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THE ISSUE OF ETHNIC MINORITIES AND EUROPEAN SECURITY

Course support

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The structure of the course support

- Introduction and context
- National minorities, European education and societal security
- The European Identity Rematch. Theoretical and methodological benchmarks
- Management of ethno-religious relations in the Romanian space
- Identity challenges for the European integration of the Republic of Moldova
- The Identity Challenges of the European Integration Process of North Macedonia
- Bibliography

Introduction and context

Introduction

- this field of research is one of the relative truths
- From this perspective, our national subjectivism, in the logic we propose, supports and respects the subjectivism of others, including their national truth.
- As such, our goals are limited to identifying, presenting and possibly comparing different types of identities seen as borders and potential sources of conflict.

Introduction

- the establishment of national and ethnic identity of a person or community
- **objective** and **subjective** elements of identification
- two perspectives: **self-identification** and **hetero-identification**
- Ethnicity and religious confession are concepts around which discussions and controversy arise, generating emotions and feelings of extreme intensity. Each of us belongs to such communities. By default, there is a strong pressure on us to be subjective.

Introduction

- The concept of minority:

- The sociological dimension

- The demographic dimension

Classical minority vs. the non-classical minority

- The future of the nation state!?
- Other concepts: territoriality, extraterritoriality, etc.
- Dual citizenship as a subject of international dispute

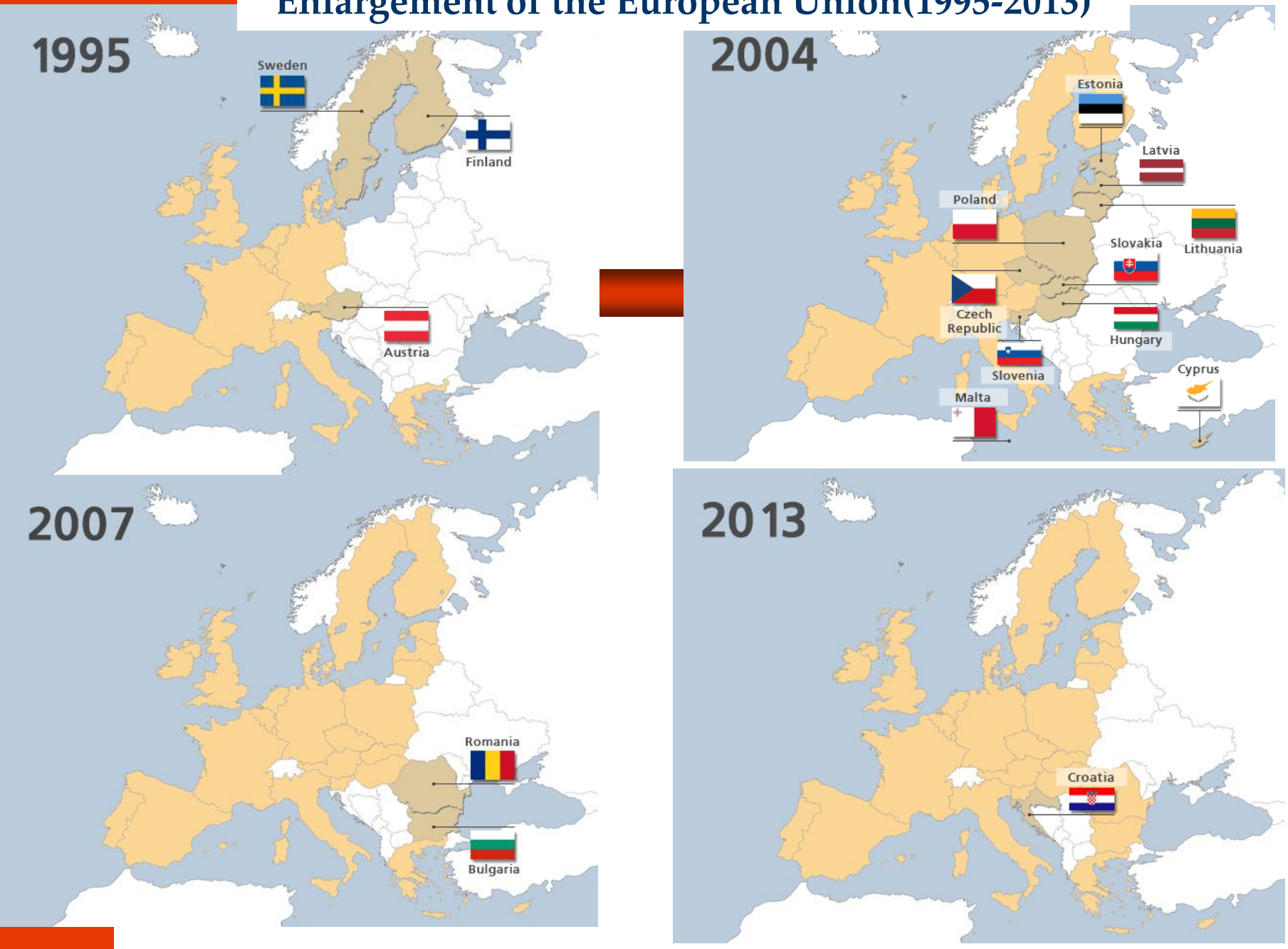
●The Iron Curtain (NATO vs. Warsaw Pact)



●Source: Personal adaptation after

●http://mrparana.weebly.com/section-114.html, viewed on 07.01.14

Enlargement of the European Union(1995-2013)



- Source: BBC, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24367705,
- viewed on 06.01.14

●European Union (2024)



●Sursă: BBC, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world- middle-east-24367705, viewed on 06.01.14

Europe from Exclusive Borders to Inclusive Frontiers

- "Europe without borders" ?!?
- "Europe is and should remain *a house with many rooms*"
- "frontières barrières" vs. "frontières ouvertes"
- *inclusive/open borders* (good!?) *vs. exclusive/close borders* (bad!?)
- *hard* and *soft borders*
- European Union should have *hard* external borders and *soft* internal borders!

- Visa, border police control on people and goods crossing the border are characteristic of *hard* border
- the *soft* border is characteristic of a more flexible transit system with no restrictions of circulation for goods and persons
- There are several *steps to reach this type of border*: eliminating visa, reducing taxes; human contacts - including cultural, educational, and training programmes.

European cultural identity: internal cultural borders or unitary cultural area

cultural diversity/multiculturalism vs. homogenization/cultural unity

1. **Europe - a space of cultural borders**

- Europe: culture of cultures
- Cultural border versus political border/cultural identity
- Cultural borders are the foundation of current geopolitics

2. **Europe – a geo-cultural archipelago**

- Cultural Europe: between common values and interests
- The digital revolution and the communication society: between diversity and homogenization
- Culture in the network – a new type of cultural frontier

We therefore identify at least two cultural identity constructions at the European level: a culture of cultures, respectively a cultural space with a strong identity at a particular, local, regional, national level, or a cultural archipelago, respectively a common cultural space interrupted by discontinuities.

The international context of the *European Concert* crash

Eroding the old monarchic order of powerful governments. The collapse of multinational empires

Europe of 1871



Interwar Europe



The international context of the *European Concert* crash

Eroding the old monarchic order of powerful governments. The collapse of multinational empires

Europe of 1871



Contemporary Europe



National minorities, European education and societal security

Conceptual perspective

For a better understanding of the relationships described by the terminological couple majority - minority, we must distinguish between the demographic and sociological dimensions of these types of relationships.

- From a demographic point of view, the majority-minority relationship describes a situation of volume difference between two ethnically and religiously differentiated segments, which coexist in a territorial administrative framework, usually on the territory of a state.

- In a sociological sense, minority-majority relationships describe a situation of asymmetry between groups in terms of power or authority, essentially a relationship of subordination of the minority community(s) by a dominant majority.

Conceptual perspective

The distinction between the two perspectives - demographic and sociological - is imposed for a very simple reason: the institutionalized ways of managing power and authority relations do not necessarily overlap with demographic relations.

or

More simply formulated: power does not always belong to the many, but to the groups that control the resources of power and authority in a society, which may be minority in the demographic sense.

The classic example is that of the (former) **apartheid regime in South Africa**, where whites (although they represented a minority in a demographic sense) had control over the black population (a majority in a demographic sense).

Conceptual perspective

- **The dominant majority** is that configuration of inter-ethnic or inter-religious relations in which the majority group represents the largest segment of the population, and controls the levers of power.
- **The dominant elites**, although they are in the minority in a demographic sense, control the state, or other levers of the institutionalized exercise of power (see the situation presented above in South Africa),
- **subordinating the masses** (subordinated mass), i.e. the groups in the demographic majority, but in the sociological minority
- In the "typical" **minority** situation are those groups that are not even in a position of dominant authority but, compared to other ethnic groups in the respective society, are even fewer.

Conceptual perspective

- In the minority-majority relationship sociologists use the terms:

1. ***marginal minority*** in situations where there are differences between the majority and minority groups not only in terms of power and influence but also in terms of class, position in the social structure.

In other words, there is a fairly high chance that ethnic or religious affiliation and a certain class position coincide, so the minority.

2. ***low-status minority*** (or stigmatized ethnic or religious groups) for those groups that, in addition to being subordinate in terms of power relations, are also attributed certain negative characteristics.

Those who are part of this group are considered (under certain aspects) inferior to the majority, there are social norms regarding the avoidance of certain contacts and relationships with individuals belonging to the respective ethnic or religious group.

National minority vs. ethnic minority

- C.-L. Popescu distinguishes between national minorities and ethnic minorities "according to whether or not there is a state other than the one in which citizens belonging to the respective minority live and in which people of the same national origin constitute a majority. For example, in Romania, Hungarians or Germans are a national minority, while Rroma are an ethnic minority".
- It is usually considered that ***nationality*** denotes belonging to a community defined precisely enough from a political point of view, which is based on the unity of territory, language, economic, social, cultural and psychological life and has the consciousness of its origin and its own destiny. ***Ethnicity*** designates the connection of a person with a distinct entity of individuals constituted as a historical form of community between people and which is based on the unity of territory, language, culture, traditions, etc.
- It should be noted that the delimitation between the two concepts has no meaning in international law, as there is no obvious interest in clarifying the distinction between the two terms.

What exactly makes the difference between national/ethnic minorities and peoples?

- **The territorial factor**. It represents an essential element in the process of establishing peoples. On the other hand, although national/ethnic minorities are often concentrated in a certain region, they are often dispersed.
- **The degree of political organization** is much lower in the case of minorities, even if they also constitute a series of representative structures.
- **The group dynamic is a distinct one**. If in the case of **the people** the aspiration towards an individual existence is essential for its definition and becoming as such, in the case of the **minorities**, the main goal is to maintain the cultural, linguistic and religious identity within the existing political organization or by optimizing it.
- It could be said that the "subversive" element is less in the case of minorities, and, when it appears, perhaps the correct question would not be whether minorities claim an (unjustified) right to self-determination, but whether external pressures (the threat to the address of his identity) does not, in fact, trigger the process of constituting a distinct national consciousness.

Ethnicity between objective and subjective dimensions

Objective dimensions are considered to be:

- language,
- religion,
- specificities in political organization,
- occupation of a certain territory,
- artifacts of that culture,
- distinct community mentality,
- specific aspects of the way of life,
- anthropological-physical,
- racial differences

Subjective dimensions are considered to be:

- The belief in a common ancestor, the mythical or scientific discourse of ethnogenesis
- The discourse on the community of fate in history
- Subjective representations about the main characteristic features of the respective ethnic group (self-stereotypes) – a sum of virtues and defects

Ethnicity between objective and subjective dimensions

- **Ethnic heteroidentification** - is the act by which an individual is framed by others as belonging to a certain ethnicity. In general, conferring an ethnonym on an individual is based on criteria on which there is a quasi-unanimous consensus.
- **Ethnic self-identification** - is the situation in which an individual decides for himself about his ethnic affiliation. Of course, in most cases, self-identification takes into account the criteria of heteroidentification

Working with the two concepts is useful when analyzing ethnic groups that are subject to a series of negative stereotypes. Ex. Roma from Romania: 3.2% in 2011 (approx. 621,000 people), compared to approx. 1 million in estimates

Ethnicity between objective and subjective dimensions

Hetero- or self-identification cannot be done in the same way in all situations.

In the case of Bosnia, language is not the main element of ethnic demarcation. Religion is much more important here: the Orthodox are Serbs, the Muslims are Bosniaks, the Catholics are Croats. Thus, the ethnic borders correspond to the confessional ones. Religion is the criterion for inclusion or exclusion from a group.

In Catalonia, 56.5% of the population believe that those who live and work here (regardless of their origin) can consider themselves Catalan, compared to 33.3% who believe that only those who speak Catalan can consider themselves Catalan.

Stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination

- **Stereotypes and prejudices**

- "Mythical" images ---- knowledge, clichés about the respective ethnic group"X is the son of a poor shoemaker. X, most of the time, was sulking and preferred to play instead of work. What ethnicity was child X?„

- Generalized clichés about physical appearance, moral and character traits with which we describe a group – **stereotypes**

- **Attitude** - a complex of expectations and judgments prior to any individual experience

- **Prejudice** - complex of expectations and judgments that precede and mark the action

ATTITUDE: I can't stand the Rroma. – Affective reporting. Assessment
STEREOTYPE: Because they are all thieves. – Argumenting an unfavorable attitude

- Creating ***scapegoats***

Stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination

The appeal to certain sensitivities, to insignificant details and exceptions that are then linked, through a proper interpretation mechanism, to the stereotypes necessary for rationalization, is the path that leads to prejudices and discrimination.

X: *The problem with Jews is that they only care about their own group*

Y: According to the records of some companies organized for charitable purposes, it follows that Jews, relative to their proportion in the population, donate more than non-Jews.

X: This is the proof that they have always endeavored to buy the goodwill of others and always meddle in the affairs of Christians. They only think about money, that's why there are so many Jewish bankers.

Y: Another investigation done not long ago shows that the proportion of Jews in banking business is small. There are far more non-Jewish bankers than Jews.

X: Well, that's exactly what it's about; they do not have the courage to enter into honest business. Instead, many of them invest in the film industry, nightclubs and other dubious businesses.

Such a dynamic of the rationalization of prejudices makes it possible to criminalize some ethnic groups in crisis situations or in the context of social problems.

Stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination

"Scale of discrimination"

- **Verbalization** – condemnation, blame
- **Avoidance** – limiting and even avoiding contacts
- **Discrimination** – moving from passive avoidance to actions directed against group individuals (exclusion, rejection, isolation)
- **Violent actions** – assault, destruction of property
- **Physical extermination** – the advanced stage of rejection and hatred

National minorities: levels of educational analysis

- **Demographic perspective**

- It allows the analysis and visualization of the quantitative and structured size of the population by national-ethnic or religious groups
- The weight of the ethnic group may be related to its status
- Natural, territorial and social mobility of minorities
- Family, marital status and family "values".

National minorities: levels of educational analysis

- **The administrative-political perspective**

- It allows analyzes regarding the degree of administrative-political involvement of minorities
- The presence of minorities in the administrative-political space versus the legislative framework
- Analysis of the speech of the political leaders of the minorities present in the local or national public space
- Political activism or passivism
- Nationalism, fundamentalism and extremism in the public space
- Territorial autonomy based on ethnic criteria

National minorities: levels of educational analysis

- **The legislative perspective**

- Analysis of the legislative framework that refers to minorities
- The rights of minorities in the public space
- The status of minorities
- Collective rights and freedoms
- Negative or positive discrimination at the institutional and legislative level
- Legislative submissions regarding the possibility of conserving and preserving the identity of minorities
- Promoting the principles of equality and non-discrimination in relation to the majority

National minorities: levels of educational analysis

- **The cultural-educational perspective**

- Cultural specificity of minorities in education
- Promoting and preserving cultural identity
- Minority culture in public space
- Intercultural dialogue
- The cultural mix
- Contact cultures
- Multiculturalism vs. Interculturalism
- Intercultural education
- From ethnocentrism to otherness

National minorities: levels of educational analysis

- **The socio-economic perspective**
  - The socio-economic status of minorities
  - Socio-economic integration of minorities, including immigrants
- **Association perspective: ethnicity – confession**
  - The ethno-confessional identity association and the relationship with the majority
  - Contemporary ecumenism vs. the violence of inter-religious conflicts

National minorities: levels of educational analysis

- **The perspective of the national debate vs. European**

- Europeanism vs. Nationalism – the ethno-cultural border
- The intensity of the feeling of belonging to national, respectively European values
- Euroscepticism and extreme nationalism
- National interest vs. European interest
- European diversity vs. the national unit
- The place of patriotism in the context of European integration
- Cross-border cooperation and the identity of the Euroregional space

National minorities: levels of educational analysis

- **Linguistic perspective**

- Promoting and preserving the mother tongue
- Communication in the mother tongue in the public space
- Multilingualism
- Officialization of minority languages

- **The perspective of everyday life**

- The habitat and forms of daily expression of minorities
- Customs, traditions and specificities of minorities

National minorities: levels of educational analysis

- **The perspective of European values**

- Respect for human dignity
- Respect and promotion of freedom
- Democratically
- Equal
- Respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities

Protection of minority communities

This is based on:

a) *the principle of respect for diversity*, to a large extent different from the principle of tolerance which assumed the arrogance of the hierarchical relationship between tolerant and tolerated;

b) *the principle of partnership coexistence* (partnership) which presupposes the association of minorities to the general management act (of government, in particular);

c) *the principle of positive discrimination*, which implies granting, in favor of minorities, some privileges, when they are necessary to compensate for the numerical inequality between them and the majority;d

d) *the principle of preserving cultural identity*, which concerns the creation of conditions for preserving the identification elements of the community in question (language, religion, traditions, etc.);

e) *the principle of multicultural integration* (multiculturalism) which goes beyond simple coexistence and, refusing, equally, both the assimilation of minorities and their isolation (insularization, ghettoization), seeks that the members of each entity, be it majority or minority, acquire , to understand, respect and express themselves according to the specific values of the culture of the other cohabiting cultural communities. Multicultural society not only respects diversity but, at the same time, preserves and synthesizes the cultural values of all groups with their own identity that coexist on the territory of a given state.

Models that respond to ethnic diversity

- **The assimilation model** (the case of the United States and France) assumes the complete incorporation of ethnic minorities into a society. They abandon their distinct linguistic, cultural and social characteristics and adopt the peculiarities of the dominant group. The role of the state is limited because the responsibility rests with the individual who opted for the change.
- **The differentiation model** assumes the avoidance of a conflict through a process that eliminates or minimizes contact with minorities. An extreme view of the differentiation model includes the expulsion of ethnic minorities or prevents the participation of minorities in the social life of the country in which they live.
- **The model of multiculturalism** recognizes the legitimacy and the need for equality between ethnic groups regarding the expression of cultural diversity. Multiculturalism includes minorities as part of the whole society and accepts their distinct cultural characteristics. This model has been adopted by countries such as Australia, Canada and Sweden. And the Romanian state has embraced, through the constitution, policies and practice, the multicultural approach

The European Identity Rematch

- theoretical and methodological benchmarks -

Introduction & Concepts

- ***Identity at European, national and regional level***

- European citizen can be Italian, German or Romanian
- An Italian citizen can be Sicilian, Neapolitan, Venetian, Piedmontese, Tuscan etc. A German citizen can be a Bavarian, Saxon, Prussian or Austrian. A Romanian can be Transylvanian, Oltenian or Moldovan.

- **The identity globalization vs. glocalization of identity**

Introduction & Concepts

- Even if the nation states remain very strong, in the current geopolitical context, →**The association of nation-state-territory-border carries some nuances**.
- Principles like **extraterritoriality** and even **non-territoriality** become topics discussed about the national and international state logic.
- In Europe there is an increase in the identity claims; → **the territorial ethno-separatism is risk for more states**
- The fashion of secessionist referendum
- The Kosovo precedent
- The case of the Crimean referendum, imported in / exported to Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Transnistria or Gagauzia keeps Eastern Europe and the eastern borders of the EU under tension, bringing to the fore the exercise of power by the new Russian imperialism

Contemporary Europe. A new stage of ethno-national emancipation: identity rematch/retaliation

- European, national and regional identities
- As a result of *systemic crises at EU level* (economic, financial, social, institutional or legitimacy), new geopolitical realities in the proximity (e.g. the situation in Ukraine, the Near East, North Africa), but also as a result of massive migration, we find a return to ***local, regional or national identities***
- ***The public discourse***: external and internal enemies - The European Union, Russia, globalization, the immigrant, the multinationals companies, the national minorities... the others / the holy wars of the nation
- The countries of the Visegrád Group + Romania, Austria, Italy...
- the nationalist rhetoric of political leaders such as Vladimir Putin in Russia or Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Turkey: the glorious imperialist past of their own history

Methodology, Premises, Hypotheses, Antagonism of approaches

- The process of European construction was accompanied by a strong *process of European identity construction*.
- Stimulated by the phenomenon of globalization, by the success of the EU, especially by the European expansion to the east and the disappearance of the "Iron Curtain", *the European identity experienced an exaltation* both at the level of public discourse and at the everyday level.
- As an effect of the crises that have become systemic at the EU level (economic, financial, social, institutional or legitimacy), of the new geopolitical realities in the proximity space (e.g. the situation in Ukraine, the Near East, North Africa), but also as an effect of migration massive, we see *a return to local, regional or national identities*.
- The EU can be considered the main loser or the main beneficiary in the context in which all these can be associated with a necessary stage in the consolidation of the European construction process.

Methodology, Premises, Hypotheses, Antagonism of approaches

- In the specialized literature we identify as effects of globalization the *universalization (uniformization!?) of values*, but also *ethnic violence*, *extremism, nationalism*, etc.
- The optimistic liberal predictions after the 90s hailed the *dissolution of the nation-state binomial*, in reality states can no longer exist today unless they are based on a very strong *national and ethnic surplus*.
- "identity globalization" has proven to be stronger in urban and industrialized societies, and where there are substantial rural areas, a rich heritage and cultural tradition, a resistance to globalization has developed.
- The local, national-cultural identity is more strongly preserved in the rural-agrarian environment and in the reference proximity area of cultural sites

Methodology, Premises, Hypotheses, Antagonism of approaches

The period of prosperity and economic *growth strengthened the European identity and the feeling of European belonging*.

In the context of the new economic-social and geopolitical crises, we are witnessing the "*identity rematch*" and the "*feeling of returning to the historical, national and cultural identity*„

European interests vs. *national interests*

Methodology, Premises, Hypotheses, Antagonism of approaches

- **The majority-minority dispute in Central and Eastern Europe**

Concepts: ethnic group => national minority => national community
restrictive-individual => demanding-collective

- **The subjective and objective dimension of identity**

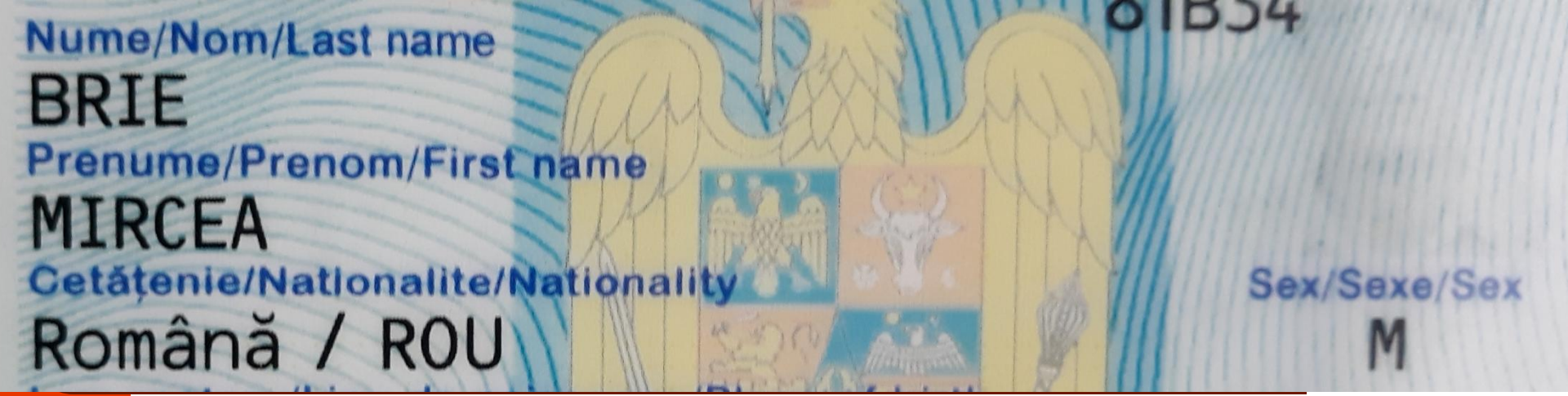
Unlike the *concept of national origin*, which refers to something given, inherited by birth, *national identity* is, above all, the expression of the consciousness of belonging to a cultural community that is defined as a political community. - an "everyday plebeian" (Ernest Renan)

- **European national identity vs. American national consciousness**

European national identity serves the ethnic group => *nationalism*
American national identity serves the country => *patriotism*

The image of identity in Europe

- Is there a unitary European identity?!
- The old West/East divide. *national identity*
- Eastern Europe had a different path of development, in the Central European Identity
- The new North/South divide. Protestant Europe vs. Catholic-Orthodox Europe
- European citizens vs. citizens of national states
- Self-identification and hetero-identification
- Migration and immigrant identity in Europe
- In most Western countries the national identity was built mainly around the identity of the citizen, and the territory of the status consequently became the fundamental term of reference for the "national territory" - *the civic dimension* whose ethnicity, ethnic belonging played a fundamental role in the construction of the national identity – *the ethnic dimension of national identity*



Nationalitate/Nationalite/Nationality

Cetatenie/Citoyennete/Citizenship

- In most Western countries national identity was built mainly around the **citizen identity -** *the civic dimension of national identity* → *patriotism*
- In Eastern Europe ***ethnicity*** played a key role in building the national identity – *the ethnic dimension of national identity* → *nationalism*
- A fundamental characteristic of state-building constructions of the national state in Eastern Europe is the permanent lack of *legitimacy*
- a *fundamental source of inter-ethnic tension*
- the sacralization of the state territory considered *national territory (! ethnically)*
- the cultural-historical philosophy is to unlegitimize contribution of other national communities

The image of identity in Europe

- **The Western model of the nation**: emphasizes the centrality of the national territory or homeland of the nation
- **The Eastern model**: concerned with ethnic origin and cultural ties
- A fundamental characteristic of the state constructions of the national state type in Eastern Europe: their permanent lack of legitimacy or, rather, their incomplete legitimacy.

By identifying the state with a single national identity, the other national communities inevitably found themselves outside of this legitimization process, which constituted ***a fundamental source of inter-ethnic tension****.*

=> the sacralization of state territory considered national territory (the rightful property of a single nation!), and the cultural-historical philosophy is to delegitimize as much as possible the contribution of other national communities

Identity rematch

- There is an almost obsessive orientation of the contemporary world towards **ethnicity**, towards national specificity
- In this context, the current trend of the European peoples can only be the preservation of the **cultural/national identity** (or its creation!)
- **Identity claims are increasing** in Europe and there is a risk that several states will soon face ethno-territorial separatism.
- Migration and the glocalization of identity - the immigrant obtains citizenship, not ethnicity
- The theory of small states (Leopold Kohr)

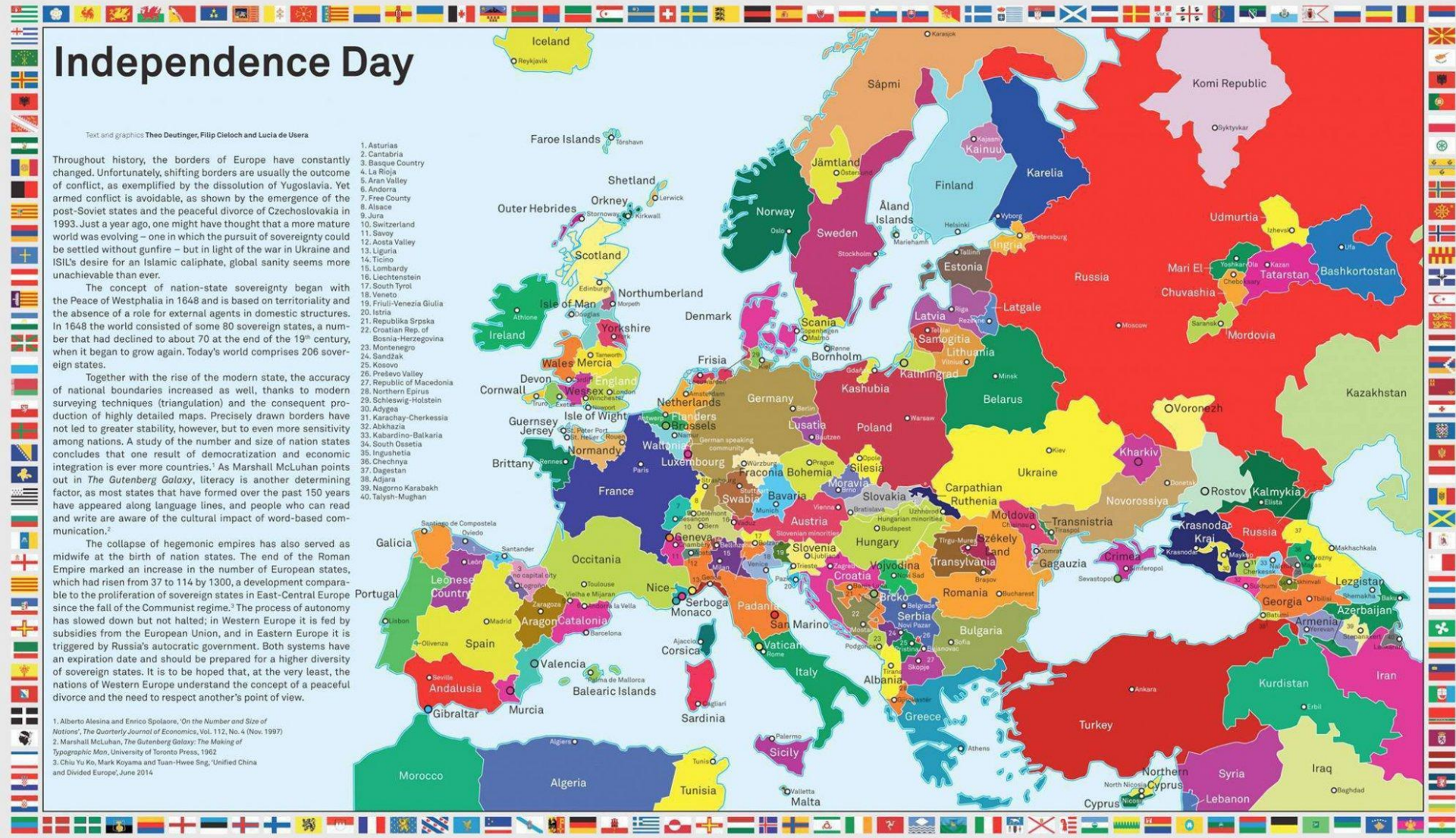
Project map of the "Europe of the regions", elaborated on the basis of the materials of the Round Table of the League of Conservative Journalism with the generic "United Regions of Europe: Kosovo as advanced in the process of European glocalization"



The project of the map of the United States of Europe, in the vision of Freddy Heineken, inspired by the theses of Leopold Kohr



Independence Day



Text and graphics **Theo Deutinger, Filip Cieloch and Lucia de Usera**

Throughout history, the borders of Europe have constantly changed. Unfortunately, shifting borders are usually the outcome of conflict, as exemplified by the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Yet armed conflict is avoidable, as shown by the emergence of the post-Soviet states and the peaceful divorce of Czechoslovakia in 1993. Just a year ago, one might have thought that a more mature world was evolving – one in which the pursuit of sovereignty could be settled without gunfire – but in light of the war in Ukraine and ISIL's desire for an Islamic caliphate, global sanity seems more unachievable than ever.

The concept of nation-state sovereignty began with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 and is based on territoriality and the absence of a role for external agents in domestic structures. In 1648 the world consisted of some 80 sovereign states, a number that had declined to about 70 at the end of the 19th century, when it began to grow again. Today's world comprises 206 sovereign states.

Together with the rise of the modern state, the accuracy of national boundaries increased as well, thanks to modern surveying techniques (triangulation) and the consequent production of highly detailed maps. Precisely drawn borders have not led to greater stability, however, but to even more sensitivity among nations. A study of the number and size of nation states concludes that one result of democratization and economic integration is ever more countries.[1] As Marshall McLuhan points out in *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, literacy is another determining factor, as most states that have formed over the past 150 years have appeared along language lines, and people who can read and write are aware of the cultural impact of word-based communication.[2]

The collapse of hegemonic empires has also served as midwife at the birth of nation states. The end of the Roman Empire marked an increase in the number of European states, which had risen from 37 to 114 by 1300, a development comparable to the proliferation of sovereign states in East-Central Europe since the fall of the Communist regime.[3] The process of autonomy has slowed down but not halted; in Western Europe it is fed by subsidies from the European Union, and in Eastern Europe it is triggered by Russia's autocratic government. Both systems have an expiration date and should be prepared for a higher diversity of sovereign states. It is to be hoped that, at the very least, the nations of Western Europe understand the concept of a peaceful divorce and the need to respect another's point of view.

1. Asturias
2. Cantabria
3. Basque Country
4. La Rioja
5. Aran Valley
6. Andorra
7. Free County
8. Alsace
9. Jura
10. Switzerland
11. Savoy
12. Aosta Valley
13. Liguria
14. Ticino
15. Lombardy
16. Liechtenstein
17. South Tyrol
18. Veneto
19. Friuli-Venezia Giulia
20. Istria
21. Republika Srpska
22. Croatian Rep. of Bosnia-Herzegovina
23. Montenegro
24. Sandžak
25. Kosovo
26. Preševo Valley
27. Republic of Macedonia
28. Northern Epirus
29. Schleswig-Holstein
30. Adygea
31. Karachay-Cherkessia
32. Abkhazia
33. Kabardino-Balkaria
34. South Ossetia
35. Ingushetia
36. Chechnya
37. Dagestan
38. Adjara
39. Nagorno Karabakh
40. Talysh-Mughan

1. Alberto Alesina and Enrico Spolaore, '*On the Number and Size of Nations*', *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 112, No. 4 (Nov. 1997)
2. Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*, University of Toronto Press, 1962
3. Chiu Yu Ko, Mark Koyama and Tuan-Hwee Sng, 'Unified China and Divided Europe', June 2014

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The image of the EU – the return to the national/regional

- Analysis of Eurobarometer data / 2007, 2012, 2014

Question: QA40 In your opinion, among the following issues, which are those that most create a feeling of community among European Union citizens? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS)

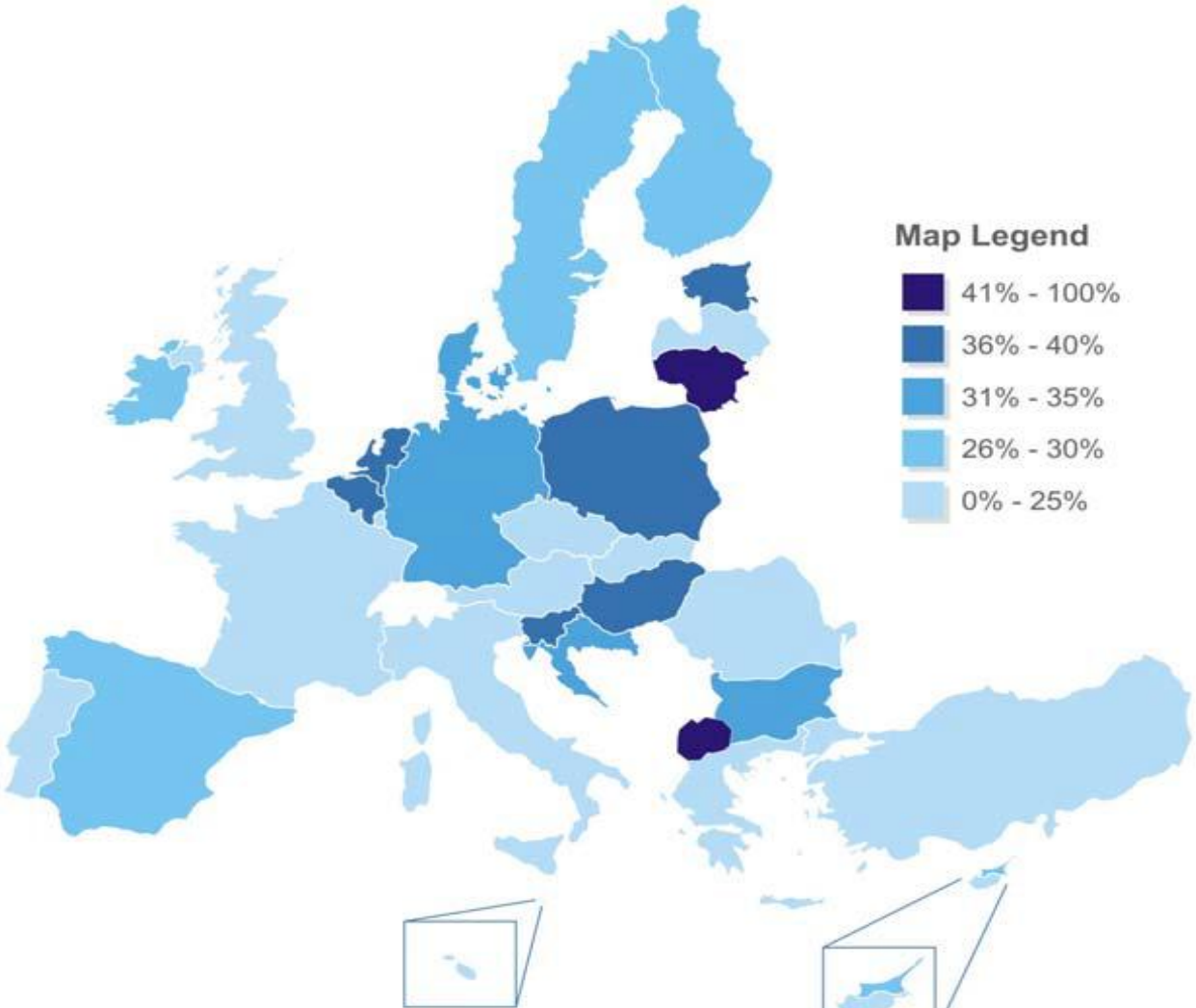
Answers: Economy

2007

LT	45%
NL	40%
HU	40%
EE	39%
PL	38%
BE	37%
SI	37%
BG	35%
DE	33%
DK	32%
IE	30%
FI	29%
SE	28%
ES	27%
EU27	27%
FR	25%
CY*	24%
LV	24%
CZ	23%
RO	23%
AT	22%
EL	21%
MT	21%
SK	21%
IT	20%
UK	19%
PT	18%
LU	17%

* CY(tcc) = 29%

MK	47%
HR	35%



Question: QA40 In your opinion, among the following issues, which are those that most create a feeling of community among European Union citizens? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS)

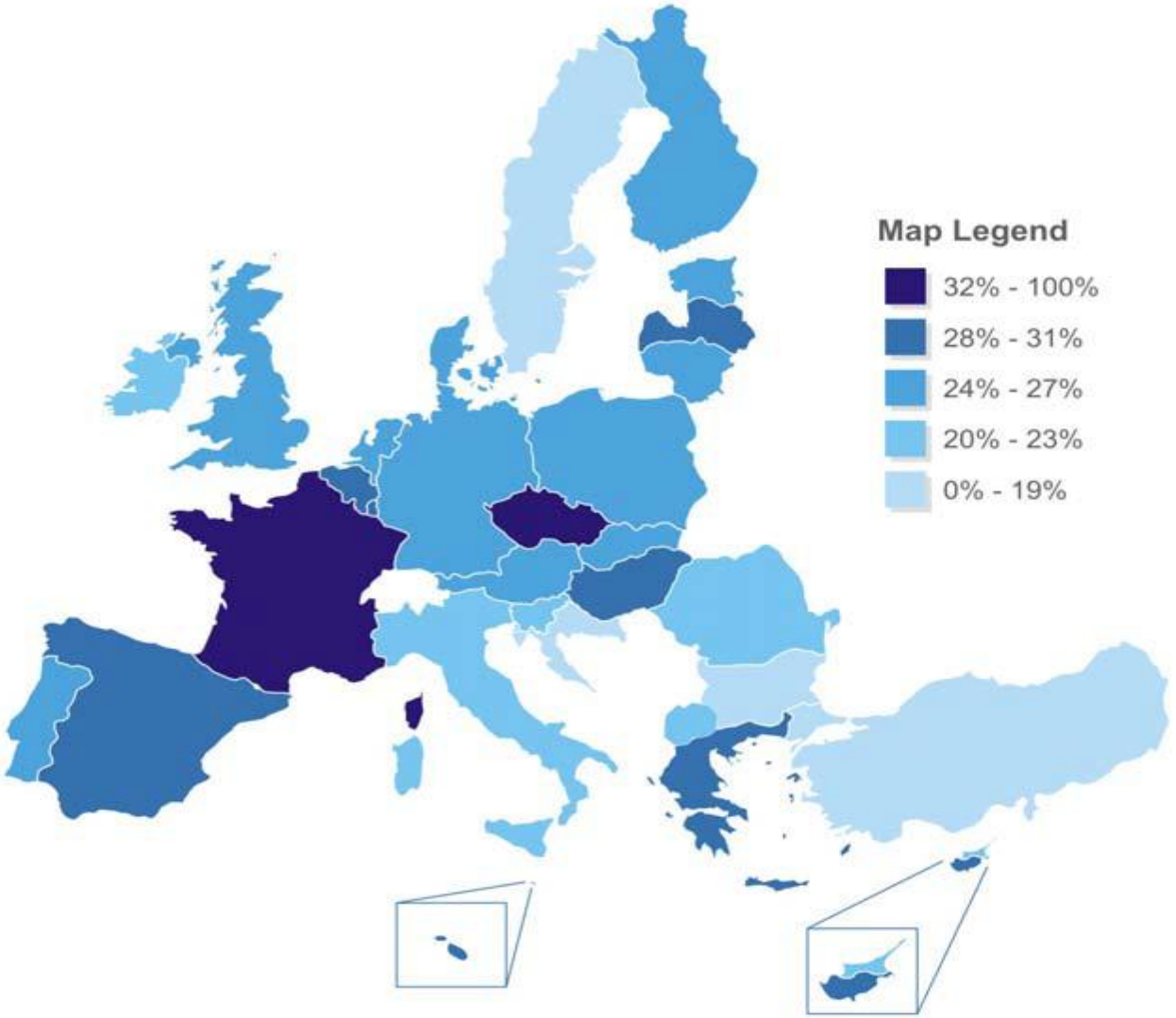
Answers: Culture

2007

CZ	35%
FR	33%
EL	30%
ES	30%
CY*	30%
LV	30%
MT	30%
HU	29%
BE	28%
LU	28%
DK	27%
DE	27%
UK	27%
LT	27%
SK	27%
EU27	27%
PT	26%
AT	25%
EE	25%
PL	25%
NL	24%
FI	24%
IE	23%
IT	23%
SI	23%
RO	21%
SE	18%
BG	15%

* CY(tcc) = 21%

MK	21%
HR	19%
TR	17%



Question: QA33.4 People may feel different levels of attachment to their village, town or city, to their country or to the European Union. Please tell me how attached you feel to...

Option: European Union

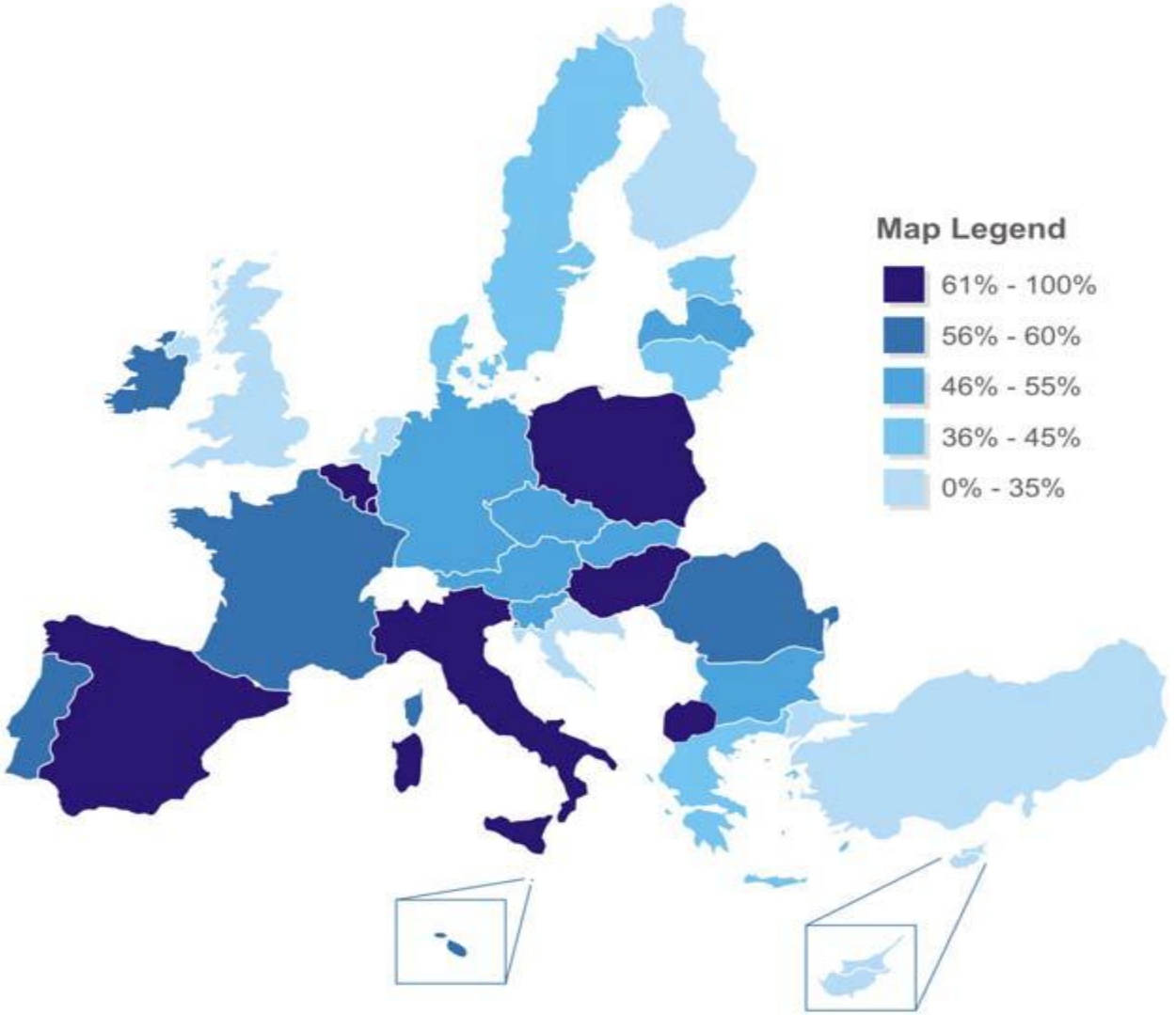
Answers: Attached

2007

BE	66%
PL	65%
LU	63%
ES	62%
IT	62%
HU	61%
IE	57%
FR	56%
PT	56%
MT	56%
RO	56%
DE	55%
SK	55%
SI	55%
EU27	53%
LV	52%
CZ	50%
AT	48%
BG	46%
LT	42%
EL	41%
EE	41%
DK	40%
SE	38%
UK	34%
NL	32%
CY*	32%
FI	30%

* CY(tcc) = 33%

MK	71%
HR	32%
TR	25%



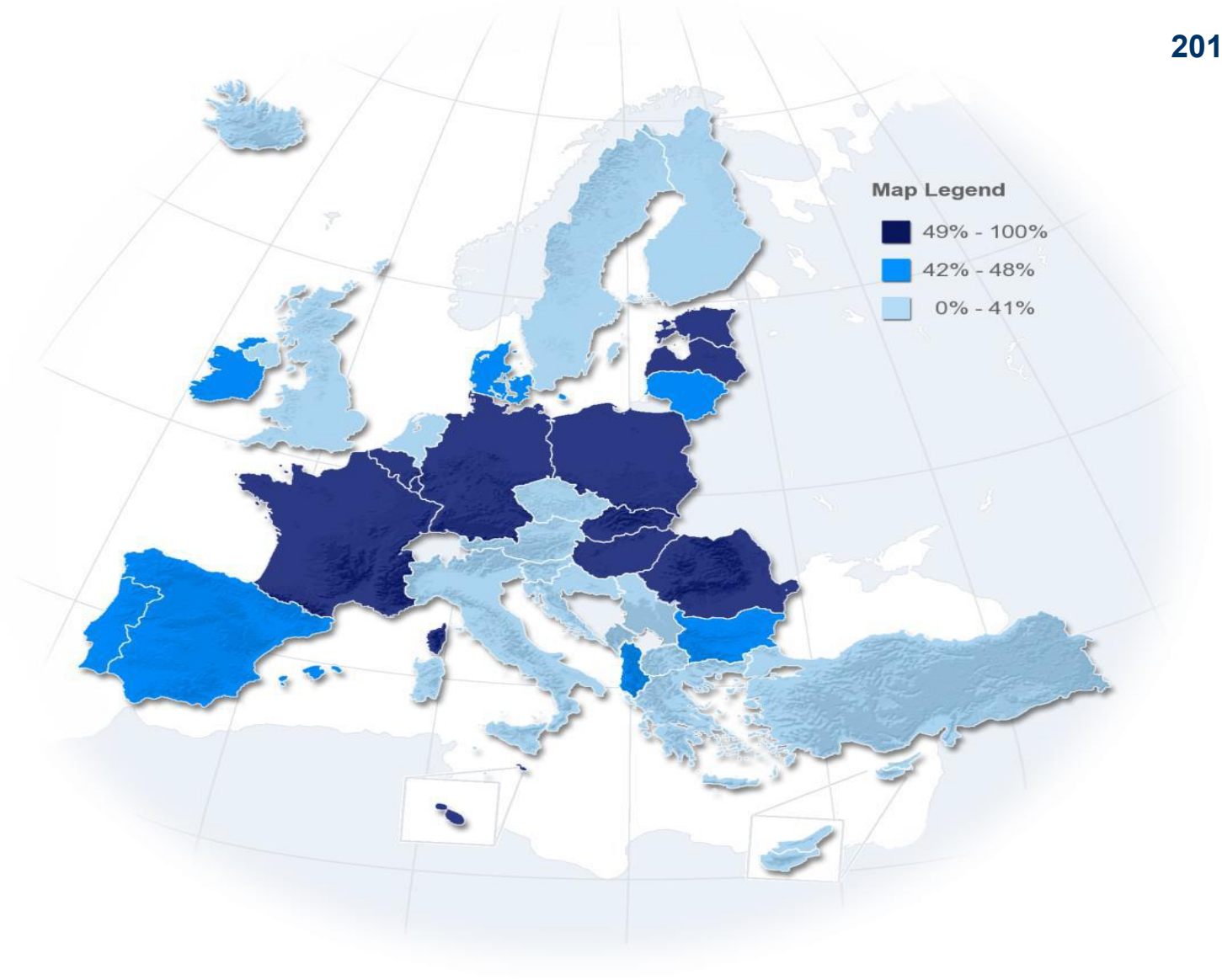
Question: QD1a.3. Please tell me how attached you feel to…

Option: The European Union

Answers: Total 'Attached'

2014

LU	72%
LV	63%
PL	59%
RO	58%
MT	55%
SK	54%
BE	51%
HU	51%
FR	51%
EE	50%
DE	49%
ES	46%
PT	45%
EU28	45%
DK	45%
BG	44%
IE	43%
LT	42%
HR	41%
AT	41%
SE	40%
IT	39%
SI	38%
UK	36%
CZ	35%
FI	35%
NL	31%
EL	30%
CY	27%
CY (tcc)	27%
AL	44%
MK	41%
ME	33%
IS	18%
RS	18%
TR	15%



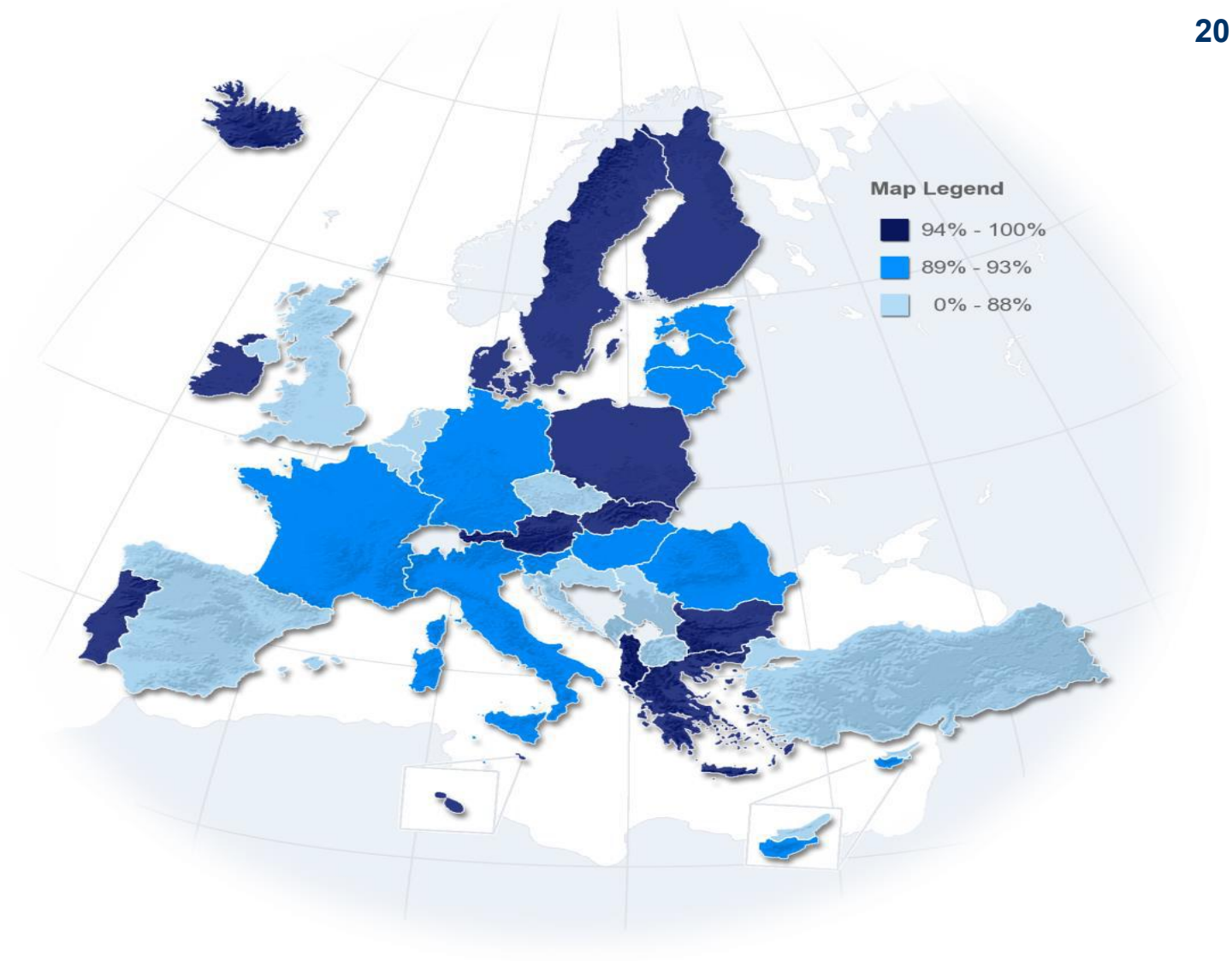
Question: QD1a.2. Please tell me how attached you feel to…

Option: (OUR COUNTRY)

Answers: Total 'Attached'

2014

DK	98%
PT	97%
EL	97%
SK	96%
PL	96%
BG	96%
SE	95%
MT	95%
AT	94%
IE	94%
FI	94%
DE	93%
CY	93%
EE	93%
FR	93%
LU	92%
RO	92%
IT	92%
SI	92%
EU28	91%
LV	91%
LT	90%
HU	90%
CZ	88%
UK	88%
HR	87%
NL	86%
ES	83%
BE	83%
CY (tcc)	75%
IS	96%
AL	94%
ME	86%
MK	84%
RS	81%
TR	79%



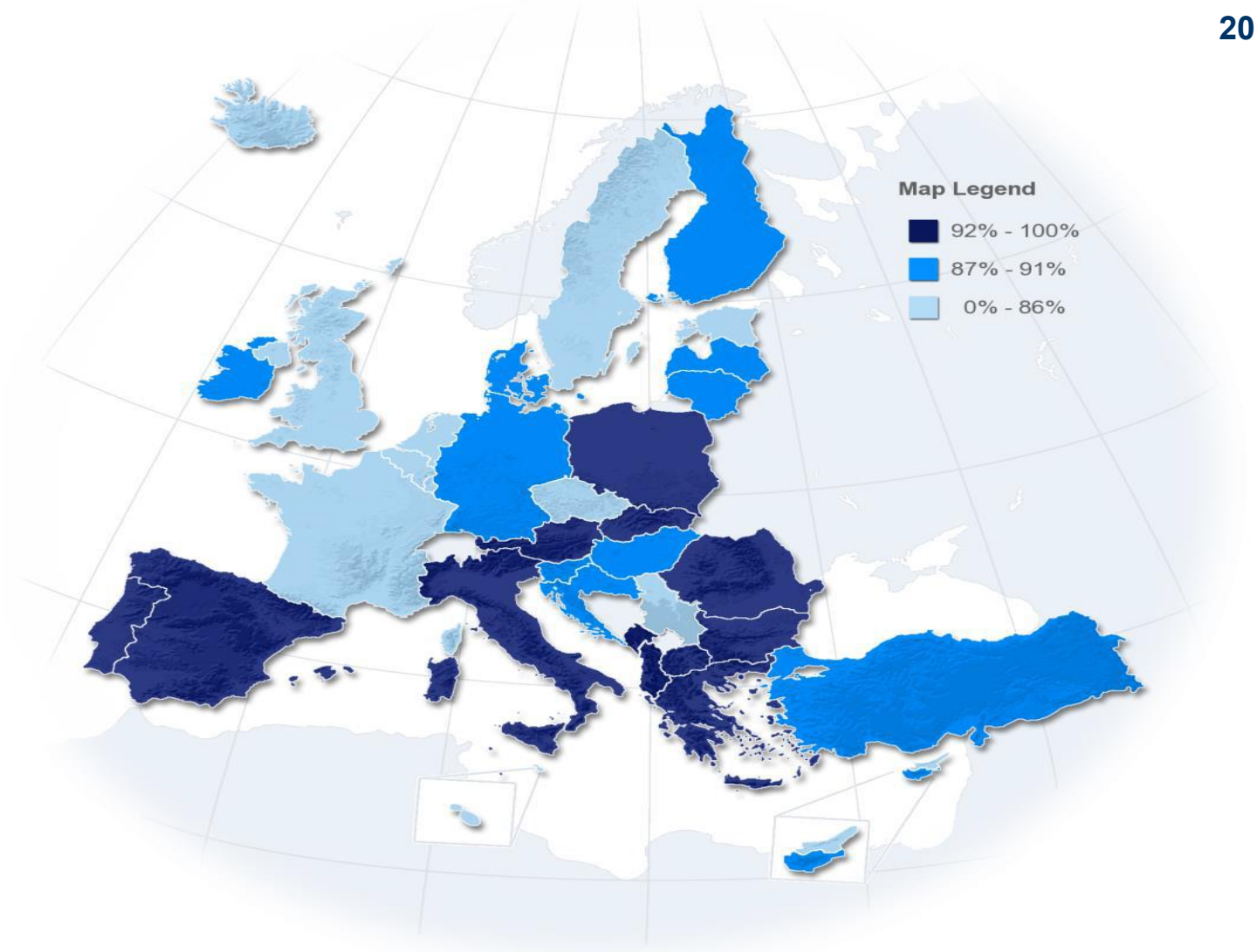
Question: QD1a.1. Please tell me how attached you feel to…

Option: Your city/ town/ village

Answers: Total 'Attached'

2014

PT	97%
BG	96%
EL	96%
PL	94%
RO	93%
SK	93%
ES	92%
AT	92%
IT	92%
HR	91%
LV	91%
IE	90%
EU28	89%
DE	89%
CY	89%
SI	89%
DK	88%
HU	88%
FI	87%
LT	87%
CZ	86%
UK	86%
SE	85%
LU	82%
BE	81%
FR	81%
MT	79%
EE	78%
NL	74%
CY (tcc)	77%
AL	95%
MK	92%
ME	92%
TR	90%
RS	84%
IS	82%



Short summary

- The success of the EU, especially the European enlargement to the east and the disappearance of the „Iron Curtain” ***proved the European identity***
- As a result of the crisis that has become systemic in the EU, of the new geopolitical space of proximity, and as a result of massive migration, there is a ***return to local, regional or national identities***.
- ***Identity revenge*** is manifested both by returning to national and regional levels
- ***the state remains the „refuge”*** of the citizen when crises arise.
- ***The European Union can be considered the main loser or the main beneficiary*** in the context in which all this can be associated with the necessary steps to further the process of European construction

Short summary

- In the current geopolitical and socio-economic context, the sense of belonging is changing towards the national-regional space
- The EU's lack of response to the problems of European citizens, the European systemic and institutional crises are eroding the European identity
- The state remains the citizen's "refuge" in crisis situations
- Ethno-cultural claims increase in the context of the "conflict" for resources
- National identity is increasingly present in the public space through association with extremist groups

Management of ethno-religious relations in the Romanian space

CARTE ETHNOGRAPHIQUE DE LA ROUMANIE

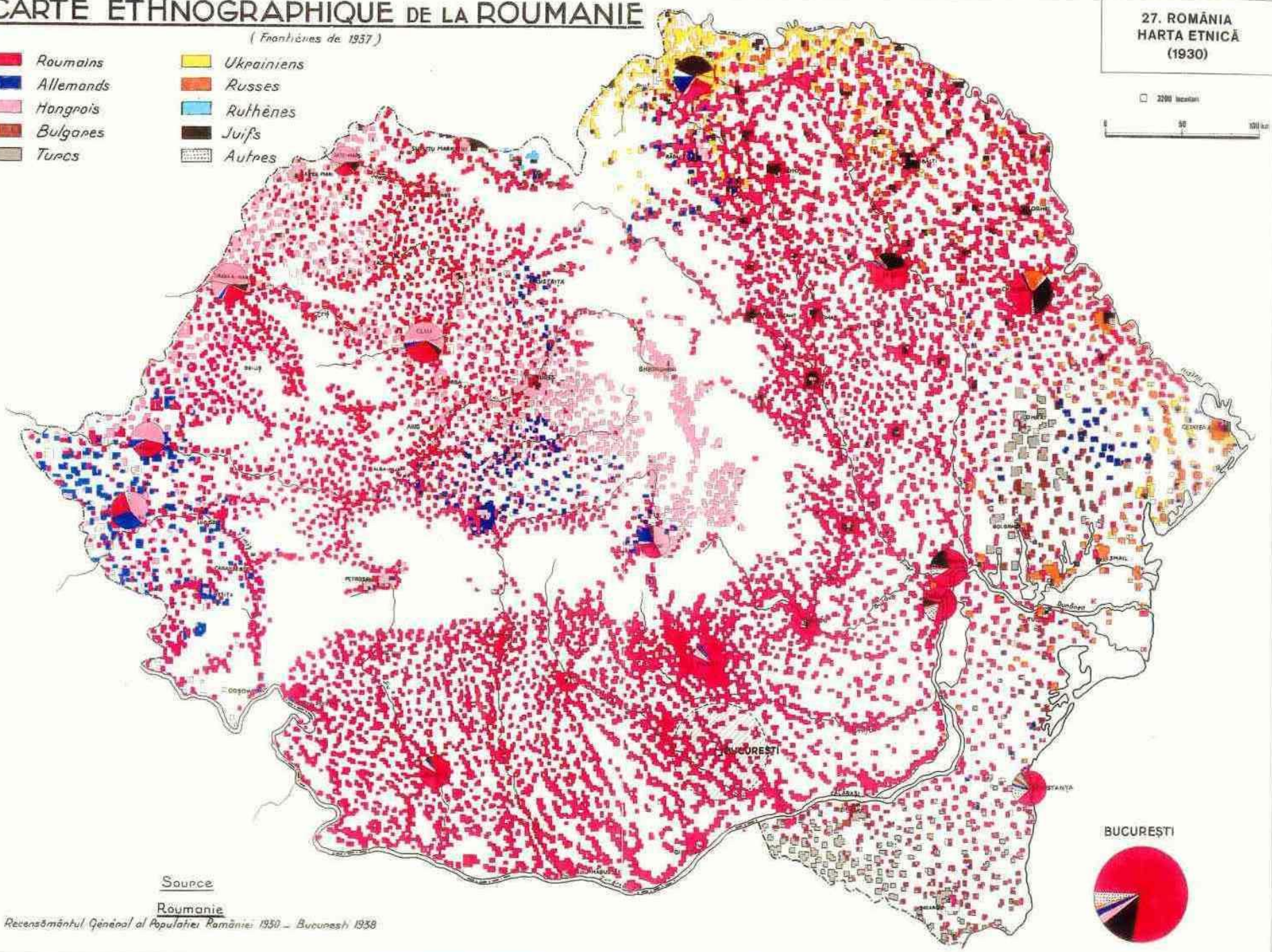
(Frontières de 1937)

- Roumains
- Allemands
- Hongrois
- Bulgares
- Turcs
- Ukrainiens
- Russes
- Ruthènes
- Juifs
- Autres

27. ROMÂNIA
HARTA ETNICĂ
(1930)

□ 2200 locuitori

0 50 100 km



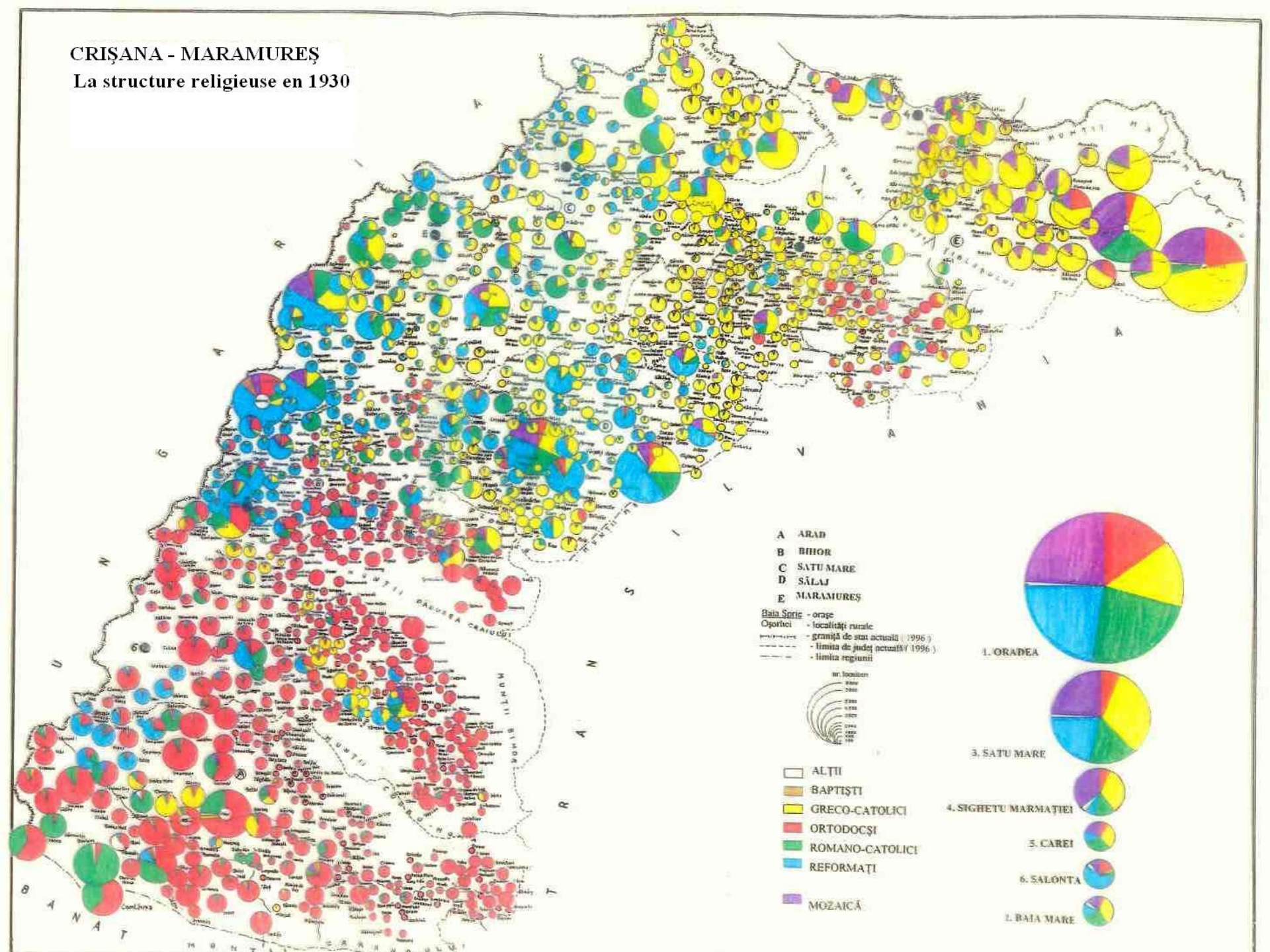
Source

Roumanie

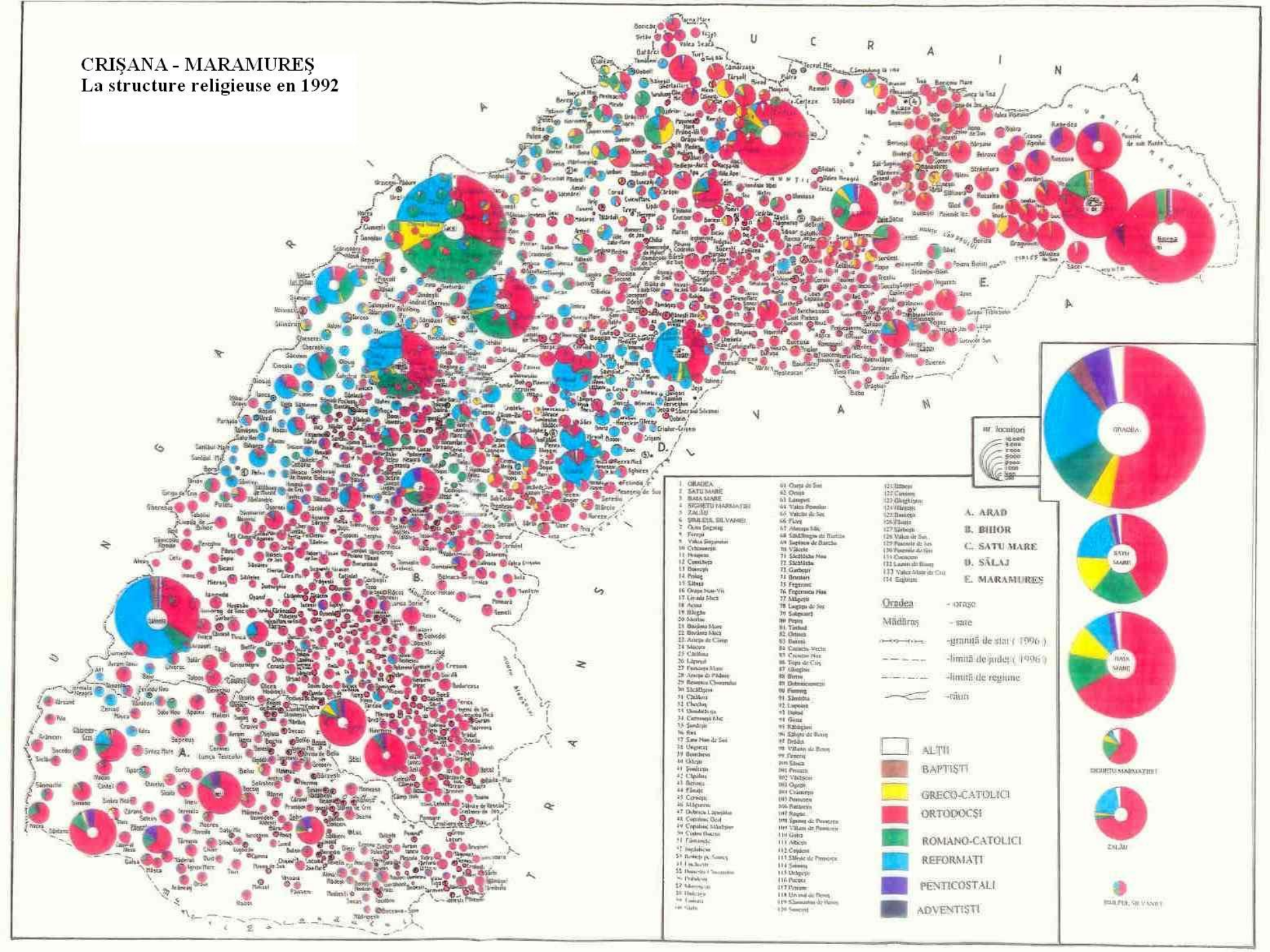
Recensământul Qènèral al Populației României 1930 – Bucuresti 1938

CRIŞANA - MARAMUREŞ

La structure religieuse en 1930



CRIȘANA - MARAMUREȘ
La structure religieuse en 1992



Ethno-demographic realities (Romania, 1930 vs. 2011)

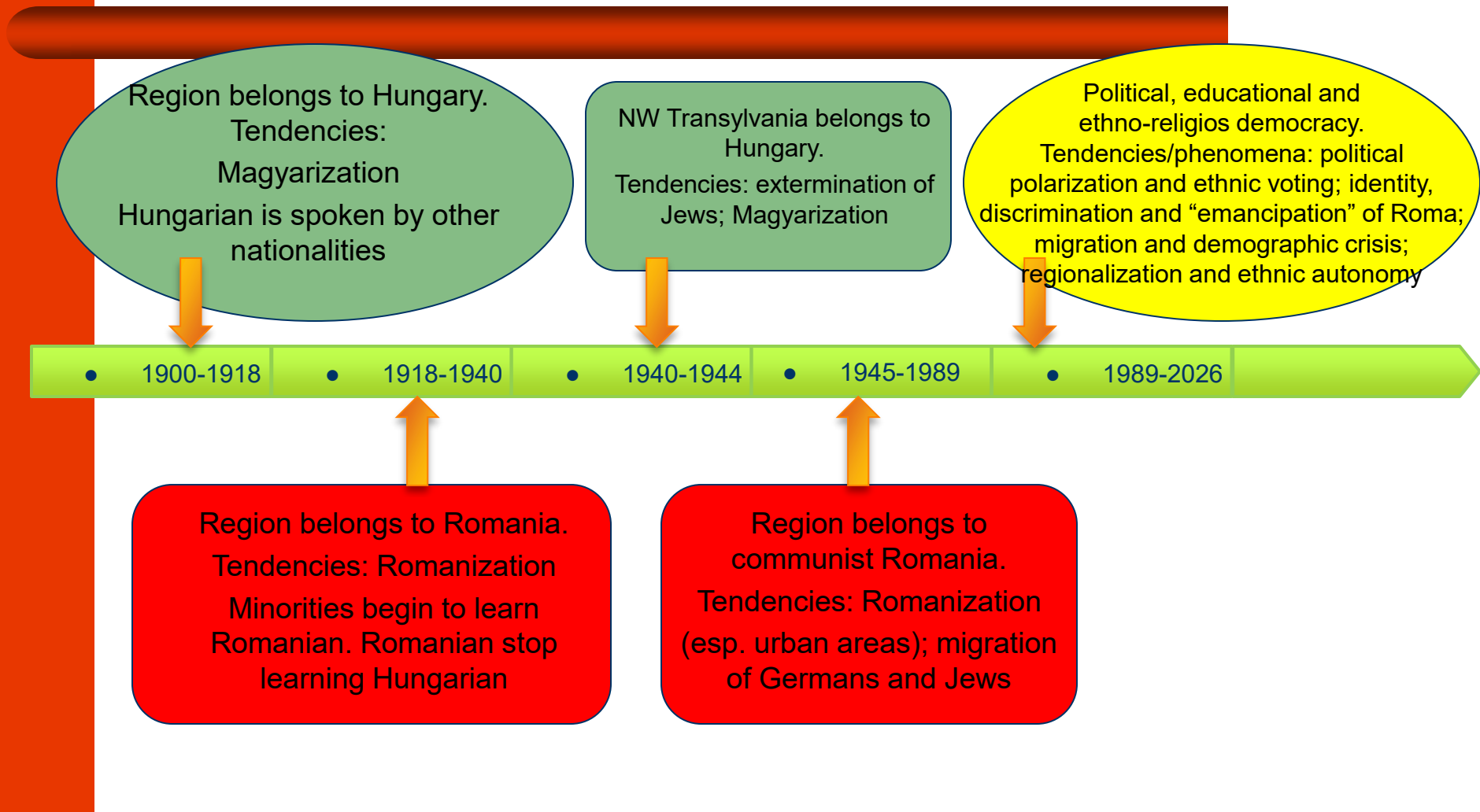
1930

	Cifre absolute	%
TOTAL ROMÂNIA	18,057,028	100.0
Români	12,981,324	71.9
Unguri	1,425,507	7.9
Germani	745,421	4.1
Ruși	409,150	2.3
Ruteni, Ucrainieni	582,115	3.2
Sârbi, Croați, Sloveni	51,062	0.3
Bulgari	366,384	2.0
Cehi, Slovaci	51,842	0.3
Polonezi	48,310	0.3
Huțani	12,456	*
Evrei	728,115	4.0
Greci	26,495	0.1
Albanezi	4,670	*
Armeni	15,544	*
Turci	154,772	0.9
Tătari	22,141	0.1
Găgăuzi	105,750	0.6
Țigani	262,501	1.5
Alte neamuri	56,355	0.3
Neamul nedeclarat	7,114	*

2011

ROMANIA	20121641	100
Romani	16792868	**88,9**
Maghiari	1227623	**6,5**
Romi	621573	**3,4**
Ucraineni	50920	**0,25**
Germani	36042	**0,18**
Turci	27698	
Rusi-Lipoveni	23487	
Tatari	20282	
Sarbi	18076	
Slovaci	13654	
Bulgari	7336	
Croati	5408	
Greci	3668	
Italieni	3203	
Evrei	3271	
Cehi	2477	
Polonezi	2543	
Chinezi	2017	
Armeni	1361	
Ceangai	1536	
Macedoneni	1264	
Alta etnie	18524	

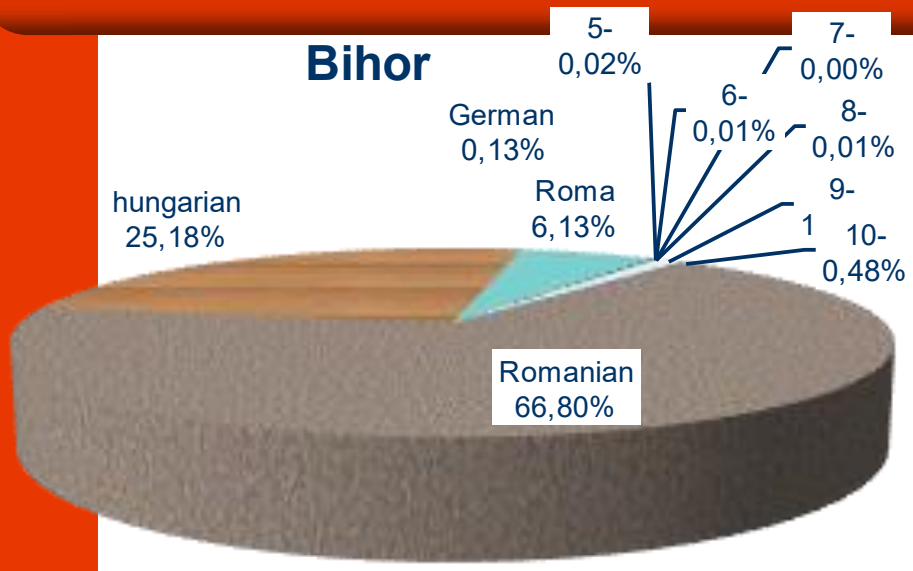
Goepolitical chronology and impact on ethnicity in Transylvania (XX cent.). Case study

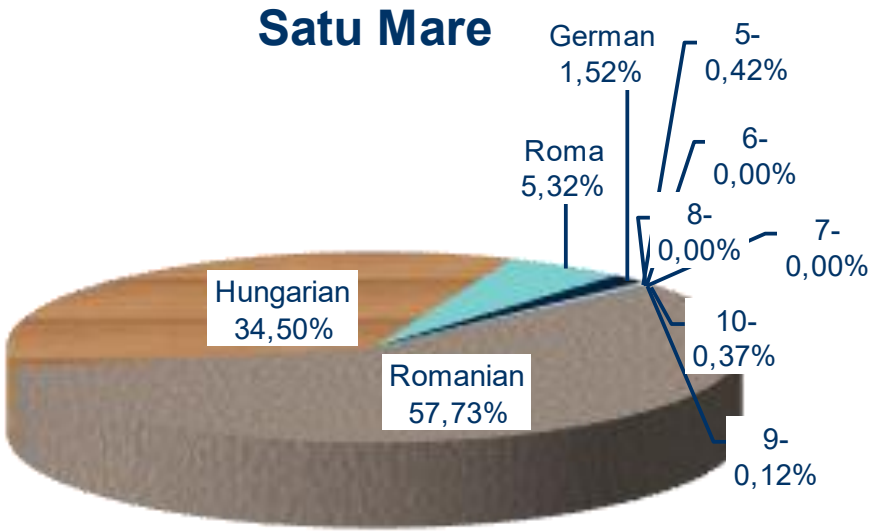


Evolution in numbers of main ethnic groups in Bihor and Satu Mare counties

County	Year	Total Population	Romanians	Hungarians	Roma
BIHOR	1930	527216	308478	171907	6211
	1956	574488	362345	194883	3333
	1966	586460	377837	192948	3678
	1977	633094	409770	199615	12014
	1992	638863	425097	181703	21796
	2002	600246	404468	155829	30089
	2011	549.752	367.221	138.441	33.697
SATU MARE	1930	301105	147135	95104	4787
	1956	337351	180930	145880	2283
	1966	359393	203780	147594	1750
	1977	393840	227630	152738	5256
	1992	400789	234541	140392	9823
	2002	367281	216085	129258	13478
	2011	329.079	189.991	113.541	17.513

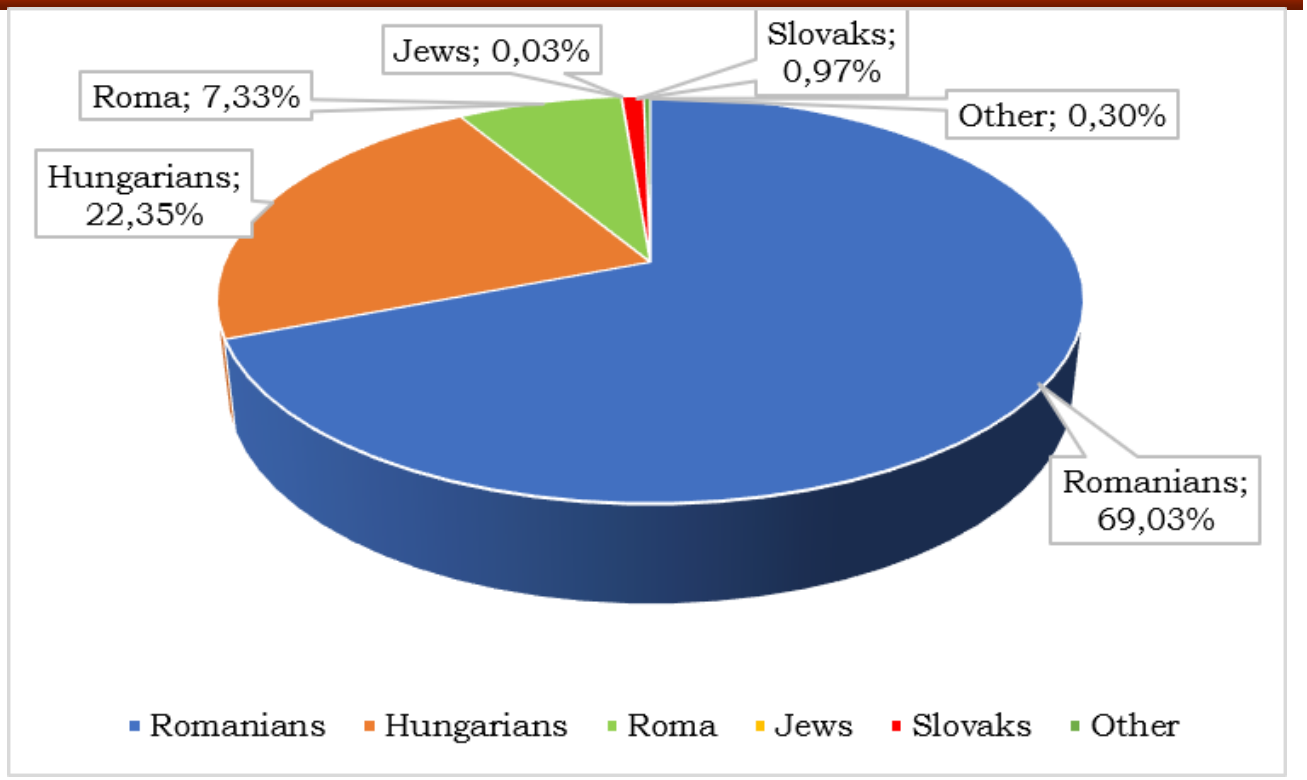
Ethnical realities in Bihor and Satu Mare (2011)





Counties	Total stabile population	Romanian	Hungarian	Roma	German	Ukrainian	Turkish	Tatar	Russians-lipoveanians	Other ethnicities	Undeclared ethnicity
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bihor	549752	367221	138441	33697	710	105	47		29	6862	2638
	%	**66,80**	**25,18**	**6,13**	**0,13**	**0,02**	**0,01**	**0,00**	**0,01**	**1,25**	**0,48**
Satu Mare	329079	189991	113541	17513	4986	1397	7		7	405	1232
	%	**34,56**	**20,65**	**3,19**	**0,91**	**0,25**	**0,00**	**0,00**	**0,00**	**0,07**	**0,22**

Ethnic Structure of the Population. The 2021 Census (% of the Population with Declared Ethnicity)



The border space of Bihor County maintains its profile as a multi-ethnic contact area

Relative to the population with declared ethnicity, the structure highlights:

- *The Romanian Majority* (69,03%), which represents the main demographic pillar (347.148 persons). Its historical consolidation in urban centers (especially Oradea) ensures national administrative stability, acting as a balancing factor in the management of public policies.
- *The Hungarian Minority* (22,35%), with 112.387 residents, represents one of the most compact Hungarian communities in the border area. Although experiencing a gradual numerical decline caused by structural demographic aging and secondary cross-border migration toward Hungary, the group maintains a strong political and institutional representation, holding compact majorities in the northern and western parts of the county.
- *The Roma Minority* (7,33%): It records a steady rise (36.837 persons). This dynamic reflects a positive natural growth rate, but also an emancipation of identity assumption in the contemporary period, driven by the gradual reduction of stigmatization and the emergence of its own public elite.
- *Small Historical Minorities* (Slovaks – 0,97%, Jews – 0,03%): The Slovak community (4.860 persons) manifests vulnerabilities due to rural geographic isolation and aging. Jews (135 persons) represent a symbolic presence, a tragic reminder of the 20th-century geopolitical traumas (the 1944 deportations).

Major trends and changes - the ethnic dimension -

- The disappearance of Jews and Germans
- The loss of Slovak identity
- 1900 => 2026. Hungarian language vs. Romanian language
- 1900: The Hungarian language was known by the majority of Romanians; A small proportion of Hungarians know Romanian
- 2026: The Romanian language is known by the majority of Hungarians; A small percentage of Romanians know Hungarian
- Romanization, especially of cities
- The continuation of the Hungarianization of the Swabians, Slovaks and Roma
- Education and religion exponents of Hungarian ethnic identity/ through the Reformed and more recently also through the Roman Catholic Church
- Discrimination, identity, emancipation, the increase in the number of Roma
- Ethnic voting and regionalization
- Cross-border cooperation # intercultural dialogue in the EU

The religious structure of the Romanian population 1930 vs. 2011

POPULAȚIA DUPĂ RELIGIE –

Tabela 3

	Cifre absolute	%
TOTAL ROMÂNIA	**18,057,028**	**100.0**
Ortodoxă	13,108,227	72.6
Greco-Catolică	1,427,391	7.9
Romano-Catolică	1,234,151	6.8
Reformată, Calvină	710,706	3.9
Evanghelică-Luterană	398,759	2.2
Unitariană	69,257	0.4
Armeno-Gregoriană	10,005	*
Armeno-Catolică	1,440	*
Lipovană	57,288	0.3
Adventistă	16,102	*
Baptistă	60,562	0.3
Mozaică	756,930	4.2
Mahomedană	185,486	1.0
Alte religii și secte	7,434	*
Fără religie și liber-cugetători	6,604	*
Nedeclarată	6,686	*

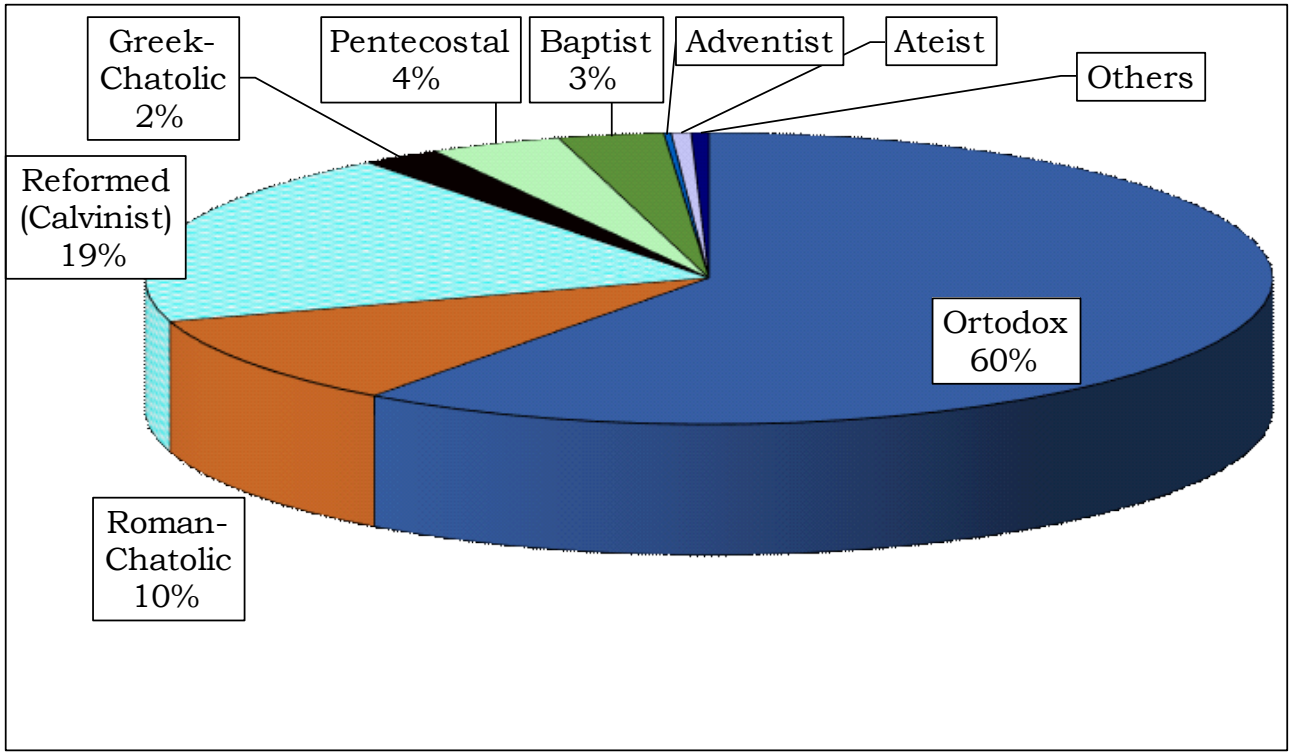
*) Sub 0.1 % — *Moins de 0.1%*

	2011	
ROMANIA (2011)	20121641	**100**
Ortodoxa	16307004	**86,5**
Romano-catolica	870774	**4,6**
Reformata	600932	**3,2**
Penticostala	362314	**1,9**
Greco-catolica	150593	**0,8**
Baptista	112850	**0,4**
Adventista de ziua a saptea	80944	
Musulmana	64337	
Unitariana	57686	
Martorii lui Iehova	49820	
Crestina dupa Evanghelie	42495	
Crestina de rit vechi	32558	
Evanghelica lutherana	20168	
Ortodoxa sarba	14385	
Evanghelica	15514	
Evanghelica de confesiune augustana	5399	
Mozaica	3519	
Armeana	393	
Alta religie	30557	
Fara religie	18917	
Atei	20743	

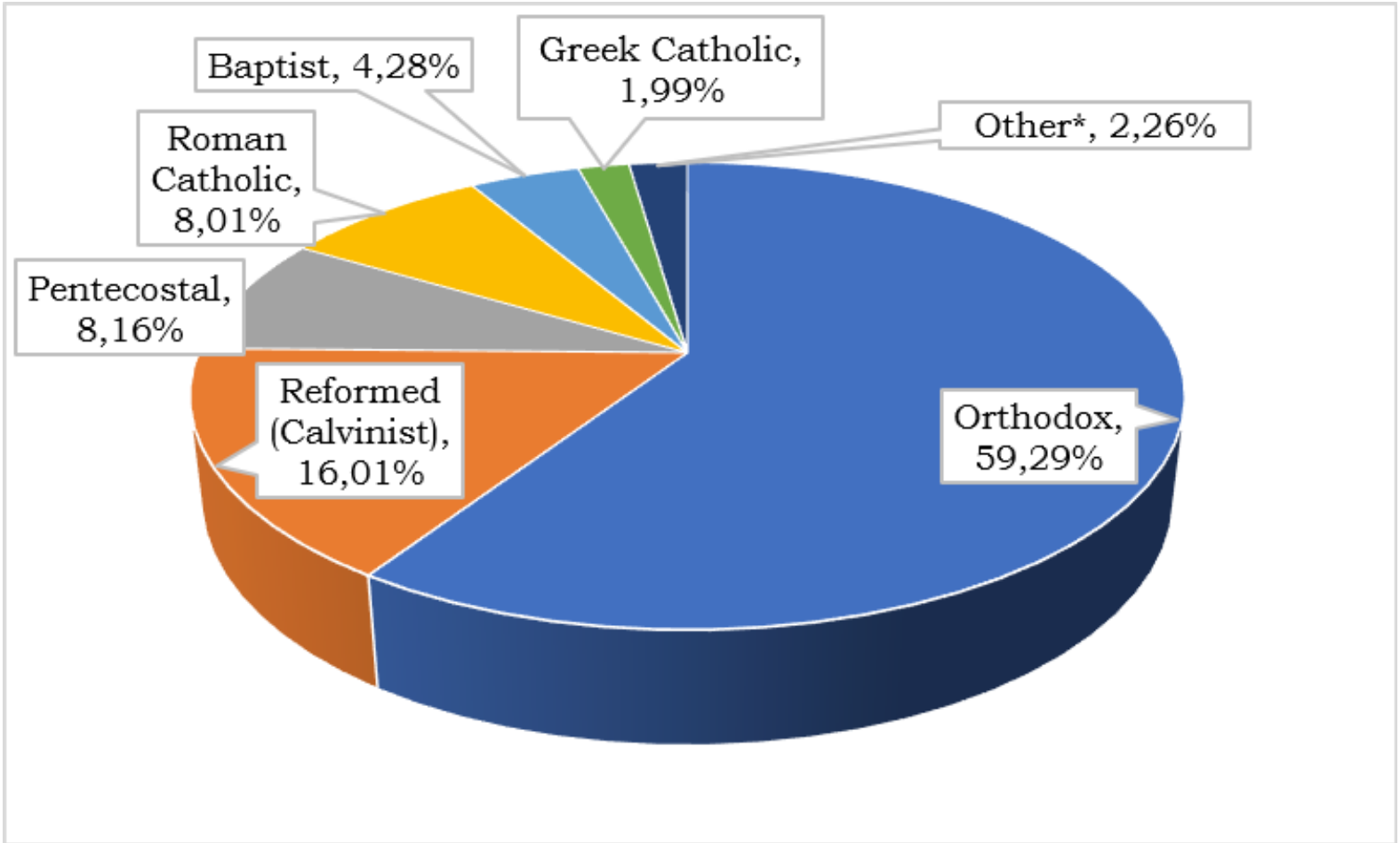
Population in Bihor County by Ethnicity at the Censuses between 1930 and 2021 (Absolute Number of Persons)

Year	Total Population	Romanians	Hungarians	Roma	Jews	Slovaks	Other*	Information unavailable*
1930	527.216	308.478	171.907	6.211	23.709	12.365	4.349	197
1956	574.488	362.345	194.883	3.333	4.878	6.726	2.214	109
1966	586.460	377.837	192.948	3.678	1.798	7.813	2.323	62
1977	633.094	409.770	199.615	12.014	910	8.079	2.700	6
1992	638.863	425.097	181.703	21.796	354	7.793	2.117	3
2002	600.246	404.468	155.829	30.089	224	7.370	2.146	120
2011	575.398	366.245	138.213	34.640	176	6.091	1.638	28.395
2021	551.297	347.148	112.387	36.837	135	4.860	1.502	48.428

Religious structure in the Bihor County in 1992



Religious Structure of Bihor County. The 2021 Census (% of those with Declared Religion)



Trends and major changes - the religious dimension -

- Consolidation of the Orthodox community
- Dissolution and re-establishment of the Greek Catholic Church => significant reduction of the community
- The reduction of religious communities specific to minorities, especially of Germans
- The reduction to extinction of the mosaic community
- The development of neo-Protestant religious communities, especially the Pentecostal community

The Romanian model of managing inter-ethnic relations. Legislative framework

- guarantees equal protection for all citizens and sanctions discrimination
- guarantees full and effective equality before the law for all Romanian citizens
- includes provisions aimed at fighting discrimination and xenophobia
- guarantees respect for linguistic rights, education in the mother tongue, but also **limited officialdom** - in administrative units where the percentage of a linguistic minority reaches or exceeds 20%
- The representation of national minorities in the Parliament is provided by the Constitution

Perspectives and challenges in inter-ethnic relations in Romania

- Reducing discrimination against the Roma - a European challenge, not just a Romanian one
- The issue of local autonomy vs. territorial autonomy based on ethnic criteria. Ex. the debate regarding the Szeklerland
- Cultural autonomy - a possible solution!?
- The dispute regarding "dual citizenship" in the current European context
- Is integration still a current solution?

What is the place of dialogue or cooperation?

Identity challenges for the European integration of the Republic of Moldova

Mircea Brie
University of Oradea

Context. International level

- The historical legacy of geopolitical disputes has been transposed locally
- The collapse of the USSR
- Enlargement of the EU to the east and the Balkans
- Conflicts in the Eastern European, Asian and African neighborhood of the EU
- The migrant crisis
- Russian aggression in Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (after 2014)
- Russian interference in the Republic of Moldova and the Balkans
- The ambiguity of US foreign and security policy during the Donald Trump era

Context. National level

- The Transnistrian secession

- March 2nd, 1992 is officially considered the day the war in the Dniester began
- In May 1992, Russia intervened in the war on the side of the separatists



- July 21st, 1992. The end of the war. 30 years later, the frozen conflict continues (Boris Yeltsin and Mircea Snegur signed the cease-fire agreement in Moscow)



Context. National level

- The Autonomous Region of Găgăuzia
- Proclaimed on August 19th, 1990, the region receives the status of autonomy recognized by the Chișinău Parliament in December 1994
- in 2014, the population was 134.535 inhabitants
- The official languages are Gagauz, Romanian and Russian.





Context. National level

Identity as border in the Republic of Moldova

- citizen identity / civic identity
- ethnic identity
- religion identity
- linguistic identity
- alphabet identity
- cultural identity
- geopolitical identity



Context. National level

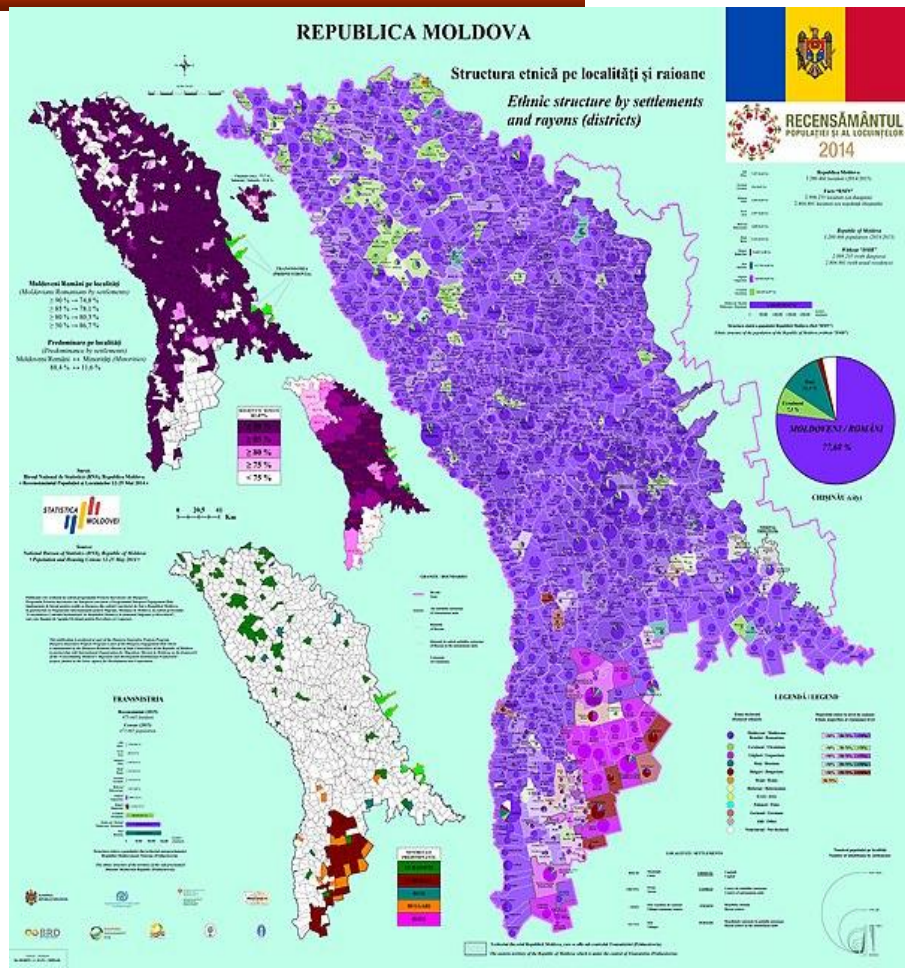
- ***National identity, or about being Moldovan***

The *Moldovenism* versus *Romanianism* debate

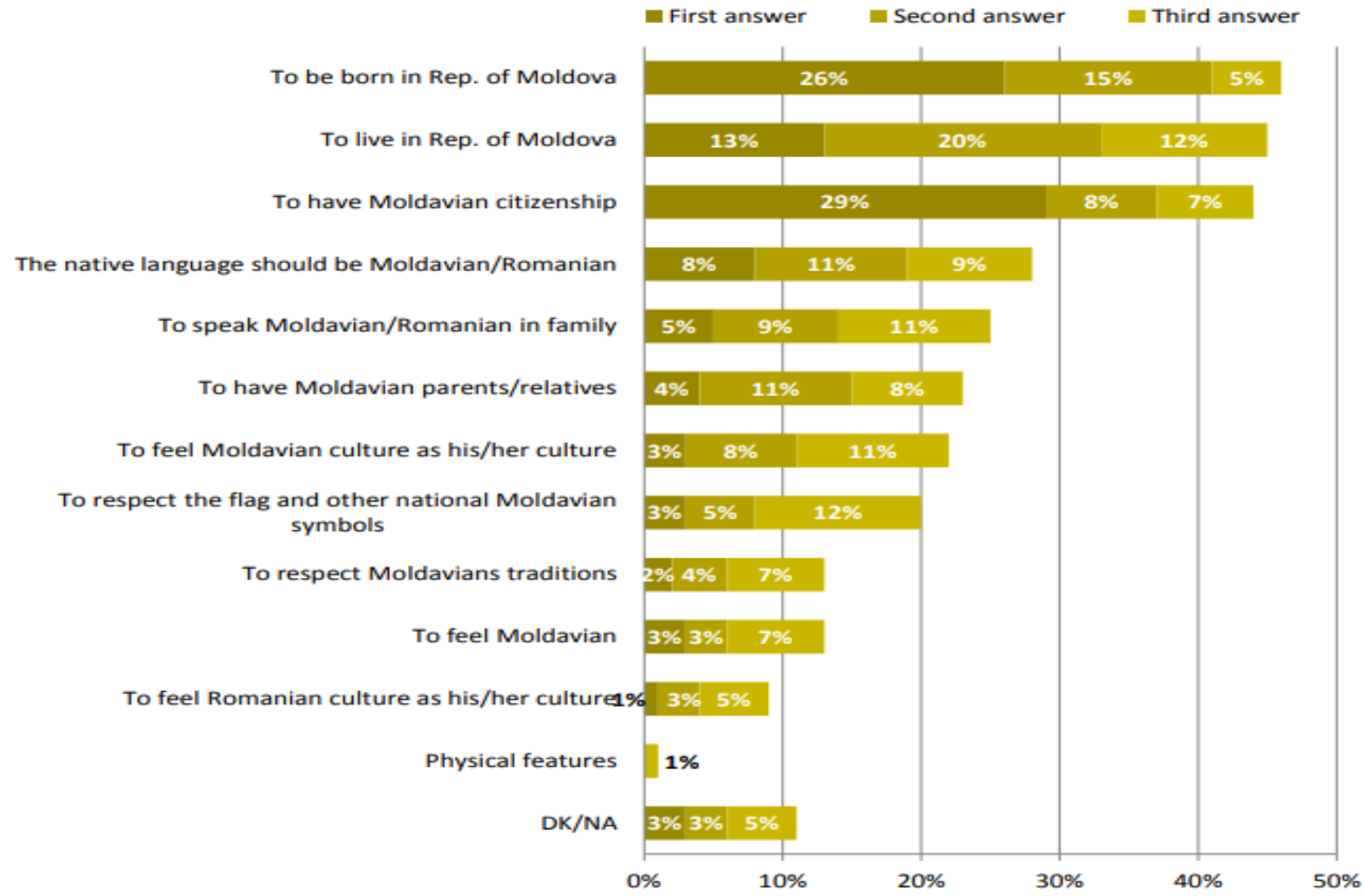
- ***The Romanian language versus the Moldovan language***

- The Moldovan Declaration of Independence (1991): “the establishment of Romanian as a state language”
- 1994: The official language of Moldova is according to the new constitution, the “Moldovan language”
- 5 December 2013, the Constitutional Court of Moldova: “the state language of Moldova is Romanian”.

- ***Being a Romanian in the Republic of Moldova***



The most important things for someone to be considered moldavian



Context. National level

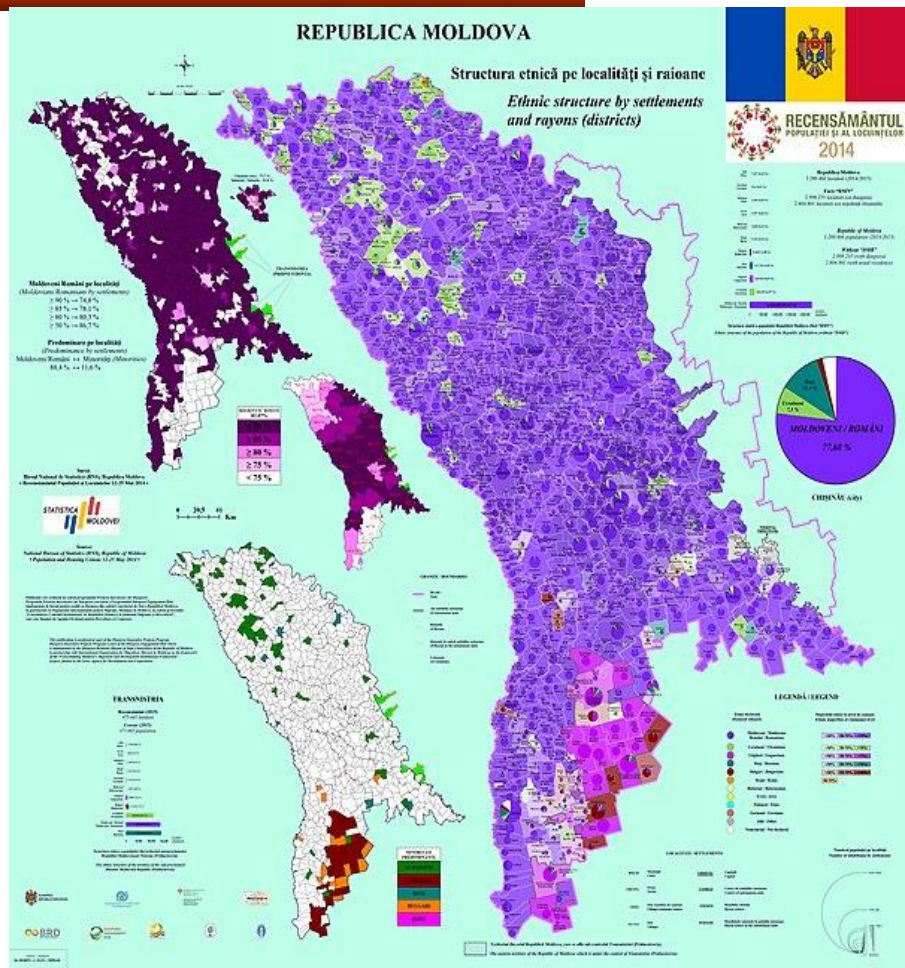
- ***Being a Russian in the Republic of Moldova***
- **The Cyrillic alphabet as an identity border**

- the Cyrillic alphabet as a distinctive element in relation to the Romanian language
- In Transnistria, Cyrillic spelling is still used to write "Moldovan".

- ***Orthodoxy in the Republic of Moldova: between Bucharest and Moscow***

- This organization has reflected geopolitical trends from Moscow and Bucharest

- ***The Gagauz community - an identity on the border***



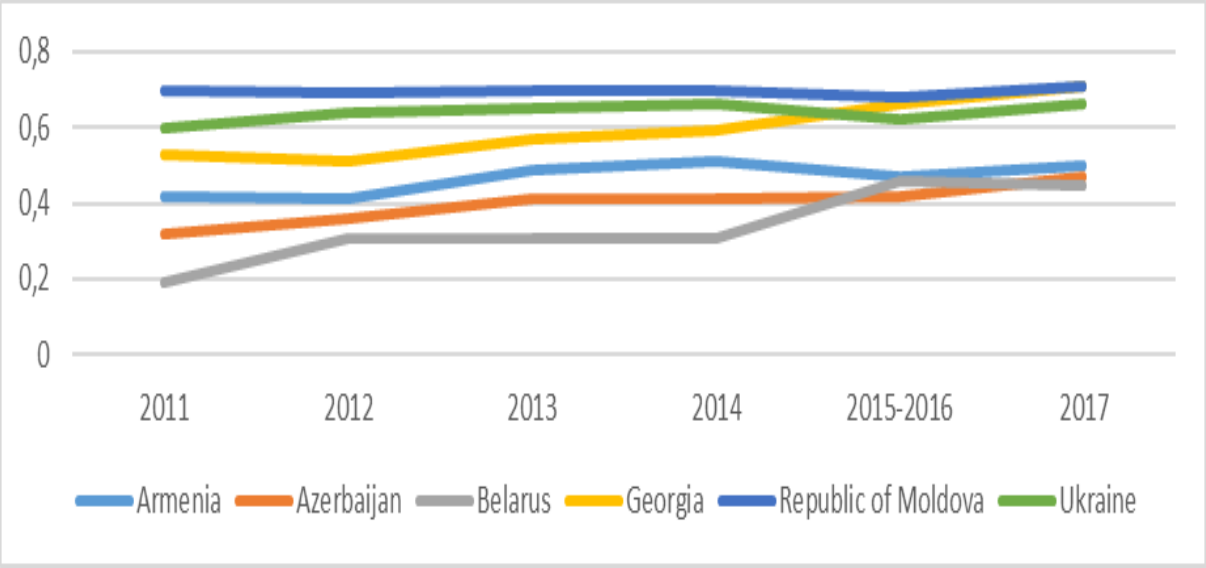
The Republic of Moldova
European integration and identity heritage

- ***The Association Agreement (AA)* between the EU and Republic of Moldova**, signed on June 27, 2014 in Brussels
- On **3 March 2022**, Republic of Moldova applied for EU membership
- On **17 June 2022**, the European Commission issued its opinion on the application for EU membership
- On **23 June 2022**, the European Council **granted candidate status to** Republic of **Moldova**.

The Republic of Moldova
European integration and identity heritage

Since 2009, the Republic of Moldova has been part of the Eastern Partnership Initiative (EaP)

The *linkage* dimension – EaP Index



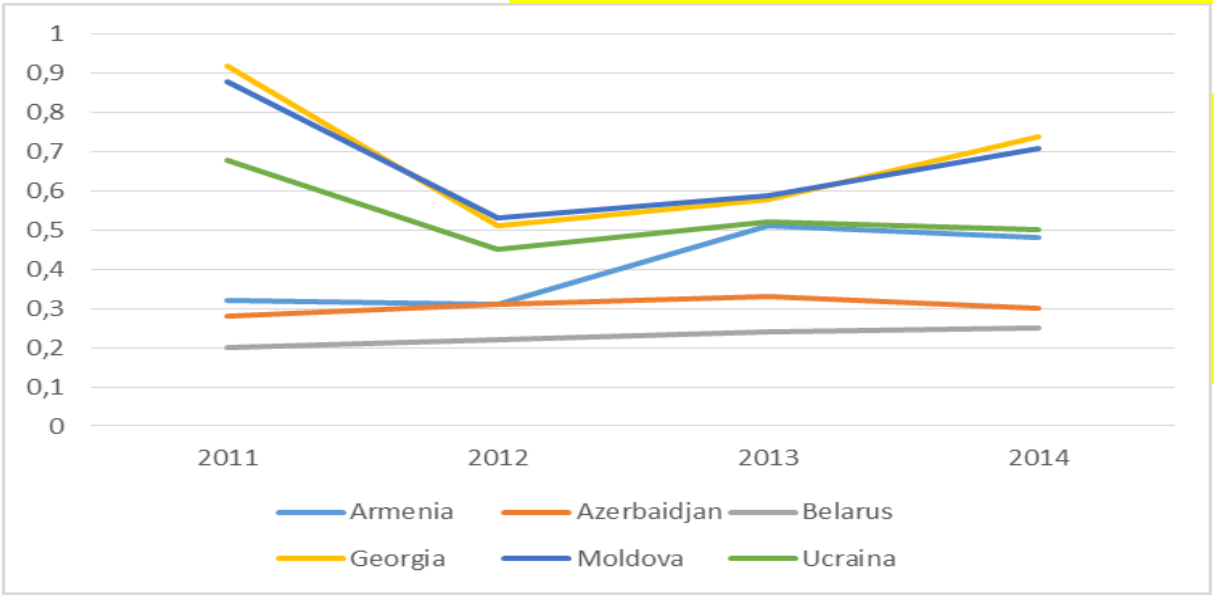
It includes variables such as: political dialogue; trade and economic integration; transport and energy; freedom, security and justice; education and mobility (*people to people*) and assistance

Source: the authors, based on data collected from reports published by the Renașterea International Foundation in collaboration with Open Society Foundations, available online at https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/

The Republic of Moldova
European integration and identity heritage

Since 2009, the Republic of Moldova has been part of the Eastern Partnership Initiative (EaP)

The *management* dimension – EaP Index



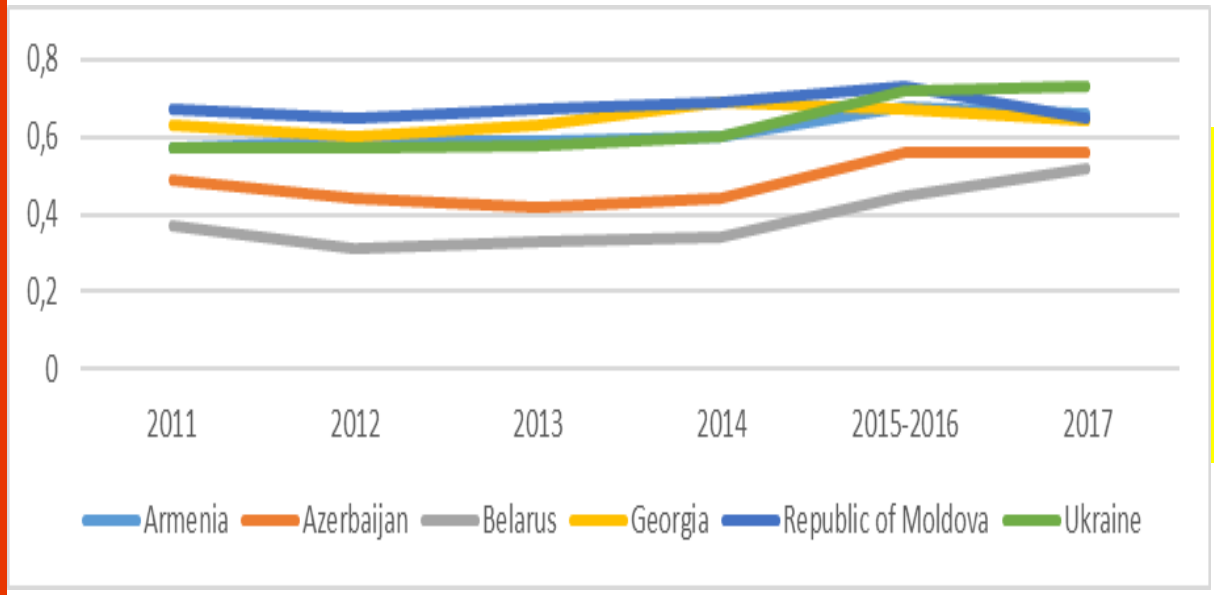
It includes variables such as: the coordination mechanism; the legislative harmonization mechanism; the civil society participation and EU assistance management

Source: the authors, based on data collected from reports published by the Renașterea International Foundation in collaboration with Open Society Foundations, available online at https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/

The Republic of Moldova
European integration and identity heritage

Since 2009, the Republic of Moldova has been part of the Eastern Partnership Initiative (EaP)

The *approximation* dimension – EaP Index

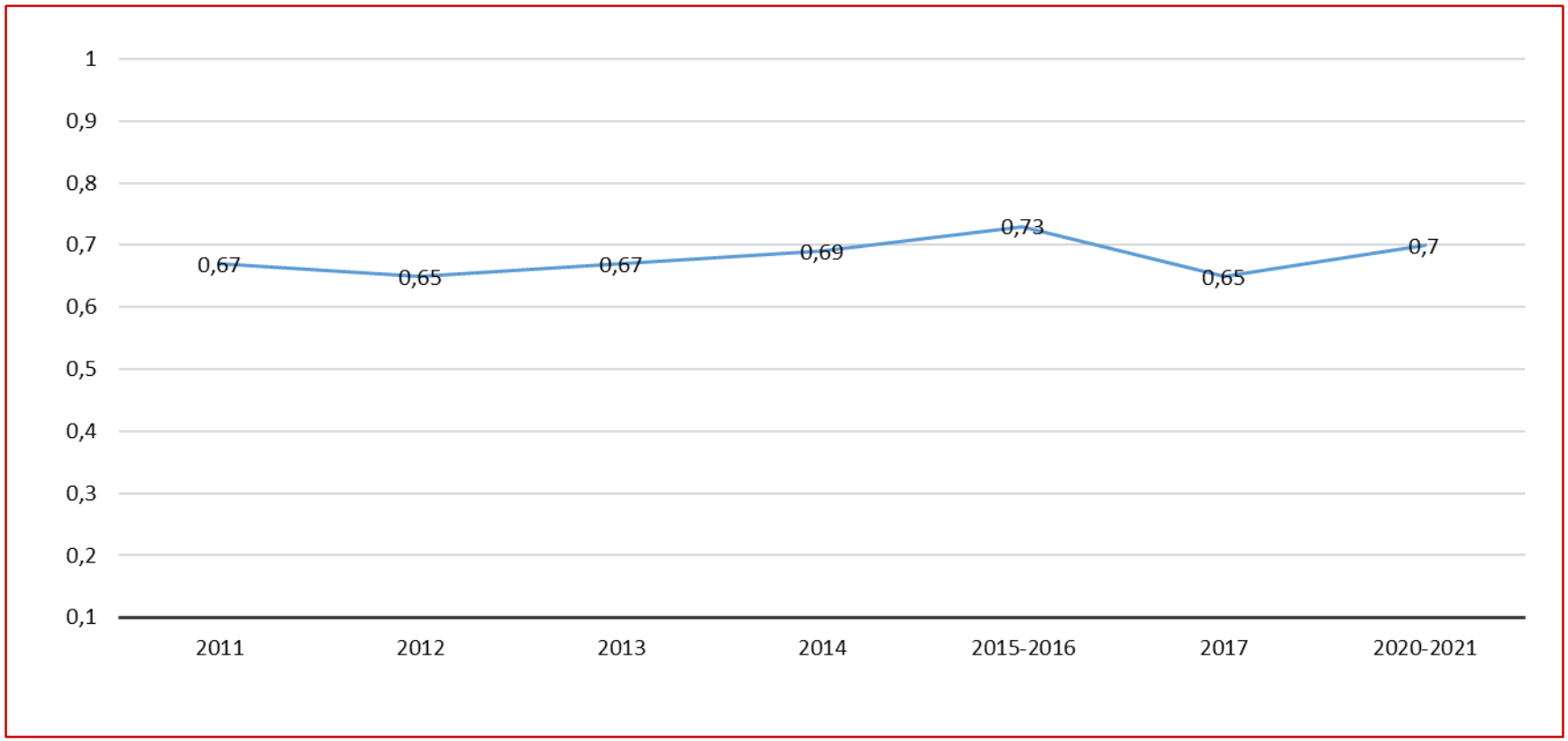


It includes variables such as: democracy; the rule of law; the quality of governance; market economy; freedom, security and justice; energy and transport; environment; education and mobility (*people to people*)

Source: the authors, based on data collected from reports published by the Renașterea International Foundation in collaboration with Open Society Foundations, available online at https://eap-csf.eu/eastern-partnership-index/

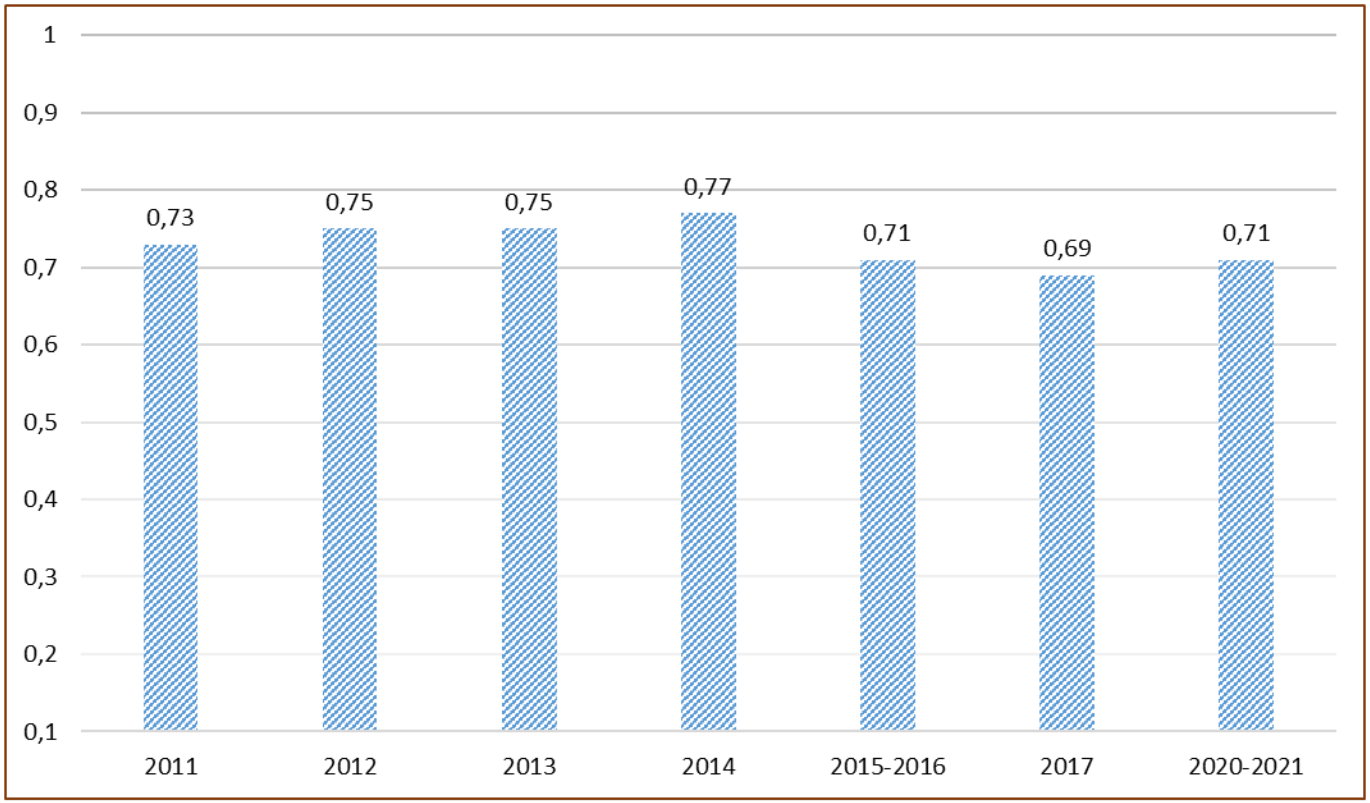
The Republic of Moldova
European integration and identity heritage

Approximation Dimension– Republic of Moldova



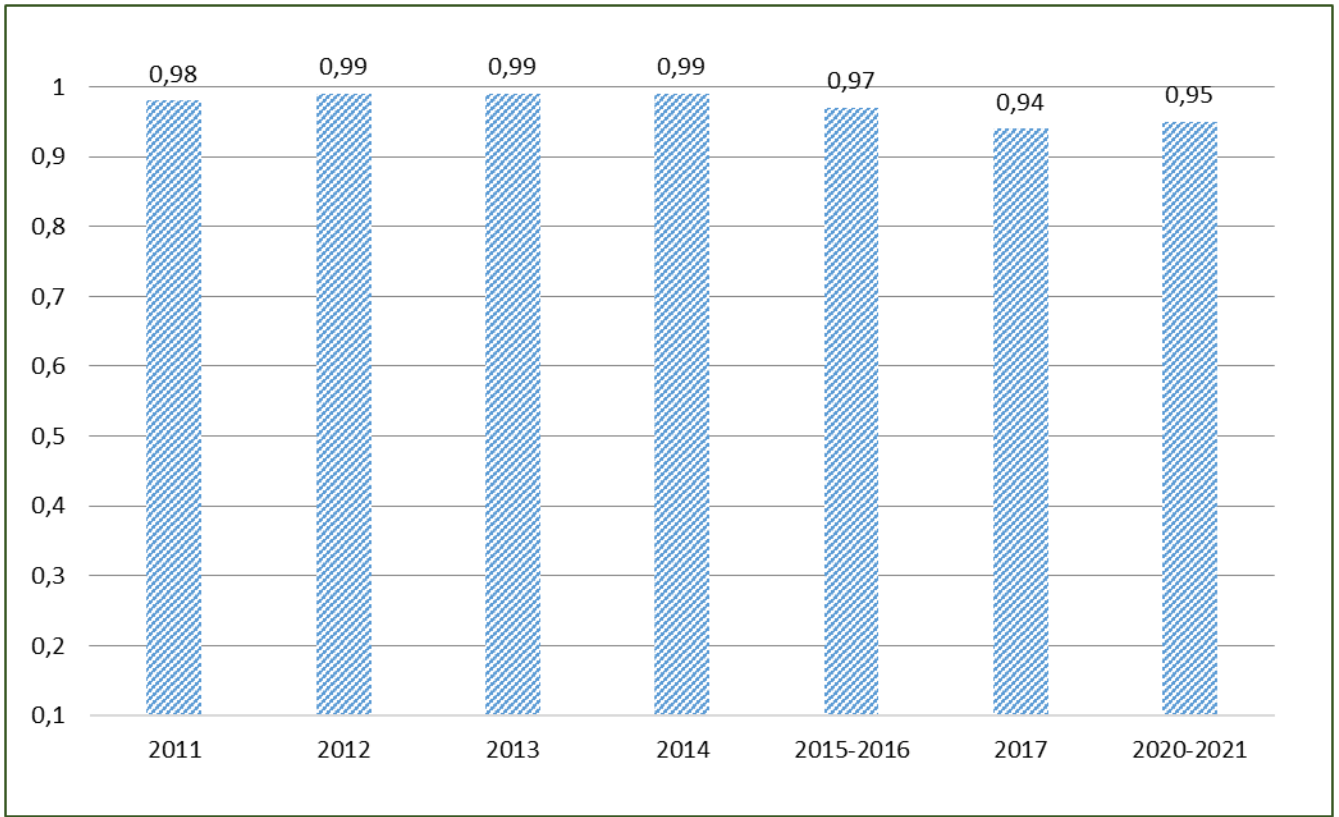
The Republic of Moldova
European integration and identity heritage

Deep and Sustainable Democracy (2011-2017) / Democracy and Good Governance (2020-2021) – Approximation Dimension

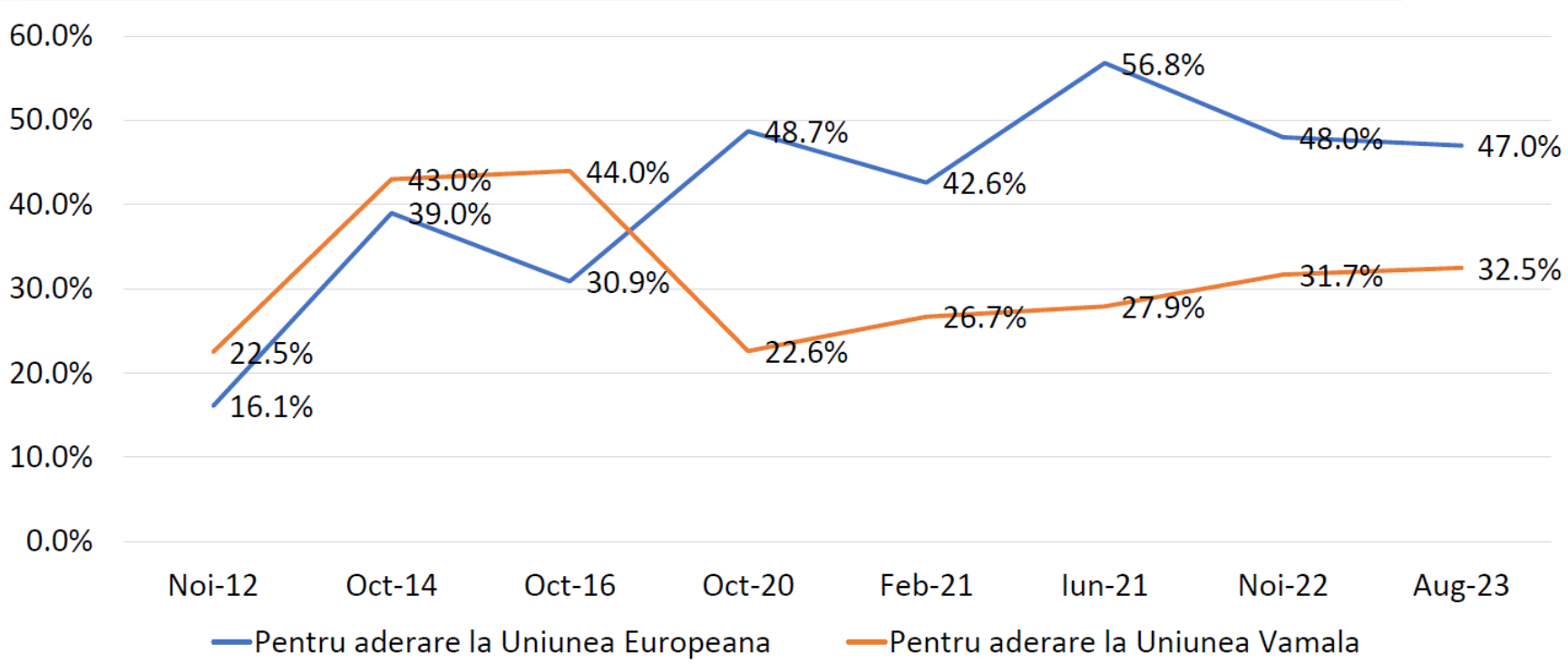


The Republic of Moldova
European integration and identity heritage

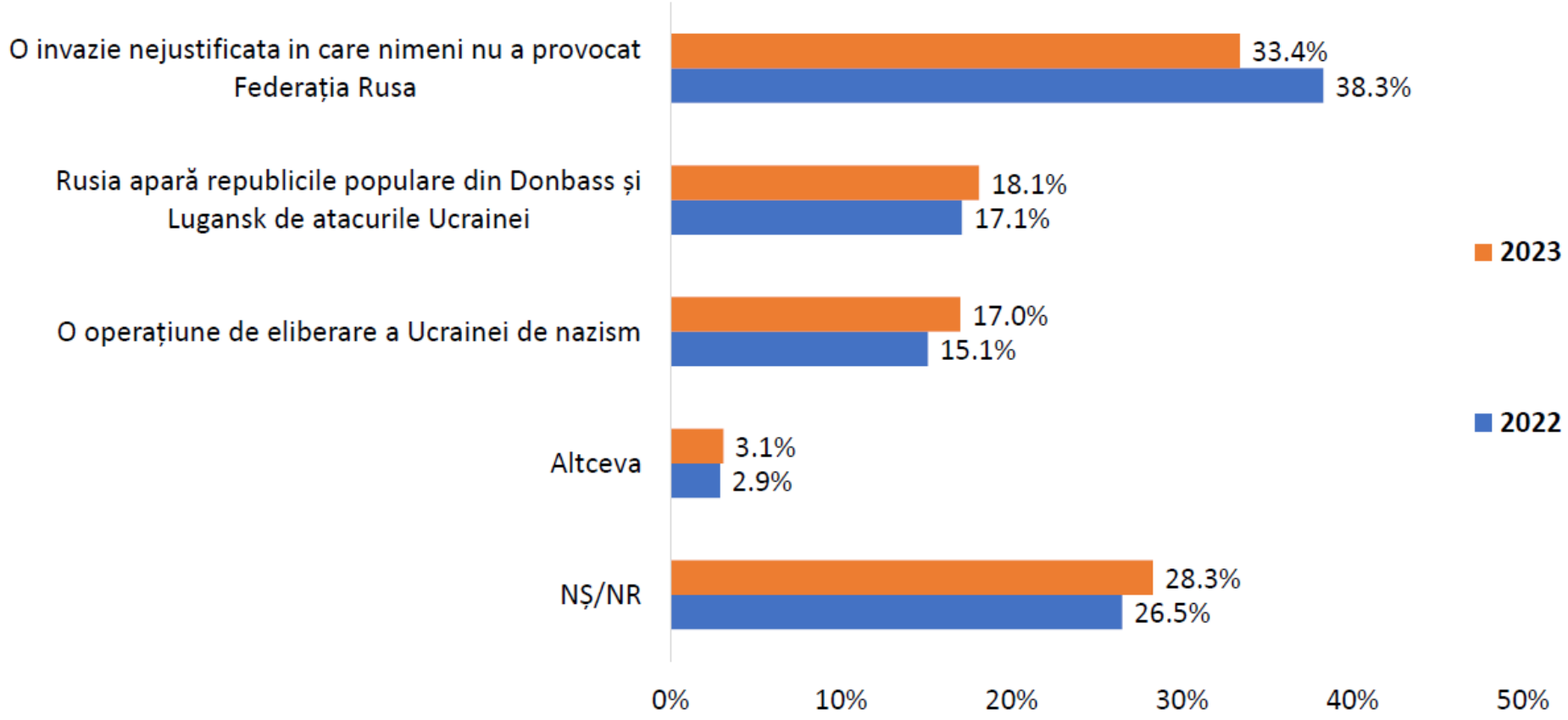
Freedom, Security and Justice – subcategorie EU Integration and Convergence/Policy Convergence (Approximation Dimension)



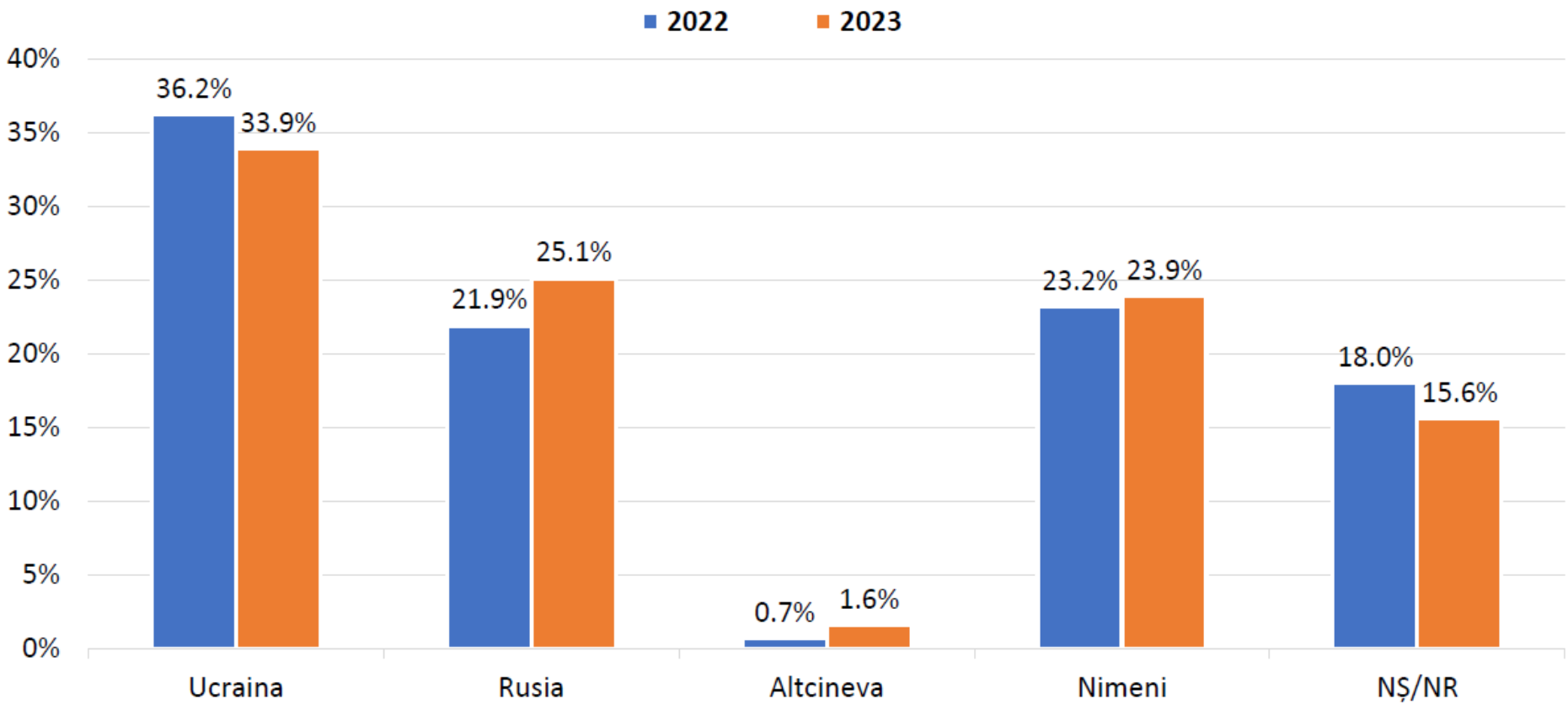
However, if you had to choose in a referendum between the Republic of Moldova's accession to the European Union and the Republic of Moldova's accession to the Eurasian Economic Union (Customs Union), what would you opt for?



Which of the following statements do you think best describes what is happening in Ukraine now?



Who do you think is right in this military conflict?



2023

The Republic of Moldova
European integration and identity heritage

- **... All this time there is an opposition to the EU supported from outside. The following are used:**

- **Fragmentation and identity cleavage**
- **Promotion of Moldovanism ("European integration would lead to the disappearance of Moldova's statehood through Union with Romania)**
- **The threat of separatist movements**

The Republic of Moldova
European integration and identity heritage

- The Russian invasion of Ukraine has fueled the prospect of inter-ethnic conflicts
- Separatism in Transnistria
- The prospect of war in the Republic of Moldova
- April 2022: A series of explosions in Tiraspol (Chisinau: Challenges and pretexts)
- July 22nd, 2022, Vitaly Ignatyev, the Foreign Minister of the separatist region of Transnistria, said he is committed to achieving independence and possibly a unification with Russia



The Republic of Moldova
European integration and identity heritage

Tensions in Gagauzia

- On August 19th, 2022, the Comrat celebrated 32 years since the creation of the Republic of Gagauzia
- **Dmitry Konstantinov,** President of the People's Assembly, proposes to convene a congress on October 2nd, 2022 with the aim of "determining future actions and solutions for autonomy"
- **Dmitry Konstantinov:** “The people of Gagauzia no longer have to endure and allow to be deceived”, “Chisinau put the Gagauz people in chains”
- **Mihail Kendighelean**, representative of the Council of Elders / former President of the People's Assembly : “Sandu is a citizen of Romania, as are many of the Government of the Republic of Moldova. That's why the Gagauz people don't trust them. They don’t want to go to Romania.”
- **Mihail Kendighelean**, for Nezavisimaia Gazeta: “We have information that Romania is preparing to enter the Republic of Moldova as soon as Russia enters the Odessa region.”

The Republic of Moldova
European integration and identity heritage

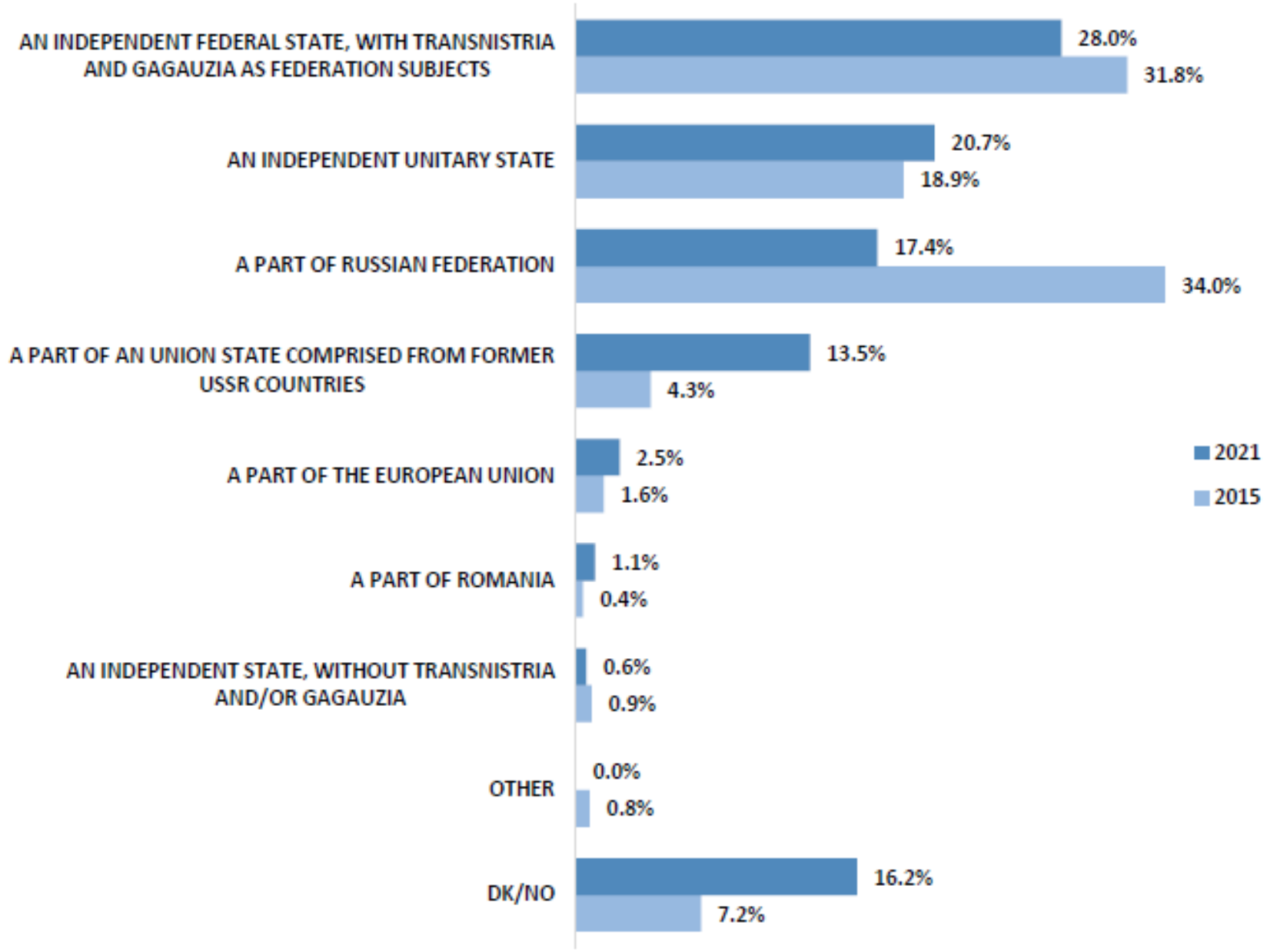
- "Gagauzia will ask for the help of Russia and Turkey for fear that Moldova will be conquered by Romania" – headlines the Nokta portal from Comrat (August 24th, 2022).

- The Gagauz authorities officially support the European path. **Irina Vlah, Bashkan/Governor of Gagauzia**: "Gagauzia is part of the Republic of Moldova and Gagauzia has the same course."

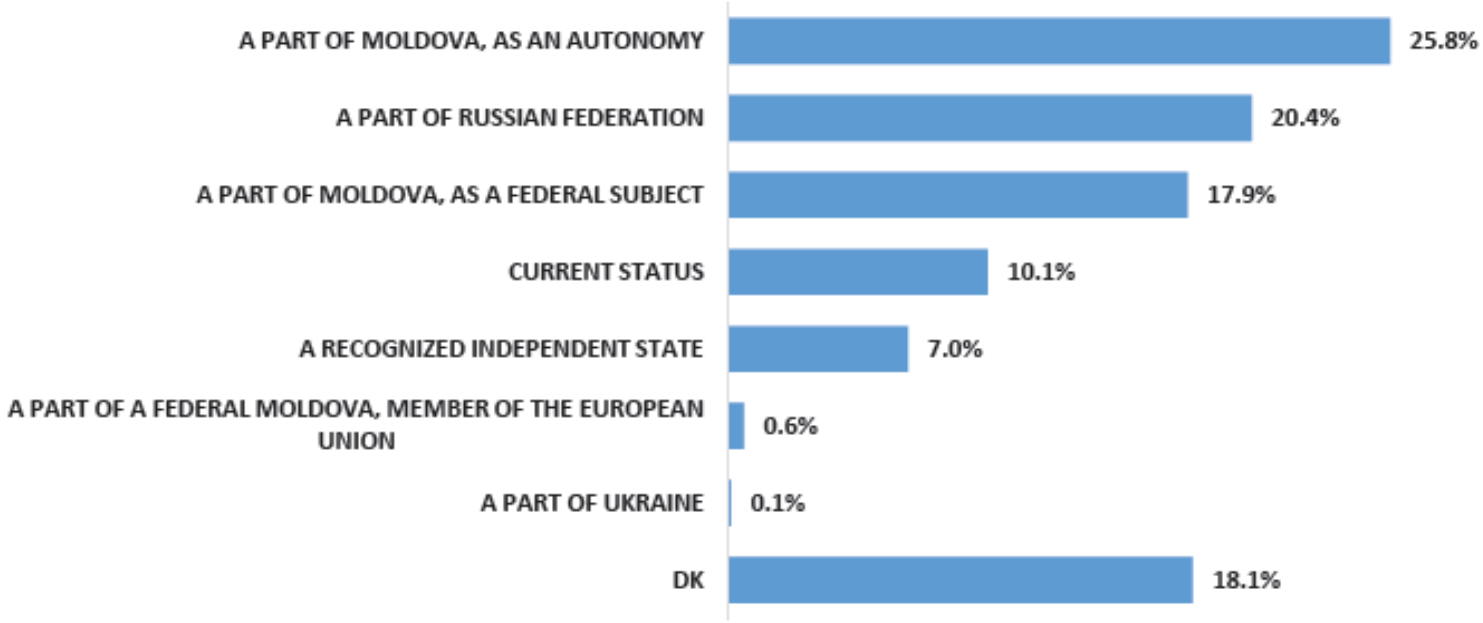


Maia Sandu, at the meeting of the People's Assembly of Gagauzia (September 2nd, 2022): **"I know better than you what my language is. I speak Romanian."**

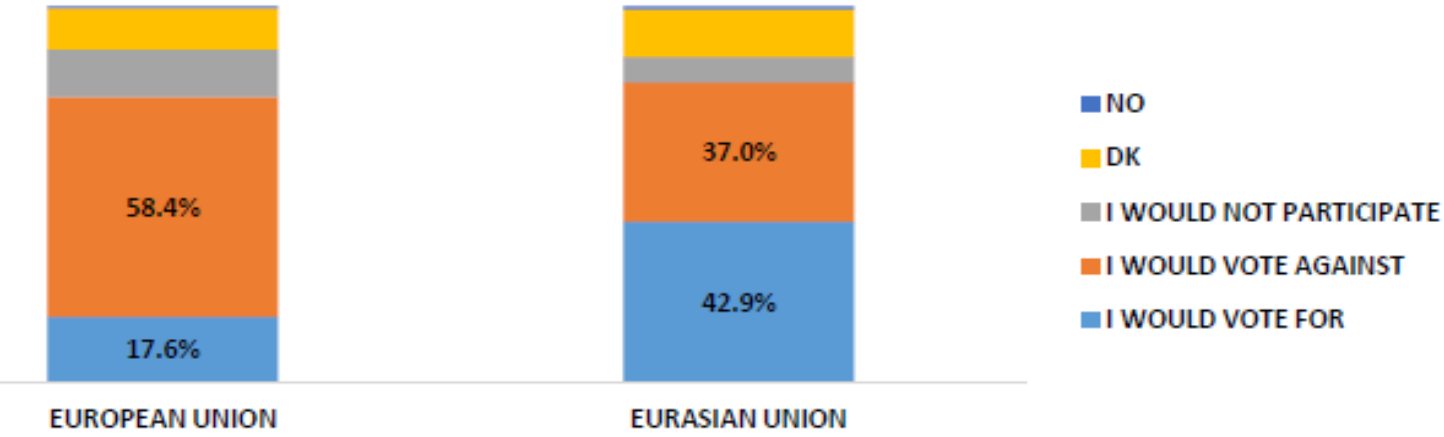
VIEWS ON THE FUTURE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA'S STATEHOOD (Gagauzia)



Attitude towards the external partners in the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia and the Taraclia District



PREFERENCES IN TERMS OF EXTERNAL INTEGRATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA



Conclusions

- The collapse of communism, in the absence of certain European integration, led to extreme nationalisms and armed conflicts
- These conflicts have apparently been frozen, but amid multiple crises since 2008, especially now amid the conflict in Ukraine, reappear in the form of "Identity Revolutions".
- They often take the form of secessionist movements
- These movements are ideologically and logistically supported from the outside
- The context of Ukrainian crises may lead to new conflicts in the Republic of Moldova in the absence of a firm and decisive EU intervention
- The accession to the EU can stop possible conflicts

The Identity Challenges of the European Integration Process of North Macedonia

Mircea Brie

Universitatea din Oradea

Introduction & methodology

- The ***purpose*** of this paper is to establish and analyze the relationship between the management of identity disputes in North Macedonia and various integration processes (e.g. Euro-Atlantic integration).

- ***Specific objectives***:

- Identification and analysis of internal and external identity disputes;
- Establishing a correlation and conducting an analysis of the mutual influence between the integration process and the management of identity disputes;
- Analysis of public perceptions

Introduction & methodology

- ***Three-level analysis***:

- Analysis of how identity issues, specifically internal and external identity disputes, influenced the level of the integration and the rapprochement process with the EU,
- Analysis of rapprochement with the EU and integration into NATO, to determine the degree of flexibility of the Macedonian position on identity issues,
- Analysis of public perceptions regarding identity disputes in the Euro-Atlantic integration context

Introduction & methodology

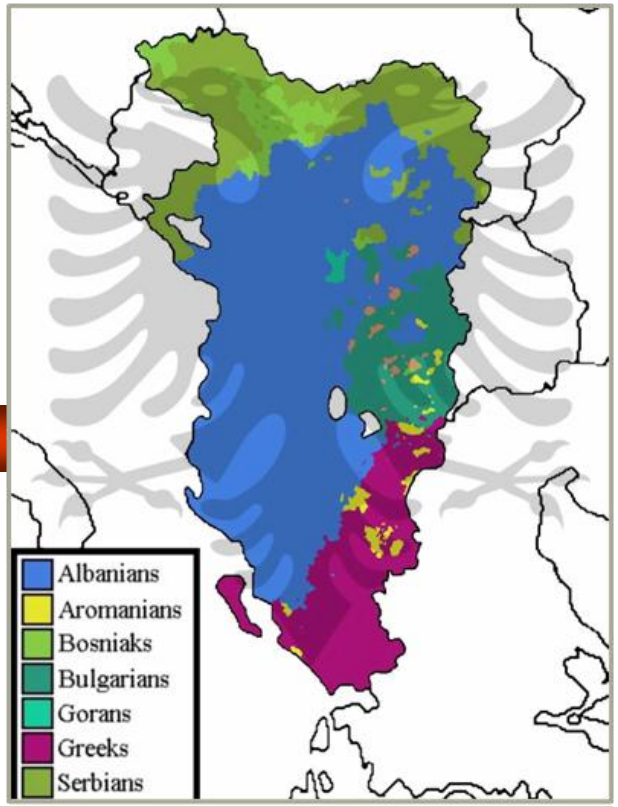
- ***Research hypotheses***:
  - Rapprochement with the EU and integration into NATO have led to a more flexible Macedonian position on identity issues.
  - Internal and external identity disputes have influenced the integration level and the process of rapprochement with the European Union.
  - Minorities in North Macedonia are more willing than Macedonians to compromise on external identity disputes in order to ensure rapprochement with the EU and NATO

Introduction & Concepts

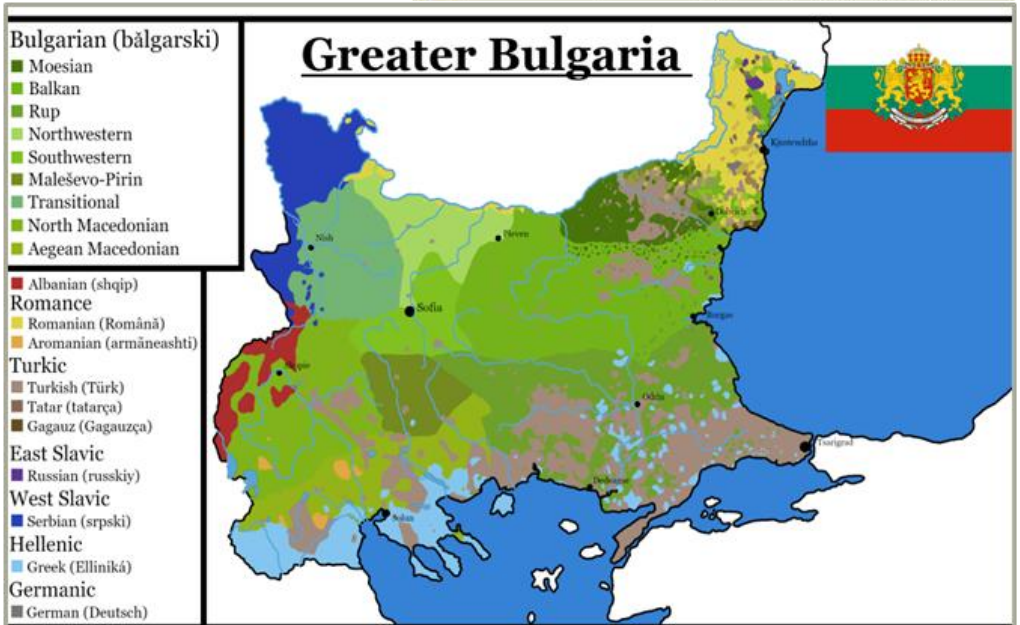
- the **process of nation-building and national identity** in the new Balkan states
- **the identity as a border**
  - **citizen identity / civic identity**
  - **ethnic identity**
  - **religion identity**
  - **linguistic identity**
  - **alphabet identity**
  - **geopolitical identity**
- **Levels of integration**:
  - European
  - security/NATO
  - Balkan regional
  - National
  - local/regional

Identity as a Border









Context. National level

- The dismantling of Yugoslavia
- September 8th, 1991: Independence of the Republic of Macedonia/ today North Macedonia
- Conflicts in Kosovo and NATO intervention in 1999
- February-August 2001, North Macedonia, the conflict between the government and ethnic Albanians, especially in the north and west of the country



Internal identity balance and the national integration process

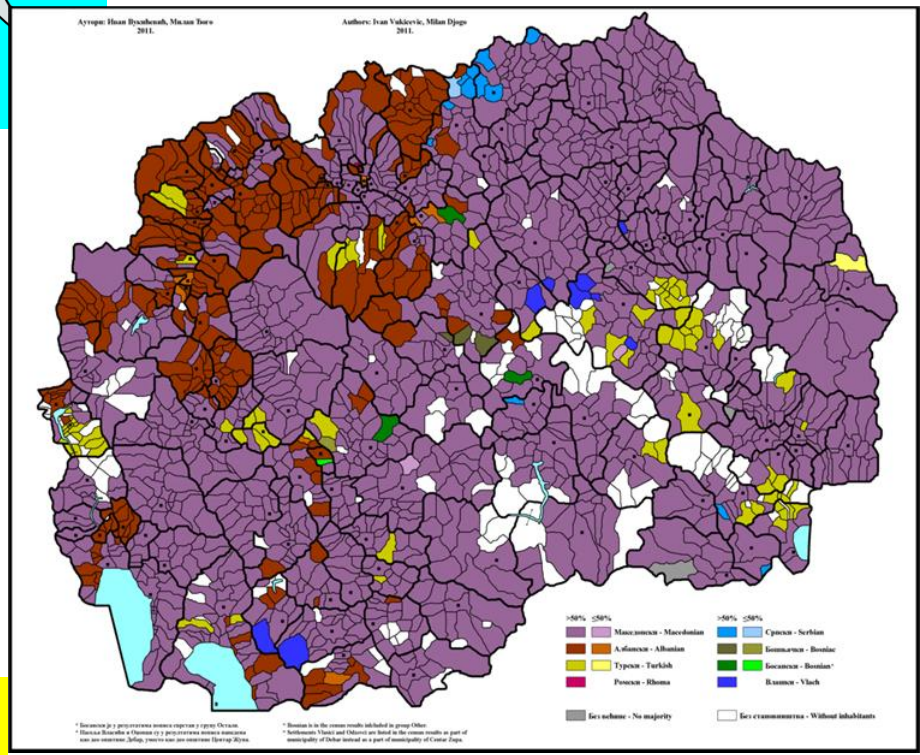


ALBANIANS: 25%

ETHNO-LINGUISTIC AND RELIGIOUS BORDER

CONSOCIATIONALISM

AUGUST 13, 2001 – OHRID AGREEMENT

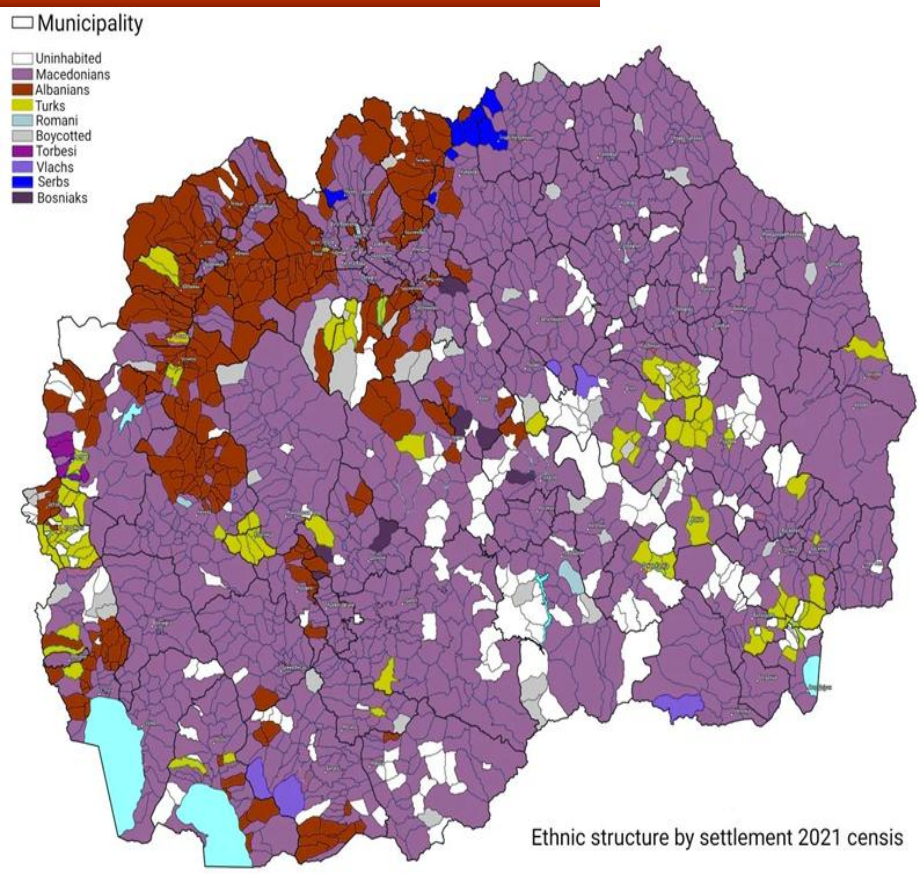


Linguistic map of North Macedonia

Internal identity balance and the national integration process

Identity as a border in North Macedonia





The identity crisis of the state's name and the integrative compromise at the security level

- After 27 years of negotiation, in 2018 Greece and Macedonia reached **a historic agreement that aims to resolve the old dispute regarding the name** of the former Yugoslav republic
- The Prespa Agreement is more than a standard bilateral agreement, it is hardly **a compromise**.
- Macedonia ⟹ North Macedonia

- August 1, 2018, NATO Secretary General sent a letter to the Republic of North Macedonia along with the NATO Accession Implementation Plan
- March 27, 2020, North Macedonia became a NATO member

The language and history dispute:
2017 Good neighbourly agreement
2022 Protocol with Bulgaria

Bulgarian requests took into account:

- revision of the national historical narratives,
- language requirements
- the status of the Bulgarian minority in North Macedonia.

Finally, with French mediation, state that held the presidency of the EU Council, the parliament in Skopje voted on July 16, 2022 for **a compromise** requested by the Bulgarians.

External identity challenges

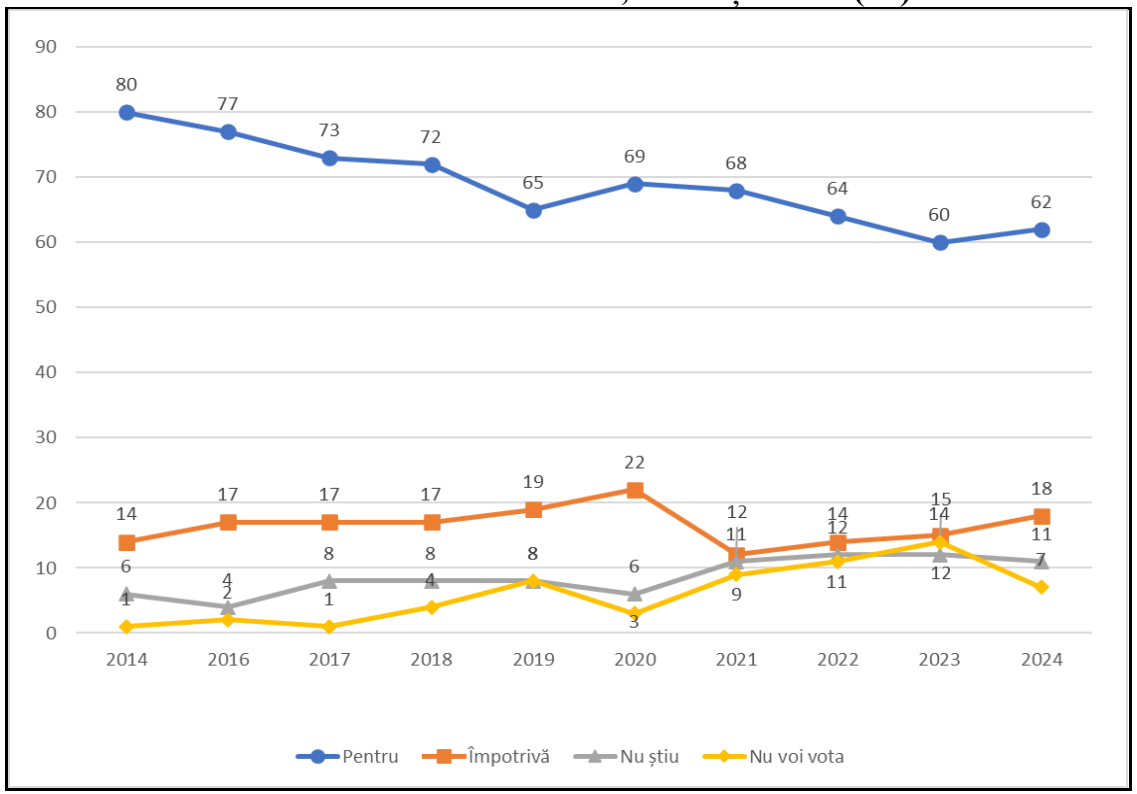
The language and history dispute:
2017 Good neighbourly agreement
2022 Protocol with Bulgaria

- It was **an agreement and a promise** (later unfulfilled).
- The center-left government **accepted** a Bulgarian request to introduce a reference to the Bulgarian ethnic minority in the constitution of North Macedonia.
- In 2024, **a conservative government** came to power led by Prime Minister Hristijan Mickoski, who "declared that he would only amend the constitution if Bulgaria first approved North Macedonia's accession to the EU" (Testorides, 2025).

Three years later, in 2025, the EU is still requiring North Macedonia to amend its constitution due to the impasse with Bulgaria.

Analysis of public perceptions regarding identity compromises

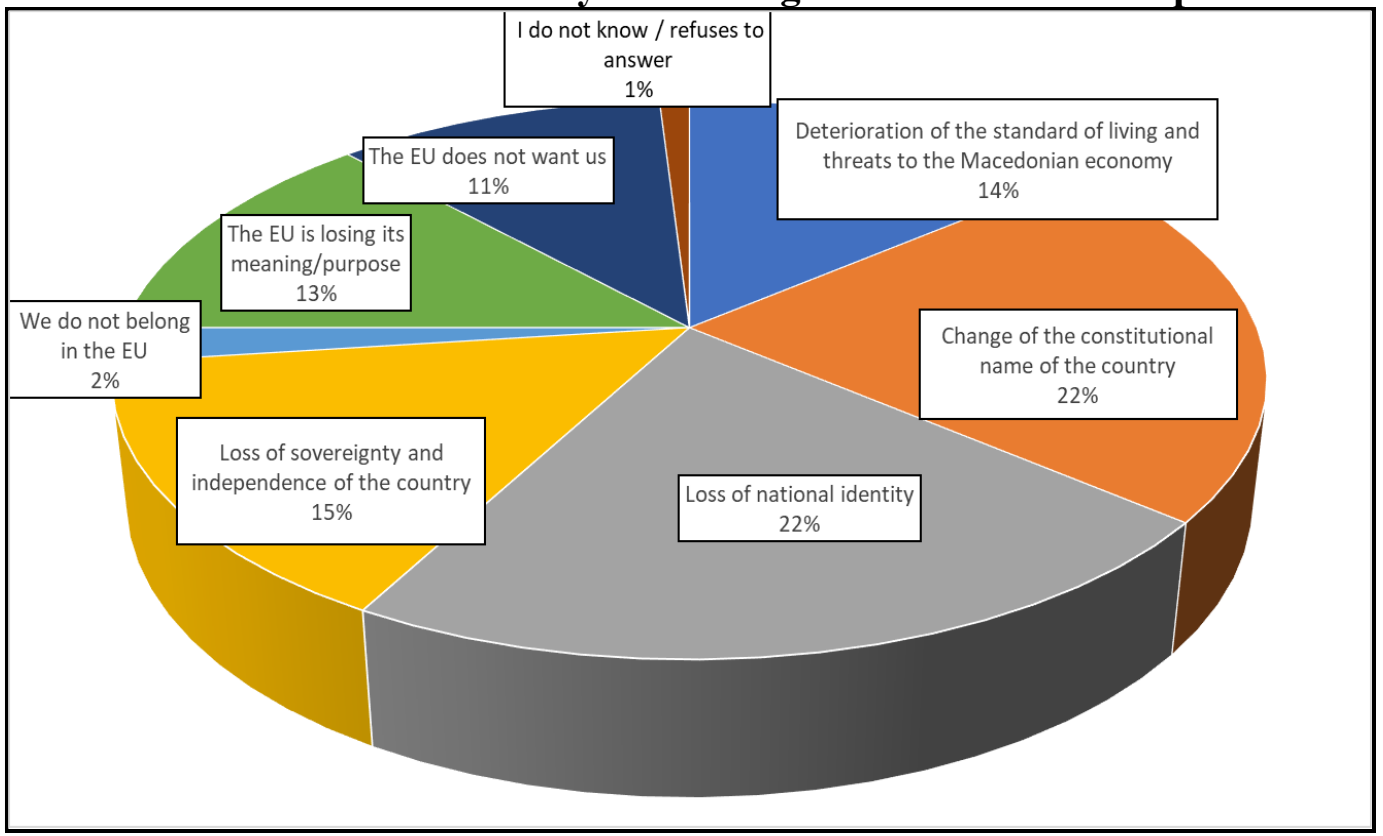
Dacă săptămâna viitoare va avea loc un referendum pentru aderarea Republicii Macedonia de Nord la UE, cum ați vota? (%)



Sursă: elaborare autor în baza datelor din Damjanovski, 2025: 13
(sondajele de opinie publică efectuate în perioada 2014-2024)

Analysis of public perceptions regarding identity compromises

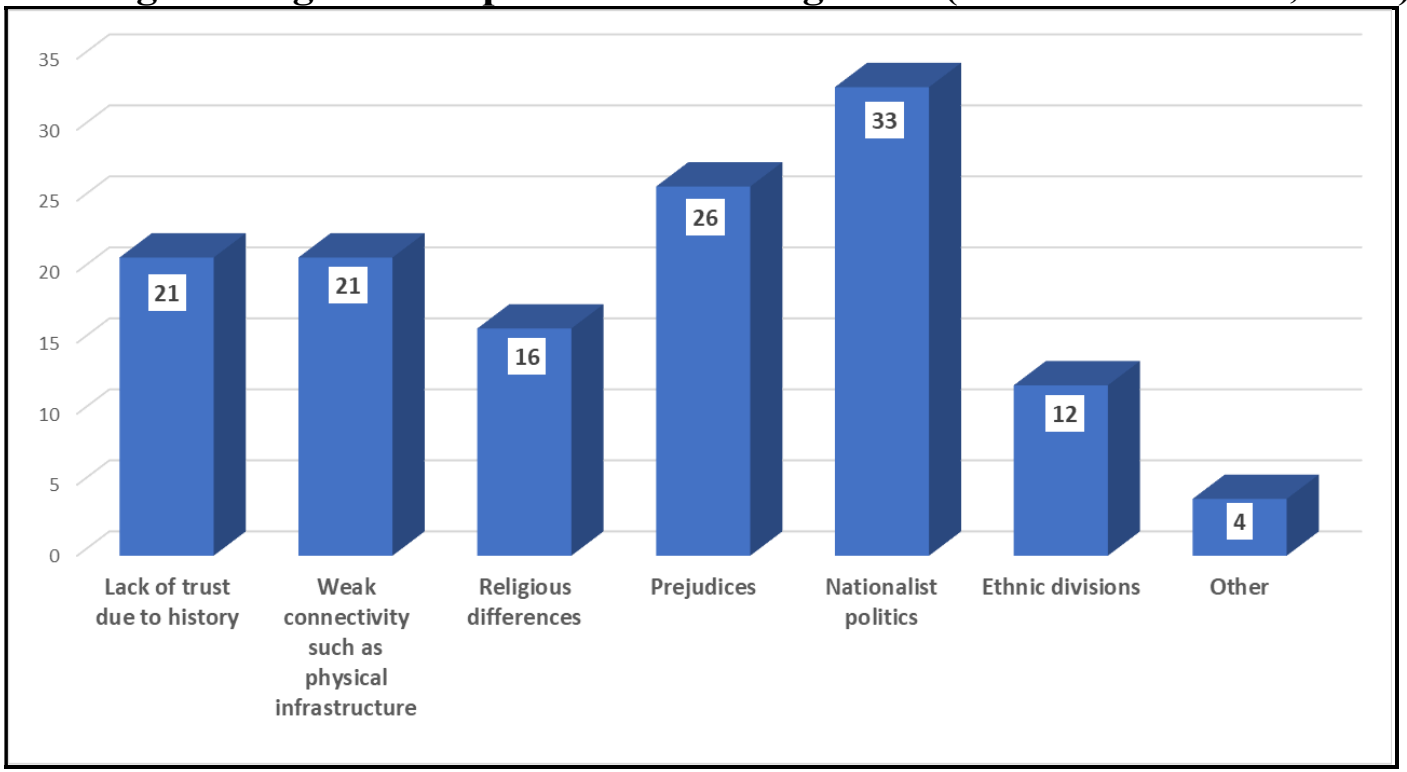
What is the reason for your vote against EU membership?



Source: author's own preparations based on data collected from Damjanovski, 2025: 23 (public opinion survey research conducted in the period October-December 2024)

Analysis of public perceptions regarding identity compromises

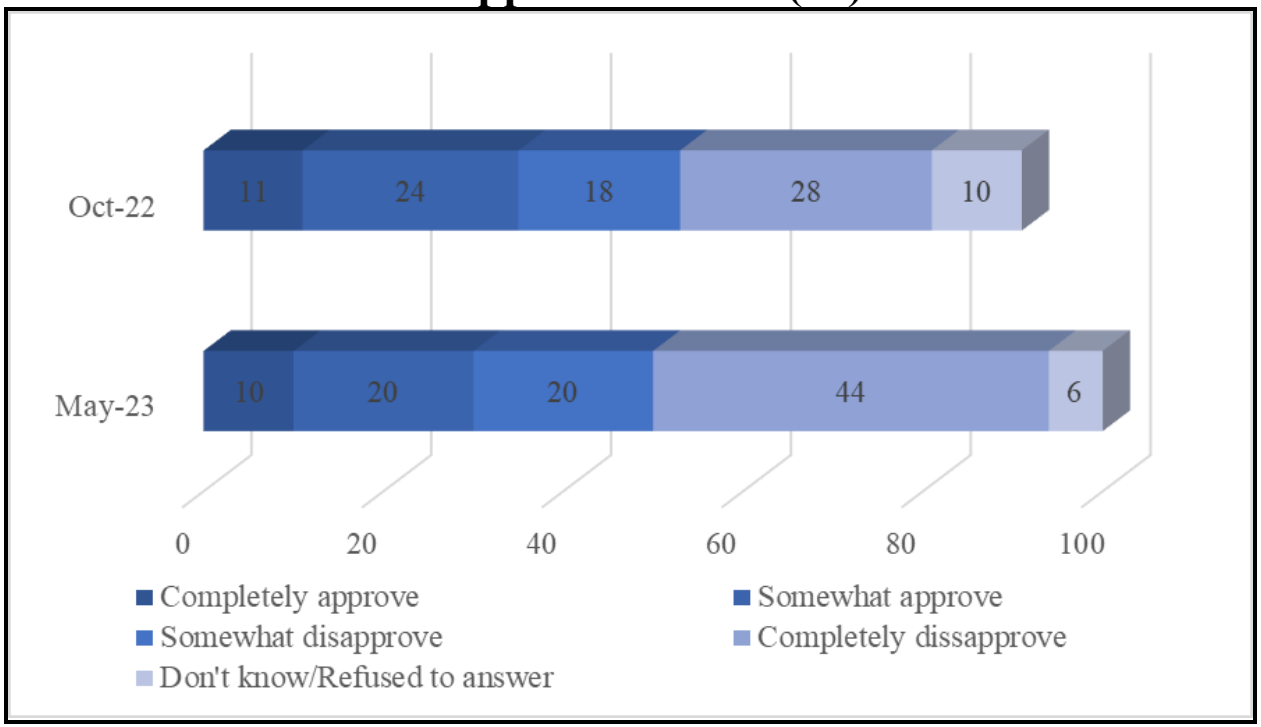
Challenges in regional cooperation with neighbors (North Macedonia, 2024)



Source: author's own preparations based on data collected from Balkan Barometer, 2024: 52.
Q: In your opinion, what hampers regional cooperation between Western Balkan economies?
(All respondents, N=6000, multiple answers, share of total, %)

Analysis of public perceptions regarding identity compromises

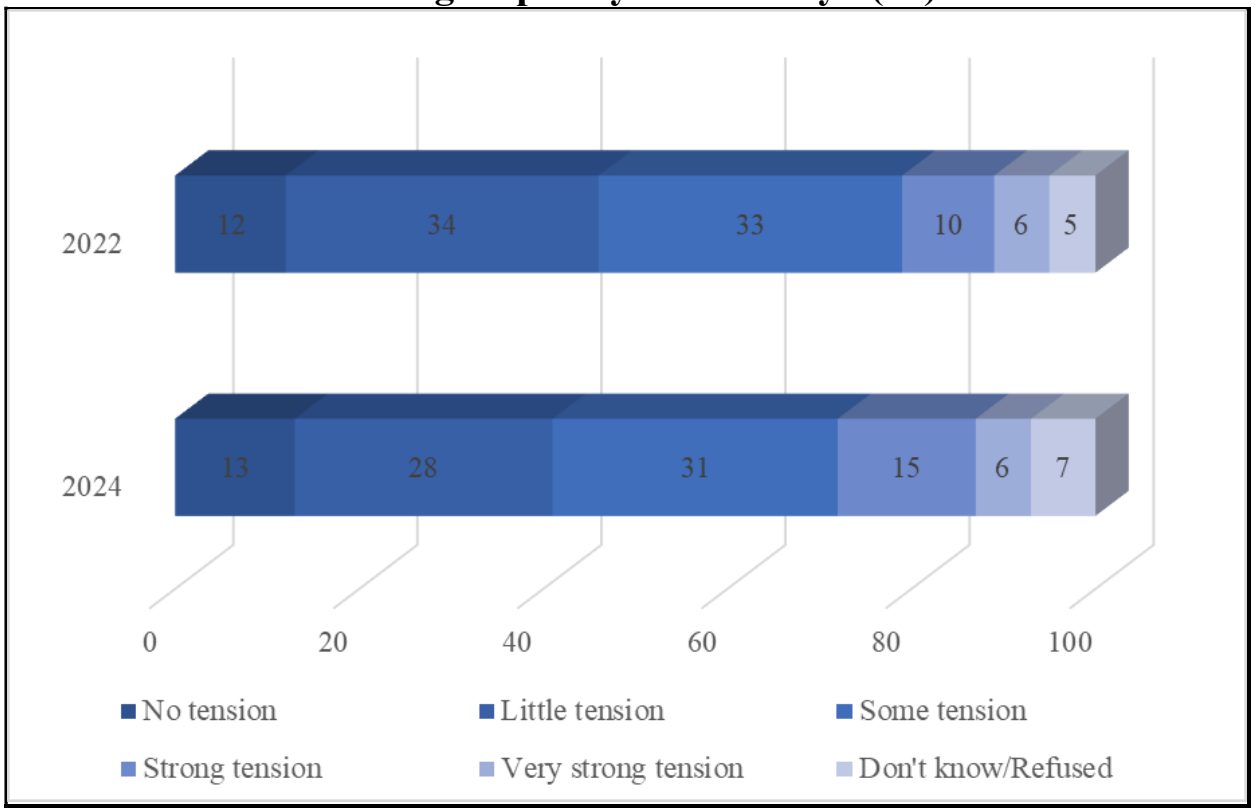
For the EU accession negotiations to continue, North Macedonia has agreed to include the Bulgarian community in its constitution. Do you approve or disapprove of this? (%)



Source: author's own preparations based on data collected from Brima: 2023: 77

Analysis of public perceptions regarding identity compromises

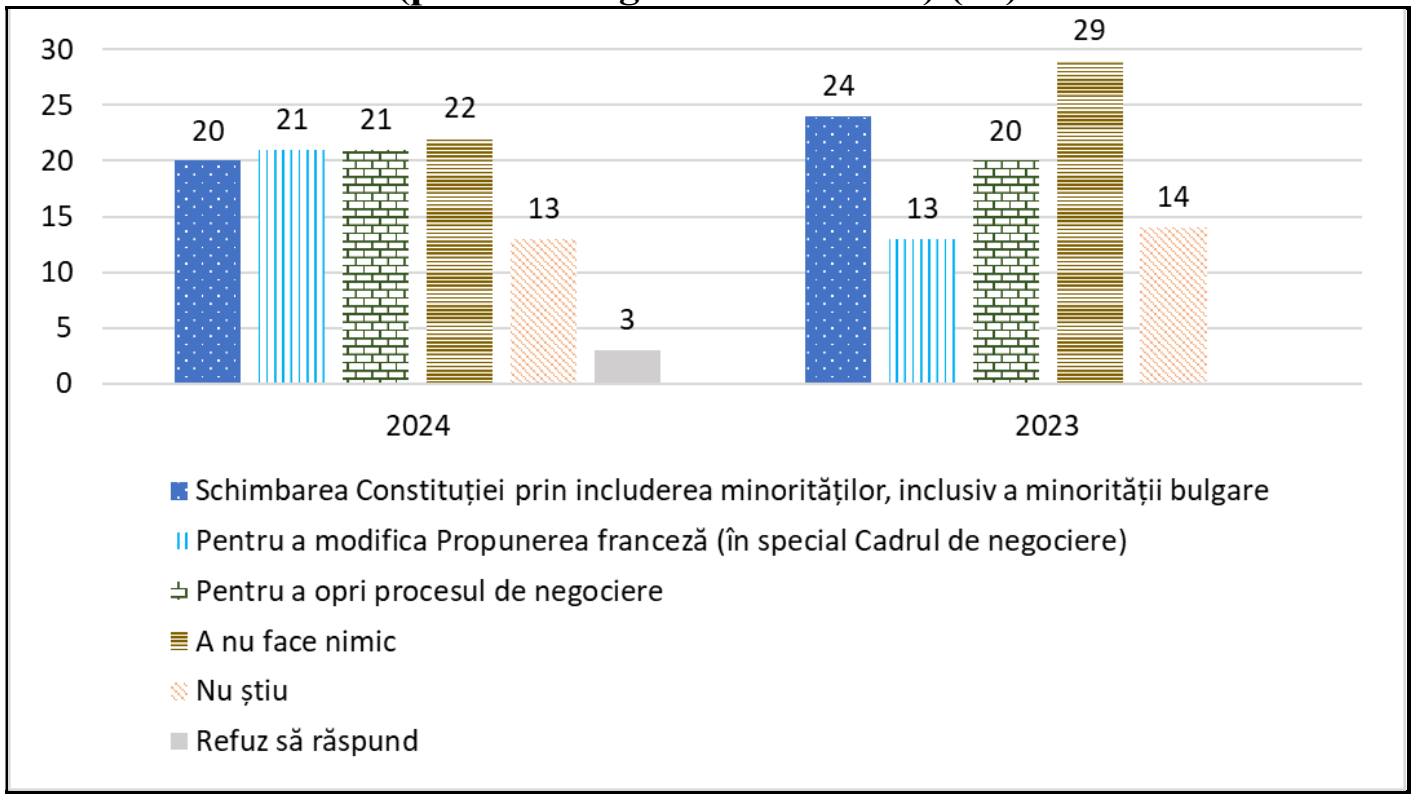
How would you rate the level of intensity of tension between different ethnic groups in your country? (%)



Source: author's own preparations based on data collected from IPSOS, 2024: 94

Analysis of public perceptions regarding identity compromises

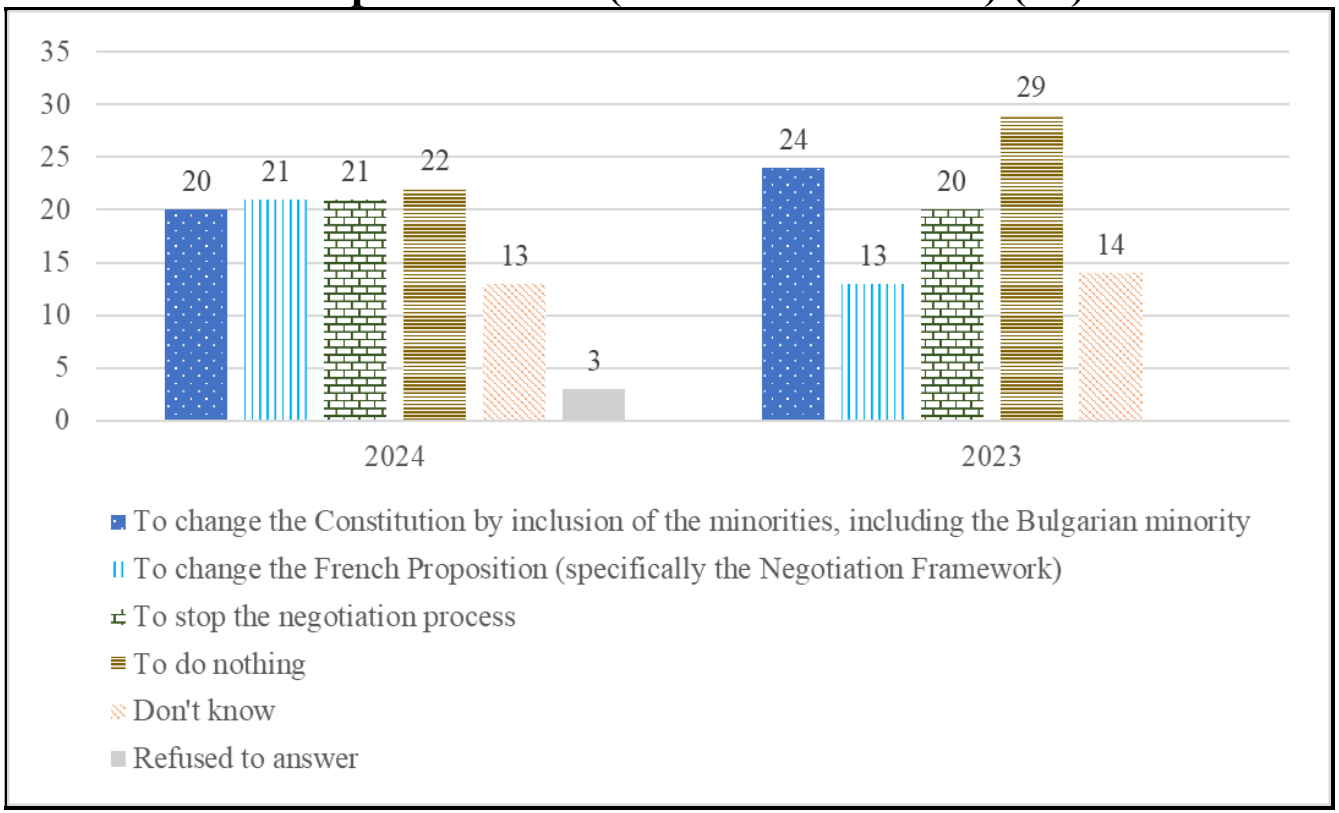
Ce schimbări considerați că trebuie făcute pe calea către Uniunea Europeană? (prezentare generală istorică) (%)



Sursă: elaborare autor în baza datelor din Velinovska & Sofeska, 2025: 11

Analysis of public perceptions regarding identity compromises

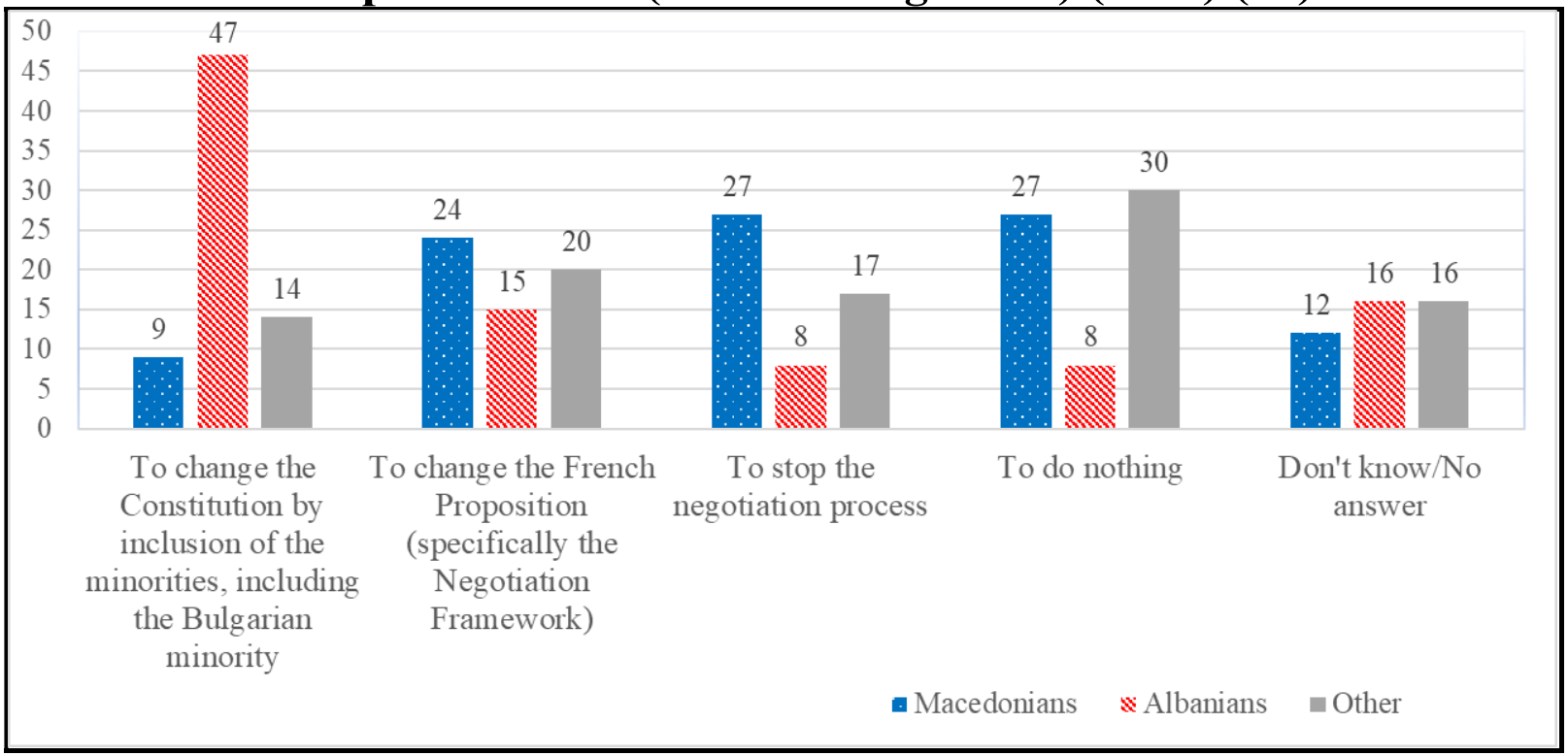
What changes do you think need to be made on the path towards the European Union? (historical overview) (%)



Source: author's own preparations based on data collected from Velinovska and Sofeska, 2025: 11

Analysis of public perceptions regarding identity compromises

What changes do you think need to be made on the path towards the European Union? (ethnic background) (2024) (%)



Source: author's own preparations based on data collected from Velinovska and Sofeska, 2025: 1

Conclusions

- only compromise can be the key in identity disputes
- North Macedonia has made many compromises, but on the other hand, they are still not enough
- The Macedonian position has become more flexible to a certain extent under the pressure of negotiations related to the Euro-Atlantic integration process
- A generalized frustration has been created in society beyond the flexibility of political positions => radicalization
- A new government (2024), increasingly inflexible in implementing the agreement with the Bulgarian side
- Increasing share of those who reject the identity compromise
- Existence of different perceptions among ethnic Albanians compared to Macedonians

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