



**ADID IN ROMANIA:
A LONGITUDINAL
APPROACH
SECONDARY DATA
ANALYSIS
- SUMMARY -**

Tania Chilin, Oana Lup



INTRODUCTION

One of the main goals driving this analysis was to identify and describe how various measurements were used in passed surveys to address intolerant, discriminatory and anti-democratic attitudes. This in turn could help guide and develop better or more refined ways of assessing aforementioned attitudes and behaviours and perhaps pinpoint specific circumstances in which they are activated and subsequently discouraged. Additionally, this is a descriptive study aimed to trace a rough sketch of how widespread intolerant beliefs and opinions are in Romania, what are the recipient target-groups and perhaps identify over time changes in the manifestation patterns of such anti-democratic attitudes.

According to our definition, ADID is characterized by the simultaneous presence of three elements: a more or less clear identification of the target group, the expression of a negative attitude towards the group, and a more or less explicit assertion of the idea that the group, because of a supposed characteristics, should be treated less favorably than other groups of humans are, by default, expected to be.

ADID can comfortably include concepts such as stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination/discriminatory acts, intolerance, and so on. Our definition of ADID is consistent with all these concepts both when we take into account common language/dictionary and basic social science definitions.

Because individual characteristics and traits could have important consequences on how people perceive issues of tolerance and prejudice in general or related to specific groups, the present analysis looks at the variation of different measures of ADID across socio-demographic attributes. Literature has identified that the most important of these are the level of education, urbanization, age, religiosity, gender, authoritarianism and democratic values. However, because in many cases measures of religiosity, authoritarianism and democratic values could not be standardized across different surveys, only the following demographic traits were included: education, urbanization, age and gender. Ethnicity was also added as a control variable where needed.

2

EDUCATION

Lipset (1963, 100-104) found a positive correlation between education and tolerance. This finding was subsequently confirmed in established democracies (Erikson and Tedin 1995:156), emerging democracies (Colton 2000:76), and large-N, cross-national studies (Inglehart 1997:251-53). There are also many studies showing that a higher level of education is associated with greater acceptance of homosexuality. (Anderson and Fetner, 2008b; Adamczyk and Pitt 2009; Van den Akker et al. 2012; Anderson and Fetner 2008a; Gerhards 2010; Hadler 2012; Loftus 2001; McVeigh and Diaz 2009; Ohlander et al. 2005; Takács and Szalma 2011).

In Romania, Vilman-Miller and Fesnic (2009) found that tolerance towards homosexuality was positively correlated with education, as well as urbanization and negatively correlated with religiosity and age.

URBANIZATION

Research points towards there being a positive correlation between urbanization and political tolerance. Several studies have shown that people living in urban areas report more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality compared to people living in rural areas (Anderson and Fetner, 2008b; Van den Akker et al. 2012; Anderson and Fetner 2008a; Van den Akker et al 2012; Stulhofer and Rimac 2009; Ohlander et al. 2005).

A large-N study on political tolerance in Europe (29 cases) conducted by Todosijevic and Envedi concludes that there are significant differences in attitudes between urban and rural areas in the West, but in Eastern Europe these differences are negligible (Todosijevic and Envedi 2008, 10). The lack of familiarity with outsider groups could potentially explain the finding that rural residents seem to be less tolerant towards LGBT people - or the effect of the urban-rural variable might be a by-product of other factors (socio-economic status, for instance). Nevertheless, Takács and Szalma (2011) found

a different result when examining data gathered in 2008 in 26 European countries: they reported the highest level of acceptance in suburbs of large cities, and the lowest levels among residents of large cities. At any rate, in Romania, urbanization appears to be a good predictor of political tolerance (Fesnic 2008, 39-40).

Rusu and Tudor (2013) found that in Romania, both urbanization and socio-economic status were significant predictors of tolerance, as well as education. The variables that were negatively correlated with tolerance included: age, rural environment and country region (respondents from the region of Muntenia were less tolerant). The effect of these variables remained stable with regard to tolerance towards immigrants, homosexuality or towards people belonging to a different ethnic group.

AGE

In most cases, younger generations tend to be more tolerant than older ones (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 97-114). Studies have shown that older people hold more negative attitudes towards homosexuality (Adamczyk and Pitt 2009; Anderson and Fetner 2008a; Van den Akker et al. 2012; Gerhards 2010; Hadler 2012; McVeigh and Diaz 2009; Takács and Szalma 2011). Increasingly tolerant attitudes can be attributed to the replacement of older, conservative generations with younger and more tolerant ones. Other scholars however believe that attitudes become more tolerant over time within all cohorts, arguing that changes in attitudes towards homosexuality have been too large and too rapid to be explained solely by the natural replacement of conservative cohorts (Anderson and Fetner 2008b; De Graaf 2008).

GENDER

Some studies find men to be more tolerant than women, suggesting that the latter calculate the rights-security trade-off differently than men and are thus more willing to convict or to impose harsher sentences (Shapiro and Mahajan, 1986; Lock, 1999). Men are more supportive than females of civil liberties issues (Shiraev and Sobel 2006, 146-47; Todosijevic and Enyedi 2008, 10-17; Stouffer, 1955), while women are less tolerant than men on political issues (less willing to extend civil liberties to political outgroups), but more tolerant on social issues (more permissive towards unconventional social behaviour) (Miller-Viman and Fesnic, 2009).

An in-depth look at the IPP's 2003 study "Intolerance, Discrimination, Extremism in Romania" suggests that while younger Romanians and those with more formal education are, indeed, more tolerant towards LGBT groups, the same may not hold true for attitudes towards the Roma and Hungarians. Age does appear to play a part in views towards Jewish people, while urban/rural differences are only glaring with regard to gay rights. The same dataset showed positive correlation between authoritarian values and anti-gay views, as well as a positive relationship between nationalist attitudes and prejudice towards Hungarians.

TARGET-GROUPS

While according to the last census, approximately 88,9% of the Romanian population is Romanian, the country is home to important ethnic minorities. Hungarians account for 6,5% of the population, while Roma people for 3,3% - these groups stand for the two largest minority groups. Other groups are the Ukrainians (0,3%), Germans (0,2%), Turks, Russians, Serbs, Slovaks, and Tatars (each at 0,1%).

The 2004 census reported a proportion of 6,6% for Hungarians, only 2,5% for Roma, and 0,3% for Ukrainians and Germans¹ - making the Roma the only group to have increased in size by 2011. Furthermore, although the 2011 official census data reports that 621,000 people had declared themselves Roma, estimates of the Roma population are much higher - the European Commission places the figure somewhere between 1.8 and 2.5 million people. The Roma associations also estimate to have over 2 million members in Romania.

Apart from the Roma minority who are found throughout the territory of Romania, all the other ethnic minorities mentioned above are predominantly settled in distinctive regions. While other ethnic groups reside in border regions connected to their respective kin-states, Hungarians and Germans reside in the Transylvania region.

1 Source: World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples. <http://www.minorityrights.org/3521/romania/romania-overview.html>; last accessed 23.01.2015

THE ROMA

Estimates make the Roma minority the largest ethnic minority group in Romania. The Roma were the only ethnic minority in Romania with a rising population, while the number of Hungarians, Germans, Ukrainians and other minorities has decreased since 2002. While the surge could be due to demographic changes, most scholars argue that part of this increase is explained by the fact that more and more people are willing to declare their Roma origins, something that was often hidden before, as noted by the National Institute of Statistics.² In addition, the conditions in which the 2002 census was carried out were also criticized by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) that argued that they made it impossible to collect comprehensive, precise and reliable data on the actual ethnic make-up of the population of Romania, especially in the case of the Roma minority.³

While the Roma are the largest minority group of Romania they are at the same time the most disadvantaged group, both socially and economically. The Roma population has the highest illiteracy levels in Romania.⁴ Discrimination against Roma is wide spread in society, although Romania's adherence to the European Union made it possible for the Romanian government (in cooperation with the EU, UN and World Bank) to work with Roma organizations in order to combat the social marginalization of the Roma. Notwithstanding these efforts to combat discrimination of the Roma regarding access to education and health care, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights highlights in the Concluding Observations outstanding concerns over Romania's failure to ensure effective implementation and protection of the human rights - among others - of Roma people. According to the World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous People, "Roma remain under-represented at national and local levels, but EU integration and the engagement of domestic and international civil society organizations have kept their problems on the Romanian agenda." Amnesty International and the European Roma Rights Centre also reported concerns following the recent review of Romania's periodic reports (European Roma Rights Centre - ERRC, 2014).

ETHNIC HUNGARIANS

Officially the largest minority group in Romania (possibly outnumbered by the Roma), a large proportion of Hungarians live in the region of Transylvania, making up approximately 18.9% of the population in the region. While Transylvania is clearly dominated by Romanians, most of the Hungarians live in concentrated regions in the counties of Harghita, Covasna, and Mures, often forming a clear majority in the localities here.

There has been an uneasy history of Hungarians and Romanians, Transylvania having been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, where Romanians were a minority. Hungarians have had a dominant role in Transylvania up until the twentieth century but were oppressed under communism. While history is disputed between the two groups, Hungarians and Romanians co-existed for much of their history, and as such Hungarians (and Germans) constitute traditional historical minorities. Hungarians are Roman Catholics, Calvinists or Unitarians and are thus different in confessional terms from ethnic Romanians, most of whom are Eastern Orthodox or Greek Catholic.⁵

After the regime change in 1989, Hungarians have demanded more self-government rights, a call that was met with animosity by Romanians. Clashes broke out in the Transylvanian town of Tргу-Mures in March 1990, when supporters of the nationalist party Vatra Romaneasca (Romanian Cradle) attacked Hungarians. Hungarian retaliations followed and the army finally intervened, but eight people were killed and more than three hundred injured - mostly Hungarians - before order was restored (Socor 1990; Jenne 2007, 111).

-
- 2 Source: "Economia socială și comunitățile de romi – provocări și oportunități –" ; available at: http://www.undp.ro/libraries/projects/Economia_Sociala_si_Comunitatile_de_Romi_Provocari_si_Oportunitati.pdf ; last accessed 23.01.2015
 - 3 UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. 13 September 2010. Concluding observations (2010) CERD; available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/countries/ENACARRegion/Pages/ROIIndex.aspx> ; last accessed 23.01.2015
 - 4 "Economia socială și comunitățile de romi – provocări și oportunități –" Page 21-22 ; available at: http://www.undp.ro/libraries/projects/Economia_Sociala_si_Comunitatile_de_Romi_Provocari_si_Oportunitati.pdf last accessed 23.01.2015
 - 5 <http://www.minorityrights.org/3521/romania/romania-overview.html>; last accessed 23.01.2015

Protection of its Hungarian kin was always high on Hungary's foreign policy agenda, often causing friction with Romania. The bilateral treaty between the two countries dragged on until 1996 (Warner 2004, 387-8), and ethnic tensions ran high during this period, partly due to the ongoing pressure for territorial autonomy exerted by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania. However, relations between Romanians and Hungarians in Transylvania have been peaceful since 1990, although extremist statements and kindling from right-wing Romanian parties are rather common. Tensions persist mainly because of the continued denial of Hungarian demands for territorial autonomy.

ETHNIC GERMANS

The majority of ethnic Germans also live in Transylvania. The German minority group can be broken down into three groups, the Saxons who arrived in the 12-13th century, the Swabs who came mainly in the 18th century to the southwest of Transylvania, and the small Landler group, also 18th century immigrants who were Protestants and took refuge in northern Transylvania.

While the German minority used to be one of the significant minorities in Romania, its numbers decreased continuously and rapidly. In the last two decades or so, from 1992 to 2002 and from 2002 to 2011, the German population was halved twice as the German community saw its number fall from approx. 120 thousand in 1992 to approx. 60 thousand by 2002, and then to 36 thousand people in 2011. This large drop in numbers is even more significant since in the 1930s the German community was 760 thousand strong.⁶

The demise of the Germans in Romania started with the end of World War II, when the new Romanian authorities seized much of the properties of the Germans and transported approximately 75,000 Germans to the Soviet Union as forced labor. Decline of the German population continued under communism as many Germans were permitted to emigrate to the Federal Republic of Germany in exchange for hard currency remittances. After the regime change, the continued decrease of German population was due to emigration to Germany. Emigration has also meant that many traditional German settlements have been completely or partially abandoned, reducing the minority even further (Wolff & Cordell 2010).

JEWS

There are barely more than 3,000 Jews in Romania according to the latest census, while in 2002 there were more than 5,500. The number of Jews has fallen considerably not just in recent years, but also over the past 70 years as a result of the Nazi genocide and of state-sponsored emigration to Israel during the communist period.⁷ Although their number is quite small, acts of anti-Semitism, including vandalism against Jewish sites, continue to take place in Romania.

In the early years of democracy anti-Semitism was rather common – in 1991 and again in 1999, Romanian legislators caused an international uproar when they commemorated the day of death of Romania's Nazi-allied leader, Marshal Ion Antonescu. This was particularly distressing to Romania's small remaining Jewish population.⁸ With the development of democracy, Romania instituted Governmental decrees that would prohibit racist, xenophobic and fascist organizations, and banned denial of the Holocaust in 2002. This included the prohibition of denial of the participation of Romanian officials in the Holocaust, which was also acknowledged by the Romanian Presidency in 2004.

LGBT GROUPS

While traditional studies of tolerance examine people's attitudes using measures based on whether they would extend civil liberties to political outgroups, Inglehart argues that homosexuality is a better, more refined indicator of political tolerance towards outgroups in general (Inglehart and Welzel, 2000:29; Inglehart, 1997:276-280). The argument is that respondents will be more honest about their lack of tolerance when it comes to sexual minorities compared to other groups. This is especially true when homosexuality is not socially acceptable within the wider society (Fish, 2005:88).

6 <http://www.minorityrights.org/3521/romania/romania-overview.html> ; last accessed 23.01.2015

7 <http://www.minorityrights.org/3521/romania/romania-overview.html>

8 <http://www.minorityrights.org/3521/romania/romania-overview.html>

According to the LGBT Tolerance Index, Romania is the second lowest LGBT tolerant country in the world and the least LGBT tolerant country in Europe. Romania shares this position with China, while the only country that scores lower is Indonesia. The LGBT minority in Romania faces discrimination, intolerance and aggressive behaviour, yet victims rarely report this type of conduct due to the general attitudes of disdain present within the society and also among authorities when it comes to the issue.⁹ Furthermore, homosexuality used to be a criminal offence for as late as the year 2000.

THE POOR

Romania is one of the poorest countries of the European Union and this has important consequences for the society at large. According to Eurostat, in 2011, the level of absolute poverty was 5% overall; 8.4% for youths aged 15-19; 7.6% for 20-24 years old; 6% for 25-29 years old and 4.6% for the segment of the population aged between 30 and 34. Young people aged 18 to 24 are the most affected, as 28.1% of them are in a relative poverty state. The economic crisis also deeply affected Romania, while in 2008 the number of unemployed people fluctuated between 300,000 and 400,000, by 2010 the figure went as high as 760,000 people. In 2014, the problem was still significant as more than 450,000 people remained unemployed.¹⁰

9 ILGA-Europe Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People in Europe. 2014. Page 134- 136 available at: <https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/15245131/Annual%20Review%202014%20web%20version.pdf> last accessed 23.01.2015

10 <http://www.anofm.ro/statistica> last accessed 22.01.2015

CONCLUSIONS

While one would expect to see an increase in tolerance and acceptance of the Roma population throughout the years, the anti-Roma sentiment appears to be rather resilient or at best dissipating at a very slow pace. Moreover, while most studies have shown that more educated people, as well as the youth tend to be more tolerant and acceptant in general, this may not be so true in the case of Romania when referring to the Roma population. This type of inelasticity is a very interesting phenomenon that certainly requires its own path of exploration through developing and employing more complex survey designs. Specifically, one would be interested to see why the contact theory does not quite hold in Romania when it comes to the Roma population and if and how prejudice, stereotyping and social distance are intertwined to form an impermeable web of intolerance. These findings regarding the overtime persistence of anti-Roma sentiment in Romania are in tune with what the 2003 IPP study "Intolerance, Discrimination, Extremism in Romania" suggests: that while younger Romanians and those with more formal education are, indeed, more tolerant towards LGBT groups, the same may not hold true for attitudes towards the Roma and Hungarians.

Compared to other European countries, Romania scores rather low when it comes to displaying accepting attitudes towards gay/ lesbian/ bisexual people. On the other hand, compared to tolerance towards the Roma, acceptance of sexual minorities does appear to be more sensitive to education and age.

Younger and more educated people, as well as people who have gay or lesbian friends and acquaintances are more likely to express tolerance of sexual minorities. These findings could have a practical impact on how various campaigns promoting tolerance towards LGBT groups are designed and implemented.

In 2014 62% of respondents stated they would not want a gay neighbour compared to 75% in 1990. It is interesting to observe that in 2014 more people stated they would not like to have a gay neighbour (62%) than not liking a Roma neighbour (46%). The 2015 Eurobarometer tells the same story in a different way. The mean score for feeling comfortable with having a Roma work colleague was 6.6 while the average score for being comfortable with a gay/ lesbian or bisexual co-worker was 4.6. Romania had the largest mean acceptance score difference between the two out-groups out of all EU28 countries. This again supports the findings that Romanians in general find it extremely difficult to express tolerance towards LGBT groups. This is particularly worrisome if we take into account Inglehart's assertion, that accepting LGBT groups is a good indicator of tolerating groups of people that are different in general. The question thus remains, what are the contextual factors that allow for intolerant attitudes to be so widespread and resilient. Scholars have found that religiosity and adopting authoritarian world-views could partially explain aversion towards sexual minorities. The goal then would not be to try and change these attitudes and beliefs, but rather to explore various contexts in which reconciliation between holding such beliefs and accepting "the other" would occur.

LIMITS

A major issue when attempting to study any type of social phenomenon from a longitudinal perspective using secondary data as a source is discontinuity of indicators. Very few studies conducted in Romania used identical survey items to address ADID, which in turn makes comparability across the years challenging. Moreover, there is a lack of refinement when it comes to breaking down concepts into their separate dimensions and exploring their complexity, with most surveys focusing on just one angle of ADID. This limits the scope of secondary data analyses and restricts the examination of any overlaps between these dimensions and also where/ why does disengagement from a particular attitude occur. Subsequently, the studies produced using existing survey data employed few measurements taken as proxies for intolerance, with the majority focusing on the same evaluation approaches, such as appraising social distance from certain groups or approval of treating members of minority groups "like any other person."

Also lacking in past surveys are batteries of questions that would allow comparability of the different types of prejudice across separate target-groups. It is, for example, rather difficult to examine whether respondents with a high level of antipathy towards the Roma also exhibit negative sentiments towards other minorities, or whether readiness to restrict political rights varies across out-groups.

Existing studies fulfill the task of painting the general picture when it comes to describing sources and manifestations of ADID, however a more nuanced approach would lead to a much better understanding of intolerant/ anti-democratic attitudes and, more importantly, how to shift them.