
EVOLUTION OF THE FAMILY STRUCTURES IN ROMANIA

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Abstract: *the article starts from some conceptual specifications concerning the definition and general social functions of the family. After that, it presents some of the main existing demographic trend in European space including Romania in the field of family demography. It is analysing some factors of modernization of the European family, but also some particular aspects of the relevant national context. The article uses data and information from international statistics (UN), Eurostat data, but also data from national censuses and statistics.*

Keywords: *modernization, social policies, national circumstances*

Introduction

The family, as social group, became object of study for the social sciences – sociology, anthropology and, also economy – as of the 19th century. The problem of the social support given to the families in difficulty became a properly consolidated chapter in family sociology and on social work, particularly in the fourth decade of the 20th century. For instance, some US sociological surveys on this subject have extremely practical objectives, pertaining to the necessity of understanding the social state and of establishing survival conditions for the families confronted with situations at the limit, generated by unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, children losing the economic support of the parents, etc. the history of family sociology shows some change of the research topics in time, while some basic themes persisted all the time, such as the economic dimension of the family life, change of components of the roles and positions of authority within the family, thematic of the social policies addressing family issues.

By mid-19th century, a first wave of papers regarding the crisis of the family institution has been published. The most critical topics referred to the decrease of paternal authority, moral decay of some family members, change of elements with social role within the families associated to the modern society, risks pertaining to the abusive behaviour of the spouses, of the parents towards the children, or the delinquent behaviour of the children from dismembered families.

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During the interbellum period, the popularization of the psychoanalytical methods of social investigation favoured the emergence of studies focused on the risks of the internal family life, as effect of the pressures generated by the interdictions imposed within the family life. Within that context, ideas related to the feminist ideology became widespread. Also at that time, the roles within the different types of family structures came into discussion, promoting the pattern of the large family, which brought into discussion, at a much broader theoretical level (compared, for instance, to the Elizabethan period in England, when the Poor Act was adopted – 1602), the topic of the responsibility of the society (of the market economy) and of the welfare state, particularly, towards the risk of poverty for the families with many children.

Subsequently, the topic of the responsibility of the so-called “providential” state was discussed, which is called upon to assume increasingly the traditional functions of the family (by educating the children, taking care of the ill, assisting the elder, etc.)

As of the eight decade of the 20th century, family crisis was the focus of the social analysts, topic which still persists in the present time. Many subjects were discussed (dysfunctions within the nuclear or single parent families, trends of family dissolution, traumas of the family dissolution process, child abandonment, etc.). Alternative life styles were presented, which became popular, particularly in the West – higher number of consensual couples, lower marriage rates, statistical increase of the celibate, increasing overt social affirmation of the homosexual couples, of family life deviancy (alcoholism, physical and verbal violence, irresponsible management of family resources, increasing rate of divorces, psychological traumas of the children coming from dismembered families, etc.). The sociological literature also has statements in favour of the advantages of the family life, on the background of the difficulties induced by the increasingly frequent economic crises.

The involvement of the state in the social protection of the family was marked, in time, by the enhancement of its economic importance and by the change of the target groups for the social policies.

In principle, two basic fundamental patterns of social assistance to the life family existed, over the past 3 decades, in the European welfare states, each individual country adopting either of them or a mix of the two. The Beveridge pattern – by universalist assistance of acknowledged social risks, was initially applied in the Great Britain. The Bismark pattern – assistance granted primarily to the families, employees on the formal labour market – was initially applied in Germany. The use of such patterns of social intervention starting from the legal norms regarding the family, contributed largely to the establishment of the middle classes in the West, the families usually having a broad statistical representation in all societies, and at least one family member being employed on the labour market. The welfare state expanded in most countries, after 1945, gradually changing its functions. While during the post-war period it focused mainly on social assistance with the purpose of alleviating the social dysfunctions (aiming peace among the social classes), more recently, the role of the welfare state is to ensure the redistribution of the welfare created by the market economy, by regulating and controlling the social transfers.

Irrespective of their stage of development or of their economic state, all countries employed the following main principles in the formulation of their social policies (Deme, 2006):

1. Social protection against the risk of losing the labour incomes of the employees (insurances for work accidents, pensions, unemployment).
2. Protection of the employee families (successor pension, healthcare insurances for the whole family).
3. Protection of family members which could not work (people with handicap, children).
4. Universal protection (healthcare insurances, social aid, allocations for children).

The social researchers are still concerned, nowadays, to study the evolution of family structures. Authors such as Milan (2013), Cohen (2011), Roberts (2007), Griver (2008), Jayson (2010), Levy et al. (2002), claim and debate new ideas about the effects of the post-modern culture on the family life. The life of the couples changed radically in the western societies, where the legally bound family tends to lose its dominant role within the society, becoming less and less represented statistically. Some alternative patterns of living together contest the traditional families.

The **concept of “family”** has a rather broad semantic sphere, comprehending different types of structures (number of family members, distribution of family members’ roles). The sciences of sociology, anthropology or psychology study all types of family structures. The exact definition of the family structures is relevant for the social sciences and for the juridical area, such structures generating a broad and complex social-economic problematic. In this article we will plead for one type or another of family definition, but we noticed that, the family structures of couples consisting of a man and a woman, with or without children, are statistically dominant in the European society.

Without exhausting the subject of family definition, we note some definitions that are relevant within the present context. Murdock (1949) defines the family as a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction, which includes adult people of both genders, of which at least two have acknowledged (accepted) sexual relations, and one or more children, own or adopted, which they nurture and care for. Levi-Strauss (apud Damian, 1972) defines the family as a social group initiated by marriage, consisting of the husband, wife and children or other relatives, group reunited by moral, legal, economic, religious and social rights and obligations. Damian N. (1972) refers to the family as a group of relatives established by marriage, blood or adoption, which live together, develop common economic and household activities, are linked by spiritual relations (ideological and psychological) and by juridical relations, provided the existence of the state and law (in Buzatu, 2016).

According to the acceptations used in EU family and household censuses, the family nucleus can include two or more people who belong to the same household and whose kinship relations are of husband and wife, partners within a registered partnership, partners within a consensual union, or aren't and child (Regulation CE nr. 1201/2009).

In some European countries, the reference to the family are vaguer, mentioning structures of the following types: couple with no children, couple with one or more children, single parents with one or more children. In the modern age, the concept of family is usually limited to the direct relations (first degree) between the parents and children. By child they understand the biological son or daughter from the marriage (even from a previous marriage) or adopted (irrespective of the age), who usually lives in the household of one of the parents. The child living alternatively with one of the parents (when the parents are divorced), will consider as household, the one where he/she spends most of the time, its usual residence. The son or daughter having a spouse, a registered partner or a partner within a consensual union, living together with one or more own children, in the parents' house, is not considered to be a child. Legally, the family represents a group of persons between whom there have been established and exist rights and duties regulated by legal norms which state the conditions of concluding the marriage, the rights and duties of the spouses, the relations between the parents and the children, the manner of inheritance, the rights and obligations in the case of divorce, etc.

Main social functions of the family

The functions of the family define a coherent set of resembling activities, whose role is to ensure the identity of a group, its existence, its proper development and its relations with the social environment. "A thing or a phenomenon exists as long as it fulfils particular functions for which it cannot be replaced" (Bistriceanu, 2006). The family displays its functionality towards the society and towards the individuals which compose it by fulfilling several functions. The sociologists developed several classifications for the functions of this type; following are some essential ones:

- a) **Regulating the reproductive patterns, psycho-affective solidarity and integration of the sexual behaviour within the family couple.** Norms and restrictions are set within the family life (one wife for one husband, for instance), including by the promotion of particular conceptions about divorce or remarrying. This function relies on the existence of a psycho-affective solidarity within the couple, which can extend towards their progeny, if any. Until now, no other social structure didn't prove to be more socially desirable, in this respect, than the family. Beyond meeting the basic needs, the members of any family need psycho-affective balance and protection, for a proper social integration. The sexual relations should preferably manifest within family couples established on the basis of the free consent of the partners, resulting from mutual affection. In order to avoid the genetic degeneration of the humans, the sexual relations are regulated so as to avoid the incest (sexual relations between close relatives – although the kin categories are different in different societies), when families are established. Usually, the formal interdictions ban the marriage between parents and children, sisters and brothers, grandparents and nephews, uncles and nephews, cousins of the first degree.
- b) **Economic function, establishment of the premises for the production and consumption of goods and services within the family.** Within the traditional agrarian or preindustrial societies, the social and economic system depends heavily

on the economic function of the family (particularly in the peasant household or craftsman household). In the modern, industrial or post-industrial societies, the economic function of the family (regarding the dimension of producing consumption goods and services) was largely externalized, and the work that yields income is done mostly outside the household. The consumption function is performed largely within the family. This presumes the assignment of expenditures by categories of needs, which are satisfied within the limits of the family budget.

- c) Socialization, social control and intergenerational perpetuation of the cultural values. Society must reproduce biologically, but also socio-culturally; the first values assimilated by the young generations are transmitted via the process of socialization within the family. The family is also responsible for the establishment of the first facilities of caring, education, formation of children personality and for their protection.
- d) Juridical function, transmission of the social status and of other family advantages. The family members have legal rights and duties specified by specific laws. The family, next to the structures of the education and learning systems, provides the necessary conditions for children's start in life. It is the most important factor in the acquisition of the social state by the progeny. By being born in a specific family, a child can benefit of a better or less advantageous start (inheriting material goods or an acknowledged social position, growing within a specific family environment generated by the socio-professional profile of the parents, etc.). The juridical function of the family decreased much in its importance and social effects due to the increasing number of consensual couples, which stresses the individual responsibility.

Each society is characterized by a specific dominant family pattern, which regulates the relations between genders and the relations between the parents and their children. The most important criteria that distinguish the family patterns are:

- Socially-accepted manners by which two or more persons can form a family;
- Relations of authority and how they are used within the family;
- Regulation of the property on the family financial goods/values and of the inheritance.

Necessity of analysing and social assistance for the family life

Towards the end of the 20th century, the welfare state became not just a facilitator of the social peace, but also an important factor of the social development. Such a change led everything to:

1. Nationalization of the social support.
2. Family assisting not by goodwill of a person or institution, but by right guaranteed by law.

3. Consolidation of the social aid by the establishment of increasingly complex systems of social insurances.
4. Establishment, by compulsory public contributions, of the funds necessary for the support of social insurances and social work.
5. Private and community initiatives in the field of social work and social insurances are not excluded, the USA being an eloquent example for this (Zamfir E. and Zamfir C., coord., 1995).

The forecasts of the demographic evolutions within the EU show that the European population will age massively by 2060, mainly due to the low fertility and higher life expectancy. The role of migration in the alleviation of this process cannot be particularly consistent, at least for now, and it anyhow not reverse the current demographic trend. The economic and social consequences of the European population aging will affect the whole Europe. The low fertility will decrease the number of active people which to support the young generations and the elder. The increasing number of old people will require healthcare services, social work services, adapted dwellings and trained staff. Such demographic changes will generate additional pressure on the public budgets, implicitly on the public administration, to collect more rigorously the taxes and dues. The forecasts show that the regions that will have to solve the most difficult social challenges derived from the demographic evolutions, are the peripheral regions, the rural ones and the post-industrial ones, from where the population tends to migrate or is decreasing. The European Commission issued Communication [COM(2006) 571], “The demographic future of Europe – from challenge to opportunity”, which formulates some essential policies for:

- Promoting demographic renewal in Europe, by better conditions for the families and improved reconciliation of the work life with the family life;
- Promoting employment in Europe:
- More jobs and longer working lives of better quality
- A more productive and dynamic Europe by investments in education and research
- Sustainable public finances in Europe: guaranteeing adequate social security and equity between the generations
- Receiving and integrating immigrants in Europe

Social protection of the family in Romania.

By the adhesion to the European Community and by accepting the European Social Chart, Romania promotes some basic social rights, through: art. 13. The right to social assistance and healthcare; art. 14. The right to benefit of social work; art. 23. The right of the elder to social assistance; art. 30. The right to protection against poverty and social exclusion. The main target groups of the social work services in Romania are the children, the young people in difficulty and the juvenile delinquents, the people with disabilities, the old people, the addicts of drugs, alcohol or other toxic substances, the

people and families with no incomes, some categories such as refugees, immigrants, the Roma, the people in long-term detention, etc. the institution which provides assistance and support for the children, family, lonely people, old people, people in need, abused, marginalised or with disabilities, and to any person in need, is the General Direction for Social Assistance and Child Protection (D.G.A.S.P.C.), subordinated to the County Councils, or to the District Councils, in Bucharest. The mission of this public institution is to provide, to the people in its area of activity, a system of social assistance services which to answer the identified needs, and to provide universal and comprehensive social security.

The Direction for Child Protection comprises: Family-type department; Complex evaluation department; Adoption department; Monitoring department; Counselling and support for parents and children; Child phone department; Maternal assistance department; Coordination and information for street children; Juvenile delinquency; People trafficking department; Alternative services (night shelter for street children, day and night shelter for street children); Residential services for children (placement centres, emergency shelter for abused children, maternal centre; complex of community services).

The purpose of the Direction for Child Protection focuses on specialised interventions and development of adequate social work services for children in difficulty and their families, using all forms and means stipulated in the laws. DGASPC have responsibilities in the cases of abuse, bad treatments, neglect or exploitation, through work included, child trafficking, repatriation and social reintegration of the unaccompanied children, return of the families with children and support services as needed. DGASPC may play a complementary role to that of the tutoring authority in the case of the children whose parents divorce (HG 49/2011).

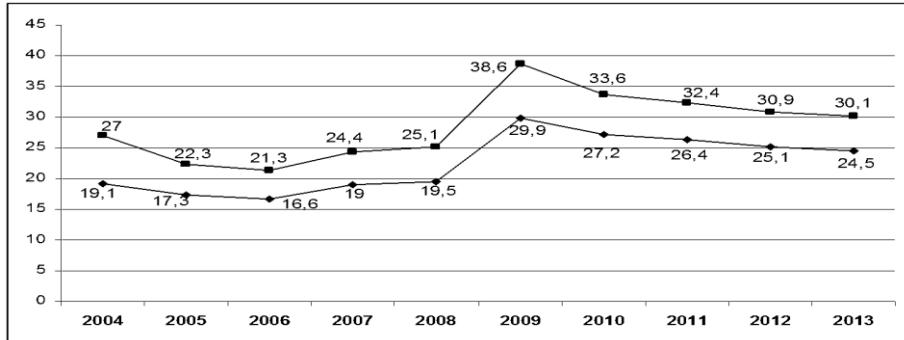
In Romania, the number of people receiving child rearing indemnity decreased by 0.9% in the first 9 months of 2015 (Ministry of Labour data). The number of people receiving child rearing indemnity was 138,882 between January 1st – September 30th 2015, 1,255 people less than in the corresponding interval from 2014. Almost half of these people (48.1%, i.e. 66,819 people) received the basic amount, of 600 lei monthly. Most beneficiaries were from Bucharest (16,639).

The funds spent for this benefit exceeded 1.186 billion lei and was 1.7% higher than in January 1st – September 30th 2014, although the number of beneficiaries decreased. The average monthly amount paid per beneficiary increased from 935 lei in January 1st – September 30th 2014, to 949 lei in January 1st – September 30th 2015.

The counties of Arad, Constanța, Brașov, Sibiu, Iași, Timiș, Ilfov, Cluj paid amounts higher than 950 lei per beneficiary, while Bucharest municipality paid 1,326 lei. Social insurances contributions are paid for the beneficiaries of child rearing indemnity. The amount spent for this purpose in January 1st – September 30th 2015, was 66,146,710 lei, higher by 1,076,587 lei (1.7%) than in the same period of the previous year (** birth rate in Romania keeps decreasing...,2016). Both in 1992, and in 2002, the family nuclei with children (husband-wife, he partner-she partner and single parent) represented about two thirds from the total number of nuclei. In 2002, the number of single parent families was 2.7% higher than in 1992.

The economic dimension of the quality of life of the different categories of families from Romania, whose incomes come mostly from the system of social protection, is strongly imbalanced.

Chart 1. Dynamics of the ratio between the minimal guaranteed income (MGI) plus two state allocations and the minimal basket for decent consumption (MD), and the minimal basket of subsistence (MS), for the single parent family in Romania, urban areas, October 2004–2013



Legend: —♦— MGI 3 people/ MD 3 people; —■— MGI 3 people/ MS 3 people

Source: Mihăilescu Adina, 2015

For instance, in Romania in 2013, the single parent family of one adult person and 2 children, eligible for the minimal guaranteed income for 3 people, plus the state allocations for the two children, managed to meet the requirements of the minimal basket of consumption only in proportion of almost one third at the subsistence level, and almost a quarter at the minimal decent level (Chart 1) (Mihăilescu, 2015).

Modernization of the life as a couple in Europe

Within the current European area, some traditional elements of the family life stepped back (starting with the 1960s-1070s), in front of the modernizing trends. Such trends appeared on the background of the evolution of women's role and condition within the society, of the general development of the modern societies, of the change of many social values. Within a context of broad liberalization of the mentality and aspirations of each new generation of young people, the number of divorces within the traditional families reached unprecedented values: 70% in 2012, in Belgium, for instance. The average age of the partners within a marriage increased, but the young people tend to start their adult life much sooner, rather living alone or cohabiting, not by leaving parents' house at marriage. The classical marriage – man and woman, with or without children – still is the most frequent type of family, even in the West (***) *Regional demographic statistics, Eurostat, Statistics, 2016*

Single parent family. In 2011, in Europe, it was a high number of single parent families: 15.5 million (11.0% of the total number of families within EU 28 countries), with at least one child, under 25, living together with the parent. Such families are met mostly in the large urban centres. In Romania, this phenomenon is lower than in the western countries – 25.3% of the total families from Romania are single parent families, and one of four single parent families is family with a single father (highest such proportion within EU 28). In Bulgaria, Spain, Finland and Swede, the proportion of families with single father also was rather high. The single parent families were rather few in Greek, with the peak of 8.1% in the capital region Attiki. Similar situations were also noticed in southern Bulgaria (Kardzhali and Smolian), in Germany (Eichstätt in Bavaria), in Italy (Agrigento in Sicilia and Barletta-Andria-Trani in Puglia) etc. (**Regional demographic statistics, Eurostat, Statistics, 2016).

Marriage and family-type pact. Although on a decreasing trend (see for instance France, Table 1), the marriage between men and women are still dominant, compared to the number of pacts. However, in December 2015, a number of 13 European states – Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Island, Ireland, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Great Britain – acknowledged legally and allowed marriage between same-sex partners. A number of 21 European states acknowledged some forms of civil reunion; in France, for instance, a pact of civil solidarity (pact, for short) shows a contractual form of civil union between two adult people living together. This is a marital union which doesn't involve the full responsibilities of a marriage. The legalization of such union structures has been voted by the French Parliament in 1999, to give legal status for the different-sex or same-sex couples which were living outside marriage. In 2012, in France, 94% of the couples joined by pact were of different sex (** 2016, Évolution du nombre de mariages et de pacs conclus jusqu'en 2015, INSEE, 2016).

Table 1 - Number of marriages and of family pacts in France, in 2000-2012

Year	Pacts between different-sex couples	Pacts between same-sex couples	Total pacts	Marriages between different-sex couples	Proportion of same-sex unions
2000	5 412	16 859	22 271	305 234	1.65
2001	3 323	16 306	19 629	295 720	1.05
2002	3 622	21 683	25 305	286 169	1.16
2003	4 294	27 276	31 570	282 756	1.37
2004	5 023	35 057	40 080	278 439	1.58
2005	4 865	55 597	60 462	283 036	1.42
2006	5 071	72 276	77 347	273 914	1.44
2007	6 221	95 778	101 999	273 669	1.66
2008	8 201	137 801	146 002	265 404	1.99
2009	8 434	166 089	174 523	251 478	1.98
2010	9 143	196 415	205 558	251 654	2.00
2011	7 494	144 675	152 169	236 826	...
2012	6 969	153 670	160 639	245 930	...

Source: ** 2016, Évolution du nombre de mariages et de pacs conclus jusqu'en 2015, INSEE, 2016

In 1960-2013, in the countries that currently form EU.28, there was a trend of decrease up to/beyond half, of the gross rate of marriage. The countries in which the trend of decreasing rate of marriage was more moderate, were those which already had lower values at the initial moment, 1960 (for instance, Ireland or Sweden, compared to Romania).

Table 2 - Gross rate of marriage – EU 28, selection - interval 1960–2013
(per 1000 inhabitants)

Country	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013
EU 28		7.9	6.8	6.8	6.3	5.2	4.4	4.2	...
Belgium	7.1	7.6	6.7	6.5	4.4	3.9	3.7	3.8	...
Bulgaria	8.8	8.6	7.9	6.9	4.3	3.3	2.9	2.9	3.0
Czech Rep.	7.7	9.2	7.6	8.8	5.4	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.1
Denmark*	7.8	7.4	5.2	6.1	7.2	5.6	4.9	5.1	4.9
Germany	9.5	7.4	6.3	6.5	5.1	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.6
Estonia*	10.0	9.1	8.8	7.5	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.5	4.3
Ireland*	5.5	7.0	6.4	5.1	5.0	4.5	4.3	4.5	...
Greek	7.0	7.7	6.5	5.8	4.5	5.1	5.0	4.5	4.7
Spain	7.9	7.3	5.9	5.7	5.4	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.3
France	7.0	7.8	6.2	5.1	5.0	3.9	3.6	3.7	...
Croatia	8.9	8.5	7.2	5.8	4.9	5.0	4.7	4.8	4.5
Italy	7.7	7.3	5.7	5.6	5.0	3.7	3.4	3.5	3.2
Cyprus	...	8.6	7.7	9.7	13.4	7.3	7.3	6.7	6.4
Latvia	11.0	10.2	9.8	8.9	3.9	4.4	5.2	5.5	5.7
Lithuania	10.1	9.5	9.2	9.8	4.8	6.0	6.3	6.9	6.9
Luxemburg	7.1	6.4	5.9	6.1	4.9	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.2
Hungary	8.9	9.3	7.5	6.4	4.6	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.7
Malta	6.0	7.9	8.8	7.1	6.7	6.3	6.2	6.7	6.1
Netherlands	7.7	9.5	6.4	6.5	5.5	4.5	4.3	4.3	3.8
Austria	8.3	7.1	6.2	5.9	4.9	4.5	4.3	4.6	4.3
Poland	8.2	8.6	8.6	6.7	5.5	6.0	5.4	5.4	4.7
Portugal	7.8	9.4	7.4	7.2	6.2	3.8	3.4	3.3	3.1
Romania	10.7	7.2	8.2	8.3	6.1	5.7	5.2	5.4	5.4
Slovenia	8.8	8.3	6.5	4.3	3.6	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.0
Slovakia	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.6	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.7
Finland	7.4	8.8	6.1	5.0	5.1	5.6	5.3	5.3	4.6
Sweden*	6.7	5.4	4.5	4.7	4.5	5.3	5.0	5.3	5.4
United Kingdom	7.5	8.5	7.4	6.6	5.2	4.5	4.5	...	...

Note: * - 2013 data

Source: *** 2015, Marriage and divorce statistics, Eurostat, Statistics explained

Within the EU 28 countries, in 2013, the highest gross rates of marriage were in Lithuania (6.9), Cyprus (6.4) and Malta (6.1).

The gross rate of divorces, in 1060-2015, is much lower than the rate of marriage, but it displayed a preponderant increasing trend, reaching two times, or even higher values in

countries such as Greece, Spain, Cyprus, Lithuania etc. In 2011–2013, the gross rate of divorces was significantly lower in Ireland (0.6 per 1000 people in 2012), Malta (0.8 in 2013), Italy (0.9 in 2012) than in some northern states, such as Latvia (3.5 per 1000 people in 2013), Lithuania and Denmark (both with 3.4 in 2013). In Romania the value of this indicator decreased from 2.0 to 1.4 per 1000 inhabitants. Divorce was not allowed by law in Italy until 1970, in Spain until 1981, in Ireland until 1995 and in Malta until 2011.

Table 3 - Gross rate of divorces – EU 28, selection, interval 1960-2013
(per 1000 inhabitants)

Country	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013
EU 28 (2)	...	0.9	1.5	1.6	1.8	2.0	2.0	...	...
Belgium	0.5	0.7	1.5	2.0	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.3	...
Bulgaria	...	1.2	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.6	1.5
Czech Rep.	1.4	2.2	2.6	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.5	2.7
Denmark	1.5	1.9	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.8	3.4
Germany	1.0	1.3	1.8	1.9	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.1
Estonia	2.1	3.2	4.1	3.7	3.0	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5
Ireland	...	...	...	...	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	...
Greek	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.6	1.0	1.2	1.1	1.3	...
Spain	...	...	...	0.6	0.9	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.0
France (3)	0.7	0.8	1.5	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.0	...	...
Croatia	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.4
Italy	...	...	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.9	...
Cyprus	...	0.2	0.3	0.6	1.7	2.3	2.3	2.4	...
Latvia	2.4	4.6	5.0	4.0	2.6	2.4	4.0	3.6	3.5
Lithuania	0.9	2.2	3.2	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.4
Luxemburg	0.5	0.6	1.6	2.0	2.4	2.1	2.3	2.0	2.1
Hungary (4)	1.7	2.2	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.0
Malta	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.1	1.1	0.8
Netherlands	0.5	0.8	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.0
Austria	1.1	1.4	1.9	2.1	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.0	...
Poland (5)	0.5	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.7
Portugal	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.9	1.9	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.2
Romania	2.0	0.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.8	1.6	1.4
Slovenia	1.0	1.1	1.2	0.9	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.1
Slovakia	0.6	0.8	0.3	1.7	1.7	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.0
Finland	0.8	1.3	2.0	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.5
Sweden	1.2	1.6	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.8
United Kingdom	...	1.0	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.1	2.1	2.0	...

Note: 1. Divorce was not allowed by law in Italy until 1970, in Spain until 1981, in Ireland until 1995 and in Malta until 2011. 2. 1970-1990, excluding the overseas French departments. 3. 1960-1990, excluding the overseas French departments. 4. 2012 interrupted series. 5. 2011 interrupted series

Source: *** 2015, Marriage and divorce statistics, Eurostat, Statistics explained

The highest divorce rates were noticed in 2010-2011, that is immediately after of even during the global financial crisis which affected Europe too.

Increase of the number of births outside the marriage, in EU 28

Within the EU, the term of couple, according to the Census of the population and households, includes: married couples; couples with registered partnership; couples living in consensual union. According to EU acceptance, in 2011, a couple is formed when two people (irrespective of their gender) decide to live together as a married couple, within a registered partnership or consensual union (the latter form referring to the situation in which two people belong to the same household and have a marital-type relation, but are not married and don't have a registered partnership).

Many EU member states passed laws which guarantee the legal acknowledgement of partnerships, officialised concubinage and same-sex marriages (Regulation 1201/2009 EC). The gross rate of births outside the marriage, in EU 28 member states, multiplied several folds in almost all countries, except Croatia, where it increased just two times. Romania, where the data series regarding the gross rate of birth outside the marriage started in 2000, is in agreement with the general evolution of this indicator, although in 2000-2014, the growth was not that steep as in other European countries (the rate increased from 25.5 to 30.4 per 1000 inhabitants).

In EU countries, although the number of children born outside the marriage increased, the marriage still is the most usual type of family union which rears children. In 2011, the married couples with at least one child represented 33.2% of the total EU 28 families, more than five times more than the couples in consensual union with one child (5.6% of the total number of families). The married couples with at least one child represented over 40% of the total families from Poland, Ireland, Luxemburg, Croatia and Cyprus. The couples in consensual union with at least one child represented more than 10% of the total number of families in Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Island and Norway. In Greece, the married couples with at least one child were over 100 times more than the number of couples in consensual union with at least one child (***)*Regional demographic statistics, Eurostat, Statistics, 2016*).

Table 4 - Gross rate of births outside the marriage - EU 28, selection, interval 1960-2013 (per 1000 inhabitants)

Country	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013
EU 28	...	...	...	...	27.3	38.0	39.3	40.0	...
Belgium	2.1	2.8	4.1	11.6	28.0	45.7	50.0	52.3	...
Bulgaria	8.0	8.5	10.9	12.4	38.4	54.1	56.1	57.4	59.1
Czech Rep.	4.9	5.4	5.6	8.6	21.8	40.3	41.8	43.4	45.0
Denmark*	7.8	11.0	33.2	46.4	44.6	47.3	49.0	50.6	51.5
Germany	7.6	7.2	11.9	15.3	23.3	33.3	33.9	34.5	34.8
Estonia*	...	...	...	27.2	54.5	59.1	59.7	58.4	...
Ireland*	1.6	2.7	5.9	14.6	31.5	33.8	33.9	35.1	...

Country	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013
Greek	1.2	1.1	1.5	2.2	4.0	7.3	7.4	7.6	7.0
Spain	2.3	1.4	3.9	9.6	17.7	35.5	37.4	39.0	40.9
France	...	...	...	...	43.6	55.0	55.8	56.7	...
Croatia	7.4	5.4	5.1	7.0	9.0	13.3	14.0	15.4	16.1
Italy	2.4	2.2	4.3	6.5	9.7	21.5	23.4	24.5	26.9
Cyprus	...	0.2	0.6	0.7	2.3	15.2	16.9	18.6	...
Latvia	11.9	11.4	12.5	16.9	40.4	44.4	44.6	45.0	44.6
Lithuania	...	3.7	6.3	7.0	22.5	25.7	27.7	28.8	29.5
Luxemburg	3.2	4.0	6.0	12.8	21.0	34.0	34.1	37.1	37.8
Hungary	5.5	5.4	7.1	13.1	29.0	40.8	42.3	44.5	45.6
Malta	0.7	1.5	1.1	1.8	10.6	25.3	23.0	25.7	25.9
Netherlands	1.4	2.1	4.1	11.4	24.9	44.3	45.3	46.6	47.4
Austria	13.0	12.8	17.8	23.6	31.3	40.1	40.4	41.5	...
Poland	...	5.0	4.8	6.2	12.1	20.6	21.2	22.3	23.4
Portugal	9.5	7.3	9.2	14.7	22.2	41.3	42.8	45.6	47.6
Romania	...	...	...	...	25.5	27.7	30.0	31.0	30.5
Slovenia	9.1	8.5	13.1	24.5	37.1	55.7	56.8	57.6	58.0
Slovakia	4.7	6.2	5.7	7.6	18.3	33.0	34.0	35.4	37.0
Finland	4.0	5.8	13.1	25.2	39.2	41.1	40.9	41.5	42.1
Sweden*	11.3	18.6	39.7	47.0	55.3	54.2	54.3	54.5	54.4
United Kingdom	5.2	8.0	11.5	27.9	39.7	46.9	47.3	47.6	...

Source: *** 2015, Marriage and divorce statistics, Eurostat, Statistics explained

The, more or less, traditional family, launched in the global social life values strongly validated by millions of couples, during times of plentitude and penury, of stability or crisis, of peace or war. However, together with the increasing disintegration and negation of the values of the classical families, it (and all the post-modern societies) seems ta have problems that are increasingly difficult to solve – higher rate of divorces, alienation of the children from their parents, rebellion of the minor and teenager children against their parents, higher rate of juvenile delinquency globally, higher number of conflicting states and of tensions within the family, higher rate of violence within the family, etc.

The family, and the whole human society, became more exposed to risks of all kind. The correlations between some social disasters or decadence and the disintegration trends of the family life have been insufficiently studied. Such analyses are not lacking completely, however, from the studies focused on the analysis of the social change, or in the religious exegeses. The transformations within the family during the present time were also analysed by Romanian researchers. Authors such as Raluca Popescu (2009), Daniela Pescaru-Urse (2009) and others, analysed the way in which the life of couples evolved in Romania over the recent decades. The conclusion of these studies is that the Romanian family is currently in full process of modernization. The rate of cohabitation as well as the number of single parent families increased, together with the decrease of the legally- formed families. The transformations of the dominant family pattern in Romania during the recent years reflect the general European trend, even if they don't have the extent from the western countries. In Romania there still is a clear aspiration

towards marriage, the consensual cohabitation and the single parent families still being minorities with rather low numbers.

Families from Romania

Marriage and the marriage rate. For at least nine decades, the institution of marriage and family has been and extremely important issue in the life of the Romanian population. In the interval of 1930-1964, in only four years, the marriage rate was below 9% (1933, 1935, 1939 and 1940 – which were, except for 1935, years of national and global economic crisis; in 1940 Romania suffered a devastating earthquake and entered a war which lasted five years (Pisică, 2015).

In the post-war years, 1946-1960, in Romania and worldwide, the marriage rates reached unprecedented rates, exceeding 10-11%, except for 1947 (extreme draught and food crisis) (Pisică, 2015).

After 1966, when the communist regime applied compelling policies for demographic growth (Decree 770/October 2, 1966), cancelling the 1957 Decree which allowed free abortions, the marriage rate decreased significantly to 7% in 1969. Another decree modified the law of divorce, so as to deter radically the would-be divorced. The anti-abortion decree stipulated jail terms for the women and for those who helped or assisted abortions. Therefore, the number of unwanted children doubled in Romania in 1967, when the largest number of children, during the entire post-1944 period, was born. Gradually, until 1973, the rate of total fertility returned to 2.4 children in average born by a woman, while in the subsequent years it maintained at the levels previous to the decree.

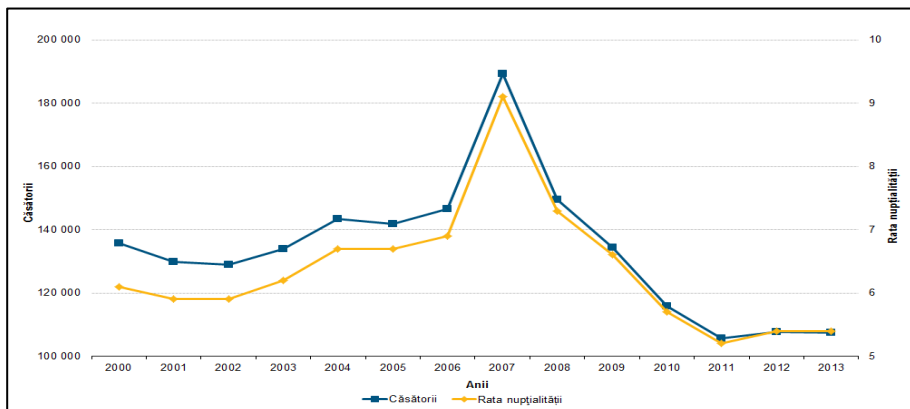
The anti-abortion decree rapidly increased the number of deaths due to complications following the “illegal” abortions – in 1966-1989 there were 9,452 such deaths, but due to juridical reasons, many such deaths were recorded as other medical causes, such as “kidney failure” “septicaemia”.

A similar effect was felt in terms of the social response to the anti-divorce or “family consolidation” legislation. For a while, the number of divorces decreased. Thus, in October 1st 1966-Mau 31st 1967, there were 4,512 divorce actions, which was 87.7% less than the similar period before the anti-divorce law. Subsequently, the couples with problems adapted to the new restrictions and the number of divorces returned to higher values. In 1964, Romania had the highest index of divorces related to the number of marriages, from Europe: out of five marriages, one ended in court. The capital city was on top, with half the number of marriages ending by divorce (Betea, 2012).

In present time Romania, the family plays an essential role in the life of the individuals, the formal marriage being a widely used way of establishing a family. The Family code was adopted by Law 4, of January 4th 1953, which was modified and completed by many subsequent laws (Law 23/1999, Law 272/2004 regarding the protection and promotion of children rights, Law 288/2007, Law 202/2010 regarding measures to accelerate the solution to court trials, Law 202/2010 – Small reform of the justice, etc.).

Art. 1 from the Family code shows that in Romania the state protects the marriage and the family; it supports, through economic and social measures, the development and consolidation of the families. The Romanian state defends the interests of the mother and child and is particularly careful regarding the rearing and education and the young generation. The family relies on the free consent marriage between spouses. Man and woman have equal rights between them and regarding the children. The parental rights are exercised only in favour of the child. In Romania, the consensual union is not as widely spread as in other EU member states and, it seems, there still isn't a consistent increasing trend of this phenomenon. The proportion of people living in consensual union at the 2002 and 2011 Censuses of the population and households, remained constant (4.5%). The young people get married at older ages, after finishing their education training, after getting integrated on the labour market and when they have the material resources to live within a couple. The increase of the average age at the first marriage also increased the age when the women have their first child, therefore the number of years when they can get birth to other children, with effects on the conjunctural indicator of fertility.

Chart 2. Marriages and marriage rate in 2000-2013 in Romania



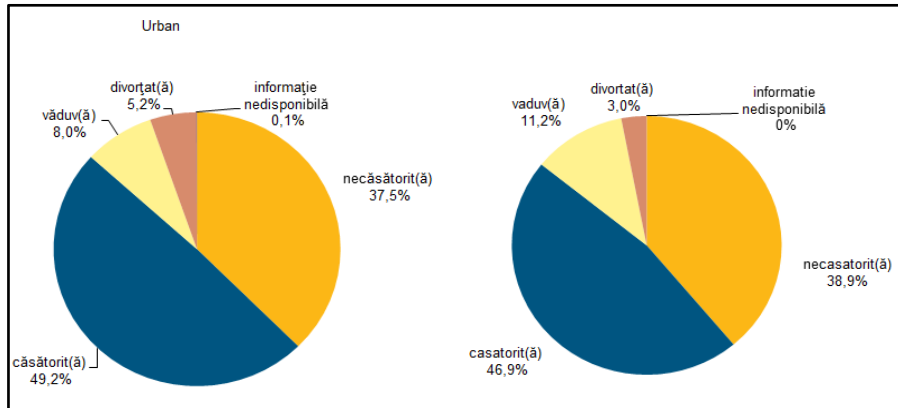
Source: *** 2015, Statistics explained, Eurostat (Baetica, 2015)

In Romania too, more and more children are born outside the marriage. The decision to have children no longer depends so much on the status of married person, on the opinion or disapproval of other people, being mainly determined by other criteria: finding the right partner, a proper income, having the material resources necessary to raise and educate the children properly, special circumstances in the life of the individual, etc. in 2013, in Romania, there were 107,507 marriages recorded, continuing a decreasing trend which started in 2007. After a decrease in 2000-2002, the number of marriages in Romania increased until 2007, when it peaked due to the laws which established a financial support for the couples that were marrying for the first time (Law 396/2006). The marriage rate oscillated between a minimum of 5.2 marriages per 1000 inhabitants in 2011, and a maximum of 9.1‰ in 2007. In 2012, the number of marriages was 44% lower than in 1990, 107,760 vs. 192,652 (INS). Brăila and

Teleorman Counties had the largest decrease of the number of marriages (61% decrease, 2012 compared to 1990). 2007 was the only year when the number of marriages was close to that from 1990, while in 2011, there was the lowest number of marriages. In 1990-2012, Iași County ranked the first in terms of number of marriages, with over 4,500 marriages in 2012. Covasna County was at the bottom, with 872 marriages in 2012. The largest decrease of the number of marriages was in Brăila and Teleorman Counties, with 61% less marriages in 2012, compared to 1990. At the opposite end, Ilfov County had the lowest decrease of the number of marriages compared to 1990 – 11%. It is followed by Cluj County, with 29% decrease over 22 years, and Timiș County with 30% decrease. In Bucharest, the number of marriages was 38% lower in 2012 compared to 1990, according to INS data (Pisică, 2015). The largest number of marriages in 1990-2012 was recorded in Iași County – 132,500, followed by Prahova County – 124,626 and Constanța County – 119,300. The lowest number of marriages was in Covasna County – 30,409 (Tacu, 2016).

Legal civil status. According to the results of the 2011 Census of the population and households, more of half of the resident population of Romania, aged 20 and over were married people (61.1%). Some 716.4 thousand people aged 20 and over live in consensual union. About three quarters of these people have never been officially married, 17.3% being divorced people, at the moment of the census.

Chart 3. Civil status – differences between rural and urban



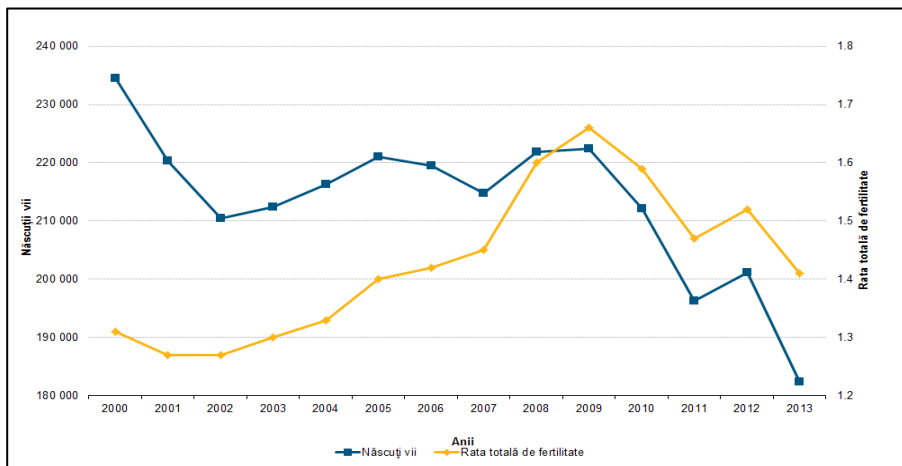
Source: *** 2015, Statistics explained, Eurostat, (Baetica, 2015)

The analysis of the average age at the first marriage shows a constant increasing trend and delaying of the marriage. In 2007, (first year after the implementation of the financial support) a slight increase of this age was noticed, determined by the marriages delayed due to financial reasons. The curve of the marriage rate follows closely that of the marriages number, peaking (8.8 marriages per 1000 inhabitants) in 2007, after which the rate of marriages decreased strongly due to the outbound migration after the accession of Romania to the EU and borders opening.

Birth rate. According to UN data, birth rate evolution in Romania was the following (** UN Population Fund, ** State of world population, UNFPA, 2006): the gross birth rate was 14.3‰ until 1966; after 1967, when abortion was banned, it increased to 27.4‰; in 1986-1989 the birth rate was around 16‰, decreasing to 10.4‰ in 2000 and even to 10‰ in 2002, after which it increased slightly. While in 1989 there were 369,000 children born, in 2013 there were just 182,313 children born. While the average number of births was 360,000 per year, in the last decade their number oscillated around 220,000 per year. In May 2010, infant mortality was 9.2‰, while in most EU member states it was below 5‰. After 2009, when there was some increase in the number of live births, there was a steep, almost brutal decrease of the number of live births (unprecedented in the history of Romania), until 2013, when the lowest number of live births after 2000 was recorded: 182,313 (Chart 4).

The total fertility rate increased starting with 2002 up to a maximum of 1.66 children per woman, in 2009, after which it decreased strongly until 2013, getting closer to the level of 2005-2006 years, when the birth rate was, however, about 20% higher than in 2013.

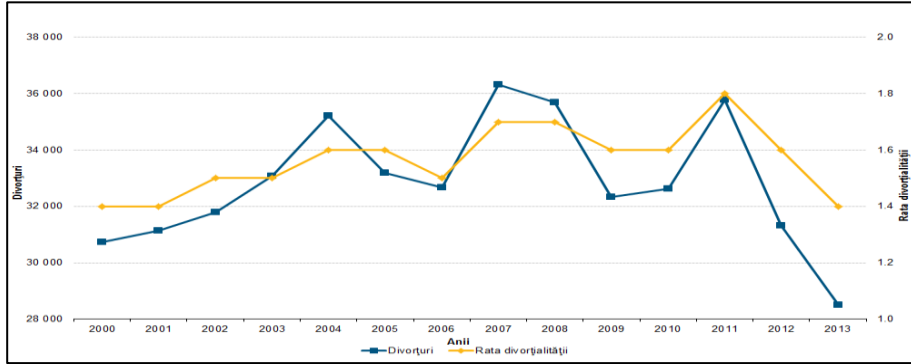
Chart 4. Live births and total fertility rate, in 2000-2013 in Romania



Source: ** 2015, Statistics explained, Eurostat (Baetica 2015)

Divortiality. After 2000, the number of divorces displayed an increasing trend, until 2004 (Chart 5). A new peak of this phenomenon was recorded in 2007.

In 2013, a total of 28,507 divorces were declared through final sentences or decisions of the public notaries and of the civil state officials. Compared to 2000-2012, the number of divorces and the rate of divortiality decreased (Ruscior, 2014), after an oscillating evolution with increasing trend in 2004-2011.

Chart 5. Divorces and the rate of divortiality, in 2000-2013 in Romania

Sources: *** 2015, Statistics explained, Eurostat, (Baetica 2015)

In 2013, not only the birth rate, but also the rate of divortiality decreased strongly, to 1.4 divorces per 1000 inhabitants. This happened because, in 2010, the reform of the Civil code introduced the possibility of administrative divorcing, which involved a much simplified procedure. This increased the freedom of expressing the will of separation, which increased the number of divorces in 2011. After 2011, the number of divorces decreased.

Conclusions

National particularities. Although, of rather many years, the pressure coming from the supporters of modernization tended to transform the event of *marriage* into a laic act, the collective mental of the Romanian people proved rather resistant to the change. In Romania, despite the laic trends to marginalise the religious expression of the spiritual life, marriage still is strongly influenced by the regulations originating from the religious sphere. Therefore, there still is a peculiarity of the marriages in Romania, namely the *seasonality of the marriage phenomenon*. Usually, the rate of marriages is minimal in March and April (during the Easter fasting), followed by a peak in the summer and autumn months, particularly as of the second half of August (after the fasting for Holy Virgin Mary), in September and October.

Table 5. Family nuclei in Romania, by type, Censuses from 2002-1992

	2002		1992	
Total	6369.5	100.0	6393.1	100.0
Conjugal couple, no children	2108.9	33.1	2065.3	32.3
Conjugal couple, with children	3404.0	53.4	3637.5	58.9
Single parent with children	856.6	13.5	690.3	10.8

Source: Cambir et al., 2009, Studiu privind evoluția fenomenului familiilor monoparentale în România, CNPS

The financial support for the couples at their first marriage, by Law 396/2006 also had a positive influence on the number of marriages in 2006 and 2007. The abrogation of this law rapidly decreased the number of marriages in Romania.

There are noticeable differences in the distribution of the resident people by their legal civil state, by area of residence. In the urban environment, the proportion of married people is almost half, while in the rural it is of just 46.9%. This probably explains the fact that the rate of divorces is much higher in urban areas than in rural ones, where the separation of consensual unions doesn't produce legal or statistical events. The widow persons are more frequent in the rural (11.2%, of the total rural population, compared to 8.0% in the urban areas). Over the past 15 years, the economic and social factors that can influence the formation/breakup of families in Romania, essentially determined the overlapping of a trend of modernization of the manners of establishment and maintenance of the families, over the underlying national tradition which still observes the Christian spiritual recommendations, thus proving a still rather strong resistance to change. With the absence of adequate social policies which, at least, to maintain the rate of demographic replacement, the birth rate decreased dramatically in Romania. Here in Romania, the same-sex marriages are not acknowledged officially.

UN warns that Romania might experience a 22% decrease of the population by 2050, one of the highest rates worldwide. The population of Romania already decreased below 20 million people (2017). This is a negative record, as of 1968 onwards, which will probably persist for the next 35 years. In terms of population decrease Romania ranks second, after Bulgaria, with 27% (from 7 to 5 million people), followed by several other Eastern Europe countries: Republic of Moldova, Hungary, Serbia, Croatia, Lithuania, Latvia. UN explanations for the drastic decrease of the population in Romania are the low fertility rate, infant mortality, with one of the highest rates in the EU, and the negative natural gain. Under such conditions, each woman should give birth at least to two children, so as to return to a population of 20 million. (Stan, 2015).

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