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Is the Family System in Romania Similar to those of Southern European Countries?

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Abstract: In his influential 1998 study, David S. Reher discusses historical differences between countries with strong and weak family ties. He focuses on the "Western World", comparing Italy and the Iberian Peninsula with Scandinavia, the British Isles, the Low Countries, Germany and Austria, together with North America. In this paper, we explore whether Romania, in Eastern Europe, can be characterised as having a strong family system, given the increasingly important role family has played for individual well-being following the end of the socialist regime. We observe a number of similarities between Romania and Southern European countries in terms of behaviours associated with "strong family ties", opinions on family care and mutual intergenerational support. Differences can be explained in light of Romania's economic and housing crisis. Overall, it is likely that the importance of family ties in Romania increased after the end of the socialist regime.

Keywords: Romania · Strong family ties · Living arrangements · Intergenerational support · Values and attitudes

1 Introduction

In his influential 1998 study on family ties, David S. Reher discusses historical differences between countries with strong and weak family ties. He focuses on the "Western World", comparing Italy and the Iberian Peninsula with Scandinavia, the British Isles, the Low Countries, Germany and Austria, together with North America. There has, however, been increasing interest in family models of former socialist states, especially following the enlargement of the European Union. Scholars such as *Hajnal* (1965, 1982) and *Laslett* (1983) originally described Eastern Europe and the Balkans (the countries East of the "Hajnal line", an imaginary line from St. Petersburg to Trieste) as characterised by a common historical pattern of early and nearly universal marriage and a "joint household" system. However, this homogeneous

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pattern has recently been questioned, as different aspects of family life, such as family structure, intergenerational relationships and obligations, and welfare systems are increasingly taken into account. *Alain Blum* (2001) argues that former socialist countries encompass a wide variety of family traditions, and that forty years of socialist regimes were unable to affect the culture of private family life. Recent macro-level descriptive analyses (which include the newer EU member states) have not been able to identify a uniform behavioural model East of the Hajnal line (*Plakans/Wetherell* 2005; *Mandic* 2008; *Fokkema/Liefbroer* 2008; *Billari/Liefbroer* 2010; *Hoem et al.* 2010; *Iacovou* 2011; *Iacovou/Skew* 2011), while existing comparative studies are more general and do not differentiate between groups of countries within the region (*Saraceno et al.* 2005). In her analysis of the structural determinants of leaving the parental home in Europe, *Mandic* (2008: 634), for example, finds that "the new member states from central Europe, in spite of geographical proximity and common recent 'communist' legacy, were found in all three [European] clusters, indicating a possibility of rather diverging developments".

Despite an increased interest in former socialist Europe, comparative data on family life remain scarce (*Manning* 2004). Important surveys on family choices and behaviours (e.g. Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) and the Gender and Generations Survey (GGS)) still include a limited number of countries[1] and results are often not comparable. In a similar vein, cross-national surveys on attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns (e.g. European Social Surveys and World Values Survey) may fail to match pertinent topics and countries.

This study adopts a different approach. We focus on one country at one point in time, so as to verify whether it fits a particular model. In our analyses, we refer to the framework of family ties and attempt to determine whether Romania, in the eastern part of Europe, can be characterised as having a strong family system, especially in light of the increased importance of the family for individual well-being following the end of the socialist regime.[2]

Identifying the specific role of family ties in Romania before and after the end of the Ceaușescu dictatorship represents a certain challenge. Before 1989, family ties were less visible due to the state's support of families and the independence the system granted to the youth. After 1989 it became unclear whether strong family ties were a preferred way of living, or rather a pragmatic and strategic response to the shock of the post-socialist transition and the unavailability or low quality of welfare services.

The second challenge concerns changes in living arrangements and union formation that are increasingly widespread in Romania – such as cohabitations and

1 No former socialist country was covered in the first wave (2004-05) of SHARE. In 2006-07, the Czech Republic and Poland were introduced, and in 2011 Estonia, Hungary and Slovenia. Unfortunately, Romania has not (yet) been included.

2 Similar processes have been observed in Albania, where the state assumed a primary role during the socialist regime, but the family regained its importance following the end of socialist rule (*Danaj et al.* 2005). The role of the family in post-socialist Bulgaria has been documented by *Ghodsee* and *Bernardi* (2012).

births out of wedlock. Multiple interpretations of these behaviours are possible. From Reher's perspective, they are common in countries with weak family ties. Other authors (*Hoem et al.* 2009; *Potârcă et al.* 2013) suggest that they are signs of the diffusion of the Second Demographic Transition (SDT) in Romania. Alternatively, as they are especially visible among the weakest social groups, they may be a consequence of the political transition. Nevertheless, the question of how they interact with family ties in practice remains.

In the following, we compare Romania to Italy and Spain – two countries representative of strong family ties – as well as to other countries, both in West, North and East Europe, highlighting similarities and differences. We focus on family-related demographic behaviour, such as marriage and cohabitation, leaving the parental home, living arrangements of the young and the elderly, values and attitudes towards the family, and intergenerational support among family members. We use macro- and micro-level data from official databases and sample surveys. As far as possible, we select comparative data sources in order to strengthen our considerations.

2 The Social Context of the Family in Romania

The socialist regime in Romania (1947-1989) profoundly altered family relationships by imposing standardised life-paths. More specifically, this period was one of industrialisation – i.e. of the creation of a large industry sector – and the quasi-realisation of a full-employment programme. This also included the development of mass education, the nationalisation of agriculture (which turned farmers into wage earners) and a process of urbanisation. In 1960, 67.9 percent of Romanian inhabitants were living in rural areas, by 1990 this share had decreased to 48 percent. Education was seen by the regime as a means of developing an industrial workforce, consequently most high-school graduates were employed in industrial areas located in or near urban areas. Individuals from rural areas were given the opportunity to change their residence.

Young adults who grew up during the communist period had highly predictable and standardised paths of life. More specifically, they mostly originated from rural areas, left their parental homes to pursue secondary or tertiary education, and after graduation received jobs and housing, often sharing these with others of a similar social status. Marriage and the birth of a first child granted them the right to an individual dwelling. *Massino* (2010) observes that marriage was often a means of freeing oneself from communal living in the dormitories. More generally, the regime smoothed the transition to adulthood due to a lesser need for family involvement and support. Early departure from the parental home and independent living did not necessarily represent a personal choice for more independence, but was rather enabled and sometimes imposed by the social context, as graduates were forced to take up certain jobs.

A certain share of the rural youth, however, remained in their native regions, choosing instead a life-course that more closely resembled that of their parents.

More specifically, they became wage earners in agriculture and, unlike their urban (or emigrational) counterparts, needed the support of their family, especially in terms of housing. Here the family system carried on the tradition of pre-modern rural families which is characterised by neo-local residence for newly formed conjugal couples (the new couple lives in an own residence without other relatives) and (extended) family support. Thus, the persistence of kinship networks (*Blum* 2001) can be observed across socialist Europe, largely in family structures where young adults or married couples continue to live with their parents.

Individuals who chose to pursue their education were supported through different policies (e.g. tax-free education or scholarships). Graduates then quickly entered the labour force, most of them being sent to places outside their native region. Such internal migrations and employment resulted in a greater physical distance between young adults and their parents, making family support both increasingly unnecessary and difficult to provide. Welfare supply was primarily the responsibility of the state, which in turn ensured the quasi-total absorption of young graduates into the labour force. Employment then provided social services, such as housing, family allowances, maternity leave, or other support (*Popescu* 2004).

In order to increase the number of working parents in the labour force, the state created a large network of childcare institutions. Mothers could thus immediately resume employment after birth and grandparents were not burdened with childrearing. Here, family ties did, however, continue to play an important role. For instance, grandparents often remained the primary providers of childcare due to the low quality or scarcity of these public services (*Popescu* 2004).

With regard to the elderly population, the introduction of a pay-as-you-go pension system and an increase in labour market participation following the establishment of the socialist regime greatly increased the number of pension receivers. Financial benefits reduced old age poverty as well as the need for support from the family. Individuals were thus no longer burdened with the responsibility of directly caring for the elderly, and were able to meet the requirements of the Family Code (1954), which stated that descendants have care obligations towards their parents (that could be paid in kind or in cash).

The system did not, however, account for special needs, such as sickness and old age disabilities. Here, state support was practically non-existent and the number of elderly care institutions was very small (such institutions were commonly called "asylums" and their image was very negative), so that sick and disabled elderly care became almost entirely the responsibility of the family.

The socialist revolution constituted a radical break from the past, and families were defined as the "depository of traditions" (*Kerblay* 1985: 564) or the "place where cultural traditions were perpetuated" (*Blum* 2001: 236). However, these reforms eventually lost their momentum and, after 1970, were overridden by "a regressive retreat from Marxist principles to conservative nationalism" (*Massino* 2010: 38). Such reverses in political discourse and in specific measures to outwardly preserve families – for example, the prohibition of abortion and restrictions imposed on divorce – (*Inglot et al.* 2011) affected family life. Nonetheless, after a period of flux, long-term behavioural trends continued (*Blum* 2001).

After the fall of the communist regime in 1989, the life course of young Romanians became far less predictable due to the social and economic changes. With the state reducing its support (*Ferge* 1997) and instituting increasingly limited social policies (*Popescu* 2004), there was much uncertainty, anxiety and fear (*Genov* 1998). Graduation no longer ensured secure jobs and housing and employment rates dropped by 20 percent. Women in particular left the labour market and turned towards family care, minding their children and parents.

Parental leave, non-existent during the communist regime, was introduced in 1990. Public childcare, however, almost disappeared, and the importance of family support grew (*Rotariu et al.* 2012). Participation in early education (for children aged 3-6 years) increased from 72.3 percent in 2002 to 82 percent in 2012 (compared to the EU average of 93.2 percent in 2012). Owing to insufficient public provision, private childcare services emerged, but for the majority of the Romanian population the costs are prohibitive.

Young adults tended to stay in their parents' household longer due to socio-economic insecurity. Thus, the importance of family support increased. Entrance into the labour market was delayed and became ever more difficult, reflected by a growing youth unemployment rate (under the age of 25). Individuals who chose to pursue higher education faced similar issues. Education was no longer tuition-free; from 2000 to 2010 approximately half of all students paid tuition (*UEFISCDI – CNFIS* 2014) at the same time state support for students was reduced dramatically. Following graduation, the transition into employment became increasingly difficult. The housing market also underwent a number of changes: home-ownership became predominant, the rental sector became almost entirely privatised and municipal housing was severely marginalised (*Speder* 2005; *Mureșan et al.* 2008).[3] These changes were the result of several factors, including the selling of formerly public housing into private ownership soon after the fall of socialism, a sharp decrease in the construction of new dwellings and the share of construction from public funds,[4] a decline in the purchasing power of the population during this transition period, combined with a spike in housing prices (*Dan* 1996, 2009). These factors meant that many families needed to extend the period of support for their children (*Bezrukof/ Foigt* 2002), which made "leaving the nest" an important step for both children and parents, perceived as a fundamental shift towards adulthood.

By the end of the socialist regime, pensions amounted to 60 percent of the mean salary in Romania. By 2007, however, they had dropped to 36 percent, leading to increased poverty and a decrease in the standard of living. Institutions for elderly care emerged during this period, albeit in limited numbers and with continuing negative connotations. To this day, elderly care remains a concern for many families in Romania.

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3 Law no. 61, 7 February 1990 (*Decret-Lege nr 61/7 Feb 1990*) constitutes the act that initiated the privatisation of housing stocks; by 2002 only 1.25 percent were publically owned. Moreover, that same year, 93.2 percent of dwellings occupied by one family were occupied by their owners (2002 Census).

4 Public funding accounts for 2 percent of all housing stock in 2000 (*Dan* 2009).

3 Family formation

3.1 Departure from the parental home

According to *Reher* (1998), countries with weak family ties are generally characterised by an early departure of youth from the parental home, as they seek to start their adult lives and achieve economic independence. Housing is often shared with friends or colleagues who are in the same stage of their lives. Years may pass until marriage. In countries with strong family ties, patterns of leaving the parental home are quite different: young people continue to live with their parents even after they have found a job, and their final departure tends to coincide with marriage.

The *European Commission Report on Youth* (2012, with 2010 data) shows strong disparities across countries regarding the average age at leaving the parental home, with clear clusters of countries (Table 1). In Finland, the Netherlands and France, both women and men leave the earliest compared to the rest of Europe, at an average age of 20.9-22.9 for women and 22.9-24.9 years for men. In Eastern and Southern European countries, the average age is 25.0-27.9 years for women and 28.0-30.9 years for men. Italy stands out with the highest age for women, 28.0-30.2 years, which is very close to that for men. Although the age at which young adults leave the parental household has remained quite stable over time, since 2005, there are marked differences across countries (*European Commission* 2012). For instance, Eastern European countries – such as Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania – have seen substantial increases, particularly when looking at men in Romania.

Such differences are mainly due to a lack of financial resources and affordable housing (*Eurostat* 2009). Studies have associated a delayed departure from the parental home in Southern and Eastern European countries with high levels of unemployment and low wages of young people, coupled with scarce affordable housing (*Aassve et al.* 2007; *Iacovou* 2001). This makes the parental home a protective shelter from economic hardship.

In Romania, a large proportion of individuals aged 15-30 cite "constraints" as the primary reason for staying with their parents for a longer period of time, thus confirming – in a subjective manner – what has been described above (Section 2). More specifically, 40 percent state that they cannot afford to move out and 37 percent report that affordable housing is scarce (*Eurostat* 2009). These figures lend support to *Mureșan's* (2007) affirmation that in recent years, "[Romanian] youth are not independent in a greater percentage nor earlier in life" (2007: 17) compared with socialist times. As described above, during the socialist era, youth independence was facilitated and supported by the state, but this is no longer the case. With increased difficulties in finding separate accommodation and the worsening economic situation, young people increasingly choose to prolong the stay in their parental homes until marriage, when the newly formed couple receives (financial) support from their families, relatives, or friends for the purchase of a dwelling (*Mureșan* 2007, 2012a): neo-local family formation is encouraged, and wedding guests contribute money to help the young couple buy a home or apartment. This financial help is a form of intergenerational support, and the same help is returned, usually to the

Tab. 1: Departure from the parental home in selected countries

	Denmark	Norway	Finland	Netherlands	France	Germany	Bulgaria	Hungary	Romania	Italy	Spain
						Average age at leaving the parental household, 2010					
Females	--	--	20.9-22.9	20.9-22.9	20.9-22.9	23.0-24.9	25.0-27.9	25.0-27.9	25.0-27.9	28.0-30.2	25.0-27.9
Males	--	--	22.9-24.9	22.9-24.9	22.9-24.9	25.0-27.0	31.0-35.1	28.0-30.9	28.0-30.9	28.0-30.9	28.0-30.9
						Individuals leaving home before their first union, as a percentage of all those who left home and entered a Union (cohort born around 1960)					
Females	--	68	55	--	41	East: 33 West: 45	--	14	28*	15	15
Males	--	72	60	--	51	East: 43 West: 55	--	18	43*	30	25

* Figures for Romania were calculated by Cornelia Mureșan using GGS data, for cohorts 1950–1969, with leaving home at first union or entering the first union before leaving home as competing risks.

Source: *European Commission* 2012 (estimates); *Billari et al.* 2001

guests' children. To live independently of their parents, young people must be able to afford an expensive apartment (especially in large urban areas) or an equally high monthly rent (*Ahmed/Emigh* 2005, for Eastern European countries). Parents with financial resources help their children buy a home or apartment; however, such help is usually associated with marriage (*Mureșan* 2007, 2012a). This can be seen as a means of imposing certain life patterns or as a way to maximise financial help, even from in-laws. Young professionals with high incomes can afford renting a house or an apartment and living separately from their parents before entering marriage. However, this is not the case for all young adults, even for those who have entered the labour market (*Mureșan* 2007, 2012a).

Some youth in Romania chose to pursue higher education in a different city – living neither with their parents nor independently. These young adults typically receive financial support from their parents (*Mureșan* 2007, 2012a) and visit them on a regular basis (distance permitting). If, after graduating, they do not find a job in the city, they usually return to the parental home. When parents cannot meet the costs of education, youth will often take up a job to support themselves, and contributions from parents take the form of different goods (such as food). This context substantially differs from the previous regime, when the state assisted youth in pursuing their studies through scholarships that also covered accommodation expenses.

In conclusion, many economic constraints affect the path of leaving the parental home. However, young people increasingly choose to relate to their family, as in Italy and Spain, rather than to follow alternative models (such as leaving early and share an apartment with friends) more similar to those of young people in Northern or Western countries.

Differences in leaving the parental home are thus expressions of variances in social norms (*Aassve et al.* 2007). While in Southern and Eastern European countries, departure most commonly coincides with marriage, in Northern countries most of the young people leaving their parental homes do so to live alone or with friends. It is, however, noteworthy that the percentages of men and women born around 1960 who left the parental home before the formation of a first union were higher in Romania compared to other Eastern or Southern countries (Table 1). These cohorts made this transition mainly during the socialist regime, reflecting the role of the state in facilitating departure from the parental home for the pursuit of university education and in providing support for living independently (as described in Section 2). After 1989, the state reduced its support and levels of leaving the parental home before the first union dropped. A comparison of data for the period of 1980-1989 to that of 1996-2005 shows a decrease from 27 percent to 22 percent for women, and from 38 percent to 33 percent for men (*Mureșan* 2007). Simultaneously, the percentage of those forming a first union while still living in the parental home increased, especially for men: 13 percent to 14 percent for women and 23 percent to 28 percent for men (*Mureșan* 2007).

According to *Aassve et al.* (2007), educational infrastructures play an important role in shaping European differences. For instance, in Scandinavian countries and in the UK, young people are expected to leave the parental home to pursue their tertiary education. By contrast, in Italy, education policy aims at ensuring geographi-

cal accessibility of universities, thus enabling the youth to continue living at home during their studies. In post-socialist Romania, universities are similarly spread throughout the country, potentially having the same effect on leaving the parental home, but unlike in Italy, this diffusion was not explicitly aimed at assisting the youth in undertaking higher studies while living in their parental homes.

These patterns of behaviour of the Romanian youth are similar to those of their counterparts in other Southern and Eastern European countries. The collapse of the socialist regime in Romania reduced resources and opportunities for independent youth living. Departure from the parental home thus came at an increasing age, and was commonly characterised by a transition to adulthood through marriage. In the face of economic constraints, families play a crucial role in shaping the conditions under which children are able to live independent lives.

3.2 First union and first birth

According to *Reher* (1998: 215), "societies with strong families tend to have greater social cohesion"; a low incidence of both cohabiting non-married couples and non-marital childbearing seem to characterise such societies. Accordingly, it is important to examine whether the decrease in marriages in Romania was accompanied by an increase in non-marital unions (cohabitations), and whether women or couples choose to maintain this alternative living arrangement throughout their life course or shift to marriage when it comes to childbirth and raising children.

According to *Hoem et al.* (2009) and *Mureșan* (2007, 2012a), marriages not preceded by cohabitation have decreased in Romania since the 1990s, while cohabitation as a first or preliminary form of relationships has steadily grown. For the period of 1996-2005, the proportion of women who cohabited before the age of 40 was 35 percent, compared to 20 percent for the period of 1980-1989 (*Mureșan* 2007). The proportion of non-marital births also increased steadily after the fall of the Berlin Wall, from 17 percent in the early 1990s to 31 percent in 2012 (Table 2). Do these figures indicate weak family ties in Romania? To answer this question, we compare the spread of these behaviours to that observed in other European countries (Table 2).

In the 1990s, the proportion of non-marital births in Romania was already relatively high, particularly in comparison to Bulgaria and Hungary in Eastern Europe, and Germany and the Netherlands in Western Europe, although still much lower than that observed in Northern Europe. In the following years, the number of births out of wedlock spread quite rapidly in the countries mentioned above: in 2012, they reached the percentages of the Northern countries. Romania, on the contrary, has maintained relatively stable levels over the last ten years, comparable to those observed in Italy and Spain.

Recent investigations have, however, shown that marriage remains the preferred context for childbearing in many European societies, particularly in Eastern Europe. Comparing data from the Generations and Gender Survey and other comparative surveys for 11 European countries, *Perelli-Harris et al.* (2012) investigate how cohabitation as a setting for childbearing and childrearing has differed by country and

Tab. 2: Cohabitation and childbearing indicators in selected countries

	Denmark	Norway	Finland	Netherlands	France	Germany	Bulgaria	Hungary	Romania	Italy	Spain
% of live births outside marriage (2012)[1]	50.6	54.9	44.5	46.6	55.8 (2011)	34.5	57.4	44.5	31.0	28.0	35.5
Analysing couples who have children (around 1995-2005)[2]											
% beginning their union with cohabitation	-	90	-	78	90	West 77 East 93	77	46	29	18	-
% still cohabiting at conception	-	61	-	33	51	West 45 East 70	45	28	18	10	-
% still cohabiting at birth	-	56	-	26	47	West 28 East 57	24	18	12	7	-
% still cohabiting 3 years after birth	-	35	-	22	33	West 18 East 38	20	15	7	4	-

Source: [1] Eurostat tables (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database), accessed 14 December 2013
[2] *Perelli-Harris et al.* 2012: Table 2: 175

year. The records show an increase in the percentage of women who cohabited at the beginning of their fertile unions in all countries, although at different levels: from 1995-2005, this proportion amounted to 18 percent in Italy, 29 percent in Romania, 46 percent in Hungary, 77 percent in Bulgaria, 78 percent in the Netherlands, and 90 percent in France and Norway. Of these countries, Italy and Romania recorded the lowest shares of women who continued to cohabit at conception, birth, or three years after birth (Table 2). Thus, in Italy, Romania and Hungary marriage continues to be the preferred context for childbearing and childrearing, and the pattern of conception during cohabitation followed by marriage has persisted (*Perelli-Harris et al.* 2012). This suggests that in Romania and some other Eastern countries, many non-marital conceptions must be unplanned pregnancies.

According to *Reher's* framework, cohabitations and births out of wedlock in Romania might be interpreted as indicator of weak family ties. However, other studies suggest that women living in rural areas with low levels of education and a low socio-economic status cohabit and/or give birth outside marriage more frequently than urban, well-educated and financially successful women (*Rotariu* 2009; *Rotariu et al.* 2012; *Hărăguş* 2008, 2010; *Oaneş-Faludi/Hărăguş* 2009). Differences within Romania do not support a classic interpretation of the process of diffusion of new demographic behaviours. Neither is the sudden increase in the 1990s, and stagnation of (since 2004), non-marital births in Romania necessarily a symptom of a transition towards a value system that is typical for late or post-modernity, as such a transition would have continued, and not suddenly halted. *Rotariu et al.* (2012) argue that such a pattern is, rather, the result of a revival of certain behaviours that developed over the past centuries in Romania. Moreover, non-marital births are mostly viewed as socially acceptable behaviour in Romania, at least in certain communities.[5]

In conclusion, patterns of family formation in Romania differ from those in Northern and Western Europe. The slow increase of cohabitation and non-marital births is more likely to be the result of economic deprivation than a sign of weakening family ties.

4 Living arrangements

Reher (1998) considers that in contexts with strong family ties, the family takes on many roles (which are largely performed by the state in northern European countries), such as support for the needy and vulnerable. Although everywhere in Europe parents love their children, the expressions of this love vary (*Reher* 1998). While in regions with weak family ties, young people are encouraged to leave their parental homes early and build their lives on their own, in regions with strong family ties, the

[5] *Kok* (2009) observes high levels of births out of wedlock around 1900 in provinces that form present-day Romania and associates these results with the region's family system, arguing that the present-day context of cohabitation and non-marital childbearing seem to be a return to past traditions.

family is called upon to protect its members against the difficulties resulting from social and economic hardship. A similar behaviour characterises relationships with the elderly: families with weak ties seek to prolong their independence and typically turn to institutional help when no longer possible; for families with strong ties, the need to provide direct familial support for the elderly is seen as an obligation.

Greater individualism or solidarity can shape family structure and preferences for nuclear or extended families. Distinctions between regions with weak and strong family ties seem to reflect historical differences in family systems. This section focuses on patterns of living arrangements of young adults (20-34 years) and the elderly (65 years and above), as well as on attitudes towards the living arrangements of the elderly. We consider a high proportion of people living alone as an indicator of weak family ties and co-residence of multiple generations as an indicator of strong ties. Co-residence is an important mechanism in the social protection of the elderly and plays a crucial role in poverty alleviation (*Palloni* 2000; *Lyberaki/Tinios* 2005).

4.1 Living arrangements of young adults

Data on the living arrangements of young adults show important differences across countries (Table 3), highlighting a strong dichotomy between North and West Europe on the one hand, and South Europe on the other. Most of these differences can be linked to varying age patterns when leaving the parental home. Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary form a distinct group in which a high percentage of young men, and a lower percentage of women live with at least one parent. The proportion of young adults living in an extended household is comparatively high in Eastern Europe.[6]

While the literature shows that such behaviour is associated with strong family ties in Southern European countries, two elements should be noted with regard to Eastern Europe and the Balkans: there is a historical pattern of family formation with a high incidence of extended or multigenerational households (*Hajnal* 1982; *De Jong Gierveld et al.* 2002; *De Jong Gierveld et al.* 2012), and a challenging housing situation in terms of availability and affordability (see Section 3.1 above; *De Jong Gierveld et al.* 2002; *Robila* 2004; *De Jong Gierveld et al.* 2012).

With specific regard to the extended household hypothesis, *Kaser* (1996) conducted a more detailed examination of households and families in the Balkans and revealed that a "neolocal-nuclear household formation system" is characteristic of Romania: upon marriage, boys traditionally received an equal share of land when leaving the parental home to set up separate residences. The youngest (or the old-

[6] We further investigated this issue for Romania and Italy using individual-level data from the 10 percent samples from national censuses conducted in 2001 for Italy and in 2002 for Romania, made available by the Minnesota Population Center (IPUMS-International). This provided an in-depth understanding of co-residence with one's parents, which we define as living in the same household with at least one parent or one of the spouses' parents. Data confirm a high proportion of married children living with their parents in Romania. *Iacovou* and *Skew* (2011), who include the new EU member states (besides Malta) in their analyses, also confirm these results; Estonia is the only exception among the former socialist countries.

Tab. 3: Living arrangements of people aged 18-34 in selected countries, 2003, in percent

	Denmark	Norway	Finland	Netherlands	France	Germany	Bulgaria	Hungary	Romania	Italy	Spain
Men											
Living alone	33	-	39	27	36	40	11	13	6	11	5
Living with parents, as a child	17	-	13	36	30	21	50	47	51	67	45
living with a partner (with or without children)	48	-	44	31	31	31	26	26	23	19	35
Living in extended households (as a couple or as a single parent)	0	-	1	3	2	2	10	11	16	0	5
Other	2	-	3	0	1	6	3	3	4	3	10
Women											
Living alone	28	-	29	20	24	26	3	5	11	6	5
Living with parents, as a child	8	-	11	22	18	14	23	32	19	60	34
Living with a partner	49	-	51	47	46	50	38	39	38	32	42
Living in extended households	2	-	0	1	2	1	29	17	18	1	6
Living as single mother	9	-	6	10	6	5	4	3	2	0	2
Other	4	-	3	0	4	4	3	4	12	1	11

Source: *Saraceno et al.* 2005: Table 1

est) child remains with the parents (*Kaser* 1996: 381). As such, intergenerational co-residence is not a traditional pattern. In addition, a small proportion of complex or multigenerational households were observed in other countries (*Kaser* 1996; *De Vos/Sandefur* 2002, quoting *Todorova* 1996, for Bulgaria). This contradicts the idea that Eastern Europe and the Balkans are a homogeneous region with a high prevalence of extended households and moreover, the nuclear family had been the predominant family model in Romania.

The second explanation suggests that economic difficulties and uncertainties may increase co-residence (*Isengard/Szydlik* 2012), although in former socialist Europe an important factor is the housing crisis that emerged after the fall of the communist regime. Thus, families use household composition as an economic strategy to pool limited financial resources, especially during periods of economic strain and transition.

Ahmed and *Emigh* (2005) tested these two hypotheses as explanations for household composition (extended/co-residence versus nuclear) in post socialist Eastern Europe. They found that extended households represent an adaptive strategy for the poor, especially in countries where the post-socialist transition to a market economy was slow and difficult, such as in Romania, Bulgaria, and Russia. In these countries, one possible explanation for the increased spread of co-residence may be the extremely high costs of housing, exacerbated by privatisation.

In conclusion, the proportion of young adults living alone or with a partner in Romania strongly depends on their age at leaving the parental home. Moreover, the high incidence of intergenerational co-residence in Romania appears to be a result of an adaptive strategy rather than of preferences. Nevertheless, the response to economic difficulties is parental support, confirming the importance of family ties in the process of family formation.

4.2 Living arrangements of the elderly

Based on the 2001 national censuses (comparative data for the census round of 2010/11 are not yet available), Eurostat data on living arrangements for the elderly (65 years and older) show clear differences between Northern or Western and Southern European countries. For instance, Southern European countries recorded lower proportions of individuals living alone and higher proportions of co-residence with children (Table 4). Romania can be found somewhere in the middle, with the proportion of individuals living alone more similar to Italy and Spain than to Northern or Western countries, and co-residence with children higher than in France and Finland but lower than in Italy and Spain.

Census data have an important advantage compared to survey data: they do not only account for people living in private households, but also for those in institutional settings. Table 4 shows that the proportion of elderly individuals living in institutions is higher in Northern and Western Europe than in Southern and Eastern European countries. Among those aged 65 years and above, 0.4 percent were living in institutions at the time of the 2002 Census in Romania. This proportion was also comparably low in Italy and Spain (2.1 percent and 2.3 percent, respectively), as

Tab. 4: Living arrangements of people aged 65 years and over in selected countries, 2000 census round, in percent

	Denmark	Norway	Finland	Netherlands	France	Germany	Bulgaria	Hungary	Romania	Italy	Spain
Living ...											
... alone (Single)	43.9	39.0	38.0	33.1	30.7	35.3	24.2	30.6	23.6	26.8	19.5
... with spouse/partner (no children)	50.3	47.2	43.3	51.2	48.8	53.8	58.3	41.9	46.8	40.6	40.4
... with children*		7.0	9.2	6.5	8.7	3.1		8.9	13.7	20.4	23.8
... in an institutional household	3.3	4.1	3.1	6.5	5.7	3.7	0.4	2.5	0.4	2.1	2.3
Other	3.5	2.7	6.4	2.7	6.1	4.1	17.1	16.1	15.5	10.1	14.0

* The databases with census data have been thoroughly revised by Eurostat and the household classification available in 2014 lacks the category "with children".

Source: *Eurostat* (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/database) accessed on 7 January 2011 and 26 March 2014.

well as in Bulgaria and Hungary (0.4 percent and 2.5 percent, respectively). These results reflect attitudes regarding preferred living arrangements for the elderly in need (see Section 4.3).

The residual category, "other," is vague and does not impact the broader observable typologies. The label mainly concerns alternative forms of extended families, such as elderly individuals living with other people in a shared house or flat. Nevertheless, Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary show the largest diffusion of several forms of co-residence, similar to patterns observed in Italy and Spain.[7]

These results for Northern, Western and Southern European countries are in line with the literature in the field. Co-residence has been documented to be the highest in Mediterranean countries (*Iacovou* 2000a, 2000b; *Tomassini et al.* 2004; *Kohli et al.* 2005; *Hank* 2007), while living alone or only with a partner have been found to be most prevalent in Sweden, Denmark, and the Netherlands (*Iacovou* 2000b).

Using data from the SHARE survey, *Kohli et al.* (2005) document a weak-strong family dichotomy corresponding to a northern-southern distinction in the family structure of the elderly. *Iacovou* and *Skew* (2011) extend their analysis to new EU member states and find similarities among Southern and South-Eastern countries, including Romania. Other post socialist countries follow a more heterogeneous pattern (*Engelen/Wolf* 2005; *Iacovou/Skew* 2011). Data from the GGS (authors' calculations) similarly support the idea that in Eastern and Southern Europe, rates of intergenerational co-residence are higher than in other industrialised European countries. In Italy and Russia, the percentage of parents aged 50 and over who co-reside with at least one child exceeds 50 percent, followed by Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania, with rates between 40 percent and 42 percent. The percentage of parents living in the same household with at least one child is much lower in Western and Northern Europe: 27 percent in France, 24 percent in Germany and Norway, and below 20 percent in the Netherlands. A similar ranking results from an analysis of women aged 35-44 years with children who co-reside with their own mother, although at lower percentages.

Romania thus exhibits high proportions of elderly who co-reside with their children or other relatives and correspondingly low proportions of elderly who live alone or in institutions. These shares are similar to those observed for Southern European countries but different from those measured in Western and Northern Europe. These proportions have increased in Romania compared to the 1992 census (*De Vos/Sandefur* 2002: 30; Table IV). As is the case for the living arrangements of young adults in Romania, the high and increasing proportion of elderly co-residence with their offspring and other relatives may be associated with housing constraints.

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7 IPUMS census data were also employed to study co-residence with children in Romania and Italy, regardless of their marital status and age. Results show that the overall proportion of elderly living with children is more similar than that shown in Table 4. More specifically, levels are somewhat higher in Romania than in Italy (32.2 percent compared to 28.9 percent). In Romania this phenomenon is more common among the elderly who are not married (mainly widowed), while in Italy it is more frequently observed among the married elderly (likely due to children's delayed departure from the parental home).

Here too, co-residence is more of an adaptive strategy than a preferred choice, though again underlining the fact that people rely heavily on family support.

4.3 Attitudes towards living arrangements

As argued above, higher proportions of co-residence of the elderly and their children in Southern Europe, as well as in Romania, are indicative of positive attitudes towards intergenerational care.

Results from the Eurobarometer surveys (*Alber/Köhler* 2004) confirm that Romanians consider themselves responsible for the care of their parents if they are no longer able to live independently. A total of 68 percent of Romanians prefer that their parents co-reside with them, less than 1 percent prefer moving their parents into an institution or a nursing home (Table 5). Other results on the perception of future responsibilities regarding elderly care in Romania similarly show that the proportion of people who advocate extended family responsibilities is much higher than the proportion of those who reject them. In some Northern countries, on the other hand, the proportion of those who reject these responsibilities is even higher than that of those who support them (Table 5). Here, it is worth noting that Nordic countries have the highest percentages of elderly living alone or in institutions (Table 4).

The results for Romania described above are similar to those observed in other Southern and former communist countries. As *Tomassini et al.* (2004: 32) state, "the contrasts in attitudes between Northern and Southern European countries mirror the contrast in solitary living among their older populations". This assertion is similarly applicable to Romania.

Alber and *Köhler* (2004) outline a summarising picture of the living arrangements of the elderly in Europe, and show that European countries cannot be treated as a homogenous group. Using simple classification analysis, they characterise the group of Scandinavian countries as having a preference towards institutional care (high support of institutional care, compared to extended family responsibilities). A second group of countries, Southern European countries, shows a preference for family models (higher support of extended family responsibilities, compared to formal institutional care). Western European countries fall somewhere in between. Preferences in Eastern European countries and the Balkans are similar to those in Southern European countries with respect to caring for one's parents. *Alber* and *Köhler* (2004: 76) conclude that "there is little doubt that the family support model will become strengthened after [the] enlargement" of the European Union.

Tab. 5: Attitudes towards the living arrangements of elderly people in need, in selected European countries. Preferred type of care for parents (col. 1 and 2); agreement with a higher personal involvement in elderly parents support (col. 3)

	Preferred type of care for own parents		Percentage point difference between those advocating and those rejecting higher family responsibilities
	Move in together (1)	Nursing home (2)	(3)
Denmark	10.9	32.8	11.7
Sweden	11.6	43.0	-17.2
Finland	17.4	17.1	-2.2
Netherlands	15.5	35.5	-6.6
France	37.5	15.1	15.6
Germany	48.9	11.4	39.5
Bulgaria	62.3	4.8	80.4
Hungary	58.6	4.5	74.4
Romania	67.7	0.9	82.6
Italy	59.0	1.9	75.5
Spain	80.7	5.4	51.9

Source: Col. 1,2 *Alber/Köhler* 2004: 75, Table 24: Answers to the following question: "Let's suppose you had an elderly father or mother who lives alone. What do you think would be best if this parent could no longer manage to live on his/her own?"

Col. 3 *Alber/Köhler* 2004: 67, Table 21: Percentage point difference between those advocating and those rejecting family responsibilities for higher elderly care. Answers to the following question: "If in the future, working adults would have to look after their elderly parents more than they do nowadays, would you say that this would be rather a good thing or rather a bad thing?"

5 Intergenerational solidarity

In all countries – irrespective of strong or weak family ties – intergenerational reciprocity is relevant even if perceived quite differently (*Reher* 1998). Several authors argue that proximity and parental support are related to the strength of intergenerational ties, as well as to a welfare system which does not encourage individual autonomy (*Reher* 1998; *Micheli* 2000; *Dalla Zuanna* 2001; *Dalla Zuanna et al.* 2007). With this in mind, proximity and support can be used as proxies for the strength of such ties, in the sense that different proximity and support patterns correspond with different intensities of family ties (*Santarelli/Cottone* 2009). Living near to one another facilitates contact and support. The more frequent familial interactions are, the easier it is to give and receive support as well as to identify possible needs. Contact frequency is sometimes seen as a form of support in itself because it satisfies a social need (*Fokkema et al.* 2008: 11, 19).

Recently, international comparative surveys such as the GGS and SHARE, have provided useful information for investigating the proximity and frequency of contact between parents and their adult children. Unfortunately, the two surveys differ in the formulation of their items and in sample composition. Comparable data for Romania are not reliable and comparative results are thus too uncertain.

The surveys do, however, measure attitudes towards family care obligations. The formulation of items was not identical, therefore percentages may reflect slightly different aspects. However, variance among countries is very strong and the results provide a general picture of the profound differences between countries (Table 6 and 7).

In terms of opinions, Romanians have strong traditional attitudes towards elderly care, as well as towards the care of children and grandchildren (*Mureșan* 2012b). Many believe that the family network should be the main provider of practical help. The reverse, however, is thought of financial support: society, and not the family, should take the primary role in providing monetary support for the elderly, and adults with children who cannot afford a minimum level of subsistence (Table 6). Generally, Romanians also have strong views concerning grandparents' support towards their adult offspring: grandparents should care for their grandchildren if their parents are unable to do so and should offer financial support if and when their

Tab. 6: Attitudes towards the responsibility of family and governments/society to care for the elderly, in selected countries, percentages per 100 respondents aged 50+

	Household help for the elderly in need of assistance		Personal care for the elderly in need of assistance		Financial support for the elderly in need of assistance	
	Totally/mainly the family	Totally/ mainly the government	Totally/mainly the family	Totally/ mainly the government	Totally/mainly the family	Totally/ mainly the government
Italy	36.5	16.7	29.5	20.6	17.5	37.8
Spain	36.6	20.8	31.4	23.2	22.2	34.9
Germany	43.6	12.0	28.7	16.0	14.8	36.5
France	13.3	48.0	8.7	53.7	8.4	50.6
Denmark	4.1	77.7	2.5	88.8	3.7	83.1
Netherlands	13.6	45.8	5.5	61.9	5.9	69.1

	Assistance for the elderly in need of care in their home		Financial support for the elderly who live below subsistence level	
	Mainly the family	Mainly society	Mainly the family	Mainly society
Romania	45.6	5.9	5.6	26.6
Bulgaria	18.8	6.6	3.8	29.2
Russia	22.1	7.4	3.4	38.6
Norway	0.6	26.3	0.5	61.9

Source: for Romania, Bulgaria, Russia and Norway: GGS wave 1, conducted around 2005; for other countries: 2004 SHARE data (*Fokkema et al.* 2008: 37, Table 4.1)

Tab. 7: Attitudes towards the duty of parents/grandparents to care for their children/grandchildren, selected countries, percentages per 100 respondents aged 50+

	To be there for their grandchildren in case of difficulty		To help the parents of their grandchildren in looking after young grandchildren		To do their best for their children even at the expense of their own well-being		To contribute towards the economic security of grandchildren and their family	
	Agree/ strongly agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Agree/ strongly agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Agree/ strongly agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Agree/ strongly agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree
Italy	89.6	3.3	77.8	7.1	88.6	3.4	63.7	13.4
Spain	87.1	2.6	69.1	10.9	89.8	2.8	58.0	14.4
Germany	83.5	3.2	74.8	7.4	58.3	21.2	39.8	27.9
France	89.3	2.9	69.4	9.7	72.0	10.7	49.4	17.5
Denmark	76.0	10.2	37.5	34.3	70.2	13.6	17.0	50.8
Netherlands	74.0	10.7	28.5	42.0	64.9	14.9	25.1	43.2

	Grandparents should look after their grandchildren if the parents of these grandchildren are unable to do so		If their adult children are in need, parents should adjust their own lives in order to help them		Parents ought to provide financial help to their adult children when the children are having financial difficulties	
	Agree/ strongly agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Agree/ strongly agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Agree/ strongly agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree
Romania	79.9	3.4	47.1	18.7	74.4	4.0
Bulgaria	76.8	7.1	51.2	17.1	68.1	7.4
Russia	79.1	7.2	64.4	11.8	72.7	6.4
Norway	50.9	15.8	23.6	40.5	42.6	19.2

Source: for Romania, Bulgaria, Russia and Norway: GGS wave 1, conducted around 2005; for other countries: 2004 SHARE data (*Fokkema et al.* 2008: 38, Table 4.2)

adult children face economic difficulties. Elderly people in Romania, however, show a much lower level of agreement in terms of adapting their own lives to the urgent needs of their adult children (Table 7).

In a comparative perspective, Romania shows trends that are much more similar to those observed in Southern Europe than in other countries. In Italy and Spain, as in Romania, the responsibility of caring for the elderly lies primarily with their families, while the government is only considered responsible in situations where the family cannot fulfil these duties, primarily in terms of financial assistance (Table 6). In all countries, the sense of duty on the part of older adults towards their children or their grandchildren is strong. Romanians, however, feel they are responsible for the financial security of their adult children and are willing to adjust their lives in order to be able to help them – this pattern resembles the one observed in Bulgaria and Russia (though at a higher and lower degree than in Southern European countries, respectively) (Table 7).

In conclusion, a comparison of attitudes towards family care obligations reveals that Romanian opinion are quite similar to Italian or Spanish views, especially when it comes to caring for elderly parents or caring for grandchildren when adult children find themselves in times of hardship. Western and Northern European countries hold quite different views.

6 Discussion and conclusion

In this paper, we explore whether the family system in Romania can be considered as a pattern of strong family ties similar to that of Southern European countries. To this end, we compare Romania to countries from different regions of Europe.

We observe a number of similarities between Romania and Southern Europe in terms of behaviours reflecting "strong family ties": a high proportion of children who only leave the parental home to marry, few individuals who live alone, a low but increasing level of non-marital cohabitation, a relatively high proportion of elderly people living with their children or other relatives and a low proportion living in institutions. Attitudes on family care obligations are similar to those observed in Southern European countries. In these countries, emphasis is placed on the role of the family, as opposed to the larger society, in terms of providing mutual intergenerational support.

Although on the rise, the age at leaving the parental home is lower in Romania than in South Europe. Moreover, co-residence of young married couples and their parents is more frequent. According to our assessment, it is not different kinds of family ties that enhance this variance, but rather economic constraints and the difficult housing situation in Romania. The collapse of the communist regime marked a changing point in family life and the life course of young adults. Parents who experienced important life course events during the communist regime wish to provide similarly smooth transitions for their children; the support once received from the state (especially for housing) is now replaced by family contributions. In this respect, family ties might have become more important since the fall of the socialist regime.

More generally, we consider whether and how decades of socialist government affected local cultures and changed family systems. Ultimately, we agree with *Alain Blum* (2001), who argues that socialist regimes were too distant from everyday life and thus unable to adapt themselves to the social contexts they wanted to dominate. Consequently, they did not extensively or sustainably modify family systems. More precisely, while they may have facilitated temporary adaptations, they did not alter underlying cultural and behavioural models. *Danaj et al.* (2005) reach the same conclusions for Albania.

Although the behaviour observed in Romania is associated with the strong family ties characteristic of Southern European countries, the question still remains as to how close these similarities truly are, i.e. whether they are deep-rooted or only temporary. Both regions appear to be experiencing the changes in living arrangements and union formation typically associated with the path towards the Second

Demographic Transition (SDT). The increasing acceptance of new behaviours and a growing proportion of non-marital cohabitations, non-marital births, and divorces (not discussed in this paper) are often considered as indicators of progress in the SDT. One might therefore ask: Are strong family ties in this regard simply a residual pattern of traditional behaviours, delaying the general path of the SDT, or a sign that countries with strong family ties follow different paths and time schedules?

Related to this debate, *Thornton* and *Philipov* (2009) propose a developmental idealism framework for explaining recent changes in marital and fertility behaviour in Eastern Europe. Within their paradigm, Western European and North American countries are considered as very modern and developed, so that they also have the power to affect (among others things) beliefs, values and behaviours about marriage and fertility in regions such as Eastern Europe. Along these lines, they suggest that more "traditional" populations have increased their tolerance regarding different family values and behaviour. Although *Thornton* and *Philipov* (2009: 146, 150) do not specifically consider family ties, they state that "it is also possible that […] the confidence and authority of parents declined, providing many more alternatives for young adults", and that "it would also have been difficult […] for parents to maintain their influence on their children's beliefs, values, and behaviour". Furthermore, it is possible that some demographic changes, such as the increase in divorce or the diffusion of step-families, have weakened family ties as well. The SDT has not, however, followed the same pattern everywhere. It is possible that this transition may follow specific paths or time schedules in countries with strong family ties. *Potârcă et al*. (2013) show that in Romania, strong norms about marriage and family shape the SDT pattern in a similar manner as observed in many Southern European countries. *Lesthaeghe* (2010) also acknowledges that although the SDT now concerns most European populations, local narratives may affect changes in values and new behaviours, and thus the SDT may differ by context. Even *Reher* (1998: 221) emphasizes historical, cultural, geographical and social continuity, stressing that modernisation cannot erase "the deep disparities that have always characterized the family in the different regions and cultures in Europe".

At the conclusion of this comparative analysis, many questions remain and warrant further investigation. One of the primary difficulties we encountered was a lack of available comparable data and indicators for Romania and other European countries. Occasionally, similar (but not identical) indicators are utilised across surveys, making it difficult to draw reliable conclusions. Comparative datasets have often been developed within different theoretical frameworks. In fact, the GGS programme was developed within the framework of the SDT, while the SHARE project is more focused on intergenerational solidarity, and Eastern European countries and the Balkans are not yet well represented. This article can serve as a basis for future comparative studies and progress towards a more comprehensive framework for understanding social and demographic similarities and differences within Europe.

This study does not take into account another demographic trend that has deeply affected Romania in recent years, namely a very relevant out-migration (*UN Population Division* 2013). Out-migration can weaken family networks both in the native as well as the host country. However, it remains uncertain to what extent such move-

ments affect family ties, and empirical evidence is currently insufficient to examine the issue. In our opinion, out-migration will not significantly reduce family ties, at least in the short run, thanks to strong migration chains and support of migrants within extended families – families who provide support to both those within Romania who do not migrate as well as those within the host country who do migrate. Unfortunately, this cannot be tested in the host countries because of a lack data. However, there is one (relatively weak) indicator that might illustrate such support: assistance in finding employment in the host country. For example, 76 percent of Romanians living in Italy found work with the help of relatives or friends, compared to 72 percent of the entire group of foreign citizens (*Istat* 2009). Other studies point to the relevance of continuity in migrants' behaviours and attitudes in native and host countries: see, for example, *Khoo et al.* (2002) on cohabitation among Italians who were raised in Australia, and *Carl* (2013) on gender role attitudes among first- and second-generation immigrants in Europe. Does this hold for family ties among Romanian migrants as well? Future research might address this question.

This paper considers each country as a homogeneous entity. Average behaviours may, however, conceal internal differences. We know, for example, that the socialist regime in Romania strongly shaped a process of urbanisation with differences in family-related behaviour in urban and rural areas (see Section 2), and that the Romanian population is composed of numerous ethnic groups (*Hărăguş* 2009; *Rada* 2013). Differences in family ties among sub-populations thus remain unexplored, and more insights into this issue could shed new light on the persistence and dynamics of family ties in Romania.[8]

Notwithstanding these important questions, in light of the literature, and the comparison of certain demographic behaviours and values discussed in this paper, we can give a positive answer to the question initially posed: Does Romania exhibit a pattern of strong family ties? This conclusion may also apply to other post socialist European countries, although it is not, in our opinion, a common trait to this region as a whole. These results encourage a broadening of our view towards all European countries, pushing us to see if the line from the Pyrenees to the Alps, dividing Southern Europe with strong family ties from North-Western Europe with weak family ties, can be lengthened to the Carpathians and shed new light on commonalities and differences in other demographic behaviours.

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8 Differences in family related behaviours have been observed between urban and rural areas and ethnic groups also in Albania (*Hemming et al.* 2012).

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