

Agnes Nemenyi, Ruth Rossier

Cultural and Ethnic Determinants of Land Use and Inheritance in Romania

Abstract

This paper aims to demonstrate some ethno-cultural specificity in land use and land inheritance by the data of the field survey carried out in four different municipalities in Romania, representing different historical regions where the ethnical composition of the regions is very different. The understanding of land management and agriculture is very different between the groups. The paper presents the data of a project which is the collaboration of a Swiss and a Romanian team in a three-year programme (SCOPES programme of Swiss National Science Foundation), in which a survey was carried out with the help of questionnaires. This was applied in a sample of 612 rural households in four municipalities. The main questions focused on land use and land inheritance as well as agriculture. The sample included two generations: the parents and their children (362), men and women. The research team looked for an answer to the question: "who are the next generation farmers in Romania and are there cultural and ethnic and also gender-based differences between rural families?" As the data show there are four different strategies applied in the four regions. In one, traditional sustainable agriculture was preserved, combined with a high rate of international migration. In another village there is a good perspective for farming, but a lot of young people are going to other sectors of activities. In the third location the former socialist cooperative was transformed into a new type of agricultural cooperative. This region has the best developmental perspectives. In the fourth region agricultural activity is maintained and the local economy also includes other types of activities which are complementary to agriculture (trade, industry and other services).

Keywords: Romania, agriculture, farm succession, inheritance, land use, production strategies.

Introduction

Land and People of Romania

Romania is the second most populous and the second largest country in Eastern Europe after Poland. Its 21 million people live on 238.400 km². Eighty nine per cent of the country's population is Romanian. Ethnic minorities represent 11% of the population: Hungarians (7.1%), Roma (1.7%), Germans (0.5%), Ukrainians (0.3%), Jews (0.4%) and others. Most of the population is Orthodox (87%) followed by Roman Catholics (5%), Reformed (3.5%), Greek Catholics (1%) and others. The relief distribution is: mountains (31%), hills (36%) and plains (33%). Neighbours: Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Hungary, Bulgaria, the Black Sea. The official language is Romanian, the easternmost member of the family of Romance languages. In addition to Romanian minorities speak their mother tongue. The majority of Hungarians and Germans live in Transylvania, which up until 1918 was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

In 2007, agricultural production decreased by 16.7% (compared to 2006), and only contributed 6.6% to the GDP. The diminution of production was higher in crop production (24.7%) than in animal breeding (3.9%). Last year's drought contributed to this low agricultural production, but also less land was under cultivation. The quantity of land under cultivation decreased (compared to 2006) by one million hectares. Only the production of potatoes, grapes and sugar beet was better than 2006. In 2007, agricultural production was half of that in 2001, and only 25% of the production in 2005. The last agricultural year had the weakest production in the last 25 years. In 2007 the Romanian economy grew 6%. The Austrians, Dutch and Germans contributed 55% of foreign investments to this development. But compared to 2006 foreign investments had diminished 22%. The overall (own and foreign) investments' 39% came from industry, 34% from trade and the services sector, 13.9% from construction and 1.46% from agriculture.

Objective of the Research

This paper aims to show ethno-cultural differences between some ethnic groups in land use and land inheritance by the data of fieldwork carried out in four different municipalities in Romania, which represent different historical and geographical regions of the country, and where the ethnical composition of the regions is very varied. The different understanding of land management

and agriculture in these four regions will be explained. The paper is based on the data from a standardised questionnaire made for the project “Farm Transfer Research – developing a rationale for structural policy in Romanian agriculture (Farmtrans)”, a scientific cooperation between Eastern Europe and Switzerland. Households with over half a hectare of land were considered as agricultural households which one or the other could probably cross the barrier from self-consumption to market orientation and become a family farm business. The main questions were focused on land use and land inheritance as well as agricultural production. This sample includes two generations: landowners and potential successors.

Characteristics of Land and People in the Four Regions

Table 1: The regions of the sample

Region	Commercialisation	Ethnic groups
Frumoasa (region 1), county of Bacau (Moldova, Eastern Romania)	Not commercial agriculture (self-sufficiency)	Romanians Hungarian (Csangos)
Cojocna (region 2), county of Cluj (Transylvania, North-Western Romania)	Commercial agriculture already exists	Romanian, Hungarians and Roma (Gypsies)
Petresti (region 3), county of Satu Mare, (Northern Romania)	Partly commercial (co-operative), partly self-sufficiency	Hungarians, Germans (Schwabs)
Horezu (region 4), county of Valcea, (Oltenia, Southern Romania)	Incipient commercial agriculture (new factory for dairy products)	Romanians

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

Table 2: Number of interviews made in the four regions of the sample

Studied region	Number of interviews	Current farmers	Potential successors
Frumoasa	213 (22%)	135 (47 male/88 female)	78 (30 male/48 female)
Cojocna	229 (23%)	151 (64 male/87 female)	78 (41 male/37 female)
Petresti	279 (29%)	161 (68 male/93 female)	118 (66 male/52 female)
Horezu	253 (26%)	165 (100 male/65 female)	88 (47 male/41 female)
Total	974 (100%)	612 (279 male/333 female)	362 (184 male/178 female)

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

The village of **Frumoasa** (county of Bacau) in Eastern-Romania is one of four villages belonging to the municipality of Balcani with a population of 8059 inhabitants in 2815 households. Agriculture in Balcani consists of an agricultural area of 3880 hectares: 1191 ha of pasture, 2030 ha of meadows and 659 hectares of arable land (17% of the agricultural area). Furthermore there are 6809 ha of forest. There are 1830 cows, 1820 pigs and 1600 sheep, but mechanisation is low (only four tractors). 48% of the active population (4640 people) work in agriculture¹.

In Frumoasa, the production of maize, potatoes, milk, wine and meat (mutton, lamb) is exclusively carried out for self-sufficiency. As the region suffers from a serious flow of migration to Western European countries, some of the plots are not cultivated at all. The average agricultural plot in Frumoasa is 1.47 ha. People in this village are primarily of Romanian ethnicity (70%), secondly Hungarian (23%). One third of the population is Orthodox, two thirds are Roman Catholic and there are a few Muslims (1%).

The village of **Cojocna** (Cluj county) is situated in the centre of Transylvania. In this village there are 2436 people who live in 803 households. The agricultural area of the whole community is 13,200 ha, of which 8000 ha belong to the village of Cojocna, where white sugar beet, soya, wheat and other crops are produced and taken to the market, the accent shifts towards animal production, as several slaughterhouses and dairy factories in the city of Cluj-Napoca nearby offer a profitable opportunity for marketing. In Cojocna the average agricultural plot is 4.75 ha. About one third of the agricultural households is of Hungarian, and one third of Romanian ethnicity, as well as Roma. In Cojocna there are many different confessions living together, the largest Christian Confessional group is reformed (34%).

Petresti (Satu Mare county) is a village located in northern Romania and has a population of 1683 people living in 509 households. The agricultural area belonging to the village is 2000 ha. In Petresti there are many more young people (up to 14 years) than elderly people over sixty years (18% each), two thirds of the elderly are women². Petresti (in German Petrifeld) is situated in the lowland, beyond the mountainous and hilly Transylvania. The soil is very fertile and the land is mainly arable. Most villagers are involved in agriculture: as owners of household plots (<0.5 ha) or owners of private farm land (>0.5) which they mostly lease after re-privatisation to the new private cooperative or

¹ Recensământul populației 2002, vol. I, page 912.

² Recensământul populației 2002, vol. I, page 984.

very few cultivate the land themselves as new private farmers. The average size of farms in Petresti is 6.64 ha. In Petresti the German (48%) and Hungarian (45%) ethnicity is dominant. Petresti is almost entirely Roman Catholic.

Horezu (county) is a small town and the centre of seven villages situated in southern Romania. 6813 people live in the whole community, 3922 in the village of Horezu. As in Frumoasa, 48% of the active population (4392 people) work in agriculture³. The agricultural area belonging to Horezu is 4433 ha. Agriculture in Horezu consists of arable land (514 ha), pastures (2509 ha), meadows (892 ha) and orchards (518 ha). Beside agriculture there is also forestry (6620 ha forest), of which 362 ha is a private forest. Horezu owns 1636 cows, 2208 pigs, 76 horses and 2715 sheep⁴. Horezu is currently undergoing a change in orientation from being a mining community to the exploitation of short-term tourism. Its agriculture is largely subsistence oriented. Currently, fruit is the only product which is brought to market on a large scale, particularly apples and plums. A major investment into a dairy factory is supposed to encourage farmers to keep cows on a larger scale. The agricultural area in Horezu is on average 2.65 ha. Horezu is 100% inhabited by Romanians and 99% of the population is Orthodox.

According to the data and observations in the places in the survey the age structure of the sample varies according to the local characteristics, depending on several variables like: working abroad, migration, proximity of an urban settlement, tourism developed or the administrative status (rural or urban). The following table summarises the data variability:

Table 3: Year of birth of the sample

Place/variable	Year of birth/age		Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu	Whole sample	
Head of the household	1912–34	95–73	40	67	37	52	196	32.03%
	1935–57	72–50	70	73	87	94	324	52.94%
	1958–79	51–28	25	11	37	19	92	15.03%
Total			135	151	161	165	612	100%
Successor	1945–69	62–38	29	40	57	32	158	43.65%
	1970–93	37–14	49	38	61	56	204	56.35%
Total			78	78	118	88	362	100%

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

³ Recensământul populației 2002, vol. I, page 1003.

⁴ Recensământul populației 2002, vol. I, page 1002.

Attitudes towards Land

After 1991, proprietors received part of their formal agricultural and forestry area, and these ‘new-old’ proprietors started to produce food for self-consumption, but also for sale. In the beginning, land property in itself was already very important. The consequence of this attitude towards land ownership was that not much of this land was on the market. In all four regions since 1990 only 54 cases are known which sold some land (9%), mostly in the two villages of Cojocna (43%) and Horezu (39%). The land sold was in Cojocna mostly arable, and in Horezu pasture or meadow land. We have to mention the fact, that Cojocna has the largest amount of available land (13000 ha).

A main specificity of land property is the segmentation of an agricultural area into many parcels (table 4). This phenomenon is less precarious in Petresti where the number of parcels is at the most five. In the other three regions of the sample, the segmentation of the agricultural area is more frequent. In Frumoasa two thirds of the agricultural area consists of three to six parcels, in Cojocna of two to five, and in Horezu three quarters of the agricultural area consists of between two and six parcels. Cojocna shows the highest number of parcels, the agricultural area is split into sixteen parcels.

Comparing the amount of the exploited land with that which is left fallow, there are great differences in the sample, as can be seen in the table below.

Table 4: Share of agricultural area under cultivation and not under cultivation by region

Region	Frumoasa		Cojocna		Petresti		Horezu	
Agricultural area	Under cultivation mean ha	Not under cultivation mean ha	Under cultivation mean ha	Not under cultivation mean ha	Under cultivation mean ha	Not under cultivation mean ha	Under cultivation mean ha	Not under cultivation mean ha
Arable area	0.32	0.22	2.48	2.61	6.39	0	0.64	0.67
Orchard	0.12	0.35	0.44	0.55	0.43	0.05	1.06	1.41
Pasture & meadow	0.93	0.59	1.78	1.84	2.12	0	1.46	1.35
Total	1.37	1.16	4.70	5.00	8.94	0.05	3.16	3.43

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

In every region there is land which is not cultivated. In Cojocna and in Horezu the part of the agricultural area which is not under cultivation is slightly higher than that which is cultivated. In Petresti the situation is completely different: only a small agricultural area is not under cultivation. As in Petresti, so also in Frumoasa, the orchard area seems to have lost importance for cultivation.

Attitudes towards Agricultural Production

Food Production

Another important aspect is agricultural food production. In order to know the production structure of each region, the survey asked to name the five most important products produced in 2006. The four regions show different production profiles in the production palette as well as in the importance of production. Some of the products are only for self-consumption, especially vegetables, poultry and animal feed.

The lowest rate of market orientation in agricultural production shows **Frumoasa** where only a few products and those in unimportant quantities are sold, especially milk, eggs and onions. In Frumoasa in the very east of Romania no market oriented agriculture was established after land re-privatisation. These agricultural households do not intend to go into farming and food production for the market. Probably food production for their own consumption will vanish as soon as the general economic situation is more favourable in this region of Romania.

In the other three regions, the situation is different. The most market oriented village of the four is **Petresti** in the northern part of Romania, close to the Hungarian and Ukrainian border. In Petresti the most important production for the market are the following products: milk, sugar beet, potatoes, wheat and sunflowers. Petresti has very fertile soil for arable farming and thus production is oriented towards arable or mixed farming. Meat production (pork, beef) exists mostly for self-sufficiency.

In Cojocna milk, meat (pork, beef) and sugar beet are the most important market products. But the production level is – compared to Petresti – much lower in quantities which are produced. While in Petresti milk production is about 22,000 kg per year and farm on average, it is only about 4600 kg in Cojocna (21%). Cojocna has a mixed production and besides milk and meat it

also produces animal feed like corn, wheat and oats. Only few of these products are sold. A certain speciality of Cojocna is their garlic production.

In Horezu in the Southern Carpathians, the production structure is oriented towards fruit (strawberries, apples, plums etc.) Meat production (pork, beef or other) has a certain importance in agricultural production sale. Specific products in the region of Horezu are honey and nuts. The production level in Horezu is below that of Petresti and Cojocna.

Mechanisation

As an indicator for the level of mechanisation the number of tractors available in each region was surveyed. The highest level of mechanisation by number of tractors was found in Cojocna: this village has 29 available tractors. Frumoasa with only one single tractor which is very old for agricultural production has the lowest level of mechanisation. Petresti with eight and Horezu with six tractors show about the same level of mechanisation. But in Petresti the agricultural cooperative often takes over the tractor work for the land owners and the situation is therefore different. People in Petresti are not dependent on having their own tractor as in the other villages. The tractors in Horezu were quite new: on average 6 years old, whereas in Petresti they were over 15 on average. All together, the level of mechanisation in all four regions is low (10% of tractor owners).

Sources of Income

Horezu has the highest standard of living by means of income. In all sources of income Horezu is situated on the highest level, this municipality has the most resources by rents and by making and selling pottery.

In Petresti the main source of income comes from selling agricultural products, furthermore there is some income generated by benefits and interests from investments. In Cojocna the main sources are from employment salaries and state pensions, further from benefits and interests from investments.

In Frumoasa the two main sources are employment salaries and state pensions. In Frumoasa the situation is such that over half of the active population constantly works abroad (mainly in Italy) and supports their families financially at home.

Table 5: Sources of income

Source	Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu	Mean
Salary	32.7187	22.2637	21.0912	1.8082	4.4616
Profits	–	16.2028	23.4715	3.1884	5.7869
Child support	6.5651	4.7507	1.4685	0.2087	0.5429
State pension	19.2187	18.1874	10.0821	0.6509	1.9111
Social assistance	12.73	7.5101	3.9461	0.5088	0.9878
Selling agricultural products	13.0154	8.982	28.5866	3.0134	4.6215
Rents	–	8.3658	3.8905	78.744	67.5296
Others	15.7519	13.7374	7.4631	11.8726	14.1586
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

Table 6: The structure of expenses

Expenses	Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu	Mean
Food, drink	11.97	9.0858	2.8997	6.7760	5.48
Clothing	9.17	6.5609	2.4812	2.7120	3.6
Housing	5.53	5.1033	3.7255	3.4245	3.8
Health care expenses	6.3	3.9527	1.269	2.0681	2.2
Transportation	6.05	5.9308	1.7174	2.9896	3
Culture and education	10.22	10.9549	2.3195	2.0529	3.48
Telephone	3.69	3.2232	1.216	2.0525	1.97
Rates	6.87	10.69	3.4838	10.3587	8.99
Investments	15.47	12.7666	13.7482	53.5278	31.37
Leisure	7.01	7.4577	0.9942	2.6937	2.69
Agricultural production	9.3562	11.6333	16.1657	3.7197	11.9
Others	8.4257	12.6402	49.9792	7.6232	21.46
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

In all types of expenses the mean sums are the highest in Horezu, the lowest are in Frumoasa. The highest expenses for agricultural production are in Petresti, the lowest are in Horezu. In Horezu the investments make up for more than half.

Relations between Generations

In our sample 59.15% of the heads of households have a successor, the lower rates are in Cojocna 51.65%, in Horezu 53.33%, in Frumoasa 57.77%, the highest in Petresti 73.29%. In the parents' generation in three settlements there are more women than men as heads, but in the next generation there is a gender equilibration of the sexes 50.83% to 49.17%.

The religious status of the two generations is very interesting, some religious groups are constant or growing: where the Orthodox are growing, Roman Catholics are diminishing (Frumoasa), the changes are present in ethnically heterogeneous regions (Cojocna is the best example).

The ethnic composition of the heads of households compared with the successors was changing in some regions: Romanians were growing 8.6%, Csangos diminished with the same percentage, Hungarians grew in Petresti 6.1%, Schwabs diminished with the same percentage, Germans grew 2.6%.

Between the two generations there are important differences in educational level, with the older generations in Frumoasa having a lower level of education (15% of the parents' generation are illiterate), the highest university level in Horezu (12.8%). In the successor generation there are also differences between settlements, in Frumoasa half of the children have 5–10 classes (48.7%), the other half (46.2%) have finished a trade school; in Cojocna and Petresti there is an important rate with theoretical high school (Cojocna 12.8%, Petresti 20.3%), Horezu has the highest rate of higher education in the second generation (26.1%), vocational school with high school graduating 15.9%, and theoretical high school with graduating 23.9%.

Table 7: The religion of head of householders

Place/Variable	Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu	Whole sample
	%	%	%	%	%
Orthodox	33.3	17.9	1.9	99.4	39.05
Roman Catholic	65.9	21.9	95.7	0	45.10
Greek Catholic	0	13.2	0.6	0	3.43
Reformed	0	33.8	0.6	0	8.50
Adventism	0	4.0	0	0	0.98
Unitarian	0	7.9	1.2	0	2.29
Pentecostalism	0	1.3	0	0	0.33
Muslim	0	0	0	0.6	0.16
Other	0.7	0	0	0	0.16
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

Table 8: The religion of successors

Place/Variable	Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu	Whole sample
	%	%	%	%	%
Orthodox	37.2	17.9	1.7	100	36.74
Roman Catholic	62.8	26.9	97.5	0	51.10
Greek Catholic	0	10.3	0.8	0	2.49
Reformed	0	37.2	0	0	8.01
Adventism	0	1.3	0	0	0.28
Unitarian	0	6.4	0	0	1.38
Pentecostalism	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

Table 9: The nationality of head of householders

Place/Variable	Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu	Whole sample
	%	%	%	%	%
Romanian	69.6	31.8	4.3	100	51.31
Hungarian	4.4	67.5	44.7	0	29.41
Roma	0	0.7	0	0	0.16
Csango	23.0	0	0	0	5.07
Kraut	0	0	48.5	0	12.75
Dutch	0	0	2.5	0	0.65
Other	3.0	0	0	0	0.65
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

Table 10: The nationality of successors (%)

Place/Variable	Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu	Whole sample
Romanian	78.2	32.1	4.2	100	49.45
Hungarian	5.1	67.9	50.8	0	32.32
Roma	0	0	0	0	0
Csango	16.7	0	0	0	3.59
Kraut	0	0	39.8	0	12.98
Dutch	0	0	5.1	0	1.66
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

Land succession

In the sample 59.15% of the landowners state that they have a potential successor to work the land, the lower rates are in Cojocna (51.65%) in Horezu (53.33%), in Frumoasa (57.77%) and the highest in Petresti (73.29%). In the parents' generation the sample has more women than men, but in the generation of the children the gender equilibrium is better (50.83% to 49.17%).

The religious structure of the two generations is very interesting. In the case of Frumoasa the number of Orthodox is growing while the Roman Catholics is decreasing, changes can be seen in the ethnically and religiously heterogeneous regions (Cojocna).

Linked by the region, the ethnic composition of the heads of households compared to that of the successors has changed in some regions; Romanians grew 8.6%, Csangos diminished by the same rate, Hungarians grew in Petresti 6.1%, Schwabs diminished with the same percentage, Germans grew 2.6%.

Between the two generations there are important differences in educational level, the older generations have a lower educational level. In Frumoasa 15% of the parents' generation is illiterate, the highest educational level is in Horezu (12.8%). In the generation of the successors there are also differences between settlements, but in every settlement around 50% have at least the level of comprehensive school.

Regarding plans of abandoning agriculture, 8.8% of the whole sample plan to abandon it partially and 14.3% totally, 55% do not intend to abandon land and 11.4% are very decided not to abandon the land.

Table 11: Intentions to abandon agriculture (%)

When/how	Whole sample	Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu
Partially	8.8	3.5	15.2	13.7	3.0
Totally	14.3	0.7	27.8	19.3	9.0
Do not plan to abandon	55.0	37.3	43.0	56.5	80.6
Never	11.4	49.3	0.7	–	–
No answer	10.5	9.2	13.2	10.6	7.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

There are two villages where over 80% of the population do not intend to abandon agriculture

Table 12: Where do you intend to live after abandoning agriculture?

Where	Whole sample	Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu
In another village	0.8	–	1.3	1.2	0.6
In the same house	76.5	85.9	91.4	51.6	80.6
Together with the children	12.5	6.3	7.3	29.2	6.7
Others	0.3	–	–	0.6	0.6
No answer	9.8	7.7	–	17.4	11.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

As the data show, most of the sample (over 76%) intends to stay and live in the same house. Only in Petresti 29.2% of the sample intend to live with the younger generation, in others the percentage is under 10%.

About the sources of income after they abandon agriculture, you can see that the great majority relies on the state pension (77.8% of the whole sample), but there are important regional differences:

Table 13: Sources of living after abandoning agriculture

Sources of income	Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu
Renting land	1.4	5.3	26.7	1.2
Selling land	–	9.9	–	0.6
State pension, social security	65.5	72.7	70.2	83.6
Selling agricultural products	–	1.3	3.1	–
Selling private properties	–	–	–	0.6
Selling other agricultural properties	–	–	–	0.6
Investments	1.4	0.2	–	1.8
Agricultural private pensions or stock shares	2.1	–	8.7	0.6
Other sources (e.g. support from children)	22.5	10.6	6.8	15.2
No answer	7.9	–	–	–
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

Renting land as a source of income is important in Petresti (26.7%) and Cojocna (5.3%). The third source is the support given by children, most important in Frumoasa, where more than 60% of the population is working abroad temporarily. Income from agricultural stocks only exists in Petresti (8.7%).

The question of who will work the land after the head of the household retires was raised by us, and a great percentage (26.0%) did not answer. 65% of those who answered considered family members as persons who can do it, or in co-operation (5.1%). Answers differ in the four regions: in Horezu and Frumoasa 81% and 78.8%, in Petresti the possibility of co-operation was high (19.2%).

We also wanted to find out whether the successors take part in agricultural activities.

Table 14: Are the successors involved in agricultural activities?

Nationality	No	Yes	Total
Romanians	34.98	65.02	100
Hungarians	59.77	40.23	100

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

The answers show that there are significant differences in attitudes, life strategies and specific inter-generational relations towards the main assets (house, land).

When it comes to making decisions there seems to be a problem.

Table 15: Who makes the main decisions in the leadership of the household?

Who	Whole sample	Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu
Only the questioned person	14.6	34.5	4.6	5.6	15.8
Mainly this person	8.5	9.2	7.9	8.7	8.5
All together	22.5	19.7	17.2	18.6	33.9
Mainly the successors	4	3.5	4	4.3	4.2
Only the successors	3.4	4.2	3.3	3.1	3
Total	53.1	71.1	37.1	40.4	65.5

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

The percentage of 'no' answers was very high (46.9%), this shows that people do not know how to manage the household and as one can see the voice of the successors is not very important, only 7% of successors can make the main decisions. The same can be said on the topic of transmission of land, as the great majority of the people do not have a will in order to regulate this (90%). But it is interesting to see that still those children who do not work in agriculture are considered by their parents as entitled to inherit land (80.9% of the sample gave an affirmative answer), so they do not make any kind of discrimination.

The Perspectives of Agriculture

Analysing the occupational structure of the two generations, the rate of pensioners is very high (32.35% in the older generation and 42.32% of those working in the household, in agriculture). In the generation of the successors 34.63% are non-agricultural workers and regarding the relation to agriculture we could say that there were differences in the regions.

Table 16: Different occupations in the successors' generation by region

Occupation linked to agriculture	Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu	Whole sample
Occasionally working in agriculture	7.7	1.3	12.8	14.8	9.7
Regularly working in agriculture	14.1	6.4	4.3	11.4	8.5
Permanently working in agriculture	44.9	14.1	5.1	9.1	16.6
Leads own agro-business	1.3	2.6	2.6	–	1.6
Agricultural worker	–	1.3	6.8	1.1	2.7
Leads own non-agro-business	2.6	1.3	6	6.8	4.4

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

The highest rate of agricultural activities in the successors' generation is in Frumoasa, the most traditional settlement and lowest rates are in Horezu with a much more multifunctional economy. Still it is interesting to see the existence of agro-business in three villages, this means the start of new activities linked to agriculture.

Table 17: Plans to work on the family land by region

Answer	Frumoasa	Cojocna	Petresti	Horezu	Whole sample
No	10.6	25.2	31.7	17	21.2
Yes, as a main occupation	31.7	7.9	6.2	7.9	12.9
Yes, as a complementary occupation	11.3	13.9	28	20.6	18.6
Maybe	1.4	2	3.7	4.2	2.9
Total	54.9	49	69.6	49.7	55.6

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

Table 18: Plans to work on the family land by ethnic group

Answer	Romanians	Hungarians	Csangos	Germans
No	29.83	50	4.17	50
Yes, as a main occupation	32.74	10	66.66	8.69
Yes, as a complementary occupation	31.57	36.36	25	34.78
Maybe	5.86	3.64	4.17	6.53
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

As the above tables show there are cultural differences in this decision. The Csangos are most keen on continuing agriculture (95.83% of the successors), they are followed by the Romanians (70.17%), Hungarians and Germans (50–60%). So ethnicity is very important in the agricultural activities of the parents' generation.

Table 19: Family structure by number of household members

Number	Frumoasa		Cojocna		Petresti		Horezu		Whole sample	
		%		%		%		%		%
1 person	28	19.7	38	25.2	24	14.9	19	11.5	109	17.60
2 persons	43	30.3	57	37.7	40	24.8	54	32.7	194	31.34
3 persons	22	15.5	26	17.2	36	22.4	38	23.0	122	19.70
4 persons	20	14.1	18	11.9	30	18.6	17	10.3	85	13.73
5 persons	8	5.6	6	4.0	21	13.0	21	12.7	56	9.04
6 persons	8	5.6	4	2.6	9	5.6	12	7.3	33	5.33
7 or more	12	9.1	2	1.4	1	0.7	4	2.5	19	3.08
No answer	1	0.1	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	0.18
Total	142	100.0	151	100.0	161	100.0	165	100.0	619	100.00

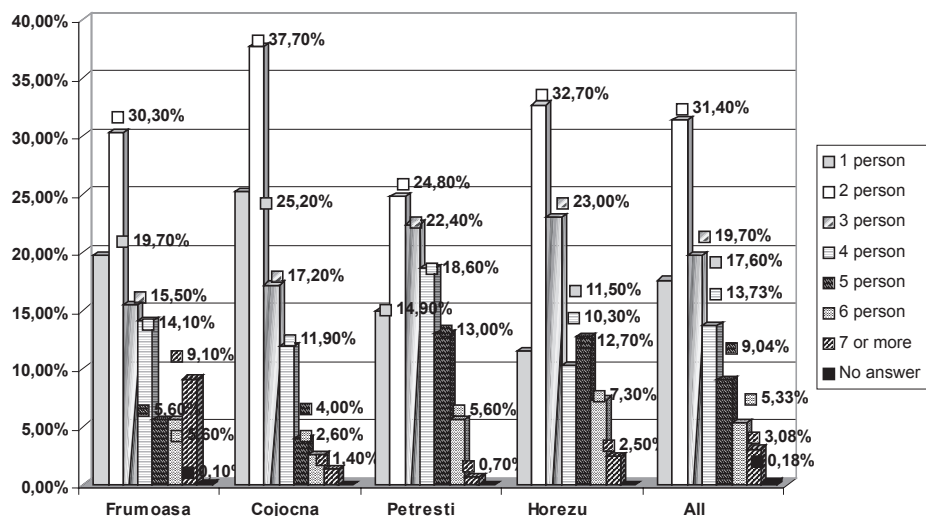
Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

Table 20: Family structure by number of generations

	Frumoasa		Cojocna		Petresti		Horezu		Whole sample	
		%		%		%		%		%
Single person	28	19.7	38	25.2	24	14.9	19	11.5	109	17.60
One generation	37	26.1	45	29.8	25	15.5	40	24.2	147	23.74
Parents with adult children	29	20.4	45	29.8	49	30.4	57	34.5	180	29.07
Parents with minor children	23	16.2	9	6.0	23	14.3	11	6.7	66	10.66
Three generations	25	17.6	14	9.3	37	23.0	36	21.8	112	18.09
Other situations	–	–	–	–	3	1.9	2	1.3	5	0.84
Total	142	100.0	151	100.0	161	100.0	165	100.0	619	100.00

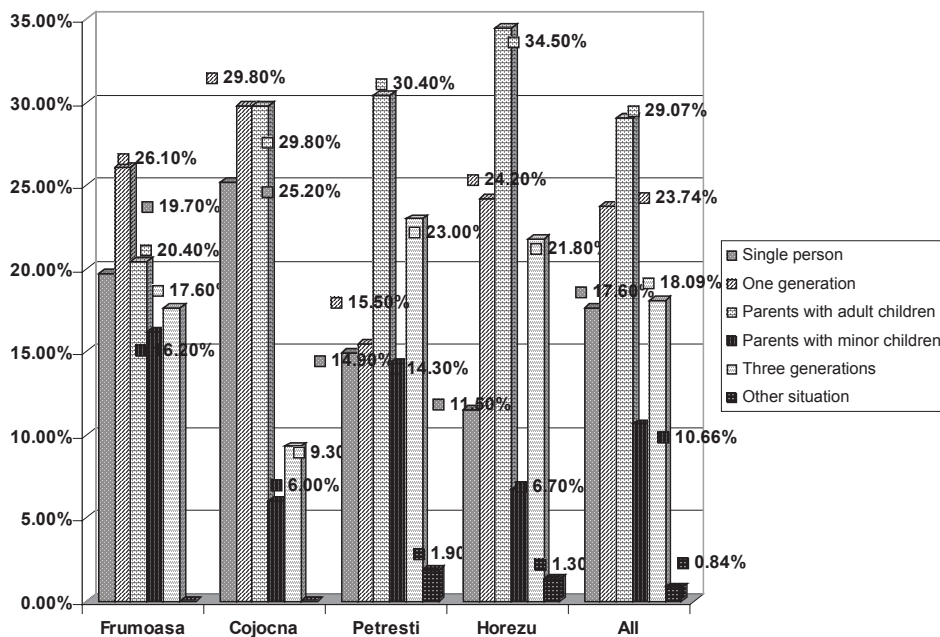
Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

Figure 1: Family structure by number of household members



Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

Figure 2: Family structure by number of generations



Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

Table 21: Family structure by number of members working in agriculture

Number	Horezu		Frumoasa		Petresti		Cojocna		Whole sample	
		%		%		%		%		%
No one	155	93.9	105	73.9	146	90.8	136	90.1	542	87.56
One member	4	2.4	22	15.5	9	5.6	8	5.3	43	6.94
Two members	1	0.6	8	5.6	1	0.6	4	2.6	14	2.26
Three members	–	–	–	–	1	0.6	1	0.7	2	0.31
One labourer	3	1.9	4	2.9	2	1.2	2	1.3	11	1.77
Two labourers	–	–	1	0.8	1	0.6	–	–	2	0.31
Three labourers	–	–	1	0.8	1	0.6	–	–	2	0.31
Agricultural specialist	2	1.2	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	0.31
No answer	1	0.8	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	0.23
Total	165	100.0	142	100.0	161	100.0	151	100.0	619	100.00

Source: Nemenyi, A. 2009 *Trends in Land Succession*. Cluj: University Press.

The main unit of the rural household is the family. In our sample 17.60% of the households only has one member, but as we see, over 18% of the households consist of the traditional three generations. There are differences according to region. 29.07% of the households consist of parents with adult children. The highest number of families was in Frumoasa, where families often have 5–6 children, this showing very traditional demographic behaviour. We asked how many members of the family work in agriculture, and as the data show, 87.56% answered ‘no’, which is a very high percentage.

Conclusion

In Romania the main unit of agriculture is the rural family. In the land inheritance process there are some cultural-ethnic similarities, but there are also important differences. The rural families which are ageing run self sufficient traditional agriculture. The research showed the importance of land as a social value, but the implication of the younger generation is influenced by global socio-political factors (financial support). There is important agricultural cooperation between farmers and involvement of other types of activities in the revitalisation of the rural space.

Figure 3: The regions on the sample



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Péter Tóth

Knowledge Society from the Point of View of Rural Sustainability

Bruckmeier K. and Tovey H. (Eds.) 2009 *Rural sustainable development in the knowledge society*. London: Ashgate Publishing, pp. 294.

The theory of sustainability conquered the world of developers approximately 20 years ago. But transformation is not an easy process since changes in the economy during the last 200–250 years creating global market-oriented, mass production industries fixed the rules in every aspect of everyday life. And another obstacle exists while each place has its own climatic, geographical, political, social and economic background the process of transformation cannot be unified. The philosopher's stone exists in neither alchemy nor in the practice of sustainable development, moreover during the process of intervention at national level the regional or micro-regional spatial differences of a country must be taken into consideration. That is why Karl Bruckmeier and Hilary Tovey, the writers and editors of this book had to make an enormous effort to synthesize the global trends in European rural sustainable development out of different case studies from several European countries. Their work was supported by researchers and academics from 12 European countries. The book is based on the 6th Framework Research Programme which lasted 30 months from 2004 to 2007. The aim of the research was to reveal how certain knowledge types are embedded in the context of rural development, who the actors of the development process are and how these knowledge types interact or counteract with one another. The name of the project is CORASON (Conditions for Rural Sustainable Development). The countries were chosen to represent the European border region considered as forming the so-called Green Ring where strong conventional agrarian traditions survived the waves of industrialisation and the bottom up approach of collectivisation in the case of ex-socialist bloc countries. This theory was introduced and

explained in 2001 in the book *Europe's Green Ring* edited by Leo Granberg, Imre Kovách and Hilary Tovey. Countries involved in the CORASON project were Great Britain (Scotland), Germany (East Germany), Spain, Portugal, Italy, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Ireland, Sweden, Greece. Countries equally represented new and old members of the EU, ex-socialist countries and countries with a long tradition of market-based economy. In the case of core countries like Germany the chosen territory also represented the aforementioned Green Ring in the case study from East Germany. This idea led to skipping France which bears classical agrarian traditions. The main point in each case study was the examination of a process in each country where the focus was on how the theory of sustainability reaches people involved in rural development and the local inhabitants. Rural development and rural areas are the common point in each case study but these studies deal with a vast range of subjects in this field such as local entrepreneurship development, green energy production affecting agrarian practices, traditional clam fishing, reproduction of traditional agrarian practices, rural tourism and the case of local products. Qualitative techniques such as content analysis and interview and observation were used during the preparation of case studies. The research teams also used statistics and content analysis in the pre-research phase after drawing a portrait of each nation and its role in sustainable rural development by policies, laws and actions and how these countries give a definition to the terms of rural development or sustainable rural development. The overview of these determinative actions shows that there are hardly any similarities between development policies at government or developer level. In most cases only one of the essential sustainability pillars (ecological, social, economic) was taken into consideration and each pillar will lead to different approaches in practice. This colourful picture has one unifying element that can be discovered in these policies. It is the supranational policy creation of the European Union which is used as a guideline for member states and especially for new members whose acquaintance with these theories is a rather new phenomenon. Appearance and diffusion of the idea of sustainability in Eastern European countries is definitely a result of the enlargement process of these countries.

The research process of CORASON used seven different approaches to interpret the processes. These seven approaches were merged into two core chapters in the book. One deals with diversification and innovativeness in rural areas while the other gives interpretations of theory of sustainability and the possibilities given by the environment. Each topic contains six case studies where the East and West, North and South of Europe are represented. (In the

case of a missing case study from Spain a second Polish case study is used from a different part of Poland which represents the work of another Polish research group).

The book contains a frame story with articles written by the two editors. These articles try to define the common core elements in the process of rural sustainable development. The introduction deals with the general trends of knowledge transfer and gives a brief presentation of each nation's rural policies and images of sustainability. The case study section is followed by a summary of how the innovation processes can be classified which are closely related case studies with many references to the practices. As a conclusion the editors summarize the book with a realisation of an important element in the process of development which operates as an immanent and everlasting part of rural communities: knowledge and local knowledge transfer. In most cases local knowledge is not taken into consideration as an important element. Codified knowledge is an important and irreplaceable building block in sustainable rural development but not the only type of knowledge that should be used. Local traditional knowledge or pre-industrial or lay knowledge is as important as codified knowledge which has to complete codified knowledge in order to get an applicable approach which suits the territorial needs. These two knowledge types have to be used in a balanced way which is easy in theory but really hard to do in practice. This is the point where local inhabitants and outside developers have to cooperate. One useful solution can be the appearance of an insider outsider, i.e. an outside expert with local roots in the area of development.

Finally we would like to emphasize two merits of the book. One is a different way of using the phrase of knowledge when the writers talk about the knowledge types used and needed in development and innovation. This new construction of knowledge is a way different knowledge is formulated by academics in the discourse and research of knowledge society. The usual term is a product of views generated by post-industrial development practice. Modern knowledge society needs only these terms. But in the case of a rural knowledge society which lacks elements like modern technological or scientific knowledge more terms and knowledge types should be taken into consideration so the process of modernisation and development can be followed, described and compared. Only this broader concept of knowledge will let us understand how rural areas become a part of modern knowledge society and make it possible to formulate the requirements of sustainability. The authors expanded the term 'knowledge' into the locally produced tacit or traditional knowledge types unfamiliar to

former scientific practice. And because of this attachment the daily practice of development observed locally led to a different experience which the reader could imagine from the details of national policies and scientific theories listed in the introduction of the book. The framework one can interpret the term sustainability is built in the different ways of knowledge which can be transferred where scientific, managerial or organisational and local knowledge plays a different part in the process.

Another great improvement is the fact that the authors emphasize that all the knowledge types are fluid categories since the border between different knowledge types can easily be transformed and reconstructed. The authors recognize this phenomenon but they don't give more information on how these liquid categories should be used to make a new classification of skills and knowledge types used in a rural context for development. I suspect this will be the topic of their forthcoming research which will be a good base for a new book.

I recommend this book to those who would like to look into the rural development processes in Europe to get a wider picture of what are the main building blocks of rural knowledge society.