

**University of Bucharest
Faculty of Sociology and Social Work**

Habilitation Thesis

Abstract

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My academic work has a history of over 15 years. Sociology of family, quality of life and social policy, social values and urban sociology are the main areas where I conducted most of the research. I have a rich activity in more than 50 national and international research projects, supported by European or international research funds, academic institutions, state institutions, international organizations, NGOs or private companies, many of them as coordinator / project director or coordinator of the field research. The most important factor in my academic formation has been my participation in various empirical researches, directly related to the research subjects. I consider myself a lucky researcher who had the opportunity to do field research, which had a visible impact on my scientific contributions. Almost all my publications are based on results achieved by field researches.

Through my research activity, I brought contributions in developing specific research methodologies and empirical databases; in my studies I have always tried to keep up with the main international approaches, but I also did my best in representing Romanian research in international science. Through my coordinated projects, I have developed partnerships not only in academia, but also with important social actors: local authorities or international organizations, national NGOs and even private economic actors.

So far I have brought a rich scientific contribution supported by publications: two books as single author, nine books with multiple authors (four of them in English), three coordinated volumes, twenty-seven chapters in volumes, fifteen articles in journals and seven reviews or dictionary terms. Through these publications, I contributed to the theoretical and methodological development of these areas, the growth of empirical knowledge and practical science, considering the applicability of my research results, relevant for decision-makers in public policy and for other actors involved in the community life.

My family studies are an important contribution to the development of academic research in Romania. From a theoretical standpoint, I have integrated the existing international research lines in an interdisciplinary manner, combining demographic, anthropological, quality of life or social policies approaches. From the methodological point of view, I argued the importance of transversal and longitudinal comparative analysis. I am among the few authors who published integrative analysis of Romanian family. My studies has focused on a variety of issues - types and family structures, lifestyles and value orientation, the division of domestic and gender roles, intergenerational relationships and family connections with other social institutions, problems which families are facing and

family policies - all of these being placed in a European and international context, showing a comprehensive picture in a wider context. As a particular point of view, I supported the non-alarmist perspective about Romanian family, which continues to be (as evidenced by the multiple analysis undertaken both by quantitative and qualitative research) a fundamental institution, the main landmark for Romanian society. Another important and original contribution in the field of family studies is my analysis of consensual unions in Romania. I have shown that people living in a consensual union in Romania form a distinct class, with different characteristics from those married, but heterogeneous and polarized into two categories: a) one for whom cohabitation is more a contextual option, a result of adapting to a problematic situation (lack of income, homelessness, family problems, disorganization) and b) another for whom cohabitation is a life option, an expression of the postmodern values orientation. I consider the demarcation between the two lifestyles to be an essential contribution and an original element in Romanian sociology.

Most of my scientific contributions (considered as publications, researches, conference papers, and research networks affiliation) can be placed under the social policy domain in general and the family policies in particular. My work in this area covered numerous diagnoses of social problems (poverty or social exclusion), vulnerable groups (children at risk, Roma, families with many children, immigrants, etc.), assessments and policy recommendations (on family, demography, gender, employment, education, etc.). Studies conducted have materialized in methodological tools - lists of indicators, evaluation scales, contributing to the development of research methodology of these areas. I believe that my analyses of social policy are remarkable through their special focus on trying to analyze and classify by taking into account not only economic and labor market factors, but also social criteria.. In addition, I have always tried to analyze the former communist states in a different way, considering they don't fit in a single model. My research efforts have had a critical vision not only of existing policies, but also of the way in which social policy itself has been researched in Romania and in Europe.

In the future, the most important objective in my career will be represented, as before, by the openness of academic research to the relevant social actors and to the general public, and by the applicability of my research results in public policy and in social life in general. My pedagogic vision will be led, as it has been so far, by the desire of teaching / learning through research, and by the convergence of the academic productivity along with the effervescence of courses and seminars.