing for sure which pair it is. In this case, to investigate mean differences further I have employed Bonferroni post-hoc multiple comparisons that investigate the statistical significance of all possible pairs of means. Although the comparisons of interest were identified before the data collection, a post-hoc method was employed because I was interested in all possible county comparisons, not just in a subset. The Bonferroni method assumes equal variances but is best suited for the ordinal data on which this analysis rests. Only the pairs of means found statistically significant at the .05 level are reported in this study. According to Lyman Ott, *An Introduction to Statistical Methods and Data Analysis*, 3rd ed. (Boston: PWS-Kent, 1988), p. 404.
The four counties differed among themselves with respect to only two of the ten policy areas: housing and education (see Tables 3.11 and 3.12). The fact that an overwhelming majority of the survey questions were not able to reveal meaningful differences among counties sheds some doubt over the validity of including the two other questions in the final analysis. The more so since the June 1999 Opinion Barometer did not document significant differences with respect to housing and education, and these two policy areas are not among the core responsibilities of the county councils. But the two questions do reveal the same regional pattern observed throughout the chapter and rank Transylvanian counties higher than non-Transylvanian counties. It is telling that when county differences emerged, they pointed to regional disparities. Moreover, the inclusion of the two questions does not change in any way the position of the counties relative to each other, although they do boost all four county summed scores.80 Since here I am interested to compare the four counties among themselves, rather than to contrast them with an ideal type, I chose to include the two measures.

The Transylvanian counties of Arad and Mures registered higher levels of constituent satisfaction with housing than the non-Transylvanian counties of Arges and Galati. Some 40 percent of Arad residents, and 25 percent of Mures residents, reported satisfaction with the governmental housing policy. Only 22.9 percent of Arges respondents, and as few as 12.2 percent of Galati respondents, did so. The mean scores of Arges, Galati and Mures, however, did not differ significantly at the .05 level or better, and therefore these three counties received equal rankings of 2, while Arad received a ranking of 4 (Table 3.11).

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80 Without the two questions, the summed scores were 35.5 for Arad, 30 for Mures, 24 for Galati, and 14.5 for Arges. After the county rankings based on the two questions were added, the summed scores increased to 43.5 for Arad, 34 for Mures, 28 for Galati and 18.5 for Arges (see also Table 2.14). The final ranking of the four counties remained thus unchanged.
Table 3.11: “How satisfied are you with the government’s performance in housing?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Dissatisfaction (1+2%)</th>
<th>Satisfaction (3+4%)</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were offered four choices: 1=very dissatisfied; 2=dissatisfied; 3=satisfied; 4=very satisfied. I discarded option 5=don’t know/no answer so as not to bias the mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.64; df1=3; df2=311). Statistically significant post hoc Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, and Arad-Mures.

The counties also differed significantly with respect to the constituents’ evaluation of governmental educational policy (see Table 3.12). Again, the Arad county registered the highest percentage of respondents reporting satisfaction with governmental performance (44 percent), with less than one third of the residents of other counties doing so. Arges, Galati and Mures were found not to differ significantly at the .05 level, and as a result all three counties were awarded equal rankings of 2. By contrast, Arad received a ranking of 4, to reflect its higher mean score.

Table 3.12: “How satisfied are you with the government’s performance in education?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Dissatisfaction (1+2%)</th>
<th>Satisfaction (3+4%)</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were offered four choices: 1=very dissatisfied; 2=dissatisfied; 3=satisfied; 4=very satisfied. I discarded option 5=don’t know/no answer so as not to bias the mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (F=2.92; df1=3; df2=325). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati and Arad-Mures.

County Comparison

Summed scores for the 12 performance measures that differentiated among counties appear in Table 3.13. Councils that had a more efficient internal allocation of authority and used more extensively statistical information services were also the councils displaying greater
bureaucratic responsiveness and having a more effective decision making process. In those counties the dispersal of funds and contracts was more likely to be done with the interests of broader societal groups in mind, and the councilors were more likely to be satisfied with the council’s overall activity. These councils had greater success in selecting their leadership in a timely fashion and exhibited less internal dissension. Arad, and to a lesser extent Mures, had such councils. Arad also fared better with respect to the constituents’ evaluations of governmental performance.

By contrast, the councils that were riven with conflicts had trouble selecting their leadership, and therefore for weeks and even months could not move their attention to the policy process. These county councils lagged behind in terms of the range of statistical information sources they employed, were less likely to facilitate the citizens’ contact with councilors, had a proactive economic development policy, and had spending priorities dictated by particularistic, group or party, interests. Overall the Galati county council and especially the Arges council were far less successful in their activity, a fact acknowledged by councilors in my conversations with them.

Table 3.13: Summed Performance Scores across 12 Performance Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Arad</th>
<th>Arges</th>
<th>Galati</th>
<th>Mures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Internal Allocation of Authority (Tables 3.1+3.2+3.3)</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Selection (Table 3.1)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Focus (Table 3.2)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Representativeness (Table 3.3)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Statistical Information Services (Table 3.4)</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. **Decisional Effectiveness (Tables 3.5+3.6+3.7+3.8)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>13.5</th>
<th>5.5</th>
<th>12.5</th>
<th>11.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Councilors' Perception of Council Activity (Table 3.5)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund Allocation (Table 3.6)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spending Priority (Table 3.7)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development Policy (Table 3.8)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. **Bureaucratic Responsiveness (Tables 3.9+3.10+3.12+3.13)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information Centers for Citizens (Table 3.9)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Contact Information (Table 3.10)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituents’ Evaluation of Education (Table 3.12)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituents’ Evaluations of Housing (Table 3.13)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total                                         | 43.5 | 18.5 | 28   | 35   |

The comparison reveals some important regional discrepancies, with the two Transylvanian counties outscoring the Moldovan and Wallachian counties. With summed scores of 43.5 and 35, Arad and Mures fared better than Galati and Arges, which scored only 28 and 18.5. Note also that with some exceptions the measures are fairly consistent, ranking the four counties generally in the same way. Indeed, the pattern of Arad and the top, Arges at the bottom, and Mures and Galati in between was revealed by 7 of the 12 questions, with two other questions disclosing similar but slightly different patterns. Regional differences (Arad and Mures at the top, and Galati and Arges at the bottom) emerged in 11 of the 12 cases. In only one instance, spending priority, did a non-Transylvanian county (Galati) rank higher than both Arad and Mures. Having established that local government performance differences do exist, the remainder of the study will attempt to uncover the extent to which county differences in social capital explain them.
CHAPTER 4.
Explaining Institutional Performance. Social Capital - An Overview

As the previous chapters contended, in post-communist Romania there have been significant differences among local governments in terms of their success in reaching their declared goals. More specifically, the Transylvanian county councils of Arad and Mures were better than non-Transylvanian councils of Galati and Arges at addressing the problems faced by their counties and responding to the concerns of their citizens, albeit all these local governmental structures had the same formal functions and responsibilities. What could account for these differences? What factors might explain why the same institutional arrangement performed in some settings better than in others? In what follows a sociostructural explanation is advanced and tested as a possible answer. To probe the relationship between institutional success/failure and social capital, I will begin by surveying the relevant literature in view of defining social capital, identifying the measures that can operationalize it, and laying the ground for the county comparison detailed in Chapter 5. This chapter begins by presenting the most important intellectual markers for the use of the concept, highlights the manner in which previous studies have shaped my understanding of social capital, and offers an explicit definition of social capital to serve as a benchmark for the present study. I then propose six measures of social capital and show the reasons why each of them was included in the present analysis. The chapter concludes with a presentation of the most important studies assessing the level of social capital in Romania. With one exception, no observer of Romanian politics and society ever used the concepts of 'social capital', '(un)civicness' or 'amoral familism' to describe life in that country, but they did
present evidence on some of the facets of social capital identified here. This historical evidence is meant to serve as a background for understanding the statistical analyses reported in Chapter 5 and 6.

Social Capital: A Brief Intellectual History

While social capital has existed as a concept in the sociological literature for some time, only in the last decade did it gain currency in political science. And while only recently did the term enter academic parlance, it followed a long tradition resting on the ideas that trust and norms were needed to facilitate market transactions and that associationalism was a key ingredient of democracy. Indeed, all major sociological schools used terms that echoed in one way or another sociostructural resources akin to social capital. In his recent overview of the subject, Woolcock evoked Marx’s *bounded solidarity* which makes groups coalesce in face of a common experience or enemy (identified by him usually as capitalistic exploitation), Weber’s *enforceable trust*, those social obligations that provide citizens with economic advantages or opportunities, Durkheim’s *value introjection*, which sees a shared sense of value within a society as being more important than contractual commitments, and Simmel’s *reciprocity transactions* in informal networks, in which one person does favors for another in return for favors at a later date. Another precursor of contemporary social capital theorists, French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville, never used the term “social capital” to describe political life in America, but he did

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note the value of voluntary associations, a key element of social capital, for sustaining a
democratic spirit.³

Opinions are divided over who exactly should be credited with the first use of the concept
in its contemporary form. Some social capital scholars agree that the term first appeared in Jane
Jacobs' 1961 study on The Death and Life of Great American Cities. In arguing that city
planning and rebuilding unwittingly served to deaden the social and economic city life, Jacobs
contended that “networks are a city’s irreplaceable social capital. Whenever the capital is lost,
from whatever cause, the income from it disappears, never to return until and unless new capital
is slowly accumulated.”⁴ In a little known study published in the late 1970s Glen Loury also used
the term to communicate the idea that social relationships constitute resources akin to physical or
human capital for individuals, but his study failed to get the attention it deserved.⁵ The French
sociologist Pierre Bourdieu was the first to use the term to refer to the advantages conferred by
membership in certain communities. In his earlier writings, social capital represented a distinct
form of social relationship resulted from investment strategies pursued consciously or
unconsciously and aimed at producing advantages for the individual at the present and/or in the
future.⁶ He later defined social capital as “the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to
an individual or group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized

³ Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (New York: Shocker Books, 1961 [1835]).
relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition." Bourdieu further contended that the volume of social capital in a social relationship depended on the extent of network connections to be mobilized and the volume of capital possessed by the individuals in the network.

Half a decade later, sociologist James Coleman developed the conceptual foundations of social capital, which he described as a sociostructural resource, roughly analogous to assets such as financial or human capital, individuals derive from their social ties. In Coleman's understanding:

Social capital is defined by its function. It is ... a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence ... Unlike other forms of capital, social capital inheres in the structure of relations between persons and among persons.8

His conceptualization of social capital as resources inherent in a social organization that constitute capital assets for the individual made reference to features of social organization that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action.9 In his theoretical inquiry, Coleman identified three elements that could help social relationships become useful capital: (1) an assurance for expectations, obligations and trustworthiness that formed the basis of trust, (2) networks relying on information transfer in social relations, and (3) social norms and effective sanctions that would reduce transaction costs. Synergy and voluntary cooperation, he argued, were easier when individuals inherited substantial stocks of trust, networks and norms, and when the pursuit of collective goods was not seen as a contradiction to the pursuit of


maximizing individual wealth. Coleman cited two suggestive examples worth mentioning here. The first referred to the New York Jewish diamond merchants who conduct their transactions informally and thus save lawyers' fees. Sacks of jewels worth thousands of dollars are lent for examination overnight without any paper signed. What makes these expeditious exchanges possible is the trust that associates will not shirk their obligations because they belong to the same tight social circles. Anyone found guilty of malfeasance can kiss good-bye his future chances for taking part in this lucrative market. Coleman similarly argued that pupils in Catholic schools fare better compared to those in public schools because a teaching staff imbued with religious commitment sees the school as a closely integrated community rather than simply a set of bureaucratic structures.

In the early 1990s, social capital emerged as a crucial conceptual tool for improving both political and economic performance by facilitating collective action among actors, within different institutional settings. Much of the praise for popularizing the concept outside of sociological circles goes to Robert Putnam, the first political scientist to employ the term in his studies on Italy and the much publicized "bowling alone" theme. In his understanding, social capital consisted of the "social life networks, norms and trust that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives." Drawing on a wealth of statistical data and historical analysis, Putnam showed in Making Democracy Work how differences in levels of social capital translated into differences in governmental performance. Northern Italian regions with high levels of social capital, where citizens took interest in politics, communities were based on trust and reciprocity, inter-personal relationships were horizontal, and a dense network of voluntary associations existed, were regions with effective government. By contrast, southern

Italian regions characterized by low levels of social capital, where citizens were distrustful of each other and disinterested in politics, patronage and corruption were in abundance, and voluntary organizations were scarce, were regions with unperforming government. Putnam not only showed that the presence of social capital—more than economic wealth and development, political polarization or social conflict—was the difference between successful self-government and failure, but he went further to pinpoint the factors responsible for the creation and sustenance of the sociostructural resources he deemed vital for a healthy democracy. In the second part of the same magisterial study, he suggested that the northern Italian civic community rested on a virtuous circle of social capital with deep historical and cultural roots. The opposite was unfortunately true, according to Putnam, for the southern Italian “defection, distrust, skirting, exploitation, disorder and stagnation,” which “intensify each other in a suffocating miasma of vicious circles.”

Putnam contrasted civic and uncivic communities, and in doing so he relied on the work of sociologists like Edward Banfield, who earlier described situations when social capital was in short supply. Because of the peasants’ tendency “to maximize the material, short-run advantage of the nuclear family” and to assume that “all others will do likewise,” the small southern Italian village of Chiaromonte could not solve collective action problems and thus could not improve its economic and political life. This “amoral familism” – attributed by Banfield to a combination of long-term economic deprivation, high mortality rate, prevalence of nuclear families, class subordination, and child rearing patterns alternating rewards and punishments in a manner not justified by coherent principles – was ill-suited to sustain a network of associations allowing the community a measure of economic prosperity. That amoral familism was not rooted in economic

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deprivation alone was illustrated by a suggestive example worth mentioning here. As bickering among peasants and their inability to draft a request for a village high-school meant that Chiaromonte had only an elementary school, students from the village had to commute daily some thirty kilometers to the nearest town. For Banfield, cultural not economic factors created the deadlock. The regional government granted a bus and a driver, but the Chiaromonte peasants were unable to reach an understanding that would change the bus schedule and allow students to arrive in the town in time for classes. The entire community was worse off because of its failure to come together. As the example suggests, amoral familism went hand in hand with pervasive distrust towards those outside the immediate family, an understanding of the public domain as a battleground for the pursuit of personal interests, and a general inability to maintain organization and to engage people in matters of public concern.12

In adapting the concept for political analysis, Putnam departed significantly from Coleman’s understanding of social capital, although both highlighted the same triad of trust, networks and norms operating at the community, rather than at the individual, level. Whereas Coleman believed that social capital was the unintended consequence of the formalization of social relationships, Putnam suggested that social capital was built up and depleted primarily through explicit efforts to facilitate cooperation and coordination, more specifically through voluntary associations. Whereas Coleman argued that the usefulness of social capital depended on the circumstance, Putnam saw it as a resource with only positive political consequences and recommended social capital and social trust as a panacea for current problems.13

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13 Coleman argued that social capital was “fungible with respect to specific activities. A given form of social capital that is valuable in facilitating certain actions may be useless or even harmful for others” (Foundations of Social Theory, p. 302). But Coleman himself treated social capital as an unmixed blessing, a view later embraced by Putnam, who at the beginning seemed unaware that social capital could have some downside.
Coleman's conceptualization social capital and access to it were unevenly distributed in society, Putnam seemed to assume that they were uniform, and that all forms of capital (social, human or cultural) were equally valuable as resources to facilitate individual or collective actions. Whereas Coleman saw it as an exogenous variable for policy purposes, Putnam told us—albeit in a rather pessimistic voice—that public policy can be oriented towards social capital building, and that social trust, networks and norms constituted a common good everyone could share in. The social capital theory was wholeheartedly embraced by political scientists debating the appropriate role of government and the precedence of political attitudes and behavior over political institutions.

The result was a voluminous body of research that takes Bourdieu, Coleman and/or Putnam as its benchmark, and openly acknowledges its efforts to clarify some of the perceived conceptual, analytical and operational shortcomings of the latter three authors. Although not internally cohesive, this vast literature has moved along several main directions, greatly advancing our understanding of the ingredients of social capital and its theoretical relevance. All these studies, which are briefly presented in the following sections, have provided valuable guidance to the present analysis. The purpose of this review is not to repeat the arguments raised by various authors but to find a working definition of social capital and to spell out the nature of the relationship among institutional performance, social capital and ethnicity.

Much of the social capital literature has revolved around the problem of defining the term either as a collection of elements or in relation to other political concepts.\textsuperscript{14} Making Democracy Work made the point that trust in fellow citizens, civic engagement, interest in politics and a rich network of voluntary associations were all evidence of a civic spirit, and consequently of social

\textsuperscript{14} Previous surveys of the social capital literature tried to set the record straight about the relationship between Bourdieu's, Coleman's and Putnam's definitions of the concept, but I have opted instead to concentrate my efforts on identifying the political attitudes and behaviors that make the essence of social capital. Here social capital was contrasted to civil society and political culture because numerous authors have tended to collapse the terms.
capital. Putnam's Italian data suggested that his social capital measures were positively correlated among themselves, all pointing in the same direction, if not to the same degree. Other researchers employed different data sets in an effort to see if these relationships were empirically valid for other countries and political settings. Using aggregate data from the United States, Brehm and Rahn, for example, found evidence that trust and civic engagement did go together as suggested by Putnam. In a lengthy study designed to refute the implications of the "bowling alone" argument, van Deth also found a positive correlation between social capital, on the one hand, and interest in politics and political involvement, on the other. Nevertheless, after examining data from Western Europe, he concluded that the relationship was uneven, since for some citizens, dubbed "spectators" in the analysis, the level of political involvement lagged far behind the level of interest in politics.

In their examinations of the definitional aspects of social capital, Fowler and Edwards provided sober analyses of the differences separating social capital from concepts like political culture and civil society. In reviewing some thirty articles on the subject, they took a stand against studies that conceived social capital as little more than a stand-in for old political culture variables. Indeed, sociostructural resources like social capital incorporate both attitudes and behavior, and refer not only to the relationship between citizens and government but also to those norms that bind individuals to other members of the community. As the two authors forcefully contended, these differences do not warrant social capital's reduction to just another variant of

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political culture. Fowler and Edwards also made the argument that civil society and social capital (or "civicness") stemmed from two different traditions that, although occasionally intersecting each other, have imprinted distinct features on the two concepts.\textsuperscript{18} Social capital arguments lay special emphasis on the ability of associational life to foster patterns of civility in the actions of citizens of democratic polities. Civil society, passionately articulated by Central European intellectuals like Vaclav Havel and Adam Michnik in the 1970s and 1980s, privileges that sphere of action which is independent of the state and precisely because of that is capable of "energizing resistance to a tyrannical regime." As Fowler and Edwards noted, there is a certain degree of contradiction between the two concepts, for while the former postulates the positive effects of association for governance, the latter emphasizes the importance of civil association as a counterweight to the state.\textsuperscript{19} Needless to say that stressing that social capital is irreducible to political culture or civil society is not tantamount to saying that they have nothing in common but rather that political scientists should be aware that the assumptions, usage and operationalization of the latter two do not readily apply to the former.\textsuperscript{20}

To address the definitional challenges highlighted by previous studies dealing with social capital, this study takes at heart Keefer’s comments: rather than endlessly debating what social capital should mean, it is "more helpful . . . simply to be clear about what we mean by social


\textsuperscript{20} To the extent that it refers to interpersonal ties and relational networks in which people are embedded, social capital is closely related to the first face of culture identified by Laitin. The other face includes the symbols, language, values and assumptions people use to interpret their world. See David Laitin, \textit{Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).
capital in every comment or application." For this study, therefore, social capital is taken to consist of those features of community life that can potentially advance the wellbeing of the community: inter-personal trust and cooperation, interest and engagement in the political life of the community, social and ethnic toleration, and networks of interaction between community members. Each of these social capital measures is presented in the last section of this chapter. As a composite of both political attitudes and behavior in which individuals and their fellow community members engage, social capital as defined here is not reducible to political culture. Neither is it understood as a resource in which only members of the voluntary organizations belonging to a state-free civil society could share. Associationalism is an important element of social capital, but cannot stand in for the latter. For this reason, rather than taking voluntary groups as the unit of analysis, as civil society scholarship generally does, this study looks at the sociostructural configurations of larger communities. And instead of considering that membership in any association can produce social capital, this study privileges those groups that foster trust and reciprocity toward non-group members, and toward the larger society.

In his study of Italian regions, Putnam used social capital both as an independent and a dependent variable, and as such put two distinct arguments on the agenda: (1) social capital as the cause of good governance, economic development and democracy, and (2) social capital as the result of various constellations of historical experiences. These causal relationships, ultimately denoting the relevance of social capital for political analysis, have been examined in some detail by other authors. Brehm and Rahn replicated both causal relationships in a study arguing that the collective manifestations of social capital highlighted by scholars in Coleman’s

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and Putnam’s tradition must be replicated at the level of individual civic engagement and in individual attitudes toward others.\textsuperscript{22} Seligson, by contrast, contented herself with probing only the first causation using demand-making on governmental officials instead of institutional performance.\textsuperscript{23} Her study, which supported Putnam’s conclusion that social capital is associated with democracy, found that among Central Americans, participation in community improvement organizations was much more likely to lead to demand-making than involvement in any other kind of civil society organizations. Similarly, Richard Rose looked at social capital’s impact on welfare in post-communist Russia, and specified the circumstances under which networks can help increase individual welfare.\textsuperscript{24}

Other research projects saw social capital as a necessary prerequisite for enhancing community action and for enabling societal actors to be involved collectively in the provision of public goods at national, regional and local levels. Studies by Brehm and Rahn, Stolle and Rochon, and Muller and Seligson suggested that communities with more social capital were able to engage in joint activity and to produce public goods more easily than those with less of it.\textsuperscript{25} They argued that when people work together voluntarily they acquire important democratic orientations and skills as trust, norms of reciprocity and cooperation, and the capacity to transcend narrow points of view and conceptualize the common good. Social capital thus helps citizens overcome the public-private divide, and solve the dilemma of collective action of

\textsuperscript{22} See Brehm and Rahn, “Individual-Level Evidence.”


reconciling rationality by individuals with rationality by society. In doing so, the concept of social capital has shifted the emphasis away from new institutionalist approaches, which see in collective dilemmas reasons for the existence of institutions but leave open the crucial problems of how are formal institutions provided and why the same institutions operate differently in different settings. In its criticism of the undersocialised character of new institutionalism, the social capital theory drew on Granovetter’s embeddedness argument, which pointed to the role of personal relations and networks in generating trust, establishing expectations and enforcing norms, and to the role of social and cultural contexts in affecting purposive action.

A number of scholars examined in further detail Putnam’s claim that sociostructural reserves of trust, norms and networks had salutary implications for the creation and sustenance of community and democracy. Wood shared Putnam’s view that “in the complex causal processes of social history, certain kinds of political culture help shape and sustain political institutions” that make democracy work. Sides explicitly tested the relationship between social capital and democracy only to find out that there is a degree of reciprocity between the two. The asymmetry of the relationship, with democracy’s impact on social trust being much greater than social trust’s impact on democracy, prompted the author to take Jackman’s and Miller’s, rather than Inglehart’s and Putnam’s, side and argue that social capital is endogeneous to, more


than a pre-requisite of democracy. Note, however, that Sides' operationalization methods reduced social capital to just one of its facets, social trust, and thus his conclusions were considered by many social capital scholars as unsubstantiated.

Sides' conclusion, however, was echoed by the State-Society Synergy project, which rejected Putnam's theory of social capital formation as an exclusively society-driven process in which deliberate action and strategy by the state have no role to play. In his already mentioned study on rural Mexico, Fox moved one step closer to unpack the social capital formation process by isolating two additional ways in which norms of trust and reciprocity can emerge in communities under authoritarian regimes. He examined instances in which the state and local societal actors co-produce social capital, as when reformist Mexican governmental officials encouraged relatively autonomous grassroots organizations. The second causal path of social capital formation, according to that study, is through collaboration between local and external (read outside of the community) civil society organizations such as the democratic wing of the Catholic Church. Fox, however, recognized that the alliances between "state and societal reformists often end up inducing subordinate semi-clientelism without actually engendering an autonomous "thickening" of civil society organizations specific to civic communities. While unnecessarily collapsing social capital and civil society, the State-Society Synergy project raised awareness to the fact that the understanding of any polity calls for an examination of the political

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settlements that ground it, and of their effects on the social forces and autonomous associations that produce social capital. Putnam himself accepted that social capital might be the focus of more active state intervention after he became involved with the Saguaro Seminar, which is committed to discovering "actionable strategies" to rebuild social capital in different corners of the world. Initially he left little room for government in social capital building, arguing instead that social capital is primarily the product of historical forces.

Recently Booth and Richard reiterated the argument that the capacity of associationalism (civil society) to produce social capital is shaped in important ways by the larger sociopolitical and economic context. Drawing on a five-nation survey of the attitudes and behavior of Central Americans, the authors showed that in the aftermath of authoritarian regimes people remain wary of political engagement, even when they participate actively in associations. Booth and Richard also explicitly supported Tarrow's earlier contention that the causal, or at least sequential, connection may move from state behavior to social capital development rather than the reverse.

In his 1996 review of Making Democracy Work, Tarrow faulted Putnam for errors in interpretations of Italian history. In particular, he suggested that rather than social capital having shaped government performance, as Putnam argued, the opposite probably occurred, the state and political institutions having stimulated high levels of associational activity and civicness. Tarrow was not alone in his insistence that political context (that is, the environmental


conditions of citizen participation and association) strongly shapes associationalism, engagement and social capital, as Fowler and Edwards later returned to this argument.36

The present study takes into account these important findings of the social capital scholarship. Despite the numerous criticisms raised in relation to the concept and its theoretical usefulness, even its most acerbic critics, political scientist Michael Fowley and sociologist Bob Edwards, recognized that "the notion of social capital provides a useful heuristic for capturing the ways in which social resources are created and are made available to individuals and groups. And properly operationalized, it is more than a heuristic."37 While here the main causal arrow goes from social capital to institutional performance, this study does not ignore the relevance of the political context for social capital but supplements the empirical sociostructural analysis with a careful examination of the general confines of social action set up by the Romanian state. By moving back and forth from society to the state I hope to offer a rich picture of those aspects of life in Eastern Europe that are politically relevant for its democratization and institution building processes and for the ability of its citizens to solve problems of common interest.

Before presenting the social capital components on which this study rests, I want to address briefly the problem of the level of analysis and the indicators that would offer the most theoretical mileage for understanding the cultural traits of a polity and their impact on the political process in general, and the quality of the democratic system in particular. A cursory look at the literature reveals that the debate over the proper indicators and level of analysis for social capital studies has largely pitted sociologists against political scientists. Many political science treatments of social capital have used aggregate national survey results, and frequently

36 Foley and Edwards, "The Paradox of Civil Society."

37 Foley and Edwards, "Is It Time to Disinvest in Social Capital?", p. 20.
reduced social capital to two, sometimes even one, of its core elements—networks, trust, and norms—despite the fact that both Coleman and Putnam stressed that none of these elements alone could embody social capital. In response to the proliferation of statistical analyses, sociologists have contended that any study concerned with the sociostructural and cultural prerequisites of democracy should rest on qualitative analyses. Time and again sociologists have warned that lumping together national level synthetic indicators and opinion survey results tends to obscure some important sub-national discrepancies. Instead of the macro-level analyses preferred by political scientists, sociologists have favored micro-level examinations that take into account the differences between the relevant social, ethnic or racial divisions within the community. Of course, the right balance must be struck between the level of analysis and the costs of research. In-depth examination of small communities and micro-level interpersonal ties and networks is not always possible, since it requires both time and money, resources in short supply for most researchers. National opinion surveys commissioned by universities or non-academic agencies might offer easy access to a wealth of data, but they often lack the detail needed to contextualize close-ended responses and include few measures directly related to social capital, since these polls usually tap voters’ attitudes toward electoral candidates. This study seeks to avoid the pitfalls highlighted by these studies by employing a sub-national comparison and by using a multitude of indicators to tap social capital reserves of each county and region.

Six Measures of Social Capital

The kind of norms, trust and networks that allow a community to tap into its social capital reserves are captured in this study with the help of six measures operationalizing social
capital in view of the intra-country and inter-regional comparisons detailed in the next chapters. The first five measures were drawn from the literature, while toleration was added for its potential to probe the linkages between ethnic diversity and social capital. It is worth reasserting that the civic spirit of Romanian county residents can be captured by none of the following elements taken in isolation. Neither is social capital simply the total sum of these measures. Rather each measure gives us an incomplete glimpse at a picture too large for any one to render adequately.

Trust. An integral part of social capital arguments is the observation that trust forms the basis for a civic community. Economists from Adam Smith to Kenneth Arrow have identified trust as a key facilitator of cooperation, while sociologist Charles Sabel has underlined the centrality for modern societies of "the mutual confidence that no party to an exchange will exploit the others' vulnerability."38 More recently, political scientist Francis Fukuyama provided a clearly written account of the role that trust plays in the creation of social capital, by arguing that societies with high levels of trust develop and accumulate greater levels of social capital. His 1995 book Trust argued that the level of trust inherent in a society conditions its prosperity and degree of democracy. Fukuyama's trust is related to industrial structure and the origins of those organizations that are essential to competitiveness and economic wellbeing. According to him, in low-trust societies such as southern Italy, France, South Korea and China, familistic structures constitute the basic unit of economic activity, leading to difficulty in creating large organizations that are the basis of economic success. Alternatively, high-trust societies like Germany and Japan

are able to create large-scale firms. For Fukuyama social capital is not necessary for growth, but its absence tempts governments to intervene in the economy, an action which typically imperils competitiveness.\textsuperscript{39} Consequently, trust is the lubricant of social life, the glue that holds together the otherwise centrifugal structures of the market.\textsuperscript{40}

This is so because citizens of civic communities are trustful toward one another even when they differ on matters of substance. Interpersonal trust enables shared interests to be realized, thus avoiding situations in which individuals "acting in wary isolation" have an incentive to defect from collective action.\textsuperscript{41} In the absence of trust, dilemmas of collective action arise. An individual may have a mutual interest in cooperating with someone else, but cannot rely on the other party not to defect and leave him at a disadvantage. In the absence of a civic spirit centered on inter-personal relations of trust cooperation will tend not to occur, even if it would be beneficial to all parties involved.\textsuperscript{42} Theoretically, institutional and legal sanctions could ensure that the costs of defecting remain high, but only a powerful coercive state apparatus could act as the third-party enforcer in a modern, large-scale society.

Only recently did social capital scholars recognize that different forms of trust have a differential effect on the generation of social capital and may combine and/or conflict in different contexts. Anthony Pagden, for example, argued that "only in the society where trust as public (in contrast to private) faith is held to be central, indeed the dominant social principle, will the good


\textsuperscript{40} Fukuyama, \textit{Trust: The Social Values and the Creation of Prosperity} (New York, NY: Penguin, 1995).

\textsuperscript{41} Putnam, \textit{Making Democracy Work}, p. 89.

\textsuperscript{42} Diego Gambetta, ed., \textit{Trust: Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations} (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988). See also the example of the Chiaromonte peasants on page 6 of this chapter.
of the family be made subordinate to the good of society at large, and only in that kind of society will economic take-off be possible." In turn, Baier noted that:

Exploitation and conspiracy, as much as justice and fellowship, thrive better in an atmosphere of trust. There are moral as well as immoral trust relationships, and trust-busting can be a morally proper goal... Trust can coexist, and has long coexisted, with contrived and perpetual inequality.

In her critical review of Making Democracy Work, Margaret Levi argued that "trust is neither normatively good nor bad; it is neither a virtue nor a vice." And Varshney pointed out that trust based on inter-ethnic, rather than intra-ethnic, networks is essential for avoiding ethnic violence and managing ethnic conflict. This study therefore includes both measures of generalized trust (that is, trust toward the community at large), and measures of trust toward the main ethnic groups present in the community, including the respondent's own ethnic group.

Associations and Social Structures of Cooperation. The norms and values of the civic community are embodied in, and reinforced by, voluntary associations. In his classic account, Alexis de Tocqueville hailed the Americans' propensity to forever form civil and political associations and a democracy whose citizens "carried to the highest perfection the art of pursuing in common the objectives of common desires and applied this new technique to the greatest number of purposes." As he eloquently wrote, "in democratic countries the science of association is the mother of science; the progress of all the rest depends upon the progress it has

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47 de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, pp. 513-514.
made.” Putnam also argued that "networks of civil engagement are an essential form of social capital: the denser such networks in the community, the more likely that its citizens will be able to cooperate for mutual benefit.”

The chief virtue of associationalism lies in its capacity to socialize participants into the norms of generalized reciprocity and trust that are essential components of the social capital needed for effective cooperation. Members of associations are educated in the habits of cooperation, solidarity, and public-spiritedness, and learn to relate to other people as equal partners with shared responsibility for collective endeavors. More specifically, associationalism fosters sturdy norms of generalized reciprocity by creating expectations that favors given now will be returned later, and facilitates coordination and communication by creating channels through which information about the trustworthiness of other individuals and groups can flow, be tested and verified. It also embodies past success at collaboration, which can serve as a cultural template for future collaboration. Membership further supports interest articulation and overcomes the inability of the community "to act together for [the] common good or, indeed, for any end transcending the immediate material interest of the nuclear family."

As the Civic Culture demonstrated with the help of a cross-national comparison, association members display more political sophistication, social trust, political participation, and subjective civic competence than the rest of the population. For these skills to be acquired, membership does not have to be necessarily in associations whose main purpose is political. Putnam echoed the idea that cooperative voluntary activity promoting community and

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48 de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, p. 107.
49 Putnam, Making Democracy Work, p. 25.
51 Banfield, Moral Basis of a Backward Society, p. 10.
democracy need not be explicitly political, when he wrote that taking part in a literature society or a bird-watching club can also "teach the joys of successful collaboration."52 While Almond and Verba, and Putnam, suggested that membership in any kind of association nurtured civicness, Eastis' ethnographic study of choral groups highlighted the analytical risk inherent in treating two ostensibly similar groups as equals with respect to social capital.53 Similarly, Fox took the example of Mexico's poorest regions to show that civicness is not always uniformly distributed in the society.54 In a quantitative study, Stolle and Rochon showed that different types of associations provide participants with differential access to social capital.55 Using cross-national survey data from the United States, Sweden and Germany, they examined the relationship between the type of associations and social capital and found important differences between the type of group and level of generalized trust, community reciprocity, and tolerance among group members. Two related studies authored by Minkoff and Smith further showed that the production of social capital was not restricted to arenas where face-to-face interactions predominate—as Putnam seemed to imply—but can be found whenever social resources are made available to individuals and groups.56 National social movements (for Minkoff) and trans-nationally organized social movements (for Smith), just like locally-based voluntary

52 Putnam, Making Democracy Work, p. 90.


55 Stolle and Rochon, "Are All Associations Alike?."

associations, provide people with incentives and resources for action, and wide access to both in local, national and international policy arenas.

Social capital is truly a public good, available to society and capable of producing the effects ascribed to it, only if networks "cut across social cleavages" in order to nourish larger cooperation.\(^5\) Following Granovetter,\(^6\) Putnam considered that only horizontal networks of relative equals are fundamental to the creation, maintenance, and growth of social capital. Only they can generate trust, and only membership in them is positively associated with good government. He further claimed that "vertical," hierarchical networks generate asymmetric "patron-client" relationships that do not build social capital and may in fact undermine it. This is a consequence of the nature of interactions in each type of organization. In vertically structured organizations, goals are accomplished through command and obedience, and more powerful group members can defect from agreements with less powerful members with impunity, as there are no sanctions available to enforce norms of reciprocity. By contrast, members of horizontal organizations rely on cooperation and symmetrical reciprocity to attain their objectives.\(^5\)

Some researchers disagree with this view, feeling that the difference between vertical and horizontal ties is far less clear cut. Levi pointed out that some forms of vertical relationships "may also facilitate trust, cooperation, reciprocity, and certainly, coordination" and this warrants their inclusion in the concept of social capital.\(^6\) Other authors drew attention to the fact that even

\(^{5}\) Putnam, "Tuning In, Tuning Out," 665.

\(^{6}\) Granovetter, "The Nature of Economic Relationships," pp. 3-41. Granovetter differentiated between 'strong' interpersonal ties like kinship and intimate friendship and 'weak' ties like acquaintance and shared membership in secondary associations. He thus prepares the ground for Putnam's argument that weak ties play a role in effecting social cohesion.

\(^{5}\) Putnam, Making Democracy Work, pp. 173-175.

horizontal networks sometimes contain differences in power and resources among members. To probe the relationship between type of network and social capital, Stolle surveyed the members of voluntary associations in Germany and Sweden, concentrating on horizontally structured associations because of Putnam's prediction on the source of social capital. Her qualitative study reached two important conclusions. First, when people are loosely bound to an association, their trust in fellow members generalizes to the wider community, but when they are tightly bound the generalization is less likely to occur. Second, the more horizontal the organization and the more breadth in responsibility within it, the higher the trust it instilled in its members. In other words, horizontal networks that allow more people to share in the responsibilities are more likely to foster a civic spirit than vertical ties. This conclusion seems to vindicate Putnam of his over-reliance on Granovetter's weak horizontal ties.

Related to associationalism, Portes and Landolt made an important observation when they drew attention to the fact that not every voluntary group instilled civic attitudes in its members. According to these authors, there is a downside to social capital that was not sufficiently recognized by the social capital scholars but which can hardly be ignored. Portes and Landolt described four significant problems associated with group membership in general. The same strong ties that help group members attain their common goals often enable them to exclude outsiders in the name of a virulent “us versus them” dichotomy, as nationalist groups often do. Group membership can bring demands for conformity, stifling individualism and undermining business initiatives. Additionally, social networks can be characterized by

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downward leveling pressures, and can give rise to unwanted "public bads" such as Mafia families, prostitution rings and youth gangs. In the United States, militias and certain religious movements represent an armed and paranoid version of civic responsibility or a retreat from social responsibility beyond the immediate group. These voluntary, autonomous grassroots groups build trust and habits of cooperation among their members, but breed distrust toward the society at large.

In this study associationalism is, therefore, operationalized in such a way as to allow a qualitative analysis of the networks and associations present in the community. Rather than simply using the total number of voluntary associations officially registered in a particular county, I have chosen to ask respondents to state whether they were involved in such organizations, together with the main object of activity of the associations in which they participated. Respondents not only had to choose the kind of association from a given list, but they had to name the association. Information about the activity of the associations identified in this way was then compiled and correlated with personal interviews with local leaders and with local press reports. Particular attention was given to ethnic groups.

*Interest in Community Affairs and Politics.* At the heart of the discussion about the relevance of politics, which is as old as the study of politics itself, is the idea that citizens should combine private and political responsibilities. Maybe the first to stress this idea was Pericles, who told those gathered to bury their casualties in the Peloponnesian war that:

> an Athenian citizen does not neglect the state because he takes care of his own household; and even those of us who are engaged in business have a fair idea of politics. We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs not as a harmless, but as a useless character.\(^6^3\)

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The idea that man is not made to live alone, except for the few whose vocation requires isolation, was echoed by the Venetian Franciscan Fra Paolino who in 1314 urged his fellow citizens to *fagli mestiere a vivere con molti* (make it your business to live with many others). For Paolino, to live in society was to participate in three progressively more exclusive communities: the overarching political community (city, kingdom or other entity); the neighborhood (*vicinato*); and the household. And in order to be an active member of the polity, one had to be informed on and interested in the issues relevant for it.  

Interest in political affairs helps citizens familiarize themselves with the public sphere, and identify the issues of common interest that have to be addressed. As previous studies demonstrated, citizens of civic communities take greater interest in public affairs and the political process than do members of uncivic communities. Higher levels of subjective political interest were shown to accompany higher levels of social capital. This proposition is apparently contradicted by studies documenting a decline in subjective political interest in citizens of Western democratic systems. But it should be noted that these polities continue to register higher levels of political interest than countries known for lower levels of social capital. As detailed in the next chapter multiple indicators—ranging from reported interest in national and local politics to newspaper readership—were used to measure interest in community affairs and public life.

*Civic Engagement and Political Participation.* Adept's of social capital have long argued that citizenship in a civic community is marked not only by interest in politics but also by active

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participation in public affairs. Such participation makes a community oriented toward shared rather than personal benefits. By contrast, the withdrawal from public affairs is the main characteristic of the "amoral familist" ethos described by Edward Banfield. As his 1950s ethnographic study indicated, in small southern Italian villages peasants pursued almost exclusively the interests of their nuclear families and assumed, probably with very good reasons, that all other community members did likewise. The higher the civic engagement, the more likely that community members will cooperate for mutual benefit.

This study operates a distinction between civic engagement and associationalism, and understands the former as involvement in political and community affairs other than voluntary associations. Indeed, civic engagement is not restricted to group membership but often takes the form of participation in a general community meeting, a strike at the workplace or a peaceful demonstration against the local or central government, support for a protest petition or willingness to contact a local official or politician for discussing problems of interest for the larger community. Although these activities might be pursued outside associationalism, they all reveal citizen concern for the life of the community and for people outside the immediate family, and therefore can be summed up under the general rubric of social capital.

The Nature of Interpersonal Relations. As previously noted, civic communities are bound together by "horizontal" relations of reciprocity and cooperation, not by "vertical" relations of authority and dependency. Widespread feelings of law-abidingness foster social trust and interpersonal ties among equals, concretized in an understanding that norms of behavior are applicable for all members of the community, without exception. By contrast, 'amoral familistic'

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Communities are characterized primarily by asymmetrical forms of interpersonal assistance such as patron-client ties, although it is worth mentioning that this predominance of "vertical" ties does not translate into a virtual absence of micro-level solidarities in less civic societies.\textsuperscript{68} Families and neighbors might still help each other but these kinds of interaction do not breed the generalized social trust required for social capital to take hold and flourish. And while patrimonialism and corruption characterize all societies to a certain degree, their unacceptability by the society at large sets Western democratic societies apart. In this study, law-abidingness, clientelism and corruption are operationalized with the help of a multiple set of closed- and open-ended questions.

Tolerance. In a civic community, citizens have strong views on public issues, but they are tolerant of their opponents, accept opinions different from their own as legitimate, and are ready to take the rights of the others seriously. Inglehart stressed the centrality of tolerance for social capital when he defined the latter as "a culture of trust and tolerance, in which extensive networks of voluntary associations form."\textsuperscript{69} While its importance for all societies cannot be denied, tolerance becomes highly salient in ethnically diverse countries like Romania that, after decades of state-sponsored discrimination and uniformizing policies, must forge new social ties between the majority and the minority groups. With its rejection of the concept of "unity in diversity," intolerance breeds distrust of, and animosity toward, those who are different in some way. Intolerant societies are unable to provide people with all kinds of differences the space to coexist, to cooperate in order to achieve objectives that are considered to stand above those

\textsuperscript{68} Some economic definitions of social capital do include "vertical" ties, and even "horizontal" networks do of course contain some differences in power and resources among members. See George Kolankiewicz, "Social Capital and Social Change," British Journal of Sociology 47, no. 3 (September 1996), pp. 431-433. While the question of whether or not "vertical" ties can be included in a definition of social capital remains open, for the purpose of this study we will focus solely on the "horizontal" networks discussed by Putnam, Making Democracy Work, p. 173.

\textsuperscript{69} Inglehart, Modernization and Postmodernization, p. 172.
aspects of life that separate individual from individual and group from group. In intolerant societies the stakes of the political game are very high. Political debate often deteriorates to fist-cuffs and outright violence.

Social Capital in Romania — Prolegomena to the Survey Analyses

While the sociostructural analyses undertaken in the next chapters hope to uncover significant differences between Romanian counties and regions, I do not expect these differences to be very large. Putnam found not only that the Italian North and South differed significantly from each other, but also that the North was civic whereas the South was uncivic. On the spectrum ranging from 'amoral familism' through the neutral point to 'civicness', Italian regions positioned themselves on either side of the neutral point, with the South being situated in the first segment of the sociostructural spectrum, and the North lying somewhere between the neutral point and the civic end. In the Romanian case, by contrast, all counties and regions are likely to position themselves somewhere between the uncivic end and the neutral point. Patchy as it is, the historical evidence about life in that country suggests that in the Old Romanian Kingdom and Transylvania alike, people were more likely to be distrustful toward their fellow citizens and the government, engaged only occasionally in political activities, rarely formed voluntary organizations, and accepted patronage and corruption as aspects of a normal life.⁷⁰ Forty-five years of communist homogenization programs further diminished whatever cultural and socioeconomic differences set the Romanian regions apart.

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⁷⁰ Most historical accounts written by Romanian authors shed little light on the opinions of average Romanians, preferring instead to survey, sometimes in unnecessary detail, the attitudes and actions of the country's political and economic elite. Even today, the vast majority of Romanian historiography adheres to the "great men" model, which sees the top-level government in Bucharest as the natural locus of history.
Putnam himself opined that “many of the formerly communist societies had weak civic traditions before the advent of communism and totalitarian rule abused even hat limited stock of social capital.” Nichols agrees with this view when he maintains that if social capital is the key to making democracy work then its systematic erosion before 1991 helps explain the special and severe problems in the process of post-communist democratic consolidation. The prospects for democratization throughout the post-communist Europe, therefore, might be rather poor.

The similarities between the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires explain why all Romanian regions score so low in terms of social capital and why they have more in common with the Italian South than with the Italian North. According to Putnam, the civic spirit had as its preferred locus the city-republics of northern Italy. Transylvania had its own independent, German-run towns but their feeble mercantile life and restricted communal autonomy vis-a-vis central authorities made them only pale reflections of the north Italian city-republics. Only a fraction of Transylvanian residents lived in the seven independent burgs, and thus even if these towns shared civic sentiments their mores carried less weight in Transylvania than did their counterparts in northern Italy. The Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires, like the regimes that ruled southern Italy until 1861, were unconducive for the growth of social capital. They were foreign centralized monarchies that governed with a logic of colonial exploitation, promoted mutual distrust and conflict among their subjects, and destroyed horizontal ties of solidarity which could threatened the primacy of vertical ties of dependence and exploitation.

Under the influence of the Phanariot rulers, the Enlightenment values spread to the Old Romanian Kingdom during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In their journeys to the West, and particularly to Paris and Vienna, young Romanian boyars discovered liberalism but their borrowing of these ideas was highly selective, as was Western influence on Romanian social and political thought. Liberalism, for most Romanian boyars, was largely taken to represent the right to self-determination. Civic engagement remained foreign to boyars and peasants alike, and the latter seemed to pursue the logic of "amoral familism" Banfield described by which each tried to maximize the short-term gains of his nuclear family, and believed that all the others were doing just the same. Philosopher Constantin Radulescu-Motru was among the first to note that "each villager does what he thinks the others would do... For the Romanian peasant, to step out of the prescribed order-line is not merely a risk, it is sheer insanity." 74

Conformity was accompanied by fatalism, reflecting the peasants' perceived inability to control their future, and a hostile social and natural environment. 75 The peasant was distrustful of everybody outside his immediate family, and with good reason since most people with whom he had contact wanted a share of his meager harvest. Pompiliu Eliade also noted that fear and distrust are among the enduring features of the peasant ethos. . . No matter how truthful and compassionate your words, he will look you in the eye with distrust, almost disgust, and then he will whisper his characteristic word: "maybe." Restlessness, distrust, skepticism, these are the characteristics of Moldovan and Wallachian peasants. 76

Along with state paternalism, authoritarianism and conservatism, these features were proven characteristics of other Eastern European peasant societies, Transylvania included, but the Old


76 Pompiliu Eliade, Influenta franceza asupra spiritului public in Romania (Bucharest: Editura Univers, 1982), p. 23. The work, Eliade's doctoral thesis at the Universite de Paris, was completed in 1898.
Romanian Kingdom underwent modernization at a later date, and thus such cultural traits were noticeable there even when their influence was fading in the rest of the region.

In a culture in which orientation toward nature is one of fatalism and resignation, popular feelings toward government are likely to be much the same. Romanian citizens' distrust toward politicians was documented well before communism took hold of the country. Historian Barbara Jelavich noted that in the years before World War I

although he still responded to patriotic appeals in time of crisis, the peasant was usually suspicious and mistrustful of those in power . . . The only contact that the peasantry had with the state was while paying taxes and fines, rendering military service and rendering corve for various public purposes. The state was not an institution that the peasantry . . . considered their own, but it remained for them a foreign, fearful and often hated organization.78

The venality of their leaders was not instrumental for breaking the traditional suspicion of Romanian citizens, be they urban or rural dwellers. With few exceptions, pre-communist Romanian political leaders and organizations seldom expounded democratic principles or represented the interests and views of their predominantly peasant societies. The masses, regardless of their nationality or religious affiliation, were generally disinterested in party politics or in political actions and programs designed to give them more voice in the state.79 In Transylvania and the Old Kingdom alike, popular attitudes included greater allegiance to authoritarian paternalistic monarchs than to self-styled political leaders.80 The blame partly


78 See Barbara Jelawich, History of the Balkans (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 48. Corve (sometimes rendered as corvee) was the unpaid peasant labor exacted by the feudal lords (boyars, in Romania).


rested with the latter, whose platforms and promises seldom advocated genuine democratic changes or addressed the problems faced by the constituency they claimed to represent. Equally widespread was a belief in statism, which essentially allocated to the state and public authorities a high profile in the political and economic life of the individuals with a corresponding reduction in individual rights and the concept of individual enterprise.81

Almost without exception, observers of Romanian politics have singled out clientelism and corruption as some of that country's longest standing afflictions, surviving quasi-democratic and totalitarian regimes alike, and being usually rationalized by Romanians under the motto "Que voulez-vous, nous sommes ici aux portes de l'Orient, ou tout est pris à la légère."82 As Chapter 2 hopefully suggested, patronage was already an established behavioral pattern by the beginning of the twentieth century. Radulescu-Motru lamented the power of personal connections in a land where principles and rules were routinely brushed aside:

'Do you have somebody at the Court of Justice?' 'Do you have somebody at the prefecture?' 'Do you have somebody at the mayor's office?' 'Do you have somebody at the bank?' . . . Do you have somebody at the ministry of education, of finance, of internal affairs?! ... This eternal somebody! He does and undoes all and everything! . . . If you have somebody then you have justice, credit, liberty, authority, you are a sovereign citizen . . . If you have somebody, you also have cleaner streets, lamp gas, a seat for your child in school, an amiable commissar and a sympathetic judge. This somebody may sanctify you as a scientist and even artist. He has his own newspaper, where his scribes might bark at you or glorify you . . . He has his own [literary] circle and his own Academy . . . This is how one becomes a scientist or an artist.83

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82 "Here we are, at the gates to the Orient, where nothing is taken seriously." Formulated by Mateiu Caragiale, Crai de Curtea Veche (Bucharest: Minerva, 1972). The phrase was apparently uttered by Raymond Poincare, the future French President, who appeared as defense councilor in one of the most famous corruption trials in Bucharest. Cf. Michael Shafir, "Political Culture, Intellectual Dissent, and Intellectual Consent: The Case of Romania," Orbis 27 (Summer 1983), p. 408.

Successive generations of Romanians demonstrated a suspicious desire to replace the older generation in the official positions that bestowed substantial material advantages. Despite the efforts of the Romanian Communist Party (Partidul Comunist Roman, PCR) to create new "socialist" social discipline, responsibility and political maturity, Romanian citizens continued to rely on wide patron-client networks, the connectii (connections) and pile (pull), while professionals and officials demanded mica atentie (a little gift) before the performance of any public service, and felt entitled to use public resources freely for their private ends.84 This behavior, stressing "covert, personalized, hierarchical relationships involving complicity rather than public arrangements" obstructed the development of overt, horizontal and rule-abiding relationships that make the essence of social capital. Even after the collapse of communism, observers found Romanian human relationships largely informal and hierarchical and noticed the fact that in that country state regulations and laws were regarded as obstacles to be overcome rather than rules to be obeyed.85

Corruption and clientelism bred widespread cynicism about politicians, the political game, authority, and established rules and procedures, a feeling that persisted even after the collapse of communist structures. The results of the survey I administered in various Romanian high-schools in early 1999 attested to this fact. Students were asked the open-ended question "What is in your opinion the safest way to enrich oneself?." One student wrote: "in my opinion, today honest work cannot help one get rich quickly. I do not encourage others to do this, but I believe that the best solution is to enter politics or other business. You also could get rich legally, but you need exceptional qualities and a lot of patience, because it will take time." For another,


85 John Feffer, Shock Waves. Eastern Europe after the Revolutions (Boston, MS: South End Press, 1992), pp. 201-204.
"the surest way is to have as many connections in local administration as possible. If one has a pleasant personality, courage and not too much respect for the others, good money can be amassed [in such a position] without too much effort." Another student wrote that "the easiest way is to enter in the service of an influent and rich person, in whose shadow one could hide and do practically everything," while his classmate believed that "though work would be the most honest way to get rich, it is very difficult to be successful in a country gripped by corruption in which a handful of individuals control everything and realize their dreams by excluding the average Joe."

Most students were of the opinion that the best ways to achieve economic success during post-communism were illegal. Individual prosperity could be achieved only at the others' expense, a view reminiscent of the peasant zero-sum game in which players cannot benefit together from their interaction and exchange. Most distressing was the frequency of responses suggesting that party leaders, cabinet and parliament members and politicians in general were in the best position to make rapid, albeit undeserved, material gains. Top state officials and administrators could bend the rules in their favor and "steal legally," by plundering the state coffers or by appropriating the state-owned enterprises slated for privatization. The key to personal material fulfillment was thus believed to be a combination of state positions, good connections with well-positioned individuals, and a personal philosophy of ruthlessness and crass opportunism. It is reasonable to assume that the students were simply reacting to what they saw around them.

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86 Classic peasant societies were described as pursuing "zero-sum game" or "limited good" strategies. The logic prohibits concerted action because peasants fail to understand that each may prosper best when all in a community prosper together. See, among others, George Foster, "Peasant Society and the Image of Limited Good," American Anthropologist 67 (1965), pp. 293-315 and "A Second Look at Limited Good," Anthropological Quarterly (1972), pp. 57-64, and F. G. Friedmann, "The World of 'La Miseria'," Partisan Review 20 (March-April 1953), pp. 218-231.
The lack of organized resistance to the devious policies promoted by Ceausescu best speaks for the Romanias' traditional lack of associationalism, and their reluctance to engage in grassroots politics during post-communist times. In a study on Czech political culture, David Paul observed that "the tendency of Czechs to respond to military and political suppression by resorting to tactics of passive resistance is in stark contrast to the tendency of Poles or Hungarians to rebel violently under roughly analogous circumstances." From this point of view, communist Romania stood closer to Czechoslovakia than to Hungary or Poland. Romania lacked a civil society that could aggregate and articulate societal demands or act as a counterbalance to the party-state. Its handful of dissenting voices were promptly isolated or banished into exile. A serious study of pre-1945 associationalism is yet to be undertaken, but historical accounts do seem to agree that lack of solidarity and reluctance to initiate and participate in voluntary organizations were also the staple of pre-communist Romania.

Having reviewed the studies that informed the present analysis, presented the main theoretical discussions revolving around the concept of social capital and its theoretical relevance, examined the main facets of social capital and proposed a working definition of the term, this chapter has set the stage for the county comparison that follows. Chapter 5 presents a sociostructural comparison of the four counties that takes a closer look at each of the social capital facets outlined here.

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CHAPTER 5.
A County-Level Sociostructural Comparison

The purpose of this chapter is to rank four selected counties (Arad, Arges, Galati and Mures) in terms of their social capital levels. To do this, high-school students in each county were asked to respond to questions tapping their own and their parents’ attitudes and behavior related to the six facets of social capital identified in the previous chapter: (1) trust, (2) associationalism, (3) interest in community affairs and politics, (4) civic engagement and participation in politics, (5) absence of corruption and clientelism, and (6) tolerance. Too often the choice of indicators tends to be rather random, and selected quantitative measures fail to reflect adequately the theoretical concepts from which they are derived. Studies on social capital have been particularly prone to this kind of criticism because concepts were deemed hard to measure and researchers believed that any available variables would do.¹ Following Hubert Blalock’s advice, this analysis seeks to improve the link between measurement and conceptualization by employing for each facet of social capital many indicators previously used by other authors, and by stating explicitly the assumptions required for measures to reflect theoretical constructs.²

For county comparisons, I followed the method detailed in Chapter 3 and ranked each of the four counties on bi-polar ordinal scales ranging from 1 to 4, where 1 was the lowest and 4 was the highest score. For each indicator I then established if counties differed significantly

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among themselves using the analysis of variance procedure (Anova). Counties shown not to differ significantly with respect to a particular indicator received equal scores. Summed scores for each county were then computed across all social capital indicators (Table 5.47). The higher the summed score, the higher the social capital of that county.

Data

In all four counties were surveyed 15 different high-schools, selected according to their location, specialization, and their students' ethnic background. First, high-schools from the county's main town and outside of it were selected, then both theoretical and vocational high-schools were identified and included in the analysis. The Romanian high-school system distinguishes between "theoretical high-schools," which offer general study programs preparing students for the university entry exams, and "vocational high-schools," which are more applied and usually enroll students seeking to learn a trade. There are marked differences between the socioeconomic background of the students attending the two types of schools, with the families of theoretical high-school students being more wealthy and better educated than the families of vocational high-school students. In the two ethnically heterogeneous Transylvanian counties, I have included both predominantly Romanian and predominantly Hungarian schools where possible, and in schools with Romanian and Hungarian classes I asked permission to administer the survey to both classes.

A total of 703 twelfth-grade students responded to one hundred and twenty questions asking them about their personal and their parents' political attitudes and behavior, relations with members of the community, and opinions about the activity of county leaders (for questions, see

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3 For the rationale for using this statistical procedure, see Chapter 3, page 130.
Appendix 3). Overall, 153 students were surveyed in Arad, 179 in Arges, 167 in Galati, and another 204 in Mures. Of the total, 280 students attended theoretical high-schools, and another 423 were enrolled in vocational schools. As many as 519 students were surveyed in county main towns and an additional 184 in other localities. Some 51 non-Romanians and 652 Romanians were included. Because social capital is formed in the family and by prolonged interaction with the community at large, two students residing in counties other than those where they were surveyed, together with eight other students who had resided in the counties where they were surveyed for less than five years, were excluded from the analysis. To be included, students must have resided in the county where they were interviewed since 1995, that is, since their first high-school year. The cutoff point was determined by the nature of the questions students had to answer. For example, after the demise of state-sponsored, non-voluntary organizations such as the “Nation’s Eagles” (Soimii Patriei) and the “Pioneers” (Pionieri), few Romanian pre-high-school students belonged to voluntary associations. In addition, several studies suggest that around the age of 14 or 15 the youth start forming their own political opinion instead of simply reproducing their parents’ and friends’ attitudes.\(^4\) Since this analysis seeks to uncover differences among counties, I compared same-county data, pooling together all students residing in a particular county. To adjust for discrepancies between the resulting sample and the county population, cases were weighted according to the students’ residence and ethnicity (see Appendix 2 for weight computation).

\(^4\) See Elizabeth Smith, "Youth Voluntary Association Participation and Political Attitudes: A Quasi-Experimental Analysis," paper presented at the September 1999 American Political Science Association annual meeting.
Trust

The survey included a battery of 13 questions designed to assess interpersonal trust from various angles. The first two questions estimated levels of generalized trust, with the rest probing trust in various ethnic and non-ethnic segments of the immediate community. Four composite measures for generalized social trust, trust in the immediate community, trust in non-ethnic groups, and trust in ethnic groups were constructed. Significant differences among counties were found with respect to eleven measures.

Generalized Trust. Two twin questions sought to assess generalized trust in fellow citizens. Each question asked students to choose between two divergent views, only one of which was akin to a civic spirit. Generalized social trust was operationalized as a composite measure capturing trust in others and perceived altruistic behavior, and recording the number of times a student chose either that people should be generally trusted or that people usually try to help others. The composite measure ranged from 0 to 2. The first column of Table 5.1 records the percentages of students rejecting both options, that is, students who believed that other people should not be trusted and that others do not try to help. These students have low levels of social trust. The fourth column, reflecting high social trust, records the percentage of students accepting both civic options, while the third column records the percentage endorsing only one of the two civic options. The results reveal that only a tiny minority of respondents chose civic options, a finding suggesting that Romanian citizens have yet to reach any level of meaningful civicness.

For the first time regional differences were evident, as the Transylvanian counties ranked higher

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5 Both questions were found to be correlated between themselves and with other measures for feelings of general social connectedness, such as questions asking how much trust people have in ethnic groups, and how much importance they attach to friends.

6 The two questions were: "Some say that people can generally be trusted. Others say one must be cautious in relation to other people. Which is your view?" and "Do you think that most people try to help others or that most people think only of themselves?" See also Tables 5.2 and 5.3.
than the rest of the country with respect to generalized trust. Mures came first with the lowest percentage of students displaying low levels of trust (72.8 percent), followed closely by Arad (with 78.7 percent). The non-Transylvanian counties trailed behind at a considerable distance, with 83.4 percent for Arges and as much as 88.7 percent for Galati, scoring low on the social trust scale. The pattern of the Transylvanian counties coming at the top, and the non-Transylvanian counties coming at the bottom, was noticeable with respect to a majority of the social capital indicators employed in this study, though same-region counties occasionally changed places with respect to their rankings. All four means differed significantly at the .05 level, and therefore the counties received different scores (4 for Mures, 3 for Arad, 2 for Arges and 1 for Galati).

Table 5.1: Generalized Social Trust

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The higher the mean scores, the higher the generalized social trust. All means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=5.07; df1=3; df2=456).

A closer look at the two questions that formed the composite measure is warranted. When asked whether other people should be trusted or not, less than one-tenth of students in all counties opted for the first variant (Table 5.2). Even more striking than the respondents' general cautiousness were the clear regional differences that emerged. Mures and Arad came at the top, with 8.2 and 6.8 percent of students stating that people should be trusted, and Arges and Galati at the bottom, with only 2.9 and 1.3 percent, respectively. The Mures rate was more than six times higher than the Galati rate, and their mean scores differed significantly. Other mean differences
were not significant, but for the general ranking to make sense, different counties received
different point scores according to the percentage of students who have endorsed civic options.\footnote{Since Arad was not found to differ significantly from Mures or Galati, the three counties should have received equal rankings. But then two counties found to differ significantly at the .05 level would have been assigned equal rankings.}
The rankings were 1 for Galati, 2 for Arges, 3 for Arad, and 4 for Mures.

Table 5.2: "Some say that people can generally be trusted. Others say one must be cautious in relation to other people. Which is your view?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Trustworthy (1)%</th>
<th>Untrustworthy (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>97.1</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given two options: 1=people can be trusted; 2=it is better to be cautious with most people. The higher the mean score, the lower the trust in others. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=2.84; df1=3; df2=457). Statistically different Bonferroni comparisons: Mures-Galati.

The same regional differences were noticeable when students were asked whether they believed that other people tried to help others or that people thought only of themselves (see Table 5.3). Fewer Transylvanians than non-Transylvanians believed other people to be egoist, although a majority of students in all counties endorsed this uncivic option. Again, Mures scored highest in terms of generalized trust (with 25.6 percent of students endorsing the civic option), followed by Arad (17.1 percent) and Arges (15.8 percent), while Galati scored lowest (with a bare 10 percent). Mures received a ranking of 4, reflecting the fact that this county came first. However, the means for the other counties (Arad, Arges and Galati) did not differ significantly at the .05 level and therefore all three received rankings of 2.
Table 5.3: "Do you think that most people try to help others or that most people think only of themselves?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Altruist (1)%</th>
<th>Egoist (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>82.9</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given two options: 1=people try to help others; 2=people think only of themselves. Higher mean scores correspond to beliefs that others are less likely to engage in altruistic behavior. Means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.84; df1=3; df2=456). Statistically different Bonferroni comparisons: Mures-Arad, Mures-Arges, Mures-Galati.

**Trust in the Immediate Community.** Generalized social trust should also translate into comparable levels of trust in community members. To allow such a move from the abstract trust in people in general to the more concrete trust in fellow citizens, the questionnaire included eleven items referring to trust in specific groups of the immediate community. Average scores across all eleven measures were then computed to sum up trust in ethnic and non-ethnic community groups (Table 5.4). Given their low levels of generalized social trust, it is unsurprising that less than one in ten students in all Romanian counties were trustful of the various groups identified in the survey. Regional differences were again clearly noticeable, with the Transylvanians being more trusting than the non-Transylvanians and the Mures and Arad students reportedly trusting the groups in greater numbers than the Galati and Arges students (9 and 5.1 percent, compared to as little as 1.9 and 1.8 percent). Differences between regions were found to be significant at the .05 confidence level, but differences within regions were not. The two Transylvanian counties were assigned rankings of 3.5, while Arges and Galati each received a ranking of 1.5.
Table 5.4: Overall Trust in the Immediate Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Distrustful (%)</th>
<th>Trustful (%)</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>98.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average scores across questions on trust in relatives, neighbors, schoolmates, fellow residents of the same locality, county leaders, politicians in general, and trust in Romanians, Hungarians, Roma/Gypsy, Germans, and Jewish. Cutoff mark for distinguishing distrust from trust was 2.5 (the middle of the scale). The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. Arad mean score is higher than Mures', although more Mures than Arad students stated their trust, because more Arad students chose the first option ("totally distrust"). The same is true for Arges and Galati. The four county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=11.42; df1=3; df2=444). Statistically different Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, Mures-Galati.

Six of the eleven questions asked students to state their trust in non-ethnic groups such as: relatives, neighbors, schoolmates, fellow residents of the locality, county leaders, and politicians in general. Again, a composite measure was constructed by averaging student scores across all six indicators (Table 5.5). While an overwhelming majority of students in all counties (more than 90 percent) were distrustful, the Arad and Mures respondents were less so than the Arges and Galati participants. On average more Arad students trusted the six non-ethnic groups identified in the survey (7.3 percent), than students in all other counties. Arad was followed closely by Mures (with 6.9 percent of respondents trusting non-ethnic groups). The most distrustful county was the Wallachian county of Arges, where as many as 94.1 percent of the students reported distrust, and to a slightly lesser degree the Moldovan county of Galati with 93.6 percent of respondents doing so. Differences between county means were not found to be statistically significant at the .05 level, but note that slightly more Transylvanians than non-Transylvanians reported trust.

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8 Arad and Mures differed significantly from Arges and Galati. But Arad did not differ from Mures, and neither did Arges from Galati. Note that the Anova used in this chapter is performed at the level of counties, not at the level of regions.
Table 5.5: Trust in Fellow Citizens (Non-ethnic Groups)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Distrustful (%)</th>
<th>Trustful (%)</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average scores across questions on trust in relatives, neighbors, schoolmates, fellow residents of the same locality, county leaders and politicians in general. Cutoff mark for distinguishing distrust from trust was 2.5 (the middle of the scale). The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. The means did not differ significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=1.82; df1=3; df2=451).

The composite measure, however, obscures significant variation not so much among the counties, but among the groups. A majority of students in all Romanian counties trusted their relatives, but distrusted all other members of the community. Trust apparently increased as the groups were closer to the nuclear family and students could relate to them personally. Also, distrust in family members seemed to go hand in hand with trust in community members outside of the family circle. Regional differences were found with respect to trust in neighbors, although a majority of students in all counties reported that they distrusted their neighbors (Table 5.6). Transylvania outscored the rest of the country in terms of trust, with 36.3 percent of the Arad respondents and 34.6 percent of the Mures respondents reporting trust in their neighbors. By contrast, only 19.1 of the Arges students and 17.9 of the Galati students did so. Arad and Mures did not differ significantly at the .05 level, and therefore each received rankings of 3.5. Similarly, the non-Transylvanian counties of Arges and Galati each received rankings of 1.5, as their mean scores also did not differ significantly and were lower than the Transylvanian means.
Table 5.6: "How much do you trust your neighbors?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=distrust completely; 2=somewhat distrust; 3=somewhat trust; 4=trust completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. Means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=7.08; df1=3; df2=455). Statistically significantly Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, Mures-Galati.

No clear regional pattern emerged with respect to trust in politicians in general, and less than 10 percent of students in all counties reportedly trusted them (Table 5.7). When talking about politicians, Mures students either distrusted them or distrusted them more (no Mures student chose the options “somewhat distrust” and “trust completely”). Arad scored highest with respect to this indicator (with 5.4 percent of Arad students reportedly trusting politicians), followed by Galati (with 4.7 percent doing so). Arges came up third (with 2.1 percent), and Mures last. The Arad and Galati means were not found to differ significantly, and neither did the Mures and Arges mean scores. The first pair received equal rankings of 3.5. The second pair received equal rankings of 1.5.

Table 5.7: "How much do you trust politicians in general?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=distrust completely; 2=somewhat distrust; 3=somewhat trust; 4=trust completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. The means were different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.21; df1=3; df2=455). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Mures, Arad-Arges, Galati-Mures, Galati-Arges.
No county or regional statistically significant differences were found with respect to the other four measures, but regional patterns again clearly emerged (see Table 5.8 for Anova results and mean scores). More Transylvanian than Wallachian or Moldovan students reportedly trusted their schoolmates and fellow county residents, and distrusted their local leaders, a finding suggesting that higher levels of generalized trust did not necessarily imply greater trust in all segments of the community. Students seemed to trust their schoolmates more than other groups. The similarities in age and preoccupation, and the extended time they have spent together, more readily bond fellow students in friendship. By contrast, only a handful of students trusted their fellow county residents. County leaders were equally distrusted, as shown by the low mean scores all counties registered.

Table 5.8: Mean Scores and Anova Results for Questions on Trust

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Arad</th>
<th>Arges</th>
<th>Galati</th>
<th>Mures</th>
<th>Anova Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>F=1.96; df1=3; df2=456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoolmates</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>F=1.25; df1=3; df2=453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Residents</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>F=0.31; df1=3; df2=457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Leaders</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>F=2.19; df1=3; df2=453</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were asked: "How much do you trust your relatives/your schoolmates/the people of your county/the leaders of this county?" and were given four choices: 1=distrust completely; 2=somewhat distrust; 3=somewhat trust; 4=trust completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. No mean scores differed statistically at the .05 level.

Five other questions tapped the students' trust in the country's main ethnic groups: Romanians, Hungarians, Roma/Gypsy, Germans, and Jewish. To understand the results it is worth reminding that the counties were selected according to their ethnic makeup, ranging from Mures, the most ethnically diverse, and Arad, which is fairly homogeneous by Transylvanian standards, to Arges and Galati, where the ethnic Romanians make up almost the entire population (see also Chapter 1). Since many Arges and Galati residents have never personally met an ethnic Hungarian, German or Jew, their high levels of distrust in non-Romanians largely
reflects the degree to which students share the traditional stereotypes dispersed and reinforced by oral tradition and the mass media rather than opinions informed by personal experience.

Average scores were computed to reflect the respondents' overall trust in ethnic groups (Table 5.9). Regardless of the county where they lived, Romanian students more readily distrusted ethnic groups (including their own) than trusted them, a finding consistent with the students' low levels of generalized trust (see Table 5.1). As a brief comparison of Table 5.9 and Table 5.5 suggests, students in all counties except Arges trusted ethnic groups more than non-ethnic groups, most probably because every student had an ethnic group to identify with even when not belonging to any of the non-ethnic groups listed. Regional differences between Transylvania and the rest of the country were once again clearly visible. Mures and Arad scored higher, with 25.7 and 18.5 percent of the students trusting the ethnic groups. Galati and Arges registered dismally low levels of trust. On average only one in ten Galati students trusted ethnic groups, and less than one in 33 Arges students did so.

Table 5.9: Trust in Ethnic Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Distrustful (%)</th>
<th>Trustful (%)</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>97.3</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average scores across questions on trust in Romanians, Hungarians, Roma/Gypsy, Germans and Jewish. Cutoff mark between distrust and trust was 2.5 (the middle of the scale). The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=24.33; df1=3; df2=448). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant at the .05 level.

Overall, more non-Transylvanians trusted ethnic Romanians, and more Transylvanians trusted ethnic Hungarians (Tables 5.10 and 5.11). Arges and Galati came first with respect to trust in ethnic Romanians (each with more than 70 percent of the students reporting some level of trust), while Mures and Arad followed at a distance (with 63.6 and 58.4 percent, respectively).
Because same-region counties were not found to differ significantly at the .05 level or better, they were awarded equal rankings: 3.5 for Arges and Galati, and 1.5 for Mures and Arad.

Table 5.10: "In general, how much do you trust the ethnic Romanians?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=distrust completely; 2=somewhat distrust; 3=somewhat trust; 4=trust completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. More Arges than Galati students chose option “trust completely” and that is why the Arges mean score is higher although less Arges students reported trust. The four means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.09; df1=3; df2=454). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, Mures-Galati.

By contrast, more Mures and Arad students trusted the ethnic Hungarians, with strikingly few Galati and Arges students doing so (Table 5.11). Indeed, some 52.7 percent of the Mures students, and 23 percent of the Arad students, reported trust in this ethnic group. By contrast, only one in twenty-five Galati students, and one in thirty-three Arges students, did so. Again, regional differences were clearly noticeable, the Transylvanian counties receiving higher rankings than the non-Transylvanian counties.

Table 5.11: "In general, how much do you trust the ethnic Hungarians?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>97.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=distrust completely; 2=somewhat distrust; 3=somewhat trust; 4=trust completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=76.46; df1=3; df2=451). Statistically significant post-hoc Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, Mures-Galati.
Students all over Romania chose either to distrust somewhat or to distrust totally the Roma/Gypsy, and no differences were found among counties at the .05 confidence level (Table 5.12). The Roma ranked lowest among the ethnic groups included in the survey, an unsurprising finding given the deeply entrenched anti-Roma feelings shared by almost all other Romanian citizens. Some regional differences were visible, with the Transylvanian respondents being more likely to trust this ethnic group than the rest of the Romanians. Some 7 percent of the Mures and 5 percent of the Arad students reported their trust in the Roma. Only 4.1 percent in Arges, and 3.7 percent in Galati, did so.

Table 5.12: "In general, how much do you trust the Roma/Gypsy?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=distrust completely; 2=somewhat distrust; 3=somewhat trust; 4=trus completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. The county means did not differ at the .05 level (Anova results: F=1.80; df1=3; df2=452).

Only in Arad did a majority of students trusted the ethnic Germans, while in all the other counties—where this group makes up less than one percent of the local population—respondents were more likely to distrust them (Table 5.13). Again, both Transylvanian counties outscored the rest of the country, but this time Arad came first (with 57.9 percent of the students trusting the Germans), followed closely by Mures (with 41.8 percent doing so). Galati and Arges trailed behind at a considerable distance, with 28 and only 21.7 percent, respectively. Arad received a ranking of 4, Mures one of 3, while Arges and Galati each received a point score of 1.5 because their means did not differ significantly at the .05 confidence level.
Table 5.13: "In general, how much do you trust the Germans?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1= distrust completely; 2=somewhat distrust; 3=somewhat trust; 4=trust completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. The four means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=15.60; df1=3; df2=451). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Mures, Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, Mures-Galati.

The same pattern emerged when students were asked whether they trusted members of the Jewish community (Table 5.14). A majority of students in all counties distrusted the Jewish, a trend congruent with the Romanian "anti-semitism without Jews" noticed by political analysts.9 In the pattern observed so many times before, more Transylvanian than non-Transylvanian students reported trust in this ethnic group. Again, Mures registered the highest percentage of students trusting the Jewish (26.3 percent), followed by Arad (with 19.1 percent), Galati (with 18.2 percent), and Arges (with only 11.5 percent). Note that the Mures students were more than twice as likely to trust this ethnic group than the Arges students. Differences between, but not within, regions were significant at the .05 confidence level. The Transylvanian counties of Arad and Mures differed from the non-Transylvanian counties of Arges and Galati. But Arad did not differ significantly from Mures, and neither did Arges from Galati.10 As a result, Arad and Mures were each assigned rankings of 3.5, while Arges and Galati received rankings of 1.5.

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10 Note that in this analysis Anova tested differences among counties, not among regions. The Mures-Galati pair was not found to be statistically significant, but for the results to make sense the two counties received different rankings.
Table 5.14: "In general, how much do you trust the Jewish?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2) %</th>
<th>Trust (3+4) %</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=distrust completely; 2=somewhat distrust; 3=somewhat trust; 4=trust completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=5.05; df1=3; df2=449). Statistically significant post-hoc Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Arges-Mures.

**Associations and Social Structures of Cooperation**

To assess levels of associationalism, the questionnaire asked students to indicate the social organizations to which they and their parents belonged. The list of associations included political parties, religious associations, organizations promoting ethnic interests, professional associations, sport clubs, cultural societies, neighborhood clubs, charitable organizations, trade unions, and student councils. In the pattern already observed, Transylvania consistently ranked higher than the rest of the country in terms of willingness to join organizations, and more Arad and Mures students than Arges and Galati students reported that they belonged to various organizations (Table 5.15). But students were generally less involved in organizations than both their parents, and mothers less than fathers. Almost three times more Mures students than Arges or Galati students belonged to associations, and almost twice as many Mures students than Arges students reported that their mothers belonged to organizations (Table 5.16). The regional gap did not close significantly with respect to the fathers' associationalism (Table 5.17). Twice as many Arad than Arges students belonged to different associations, and their mothers followed the same pattern. Of the two non-Transylvanian counties, the Moldovan county of Galati consistently scored higher than the Wallachian county of Arges.
In terms of the students' propensity to join associations, a majority of the Mures students belonged to various associations, ranging from political parties to sports clubs, but only a minority of the students residing in other counties did so (Table 5.15). Mures came first (with 58.2 percent of students belonging to at least one organization), followed by Arad (39.5 percent). Galati and Arges trailed behind at a considerable distance (each with only around 20 percent). All county means differences were statistically significant, and thus no two counties received equal point scores. The rankings were 4 for Mures, 3 for Arad, 2 for Galati, and 1 for Arges.

Table 5.15: "Which associations and organizations do you personally belong to?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>None (%)</th>
<th>At least one (%)</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were asked to write down the number of associations to which they belonged, and then identify the type of each association from a given list (charitable, political, cultural, sports, neighborhood, etc). For each student, I have then recorded the number of associations to whom she belonged. The higher the mean score, the higher the number of associations to which students belong. Means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=20.97; df1=3; df2=445).

Mures also came first with respect to the mothers' associationalism, followed by all the other countries, which did not differ significantly among themselves (Table 5.16). Arad and Galati received equal scores, but assigning Arges the same score seemed to obscure the fact that twice as many Arad students reported their mothers' involvement in at least one association. I have therefore assigned Arges a lower score than Arad and Galati. It is worth mentioning that Galati outscored Arad not in terms of associationalism but because Galati mothers tended to belong to a greater number of organizations than Arad mothers. Indeed, as many as 51.5 percent of the Galati students reported that their mothers did not belong to any organization, compared to only 35.9 percent for Arad. A closer look at the type of associations listed by the Galati
respondents showed a preponderance of apartment block organizations, in which all residents of blocks of flats built during the communist era are still automatically registered when they first enter the building. The associations, however, rarely hold meetings, elect representatives or provide a forum for dealing with issues of common interest for their members. In virtue of this observation, and the fact that writers on social capital do not recognize additional benefits for belonging to more than one association, I ranked the four counties according to the percentage of mothers belonging to at least one association rather than according to the county mean scores. The point scores awarded to each county were 4 for Mures, 3 for Arad, 2 for Galati and 1 for Arges.

Table 5.16: "Which associations and organizations does your mother belong to?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>None (%)</th>
<th>At least one (%)</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were asked to write down the number of associations to which their mothers belonged, and then identify the type of each association from a given list (charitable, political, cultural, sports, neighborhood, etc). For each student, I have then recorded the number of associations to whom her mother belonged. The higher the mean score, the higher the number of associations to which the mothers belong. Means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=16.04; df1=3; df2=450). All post-hoc Bonferroni comparisons except Arad-Galati were found to be statistically significant.

With the exception of Arges, in all other counties a majority of the students reported that their fathers belonged to various associations (Table 5.17). Mures again scored the highest among the counties (with 70.6 percent of fathers belonging to associations), followed by Arad and Galati, while Arges trailed behind at a considerable distance (with 42.8 percent). Though the Arad and Galati mean scores were found to be statistically equal, substantially more Arad students reported that their fathers belonged to at least one association (66.4 percent compared to
56.6 percent). In virtue of this observation, Mures was assigned a ranking of 4, Arad one of 3, Galati one of 2, while Arges was awarded a point score of 1.

Table 5.17: "Which associations and organizations does your father belong to?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>None (%)</th>
<th>At least one (%)</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were asked to write down the number of associations to which their fathers belonged, and then identify the type of each association from a given list (charitable, political, cultural, sports, neighborhood, etc). For each student, I have then recorded the number of associations to whom her father belonged. The higher the mean score, the higher the number of associations. Means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=12.46; df1=3; df2=448). All Bonferroni comparisons except Arad-Galati were found to be significant.

Among organizations, student councils were the most frequently reported for students, together with apartment block associations, owners' associations, and trade unions for parents. Students belonged in smaller numbers to sports and artistic clubs and religious, usually Christian evangelical, organizations. Some parents belonged to professional societies, and a handful of them to political parties of various ideological orientations. Because many are housewives, and membership tends to be related to the workplace in post-communist Romania, the mothers tended to register lower rates of associationalism than the fathers.

**Interest in Community Affairs and Politics**

Two different sets of seven questions in total were employed to assess interest in community affairs and politics. The first set of two questions sought to uncover the level of interest in local and national politics. The second set used five questions to assess the frequency with which respondents and their families kept themselves abreast with the life of the community.
by reading the press, listening to the radio, and watching the television. Significant differences among counties were found with respect to only three of these measures.

Ever since early voting studies, the level of subjective political interest was measured by a straightforward question such as “How interested are you in politics?” which generally prompts respondents to think about national politics. But simply assuming that interest in local politics is congruent with interest in national politics is not enough for a study concerned specifically with local politics, and therefore I have opted to ask students about their interest in national politics separately from their interest in local politics. Overall interest in politics was computed as the average score of reported interest in local and national politics (Table 5.18). Differences in county mean scores were not found to be statistically significant at the .05 level, suggesting that students in all four counties were equally likely to show interest in political affairs.

Table 5.18: Overall Interest in Politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scores were computed as averages of interest in local and national politics. The higher the score, the higher the interest in politics. The four county means were not statistically different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.01; df1=3; df2=456).

There were marked differences between reported interest in local and national politics, with students showing more interest in the latter. Indeed, a majority of students in all counties reported that they were interested in national politics, but only a minority of them showed any interest in local affairs. The Mures students were the least interested in national politics and the most interested in local politics, a finding suggesting that showing interest in politics at the two levels was a competing, rather than complementary, endeavor. Regardless of the county, students
were equally disinterested in local politics, and the county means did not differ significantly in this respect (Table 5.19). The highest percentage of students interested in local politics was registered in Mures (45 percent), followed by Arad and Galati (both with slightly less than 40 percent), while Arges came last (with 36.7 percent). Although too weak to be statistically relevant, regional differences were again noticeable, with Transylvanian counties outscoring the non-Transylvanian counties.

Table 5.19: "How interested are you in local politics?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disinterested (1+2)%</th>
<th>Interested (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=totally disinterested; 2=somewhat disinterested; 3=somewhat interested; 4= totalmente interested. The higher the mean score, the higher the interest in local politics. The four county means were not statistically different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=0.646; df1=3; df2=456).

Students were more interested in national politics most likely because of the Romanian political over-centralization, which privileges the capital of Bucharest at the expense of local structures. When asked about national politics (Table 5.20), more than half of the students in every county was mildly or strongly interested. Differences between Arad and Galati were not statistically significant at the .05 confidence level, and therefore the two counties received equal rankings. Similarly, Mures and Arges received equal rankings because differences between their mean scores were found insignificant. Galati and Arad, which came first (with 68.6 and 64.9 percent of the students interested in national politics), were assigned each a ranking of 3.5. Mures and Arges came last (with 53.9 and 59.2 percent, respectively), and received rankings equal to 1.5.
Table 5.20: "How interested are you in national politics?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disinterested (1+2)%</th>
<th>Interested (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1 = totally disinterested; 2 = somewhat disinterested; 3 = somewhat interested; 4 = totally interested. The higher the mean score, the higher the interest in national politics. Means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=1.19; df1=3; df2=456). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Mures-Arad, Mures-Galati, Arges-Arad, Arges-Galati.

The second set of questions assessed respondents to report the frequency of buying and reading newspapers, and that of listening and watching radio and television news programs. The social capital literature identifies high levels of newspaper readership as key to a vibrant community, because newspaper readers are believed to be better informed than non-readers and thus better equipped to participate in civic deliberations.11 However, in post-communist Romania, radio and television have also served the function of town criers by providing ample coverage of community affairs. Several studies suggested that radio and television have seemingly become the country's two most prominent sources of information.12 Since 1989 the Romanians have repeatedly complained that the prices of newspapers have become prohibitive for their shrinking living standards and wages, and thus newspaper readership might have become the hallmark of material affluence rather than civic spirit. For these reasons, in this analysis measures referring to the printed press were complemented by measures about other media outlets.


12 See, among them, Ioan Mihaiescu, "Mental Stereotypes in the First Year of Post-Totalitarian Romania," Government and Opposition 23, no. 3 (Summer 1993), p. 318.
There were significant differences in readership of national newspapers between, but not within, regions (Table 5.21). The difference between the Transylvanian counties of Arad and Mures mean scores was not statistically significant, and thus the two counties received equal rankings of 1.5. Neither was the difference between Arges and Galati, which received equal rankings of 3.5. The Transylvanian means were significantly lower than the non-Transylvanian means, but this might not necessarily suggest a civic advantage for Arges and Galati. Both counties are closer to Bucharest, where most newspapers with national coverage are printed and from where they are then distributed throughout Romania. As it often happens in countries with dismal infrastructure, the closer a county is to the capital, the surer and the sooner that county is likely to receive national newspapers. By contrast, Mures and Arad lie at considerable distances from, and are poorly connected to, the capital. Newspapers are also more likely to reach county main towns than rural and small town areas, a trend favoring Galati, where around half of the population lives in the county main town. Another plausible explanation for Transylvania's relative lagging behind the rest of Romania is the interest shown by the Hungarian community in political developments taking place in Budapest, and Hungary in general, viewed as equally or more important than Romanian politics. Unfortunately, the students were not asked to indicate what other newspapers their families read, and thus these observations cannot be verified.

Table 5.21: "How often does at least a member of your household read national newspapers?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Infrequently (1+2)%</th>
<th>Frequently (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=never; 2=weekly or almost weekly; 3=more than once a week; 4=daily or almost daily. The higher the mean scores, the more frequent the local newspaper readership. More Arges than Arad students chose option 4, and therefore the Arges mean score was higher. The means were statistically different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.01; df1=3; df2=455). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, Mures-Galati.
By far, the most popular source of information on politics was the television, watched by an overwhelming majority of the students and their families (Table 5.22). The finding is consistent with several surveys conducted in Romania during the last decade. More than 95 percent of the students in all four counties reported that their families watched television news programs more than once a week. Again, Arad and Mures differed from Arges and Galati, but Arad did not differ from Mures, and neither did Arges from Galati. Thus, there were significant differences between, but not within, the two regions. Without exception, all non-Transylvanian families reportedly watched televised news programs frequently, with slightly lower numbers in Transylvania. Both Arad and Mures received rankings equal to 1.5. Arges and Galati were each assigned a ranking of 3.5.

Table 5.22: "How often does at least a member of your household watch televised news programs?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Infrequently (1+2)%</th>
<th>Frequently (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=never; 2=weekly or almost weekly; 3=more than once a week; 4=daily or almost daily. The higher the mean scores, the more frequently were televised news programs watched. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=11.086; df1=3; df2=457). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arge, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arge, Mures-Galati.

The Romanians' over-reliance on television plays differently in different parts of the country. During the last ten years, private television has made great strides throughout Romania, mostly in urban areas, reaching today almost half of the country’s households.13 But in southern

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Romania and Moldova, the most watched is the Romanian national television channel, still tightly controlled by the central authorities and therefore strongly biased in favor of the rulers of the day, be they former communists or pro-democrats. As a result, residents of those regions cannot draw on the variety of viewpoints and political commentaries to which Transylvanians have access through the Western European and Hungarian channels covering their region. Whether in the long run this over-reliance on television will foster any form of social capital in Romania or lead that country on the North American path to "bowling alone" observed by Robert Putnam is yet to be seen.14

Table 5.23: Mean Scores and Anova Results for Three Measures of Interest in Politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Frequently</th>
<th>Arad</th>
<th>Arges</th>
<th>Galati</th>
<th>Mures</th>
<th>Anova Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buying Newspapers</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>F=1.88; df1=3; df2=457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Local Papers</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>F=1.74; df1=3; df2=454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Listening</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>F=2.32; df1=3; df2=454</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were first asked "How many times per week is your family buying newspapers?" and were given three options: 1=never; 2=one to three times per week; 3=4 or more times per week. For assessing local newspapers readership, students were asked "How often does at least a member of your household read local newspapers?" and were given four options: 1=never; 2=weekly or almost weekly; 3=more than once a week; 4=daily or almost daily. And for the third measure, students were asked "How often does at least a member of your household listen to radio news programs?" and were given the same four options. The higher the mean score, the higher the interest in politics. The county means were not statistically significant at the .05 level.

No significant regional or county differences were documented with respect to the frequency with which families bought newspapers in general, read local newspapers and listened to the radio (Anova results and mean scores are given in Table 5.23). Around half of respondents in every county stated that their families bought newspapers infrequently, with another one-third of the families buying them more than four times a week. Slightly more Transylvanian than non-Transylvanian families bought newspapers regularly. Students in all counties reported that their families read local newspapers more frequently than national newspapers, a finding suggesting

that citizens all over Romania rely mostly on the local press for information, despite their higher interest in politics at the national level. In general, listening to radio news programs seemed to be more popular than reading the press, be it local or national.

*Civic Engagement and Political Participation*

One standard measure of political participation has been electoral turnout, and thus the four counties were ranked according to their electoral turnout in the 1996 parliamentary elections (Table 5.24). Again, the two Transylvanian counties outscored the rest of the country. Mures had the highest voter turnout (almost 78 percent), followed closely by Arad (74 percent). The Wallachian county of Arges followed at some distance (68.6 percent), while the Moldovan county of Galati came last with 60.1 percent.

Table 5.24: County Electoral Turnout (1996) -- percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Turnout (%)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>77.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>68.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>60.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Turnout for November 3, 1996, 8:30 p.m.
Source: www.kappa.ro/guv/bec/prz-t.html.

But such a measure limited to a specific timeframe cannot convey the general trend of post-1989 political participation, since the 1996 elections might have been atypical for post-communist polls. To examine political participation further, students were asked how many times did their parents cast a ballot after the demise of communism (Table 5.25). In all counties, an overwhelming majority of the students answered that their parents have voted in a majority of

(January 1995), pp. 65-78.
post-communist elections, despite the fact that in reality post-1989 electoral turnout in Romania has never been that high. Although the students have seemingly inflated the level of parent participation in elections, regional differences were again clearly noticeable. The Arges and Galati mean scores were not significantly different, and neither were the Arad and Mures scores. Statistically, Arad did not differ from the non-Transylvanian counties, but to assign the three counties the same rank would wreak havoc on the point score system. Since the Arad mean was closer to Mures's than to any of the non-Transylvanian counties, Mures and Arad received rankings of 4 and 3 to reflect their higher levels of parent participation, while Arges and Galati were each assigned rankings of 1.5.

Reported parent participation in all elections (reported in the second column of Table 5.25) was much lower, and closer to the levels of voter turnout observed during elections. Note that these results mirrored the 1996 county electoral turnout reported in Table 5.24. In the pattern already observed so many times, the Transylvanian counties of Mures and Arad came at the top (with 81.7 and 75.7 percent, respectively), and the non-Transylvanian counties of Galati and Arges come at the bottom (with 63.8 and only 58.9 percent, respectively). Of those who have participated in most post-1989 elections, more non-Transylvanians than Transylvanians missed several polls (the first column), but also more Transylvanians than non-Transylvanians participated in just one or two elections (the third column).

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15 Students might have overestimated their parents' participation in post-communist elections because most of the students tend to have only a general idea about their parents' political behavior.

16 Only two pairs of mean scores differed significantly: Mures-Arges, and Mures-Galati. Since Arad did not differ significantly from Mures, the two counties should receive equal rankings. Since Arad neither differed significantly from Arges, it should receive the ranking assigned to the latter. However, this would mean that Mures and Arges would receive the same ranking, even if their means were found to differ significantly at the .05 level.
Table 5.25: "Since 1989, the Romanian citizens have voted several times. How often would you say that your parents participated in post-communist elections?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>All (1)%</th>
<th>Most (2)%</th>
<th>Few (3+4+5)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given five options: 1=participated in all; 2=participated in most; 3=participated in just one or two; 4=did not participate, although they had the right to vote; 5=did not participate in any because they did not have the right to vote. None of the students chose option 5. Mean scores for non-Transylvanian counties are higher because more respondents chose the first two options. The higher the mean scores, the lower the electoral participation. The county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: \( F=3.20;\) df1=3; df2=457). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Mures-Arges, Mures-Galati.

Though suggestive, turnout in general elections can be at best an imperfect measure of civic engagement for at least three reasons. In post-communist Romania, electoral turnout has sometimes varied with party organizational strength and activity rather than the voters' own civic engagement. According to international observers, some elections (though admittedly not the 1996 polls) were marred by serious allegations of irregularities favoring the ruling party over the opposition. Moreover, in some parts of the country where clientelistic networks are rampant, voting in general elections was a measure of immediate, personal patronage benefits rather than a mark of civicism. Several additional measures were therefore included in this analysis.

Students were asked about their parents' political engagement in five types of activities: participation in street demonstrations, participation in strikes, support for protest petitions, contacting local newspapers or television and radio stations about an issue of common interest, as well as contacting local leaders in order to discuss legislation. All five activities denote concern with problems of common interest. A composite measure ranging from 0 to 5 summarizes responses to the questions and reflects in how many of the five activities the parents engaged (Table 5.26). Regional discrepancies were clearly visible, as a majority of the Transylvanian students, but only a minority of the non-Transylvanian students, reported parent...
participation in at least one activity. As much as 55.7 percent of the Arges students and 56.5 percent of the Galati students reported parent involvement in none of the specified activities, compared to 49.9 percent for Arad and 40.7 percent for Mures. Mures had the highest mean score, followed closely by Arad, while Arges and Galati trailed behind at a considerable distance. Since same-region counties were not found to differ significantly with respect to political engagement, they were assigned equal scores. The two Transylvanian counties received higher scores than the rest of the country (3.5 compared to 1.5).

Table 5.26: Level of Engagement in Five Selected Political Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>No Engagement (%)</th>
<th>Engagement in at Least One Activity (%)</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scores, computed on the basis of the previous five questions, reflect the number of activities (street demonstration, strike, petition signing, and media and county leader contacting) the students reported that their parents had engaged in. The higher the mean score, the higher the civic engagement. The four county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=2.80; df1=3; df2=457). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, and Mures-Galati.

When activities were analyzed separately, levels of participation were generally found to be low (less than 20 percent in most cases), with petition support and strike involvement scoring slightly higher than street demonstrations and media contacting. The results are intuitive, since in Romania petition signing and strikes have generally been organized by trade unions (and therefore participation in them has been close to mandatory), while people have had difficulty self-selecting themselves for street demonstrations and media contacting due to time and other constraints. Moreover, the Romanians with whom I talked reported that they did not believe these two latter venues were effective in bringing about change, an observation generally confirmed by reality. The results also indicate that the Transylvanians contact their local leaders,
and participate in street demonstrations, petition signing and strikes in greater numbers than residents of the rest of the country. Note also that the parents of the Arad and Mures students were also more likely to contact their local leaders than the local mass media when dissatisfied with legislation or public policies.

Twice as many Mures than Arad students reported parent participation in street demonstrations (17 percent compared to 8.1 percent), most probably because of the March 1990 demonstrations organized in Tirgu Mures by the local Romanian and Hungarian communities (Table 5.27). Only around six percent of the Arges and Galati students reported parent engagement in this activity, a level representing only a third of the Mures participation level. Arad scored slightly higher than the non-Transylvanian counties but the Arad, Arges and Galati means were not found to differ significantly. As a result, I have awarded Mures a ranking of 4 and each of the other three counties a ranking of 2.

Table 5.27: "Since 1989, have your parents ever participated in a street demonstration?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>No (1)%</th>
<th>Yes (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given two options: 1=no; 2=yes. The higher the mean scores, the higher the parents' participation in street demonstrations, and the higher the civic engagement. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.973; df1=3; df2=457). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Mures-Arges, Mures-Galati.

Similarly, regardless of their county of residence citizens throughout Romania seemed reluctant to contact their local leaders in order to discuss legislation and other issues of common interest for their locality or to protest in the name of a group (Table 5.28). However, slightly more Transylvanians than non-Transylvanians reported parent participation in this activity. Arad
came first in terms of local leader contacting (with 13.4 percent of the students reporting that their parents engaged in this kind of activity), followed by Mures (11.5 percent), Arges (9.6 percent) and Galati coming at a distance (with 6.4 percent). It is worth mentioning that Galati’s rate was less than half of Arad’s level, although both were rather small. The counties were awarded rankings reflecting their local leader contacting rate. Arad received the highest ranking of 4, followed by Mures with a ranking of 3. Arges and Galati trailed behind with rankings of 2 and 1.

Table 5.28: "Have your parents ever contacted a county official? If yes, for what reason?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Contact for Non-personal Reasons (%)</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students whose parents contacted county leaders were given four options: 1=for solving a personal problem; 2=for discussing a public issue; 3=for protesting on behalf of a group; 4=other reasons, please specify. The second column reports percentage of students reporting parent contacting local leaders for discussing a public issue or protesting in the name of a group. The higher the percentage, the higher the civic engagement.

There were no observed significant differences among counties with respect to participation in strikes, signing protest petitions, and contacting mass media about issues important for the community (mean scores and Anova results are given in Table 5.29). However, regional differences were again evident, though too weak to be significant at the .05 level. A comparison of the county mean scores reveals that the two Transylvanian counties of Arad and Mures registered slightly higher percentages of residents engaging in strikes and signing protest petitions than Arges and Galati. The Arad and Mures residents seemed to shy away from contacting mass media to report their concerns.
Table 5.29: Mean Scores and Anova Results for Three Reported Civic Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Students Reporting</th>
<th>Arad</th>
<th>Arges</th>
<th>Galati</th>
<th>Mures</th>
<th>Anova Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strike Participation</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>F=2.05; df1=3; df2=457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petition Signing</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>F=0.65; df1=3; df2=457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Media Contacting</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>F=0.56; df1=3; df2=457</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anova Results

Students were asked “Since 1989, have your parents ever participated in a strike/signed a petition of protest/written a letter or contacted a local radio or television station about an issue that bothered them?” and were given two options: 1=no; 2=yes. The higher the mean score, the higher the civic engagement.

The Nature of Interpersonal Relationships: An Absence of Corruption and Clientelism

Since definitions of clientelism and corruption vary widely, and prolonged socialization into patron-client relations makes it difficult for the respondents to discern patrimonialism from horizontal relations of reciprocity between equals, multiple questions were included in the survey. A total of ten questions, and one composite measure, were used to measure the nature of interpersonal relationships. Significant differences among counties were found with respect to eight of these measures. Corruption and clientelism denote lack of social capital, and therefore the counties that scored higher on these measures were assigned lower rankings.

To begin with, students were asked whether they believed that in order to succeed in life influential protectors and friends (the so-called “connections”) are more important than personal merit (Table 5.30). A majority of all students said yes, but the Transylvanians were less likely to agree with the statement than residents of other parts of Romania, a finding in line with Moldova’s and Wallachia’s lower levels of social capital. Strong differences between Transylvania and the Old Kingdom were found at the 0.5 confidence level, but Arad did not differ significantly from Mures, and neither did Arges from Galati. Around half of the Transylvanian respondents, but only a third of the non-Transylvanians, believed that personal merit was the basis of personal success. Since the higher the mean score, the lower the social
capital, Arad and Mures were assigned rankings of 3.5, and Arges and Galati received lower rankings of 1.5.

Table 5.30: “How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: To succeed in life, influential protectors and friends are more important than personal merit?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=disagree completely; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=agree completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the clientelism. The four county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.22; df1=3; df2=457). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, and Mures-Galati.

A majority of students throughout Romania saw their counties marred by corruption (Table 5.31). This time, Arad and Galati came first (with more than 70 percent of students agreeing that corruption was something usual in their counties), followed by Arges (with 61.8 percent). The Mures students were equally divided over the issue, with half of them believing that corruption pervaded the life of their community, and the other half believing the contrary. Mures differed significantly from Arad and Galati, but other pairs were not found to be statistically significant at the .05 confidence level. As such, Arad and Galati were assigned equal rankings of 1.5, Arges received a ranking of 3, and Mures received the highest point score (a ranking of 4), to reflect the fact that fewer students thought that corruption affected that county.

It is difficult to state with certainty the reason why the Transylvanian county of Arad scored so low with respect to this question when bribe taking was reportedly less frequent there than in Arges and Galati, the non-Transylvanian counties (see Tables 5.34 to 5.38). Arad’s high-profile corruption cases, albeit few and isolated, probably helped to erode its image.
Table 5.31: “How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Corruption in something normal in this locality?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>76.3</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=disagree completely; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=agree completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the clientelism. The four county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.86; df1=3; df2=454). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Mures-Arad, and Mures-Galati.

The next question asked students whether they believed that in life noting can be done without connections and pull, the conectii and pile which are a staple in the daily life of every Romanian (Table 5.32). Students in all counties were more likely to agree than to disagree with the statement, the Transylvanians less so than the non-Transylvanians. Arges scored the highest (with some 81.9 percent of students agreeing), followed closely by Galati (with 80.2 percent).

Arad and Mures came last, with 71.2 and 68.9 percent, respectively. Again, differences between the Transylvanian and non-Transylvanian counties were statistically significant, but differences between counties of the same region were not. Arad and Mures received equal rankings of 3.5 (to reflect their higher social capital levels), while Arges and Galati each received rankings of 1.5.

Table 5.32: “How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Nothing can be done without connections and pull?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=disagree completely; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=agree completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the clientelism. The four county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=5.42; df1=3; df2=457). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, and Mures-Galati.
A question the Romanian Opinion Barometers used to assess relative levels of clientelism asked respondents whether they believed that the few Romanians who enriched themselves after 1989 did so by exploiting the others (Table 5.3). Since the collapse of the communist regime Romania, together with other Eastern European countries, pledged to encourage private entrepreneurship in an effort to restrict the role of the state, which up to then controlled as much as 95 percent of the country’s economic activity. Group interests, political instability, legislative fluidity, and poor implementation of existing laws have meant that the emergence and activity of many new private firms did not fall within the law. The bad name acquired by private entrepreneurship has partly stemmed from the proliferation of private “lice” firms opened by the communist-era managers and directors around state-owned enterprises. These private firms, which acquired exclusive rights to provide raw materials to the state-owned enterprise and/or to sell its by-products on the market, have abusively taken over state-owned assets and have kept state-owned enterprises as virtual prisoners. There is a wide perception, as a result, that most of those who have amassed wealth did so by tax evasion, illegal dealings, fraudulent privatization, and blatant disregard of the legislation.

When asked the same question, more than one in four students in all counties under consideration answered affirmatively, the non-Transylvanians in slightly larger numbers than the Transylvanians (85.1 percent and 82.5 percent in Arges and Galati, compared to 82.1 percent in Arad and 74 percent Mures). Again, differences between counties of the same region were not found to be statistically significant at the .05 level, but differences between Transylvania and the rest of Romania were. Arad and Mures were assigned rankings of 3.5, while Arges and Galati received rankings of 1.5.

---

Table 5.33: "How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The few who enriched themselves did so by exploiting the many?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=disagree completely; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=agree completely. The higher the mean score the higher the clientelism. The four county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=2.65; df1=3; df2=456). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Artes. Arad-Arges, Arad-Alati, Mures-Arad, and Mures-Galati.

Six additional questions asked students whether one should offer money or small gifts to enlist support for solving personal problems related to the workplace, police, the mayor's office, school, hospital and courts. The institutions have similar organization schemes and responsibilities in all the counties included in this analysis, and as such county differences reflect not institutional design but the institutions' operating modes, which are informed by the local mores of each local community. Across the four counties, hospitals had the worse reputation, followed by the police, workplace, courts of law, and mayory, while the school had the best reputation. A majority of all Romanian students considered that bribe was necessary in all institutions identified in the survey.

The number of times a respondent considered that bribe was always necessary was recorded separately (Table 5.34). The measure, which runs from 0 to 6 and summarizes responses to the previous six questions, shows the number of institutions in which pull was considered always necessary to facilitate service. In the pattern already noted so many times, regional differences emerged clearly. Some 39.7 and 37.8 percent of the Arad and Mures students believed that bribes were not always necessary in the institutions identified by the questionnaires. Fewer Galati and Arges students believed so (29.8 percent and 26.6 percent, respectively). Differences between, but not within, Transylvania and the rest of the country were
found to be statistically significant at the .05 confidence level. Since the mean scores of Arad and Mures were the lowest, this pair was assigned point scores of 3.5, while Arges and Galati received rankings of 1.5.\textsuperscript{18}

Table 5.34: Composite Measure for Bribing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Zero Institutions</th>
<th>One to Three Institutions</th>
<th>More than Three</th>
<th>Mean scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The measure records the number of times a respondent answered that bribe is always needed in: workplace, police, the mayor’s office, hospital, courts, and school. The higher a county’s mean score, the higher its clientelism. The four county means were found to differ significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.25; df1=3; df2=445). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, and Mures-Galati.

Asked whether they believed that bribes were necessary at the workplace, most students in all Romanian counties responded affirmatively (Table 5.35). However, fewer Transylvanian than non-Transylvanian students believed that bribe was always needed in that situation. Arges registered the lowest, and Mures registered the highest, percentage of students believing that bribe was never needed (21.3 percent compared to 41.8 percent). Arges differed significantly from all the other counties, but the latter did not differ among themselves. As a result, Arges received a ranking of 1 (reflecting the highest level of bribing and the lowest level of social capital), while Arad, Mures and Galati each received rankings of 3.

\textsuperscript{18} The same ranking was obtained when average scores across the six questions were computed. The four county mean scores were again found to be significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.26; df1=3; df2=445). The statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons were: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, and Mures-Galati. In other words, regional differences emerged but counties of the same region did not differ between themselves.
Table 5.35: “Do you think that to be treated properly one needs to give ‘presents’ (money, services or goods) at the workplace?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Never (1)%</th>
<th>Sometimes (2)%</th>
<th>Always (3)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given three options: 1=never; 2=sometimes; 3=always. The higher the mean score, the higher the clientelism. The four mean scores were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=6.15; df1=3; df2=451). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arges-Arad, Arges-Galati, and Arges-Mures.

Regional differences were not noticeable when students were asked whether bribes are needed when dealing with the police (Table 5.36). Some 32.9 percent of the Mures students believed that bribes were always necessary in that situation, but only around 18 percent of the students in the other three counties chose this option. More Mures and Galati students than students from other counties believed that bribes were never needed. Arges significantly outscored all the other counties, from which it differed significantly at the .05 level. As a result, that county received a ranking of 1. No significant differences were found between the other three counties, which received rankings of 3.

Table 5.36: “Do you think that to be treated properly one needs to give ‘presents’ (money, services or goods) to police officers?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Never (1)%</th>
<th>Sometimes (2)%</th>
<th>Always (3)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given three options: 1=never; 2=sometimes; 3=always. The higher the mean score, the higher the clientelism. The four mean scores were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=2.84; df1=3; df2=451). Statistically significant post hoc Bonferroni comparisons: Arges-Arad, Arges-Galati, and Arges-Mures.
A majority of the Transylvanians (50.2 percent in Arad and 60.4 percent in Mures), but only a minority of the non-Transylvanians (34.7 percent in Arges and 39.6 percent in Galati), believed that bribes were never needed in school (Table 5.37). However, more non-Transylvanians than Transylvanians responded that bribes were always needed in school. Differences between, but not within, the two regions were statistically significant at the .05 confidence level. Again, Arges and Galati had higher mean scores, and therefore they received lower rankings (equal to 1.5), while the Transylvanian counties of Arad and Mures received rankings of 3.5.

Table 5.37: “Do you think that to be treated properly one needs to give ‘presents’ (money, services or goods) at school?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Never (1)%</th>
<th>Sometimes (2)%</th>
<th>Always (3)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given three options: 1=never; 2=sometimes; 3=always. The higher the mean score, the higher the clientelism. The four mean scores were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=5.24; df1=3; df2=454). Statistically significant post hoc Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, and Mures-Galati.

Counties did not differ significantly with respect to perceived need to offer pull at the mayor’s office, hospital and the courts. See Table 5.38 for Anova results and mean scores. However, the Transylvanian counties of Arad and Mures scored slightly higher than the non-Transylvanian counties of Arges and Galati with respect to the first two questions, as evidenced by their lower mean scores.
Table 5.38: Bribes in Three Institutions – Mean Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Arad</th>
<th>Arges</th>
<th>Galati</th>
<th>Mures</th>
<th>Anova Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mayor's Office</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>F=0.88; df1=3; df2=453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>F=0.91; df1=3; df2=454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courts of Law</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>F=2.51; df1=3; df2=451</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were asked "Do you think that to be treated properly one needs to give 'presents' (money, services or goods) at the mayor's office/hospital/courts of law?" and were offered as options: 1=never; 2=sometimes; 3=always. The higher the mean score, the higher the clientelism and corruption. The four county means were not found to differ significantly at the .05 level.

Tolerance

Several questions were employed to assess the degree of tolerance for each county. Five questions tapped the students' tolerance toward ethnic minority rights, and three other questions were used to assess tolerance toward people sharing various political views. Significant differences among the four counties were found with respect to six of the eight measures. First, the students were asked to indicate if they supported ethnic minority rights such as the right to set up independent organizations in order to preserve their tradition and culture, have school education in their mother tongue, send representatives to the country's bi-cameral Parliament, discuss and even question the decisions of the majority, and organize protests against the local and central government. Ethnic tolerance was computed as the average score across the five questions (Table 5.39). Again, regional differences between Transylvania and the rest of Romania were clearly evident, but same-region counties did not differ significantly with respect to ethnic tolerance. A majority of the Transylvanians supported granting rights to the country's ethnic minorities, but only a minority of the students living in the rest of Romania did so. Arad and Mures received rankings of 3.5, to reflect their higher levels of tolerance, while Arges and Galati were awarded lower rankings of 1.5.
Table 5.39: Ethnic Tolerance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Intolerant (%)</th>
<th>Tolerant (%)</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average scores across five questions on support for ethnic minority rights (independent organizations, education in mother tongue, representatives in Parliament, right to question majority decisions, and right to protest against local and central authorities). Cutoff point for distinguishing disagree from agree was 2.5. The higher the mean score, the higher the ethnic tolerance. The four county means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=7.85; df1=3; df2=453). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, and Mures-Galati.

Responses to the five questions revealed some important differences between counties and regions. When asked whether ethnic minorities should be allowed to preserve their traditional culture through independent organizations, a majority of students in all counties responded affirmatively (Table 5.40). More than four in five Arad, Galati and Mures residents and slightly more than three in four Arges students supported this ethnic minority right. Regional differences were evident again, as both Mures and Arad scored higher than Arges and Galati, but no significant differences were found within the regions. The Transylvanian counties of Arad and Mures received rankings of 3.5, while Arges and Galati were awarded rankings of 1.5.

Table 5.40: "Do you think that in Romania national minorities should be allowed to keep their tradition and culture with the help of independent organizations?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=totally disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=totally agree. The higher the mean scores, the higher the tolerance. More Mures students chose option 4 and this is why the Mures mean score was higher than Galati's. The four county means differ significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.93; df1=3; df2=457). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, and Mures-Galati.
A majority of students in all counties also supported the idea of allowing ethnic minorities to have school education in their mother tongue, the Transylvanians in larger numbers than the students in other parts of the country (Table 5.41). Some 60 percent of the Transylvanians living in Arad and Mures came out in favor of granting ethnic minorities their right to education, compared to around 50 percent of the non-Transylvanians residing in Arges and Galati. It did not matter in which part of Transylvania students resided, since Arad and Mures did not differ significantly in terms of their mean scores. Neither did Arges and Galati. As a result of all these observations, the Transylvanian counties received a point score of 3.5, and Arges and Galati received rankings equal to 1.5.

Table 5.41: "Do you think that in Romania national minorities should be allowed to have school education in their mother tongue?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students had four options: 1=totally disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=totally agree. The higher the mean score, the higher the tolerance. The county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.82; df1=3; df2=456). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, and Mures-Galati.

Asked whether they supported parliamentary representation for the ethnic minorities, a majority of the students responded affirmatively in all counties except Arges, where slightly more than half of the students opposed the proposal (Table 5.42). Again, regional differences were noticeable, with Transylvania coming first (with more than 70 percent of Arad and Mures students supporting the right), and the rest of the country trailing behind (at 63 percent and 47.2 percent in Galati and Arges, respectively). Mures scored the highest, followed closely by Arad, then Galati, while Arges came last. Since differences between counties belonging to the same
region were not statistically significant, Mures and Arad received equal rankings of 3.5, and Arges and Galati each got a ranking of 1.5.

Table 5.42: "Do you think that in Romania national minorities should be allowed to have representatives in Parliament?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=totally disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=totally agree. The higher the mean score, the higher the tolerance. The four county means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=7.47; df1=3; df2=455). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures-Arges, and Mures-Galati.

Overall, surveyed students were even more reluctant to grant the ethnic minorities the right to question the decisions of the Romanian majority (Table 5.43). Having said this, it is important to note that a majority of respondents in the Transylvanian counties of Arad and Mures supported this right, while only a minority of the students in Arges and Galati did so. Mures came at the top (with 63.5 percent of students supporting the right), followed by Arad (with 54.5 percent), but their means were not found to differ significantly, and therefore these two counties were awarded equal rankings of 3.5. Arges and Galati also did not differ significantly with respect to their mean scores, which were much lower than Transylvania’s. Around 45.2 percent of Arges students, and 43.3 percent of Galati students (amounting to some two-thirds of the Mures rate), reported support for that right.
Table 5.43: "Do you think that in Romania national minorities should be allowed to question the decisions of the majority?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=totally disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=totaly agree. The higher the mean score, the higher the tolerance. The four county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=6.21; df1=3; df2=454). Statistically significant onferroni comparisons: Arad-Arges, Arad-Galati, Mures, Arges, and Mures-Galati.

Last, the students were asked whether they agreed that the ethnic minorities should have the right to protest against the country’s local and central authorities in support of their grievances (Table 5.44). Most Romanian students opposed the right, those of Transylvania less so than those of other parts of the country. Again, more Mures and Arad students responded affirmatively (some 39 percent in each county) than Arges or Galati students (35.6 and 25.5 percent, respectively). The Arad, Mures and Arges mean scores did not differ significantly at the .05 level and therefore these three counties received equal rankings of 3. Galati was assigned a lower ranking, equal to 1, to reflect its lower tolerance toward this ethnic minority right.

Table 5.44: "Do you think that in Romania national minorities should be allowed to protest against central and local authorities?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=totally disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=totaly agree. The higher the mean score, the higher the tolerance. The four county means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.74; df1=3, df2=456). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Galati-Arges, Galati-Arad, and Galati-Mures.
Tolerance is not restricted to the recognition of specific ethnic rights but extends to the accommodation of people sharing different political views. Three additional questions were included in the survey but the counties differed significantly only with regard to the first, which asked the respondents whether they agreed that people should be allowed to vote even if they cannot do so intelligently (Table 5.45). An overwhelming majority of the students in all counties endorsed that right to vote. No statistically significant differences were found between the counties with the lowest means and highest percentages of opponents to the right to vote (Arad and Galati), and therefore the two non-Transylvanian counties received equal rankings of 1.5 each. Similarly, no significant differences were found between Mures and Arges, which were each assigned higher rankings of 3.5.

Table 5.45: “How much do you agree or disagree with the following sentence: People should be allowed to vote even if they cannot do so intelligently?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=disagree completely; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=agree completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the tolerance. The four county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.80; df1=3; df2=455). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Mures-Arad, Mures-Galati, Arad-Mures, and Arad-Arges.

The Anova results and mean scores for the two other questions are reported in Table 5.46. A majority of Romanian students in all counties supported the right to a personal opinion, even when that right was not exercised reasonably. Opinions were more divided over the right to form political organizations when their program was radical. In all counties, students were less likely to endorse this latter right compared to the right to vote or the right to opinion. Again, the
counties did not differ significantly in this respect, although slightly more Arad and Arges students supported the right to form political organizations than Mures and Galati students.

Table 5.46: Two Tolerance Measures – Anova Results and Mean Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Arad</th>
<th>Arges</th>
<th>Galati</th>
<th>Mures</th>
<th>Anova Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opinion</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>F=0.93; df1=3; df2=457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Organization</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>F=0.74; df1=3; df2=455</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were asked in order: “How much do you agree or disagree with the following sentences ‘All people should have the right to have an opinion, even if they cannot exercise this right reasonably’/ ‘All people should have the right to form a political organization, even if its program is radical.’” They were given four options: 1=disagree completely; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=agree completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the tolerance.

The Mures students showed the least support for the ethnic minorities’ right to organize politically, most likely because of all four counties Mures is the only one to have locally-based nationalistic parties defending the rights of a ethnic community against the other. The chauvinistic Party for the National Unity of the Romanians (Partidul Unitatii Nationale a Romanilor, PUNR) was formed as a reaction to the emergence of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (Uniunea Democrat a Maghiarilor din Romania, UDMR), an umbrella organization representing the ethnic rather than political interests of the Transylvanian ethnic Hungarians. Both the UDMR and the PUNR have a discourse relentlessly privileging ethnicity over all other political, social and economic concerns. Both parties were formed in Mures, the only Romanian county where the ethnic Hungarian population somewhat matches in numbers the ethnic Romanian majority.

County Rankings

Having obtained county rankings for each social capital indicator, we can now compute the total point score. Of the total 48 indicators employed here only those for which county mean
scores differed significantly were reported in Table 5.47. Total point scores do not include composite measures. Mures had the highest total score (98.5), followed by Arad (90.0). The counties of Moldova and Southern Romania scored significantly lower than Transylvania: 64.5 for Galati, and only 57 for Arges. Mures scored as much as 41.5 points higher than Arges, while Arad scored 25.5 points higher than Galati.

The table also shows that counties with higher levels of trust scored higher in terms of generalized trust, trust toward members of the immediate community and trust toward the country’s main ethnic groups; associationalism; voter turnout and civic engagement; law abidingness and non-clientelistic inter-personal ties; and tolerance toward people with other ethnic backgrounds or political views. By comparison, counties with low reserves of social capital were characterized by distrust, low membership in voluntary associations, voter defection, corruption and clientelism and intolerance. As expected, social capital measures pointed in the same direction. The only exception was interest in politics and community affairs. The counties with higher levels of social capital (higher summed scores) were the counties with lower interest levels. Part of the problem rests perhaps with the survey, the students’ imperfect knowledge and recollection of their parents’ behavior, and the use of some questions and not others.

Table 5.47: Summed Scores across Social Capital Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Arad</th>
<th>Mures</th>
<th>Arges</th>
<th>Galati</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Trust (Tables 5.2+5.3+5.6+5.7+5.10+5.11+5.13+5.14)</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalized Social Trust (Table 5.1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- people should be trusted (Table 5.2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- people try to help (Table 5.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in Immediate Community (Table 5.4)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors (Table 5.6)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians (Table 5.7)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Groups (Table 5.9)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian (Table 5.10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian (Table 5.11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German (Table 5.13)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish (Table 5.14)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| B. Membership in Associations (Tables 5.15+5.16+5.17) | 9   | 12  | 3   | 6   |
| Respondent membership rate (Table 5.15)               | 3   | 4   | 1   | 2   |
| Mother membership rate (Table 5.16)                   | 3   | 4   | 1   | 2   |
| Father membership rate (Table 5.17)                   | 3   | 4   | 1   | 2   |

| C. Interest in Community Affairs and Politics (Tables 5.20+5.21+5.22) | 6.5 | 4.5 | 8.5 | 10.5 |
| Interest in National Politics (Table 5.20)            | 3.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 3.5 |
| National Newspaper Readership (Table 5.21)            | 1.5 | 1.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| Television News Watching (Table 5.22)                 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 |

| D. Civic Engagement (Tables 5.24+5.25+5.27+5.28)       | 10.5 | 12.5 | 9.5 | 7.5 |
| 1996 Electoral Turnout (Table 5.24)                   | 3    | 4    | 2   | 1   |
| Parent Participation in Post-communist Elections (Table 5.25) | 1.5 | 1.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| Parent Engagement in 5 Political Activities (Table 5.26) | 3   | 4   | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| - street demonstrations (Table 5.27)                   | 2   | 4   | 2   | 2   |
| - local leaders contacting (Table 5.28)                | 4   | 3   | 2   | 1   |

| E. Non-Clientelistic Behavior (Tables 5.30+5.31+5.32+5.33+5.35+5.36+5.37) | 21.5 | 24.0 | 11.0 | 13.5 |
| Succeed through personal merit (Table 5.30)            | 3.5 | 3.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| Corruption unusual for this county (Table 5.31)        | 1.5 | 4   | 3   | 1.5 |
| Connections/pull unnecessary (Table 5.32)              | 3.5 | 3.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| Wealth not acquired by exploitation (Table 5.33)       | 3.5 | 3.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| Bribe (Table 5.34)                                     |     |     |     |     |
| - workplace (Table 5.35)                               | 3   | 3   | 1   | 3   |
| - police (Table 5.36)                                  | 3   | 3   | 1   | 3   |
The high-school survey also uncovered significant regional differences between Transylvania, on the one hand, and Wallachia and Moldova, on the other. The pattern with Mures and Arad at the top and Galati and Arges at the bottom was observed with respect to 25 of the measures for which significant differences among counties were found statistically. In the case of three additional measures (trust in the ethnic Romanians, national newspaper readership, and television news watching) the Transylvanian counties scored lower than the non-Transylvanian counties. Regional differences suggesting a Transylvanian advantage over the rest of the country were also noted with respect to eight other measures but were too weak to be statistically significant. The rate at which regional differences could be observed seems to be high enough to assume that even the differences in means that were not significant at the .05 level did not occur by mere chance.

19 The measures were: trust in fellow citizens (non-ethnic groups) (Table 5.5), trust in the Roma (Table 5.12), interest in local politics (Table 5.19), frequency of buying newspapers (Table 5.23), parent participation in strikes, support for protest petitions (Table 5.29), and bribing at the mayor's office and hospitals (Table 5.38). Regional differences were also noted with respect to mass media contacting (Table 5.29) but Transylvania scored lower than the rest of the country.
This chapter had demonstrated that sociostructural reserves are not uniformly distributed in Romania, but that some counties have more social capital than others. More specifically, of the four counties surveyed here, Mures registered the highest levels of social capital, followed by Arad. Galati and Arges trailed behind. The high-school survey also suggests some important regional differences within Romania that place Transylvania at an advantage compared to the rest of the country. The next chapter will further explore these regional differences with the help of a more powerful survey instrument based on a sample representative for the entire Romanian population.
CHAPTER 6.
Is Transylvania More Civic? Testing Regional Sociostructural Differences

The previous chapter has uncovered significant differences among the counties of Arad, Arges, Galati and Mures with respect to their social capital levels. High-school surveys administered in early 1999 revealed that the Arad and Mures respondents were generally more tolerant, trusting and law-abiding, and less accepting of corruption and clientelism than the Arges and Galati residents. Arad and Mures also registered higher levels of electoral turnout, associationalism, and engagement in political activities. Since these latter counties belong to Transylvania, should we conclude that that province as a whole is likely to register higher levels of social capital than the rest of Romania, to which Arges and Galati belong?

This chapter brings further evidence for the existence of sociostructural differences between Transylvania and the rest of Romania by examining the results of several Opinion Barometers administered not to the youth but rather on samples representative for the country’s entire population. Thus, Chapter 5 and 6 differ not in terms of the method or measures they use but in terms of the data set they rely on. The Barometers have been conducted twice a year starting with 1994, but only four of them collected information about the respondents’ county of residence. Of these four, only the June 1998 and October 1999 Barometers included questions related to the facets of social capital identified in Chapter 4. The questions used by Opinion Barometers changed from one survey to the other, and those on which this chapter is based were no exception. None of the questions used in this chapter appeared in both June 1998 and October 1999 barometers, and therefore a time series analysis could not be used to uncover major attitudinal and behavioral changes that could have taken place between the two surveys. With the
exception of the January 1999 Jiu Valley miners’ strike, which almost brought down the Christian Democrat government of Premier Radu Vasile, no major political event took place in Romania during that period. Even if it were to occur, such event would likely influence the relationship between the citizens and the government rather than the one between the citizens and their immediate community, to which in fact social capital as a concept more readily relates.

The following analysis relies on the theoretical arguments outlined in Chapter 4 and therefore presents the different measures without detailing the role each plays in forming social capital stocks. The six broad facets of social capital identified in Chapter 4 and employed in Chapter 5—trust, associationalism, interest in community affairs and politics, civic engagement, absence of corruption and clientelism, and tolerance—were included here, too. A total of 37 questions were used to rank the counties, then summed point scores were computed for each region. The ranking method is identical to that used in Chapter 3, and readers interested in the rationale of the procedure should refer to that discussion.

This analysis is interested primarily to uncover the attitudinal and behavioral differences between Transylvania and the rest of Romania. But while compared to Transylvania they are seemingly very similar, Wallachia and Moldova do exhibit some sociostructural discrepancies that warrant their analysis as separate units. At the same time, Bucharest, the Romanian capital and the largest city in southeastern Europe, frequently behaved differently from Wallachia, the region to which it belongs geographically. Because of these considerations, I have also treated the capital separately. Thus, for the purpose of the present analysis, Romania was divided into four areas, Transylvania, Moldova, Wallachia and the city of Bucharest. While this division might seem problematic to geographers, it is parsimonious enough to respond to the research question raised by this study but detailed enough to allow for a rich regional comparison.
**Trust**

The June 1998 and October 1999 Opinion Barometers together included three sets of questions assessing trust from various angles. The first set tapped levels of generalized trust with the help of a question asking respondents whether they believed that a majority of people think only of themselves or try to help others (Table 6.1). A majority of the respondents in all regions selected the first option, but significant regional differences were noticeable. Twice as many Transylvanians than residents of other parts of Romania believed that most people try to help others. Wallachia scored in between these two extremes, with some 12.6 percent of the respondents endorsing the view, compared to 17.2 percent for Transylvania. Transylvania was assigned the highest ranking (equal to 4), followed by Wallachia (with ranking of 3), and then by Moldova and Bucharest, both with equal rankings of 1.5 due to the fact that their mean scores did not differ significantly at the .05 level. A similar question included in the high-school survey (Table 6.3) ranked the Transylvanian county of Mures the highest, but was unable to differentiate between Arad, Arges and Galati, which all received equal rankings despite the fact that slightly more Arad students chose the civic option. The Barometer suggests that Transylvania as a whole (including Arad) is more civic than the rest of the country.

Table 6.1: “In your opinion, most people try to help the others?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>No (1)%</th>
<th>Yes (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=no; 2=yes. I discarded option 3= no response/don’t know not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the number of respondents believing that most people try to help the others. Means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.09; df1=3; df2=980). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant except Moldova-Bucharest.

Source: June 1998 Opinion Barometer.
A second set of questions included in the Opinion Barometers assessed levels of trust toward Romania's five main ethnic groups. The first question asked respondents to state how much they trusted the country's main ethnic group (Table 6.2). Throughout Romania, a majority of the respondents reportedly trusted the ethnic Romanians. The Transylvanians and the Wallachians (including Bucharest residents) were more likely than the Moldovans to trust the Romanians. Only 53.5 percent of the Moldovans trusted that ethnic group, but more than 70 percent of the residents of the rest of the country did so. Transylvania, Wallachia and Bucharest received equal rankings of 3, since their mean scores were found not to be significantly different at the .05 level. At the same time, Moldova received the lowest ranking (equal to 1) to reflect its lower levels of trust. The same question figured in the high-school survey (Table 5.10) and suggested that the Transylvanians of Arad and Mures were the least likely to trust ethnic Romanians. Both the Galati, and to a lesser degree the Arges, students were more likely to trust ethnic Romanians. The Barometer, however, seems to indicate that Galati is an exception, registering higher levels of trust than Moldova as a whole.

Table 6.2: "How much do you trust the ethnic Romanians?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. I discarded option 5= no response/don't know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. More Wallachians than Transylvanians stated that they trust Romanians "very much" and this is why Wallachia's mean score was higher than Transylvania's. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=11.21; df1=3; df2=1964). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Moldova-Wallachia, Moldova-Transylvania and Moldova-Bucharest. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

The second question tapped trust in the ethnic Hungarians, the second largest ethnic group of the country (Table 6.3). This time, a majority of respondents in all regions distrusted the
ethnic group, although the Transylvanians were the least likely to do so. As much as 39.8 percent of the Transylvanians trusted the ethnic Hungarians, but less than 20 percent did so in the rest of Romania. Transylvania again received the highest ranking (equal to 4), followed by Bucharest and Moldova, with rankings of 3 and 2, respectively. Wallachia trailed behind with a ranking of 1, corresponding to the lowest mean score. When posed to the students, the same question (Table 5.11) ranked the Transylvanian counties of Mures and Arad the highest, and the Wallachian county of Argeș the lowest, with the Moldovan county of Galati scoring in between.

Table 6.3: “How much do you trust the ethnic Hungarians?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. I discarded option 5= no response/don’t know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. Means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=67.73; df1=3; df2=1814). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

Another Barometer question assessed levels of trust in the Germans (Table 6.4).

Transylvania was the only region more likely to trust than distrust this ethnic group, with the rest of Romania being more likely to distrust it. Indeed, some 54.2 percent of the Transylvanians trusted the Germans, but less than half of the residents of other regions did so. Again, the Wallachians proved to be the most distrustful of all: as much as 70.4 percent of them distrusted the Germans. Transylvania received the highest ranking (equal to 4), while Wallachia received the lowest (equal to 1). Moldova and Bucharest scored in between these two extremes, with rankings equal to 2 and 3, respectively. A similar ranking was obtained when the same question was included in the high-school survey (Table 5.13).
Table 6.4: "How much do you trust the Germans?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. I discarded option 5=no response/don't know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. Means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=33.77; df1=3; df2=1670). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

The next question tapped levels of trust in members of Romania's tiny Jewish community (Table 6.5). While a majority of respondents in all regions distrusted this ethnic group, the pattern with Transylvania at the top and Wallachia at the bottom was again clearly visible. Some 34.7 percent of the Transylvanians trusted the Jewish, but only 13.1 percent of the Wallachians did so. As such, Transylvania and Wallachia received the highest and the lowest rankings, respectively, while Moldova and Bucharest scored in between. The rankings were the following: 4 for Transylvania, 3 for Moldova, 2 for Bucharest and 1 for Wallachia. When included in the high-school survey, the same question ranked the Transylvanian counties the highest, but was unable to differentiate between Wallachia and Moldova (see Table 5.14). Though statistically weak, slightly less Arges than Galati students trusted the Jewish. The Barometer shows that differences between Wallachia and Moldova exist and are significant.

Table 6.5: "How much do you trust the Jewish?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. I discarded option 5=no response/don't know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. Means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=33.77; df1=3; df2=1670). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.
The last in this set of questions uncovered trust in members of the Roma/Gypsy community (Table 6.6). Less than one-tenth of the respondents in all regions stated their trust in this ethnic group, but again Transylvania was more likely than other regions to do so. Almost 9 percent of the Transylvanians, but only 3.4 percent of the Bucharest residents, declared that they trusted the Roma. Transylvania therefore received the highest ranking of 4, while Bucharest received the lowest ranking equal to 1. Moldova and Wallachia scored in between, with trust levels of 7.1 and 6.1 percent, respectively. Because their mean scores did not differ significantly at the .05 level, these two regions received equal rankings of 2.5. The same question was used in the high-school survey without being able to uncover differences among counties (see Table 5.12). However, slightly more Arad and Mures students trusted the Roma.

Table 6.6: “How much do you trust the Roma/Gypsies?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. 1 discarded option 5= no response/don't know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. Means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=33.77; df1=3; df2=1670). All Bonferroni comparisons except Wallachia-Moldova were statistically significant. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

The third set of Barometer questions probed trust in state institutions such as the presidency, the parliament, the mayor’s office, and the government. None of these questions were included in the high-school questionnaire. In all cases but one Transylvania scored the highest among regions and Moldova scored the lowest, while Wallahia and Bucharest scored somewhere in between. The first question referred to trust in the Romanian presidency, and revealed that less than half of the respondents in all regions trusted this central institution (Table...
6.7). Transylvania was more likely to trust the institution than Moldova and Wallachia, with the exception of the capital of Bucharest. Since their mean scores did not differ significantly at the .05 level, Bucharest and Transylvania received the highest rankings (each equal to 3.5). Neither did the mean scores of Moldova and Wallachia differ significantly at the .05 level, and as such these two regions received the lowest rankings (each equal to 1.5).

Table 6.7: “How much do you trust the Romanian presidency?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. I discarded option 5= no response/don’t know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. Means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.83; df1=3; df2=1916). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Transylvania-Wallachia, Transylvania-Moldova, and Moldova-Bucharest. Source: The Opinion Barometer October 1999.

Parliament elicited much less trust than the presidency, for no apparent reason (Table 6.8). This time, Wallachia and Bucharest were more likely to trust the legislature, Transylvania less so and Moldova the least so. A little over 12 percent of the residents of southern Romania (including Wallachia and Bucharest) trusted Parliament, but only 3.9 percent of the Moldovans did so. Only one in ten Transylvanians reported trust in this institution. But the mean scores of Transylvania and Wallachia (including Bucharest) were not found to be significantly different at the .05 level, and as a result all regions except Moldova received equal rankings equal to 3. Moldova received a ranking of 1, to reflect its lower levels of trust.
Table 6.8: “How much do you trust the Parliament?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. I discarded option 5= no response/don’t know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. Means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.59; df1=3; df2=1915). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Moldova-Transylvania, Moldova-Wallachia, and Moldova-Bucharest. Source: The October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

Equally distrusted was the government (Table 6.9). Most trustful of the executive were the Wallachian and Bucharest respondents (13.3 and 16.5 percent respectively reported trust), while the Moldovans were the most distrustful (some 93.3 percent reported distrust).

Transylvania came in between these extremes, with some 12.3 percent of respondents trusting the government. Bucharest received the highest ranking, equal to 4, while Moldova received a ranking of 1. Transylvania and Wallachia, whose mean difference did not differ significantly at the .05 level, each received rankings of 2.5.

Table 6.9: “How much do you trust the government?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. I discarded option 5= no response/don’t know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. Means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=2.66; df1=3; df2=1921). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant with the exception of Transylvania-Wallachia. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

While the regional pattern placing Transylvania above the rest of Romania was not evident with respect to trust in parliament and government, Transylvania scored the highest with
respect to trust in a local governmental structure like the mayor’s office (Table 6.10). As much as 44.5 percent of the Transylvanians, and 40.7 percent of the Wallachians, trusted the mayory, but only 37.7 percent of the Moldovans did so. Four in five Bucharest residents stated that they distrusted the Bucharest mayor’s office. Transylvania again received the highest ranking (of 4), followed by Wallachia and Moldova with equal rankings of 2.5, to reflect the fact that their mean scores did not differ significantly at the .05 level. By comparison, Bucharest trailed behind having been assigned a ranking of 1.

Table 6.10: "How much do you trust the mayor’s office?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. I discarded option 5=no response/don’t know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. Means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=14.03; df1=3; df2=1937). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant except Moldova-Wallachia. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

Two more measures were included under the rubric of trust. The first question asked the respondents whether they trusted their neighbors (Table 6.11). Throughout Romania, a majority of respondents answered affirmatively. Transylvania again scored the highest among regions, with 68.9 percent of the respondents stating their trust in neighbors. That region was closely followed by Wallachia, with a 64.8 percent trust rate. Moldova and Bucharest trailed behind, with 57.4 and 55.7 percent, respectively. Since their mean scores were found not to differ significantly at the .05 level, Transylvania and Wallachia received equal rankings of 3.5. Similarly, Moldova and Bucharest received rankings of 1.5 each, because their mean scores did not differ either. When part of the high-school survey, the same question ranked Transylvania
above the rest of the country (Table 5.6). Indeed, more Arad and Mures, than Arges and Galati, students stated that they trust their neighbors. The Barometer would suggest, however, that the Arges residents are less trusting than the rest of the Wallachians.

Table 6.11: "How much do you trust your neighbors?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. I discarded option 5= no response/don't know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. Means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.31; df1=3; df2=1984). All Bonferroni comparisons except Transylvania-Wallachia and Moldova-Bucharest were significant. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

The last Barometer question presented in this section assessed trust in people of other religions (Table 6.12). This question was not part of the high-school survey. A majority of the Transylvanians and Bucharest residents, but a minority of the respondents in the rest of the country, trusted this group. The Transylvanians were the most trustful (59.3 percent), followed by the Bucharest residents (52.9 percent), and this is why Transylvania and Bucharest received rankings of 4 and 3, respectively. Wallachia and Moldova did not differ significantly from each other, so they received equal rankings of 1.5 to reflect their lower levels of trust.

Table 6.12: "How much do you trust people of religions other than yours?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. I discarded option 5= no response/don't know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. Means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=33.77; df1=3; df2=1670). All Bonferroni comparisons except Wallachia-Moldova were statistically significant. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.
**Associationalism**

The Opinion Barometers also included measures of membership in voluntary associations. Since responses to all of these questions followed the pattern already observed, with Transylvania outscoring the rest of the country, I selected two of the most representative questions to illustrate regional differences in associationalism. The first question asked respondents whether they belonged to any voluntary association (Table 6.13). While the overwhelming majority of the Romanians did not belong to any association, fewer Transylvanians did so compared to the Moldovans and Wallachians, except Bucharest residents. Some 15.3 percent of surveyed Transylvanians and 13.8 percent of the Bucharest residents belonged to voluntary associations, compared to only 6.9 and 7.5 percent of the Wallachians and Moldovans, respectively. Because the mean differences between Transylvania and Bucharest were found not to differ significantly at the .05 level, the two received equal rankings of 3.5. Similarly, Moldova and Wallachia received equal rankings of 1.5, to reflect their lower levels of associationalism and the fact that a significant difference between their mean scores was not observed. Similar questions were included in the high-school survey (Tables 5.15, 5.16 and 5.17). Cumulatively the three questions, which assessed membership in associations for the students and their parents, ranked the Transylvanian counties of Mures and Arad the highest, followed by the Moldovan county of Galati. Arges was ranked the lowest. The Barometer suggests that even in Wallachia, which ranked the lowest among regions, there are pockets of high associationalism, the city of Bucharest being one of them.
Before turning to the second measure associated with associationalism, charity, I want to draw attention to the regional differences in the kind of associations to which the Romanians belonged. Compared to Transylvania, not only that Moldova and Wallachia registered lower levels of associationalism, they had higher levels of membership in those associations in which participation was nominal or less than voluntary. The Transylvanians were more likely to belong to political parties, professional associations, and civic-humanitarian organizations than the residents of other parts of Romania, except Bucharest. Indeed, when asked to name the type of associations to which they belonged, more Wallachian and Moldovan respondents identified block (apartment building) associations and trade unions than Romanians living in Transylvania and Bucharest. Block associations have remained phantom organizations to this day, and their membership seldom involves more than paying the monthly dues. This kind of associations prevails in urban areas, where most such apartment buildings are located, but urbanization alone fails to explain the regional differences reported here. More Transylvanians than Wallachians and Moldovans live in urban areas, but fewer Transylvanians than residents of the other two regions belonged to block associations (see Table 6.14).

Table 6.13: “Are you a member of a association?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>No (1)%</th>
<th>Yes (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=no; 2=yes. Option 3=no answer/don’t know was discarded so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the associationalism. Means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=6.60; df1=3; df2=1208). All Bonferroni comparisons except Transylvania-Bucharest and Moldova-Wallachia were statistically significant. Source: June 1998 Opinion Barometer.
Table 6.14: "Are you a member of a block association?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>No (1)%</th>
<th>Yes (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=no; 2=yes. Option 3=no answer/don't know was discarded and the n recalculated appropriately. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=8.94; df1=3; df2=315). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant except Transylvania-Moldova. Source: June 1998 Opinion Barometer.

Non-Transylvanians also belonged disproportionately to non-voluntary associations like trade unions, which do not readily qualify as part of the social capital complex (Table 6.15). A majority of the Moldovans who belonged to associations were union members (52.3 percent), and union membership accounted for 42.6 percent of association membership in Wallachia. By contrast, 34.4 percent of the Transylvanians, and only 19 percent of the Bucharest residents, were union members. Trade unions ceased to be voluntary associations once communism was installed in Romania and union membership became a vehicle of state control over the industrial working class rather than a grassroots self-organization for promoting the interests of their members. Trade unions retained most of their compulsory character even after the 1989 collapse of communism, as a means to counteract the massive lay-offs generated by the state-owned enterprise restructuring program adopted as part of the post-communist transition to a market economy. Trade union membership is likely to go hand in hand with industrialization, but again that measure alone could not explain the regional differences reported here. Transylvania as a whole was more industrialized than Moldova and Wallachia, but registered lower levels of union membership.
Table 6.15: “Are you a member of a trade union?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>No (1)%</th>
<th>Yes (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=no; 2=yes. Option 3=no answer/don’t know was discarded so as not to bias mean scores and recalculted the n appropriately. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.07; df1=3; df2=318). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant except for Moldova-Wallachia. Source: June 1998 Opinion Barometer.

Associationalism demands that citizens contribute their time, effort and sometimes money to the organizations to which they belong or to causes advancing the wellbeing of the entire community. Therefore, this analysis included a question which appeared for the first time in the October 1999 Opinion Barometer and asked respondents to chose the most likely destination of a large sum of money they hypothetically won. Among the nine options offered, the last one involved giving money to institutions and people other than the immediate family (Table 6.16). The higher the percentage of respondents willing to donate money to various causes, the higher the social capital of the region. Only a fraction of respondents in all Romanian regions selected this option, but again Transylvanians were more likely to engage in charitable donations than the residents of other parts of the country. The four regions were ranked according to the percentage of the respondents choosing the charitable option. Transylvania came first with almost 12 percent of people willing to engage in charity, and received a ranking of 4. It was followed by Wallachia, with 10.2 percent of respondents, and a ranking of 3. Bucharest, which was awarded a ranking of 2, came next, with a little less than 7 percent of respondents taking that option. Moldova trailed behind, and received a ranking of 1. The question did not appear in the high-school survey.
Table 6.16: Charity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (9)%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were asked the following question: “If you were lucky enough to gain a large sum of money, would you: 1) buy a house, car; 2) buy food, clothing; 3) deposit it in a bank; 4) deposit it in a savings bank; 5) buy hard currency; 6) buy shares in enterprises; 7) start a business; 8) give it to parents, children; 9) give it away to other people and institutions?” The table gives the percentage of those choosing option 9. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

**Interest in Community Affairs and Politics**

Two measures were used to assess regional differences with respect to interest in community affairs and politics: interest in politics, and newspaper readership. The June 1998 Opinion Barometer included questions asking respondents to state their interest in national and local politics, and to estimate the frequency with which they read newspapers. In all cases, a general pattern was clearly noticeable: Transylvania ranked higher than the rest of Romania, with the exception of Bucharest. The Transylvanian residents were more likely to take an interest in national and local politics, and read newspapers more frequently than the Moldovans and the Wallachians. The Transylvanians’ interest in community affairs and politics was matched only by that of the Bucharest residents.

Throughout Romania people were more likely to be disinterested than interested in national politics, since more than half of the respondents in all regions reported little or no interest. But some regional differences were easily noticeable (Table 6.17). More Transylvanians than other Romanian citizens, with the exception of Bucharest residents, were interested in national politics. Indeed, some 34 percent of the Transylvanians, but only 30 percent of the Moldovans and Wallachians, reported interest in national politics. As much as 41 percent of
Bucharest residents did so. Since Transylvania’s and Bucharest’s mean scores were found not to differ significantly at the .05 level, the two regions were awarded rankings equal to 3.5.

Similarly, Moldova and Wallachia were not significantly different with respect to interest in national politics, and therefore these two regions received equal rankings of 1.5. Note that the ranking differed substantially when the same question was part of the high-school survey (Table 5.20). This time, regional patterns were not observed. Arad and Galati scored the highest, while Mures and Arges scored the lowest. Taken together, the two survey instruments suggest that Mures was less interested in national politics than the rest of Transylvania, while Galati was far more interested than the other Moldovan counties.

Table 6.17: “How interested are you in national politics?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Disinterested (1+2)%</th>
<th>Interested (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. Option 5=no answer/don’t know was discarded so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the interest in politics. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.89; df1=3; df2=1157). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant except Transylvania-Bucharest and Moldova-Wallachia. Source: June 1998 Opinion Barometer.

Romanians were seemingly far less interested in local politics (Table 6.18). Though only a fraction of the Romanians expressed interest in local politics, the previously noted regional pattern was again evident. More Transylvanians than any other Romanians, except Bucharest residents, reported interest in local politics. Bucharest was awarded the highest ranking, to reflect its higher level of interest in local politics (close to 34 percent of the respondents were reportedly interested in local politics). The capital was followed by Transylvania, which registered an interest level of 20.6 percent and was awarded a ranking of 3. Moldova and Wallachia, whose
mean scores were found not to be significantly different at the .05 level, trailed behind with equal rankings of 1.5, and fewer than one in five respondents reporting interest in local politics. When part of the high-school survey, the same question revealed a similar pattern with Transylvania coming first in terms of interest. But the differences among counties were too weak to be statistically significant (see Table 5.19).

Table 6.18: “How interested are you in local politics?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Disinterested (1+2)%</th>
<th>Interested (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=very little; 2=little; 3=much; 4=very much. Option 5=no answer/don’t know was discarded so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the interest in politics. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=8.25; df1=3; df2=1154). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant except for Moldova-Wallachia. Source: June 1998 Opinion Barometer.

Only a minority of the Wallachians and the Moldovans read newspapers frequently (47.6 and 45.5 percent, respectively), but a majority of the Transilvianans and the Bucharest residents did so (52.1 and as much as 72.1 percent, respectively) (see Table 6.19). Again, Transylvania reported higher newspaper readership than other provinces of Romania, with the exception of the city of Bucharest. The capital, where three in four respondents read newspapers daily, was awarded the highest ranking (equal to 4), followed by Transylvania (with a ranking of 3). Moldova and Wallachia, whose mean scores did not differ significantly at the .05 level, each received rankings equal to 1.5. The high-school survey included a question asking students to state how frequently at least one member of their immediate family read national newspapers (Table 5.21). The two Transylvanian counties scored much lower than the rest of the country, a
finding incongruent with the Barometer results but possibly the result of the students' imperfect recollection of or lack of familiarity with the habits of their family.

Table 6.19: “How frequently do you read newspapers?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Infrequently (1+2)%</th>
<th>Frequently (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=rarely, 2=several times a month; 3=several times a week; 4=almost daily. I discarded option 5= no response/don’t know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the newspaper readership. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=15.38; df1=3; df2=1190). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant except Moldova-Wallachia. Sources: June 1998 Opinion Barometer.

Civic Engagement

One question included in the June 1998 Opinion Barometer assessed civic engagement levels across Romania. The question asked respondents how frequently they participated in the elections Romania organized after the December 1989 collapse of communism (Table 6.20). An overwhelming majority of respondents throughout Romania claimed that they participated in all elections. Transylvania and Moldova ranked higher than Wallachia, including Bucharest. As much as 86.7 percent of the surveyed Transylvanians and 84.8 percent of the Moldovans stated that they attended every one of the post-1990 elections. Some 79.8 and 77.8 percent of the Bucharest residents and the Wallachians did so. Neither pair was found to differ significantly at the 0.5 level, and as such Transylvania and Moldova received equal rankings of 3.5, while Wallachia and Bucharest received equal rankings of 1.5. A similar question asking students to report their parents’ participation in post-communist elections ranked both Transylvanian counties higher, followed by Arges and Galati at some distance (Table 5.25). If the students were
accurate in their recollections, Galati would appear to face much lower voter turnouts than the rest of Moldova, the region to which it belongs geographically.

Table 6.20: “After 1990, in how many elections did you vote?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>All (1)%</th>
<th>Some (2)%</th>
<th>None (3)%</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given three options: 1=all; 2=some; 3=none. Option 4=no answer/don’t know was discarded so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the electoral participation. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=2.60; df1=3; df2=1160). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Transylvania-Wallachia, transylvania-Bucharest, Moldova-Wallachia, and Moldova-Bucharest. Source: June 1998 Opinion Barometer.

The Nature of Interpersonal relationships: Absence of Clientelism and Patronage

The October 1999 Opinion Barometer included a battery of five questions assessing the extent of bribe acceptance across Romania. In all cases, Transylvania emerged as a region that was less corrupt than the rest of the country. In contrast, Wallachia, and especially Bucharest, proved to be the most affected by bribing, with Moldova scoring somewhere between these two extremes. The five questions asked respondents whether they thought that in order to be treated properly bribes were necessary at the hospital, police, workplace, the mayor’s office and the school.

The medical personnel was perceived to be the most corruptible, and a majority of respondents in all regions believed that bribes were necessary at the hospital (Table 6.21). However, fewer Transylvanian residents reported bribing hospital personnel. Fewer non-Transylvanian residents considered that bribing was never necessary in order to get the attention of the nurses and doctors. Indeed, some 45.7 percent of the Transylvanians believed bribes were never necessary at the hospital, while only 22.8 percent of the Bucharest residents did so.
Transylvania received the highest ranking (equal to 4), followed by Wallachia and Moldova with equal rankings of 2.5, denoting the fact that their mean scores were not significant at the .05 level. Bucharest trailed behind, and as such it received a ranking of 1. Note that when included in the high-school survey, the same question was unable to differentiate between counties (see Table 5.38 for mean scores and Anova results).

Table 6.21: “Do you think that to be treated properly one needs to give “presents” (money, services or goods) to hospital personnel?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Never (1)%</th>
<th>Sometimes (2+3)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given three options: 1=never; 2=sometimes; 3=always. I discarded option 4=no response/don’t know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the clientelism. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=10.68; df1=3; df2=1722). All post hoc Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant except for Moldova-Wallachia. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

Bribing at the workplace seemed to be less widespread than bribing of medical personnel, with only a fraction of the respondents in all regions believing it was necessary (Table 6.22). Although Transylvania did not differ significantly from Moldova and Bucharest, it did register a slightly lower percentage of respondents reporting bribing. Again, Wallachia proved to be the most corrupt region by far, with as much as 25.5 percent of the respondents reporting that bribes were sometimes or always needed at the workplace. Because their mean scores did not differ significantly at the .05 level, Transylvania, Moldova and Bucharest received equal rankings of 3, while Wallachia received a ranking of 1. When included in the high-school survey, the same question ranked the Transylvanian counties at the top, and the Wallachian county of Arges at the bottom (Table 5.34). The Galati mean score did not differ significantly from the Arad and Mures
scores, although the Opinion Barometer seems to suggest that Moldova is more affected by corruption than Transylvania.

Table 6.22: "Do you think that to be treated properly one needs to give "presents" (money, services or goods) at the workplace?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Never (1)%</th>
<th>Sometimes (2+3)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given three options: 1=never; 2=sometimes; 3=always. I discarded option 4=no response/don't know, so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the clientelism. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=8.01; df1=3; df2=1405). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Wallachia-Transylvania, Wallachia-Moldova, and Wallachia-Bucharest. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

An overwhelming majority of Romanians in all regions reported that bribe was not needed at the police. But the pattern with Transylvania at the top and Wallachia at the bottom was again clearly noticeable (Table 6.23). Only 8 percent of the Transylvanians but as much as 17.4 of Wallachia's residents reported that bribing was needed in this situation. Bucharest and Moldova scored in between these extremes, with 12 percent and 12.7 percent of respondents believing bribes to be necessary, respectively. Transylvania again was awarded the highest ranking (equal to 4), followed by Moldova and Bucharest, both with a ranking of 2.5, while Wallachia received a ranking of 1. The mean scores of Moldova and Bucharest did not differ significantly at the .05 level. The same pattern, with Transylvania at the top and Wallachia at the bottom, was noticeable when the same question was included in the high-school survey (Table 5.36).
Table 6.23: “Do you think that to be treated properly one needs to give “presents” (money, services or goods) at the police?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Never (1)%</th>
<th>Sometimes (2+3)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given three options: 1=never; 2=sometimes; 3=always. I discarded option 4=no response/don’t know, so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the clientelism. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=5.25; df1=3; df2=1228). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant except for Moldova-Bucharest. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

In the case of bribes to the mayor’s office, Transylvania again had the lowest incidence, followed by Moldova and Wallachia, while this time Bucharest trailed behind (Table 6.24).

Some 9.1 percent of the Transylvanians, but more than twice as many Bucharest residents (22.4 percent, more exactly), believed that bribes were sometimes needed at the mayor’s office. The highest ranking of 4 was again awarded to Transylvania. Because their mean scores did not differ significantly at the .05 level, Wallachia and Moldova received equal rankings of 2.5, while Bucharest received a ranking of 1. Note that when part of the high-school survey, the same question was unable to differentiate among counties or regions (Table 5.38).

Table 6.24: “Do you think that to be treated properly one needs to give “presents” (money, services or goods) at the mayor’s office?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Never (1)%</th>
<th>Sometimes (2+3)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given three options: 1=never; 2=sometimes; 3=always. I discarded option 4=no response/don’t know, so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the clientelism. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=7.78; df1=3; df2=1418). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant at the .05 level, except for Moldova-Wallachia. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.
The last question in this group assessed the need for offering bribes to the teachers (Table 6.25). Again, the highest ranking was awarded to Transylvania, since only 14.5 percent of respondents in that region considered that bribes were necessary in that case. Bucharest received a ranking of 1, corresponding to the highest percentage of respondents reporting bribes (34.6 percent). Wallachia and Moldova scored in between (with 16.1 and 21.8 percent, respectively) but their means were not statistically different at the .05 level, and therefore they received equal rankings of 2.5. A similar regional pattern, with Transylvania besting Moldova and Wallachia, was observed when the same question was part of the high-school survey (Table 5.37).

Table 6.25: “Do you think that to be treated properly one needs to give “presents” (money, services or goods) to the school teachers?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Never (1)%</th>
<th>Sometimes (2+3)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given three options: 1=never; 2=sometimes; 3=always. I discarded option 4=no response/don't know, so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the higher the clientelism. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=14.44; df1=3; df2=1459). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant, except for Moldova-Wallachia. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

Another question included in the October 1999 Opinion Barometer asked respondents to identify the main method through which those who enriched themselves after 1990 did so. The four methods listed were the following: work and personal merits; luck; connections; and breaking the law. Transylvania had the highest percentage of respondents choosing the first option (Table 6.26), and the lowest percentage choosing the last one (Table 6.27). Roughly one in ten Transylvanians believed work and personal merits were the reason for personal material success in post-communist times. Wallachia registered the same rate, but only one in fourteen Moldovans and Bucharest residents agreed with this view. As such, Transylvania received the
highest ranking, followed by Wallachia with a ranking of 3, and Bucharest with a ranking of 2. Moldova received a ranking of 1.

Table 6.26: "Do you believe that a majority of those who enriched themselves after 1989 did it by: work and personal merits?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=work and personal merits; 2=luck; 3=connections; 4=breaking the law. Respondents choosing option 1 are reported here as a percentage of all respondents who answered. I discarded option 5= no response/don't know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the corruption and clientelism. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.

Although a majority of respondents in all regions supported the view that success was a result of breaking the law, fewer Transylvanians did so (Table 6.27). Some 55 percent of the Transylvanians and Bucharest respondents, but more than 60 percent of the Wallachians and the Moldovans, chose this option. Bucharest and Transylvania did not differ significantly at the .05 level, and neither did Moldova and Wallachia. As a result, the capital and Transylvania each received rankings of 3.5, followed by Wallachia and Moldova, both with rankings of 1.5.

Table 6.27: "Do you believe that a majority of those who enriched themselves after 1989 did it by breaking the law?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=work and personal merits; 2=luck; 3=connections; 4=breaking the law. Respondents choosing option 1 are reported here as a percentage of all respondents who answered. I discarded option 5= no response/don't know so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the corruption and clientelism. Source: October 1999 Opinion Barometer.
Tolerance

The December 1997 Opinion Barometer included eleven questions tapping tolerance toward demands put forth by ethnic minorities, ranging from electing representatives for the country’s bi-cameral Parliament to having their mother tongue recognized as an official language on a par with Romanian. In all cases but two, Transylvania scored the highest and Wallachia scored the lowest among the Romanian regions in terms of tolerance toward ethnic minorities. Moldova and the city of Bucharest scored somewhere in between these two extremes. Note that throughout this section the higher the mean score, the lower the social capital, due to the manner in which responses were coded. With one exception, none of the following questions were included in the high-school survey.

Table 6.28: “In your opinion, should ethnic minorities have the right to be taught history and geography in their mother tongue?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>No (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=yes; 2=no. I discarded option 3=no answer so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the ethnic tolerance. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=9.16; df1=3; df2=1086). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Transylvania-Moldova, Transylvania-Wallachia, and Transylvania-Bucharest. Source: December 1997 Opinion Barometer.

The first question in this group asked respondents whether they supported the ethnic minorities’ right to be taught history and geography in their mother tongue (Table 6.28). Only a minority of respondents in all regions answered affirmatively, but more Transylvanians tended to support this minority right. Around one in four Transylvanians, but less than 15 percent of the respondents from other parts of the country, did so. Transylvania received the highest ranking (of
4). Since mean differences of Moldova, Wallachia and Bucharest were found not to differ significantly at the .05 level, these two regions and the capital received equal rankings of 2.

The second question asked respondents to state their support for ethnic minorities’ right to use their mother tongue in university entrance exams (Table 6.29). Again, only a minority of the respondents in all regions answered affirmatively, but slightly more Transylvanians than residents of other regions supported this right. The regional differences among mean scores were significant at the .10 level. Although weak, the differences matched the pattern already observed, and therefore the measure was included in the study and regions were ranked according to their mean scores. The rankings were the following: 4 for Transylvania, 3 for Moldova, 2 for Bucharest, and finally 1 for Wallachia.

Table 6.29: “In your opinion, should ethnic minorities have the right to take university entrance exams in their mother tongue?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>No (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=yes; 2=no. I discarded option 3=no answer so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the ethnic tolerance. Mean differences were significant at the .10 level (Anova results: F=9.16; df1=3; df2=1086). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant at the .10 level or better. Source: December 1997 Opinion Barometer.

An overwhelming majority of respondents in all regions supported the minorities’ right to have their own cultural organizations (Table 6.30). Bucharest ranked highest in this respect, with as much as 90 percent support rate. Transylvania and Moldova came second (with 85.4 and 84 percent, respectively), while Wallachia trailed behind (with only 75.1 percent of respondents agreeing with this right). The rankings were the following: Bucharest 4, Transylvania and Moldova each 2.5, and Wallachia 1. Transylvania and Moldova received equal rankings because
their mean difference was not found to be significant at the .05 level. When part of the high-school survey, the same question ranked the two Transylvanian counties of Arad and Mures higher than the non-Transylvanian counties (Table 5.40).

Table 6.30: "In your opinion, should ethnic minorities have the right to have their own cultural organizations?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>No (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>85.4</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>75.1</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=yes; 2=no. I discarded option 3= no answer so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the ethnic tolerance. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=6.39; df1=3; df2=1073). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant, except for Transylvania-Moldova. Source: December 1997 Opinion Barometer.

An overwhelming majority of respondents in all regions also endorsed minority rights to own churches (Table 6.31). Again, Transylvania was more likely than Moldova and Wallachia (except the city of Bucharest) to support this ethnic minority right. Around one in ten Transylvanians refused to support this minority right, compared to one in five Moldovans and one in four Wallachians. Since mean scores of Transylvania and Bucharest did not differ significantly at the .05 level, the two were awarded equal rankings of 3.5. Similarly, Wallachia and Moldova received equal rankings of 1.5 each, to reflect their lower levels of tolerance and the fact that their mean scores did not differ significantly at the .05 level. This question was not included in the high-school survey.
Table 6.31: “In your opinion, should ethnic minorities have their own churches?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>No (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=yes; 2=no. I discarded option 3=no answer so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the ethnic tolerance. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=9.16; df1=3; df2=1086). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant, except for Transylvania-Bucharest and Moldova-Wallachia. Source: December 1997 Opinion Barometer.

Again, Transylvania was more likely to endorse the ethnic minorities’ right to double citizenship than Moldova and Wallachia, with the exception of Bucharest (Table 6.32). Some 26.2 percent of Transylvanian respondents, but 25.4 and 20.5 percent of the Moldovans and the Wallachians, endorsed this ethnic minority right. As much as 43 percent of the Bucharest residents supported the right. The mean scores of Transylvania and Moldova did not differ significantly at the .05 level, and thus the two regions received equal rankings of 2.5. Bucharest received the highest ranking (equal to 4), while Wallachia received the lowest one (of 1).

Table 6.32: “In your opinion, should ethnic minorities have double citizenship?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>No (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=yes; 2=no. I discarded option 3=no answer so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the ethnic tolerance. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=6.83; df1=3; df2=1039). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant, except for Transylvania-Moldova. Source: December 1997 Opinion Barometer.

Only a fraction of all respondents supported the ethnic minorities’ right to use their mother tongue in public administration (Table 6.33). The pattern with Transylvania at the top and Wallachia at the bottom was again clearly noticeable, and as a result Transylvania received
the highest ranking, while Wallachia received the lowest. Some 27.2 percent of the Transylvanian respondents, but only 10 percent of the Wallachians, endorsed the right, with Moldova and Bucharest falling in between with 20.4 percent and 18 percent, respectively. Moldova and Bucharest received equal rankings of 2.5 each, reflecting the fact that their mean scores were found not to differ significantly at the .05 level.

Table 6.33: “In your opinion, should ethnic minorities have the right to use their mother tongue in public administration?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>No (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=yes; 2=no. I discarded option 3=no answer so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the ethnic tolerance. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=11.85; df1=3; df2=1067). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant except for Moldova-Bucharest. Source: December 1997 Opinion Barometer.

Transylvania again fared better with respect to support for recognizing ethnic minority languages as official languages of Romania on a par with the language of the majority (Table 6.34), although only a minority of respondents in all regions was likely to endorse this right. Again, the highest support rate was registered in Transylvania (where 17.2 percent of the respondents supported it), while the lowest was registered in Wallachia and the city of Bucharest (9 percent and 8.9 percent, respectively). The Moldovan, Wallachian and Bucharest mean scores were found not to differ significantly at the .05 level, and therefore the three of them received equal rankings of 2. Transylvania received the highest ranking, equal to 4, to reflect its higher level of tolerance.
Table 6.34: “In your opinion, should ethnic minorities’ languages be recognized as official languages?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>No (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=yes; 2=no. I discarded option 3=no answer so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the ethnic tolerance. The mean scores differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.73; df1=3; df2=1072). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Transylvania-Wallachia, Transylvania-Moldova, and Transylvania-Bucharest. Source: December 1997 Opinion Barometer.

Transylvania fared better than Moldova and Wallachia (with the exception of the city of Bucharest) with respect to support for the minorities' right to have their own political parties (Table 6.35). This time, a majority of respondents in all regions supported the right. Mean differences between Transylvania and Bucharest were not significant at the .05 level, and neither were those between Moldova and Wallachia. Transylvania and Bucharest received the highest rankings (of 3.5 each), corresponding to their higher mean scores, while Moldova and Wallachia received the lowest, equal to 1.5 each and corresponding to their lower mean scores.

Table 6.35: “In your opinion, should ethnic minorities’ have their own political parties?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>No (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=yes; 2=no. I discarded option 3=no answer so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the ethnic tolerance. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=5.90; df1=3; df2=1054). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Transylvania-Moldova, Transylvania-Wallachia, Bucharest-Moldova, and Bucharest-Wallachia. Source: December 1997 Opinion Barometer.

The same pattern was evident with respect to support for the right to have press organs for ethnic minorities (Table 6.36). Transylvania and Bucharest had the highest support rates for
this minority right and therefore they received higher rankings than Moldova and Wallachia. As much as 82.7 percent of Bucharest respondents and 76.7 percent of Transylvania respondents endorsed this minority right, compared to 65.5 percent and 62.7 percent in Moldova and Wallachia, respectively. Since the mean scores of Transylvania and Bucharest did not differ significantly at the .05 level, the two regions were assigned equal rankings of 3.5 each. For the same reason, Moldova and Wallachia received equal rankings of 1.5.

Table 6.36: “In your opinion, should ethnic minorities have their own press organs?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>No (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=yes; 2=no. I discarded option 3=no answer so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the ethnic tolerance. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: $F=9.29; df1=3; df2=1078$). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant, except for Transylvania-Bucharest and Moldova-Wallachia. Source: December 1997 Opinion Barometer.

Respondents from all regions of Romania tended to endorse another ethnic minority right: the right to have elected representatives (Table 6.37). This time, the regions of Transylvania and Moldova, together with the city of Bucharest, ranked the highest but did not differ significantly from each other, registering support levels of around 80 percent. They all received rankings equal to 3. By comparison, only some 69.2 percent of the Wallachians supported the right, and for this reason that region received the lowest ranking, equal to 1.
Table 6.37: “In your opinion, should ethnic minorities have elected representatives?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>No (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=yes; 2=no. I discarded option 3=no answer so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the ethnic tolerance. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=8.49; df1=3; df2=1070). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Wallachia-Transylvania, Wallachia-Moldova, and Wallachia-Bucharest. Source: December 1997 Opinion Barometer.

Last, Transylvania fared better than the rest of Romania in terms of support for the ethnic minority right to have separate schools, although only a minority of respondents in all regions was sympathetic to recognizing such a right (Table 6.38). Some 39.1 percent of the Transylvanian respondents supported the right, compared to only 24.4 percent of the Moldovans. The city of Bucharest and Wallachia placed themselves in between, with support rates of 26.5 percent and 30.6 percent, respectively. Transylvania received a ranking of 4. All other regions, whose means were found not to differ significantly at the .05 level, were each assigned equal rankings of 2.

Table 6.38: “In your opinion, should ethnic minorities have their own schools?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (1)%</th>
<th>No (2)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given two options: 1=yes; 2=no. I discarded option 3=no answer so as not to bias mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the ethnic tolerance. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=5.81; df1=3; df2=1073). Statistically significant Bonferroni comparisons: Transylvania-Wallachia, Transylvania-Moldova, and Transylvania-Bucharest. Source: December 1997 Opinion Barometer.
Unfortunately, the Opinion Barometers included only one question tapping non-ethnic tolerance. As part of the June 1998 Barometer, respondents were asked whether they supported state control over and interference with the activity of the press (Table 6.39). The pattern of regional differences that was observed earlier was noticeable in this case, too. Fewer Transylvanians subscribed to state interference in the activity of the press than Moldovan and Wallachian respondents, except for the Bucharest residents. Since there was no significant difference between Transylvania and Bucharest, the two were assigned equal rankings of 3.5. The regions of Moldova and Wallachia received equal rankings of 1.5 for the same reason.

Table 6.39: “Do you think the state should interfere in the activity of the press?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transylvania</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were given four options: 1=totally disagree; 2=disagree; 3=agree; 4=totally agree. I discarded option 5=no answer/don’t know so as not to bias the mean scores and recalculated the n appropriately. The higher the mean score, the lower the tolerance. The means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.65; df1=3; df2=1012). All Bonferroni comparisons were statistically significant except for Transylvania-Bucharest, and Moldova-Wallachia. Sources: June 1998 Opinion Barometer.

Regional Differences

In view of comparing Transylvania with the rest of Romania, summed point scores were computed for each regional unit (Table 6.40). As expected, Transylvania ranked first among the Romanian regions with a summed score of 127.5, followed at some distance by Bucharest with 91. Moldova and Wallachia trailed behind with 71 and only 66, respectively (each amounting to almost half of Transylvania’s summed score). As many as 34 of the 37 questions used in this analysis ranked Transylvania the highest, while 26 questions ranked Wallachia (except Bucharest) the lowest. With the exception of interest in community affairs and politics, which
ranked Bucharest the highest, all other rubrics seem to demonstrate Transylvania’s sociostructural advantage over the rest of the country.

Table 6.40: Summed Rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Transylvania</th>
<th>Moldova</th>
<th>Wallachia</th>
<th>Bucharest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generalized Trust (Table 6.9)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in ethnic groups:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- Romanians (Table 6.10)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- Hungarians (Table 6.11)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- Germans (Table 6.12)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- Jewish (Table 6.13)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- Roma/Gypsy (Table 6.14)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- Presidency (Table 6.15)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- Parliament (Table 6.16)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- Government (Table 6.17)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- Mayor’s Office (Table 6.18)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors (Table 6.19)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People of Other Religion (Table 6.20)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Associationalism (Tables 6.5+6.8)</em></td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership in Associations (Table 6.5)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity (Table 6.8)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Interest in Community Affairs and Politics (Tables 6.1+6.2+6.3)</em></td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in National Politics (Table 6.1)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Local Politics (Table 6.2)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Readership (Table 6.3)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Civic Engagement (Table 6.4)</em></td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Elections (Table 6.4)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bribes at:</th>
<th>25.0</th>
<th>15.5</th>
<th>14.0</th>
<th>14.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-- hospital (Table 6.33)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- workplace (Table 6.34)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- police (Table 6.35)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- mayor's office (Table 6.36)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- school (Table 6.37)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Success:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- work and personal merits (Table 6.38)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- breaking the law (Table 6.39)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toward minority rights:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-- history/geography taught in mother tongue (Table 6.21)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- university entrance exams in mother tongue (Table 6.22)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- cultural organizations (Table 6.23)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- own churches (Table 6.24)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- double citizenship (Table 6.25)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- mother tongue in public administration (Table 6.26)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- minority languages declared official languages (Table 6.27)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- own political parties (Table 6.28)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- own press organs (Table 6.29)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- elected representatives (Table 6.30)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- own schools (Table 6.31)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State control over the press (Table 6.32)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**

| 127.5 | 71.0 | 66.0 | 91.0 |

The analysis again shows the internal consistency of the social capital concept. Indeed, the region that ranked highest in trust, interest in politics and associationalism (Transylvania) was also the most tolerant, the least patrimonial, and the most civicly engaged region. By
contrast, the region where corruption and patronage was the most widespread (Wallachia) was also the least tolerant and civicly engaged, and the least interested in community affairs. Note, however, that Wallachia was closely followed by Moldova, which in turn was the least likely to be interested in politics and to enroll in voluntary associations. With respect to 19 questions, Moldova and Wallachia (except Bucharest) received equal rankings. Transylvania and Bucharest received equal rankings in 12 cases, and Moldova and Bucharest in 10 cases. Transylvania and Moldova received equal rankings with respect to seven questions, as did Wallachia and Bucharest. All these observations cumulated would suggest that Transylvania and the city of Bucharest are the most similar from a sociostructural viewpoint, whereas Transylvania and Wallachia, which received equal rankings with respect to no question, are the most dissimilar Romanian regions.

The city of Bucharest differed significantly from the region of Wallachia with respect to 30 measures, suggesting that geographical proximity does not always translate into an attitudinal and behavioral congruity. Even in less civic regions there are pockets of high associationalism, interest in politics and tolerance that would have been obscured by an analysis collapsing Wallachia and Bucharest into a single unit. Moreover, the city of Bucharest ranked second only to Transylvania in terms of overall social capital. The capital’s civic advantage with respect to Wallachia and Moldova would seem to confirm the fact that cities are better positioned than rural areas to foster a civic culture. Despite the long history it shares with Wallachia, Bucharest was more capable to close the gap than the rest of the region, which is formed predominatly of villages and small towns.

Chapters 5 and 6 are the first to demonstrate the existence within Romania of significant cultural differences at the regional level. These differences, which were perhaps even more
pronounced before the communist authorities initiated their intensive homogenizing campaigns, did not go unnoticed by historians and students of Eastern European politics. Romanians themselves have acknowledged the gap, the Transylvanians more so than the residents of Regat. A Hungarian Mures councilor I interviewed alluded to the cultural and economic gap placing Transylvania at an advantage over the rest of the country when she declared that:

> here in Ardeal [Transylvania] people have larger horizons, are better informed, have relatives abroad and do not fall prey to slogans as easily as people who live in the rest of the country and who never saw another ethnic group in their life. Even the living standards to which we aspire here are better.¹

Transylvanian Romanians also recognize that their region is well ahead of the rest of Romania both economically and culturally.² Jokingly, radical ethnic Romanians residing in Transylvania go as far as to suggest that a new border, following the long curve of the Carpathian mountains, should separate their region from the rest of Romania.³ Few Romanians of Wallachia and Moldova, however, see the long curve of the Carpathian mountains as a dividing line, arguing instead that "Romania is defined by the Carpathian mountains . . . our spinal column"⁴ and downplaying the advantage Transylvania enjoys over the rest of the country. This chapter is the first to demonstrate that the cultural differences separating Transylvania from the rest of Romania are significant, albeit in degree more than in kind.

¹ Author's personal interview with M. B., Mures county councilor, 18 March 1999.
² Author's interview with D. D., vice-principal of a prestigious Tîrgu Mures Romanian high-school, 17 March 1999.
³ Author's personal interview with I. I., Sibiu resident (May 1994).
⁴ The words belong to Bucharest-resident and intellectual Alexandru George, Cuvintul (January 1997).
CHAPTER 7.
Institutional Performance, Social Capital and Ethnic Conflict

As previous chapters have attempted to show, significant differences in governmental performance and social capital do exist in post-communist Romania at the county and regional levels. But do the former explain the latter? This is the major question this chapter tries to answer. Let me first review the facts.

In terms of the effectiveness and responsiveness of their councils, the counties of Arad and Mures proved to be at a clear advantage over Galati and Arges. Of the four county councils selected for this analysis, Arad was able to elect its leaders in the shortest time and without dissension, preferred a legislative focus allowing the greatest number of councilors to have a saying in county affairs, had a fair allocation of funds and a higher rate of investment, pursued the most aggressive economic development policy, and proved to be the most responsive to citizen concerns. Next came Mures and Galati, which managed to replicate Arad’s institutional success only partly. Arges, by contrast, was the least effective and responsive county of all. Its council was rift with unsolved conflicts, had trouble selecting its leadership and therefore for months could not move its attention to the policy process. In Arges the county council favored an executive focus that excluded large numbers of councilors from the decision making process, promoted a particularistic allocation of resources along group and party lines with fewer investment priorities, had a more proactive economic development policy, and did not properly facilitate citizen-councilor contacts. The comparison detailed in Chapter 3 further suggested that differences in institutional performance went beyond county level to set the Western province of Transylvania apart from the rest of the country. Indeed, both Transylvanian counties of Arad and
Mures consistently ranked higher than the non-Transylvanian counties of Galati and Arges, a finding showing that Transylvanian councils governed better than their Wallachian and Moldovan counterparts. During the first decade of post-communist transformation all Romanian county councils have tended to respond to the most pressing problems, a strategy which left little room for long-term strategic thinking and alternative option consideration, but apparently non-Transylvanian councils did that more frequently than Transylvanian counties.

The same regional discrepancies were observed with respect to social capital. As Chapters 5 and 6 demonstrate, social capital reserves are unevenly distributed across Romania, with Transylvania again outscoring the rest of the country. Taken together, the 47 measures used in the analysis suggested that Transylvania registered higher levels of trust, membership in voluntary associations, civic engagement, and tolerance toward ethnic minorities and groups sharing different political opinions. Although higher than in developed countries, Transylvanian corruption and clientelism tended to be a less pervasive phenomenon with limited penetration into local governmental structures. By contrast, Wallachia and Moldova were characterized by pervasive distrust in members of the immediate community and other ethnic groups, as well as by dismally low levels of associationalism, tolerance and civic engagement, including voter turnout. Residents of these regions tended to relate to each other mostly along clientelistic lines, a behavior making corruption rampant. There, a vast majority of the people expected others to be corrupt and corruptible, and acknowledged that they themselves would engage in extortionist transactions if given the opportunity. Within the uncivic region of Wallachia, the city of Bucharest emerged as an urban enclave of higher levels of associationalism, tolerance, and interest in politics and community affairs but these were not followed by similar gains in other areas. In fact, it is not far fetched to say that whatever advantage Bucharest had in the first three
areas over the rest of Wallachia it was almost totally lost when considering trust, civic engagement, law-abidingness, corruption and patrimonialism. Regional differences in social capital also translated into county differences. The analysis presented in Chapter 5 showed that Mures registered the highest level of social capital, followed closely by Arad. Galati came third at some distance, while Arges trailed behind with respect to all measures of social capital but one (interest in politics and community affairs).

Table 7.1: Summary of Findings — Summed Scores (Rankings)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Arad</th>
<th>Mures</th>
<th>Galati</th>
<th>Arges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Performance (Table 3.13)</td>
<td>43.5  (I)</td>
<td>34.0  (II)</td>
<td>28.0  (III)</td>
<td>18.5  (IV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital, Counties (Table 5.47)</td>
<td>90.0  (II)</td>
<td>98.5  (I)</td>
<td>64.5  (III)</td>
<td>57.0  (IV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital, Regions (Table 6.40)</td>
<td>127.5 (I)</td>
<td>127.5 (I)</td>
<td>71.0  (II)</td>
<td>66.0  (III)*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Wallachia without Bucharest. The lower the ranking, the higher the institutional performance and the higher the social capital.

Given the novelty of local governmental structures in Romania, it is reasonable to assume that if discrepancies in institutional performance do have sociostructural explanations then the causal arrow goes from social capital to institutional performance, rather than the other way around. This does not preclude the establishment of a double causation in the not so distant future, whereby institutional centralism would keep social capital at low levels, or even deplete its stocks, by restricting civil society and civic engagement. There is evidence that, at least in the Romanian case, differences in the performance of local governments were the result of sociostructural disparities. Indeed, the counties whose councils governed better were also the counties with higher reserves of social capital, while the counties whose council performance left much to be desired were also the counties with lower levels of social capital (for a summary of results, see Table 7.1). Among the four counties, Arad and Mures ranked first with respect to institutional performance. Galati came after them, while Arges trailed behind. The same pattern...
was observed with respect to social capital regardless of the instrument used for analysis, high-school survey or opinion polls.

While social capital and institutional performance ranked counties and regions similarly, one important difference must be noted. Although both Transylvanian counties ranked higher than Wallachian and Moldovan counties in terms of both institutional performance and social capital, within Transylvania the factors ranked the counties differently. Mures outscored Arad in terms of its social capital reserves, but came second to it with respect to institutional performance. As the remainder of this chapter argues, the ranking difference can be explained by the unsolved ethnic tensions that persist to this day in Mures. Mures's apparent gains in social capital relative to Arad obscure the deep-seated animosities dividing the ethnic Romanian and ethnic Hungarian communities living in that county. As this chapter argues, Mures's sociostructural advantage relative to Arad was eroded when translated into an effective and responsive institutional performance because ethnic tensions were brought into the county council, dividing the councilors along ethnic lines pernicious to good government.

Ethnic Intolerance in 1999 Mures

Performed at the county level, the assessment of social capital reserves outlined in Chapter 5 was unable to uncover the significant within-county disparities present in Mures, and thus needs to be supplemented with an analysis at the level of ethnic communities. For this purpose, the high-school survey data reported in Chapter 5 was reevaluated along ethnic lines. In short, rather than pulling together the responses of all Mures students, the answers of the ethnic Romanian students were reported separately from those of the ethnic Hungarian students. The survey thus became the first to prove the persistence of ethnic antagonism within Mures and the
extent to which it has affected the county's youth. Significant differences between the two communities were found with respect to seven questions assessing different aspects of social capital such as trust and tolerance, which are presented below. Collectively, the results suggest that the Mures residents remain divided along ethnic lines. At the time the survey was administered, the county's main ethnic communities formed two separate societies that were generally unable to forge relations across the ethnic divide.

Table 7.2: "In general, how much do you trust the ethnic Romanians?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2) %</th>
<th>Trust (3+4) %</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1 = distrust completely; 2 = somewhat distrust; 3 = somewhat trust; 4 = trust completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. The means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.09; df1=3; df2=454).

This is obvious when students were asked to state how much they trusted the ethnic Romanians and the ethnic Hungarians (see Tables 7.2 and 7.3, which are extensions of Tables 5.10 and 5.11). Though a majority of all Transylvanian students reportedly trusted the two ethnic groups, there was little evidence that that trust cut across ethnic lines, as few ethnic Hungarian students trusted the ethnic Romanians and even fewer ethnic Romanian students trusted the ethnic Hungarians. In Mures, 78.8 percent of the ethnic Romanian students trusted the ethnic Romanians, but only 47 percent of the ethnic Hungarians did so. Around 80 percent of the ethnic Hungarian students trusted ethnic Hungarians, but only 27 percent of the ethnic Romanian students trusted the other group. Thus, while both ethnic groups seemed to be equally inclined to
trust members of their own ethnic group, the ethnic Romanians were more distrustful of the ethnic Hungarians than the latter were of the ethnic Romanians. Compared to the ethnic Romanians living in Galati and Arges, those in Mures were more likely to trust the ethnic Romanians (77 and 73.8 percent in the non-Transylvanian counties, compared to 78.8 percent in Mures) (Table 7.2). Although distrustful of the ethnic Hungarians, the ethnic Romanians residing in Mures were less so than the ethnic Romanians living in Wallachia and Moldova (27 percent of the Mures ethnic Romanians reported distrust in the ethnic Hungarians, compared to 4.1 in Galati and 2.9 percent in Arges) (Table 7.3).

The isolation faced by the two main ethnic groups of Mures is even more evident when the results for Arad are brought into discussion. The trend of students trusting their own ethnic group more is also evident in that Transylvanian county. Some 67.4 percent of the ethnic Romanians of Arad trusted the ethnic Romanians, but only 24.4 percent of the ethnic Hungarians did so. Some 55.7 percent of the ethnic Hungarians trusted their own ethnic group, but only 17.9 percent of the ethnic Romanians reported trust in the ethnic Hungarians. In terms of trust toward one’s own ethnic group Arad scores lower than Mures. Fewer Arad than Mures ethnic Romanians trusted their own group (67.4 percent compared to 78.8 percent), and the same was true for the ethnic Hungarians (24.4 percent compared to 47 percent) (Table 7.2). Arad’s two ethnic groups also scored lower than Mures’s in terms of their trust in the ethnic Hungarians. Fewer Arad than Mures ethnic Romanians trusted the ethnic Hungarians (17.9 percent compared to 27 percent), and the same was true for the ethnic Hungarians (55.7 percent compared to 80.4 percent) (Table 7.3). But rather than proving lower levels of social capital in Arad, these results seem to suggest that ethnic groups in that Transylvanian county feel less need to rely on and trust their own group. The results reflect the attitudes of a limited segment of the Arad population,
high-school students, but it does not seem fanciful to suggest that in that country the two ethnic
groups lack solidarity and are divided by issues such as wealth, education and political
orientation rather than being united by ethnicity. In Mures high trust levels in one’s ethnic group
are the result of deep-seated distrust toward the other group and a failure on the part of the larger
community to forge strong inter-ethnic trusting relations. In Mures, the 1990 bloody inter-ethnic
confrontation might have prompted both ethnic Romanians and ethnic Hungarians to rely more
heavily on fellow members of their ethnic community, to unite and find solace in a hostile
environment in which most of their demands find little echo with the other group.

Table 7.3: "In general, how much do you trust the Hungarians?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Distrust (1+2)%</th>
<th>Trust (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>97.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=distrust completely; 2=somewhat distrust; 3=somewhat trust; 4=trust
completely. The higher the mean score, the higher the trust. The county means differed significantly at the .05 level
(Anova results: F=76.46; df1=3; df2=451).

A brief comparison of Tables 7.2 and 7.3 shows that the ethnic Hungarians were more
likely to trust the ethnic Romanians than were the ethnic Romanians to trust the ethnic
Hungarians. In Mures, 47 percent of the ethnic Hungarians trusted the ethnic Romanians, but
only 27 percent of the latter trusted the former. Since the same observation applied to Arad, it
can be concluded that in Transylvania the ethnic minority apparently had higher levels of social
capital than the majority.
Ethnic disparities were also evident with respect to toleration toward ethnic minority rights. Without exception, the majority was less likely to endorse ethnic minority rights, in Mures more so than in other parts of Romania. As expected, almost all ethnic Hungarians supported the right to form ethnically based independent organizations for the preservation of ethnic minority tradition and culture (Table 7.4, an extension of Table 5.40). Among the ethnic Romanians, the Arad students were the most tolerant, while the Mures students were the least likely to recognize ethnic Hungarians' need to preserve their culture with the help of independent organizations. Some 83.6 percent of the ethnic Romanians in Arad, but only 66.5 percent of those in Mures, supported that right. The Mures ethnic Romanians were even less tolerant than the ethnic Romanians residing outside Transylvania, a radicalization signaling deep, unsolved divisions between the county's main ethnic groups.

Table 7.4: "Do you think that in Romania national minorities should be allowed to keep their tradition and culture with the help of independent organizations?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=totally disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=totally agree. The higher the mean scores, the higher the tolerance. The county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.93; df1=3; df2=457).

All ethnic Hungarians residing in Arad supported the right to have education in ethnic mother tongues (Table 7.5, an extension of Table 5.44). In Mures, some 94.4 percent of the ethnic Hungarians came out in favor of this right. By contrast, the ethnic Romanians of Mures
were the most likely to oppose it, even more so than the Wallachian and Moldovan students.

While in Arad, Arges and Galati slightly over half of all ethnic Romanian respondents supported the right, in Mures only 36.6 percent of them did so.

Table 7.5: "Do you think that in Romania national minorities should be allowed to have school education in their mother tongue?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students had four options: 1=totally disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=totally agree. The higher the mean score, the higher the tolerance. The county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=4.82; df1=3; df2=456).

When asked whether they supported the ethnic minority right to have representatives in the Romanian Parliament in Bucharest, a vast majority of the ethnic Hungarian respondents again came out in favor of the right (Table 7.6). All ethnic Hungarians in Arad but only 88.1 percent in Mures did so, although it was Mures not Arad that has kept sending representatives of the Hungarian minority to the country’s legislature during the last decade. The results might reveal the dissatisfaction of many Mures ethnic Hungarians with the limited accomplishments of their representatives in Parliament in terms of drafting legislation protecting and enlarging their individual and collective rights and addressing the country’s numerous transitional socioeconomic problems. Again, the Romanian majority was less likely to support this minority right than the Hungarian minority. Around 63 percent of the Arad ethnic Romanians and Galati students supported the right. The ethnic Romanians in Mures were less likely to endorse the
right; only 58 percent of them did so. Wallachia trailed behind all other regions. Slightly more than half of the students residing in Arges, where the ethnic Romanians account for as much as 97 percent of the population, disapproved of the right.

Table 7.6: "Do you think that in Romania national minorities should be allowed to have representatives in Parliament?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=totally disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=totally agree. The higher the mean score, the higher the tolerance. The county means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=7.47; df1=3; df2=455).

The ethnic Romanians of Mures were even more reluctant to support the ethnic minority right to challenge the decisions of the majority (Table 7.7). The county was no exception, as a majority of the ethnic Romanians throughout the country disagreed with the right, no doubt as a result of Romania’s long history of addressing ethnic problems through diktat more than debate. Open discussion of the choices and decisions supported by the majority are the essence of democracy. But when the majority and the minority are constructed along ethnic, rather than ideological, lines, the majority might easily confound discussion with outright challenge to its preeminent role in policy making. The ethnic Romanians residing in Mures were the least inclined to recognize such right, an apprehension echoing the inter-ethnic clashes that occurred in that country in the early 1990s and in which many of the students’ parents probably actively participated. The ethnic Romanians of Arad were the most likely to endorse this right, while...
those of Mures were the least likely, with Arges and Galati scoring in between. Again, a majority of the ethnic Hungarians were supportive of the right, regardless of the county of their residence. Note, however, that a good percentage of the ethnic Hungarians living in Mures (almost 12 percent) rejected the right, for reasons that are not easily apparent.

Table 7.7: "Do you think that in Romania national minorities should be allowed to question the decisions of the majority?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=totally disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=totally agree. The higher the mean score, the higher the tolerance. The county means differed significantly at the .05 level (Anova results: F=6.21; df=3, df2=454).

Neither did the ethnic Romanians support the ethnic minorities' right to protest against the country's central and local authorities (Table 7.8). In all four counties a majority of the ethnic Romanian respondents rejected the right, with even higher numbers in Mures. There, only one in five ethnic Romanians was sympathetic to what local Romanian language newspapers considered not as the use but as the abuse of democratic mechanisms helping authorities to know the position of a group on certain policy options.1 Again, the Arad ethnic Romanians were the most sympathetic of all the students I surveyed. But the right seemed to be rather controversial even with the ethnic Hungarians, who rejected it in greater numbers than they rejected other ethnic minority rights to which the questionnaire referred. However, more ethnic Hungarians in
Mures than in Arad supported the right to protest against the authorities (59.4 percent compared to 54.5 percent).

Table 7.8: "Do you think that in Romania national minorities should be allowed to protest against central and local authorities?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Disagree (1+2)%</th>
<th>Agree (3+4)%</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arad</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mures</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arges</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galati</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were given four options: 1=totally disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=totally agree. The higher the mean score, the higher the tolerance. The county means were significantly different at the .05 level (Anova results: F=3.74; df1=3, df2=456).

Clearer proof for the radicalization of ethnic relations in Mures relative to Arad is obtained by examining all seven questions presented so far in terms of the ethnic group polarization on various issues they reflect. Polarization is ascertained here as the difference between the percentage of each ethnic group that trusts a given ethnic group or that supports different ethnic minority rights. Take, for example, student trust in the ethnic Hungarians (Table 7.3). In Arad 17.9 percent of the ethnic Romanians, but 55.7 percent of the ethnic Hungarians, reported trust in the ethnic Romanians. The trust levels in the majority of the two ethnic groups are 37.8 percentage points apart in Arad. In Mures, by contrast, the difference swells to 53.4 percentage points, suggesting that the society is more divided in that county. In fact, the Mures students were more polarized than the Arad students with respect to all measures, except for trust in the ethnic Romanians and support for ethnic minorities’ right to send representatives to

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1 The most vocal newspaper representing the interests of Mures ethnic Romanians is the daily Cuvintul Liber (ironically translating as The Free Word), which actively participated in the anti-Hungarian campaign that
Parliament. See Table 7.9 for polarization percentage point differences for the two Transylvanian counties.

Table 7.9: Polarization – percentage points setting ethnic groups apart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Arad</th>
<th>Mures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust in Romanians (Table 7.2)</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in Hungarians (Table 7.3)</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>53.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Independent Organizations (Table 7.4)</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Education in Mother Tongue (Table 7.5)</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Parliamentary Representation (Table 7.6)</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Right to Challenge Majority (Table 7.7)</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Right to Protest against Authorities (Table 7.8)</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As these measures collectively suggest, there are marked differences among the Transylvanian counties in terms of inter-ethnic trust and sympathy toward ethnic minority rights. In Arad apparently there was a general climate of trust and benevolent tolerance between the county’s two major ethnic communities, which were able to find means to accommodate each other and to forge ties cutting across the ethnic divide. In Mures, by contrast, the two ethnic groups were emphatically opposed to each other, each one harboring deep suspicions and sharing intransigent views toward the other, the ethnic Romanian majority more so than the ethnic Hungarian minority. In that county, therefore, the two ethnic communities were turned inwards, with their back to each other. But why do Arad and Mures differ? Why is Arad such a success story, and what specific factors have fuelled distrust and intolerance within the Mures community?

One does not have to go back too much in history to find expressions of the ethnic tensions that place Mures at a disadvantage when compared to Arad. The very fact that these memories are so fresh in everybody’s mind might help ethnicity to retain its highly salient

culminated with the March 1990 inter-ethnic confrontation.
character in that county. In March 1990 Mures became the site of a violent confrontation between its main ethnic groups, which put it on the world map together with other hot spots of inter-ethnic conflict, Northern Ireland, and the former Yugoslavia among them. However, the 1990 events were the symptoms, rather than the cause of ethnic acrimony in Mures and therefore a close examination of inter-ethnic relations in that county, and Transylvania in general, prior to the 1990 bloodshed is warranted.

Majority-Minority Relations in Transylvania and the 1990 Tirgu Mures Inter-Ethnic Clashes

The land beyond the forest, as its inhabiting ethnic groups know it, has always been a region of high ethnic diversity. In his 1412 letter to the Pope, the Hungarian king Sigismund called Transylvania a “country of mixed races and language” (promiscuarum gencium et linguarum). Six centuries later, its ethnic heterogeneity has not been conquered. What did change was the group in power, and that only in the last one hundred years. From the eleventh century onwards the mass of the Transylvanian population consisted more and more of ethnic Romanian stock held in bondage, and completely disregarded where any political decision was in question, by the three officially recognized ethnic groups, the Hungarians/Magyars, the Germans/Saxons and the Szekelys. Political but also social and religious circumstances concurred in widening the gulf between the Romanians and their rulers. While the condition of the peasantry everywhere was deplorable, it was nowhere more so than among the Transylvanian Romanians. According to historian Hugh Seton-Watson, it was “worst in the Magyar counties, sufficiently bad in the Szekel districts, and much less so, though still most unsatisfactory, on Saxon territory.”

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Romanians, who were mostly peasants, lived predominantly in the countryside, were poor and illiterate, and had political leverage at neither the central nor the local level of government.³

With Transylvania’s incorporation into the Old Kingdom of Romania, the tables were irrevocably turned in favor of the disenfranchised ethnic Romanians. In the new country, they formed the majority, though in many of the Transylvanian areas where they continued to live they still represented a minority of the population.⁴ In time, land reforms wiped away the traditional distinction between the Romanian landless peasant and the Hungarian landlord, and new opportunities for social upward mobility encouraged many Romanians to move to towns and engage in more lucrative businesses traditionally reserved for the Hungarians and the Germans. The massive Romanianization of the civil service deprived ethnic Hungarians of their preeminence in the province. Eager to assert their control over the new country and to eliminate those elements of Transylvanian tradition that could interfere with the attainment of their goals, the Romanian governments went beyond recuperative policies seeking to place Transylvanian Romanians on an equal footing with the province’s other ethnic groups to measures that singled ethnic Hungarians out for discrimination. From oppressed the Romanians quickly turned into oppressors, denying any collective rights that they believed could help ethnic Hungarians regain control over Transylvania, and bring the province back to Hungary. The threat appeared to be real for many decades after the disintegration of the Hungarian Empire, which saw modern Hungary reduced to a trifle of the Empire’s territory and population. At the time, many Hungarians espoused their wish that a land they considered an integral part of the Hungarian

³ Mario Ruffini. Istoria romanilor din Transilvania (Bucharest: Proteus, 1993).
⁴ At the time of Transylvania’s incorporation into Romania, Romanians made up more than half of the population, Hungarians one-third, with Germans and other groups accounting for the remainder. The Hungarian population has maintained itself at prewar levels, representing eight percent of Romania’s population. See Steven Fisher-Galati, “National Minority Problems in Romania: Continuity or Change?,” Nationalities Papers 22, no. 1 (1994), p. 74.
crown would revert back to Hungarian control. But if the Hungarians regarded Transylvania as part of their ancestral homeland, so did the Romanians. The Romanians' lack of tact and scruple was also backed by promptings of revenge for Hungarian absolutism in the past and for the successive Magyarization drives they had to endure. But the reversal of positions, which placed ethnic Hungarians under Romanian suzerainty, did not make the shifted yoke lighter to bear. With the benefit of hindsight, it becomes clear that the Romanian rulers have been as illiberal and oppressive to their own subjects as the Hungarians were to theirs.

After the incorporation, the constant confrontation between the Hungarian and Romanian governments, and the accompanying endless litigation before every imaginable international forum, gave the Transylvanian Hungarian question its high visibility and acrimony and halted efforts of the province's main ethnic groups to reach an amiable modus vivendi. After Hungary joined the Axis powers and Hungarian revisionist propaganda intensified, an exacerbation of internal Romanian-Hungarian relations occurred. Yet, as historian Stephen Fisher-Galati contended, these internecine hostilities prompted Romanian governments neither to abrogate the minority rights of the Transylvanian Hungarians nor to enact explicit discriminatory legislation against that ethnic group. While the political and economic power base of the ethnic Hungarian ruling class and bourgeoisie was crushed, schools, publications, political organizations and social clubs controlled by the Hungarian minority and conducted in the Hungarian language were allowed to function during the inter-war years. At the same time, the Romanian nation was defined by new constitutional arrangements in ethnic terms that equated it with its Romanian segment.

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The communist authorities, and especially Nicolae Ceausescu with his relentless recourse to bellicose nationalism, aggravated the country’s ethnic problems and made national reconciliation difficult at a time when the discrimination of the ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania became a focal point of Hungary’s foreign policy. Ceausescu’s attack on the ethnic Hungarians began in October 1967, two years after he assumed the position of the First Secretary of the PCR, with the dismantling of the Hungarian Autonomous Region (Regiunea Autonoma Maghiara, RAM). The RAM had been set up in 1950 in eastern Transylvania under Soviet pressure to allow the self-administration of the ethnic Hungarians predominant in the Mures, Harghita and Covasna counties. But the Romanian government did not understand autonomy to preclude its control over the region. The RAM’s top administrative positions were held by Romanians sent directly from Bucharest, in opposition to the constitutional provisions that civil servants in areas where a national non-Romanian group was in the majority were to be members of that majority group. The region’s official language remained Romanian, although Article 82 of the 1947 Constitution read that the spoken and written language used by administrative and judicial authorities in areas dominated by a non-Romanian group should be the language of that national group. Even the police force was kept exclusively Romanian, proving that its mission was not as much to secure law and order but to intimidate and control the local residents.

In their desire to render the ethnic Hungarian problem null, the communists complemented that narrow autonomy with additional homogenizing measures designed to dilute the RAM’s non-Romanian character. A 1964 administrative reorganization shifted the RAM boundaries such that by incorporating parts of the neighboring counties the Romanian population of the new unit increased from some 20 to 35 percent, while the number of Hungarians
correspondingly decreased from 77 to around 62 percent of the population. In the end, the move helped lower the percentage of ethnic Hungarians in every administrative unit, although they continued to make up the majority of the population in the central counties of Covasna and Harghita, lying at the border of Transylvania and Moldova.

Predictably, the ascendance within the Romanian Communist Party (Partidul Communist Roman, PCR) of a nationalistic faction poised to curtail systematically the collective privileges enjoyed by the ethnic Hungarians did not lead to meaningful coexistence between the two ethnic groups. The dismantling of the RAM followed shortly after the assimilation of the Hungarian Bolyai University into the Romanian Babes University, which are both located in Transylvania’s main city, Cluj (Kolosvar for the Hungarians). Education in Hungarian was phased down at all levels, and knowledge of Romanian became indispensable for promotion in all ranks of the state bureaucracy, party apparatus, and the country’s economic life. Transylvania’s urban centers underwent an accelerated process of Romanianization, whereby large numbers of ethnic Romanians from rural Transylvania and from Wallachia and Moldova were encouraged to resettle into thousands of new apartment blocks ringing the Transylvanian towns, and fill in the jobs created as a result of the diversification of economic activities. These resettlement programs were launched with an eye to diminishing the percentage of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania and destroying the Hungarian cultural and social values historically identified with that

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7 The 1992 official national census reported that ethnic Hungarians made up 75.2 percent of the population in Covasna and 84.7 percent in Harghita. Romanians, in contrast, made up only 23.4 percent in Covasna and 14.1 percent in Harghita.
province. As that was not enough, ethnic minorities were given positions in the party-state to convey the image of benevolent and responsive authority, but the positions were devoid of power. In fact, ethnic Hungarian PCR members were gradually marginalized, as Romanians became increasingly dominant in the party and state apparatus, and called for and worked to redefine the position of national minorities to the disadvantage of the ethnic Hungarians. The latter, together with the other ethnic minorities living in Romania, became “co-inhabiting nationalities” underrepresented in the political and socioeconomic order.

At the same time, however, during the last century there seemed to have been a gulf between the nationalist policies the political leaders promoted and the everyday life of Transylvanians. That was because, as one Transylvanian intellectual put it, “each time Romania and Hungary took over, the change spelled bad news for the locals, who lost their positions to people brought from the mother country, considered better and smarter.” For better or for worse, the ethnic Romanians and the ethnic Hungarians of Transylvania knew each other for many generations, and on the spot a certain warmth of feeling managed to outlive the changes of frontier and ownership and the conflicts of the past. Especially under the tyrannical regime of Nicolae Ceausescu the long-term residents of Transylvania often united against the communist “common enemy” to solve the daily problems of a meager and difficult survival. Long-term residents shared a sense of belonging that enabled them meaningfully to define their place in a multi-cultural province. The new opportunities opened by the December 1989 collapse of the

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10 Author’s personal interview with D. N., Mures resident, 17 March 1999.

11 As revealed by my personal interviews with both Romanian and Hungarian Tirgu Mures and Arad residents.
The communist regime gave the two ethnic communities hopes for a better life. How much these images of a better existence had in common, was another story.

The ethnic Hungarians wanted to obtain guarantees that their identity, along with their culture, language and traditions could be preserved, and the effects of communist era assimilation reversed. Their core demands for local autonomy, Hungarian language education, and political representation were fairly quickly formulated after the breakdown of the communist system. While their grievances were undoubtedly legitimate, the Hungarians placed far more emphasis on trying to secure their demands as quickly as possible than upon seeking to explain their motives to their Romanian fellow citizens, an oversight which made the Hungarian minority increasingly unpopular with the majority. Impatience quickly escalated into violence as both sides took the law into their own hands after failing to win the ear of the country's political leadership. The fuel for inter-ethnic polarization was a divisive history where politics was reduced to a zero-sum game in which advances by one group were seen as being gained at the expense of another.

It should not have been a surprise that of all Transylvanian towns with mixed population, it was Tirgu Mures (Maros Vasarhely for the Hungarians) where ethnic differences flared up into violent conflict. The second largest Romanian town populated by both Romanians and Hungarians after Cluj, Tirgu Mures came under the jurisdiction of four states during the first half of the twentieth century. Up to 1990, ethnic polarization was avoided partly because of traditions of ethnic diversity that dated back to the foundation of the city in the middle ages, when it was

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12 The demands were first made public on 23 December 1989, two days before the communist regime officially collapsed with the shooting of Ceausescu. Cf. G. Schopflin and H. Poulton, eds., Romania's Ethnic Hungarians (London: Minority Rights Group, 1990), p. 20.

13 Tom Gallagher, Romania After Ceausescu: The Politics of Intolerance (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), especially Chapter 3, remains the most authoritative account of the Tirgu Mures 1990 events and the factors leading to them.
already multilingual. The town had been overwhelmingly Hungarian up to the 1960s, and only Ceausescu's concerted policies of demographic gerrymandering and massive relocations were able to bring the percentage of ethnic Hungarian town residents down to a little more than half. In 1910, the ethnic Hungarians formed 89.3 percent of the population, while the Romanians accounted for only 6.7 percent.\textsuperscript{14} According to the Romanian census statistics, the Hungarians still made up 73.7 percent of the Tirgu Mures population in 1956.\textsuperscript{15} In an effort to lower the share of the ethnic Hungarians in Mures and Tirgu Mures, the communist regime encouraged Romanians from other counties, especially from the less developed Moldova, to relocate in the county. Coming from compactly ethnic Romanian counties, the newcomers were ill prepared to accept the differences that were part of everyday life in Transylvania. Moreover, their stationing in the suburbs provided them with few opportunities to gain familiarity with longer-term residents, be they ethnic Romanians or ethnic Hungarians. While other Transylvanian towns knew the arrival of Romanians from the adjoining counties, the process was much more hurried in Tirgu Mures than elsewhere.\textsuperscript{16}

Other differences set the town apart from the rest of Transylvania. Until October 1967 Tirgu Mures had been the capital of the RAM, and Transylvania's main judicial court during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and was thus used to take a leading role with respect to

\textsuperscript{14} In the Muras Turda (Maros-Torda) county the distribution of the three main ethnic groups was the following: Hungarians 57.4 percent, Romanians 36.2 percent and Germans 3.4 percent. See Seton-Watson, \textit{A History of Romanians}, Annex 1.


\textsuperscript{16} The Cluj-based Babes Bolyai University faculty members also subscribe to the thesis that newcomers not raised in the spirit of Transylvanian tolerance disturbed the Romanian-Hungarian relations of the region. Chapter 5, especially the section on tolerance, gives some credence to this view, since the non-Transylvanians (with the exception of the Bucharest residents) turn out to be more intolerant than the Transylvanians. The statistical evidence presented there demonstrates, albeit indirectly, that in 1999 non-Transylvanians were to emigrate in the region they would have proved ill prepared to accept a tolerant perspective on regional ethnic relations.
issues pertaining to Romanian-Hungarian relations. There also local Romanian leaders, and Romanian educational and economic elites who obtained career fulfillment through Ceausescu’s assimilationist policies of the 1970s and 1980s, had the most to lose if the demands of the ethnic Hungarians were met. In Mures was less turnover in the county and municipal administration than in other ethnically mixed areas of Transylvania, and local ethnic Romanian leaders were averse to cede positions of authority to leaders of the ethnic Hungarian community. In the final analysis, however, Mures’s unique position in Transylvania boiled down to demographics. Though not the only Transylvanian town with mixed population, Tirgu Mures was the only one split almost equally between ethnic Hungarians and ethnic Romanians. The equal match of the two ethnic communities also translated into the political realm. As Tom Gallagher explained, in Mures those who wished to alter the existing state structure and others who wished to dismantle it completely were more evenly matched than in other corners of the province. There also the radicals on both sides managed to take control of the situation more quickly and more easily.

Demographic parity was paired with another element. Think of a hypothetical county in which each ethnic group would account for one-third of the population, for example. It is highly unlikely that in such a case Romanians and Hungarians would have tried to dominate the local political scene with the same obstinacy as in Mures. Those two percentages over half of the population, which the Hungarians swore they had in the town of Tirgu Mures and the Romanians claimed they had in the Mures county as a whole, were evoked time and time again by the councilors I interviewed. For both groups therefore it was vital to show that they accounted for

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17 Gallagher, Romania After Ceausescu, p. 87.
the majority of the population even though their lead was only marginal.\(^{18}\) Although rather perplexing for the outside observer, the mentality reflected the Romanian conception of absolute sovereignty in the nation-state embodied in the Ceausescu-era slogan that “the Romanians must be masters in their own home.” The corollary was that the masters did not have to explain their policy choices to the Hungarian aliens. That the Hungarians also bought into such a view was unfortunate, though not completely incomprehensible, since during the last century they saw the transfer of power to the group that formed the majority of the population without firm guarantees that positions of power will be shared with minority representatives. The conception is apparently held by large sections of the Transylvanian population, but all counties except Mures are overwhelmingly Romanian or Hungarian, and therefore in all other counties there is no doubt which group is the majority and which one is the minority. Only in Mures the situation got out of hand. It was there that no ethnic community accepted the status of the minority, and Hungarians were more likely to see their further relegation to the position of second-class citizens more keenly than in Arad or Cluj, where their numbers do not back a majority status.

A reliable account of what really happened in the town during the spring of 1990 is yet to be pieced together, as government statements during the days of fury offered contradictory explanations, and widely different narratives have been published over the years.\(^{19}\) The heart of the conflict seemed to have been the divergent views the ethnic Romanians and the ethnic Hungarians had on the need to recognize specific minority rights. The ethnic Hungarians

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\(^{18}\) Both communities insisted they had 52, not just 51, percent of the population, as though that additional percentage would have irrevocably preempted any challenge put forth by the other group.

organized themselves into a political body able to speak on behalf of a large section of their community. The Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania (Uniunea Democrată a Maghiarilor din România, UDMR) emerged on 21 December 1989 under the leadership of Geza Domokos, the director of Kriterion, the publishing company which under communism handled the output of Hungarian-language books. Conceived as a forum uniting the divergent viewpoints of Romania’s ethnic Hungarians, the UDMR represented a wider spectrum of opinions than any other political party in the country. The fact that the UDMR was the first party to take shape effectively in post-communist Romania was later seen by the country’s majority as a sure sign of an irredentist Hungarian conspiracy to gain preeminence on the country’s political scene. From the onset, however, Geza tried to quell Romanian apprehension vis-à-vis the Hungarians’ motives for organizing themselves so quickly. First on the UDMR’s agenda was the reintroduction of the Hungarian language in schools, seen as essential for the preservation of Hungarian ethnic identity. The minister of education, one time anticommunist philosopher Mihai Sora, expressed support for the demand, but warned that many Romanians from various political backgrounds disagreed with the UDMR’s position on education.

The decision to reintroduce Hungarian-language teaching was taken in early 1990, and the deputy minister of education Attila Palfalvi made its speedy implemention his personal crusade. What had started as an issue of ethnic minority right recognition became an issue of property restitution when the ministry gave green light to a split of primary and secondary schools in view of assuring education in the native tongues of the minorities. In Tirgu Mures and Cluj, Romanian students of high-schools that offered monolingual Hungarian-language

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20 Together with the FSN, the UDMR belonged to the Provisional National Unity Council (Consiliul Provizoriu de Unitate Nationala, CPUN) in which the FSN’s declared opponents in the approaching national elections were included. The UDMR was allowed to nominate Attila Palfalvi as a minister. Some two-thirds of the 250 members of the CPUN was made up of FSN members of supporters.
education prior to the 1960s were barred without notice from entering their schools in early January, and told to transfer to schools located in a different part of the town. Amid bitter protests from Romanians, Palfalvi was dismissed for “taking measures on his own that contributed to creating tensions between the Magyar and Romanian populations of some Transylvanian localities.” In Tírgu Mures, the Romanian students and teachers evicted from their schools, along with the students’ parents, took to the street in peaceful protest, and days later an estimated 40,000 Hungarians staged a peaceful counter-demonstration in support of separate schools. These disputes over property at first denoted an inability to find mechanisms of bargaining and negotiation, but they acquired the flavor of ethnic intolerance after being seized by ultra-nationalists on both sides.

In February 1990 the Tírgu Mures Romanian counter-mobilization crystallized in the formation of the Vatra Romaneasca Union (Romanian Hearth Union), as “an expression of all those who feel and speak Romanian.” Its first public meeting was held on 1 February in the great hall of the Alexandru Papiu Ilarian high-school under the leadership of a Vatra review editor, Radu Ciontea, and in the presence of several hundred people. A further meeting held a week later in the town’s Sports Hall claimed an audience of 5,000 people and allowed the organization to launch its manifesto, Desteapta-te Romane (Wake-Up, Romanian). Under the cover of a grassroots cultural organization, Vatra developed as an ultra-nationalist pressure group “able to call upon formidable resources in order both to block Hungarian demands and to depict them as threatening the territorial survival of Romania.”

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22 Gallagher, Romania After Ceausescu, p. 80.
Its rank and file was formed of the ex-PCR activists who had first risen to prominence as a result of steps taken by Ceausescu to marginalize the ethnic Hungarians of Transylvania. Vatra appealed to Romanians who feared the loss of their privileged positions if Hungarian demands were satisfied. There were local administrators and professionals who had benefited from the displacement of Hungarians during the rule of Nicolae Ceausescu. There were Securitate members who felt threatened by resentment from a Hungarian minority over whom they were assigned to watch. And there were large numbers of manual workers who feared that Hungarian control over the local economy would put them at a disadvantage.

As Vatra quickly spread from Tirgu Mures to other Transylvanian towns, it proved increasingly difficult for Romania’s ruling National Salvation Front to restrain from resurrecting nationalism, the more so since the party was preparing to be an active contestant for power in the May 1990 national poll. On 3 March Adrian Motiu was appointed minister of Transylvanian affairs despite the protests of Romania’s minority groups.23 A leading spokesman of Vatra, Motiu used his authority to incite anti-Hungarian feeling by claiming in an interview that separation in schools was the UDMR’s first step toward detaching Transylvania completely from the rest of Romania; it was to be followed by separatism in factories, hospitals and commercial premises.24

By early March, the Vatra organizations of major Transylvanian towns, Tirgu Mures included, were gathering large audiences in factories and in surrounding villages to denounce the ethnic Hungarian minority as irreconcilably hostile and bent on gaining control of Transylvania, with the crowds chanting threats against Hungarian leaders. In Tirgu Mures Vatra won the

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24 Gallagher, Romania After Ceausescu, p. 97.
support of important mass media outlets that covered, often from inflammatory Romanian nationalist positions, the protests over the fate of educational institutions in town. Celebrations of the 1848 Hungarian revolution organized on 15 March by the Hungarian community were deemed to be overtly provocative. Fights broke the next day on the streets of Tirgu Mures when Vatra supporters, incensed by two bilingual banners that read “Schools in Hungarian” and “Justice for Minorities,” attacked Hungarian passer-byers. Tensions heightened when an ill-advised Hungarian shopkeeper displayed a defiant notice allegedly saying that she would only serve customers who spoke Hungarian, and a drunken Hungarian driver ran his car into a group of Romanian pedestrians.  

The first serious violence occurred on 19 March when a Vatra demonstration escalated into a siege of the city council building and of the local UDMR headquarters. Several Hungarian leaders, including writer Andras Suto who was blinded in one eye, were badly beaten by the crowd with Colonel Ioan Judea, the head of the Tirgu Mures local council, as a (silent) witness. Colonel Judea apparently did not keep his promise to secure safe passage for Suto because only four days earlier the later had accused him of playing an active role in disseminating a pamphlet portraying ethnic Hungarians as irredentists. The text was in fact an old anti-Romanian statement drafted by Hungarian emigres in the United States whose date had been altered to make it appear more recent. The crowd was made up of locals and Romanian peasants from the Gurghiu


26 After my March 1999 interview with him, Colonel Judea, by then a PUNR representative in the Mures county council, gave me his own written account of the March 1990 events. The account squarely blamed the ethnic Hungarians for the disturbances, while passionately defending the Romanian position and stressing the contemporary relevance of past oppression of Romanians by Hungarian rulers. The parliamentary committee in charge of investigating the events did not support the accusations that the Transylvanian Hungarians engaged in irredentism.
Valley bused into town by mayors and village civil servants, and promised exemptions from local taxes levied by their mayoralities. For historian Dennis Delletant, "the allegations highlighted the power which unscrupulous Romanian officials can exert over a society in which only lip service has been paid to the rule of law . . . and where the voice of authority still commands unquestionable obedience from the compliant." Two ethnic Hungarian county councilors I interviewed pointedly described the arrival of buses in town on 18 and 19 March. According to them, the buses had no windows and their occupants, clubs, staves and axes in hand, were shouting death threats to ethnic Hungarians, also asking the latter to go "back" to Hungary, although ethnic Hungarians have lived for generations in Transylvania, and many of them never even visited Hungary. The police made no efforts to prevent the buses from entering the town.

The next day, what started as a sign of inter-ethnic concordance degenerated into post-communist Eastern Europe's first bloody confrontation. The two ethnic communities gathered a 20,000-strong rally in the center of Tirgu Mures to protest against the previous day's violence and to demand an official inquiry into the events. Sentiments changed after radicals from both communities got the upper hand. Ethnic Romanian ultra-nationalist mobs and returning peasants ransacked the headquarters of the UDMR and of some Romanian organizations present at the

27 The Gurghiu Valley is situated in the northern part of the Mures county some 50 kilometers far from Tirgu Mures. Villages in that region are predominantly ethnic Romanian.

28 Conclusions of the parliamentary reports on the Tirgu Mures events. See also Vladimir Socor, "Forces of Old Resurface in Romania: The Ethnic Clashes in Tirgu Mures," Report on Eastern Europe 1, no. 15 (13 April 1990), p. 39, and Delletant, "The Role of Vatra Romaneasca in Transylvania," p. 32. Young Romanians apprehended on 20 March reported that they had been promised tax exemptions by the mayors of the Hodac and Ibanesti villages if willing to "defend Romanians in Tirgu Mures attacked by Hungarians."


peaceful morning rally. Meanwhile, ethnic Hungarian radicals were reinforced by Hungarian and Hungarian-speaking Roma defenders coming from the suburbs and neighboring villages. When Romanian demonstrators attacked the departing Hungarians, the latter retaliated. The clash left eight dead and several hundred injured, according to official figures, before being quelled down by intervening army units. The confrontations were apparently not limited to Tirgu Mures. The vice-principal of the Alexandru Papiu Ilarian high-school told me that her husband, a medical doctor, had been attacked by Hungarian mobs armed with axes while responding to a call from a patient residing outside the town.\(^{31}\)

Neither side accepted the blame for an antagonism that left community relations there in ruins. The UDMR single-mindedly rejected any responsibility and labeled attempts to ascertain its role in the conflict as nothing more than Romanian chauvinism, although those left dead in the conflict were ethnic Romanians. Only two of the 50 odd persons arrested in relation with the clash were ethnic Romanians, prompting bitter protests on the part of ethnic Hungarians.\(^{32}\) Vatra pointed to some foreign press reports mistakenly identifying the dead as ethnic Hungarians as another proof of a universal conspiracy aimed at bringing the Romanians on their knees, and returning Transylvania to Hungary. The organization became a legitimate political actor, and its nominees were appointed for the first time to the reconstituted local council of Tirgu Mures and the Mures county council. With their legitimacy eroded by prolonged economic crisis, in 1994 FSN leaders overlooked the role Vatra played in the Tirgu Mures events and co-opted to power representatives of Vatra's political wing, the Party for the National Unity of Romanians (Partidul Unitatii Nationale a Romanilor, PUNR).

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\(^{31}\) Author's personal interview, Tirgu Mures, 20 March 1999. The statement should be taken cautiously, since the high school remains a Vatra stronghold.

The depth of hatred placing citizen against citizen that was revealed during the spring of 1990 left Tirgu Mures a divided town rocked by the nationalist rivalry licensed under Nicolae Ceausescu and resurrected under Ion Iliescu. In the 1990 national poll, as much as 34.3 percent of votes supported the PUNR, while the UDMR obtained another 42.5 percent, a sign of the ethnic polarization that gripped the town. The PUNR won only 2.1 percent of the national vote, making virtually no impression outside Transylvania. But Mures, together with Cluj, contributed the most to the PUNR's modest success, and helped the party secure nine seats in the lower Chamber of Deputies and two in the Senate. Its archenemy, the UDMR, won 7.2 percent of the national vote, which entitled it to 29 deputy and 12 other senatorial mandates in the Bucharest parliament.

The 1990 confrontation marked a low point in the relations between Romanians and the Hungarian ethnic minority and drastically radicalized each party's position. The process of mending community relations will probably need decades to attain completion. But the fact that the town managed to avoid the recurrence of violence in the decade that followed the confrontation is a hopeful sign suggesting that the violence was artificially manufactured rather than being a spontaneous phenomenon. Nine years after the conflict, when I visited the town, Romanian and Hungarian residents and local leaders alike stressed that it was in the interest of both communities to promote inter-ethnic harmony. Perhaps it was too much to expect that in my interviews with the county councilors images of solidarity and cooperation would take the place of painful memories and bitterness. As leaders of the ethnically-defined UDMR and the PUNR, and active participants in the 1990 events, many county councilors were likely to espouse radical views with regard to the other ethnic group. But the wounds seem to heal, however slowly, due to initiatives like the setting up of the Pro-Europe League with the explicit mandate to break
down existing community barriers and prevent new ones from being erected, especially among the young. Most Mures councilors I interviewed also conceded that the level of ethnic acrimony during the 1996-2000 legislature had been considerably lower than during the previous, 1992-1996, legislature.

How ethnic differences played out in the Mures county council is the subject of the next section. While councils in other three counties were divided along ideological lines or positions on various policy issues, the Mures councilors remained split mostly along ethnic lines. There, during the 1996-2000 legislature as much as 66 percent of all councilors (27 of the 41) represented ethnically defined parties like the UDMR and the PUNR. Of the counties examined in this study, Mures had the highest percentage of councilors belonging to Romanian nationalist parties (the PUNR and the Greater Romania Party, Partidul Romania Mare, PRM), a fact revealing that at least as much of the Mures electorate was ready to class its Hungarian fellow citizens according to the hostile stereotypes inherited from communist times.33 At the same time, the success of the UDMR (which held 17 seats in the Mures county council) represented a declaration of ethnic loyalty rather than an expression of political choice on the part of the local Hungarian community.

Bringing Ethnicity In: Romanian-Hungarian Tensions in the Mures Local Government

Ethnic animosities did impact the Mures county council activity, especially during the first years following the inter-ethnic clash, that is, the 1992-1996 legislature. While the selection of the county leadership was conflict-free in 1996, interviews with councilors revealed that the speedy re-elections of the council president and vice-presidents had a history of tensions behind

33 Mures also had the highest percentage of councilors belonging to ethnic minorities. Following the 1996 local elections, the ethnic Hungarians sent 17 representatives and the Roma another one to the county council.
them. In 1996 Ioan Toganel was reelected with the support of all county councilors, a unanimity of votes unprecedented in Romania, because "under his leadership many good things were accomplished during the previous [1992-1996] legislature," but more importantly because the councilors "wanted to avoid the deadlock following the 1992 local elections, when the Mures county council delayed the election of its leadership for close to one year because the parties represented in the council could not agree on the candidates."35

The ethnic and political makeup of the county council explained the tensions. In the 1992-1996 legislature ethnic Hungarians occupied 41 percent of all seats, while ethnic Romanians held the remaining mandates. There were many political shades within the Mures Hungarian community, but as in other parts of Transylvania ethnic Hungarians were represented only by the UDMR, an umbrella coalition of small parties, political movements and civic associations with different doctrinal outlooks united by their struggle to gain more recognition for the Transylvanian ethnic Hungarian community. While all ethnic Hungarian county councilors belonged to the UDMR, the ethnic Romanian councilors were split among nine parties encompassing a wide range of political options, from nationalist to pro-democrat, and from the right to the left. Despite this diversity of political orientations, when the 1992 leadership was selected ethnicity overrode every other consideration.

As the party with most seats in the council, the UDMR tried to obtain the leadership of the council in 1992, a proposal vehemently opposed by ethnic Romanian councilors of all political colors who wanted to see an ethnic Romanian taking up the position since the Romanians represented a majority of the Mures population. The Romanians' determination to

34 Author's personal interview with M.D., Mures county councilor, 17 March 1999.

35 Author's personal interview with M.C., Mures county councilor, 18 March 1999.
secure the county council presidency became adamant after a Hungarian, Imre Fodor, secured the position of Tirgu Mures mayor. With two-fifths of seats in the county council, the UMDR was in no position to nominate an ethnic Hungarian as candidate for the council presidency, but it could effectively block the nomination of any ethnic Romanian it did not agree with, since no nomination could be made without its support. Most ethnic Romanian councilors belonged to the PUNR, but the UDMR was unwilling to lend support for a member of this anti-Hungarian, virulently nationalist party. Neither was it willing to back up nominations of councilors belonging to other nationalist or socialist parties represented in the council, which together held as many as 36 percent of the seats. The nomination of one of the six councilors representing democratic and reformist parties was not accepted by the nationalists and leftists, who advocated a return to a communist-type planned economy and an authoritarian political regime. At the national level, the UDMR and the democratic and reformist parties had an understanding to support each other, but in the Mures council this coalition had no more than 23 seats. This amounted to 56 percent of all mandates, ten percentage points short of the two-thirds of the vote required for leadership nomination.

As an amiable solution to the conundrum, the UDMR and the PUNR, the two parties with the most seats in the council, agreed to support the candidacy of Ioan Toganel, a member of the leftist Party of Social Democracy in Romania (*Partidul Democratiei Sociale din Romania*, PDSR). From the UDMR’s viewpoint, the candidate fitted two important bills that could prompt the party to lend him support although the PDSR secured only three seats in the council. Toganel represented a party that, compared to extreme leftists such as the Socialist Party (*Partidul Socialist*, PS), was mildly reformist or at least not overtly opposed to moderate change,

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36 Author’s personal interview with M.E., Mures county councilor, 16 March 1999. This idea was also echoed by M.A., another Mures county councilor, in my personal interview with him, 17 March 1999.
while compared to the PUNR had only a mildly nationalist outlook. At the time, the PDSR was also ruling Romania at the national level, a not so small advantage in a country where there is a widespread belief that "whomever is in power could give away various benefits."37 From the PUNR’s viewpoint, Toganel was also the optimal solution, the more so since he was once a PUNR member. But what really mattered in the PUNR’s eyes were his unblemished Romanian ethnic roots. The disputes surrounding the election were quelled, not before placing the Mures county council in the unenviable position of being the last council in Romania to select its leadership.38

It becomes apparent, after examining this history of dissension, that Toganel’s 1996 reelection was unavoidable as long as the composition of the county council did not change significantly following that year’s local elections, and the councilors faced basically the same dilemma regarding leadership nomination. Both Toganel and the vice-president Virag Gyorgy, an UDMR member, were reelected without much discussion because the Mures council did not want to open a new series of negotiations when no better result was in sight, an option euphemistically described by councilors as a desire to maintain continuity.39 The only leadership change saw the PUNR loosing the other vice-presidency in favor of the reformist Social-Democrat Union (Uniunea Social Democrata, USD). The angry PUNR explained its loss of representation in the council leadership in terms of a secret understanding forged by the UDMR, the reformist USD and the Democratic Convention (Conventia Democrata din Romania, CDR) to eliminate completely the PUNR from the leadership. In its characteristic style, the PUNR

37 Author’s personal interview with R.P., Arges county councilor, 3 March 1999.
38 Evenimentul Zilei (15 July 1996).
39 Author’s personal interview with M.F., Mures county councilor, 22 March 1999.
argued that the secret deal divided the ethnic Romanian councilors by prompting some of them to vote together with the ethnic Hungarians, a perilous "compromise" allegedly endangering the interests of the Mures ethnic Romanian community. Though obviously dissatisfied, the Mures PUNR councilors accepted the new county leadership and did not hasten to petition the courts against alleged irregularities, as it happened in the non-Transylvanian counties.

The belated selection of the Mures council leadership in 1992 unearthed the specter of local governmental deadlock. While animosities separating them have not been completely quelled during the following years, the county’s main ethnic groups and the parties representing them seemingly agreed to ameliorate the problem of securing inter-ethnic cooperation and to engage in a cooperative attempt at achieving good governance. A majority of the councilors I interviewed recognized that by the late 1990s their horizons had widened considerably and ethnic considerations had gradually taken a back seat relative to economic and social problems. Over the years, the council, which was at first divided along ethnic lines, became permeated by the left vs. right, reformist vs. anti-reformist, and pro-Western vs. anti-Western ideological cleavages dominant in the other three counties examined in this study. Immediately after the 1990 inter-ethnic combat proposals advanced by UDMR councilors were met with a united chorus of condemnation from the Romanian councilors representing parties that were usually the fiercest of rivals. By the late 1990s, however, democratic reformists of the CDR and the USD found it increasingly difficult to side with the anti-democratic PUNR and PRM councilors when decisions were discussed by the council, preferring instead to emulate as frequently as possible the CDR-USD-UDMR alliance in force at the central level of government. As the ethnic

40 Author’s personal interview with M.D., Mures county councilor, 17 March 1999.

41 The CDR and the USD won the 1996 parliamentary elections and subsequently co-opted the UDMR into the government.
Romanian democrats deemed the PUNR's narrow ethnic justifications for opposing every single UDMR initiative unconvincing, they started to analyze the initiatives brought before the council more for their own merits than for the perceived demerits of the political party that initiated them. Thus, almost a decade after the 1990 confrontations the majorities allowing the Mures county council to pass decisions followed political rather than ethnic cleavages. By the late 1990s even ethnic Romanian nationalist councilors managed to put aside their resentment toward the ethnic Hungarians and lend support to the UDMR-initiated decisions pertaining to local economic and social issues.

From the viewpoint of the more radical PUNR and PRM councilors the gradual replacement of intra-council ethnic differences with ideological ones was an unfortunate development, as was the fact that over the years the CDR and USD councilors voted more and more frequently together with the UDMR even when the PUNR came out against specific initiatives. As one such nationalist councilor opined, "the activity of our council would be even more efficient if the 'monstrous coalition' [of the UDMR, CDR and USD representatives] would cease to work. We, the PUNR, ameliorate its negative consequences, but it continues to work." 42 Not few nationalist Mures councilors claimed that since 1996 UDMR, CDR and USD councilors had always voted together, although councilors representing those parties argued that the coalition in effect at the central level did not work smoothly in Mures. 43 Apparently, the PUNR's main concern was not so much the constancy with which the CDR-USD-UDMR alliance came into being as the simple majority the alliance enjoyed which allowed it to outnumber the PUNR's

42 Author's personal interview with M.D., Mures county councilor, 17 March 1999.

43 M.E. claimed that the representative of the Roma community always voted with the Hungarians because Mures Roma members had been successfully Magyarized (personal interview, 16 March 1999). However, it is more plausible that the Roma councilor sided with the UDMR because both groups were in minority and shared similar concerns.
opposition to the UDMR. Within a decade, the Mures democrats gathered around the CDR and the USD emancipated from the PUNR's dominance over local politics and turned into an element of mediation between the two ethnic communities.

The UDMR councilors I interviewed conceded that the PUNR council members were relatively easy to work with when issues important for the local community were brought to the council's attention. A Hungarian councilor stated that "we, the UDMR [councilors], always support en bloc all decisions good for the county. And they, the Romanians, are doing just the same."44 Ethnic Romanian councilors also positively appreciated the work of their ethnic Hungarian colleagues on a number of occasions, a fact explaining why during the 1996-2000 legislature a great number of council decisions were supported by a solid majority of all councilors, including ethnic Romanian and ethnic Hungarian representatives. The idea was echoed by a CDR councilor, who acknowledged that "most decisions are adopted because generally we can find understanding with the UDMR."45 Even among the PUNR councilors some reported that "we occasionally manage to strike an understanding with the UDMR for peaceful coexistence," elaborating further that "the only solution is co-existence with respect for each other's sensibilities. We must cooperate if we want to achieve anything."46 Councilors on both sides agreed that the vast majority of representatives of the other ethnic group generally had the interests of the entire community at heart, a not so small accomplishment in a part of the world where traditional ethnic stereotypes charge ethnic groups invariably with covert bad

44 Author's personal interview with M.G., UDMR Mures county councilor, 24 March 1999.
45 Author's personal interview with M. H., CDR Mures county councilor, 24 March 1999.
intentions. As a rule, therefore, initiatives could be discussed in the county council in a bona fide climate.

The only exceptions were the decisions that bordered on ethnic issues. A Hungarian councilor explained what such decisions consisted of:

Dissentions occur in relation to decisions that could benefit us such as those regarding the changing of street names, the setting up of bilingual banners or when a Hungarian wants to buy a piece of land or open a private business... Then there is the Hungarian vote, and there is the Romanian vote, and all Romanian councilors vote against the UDMR regardless of their political orientation. We, the UDMR, always expect that promises will be broken.47

Another example was the request put forth by the Hungarian councilors for the transfer of the historical Teleki Library from the jurisdiction of the Mures County Library (itself subordinated to the county council) to that of the Tirgu Mures municipal council. The transfer, which apparently would have allowed the Teleki Library to receive a substantial grant from the Hungarian state for building and book restoration and the acquisition of newer Hungarian-language books, was promptly turned down by the PUNR as a move eroding an imagined Romanian character of the library.48 Built by the Hungarian aristocrat Teleki when Mures was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the small library has a valuable collection of rare Hungarian, German and Latin books.

How frequently decisions were deemed to have an ethnic character? A Romanian councilor representing the USD summed up the frequency of ethnically grounded dissension within the Mures county council as follows: "problems of general interest are supported by all councilors. They vote differently when there are suspicions that decisions could favor one ethnic group or another. But ethnic polarization occurs very infrequently and only with respect to minor

47 Author's personal interview with M.G., Mures county councilor, 24 March 1999.

48 Author's personal interview with M.B., Mures county councilor, 18 March 1999.
Another UDMR councilor estimated that "ethnic dissentions did exist in the council, but they are no longer important. We can work well with the PUNR. Councilors understand that they are in positions of responsibility, and that they have to work for the good of the entire county."50 Other councilors I interviewed agreed that "ethnic decisions" represented a small fraction of all initiatives the council discussed.

By the spring of 1999, however, pragmatism had yet to take precedence over ethnicity in the eyes of all councilors. Radical Romanian nationalists were the least ready to accept members of ethnic minorities, Hungarian and Roma alike, as equal partners for dialogue not enemies for cut-throat political combat. For some PUNR and PRM councilors, local politics still played out as a zero-sum game, and ethnic Hungarians continued to be the 'devil' with which compromise was fatal and therefore impossible. For them, dictation was preferable to negotiation and only the constant marginalization of the UDMR would do, since politics in Mures were conceived only in opposition to the ethnic Hungarians. The virulent charges these councilors brought against their fellow ethnic Hungarian residents offered a glimpse of the abyss that separated the two communities not so long ago. A PUNR and a PRM councilor described intra-council relations as tainted by their permanent suspicion toward the motives of ethnic Hungarians for advancing particular proposals.51 According to the councilors I met, the UDMR radical wing represented in the Mures county council also became increasingly marginalized over time.52

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49 Author's personal interview with M. F., Mures county councilor, 22 March 1999.

50 Author's personal interview with M.I., Mures county councilor, 18 March 1999.

51 "PUNR sometimes rejects proposals initiated by the UDMR because we don't know what is hidden behind them and whether their consequences will benefit the county even after our mandates are over" (M.D., county councilor and PUNR leader, interviewed on 17 March 1999). "Almost always there is something behind the UDMR proposals, and we have to find out what it is" (M.E., county councilor and PRM leader, interviewed on 16 March 1999).

In the years immediately following the 1990 events these vocal opponents of any Romanian-Hungarian reconciliation were giving the tone of Mures politics, but by the time I visited the county they had been marginalized in the council. Among local PUNR leaders there was a clear realization that the party's emotional appeals had lost their hold over ethnic Romanians in Mures, and Transylvania more generally. Membership in the party at both county and national levels was rapidly plummeting, and in 1998 the party found it necessary to reevaluate its radicalism, and evict some of its most outspokenly anti-Hungarian and chauvinist leaders, including its president Gheorghe Funar, the Cluj mayor. The new PUNR leader, Valeriu Tabara, adopted a conciliatory discourse toward ethnic minorities and tried to strengthen ties between central and local party leaderships in an effort to improve the PUNR's image, but the leadership change took its toll on the PUNR, which lost the Funar loyalists. In Mures, Colonel Judea led the small splinter group, but his allegiance to Funar effectively isolated him from the other PUNR county councilors, who believed Funar to be too unpredictable and unaccountable to lead their party.

Lingering inter-ethnic confrontations have led to many missed opportunities for societal reconciliation and efficient governance, and have affected local governmental performance in exactly the areas where Arad had a lead over Mures. The distinction between "ethnic" and "non-ethnic" decisions that Mures councilors were able to operate in early 1999 was much more fuzzy during the 1992-1996 legislature, when almost all proposals submitted to the council were seen as bordering on covert ethnic issues. Suspicion and constant bickering among the Romanian and Hungarian councilors explain why Mures lost to Arad in the comprehensiveness of its statistical information services, and why it launched its Information Center for Citizens and its webpage years after Arad, though Mures had the lead compared to Arges and Galati. Unencumbered by

ethnic acrimony, the Arad county council was able to turn its attention to issues of local interest, statistical information services among them. Ethnic divisions were also at the root of Mures's more proactive economic development policy, and its lack of aggressive programs designed to attract foreign investors. Many ethnic Romanian councilors and residents alike believe that the unfettered influx of foreign capital would give a free hand to various Hungarian parties to enter the Mures market and eventually to dominate the local economy. Whereas Arad encouraged its ethnic minorities to rekindle ties with expatriates willing to buy shares in local state-owned companies and to open joint ventures, Mures preferred first a "no-go" and then a "wait-and-see" policy. In the long-term, it might prove that its cautiousness was worthwhile. Mures might have been better off economically with foreign, predominantly Hungarian, investment, but probably at the cost of further poisoning relations between its ethnic communities. Undoubtedly, ethnic acrimony rendered the activity of the Mures county council ineffective during the 1992-1996 legislature, and the image it acquired at the time rested with it during the subsequent legislature. This is why citizen evaluation of housing and educational policies in Mures was less flattering than in Arad. Last, the memory of the violence and the mobs that assaulted the council building in 1990 might explain why nine years after that the council was still run like a closed fortress whose entrance was closely monitored by overvigilant guards.

Margaret Levi has warned that the conception of social capital prevalent today leads to a "romanticism of community" which obscures the differences between norms governing inter-personal cooperation and norms governing inter-group competition. In his *Making Democracy Work* Putnam, for example, seemed to imply that individuals in a civic community, who are "helpful, respectful, and trustful toward one another," will observe the same pluralism and
tolerance when interacting with people outside their community. But the evidence this analysis brings forth is more patchy, suggesting that intra-group trust, tolerance and solidarity does not easily translate into inter-group agreement. In areas of high inter-group competition such as Mures, Romanians and Hungarians form two parallel communities which have had difficulty trusting and tolerating each other, although in almost all other respects they are more "civic" than those of southern Romania and Moldova. For large segments of the Mures society "community" remains solidly defined along ethnic lines, and constant references to past injustices are used to justify why today norms of solidarity, trust and cooperation should be restricted only to one's own ethnic group.
CHAPTER 8. Concluding Remarks

The administrative reorganization Romania undertook after the collapse of the authoritarian and sultanistic regime of President Nicolae Ceausescu is similar, in magnitude and resilience, only to the sweeping changes brought about by the 1945 communist takeover and the 1860s creation of the modern Romanian bureaucratic state structure. Apart from the latter, the post-communist administrative reorganization program was the first to attempt institutional building along democratic lines, and therefore the first to change, however hesitantly, the local leaders' political point of reference from Bucharest to local constituencies. But as this study argues, despite the fact that institutional change has been uniform throughout Romania, the first decade of post-communism has proved that some county governments were better at formulating and implementing policies and addressing the demands of their constituents.

In line with previous studies examining the performance of sub-national institutions, this analysis contends that the context in which institutions operate informs the relative capabilities of county governments. As Robert Putnam suggested, historical experiences and social context mattered most in the Italian provinces, and benefited northern regions with a long tradition of republicanism. Katherine Stoner-Weiss found that the concentration of regional economy was the salient difference in explaining variations in oblast performance in Russia. In the Romanian case, context informed local government performance, with context referring to relations among community members as well as relations between major ethnic groups represented locally.

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According to the present analysis, Transylvanian local governments have generally been more effective and responsive than their Wallachian and Moldovan counterparts. Moreover, areas where ethnic groups have established an amiable *modus vivendi* based on ties cutting across the ethnic divide registered higher levels of local government performance than areas where ethnic groups viewed each other with distrust.

This study contributes to both the theoretical debate on democratization and the understanding of Romanian, and more generally Eastern European, post-communist politics and societies. The blend of formal theory and area studies is not unusual for comparative political research, although recently political scientists have been inclined to favor the former over the latter. Theoretical frameworks usually ponder over those problems that have faced many nations over many time periods. They recognize countries as cases of a larger set, and see regional and state borders as emphatic signposts, not boundary walls. But comparativists employing small n research templates are invariably grounded geographically and rely on an in-depth familiarity with their countries of study selected either by informed choice or by sheer curiosity. Rather than being a drawback, area studies can often turn to the comparativists' advantage. If quantitative theoretical frameworks are to be married with that "thick description" that enables us to make sense of informed comparisons, area studies should be viewed as more than a footnote.

**Good Governance and Civic Spirit in Post-Communist Romania**

This study is the first to examine systematically the performance of county-level governments in Romania with the help of a set of comprehensive indicators that might prove relevant for other countries of post-communist Eastern Europe. Now that new institutions have been set up throughout the region, questions regarding their effectiveness and responsiveness
have become highly relevant. The more so since these institutions are not an end in themselves, but a means of bringing those countries closer to the democratic model to which Eastern Europeans aspire. Ten years after the collapse of communism, enough time has passed for us to be able to gauge the relative worth of various institutional models, and to understand why some institutions have performed better than others and why the same institution performed better in certain settings but not in others. Even a relatively weak institution like the Romanian county council, sandwiched between an all-powerful center reluctant to share power with sub-national governments and local councils incessantly struggling for increased autonomy, has been more successful in some parts of the country in addressing the issues at hand.

Observers of local Romanian government have traditionally argued that the reason for this asymmetry in institutional performance was the different strengths and needs of the forty Romanian counties, which exhibit great social and economic diversity. Simp...
model are likely to have less effective governments driven by particularistic concerns, riven by disagreement, and unable to formulate and implement policies promptly and with dispatch.

Though some of them have taken the lead, no Romanian county council is fully democratic and responsive yet. None of the four local governments examined here reached this standard and perhaps few governments anywhere have done so. The list of issues that can help Romania upgrade its local governmental structure and bring it closer to the Western standard is perhaps too long to be fully quoted here. Decentralization, together with the accompanying local autonomy, can help Romania travel a long way on the road to a more representative, better organized, and ultimately more democratic governance. Clearly, an inflexible administrative structure cannot address the problems of both the overwhelmingly Romanian Regat and the multi-ethnic Transylvania with the same degree of success. Of course, decentralization would entail a reconsideration of the ethnic Hungarian minority's right to collective autonomy in those areas where they are concentrated. A better delineation among the national, county and local governments, and between the local administrative and governmental structures, is also called for, as it is a general streamlining of the entire Romanian bureaucratic system. Under communism, the intervention of public authorities in the lives of ordinary citizens was notoriously pervasive. People depended on public authority far more than did those living in Western Europe. Romanian authorities have to learn to relinquish some of their responsibilities, not only because the popular mood calls for it, but also because they are overwhelmed by the many tasks they have taken upon themselves to accomplish. Legislation crucial for local

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4 As much as 99.5 percent of Moldovans and Wallachians are ethnic Romanians, compared to 68.8 percent of the Transylvanians. Computed from The Annual Census (Bucharest: National Statistics Commission, 1992).

government (pertaining to local finances, the status of the civil servant, and regional development) was recently adopted, but the new laws, together with the rest of the Romanian legislation, must be simplified and accorded with the legislation of the European Union. Additional laws on the patrimony and the status of public services need to be drafted for complementing the legislation on local government.

But none of these measures could come close to addressing the real issue for institutional ineffectiveness: the relative lack of civic sentiment in Romania. If this study is correct and there is a relationship between local governmental performance and sociostructural reserves, then what Romania needs are programs fostering the cultivation of civic virtues. Civicness could profit from the establishment of voluntary associations independent from the state, greater solidarity among societal groups, both ethnic and non-ethnic, and trust in the other citizens and in the government. This is not a small task if we remember that during communist times Romania ranked last in the region in terms of the strength of its civil society. Old habits die hard, and even after December 1989 few Romanians have come together in voluntary associations, and even fewer have remained active members sharing responsibilities within grassroots organizations. In Arad, to take the most promising example at hand, 79 non-governmental associations were officially registered in late 1998. With only 16 associations for every 100,000 people, Arad was one of post-communist Romania's leaders in associationalism. Few as they were, not all associations registered in Arad were active. Armed with contact information for about four-fifths of these organizations, when I visited Romania in early 1999 I tried to get in touch with some of

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6 There were also 37 associations in Arges, 53 in Galati and 93 in Mures. In terms of density of associations, Arges came last among the four counties, with only 5 associations for every 100,000 inhabitants, followed by Galati (with eight), and Mures (with 15). Again, Transylvania took the lead in terms of number of registered associations with a total of 2,570 associations and an average of 161 associations per county. Wallachia registered a total of 2,109 and an average of 132 associations per county, while Moldova trailed behind with a total of 919 and an average of 115 associations per county. Cf. data provided by the Fundatia Democratca pentru o Societate Civila, available at www.fdsc.ro.
them in order to ask general questions about their membership and activities. Of the eleven associations I contacted over three days in the town of Arad, only three had representatives at their headquarters, with two others having some kind of contact information posted at the main entrance door. Anthropologists working on post-communist Eastern Europe, Chris Hahn among them, have warned that in that part of the world many non-governmental associations are nothing but a façade for collecting foreign grants without the obligation to pay taxes.  

We should not forget that local government reorganization is but a component of a larger post-communist project of emulating Western models. This is not the first time Romania embarked on such a program, and the country's previous record is cause for only cautious optimism. On the Romanian inter-war efforts to import Western-type political institutions, and make them workable in the Balkan context, historian Henry L. Roberts wrote: "the two outstanding characteristics of Romanian political institutions are the failure of the adopted Western constitutional and political forms to produce Western results in political and administrative behavior and the growth of 'bureaucratism'."  

Kenneth Jowitt also drew attention to pre-communist Romania's "mechanical transfer of liberal institutional facades from the West" underneath which Balkan culture and social relations continued to thrive. Reading these assessments today, a Romanian might think that these authors had just finished their fieldtrip and were referring to the country's situation during the 1990s not the inter-war period, since the same problems were routinely identified as being at the root of Romania's delayed post-communist transition to democracy. As this study reported, one of the major concerns voiced by county

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councilors was the over-bureaucratization and general inefficiency affecting local governments during post-communism. To this list local observers, who argue that the more the Romanian administrative system changes the more it stays the same, add the particularistic allocation of resources and positions that has dominated the post-1989 administration, especially in Wallachia and Moldova.  

Roberts went on to say that:

It was scarcely to be expected that forms developed in a quite different social and economic milieu should have been taken over wholesale and applied to Romanian society without maladjustment. The Byzantine and Phanariot traditions in Romanian public life, for all their unpleasant qualities, were at least long-standing modes of social and political behavior closely integrated with the life of the country.

This does not necessarily call for thwarting the program of institution building along Western lines, but rather for understanding that institutional creation is only the beginning of a much larger endeavor with more ambitious goals. Since the collapse of communism, the pro-democratic intellectuals and political leaders have warned that Romania could reiterate the past mistake of adopting the "form" without the "content." This would endow the country with an institutional framework whose structure and organization resembled the Western ones but whose functioning would be far from democratic (more exactly, performing and responsive), being instead distorted by the uncivic and intolerant political culture prevalent in the country. The threat of borrowing the shell but not the pearl remains real. The country was among the last in the region to embark on systemic political and economic reforms and to rethink its institutional

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11 See Roberts, *Rumania*, p. 152. Roberts was not the first one to make these observations. Romanian philosopher Constantin Radulescu-Motru also noted the discrepancy between the inter-war legislation of French inspiration and the Romanian traditional political culture. In his "În zilele noastre de anarhie: Scrisori catre tineri (1910)," in *Scriseri politice* (Bucharest: Nemira, 1998), pp. 249-250.
structure. Administratively, Romania sought to wipe away the legacies of the communist period by returning to the inter-war local government apparently without questioning the abilities to address the current problems of multiethnic Romania of an extensive and cumbersome structure developed at a time when the country was ethnically homogeneous. Whether this time the Romanians will succeed in creating a polity where institutions work democratically remains to be seen.

Future prospects are not all gloomy since even in a country recognized for its "Byzantine and Phanariote traditions" there is evidence that some local governments have met with a degree of success in their efforts to address local problems. The Transylvanian Arad county stands out in this respect, and can easily serve as a model for counties in other parts of Romania. It is also true that Wallachia's and Moldova's handicap, being sociostructural, will be difficult to overcome in the near future. If norms of reciprocity and trust are historically determined and need a relatively long time to be nurtured, then social capital reserves are hard to come by. The survey results presented here suggest that Romania as a whole can draw upon very limited stocks of civicness, and that even those stocks are unevenly distributed across the country, concentrated as they are predominantly in Transylvania and in the city of Bucharest. As I have argued before, there is some scope for concerted action on the part of the Romanian government and foreign institutions seeking to speed up the adoption of new civic mores, and to improve governmental performance. The key is civil society, or at least those associations that bring a variety of people together and cultivate their trust in the society at large.

For local governmental actors, the message of this analysis is mixed, since the present analysis of local government seems to suggest that governmental inefficiency is the result not so much of a lack of political will but rather of historically determined factors lying beyond the
reach of politicians and administrators. But local leaders are not entirely exonerated of the obligation to take their job seriously and look for ways to address local problems in an efficient manner. As Peter Evans suggested, the government and elite members can effect sociostructural changes by creating a milieu conducive to non-governmental action, and by viewing civil society groups as partners of constructive dialogue. Local administrators could also make a governance process poorly understood by the citizens more transparent, and renounce the view that a career in the administration is desirable only for their personal material agrandissement. As things stand now, councilor portfolios come with lots of privileges and too few responsibilities. One can blatantly disregard the legislation and the interests of the constituency and never be admonished when losing the confidence of the electorate. In this respect, Romania resembles Italy, where whoever rules makes the law (chi comanda fa la legge), according to a popular saying.

Future research calls for specifying the mechanism that would explain how social capital translates into institutional success. This analysis uncovered a correlation between the two, and further suggested that the former might explain the latter. The data presented here supported the view that even small increases in social capital levels make a significant impact on institutional performance. The detailed presentation of council activity included in Chapter 3 has hinted to the possibility that norms of trust and cooperation impinged on the ability of councilors to work together for the common good. Clearly, councilors valuing cooperation, taking interest in local politics and affairs, fostering associationalism and other forms of civic engagement, and promoting trust in fellow citizens and in government are more likely to identify the problems faced by the county and propose sound strategies for their solution. By contrast, councilors subordinating general interests to personal, group or party interests, viewing official positions as

an opportunity to share the spoils of a zero-sum game, and lacking commitment for their public job are more likely to see their activity deadlocked in incessant bickering over who gets what and when.

Social Capital and Ethnic Tensions: Bridging and Non-Bridging Networks

From a theoretical standpoint, this study calls for a reexamination of the social capital theory in view of considering the impact of community-level cleavages on the potential for interpersonal solidarity and collective action. Ever since Putnam reemphasized the importance of the civic spirit on democracy, researchers have stressed the need for building communities resting on social ties and norms of trust and mutual exchange in post-authoritarian countries. Democracy was to be constructed at the micro-level of small face-to-face communities where citizens could interact and work together to achieve their common goals within the general institutional boundaries set by the state. According to this research strand, what makes a given community civic is a dense network of voluntary associations and cooperative, equal-to-equal inter-personal relationships. The higher the number of associations and the citizens' trust toward their fellow community members, the more civic the community. For followers of Putnam, it matters little what kinds of associations prevail locally or what sort of trust people exhibit toward other groups.

The data that this study examines present a more nuanced picture. As the Mures case reveals, what seem to matter most are not the ties that bind together members of the same group, be it ethnically or racially defined, but the ties that break the divisions and bring different groups together in pursuit of the common good. In that county, both the ethnic Romanians and the ethnic Hungarians reported higher levels of generalized trust and membership in associations, an
observation which might lead us to believe that Mures is endowed with more social capital than the other counties under scrutiny here. Unfortunately, while higher than those of southern Romanian regions, the Mures social capital reserves remain ethnically circumscribed, available only within ethnic boundaries, but not transcending them. Mures ethnic Romanians associate with and trust other Mures ethnic Romanians, while Mures ethnic Hungarians do the same with other members of the local ethnic Hungarian community. But when it comes to extending the sentiments of solidarity and trust to the other ethnic group, the Romanians and the Hungarians alike have difficulty breaking the negative stereotypes about the other.\footnote{13} In the aftermath of the 1990 inter-ethnic clashes, few Mures residents had a vision about their county that transcended ethnic boundaries to conjure images of inclusiveness and toleration of the other ethnic group. The situation is changing, albeit very slowly, as both groups realize that whatever future they might share together depends on their cooperation and solidarity.

The same ethnic divide was visible within the Mures county government: ever since the collapse of communism, alliances among councilors have followed ethnic, rather than ideological or programmatic, lines. Until very recently ethnicity remained the single most important concern of the Mures county councilors, overriding every other matter, be it political, economic or social. Ethnic considerations routinely impinged on the legislative process and determined a proposal's chances to be adopted and implemented, and the allocation of responsibilities among council leaders. In other counties, council vice-presidents took upon themselves to oversee such areas of council activity as tender adjudication, policy implementation or supervision of \textit{regies autonomes}. In the Mures council, by contrast, the Hungarian vice-president looked predominantly for the welfare of the Hungarian dominated

\footnote{13} The high levels of trust in one's own ethnic group reported by the Mures residents might be driven in fact by deep suspicion toward the other ethnic group.
villages, whereas the Romanian vice-president almost single-mindedly promoted the interests of those villages where ethnic Romanians formed the majority of the population. Ethnic tensions brought the Mures county council to a halt in the early 1990s and prevented councilors from turning their attention to the important economic and social problems faced by their county during the post-communist transition process. Not even by 1999 did the council recover the ground lost by its repeated procrastination of formulating, adopting and implementing policies vital for the local life.

Surprisingly, the interplay between social capital and ethnic tensions has remained an under-explored research topic, although most countries of the world are ethnically heterogeneous and ethno-politics was one of the most salient features of the end of the twentieth century. This oversight probably had its origins in *Making Democracy Work*, the study that brought trust and reciprocity to the forefront of political research. Putnam did not dwell on the subject largely because of Italy’s relative ethnic homogeneity, although we might wonder whether the recent influx of immigrants from Albania and Northern Africa did nothing to alter that country’s Italian character. Putnam’s omission encouraged political scientists to think that ethnic heterogeneity and ethnic conflict could do little to impede the creation and accumulation of social capital reserves. But if few social capital scholars turned their attention to ethnic tensions, even fewer observers of nationalism and ethnic acrimony thought that the concept of social capital was relevant for their research. Despite being understudied, the civicness-ethnicity relationship is of special academic relevance in a world where violence affects so many multiethnic societies.

Boix and Posner were among the first to point out that not always and not all networks of interpersonal relations are beneficial. According to them:
a society full of associations dedicated to single, uncompromising imperatives which conflict with those of other associations may be a society full of social capital which, because of the nature of the groups in which it is created and of the polarized social context in which it will be employed, may be of very limited use in promoting community-wide cooperation.14

This observation holds true in the Mures case, where ethnically-based political parties and movements like the Party for the National Unity of the Romanians (PUNR), Vatra Romaneasca and the Democratic Union of Magyars in Romania (UDMR) continue to have large followings, while associations cutting across the ethnic divide remain limited both in number and in membership. In that county, ethnic associations and political parties constitute a form of social capital by advancing the private fortunes of their members and by helping them address their problems of common interest. But their uncompromising imperatives led these groups to engage in 1990 in acts of violence which scarred inter-group relations and discouraged the formation of bonds of trust with the larger community.15 What matters then are bridging networks that bring different segments of the community together rather than non-bridging networks that keep groups divided or isolated from the larger community. Bird-watching and bowling clubs do help, and political parties and movements help even more, as long as their membership is ethnically diverse and non-sectarian.

This is not to say that political parties that represent racial, religious or ethnic minorities have no place in a democratic, civic community. But in Mures several factors have deemed organizations built exclusively on ethnic lines an impediment to civic spirit and democratization. First is perhaps their prevalence and large following, which transforms other parties into minor

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players in the Mures political arena. In that county, political parties without exception closely guarded their party membership data. But my interviews led me to believe that the membership of the two parties representing the ethnic Romanians and the ethnic Hungarians of Mures numbered tens of thousands, while that of non-ethnic parties numbered hundreds. For a good part of the 1990s, therefore, ethnic parties set the tone of political debates and party politics in Mures. Their bellicose rhetoric, stemming from an understanding of inter-ethnic relations as a zero-sum game in which ethnic groups can gain advantages only at the expense of the others, precluded the larger community to come together and go beyond the ethnic divide to identify the economic and social problems facing the county.

Among the few to examine the link between civic engagement and ethnic conflict, Ashutosh Varshney resorted to Indian examples to argue for the existence of an integral link between the structure of civic life in a multiethnic society and the presence/absence of ethnic violence. More specifically, he claimed that there is a qualitative difference between the role of intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic networks of civic engagement in ethnic conflict. Inter-ethnic associations and everyday forms of engagement were agents of peace because they built bridges and managed tensions among ethnic groups. Intra-ethnic organizations and quotidian interaction, by comparison, did not necessarily foster the kind of trust and cooperation needed to avoid the breakout of ethnic conflict. Varshney went further to suggest that, if robust, both associations and everyday interaction promote peace, but that associational forms of engagement turn out to be sturdier than everyday engagement, especially when confronted with attempts by politicians to polarize the people along ethnic lines. Thus, vigorous inter-ethnic associational life acts as a serious constraint on the polarizing strategies of the political elite.

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The results of the present analysis on Romania support the correlation between civic engagement and ethnic conflict highlighted by Varshney. In areas like Mures, where both associations and everyday interpersonal relations remained confined within the limits set by ethnic identity, conflict between the two main ethnic groups erupted with unprecedented violence only to help ethnicity further maintain its salient character. Inter-ethnic distrust seemingly subsided in the late 1990s as grassroots efforts to bring Romanians and Hungarians together intensified but Mures's two ethnic groups have a long way to go toward peaceful coexistence. By contrast, areas like Arad, where ethnic Romanian and ethnic Hungarian citizens and elite members can draw on a long history of cooperation and negotiation, have managed to avoid ethnic clashes. There, ethnic considerations, while not entirely non-existent, are routinely subordinated to ideological, economic or social matters that concern all ethnic groups represented in the community. Arad's success is in no small part due to the fact that politics in that county is not regarded as a zero-sum game in which one group can benefit only at the expense of the others, but as a game where competition must ultimately give way to benevolent accommodation and collaboration.

The Mures case also supports Varshney's second observation that associational forms of engagement can best avoid ethnic violence. Under communism, the Romanians and the Hungarians interacted informally as neighbors, work-mates or schoolmates, but the communist ban on voluntary associations not sponsored by the party-state meant that the two ethnic groups were denied formal venues of collaboration that could help them establish bonds of trust and reciprocity. The lack of civil society has been detrimental to Romania's post-communist democratization process, but in Mures the lack of ethnically mixed associations resulted in violence less than three months after the collapse of the Ceausescu regime. Despite their
frequently amicable daily interaction, the Tirgu Mures Romanians and Hungarians knew little about each other, preferring instead to resurrect old stereotypes demonizing the other group. Each felt that the other group's claims and demands were insensible, and that the other group was bent on taking the power without sharing it. Had the Romanians and the Hungarians had the opportunity to interact meaningfully as equal members of voluntary associations, Mures might have avoided the violence.

The Mures ethnic separation is in many ways similar to the religious divisions in Northern Ireland and India, and the racial discrimination in South American Bolivia. In Northern Ireland there is certainly a high level of intra-community trust within the Protestant and Roman Catholic sub-cultures, and perhaps a great deal of social trust is generated within those two communities. However, such intra-community trust has generated high levels of inter-community distrust and intolerance, phenomena opposed to a flourishing civil society or to good government. In India, relations between Muslims and Hindus have fallen under the same rubric, with within-group levels of trust and tolerance far exceeding the between-group levels. In the Latin American state of Bolivia, indigenous groups that feel alienated from the political process or, in extreme cases, define their interests counter to the central government, sometimes use their high social capital reserves to thwart the performance of local governmental agencies. Together, these cases suggest that a singular focus on building social capital would not achieve the expected improvement in institutional performance without a concerted effort to bring all social groups into the formal arena of local governance.

17 Varshney, "Ethnic Conflict and the Structure of Civic Life."

The Mures case therefore points to an integral link between the structure of civic life in a multiethnic society and the presence of ethnic violence. Mures was prone to inter-ethnic clashes because the traditional bonds and the sense of belonging which united its two main ethnic groups in a community with shared historical experiences had been replaced under communism by distrust and a recourse to chauvinistic stereotypes. The scarcity of inter-ethnic networks of civic engagement able to build bridges between the Romanian and Hungarian communities and to manage ethnic tensions was coupled with the predominance of exclusionary intra-ethnic allegiances. Instead of inter-ethnic networks playing the role of agents of peace, Mures was organized primarily along intra-ethnic lines that, with their venomous us-versus-them logic, hampered the establishment of meaningful connections with the other group. Its inter-ethnic associational life, though not completely non-existent, was too weak to act as a serious deterrent on the polarizing strategies of the local political elite, a development paralleling the Indian case. There is a lesson to be drawn from the Mures tragedy. The essence of civicness is not trust and tolerance in the abstract but networks and ties that foster reciprocity toward members outside the ethnic group, and social and civic ties that bind different ethnic groups together.

The idea is not new, since other social capital theorists have delineated trust in fellow group members from generalized trust towards the community at large, and argued that the latter is a more suitable indicator of social capital. But the Mures case suggests that higher levels of generalized trust in the imagined larger community can be accompanied by lower levels of trust in specific ethnic groups making up the immediate community. Therefore, simply operationalizing trust as generalized trust with the questions suggested by previous studies and employed in Chapters 5 and 6 (Tables 5.2, 5.3 and Table 6.1) does not help us discern whether the bonds bringing together an ethnically-divided community and making it cohesive are strong
enough. Similarly, by simply looking at the number of associations researchers can overestimate the level of cooperation and solidarity within such a community. Associations have been set up in larger numbers in Mures than in all other counties examined in this study. In Mures more than seven in ten adults, and almost six in ten teenagers, belonged to an association. Mures's level of associationalism was unmatched by Arad, Arges or Galati, where only half of the adults, and one-fourth of teenagers at most, belonged to voluntary groups. But Mures's advantage remained only apparent as there most associations observed the ethnic divide and kept the ethnic Romanians and the ethnic Hungarians in a state of permanent siege. In fact, only one Mures voluntary association is dedicated exclusively to bringing the two ethnic communities together.

Transylvania: Between Facts and Rhetoric

This study is also the first to bring forth “hard” statistical evidence to substantiate the sociostructural dissimilarity between Transylvania and the rest of Romania. The differences that set the region apart are rather small, the unsurprising result of the forty-five years of sustained homogenization policies carried out by communist authorities. But they do exist, suggesting that Transylvania can draw on more social capital reserves than all other Romanian provinces. This analysis examined only four of the forty Romanian county councils, but the two Transylvanian local governmental structures were found to be more efficient and more responsive. Clearly, more county councils should be evaluated to see if Transylvanian local governments generally perform better than their non-Transylvanian counterparts.

For many researchers familiar with Transylvania, and for almost all Romanians, this research carries a revisionist message with its emphasis on the sociostructural differences separating the land beyond the forest from the rest of the country. Ever since the region’s
incorporation into Greater Romania in 1918, Romanian intellectuals, policy makers and ordinary people have stressed the common traits shared by the three provinces of Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldova. To question their cultural homogeneity, which for many is tantamount to questioning Romania’s national unity, and points to the otherwise evident differences separating the Romanian lands was long ago declared anathema, a risky undertaking that could seal the career of the too inquisitive researcher. While Western historians, anthropologists and political scientists have scrutinized Transylvania for several decades, Romanian writers approached the issue with fewer inhibitions only very recently. After the 1990 Tirgu Mures clashes, local authors also started to question whether the model of Transylvanian inter-ethnic harmony they cherished had to be discarded for no longer corresponding to reality.

The most prominent of these recent studies have examined Transylvania exclusively from the viewpoint of inter-ethnic relations. In an influential article, Transylvanian Hungarian writer emigrated to Budapest Gustav Molnar made the case for regional autonomy based on a Scottish-type broad devolution of state powers and responsibilities to the local government.19 To give more weight to his case against strict centralism and Bucharest hegemony, Molnar evoked the map of Europe that Samuel Huntington included in his The Clash of Civilizations, which assigned Transylvania but not the Regat to the Western European civilization area.20 In a series of articles, a number of Romanian writers responded to Molnar by taking issue not with the need for decentralization but with the assertion that the Carpathians would correspond to a cultural

19 Gustav Molnar, “The Transylvanian problem,” The Hungarian Quarterly 149 (Spring 1998). The article was also published in the Provincia monthly, exclusively dedicated to Transylvanian issues and available online at www.provincia.ro. Since its September 1999 inception, the journal has published short articles signed by Romanian and Hungarian intellectuals.

barrier dividing Romania. According to them, whatever mores and values set Transylvania apart had been eradicated by forty-five years of communism.21

In the same vein, political psychologist Alina Mungiu-Pippidi employed focus groups and opinion surveys to explore the “subjective Transylvania” imagined by its ethnic Romanian and ethnic Hungarian residents.22 The study offered a wealth of data on the Transylvanians’ attitudes toward their region’s history, politics and government, the other Romanian provinces, and the 1990 Tirgu Mures inter-ethnic conflict. The author, a native Moldovan residing in Bucharest, proposed a consociational model of ethnic accommodation based on power sharing and “civic nationalism” whereas allegiance to a set of institutions would replace loyalty to one’s ethnic group. Notwithstanding Mungiu-Pippidi’s enthusiastic promotion of consociationalism, a closer look at such arrangements suggests that Transylvania lacks a crucial prerequisite for such democracy to take root. Lijphart explained that in such cases “the centrifugal tendencies inherent in a plural society are counteracted by the cooperative attitudes and behavior of the leaders of the different segments of the population,” and he emphasized that pragmatic accord among elites is the key feature distinguishing the consociational model.23 But Romania lacks the grand coalition of political leaders that would protect vital minority interests. While the country might be unable to enjoy the benefits of such a model, parity and proportionality among ethnic groups could be


the first steps toward the peaceful coexistence of all Transylvanian groups.\textsuperscript{24} Such arrangements, however, might prove unstable in the long run unless norms of trust and reciprocity bind the groups together at both elite and mass level. Leaders of Transylvanian ethnic groups should meet regularly in bona fide sessions to resolve misunderstandings, keep channels of communication open, and foster organizations bringing members of various ethnic communities together.

All these studies have taken position for or against the region’s secession from Romania. My intention here is not to advocate Transylvania’s separation from Romania and its subsequent incorporation into a Greater Hungary since the move is unlikely to improve inter-ethnic relations between Romanians and Hungarians. Rather it would reverse the positions of the two ethnic groups, allowing the Transylvanian ethnic Hungarians to become part of the new country’s majority group and relegating the Romanians to the status of a national minority, without altering the regional ethnic diversity. With 5.4 million Transylvanian ethnic Romanians (that is, one-third of its population), Greater Hungary would hardly be a viable state. It would also face another hurdle. Although ethnic Romanians remain suspicious of the ethnic Hungarians’ loyalty to the Romanian state, the majority of the latter has lukewarm sentiments toward Hungary. A Transylvanian ethnic Hungarian intellectual told this author that his group feels like second-rate Hungarians in comparison to the Hungarians from Hungary and second-rate Romanian [citizens] in comparisons to other Romanians.\textsuperscript{25} The statement conveys as much disappointment with Hungary as with Romania. Clearly, majority-minority relations in Transylvania should be redefined to give more voice to the minority and make it feel at home. If Heinrich von Treitschke


\textsuperscript{25} Author’s personal interview with M. G., Tîrgu Mureș resident, 20 March 1999.
was right that *Jede Politik is eine Kunst*, the political art the Romanians must master is the art of "unity in diversity." This implies that adherence to a common set of nation-building values is accompanied by political pluralism, and cultural and linguistic autonomy for ethnic minorities.

No less important is that viewing the Transylvanian question exclusively in ethnic terms obscures the local ethnic Romanians' dissatisfaction with the current institutional arrangements and the policies formulated by the country’s leaders. These have tended to regard the region as a source of funds for the other parts of the country. Evidently, the need to achieve some measure of economic equilibrium between the better-off Transylvanian counties and the worse-off non-Transylvanian counties remains an entirely justifiable political goal. But in a period of great economic austerity and with a local financing formula that grants sub-national governments control over only a fraction of the taxes collected on their territory it is unsurprising that Transylvanian counties feel they are giving the center and the country more than they can afford. It is unlikely that Bucharest could quell for long the calls for genuine decentralization and regional autonomy. In recent years, these calls have become louder, supported as they are by the region’s majority and minority groups alike. Bucharest bureaucrats and politicians would have to learn that devolution is not a concession, but a necessary step in their struggle to bring the country together and turn European integration from a possibility into a certainty.

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26 The 8,000-strong Transylvania Banat League and the 30,000-strong ProTransylvania Civic Foundation seek to establish a regional identity that would become a viable alternative to the identity crisis experienced by Transylvanians regardless of their ethnicity. They also call for financial autonomy of Romania’s historic provinces, regional development, and an introduction of the principle of multiculturalism. The response of Bucharest authorities was swift, with the ProTransylvania Foundation being outlawed. *Cotidianul* (18 December 2000).
Appendix 1. County Demographics

Table A1: County Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Arad</th>
<th>Arges</th>
<th>Galati</th>
<th>Mures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Of which:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% urban</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% rural</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Composition (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germans</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Workforce (1995):</td>
<td>218,900</td>
<td>303,800</td>
<td>263,200</td>
<td>260,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% industry</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% agriculture</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment (%) (1996)</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage rate (per thou)</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce rate (per thou)</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant mortality (deaths/thousand live births)</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population trend (1930-1990)</td>
<td>decreasing</td>
<td>increasing</td>
<td>increasing</td>
<td>increasing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2. Weight Computation

Ideally, in each county I should have surveyed main town resident and non-resident students in numbers proportional to the county population living in the main town and outside of it. At the same time, in each Transylvanian county I should have surveyed Romanian and non-Romanian students in numbers proportional to the county Romanian and non-Romanian population. Nevertheless, this was not a cost-effective solution. As such, instead of identifying students, I have opted to identify high-schools and then randomly select three of them according to residence and the language of instruction.

Table A2.1: Fowler's Method of Computing Weights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Blacks</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number in population</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of population</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number selected in sample</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unweighted percentage of sample</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted number in sample</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted percentage of sample</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each case was weighted by residence and ethnicity according to Floyd J. Fowler's method, which takes into consideration differential probabilities of selecting cases.¹ In his example, a researcher wishes to compare black and white students, with a minimum of 100 black students, at a college where only 10 percent of the students are black. A sample of 500 students would include 50 black students, but if black students could be identified in advance, they could be selected at twice the rate at which other students were selected. Rather than adding 500
interviews to increase the sample by 50 blacks, another 50 interviews over the basic sample of 500 would give a total of 100 interviews with blacks. In order to combine the two samples, the researcher would have to give black respondents a weight of half that given to others to compensate for the fact that they were sampled at twice the rate of the rest of the population. The weight computation method is detailed in Table A2.1.

A similar computational method was used in this analysis. Percentages of population residing in and outside county main towns are given in Table A2.2. Note that in what follows I have assumed that the high-school population mirrors the residence and ethnicity makeup of the total county populations.

Table A2.2: County population (July 1, 1996)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County (Main town)</th>
<th>Total population (no. inhabitants)</th>
<th>Main town population</th>
<th>Outside main town population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARAD (Arad)</td>
<td>477,711</td>
<td>185,475 (39%)</td>
<td>292,236 (61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARGES (Pitesti)</td>
<td>677,246</td>
<td>185,693 (27%)</td>
<td>491,553 (73%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GALATI (Galati)</td>
<td>641,561</td>
<td>327,975 (51%)</td>
<td>313,586 (49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MURES (Tg. Mures)</td>
<td>604,263</td>
<td>166,099 (27%)</td>
<td>438,164 (73%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Weights for non-Transylvanian counties (Arges and Galati) were based only on residence, because minorities comprise less than 0.5 percent of their total population. Arges and Galati weights are given in Table A2.3 and Table A2.4, respectively.

Table A2.3: Weights for Arges students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Main town non-residents</th>
<th>Main town residents</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of population</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number selected in sample</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unweighted percentage in sample</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weights</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted number in sample*</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted percentage of sample*</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*rounded.

Table A2.4: Weights for Galati students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Main town non-residents</th>
<th>Main town residents</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of population</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number selected in sample</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unweighted percentage in sample</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weights</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted number in sample</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted percentage of sample</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*rounded.

To compute weights for Arad and Mures, the two Transylvanian counties, ethnic makeup was considered alongside residence. According to the 1992 national census, as much as 80 percent of the Arad population is Romanian, and 20 percent is non-Romanian (predominantly Hungarian, with small numbers of Jewish and Germans). According to a leader of the local Hungarian community whom I interviewed, some 80 percent of the county's minorities live in the main town. As a result, out of every 100 Arad inhabitants, 23 are Romanians living in the county's main town, 16 are non-Romanians living in the same town, while 57 are Romanians living outside the main town and only 4 are non-Romanians living outside the main town (see Table A2.5). However, I have surveyed a total of 153 students, of whom 83 and 18 were
Romanian and non-Romanian residents of the main town, and another 48 and 4 were Romanians and non-Romanians living outside the county's main town. Weights are given in Table A2.6.

Table A2.5: Distribution of 100 Arad inhabitants according to ethnicity and location (and the distribution of surveyed high-school students) — number of cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Romanians</th>
<th>Non-Romanians</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Town Residents (Surveyed Students)</td>
<td>23 (82)</td>
<td>16 (19)</td>
<td>39 (101)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Town Non-Residents (Surveyed Students)</td>
<td>57 (49)</td>
<td>4 (3)</td>
<td>61 (51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Surveyed Students)</td>
<td>80 (131)</td>
<td>20 (22)</td>
<td>100 (152)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A2.6: Weights for Arad Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of population</th>
<th>Romanian Non-residents</th>
<th>Non-Romanian Non-residents</th>
<th>Romanian Residents</th>
<th>Non-Romanian Residents</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number selected in sample</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unweighted percentage in sample</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weights</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted number in sample*</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted percentage of sample*</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* rounded.

Weights for Mures students were similarly computed. In Mures, Romanians make up 52 percent of the county total population, with the rest of 48 percent non-Romanians. According to a leader of the local Hungarian minority I interviewed, non-Romanians are roughly evenly
distributed between the main town and the rest of the county (see Table A2.7 for the distribution of 100 Mures inhabitants). Weights for Mures students are presented in Table A2.8.

Table A2.7: Distribution of 100 Mures inhabitants according to ethnicity and location, and the number of surveyed students — number of cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locality/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Romanians</th>
<th>Non-Romanians</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main town residents (Surveyed Students)</td>
<td>14 (55)</td>
<td>13 (79)</td>
<td>27 (134)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside main town residents (Surveyed Students)</td>
<td>38 (55)</td>
<td>35 (13)</td>
<td>73 (68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Surveyed Students)</td>
<td>52 (110)</td>
<td>48 (92)</td>
<td>100 (202)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A2.8: Weights for Mures Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of population</th>
<th>Romanian Non-residents</th>
<th>Non-Romanian Non-residents</th>
<th>Romanian Residents</th>
<th>Non-Romanian Residents</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unweighted percentage in sample</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weights</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted number in sample</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted percentage of sample</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: High-School Survey Instrument
(English Translation)

This questionnaire is anonymous and confidential. Please do not write your name anywhere and try to answer all questions sincerely.

1. How interested are you in:
   - local politics?
   - national politics?
   Very disinterested/Somewhat disinterested/Somewhat interested/Very Interested

2. How frequently, at least a member of your household (people living with you):
   - Reads local newspapers?
   - Reads national newspapers?
   - Listens to radio news programs?
   - Watches televised news programs?
   Never/Weekly or almost weekly/More than once a week/Daily or almost daily

3. From where do you find out most news on local politics? (one option only)
   - From newspapers
   - Television
   - Radio
   - From discussions with friends and relatives
   - Other sources, please specify

4. Which associations do you and your parents belong to? (please, choose as many options as applicable and write down the name of the association)
   - Trade union
   - Ethnic association
   - Environmental
   - Professional
   - Civic-political
   - Sports clubs and artistic associations
   - Religious or charitable
   - Political party
   - Owners' associations
   - Block associations
   - Student council/association
   - Other, please specify
5. Since 1989 Romanian citizens have gone to the polls several times. How frequently have your parents participated in local, parliamentary and presidential elections during the last ten years? (please, choose only one option)
They participated in all elections/In most elections/In one or two/They did not participate in any, though they had the right to vote/They did not participate in any because they had no right to vote

6. Did your parents ever contact a member of the County Council?
Yes, once/Yes, several times/No, never

7. If yes, why?
To solve a personal problem
To discuss a problem of interest for this locality
To discuss legislation
To protest in the name of a group
Don't know

8. Here are some activities in which all citizens have the right to participate. Since 1989, did your parents:
participated in a street demonstration
participated in a strike
signed a protest petition
contacted the local tv/radio station or wrote to a local newspaper
Yes/No

9. Among your family's acquaintances do you have somebody to help you solve
a health problem
a judicial problem
an administrative problem
a problem related to the police (e.g. parking or speed ticket)
a problem related to the bank (credit)
find a job
Yes/No

10. How does your family fare with respect to its connections with people who can help it?
Very poorly/Poorly/Well/Very Well

11. As far as you know, does one need to offer gifts (money, services, goods) to be treated correctly at:
the mayor's office
court of law
police
hospital
school
workplace
Never/Sometimes/Always

330
12. The persons who help you and your parents the most are:
relatives
colleagues or workmates
neighbors
schoolmates
other friends
others, please specify

13. Where do these persons live?

14. To what extent do you trust these groups of people?
Your neighbors
Your schoolmates
Your relatives
Residents of this locality
Politicians
Local leaders
Romanians
Hungarians
Germans
Gypsy/Roma
Jewish
Very little/Little/Much/Very much

15. Here are some statements with which some people agree but other do not. To what extent do you agree with them?
Citizens must have the right to vote among several candidates in all elections.
Usually the first to get scholarships and awards are those with good connections not those who are the most deserving.
The police have too much power in Romania.
Generally, nobody cares what happens to his/her neighbors.
Nothing can be done without pull and connections.
The few who are rich got there exploiting the others.
Our leaders do not care about us.
If given the chance, most people would try to profit from you.
People in this locality strictly observe the laws, even the traffic norms.
The right to opinion must be granted even to those who do not exercise it reasonably.
Regardless of whom you vote, those elected look for their interests.
In life, connections are more important than personal merits.
My vote does not count.
The government is doing enough to ensure public order.
Our political leaders are so removed from citizens that they do not understand what the latter want.
Those like me cannot influence the decisions important for this county.
Adopted by those in power, the laws are meant to be broken.
The vast majority of those in power try to exploit you.
There is too much respect for authority in Romania.
Corruption is something normal in this locality.
Everyone has the right to form a political organization, even radical.
Completely disagree/Disagree/Agree/Completely agree

16. Some say the others can be trusted. Others say it is better to be cautious with other people.
Which is your view?
Others can be trusted/Better be cautious

17. Do you think that most people try to help the others or that most think only of themselves?
Most people try to help/Most people think only of themselves

18. Do you think that national minorities in Romania should have the right to:
- preserve their culture and traditions with the help of autonomous associations
- education in their mother tongue in schools and universities
- parliamentary representatives
- question the decisions taken by the majority
- protest against local and national authorities
Completely disagree/Disagree/Agree/Completely Agree

19. Do your parents know personally any politician (member of parliament, mayor or councilor)?
Yes/No

20. To what extent do you feel you can determine your future?
None/Little/Much/Very much

21. Generally, how satisfied are you with the activity of the leaders of this county?
Very dissatisfied/Dissatisfied/Satisfied/Very satisfied

22. Here are some of the problems facing this county. To what extent are you satisfied with the way in which county leaders address these problems?
- Public transport
- Dirty roads
- Housing shortage
- Unemployment
- Corruption and criminality
- Pollution
- Lack of heating and hot water
Very dissatisfied/Dissatisfied/Satisfied/Very satisfied

23. Do you think that the following could solve these problems?
- County council president
- County council
- Mayor
- Local council
Yes/No
24. To what extent do you think that the leaders of this county have these qualities?
   Are honest
   Are good administrators
   Are good politicians
   Understand the problems of the citizens
   Have administrative experience
   Not at all/Little/Much/very much

25. Do you think that the taxes collected by the state are used properly?
   Totally disagree/Disagree/Agree/Totally agree

26. How many times a week your family buys newspapers?
   Never/1-3 times/4 or more times

27. Today, many want to get rich. What it is in your opinion the safest way to get rich?

28. Nationality: respondent, father, mother
   Romanian/Hungarian/German/Rrom/Other

29. Religion: respondent, father, mother
   Orthodox/Roman Catholic/Greek Catholic/Protestant/Other

30. Education: mother, father
   completed elementary school
   completed high-school
   completed vocational school
   enrolled in additional non-degree courses
   completed university degree

31. Do you consider yourself a person
   without religious convictions
   not very religious
   somewhat religious
   very religious

32. Your father's and your mother's occupation

33. Your birthyear

34. Your family's total income

35. Some people consider themselves rich, others consider themselves poor. On a 1 to 10 scale,
   where would your family stand?

36. Are you living in this locality?
   Yes/No
37. If yes, since when? Please write down the year.

38. If not, where is your permanent residence?
   In urban/rural area

39. Where did you spend most of your life?
   Transylvania/Wallachia/Moldova/Bucharest
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