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**THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE PROCESS OF COMBATING  
CORRUPTION – CASE STUDY ROMANIA**

Master's thesis

Supervisor: Prof. Peeter Mürsepp

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I have written the Bachelor's/Master's thesis independently  
All works and major viewpoints of the other authors, data from other sources of literature and elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ALDE – Alliance of Liberals and Democrats

ANI – National Agency for Integrity

CPI – Corruption Perception Index

CVM – Cooperation and Verification Mechanism

DGA – Anti-Corruption General Directorate

DNA – National Anti-Corruption Directorate

IMF – International Monetary Fund

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OUG – Government Emergency Ordinances

PSD – Social Democratic Party

WGI – Worldwide Governance Index

## **ABSTRACT**

The research identifies an informative gap between EU published reports about corruption in Romania and the actuality. Previous to joining the EU, Romania was subjected to certain accession conditionality's aimed at tackling the issue of corruption, but constant scandals still appeared. Therefore, conducting a research about the progress of eradicating corruption published in EU reports and the reality provides insights into the changes that need to be made. This will help to make those measures more successful.

The methodology used includes a case study approach and a critical discourse analysis. This combination was chosen due to the nature of the research problem, which requires the application of policy within a context. Thus, understanding how corruption manifests in Romania is critical and analysing the various reports and measures is essential. Furthermore, social indicators allow for implicating the human factor which is a fundamental influence in corrupt behaviour.

The final results show a slight discrepancy in the reports published by the EU and measures of combating corruption in Romania. This has been identified as being due to the exclusion of the particularistic cultural factor heavily present, but also due to the implementation of anti-corrupt measures, institutions, programmes etc. via networks which have already succumbed to corruption.

In conclusion, the overall thesis of the paper was found to be true to the extent that the informative gap is not enormous, but what is missing may be of great importance in diminishing corruption in Romania.

Keywords: European Union, Romania, corruption, Cooperation and Verification Mechanism, governance.

## INTRODUCTION

When a country is well governed, poverty and mean condition are things to be ashamed of. When a country is poorly governed, riches and honour are things to be ashamed of. (Confucius)

The Republic of Romania transitioned towards democracy after one of the most violent revolutions in Europe which took place in 1989. The uprisings put an end to the suppressive socialist regime led by autocratic leader Nicolae Ceaușescu. In the years that followed additional protests and altercations with authorities occurred, leading to a frequent exchange of powers. The fall of communism had a substantial impact on the country as on the night of 22 December 1989 the state structure was destroyed and without a plan a replacement plan it left the country in a state of institutional fluidity permitting it to produce new democratic structures and political representations (Papadimitroiu & Phinnemore 2008). Nonetheless, it could be argued that the newly introduced democratic political regime was still connected to the former system and kept hold of a corrupt, post-communist mentality.

Furthermore, the need of state-controlled industries paved the way for party-control to seize power as well as for corruption to grow. Also, poor governance and overall bad decisions, slowed advancement and reduced development. It took Romania a number of years to realise the importance of the private sector and the role it plays in development, as during communism entrepreneurship did not exist. In the period after the revolution, citizens were relieved to escape from the ruthless regime of Ceaușescu and looked hopefully to the Western nations for help. It was very difficult for Romanians to acclimatize to a new social system, as the entire communistic scene evolved around the workers. Now the population had to collaborate with the elites and

pursue strategies beneficial to the country as well as the individual. It was undeniable that the new reforms would be difficult as they would create friction at the social level. It would become a challenge for the country to implement a new system with working political and economic reforms in a restricted amount of time.

Moreover, the fall of the socialist system led to a decline in industrial output resulting in the collapse of several major industries, which needed to be rescued. According to Crăciun (2014, 4):

[...] the communist modernisation paradigm had linked urban development to urbanisation of the country, a significant number of small and medium cities which had grown due to the industries were now ailing.

Almost no city was exempt from the repercussion of this scheme and most of them never recovered. However, during the transition towards a democratic political system they provided an opportunity for the EU to pursue economic migration. Rising from the wreckage left by Ceaușescu and his regime became a challenge for the country. However, in 1990s, Romania began to see a light at the end of the tunnel and with the turn of the millennium, the country experienced economic growth. By mid-2000s, Romania affirmed to the transformational effects associated with the EU accession guidelines (Papadimitroiu & Phinnemore 2008). Nevertheless, the initial accession discussions originated already in 1999 with the decision of the Helsinki European Council (Presidency Conclusions 1999). These negotiations represented perhaps, a not to be missed opportunity for Romanian to become a fragment of the more democratic, integrated and developed part of the European continent. Additionally, the discussions became a keystone for Romania to leave its communist history in the past.

In the following years, EU imposed strict conditions and a limited timeframe to implement new reforms that will allow the country to abide by the Single Market rules and the European Monetary Union *acquis*. The preliminary accession criteria represented also a



cornerstone in Romanian politics, as it pushed the country to adopt the principles of the EU and guide towards denouncing post-communistic thinking. It was a difficult task as a new system was to be put in place. The country also had to simultaneously go through internationalisation and democratisation. Throughout this evolution, corruption remained a steppingstone in the development hence EU pushed for firm rules to eradicate it. The new reforms and measures allowed Romanian to enter the race to become a member, but there still was international doubt whether or not it was ready.

Although its initial application was met with scepticism by the northern countries, Romania was deemed ready to join and became officially a member of the EU in 2007 together with its neighbour, Bulgaria. Nonetheless, its membership was accepted under certain conditions aimed again at combating the problem of corruption. The conditions encompassed the introduction of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM) with the attached thresholds, specifically designed for Romania. Since its implementation the yearly reports hint towards a better functioning Romania with low levels of corruption.

Nevertheless, independent reports as issued by Transparency International state that corruption, especially in business costs billions and hinders economic sustainability (Transparency International 2009). Additional publications still show the presence of corrupt activities in certain levels of the society, most disappointingly in high level politics. For example, in the 2016 elections the leader of the Social Democratic Party (PSD), Liviu Dragnea won 45 percent of the votes, allowing for a governmental coalition with the Democrats (Bershidsky 2016). However, Dragnea is currently under a suspended sentence regarding electoral fraud and according to the constitution, not eligible to serve as prime minister. Many additional scandals and stories also show that there is a lack of insider knowledge between the EU issued publications regarding the status of corruption in Romania and the actuality. It is fair to assume that the extent to which corruption is embedded into the system is difficult to understand as it is in a sense part of the social, economic and political system.

The overall claim of this dissertation reads as follows; there is a significant informative gap between reports published by the EU with regards to corruption in Romania and the reality. Thus this research work will aim at identifying the underlying problems of corrupt behaviour in Romania and how the EU understands it. Therefore, the following hypothesis will be researched throughout this paper, namely that there is a gap between the reporting side, in this case the EU-related programmes, and the actuality. In pursuance of understanding evolvment and development of corruption in Romania, one has to compare its influence on the system during the socialist regime and after. This contrast will allow an analysis of the EU measures and their actual effects. Consequently, in order to comprehend the developments in Romania the paper is chronologically structured. Starting with methodology which identifies the most appropriate methods for the research it then leads to the second chapter and the introduction of corruption in the socialist regime. Furthermore, the involvement of the European Union in the battle against corruption as well as its effects after Romania joined the EU is presented in the subchapters. In addition, an analysis is provided in the third chapter in order to examine the relationship between EU reports, EU measures and corruption in Romania. Finally, conclusions will provide a summary of the findings and offer a few recommendations for the future.

Additionally, in order to provide evidence supporting the thesis statement throughout the aforementioned chapters the following questions will be addressed: What are the forms of EU involvement into the process of fighting corruption? How is this outcome measured? Additionally, examples from several levels of society will be provided to support the claim that the reports do not paint the real picture of Romania's corruption story.

# **1. METHODOLOGY**

## **1.1. Research Methods: Case study and Critical discourse analysis**

There is currently a growing consensus among researchers which suggests an increased benefit resultant from a synergy of methods. By not limiting the methodology and adopting a collaborative approach the research is more likely to advance more efficiently (Bennett 2004). However, in order to apply a more comprehensive methodology, it is required to clearly understand the limitations and trade-off as well as relative comparative advantages of every method used. Therefore, the methodological scope for this paper will encompass a combination of two methods, namely a case study and critical discourse analysis. In addition, the classic desk research will construct the base of understanding theoretical concepts, analysis reports and provide evidence supporting the main claim. This methodology was chosen due to the nature of the paper, namely it is a qualitative research aimed at identifying if EU written reports regarding Romania's fight against corruption do not mirror the reality of how this phenomenon is affecting the country.

The core methodology-related element of this paper is an emphasis on case study, which will be the base of analysing the effects of set policies. According to Yin a case study is defined as “[...] an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (Yin 2009, 18). Nevertheless, a case study will also limit the area of the research to one country (Romania) and will allow political, social and economic interferences only from within the country and the EU framework. Reducing influencing factors on this research will allow the author to focus on relationship between Romania and the EU mechanisms. Although as argued by Zaidah that case studies remain a controversial method of conducting research when applied to social sciences, specifically to the

behavioural conditions it can offer a better insight. Also by applying a case study “[...] a researcher is able to go beyond the quantitative statistical results and understand the behavioural conditions through the actor’s perspective” (Zaidah 2007, 1). Additionally, a case study will provide the comparative advantage possibly identifying a new or missing variable and allowing it to be examined individually to extrapolate which casual mechanisms may have been at work as well as developing historical justifications of certain cases. From these, complex relationships may be identified and modelled, aiding to the overall research as well as its prospective outcomes. Moreover, case studies offer the opportunity to identify new hypothesis through a combination of deduction and induction (Bennett 2004).

### **1.1.1. The aims of case study**

A case study aims to analyse data within the context in which it has been used, more specifically within the circumstances where an activity took place (Zaidah 2007). This is applicable to this research as the anti-corruption measures imposed on Romania by the EU will be analysed during certain time periods. Also, in order to maximise the success of the case study, the research is required to witness the subject in their environment. According to Zaidah this practice will contrast with experiment which consciously removes the subject from its context and focuses on limited variables. Furthermore, variations in the different approaches of the case study result in qualitative as well as quantitative analysis of data. Nevertheless, Yin suggests research should be careful when categorising case studies as entirely qualitative research, this is because some case studies can be entirely based on quantitative data (Yin 2009). Thus, a case study depending on what context it is applied aims to provide both quantitative and qualitative data. Finally, this method not only explores and defines data in a real-life setting, but it helps to clarify the intricacies of real-life situations that might have been omitted by surveys or

experiments (Zaidah 2007). Therefore, choosing this method is of great use when studying a phenomenon such as corruption.

### **1.1.2. Critique of case study**

On the other hand, no method is fully neutral because when applied by the author there is a danger of bias, which is often more present in case studies when compared with statistical or data-based methods. The bias is drawn out from the belief that case studies are well designed for falsification of results and less likely to test for verification. However, when researching a specific issue case studies offer a detailed insight into the different aspects of the problem which may lead to qualitative results. Yet, Yin also identified three arguments which criticise the use of case studies. Firstly, he states that “too many times, the case study investigator has been sloppy, has not followed systematic procedures, or has allowed equivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions” (Yin 2009, 14). As a result, case studies might lack thoroughness in comparison to other methods where the proceedings are clearly defined. Secondly, case studies allow for little generalisation as one cannot make an overall applicable statement from a single case. Finally, this method is difficult to conduct and it is too long and produces a large amount of data to be analysed. As a result, it may become difficult to organise and overall manage it. On the other hand, some of the aforementioned drawbacks of case study can be avoided by setting the parameters as well as the objectives of the study. This will keep the research under control and avoid an overflow of information.

### **1.1.3. Critical discourse analysis**

Furthermore, to complement the case study, critical discourse analysis (CDA) will be conducted. CDA as more specific discourse analysis allows the author to minimise the selection

of methods and tools to the relatable case study. For the purpose of this research, discourse will be defined according Jäger and Maier who quoted Link, namely “an institutionalised way of talking that regulates and reinforces action and thereby exerts power” (Jäger & Maier 2009, 59). This definition was also argued by KhosraviNik that it draws its understanding from the Foucauldian wisdom (KhosraviNik 2015, 59). Additionally, Wodak argues that CDA sees discourse within the context of social practice (Wodak 1997). This in turn implies a dialectal relationship between a specific discourse and the surroundings such as institutions and social structures which frame it and produces the interdependent relationship between the discourse event and them. Wodak continues that “[...] discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned; it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people” (Wodak 1997, 303). Furthermore, as discourse is socially significant the issue of power also arises because it might affect ideology such that it can contribute to produce uneven power relations; for example between ethnic minorities and majorities or between social classes.

In addition, according to Van Dijk (1993) CDA appeals to a clear socio-political standpoint where a clear principle, aim and viewpoint are established within the set discipline as well as society. In due course, CDA is ultimately political and hopes or occasional illusions are re-evaluated though critical understanding. Wodak (2009) highlights the importance of interdisciplinary work that CDA underlines so that an understanding can be gained regarding the workings of language in communicating information in social institutions. Mogashoa (2014) argues that CDA appeals to long term analysis of basic causes and consequences of matters. As a result, there is an imperative need of inquiring about the relationship between society, culture, text and talk. Therefore, considering the social issues of the community can lead to a better understanding of how policies are being taught. Furthermore, critical discourse analysts aim to understand actual situations of social interactions taken form though language. According to Mogashoa (2014, 105):

[...] critical discourse analysis aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between discursive practices, events and texts, and wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power.

Wodak (2009) argues that CDA is described as possessing a common interest in explaining ideologies as well as power via systematic examination of semiotic data such as spoken, written and visual. Furthermore, a common factor is also identified by Mogashoa (2014), namely the critical factor which encompasses the issue of power and justice as well as the ways in which various social factors such as religion, education, sexual orientation etc. change social systems. When applying CDA, analysts will aim to develop their own arguments and positions although remaining aware of their methodologies and maintaining a self-reflective attitude, which the author also aims to adopt throughout this research.

#### **1.1.4. Critical discourse Analysis aims**

CDA aims to clear up the enormous mass of discourse and focus to what is being said in a society with respect to its qualitative spectrum (Jäger & Maier 2009). Furthermore, as stated through its name this method aims to question, analyse and criticise discourses and it does so in two ways. Firstly, by showing contradictions between discourses as well as the methods through which discourse makes a specific statement true beyond reasonable doubt, even though the validity of it is restricted by the time and place it was made. Secondly, the CDA needs to be inside the discourse so that the fundamental assumption of CDA will not be compromised. The author has to take a stand. Whether it includes values, norms or human rights, it should not be forgotten that all have also been discursively constructed (Jäger & Maier 2009).

### 1.1.5. Critique of Critical Discourse Analysis

Wodak's critique of CDA is narrowed to the very word 'critical' arguing that CDA possesses a wide understanding of this term. Nevertheless, it aims to "make the implicit explicit" (Wodak 1997, 304). Through this practice the relationship between ideology, discourse and power is made implicit, while superficial meanings are questioned and nothing is taken for granted. CDA is heavily focused on being self-critical, as well as self-reflective which may contribute to social change. Wodak and Reisigl (2001) distinguish between such 'critiques', identifying three: text-immanent critiques focused on text analysis, sociodiagnostic critique aimed at integrating structural and socio-political context into the interpretation of text and prospective critique which aims to disclose the interests and inconsistencies in the text. On the other hand, as previously mentioned CDA is also reliant on social structures and therefore the criticism cannot be based on outside positions but it is itself integrated in the social field as argued by Bourdieu and supported by Wodak. Overall, CDA analysts and researchers do not lie outside the societal hierarchy of power but remain subjects to the structure. Therefore, Wodak advises that (1997, 305):

[...] CDA researchers have to be aware that their own work is driven by social, economic, and political motives like any other academic work and that they are not in any superior position. Naming oneself "critical" only implies explicit ethical standards: an intention to make their position, research interests, and values explicit and their criteria as transparent as possible, without feeling the need to apologize for the critical stance of their work.

Overall, the methodology as aforementioned will employ a combination of research methods namely; a case study which will allow for defining the premises of the research and critical discourse analysis which will allow an in-depth definition and understanding of the issues at hand. These methods were chosen for the reason that they represent the most appropriate and insightful way to conduct this research.



## 1.2. Theoretical Framework: Social Indicators

Social indicators have been widely discussed in the past and according to Andrews and Withey the composition of social indicators has been highly debated, however the main ideas in this case are “[...] normative interest and the implication of relevance to policymaking” (Andrews & Withey 1976, 3). Keeping normative interest as a base implies that an indicator measures to some degree something we care about and also which we want to preserve some control over. On the other hand, Sheldon and Freeman define social indicators as “time series that allow comparisons over an extended period which permit one to grasp long-term trends as well as unusually sharp fluctuation rates [...]” (Sheldon & Freeman 1970, 97). Furthermore, Andrews also mentions the Sawhill definition of social indicators (1969) as “quantitative measures of social conditions designed to guide choices at several levels of decision making” (Andrews & Withey 1976, 4). Thus, due to its large coverage, it can be stated that no certain definition of social indicators is monopolised. Furthermore, the author should approach with caution the indicators and as suggest by Andrews and Withey (1976, 4):

The set of indicators should be “limited” so they can be understandable and not overly detailed, lengthy, or complex. The indicators should be “comprehensive” so that a substantial portion of the most salient or critical aspects of society is included. They should be “coherent” [...] “significant” if they fulfilled the foregoing demands but there is a further implication that they should be of “direct normative interest”

Social indicators are widely used, from weather and temperature to population and unemployment rates. Although nothing can be changed regarding natural phenomena such as the change in seasons, social phenomena according to Andrews are of our own making and they fall under our direction (Andrews & Withey 1976).

In addition, Kaufman explains the methodology behind using social indicators to measure the six dimensions of governance as it is done by the Worldwide Governance Index (WGI)

(Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi 2010). Understanding the process of measuring governance is crucial, when aiming to identify a discrepancy between what is being reported and what is essentially occurring in a respective country. Thus, the six dimensions will allow the author to analyse the set inconsistencies. The dimensions are categorised as follows:

1. Voice and Accountability (VA) which focuses on the perceptions of citizens regarding their participation in appointing their government, but also freedom of expression and free media.
2. Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism (PV) looks at the perception of the probability that the government will be overthrown by violent means i.e. terrorism or revolutions. Additionally, it captures the beliefs of a country's citizen in the ability of their government to draft and implement comprehensive policies.
3. Government Effectiveness (GE) relates to the perceptions of the overall quality of policy construction and implementation, public service and freedom from political pressure.
4. Regulatory Quality (RQ) considers perceptions relating to the government's capability to draft and implement policies as well as regulation that encourage development in the private sector. Furthermore, it also encompasses the opinion of citizens about state institutions that govern set economic and social activities amid them.
5. Rule of Law (RL) looks at citizens' perceptions and confidence in matters relating to the rules of society, quality of contract implementation, courts, police, property right, as well as the degree to which violence or crime is likely to occur,
6. Control of Corruption (CC) focuses on the perceptions of the degree to which public power is used for private advancements. Overall, CC includes all forms of corruption from petty to grand, as well as the possibility of the state to be captured by elites.

Additionally, it should be emphasized that the aforementioned six dimensions should not be thought as being independent of each other. That is for example, if rule of law is respected this

could lead to fairer procedures of selecting and/or replacing governments as well as less misuse of public office for personal gain (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi 2010). Therefore, due to this interrelationship, assigning the variables measuring the several facets of governance does not offer a definite, ultimate answer. Thus, it allows the author to organise the data so that it will relate to the issue of corruption. Moreover, the WGI mirrors the perceptions of a wide and diverse group of respondents such as individuals or domestic firms who have been in direct contact with government procedures but also institutes such as the Institute for Management Development's World Competitiveness, the World Bank and the Gallup World Poll (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi 2010). Such perceptions indexes offer an insight into the workings of governments, which will become detrimental to this research, especially when looking for the actual corruption levels in a country.

However, when it comes to corruption, academic opinions are divided starting from how it is defined, how it is identified and how it is measured. Measuring corruption is also one of the facets on which most disagreements occur. This is due to the different understandings of what a corrupt act actually consists of, as this varies from country to country. Nevertheless, according to Phillip four major issues have been identified when measuring corruption, which can lead to a misinterpretation of the level of corruption present in a country. The first one being a problem of scaling, as it is the case of the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) which “[...] employs a ten-point scale to one decimal place, across a range of different indicators” (Phillip 2006, 49).

Secondly, there are reservations when discussing the appropriateness of the respondents, namely whose insights actually matter? Previous research displays a trend of serious which shows that in the case of the CPI, the opinion of western businessmen with business overseas have been at the top of constructing the index. As a result, there is an obvious bias, which unsurprisingly suggests that countries in the North and West do better. Therefore, “a comparison with the sampling procedures used in other multiple-component perception surveys could make an important contribution to a more reliable index” (Phillip 2006, 50).

Thirdly, and mostly applicable to the EU reporting and Romania, there is a strong avoidance to apply ‘harder’ indications and a heavy reliance on ‘soft’ indicators. One example includes the figures prosecuted for conducting corrupt activities. This is because an issue of comparability rises, as there are different legal instruments at work and it is difficult to state whether a high level prosecution should be seen as confirmation of the high level corruption, or as proof of low acceptance of corruption (Phillip 2006). Nonetheless, similar data should not be dismissed as it provides a complex insight into the corruption inside specific states. Moreover, reports such as published by the Council of Europe, OECD and the World Bank still provide an insight into the situation regarding corruption within a country. However, it is suggested that the harder indicators should be integrated into the soft perception-driven surveys to avoid misjudging the reality of the corruption level.

Finally, literature suggests the concern with measuring and reporting on corruption is the reliability of the CPI, specifically that its reliability is a result of “the dominance in the Index of small number surveys (nine components of 1999 index were essentially the results of three years’ worth of each of three surveys)” (Phillip 2006, 50). Keeping this theory in mind when analysing the reports of the European Union regarding Romanian, will allow an understanding of the informative gap that occurs between the two. When researching about the informative gap between the EU and Romania is not clearly defined but current studies focus on the standard anti-corruption measures taken and in an article by Novak, Rebegea stated the EU has done as much as it could (Novak 2017). The reports exist to shine a light into the corruption occurring at high-levels, but overall they are classified as ineffective. There is a lack of understanding or possibly an unwillingness to understand this condition beyond its superficial characteristics, therefore the majority of reports keep a diplomatic tone. An actual gap between the reports and the actuality has not been exactly identified, yet scholars acknowledge that Romania keeps on being corrupt and the EU is providing support but possibly not the right kind of support. As aforementioned, the debate already begins with what corruption is or what it means to be corrupt, therefore in order to understand this phenomenon in Romania one has to understand its history of political,

social and economic behaviour. In this case social indicators will serve their purpose to observe economic and social trends and offer a structure that will show if growing imbalances, social dis-benefits and dissatisfactions occur within a society. This will allow the author to identify such trends in Romania with regards to corruption but one has to keep in mind Andrews warning that in order to be useful social indicators “[...] must be formulated in such way that public and private administration can draw coherent and valid policy conclusion from them” (Andrews & Withey 1976, 2).

## **2. CORRUPTION PROCESS IN ROMANIA**

In order to understand how corruption has wormed its way into the Romanian society it is necessary to dive into the history of Romania's political systems and their policies. Furthermore, it is also imperative to assess the involvement of the European Union in the battle against corruption as well as the measures, mechanisms, tools and strategies it used to do so. Finally, an assessment is necessary on how the implemented measures affected corruption as well as how the country performed throughout the application of the EU measures.

### **2.1. Corruption in the socialist regime and before EU**

Before entering a socialist regime, Romania was battling its conviction of remaining neutral during wars. Nevertheless, despite its efforts to not become involved in the Second World War, it received numerous threats and ultimatums from the Soviet Union claiming to invade the country if it does not comply. Therefore, Romania was left with no choice, but to become a part of the war. The aftermath of WWII left Romania under the direct economic and military control of the Soviet Union. This remained until 1950s and during this time frame the country was drained from its resources. Additionally many companies were concealed under the SovRoms treaties as a front for the Soviet Union to control the Romanian market (Cioroianu 2005). Following the rise of USSR's involvement the Communist People's Republic, King Michael abdicated and was later exiled. The first leader of the communist party was Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej who laid the foundations for Ceaușescu. He pursued the idea of an independent Romania, free from the reins of the Soviets. His convictions allowed him to persuade the First Secretary of the Soviets, Nikita Khrushchev to recall troops from the Romanian territory in 1958.

Afterwards Romania came under new leadership, namely that of Nicolae Ceaușescu. He began to pursue independent policies and severely condemned the Soviet Union in their invasion of Czechoslovakia (Papadimitroiu & Phinnemore 2008). Furthermore, he did not accept for Romania to become the main agricultural supplier for the Soviet Union, as seen by the Soviet leaders at that time. Ceaușescu's determination to defy the Soviet Union allowed him to access international funds. Throughout 1960s, the country's foreign debt increased radically, which consequently amplified the involvement and influence of the World Bank and IMF in Romanian policies. This in turn interfered with Ceaușescu's reforms and therefore he implemented his restriction which had devastating effects on the population. Drastically reducing the wealth of the population resulted in citizens becoming corrupt in order to survive. Additionally, his relations with the West also began to fall apart as the situation at home worsened.

Through the socialist regime, corruption was encountered every day and at every social level. The reasons behind can be attributed to the extremely restrictive socialist regime which deprived citizens of basic rights such as access to food, electricity and heating. Furthermore, this lays in accordance to Radu & Gyulian proposals of the main causes regarding the phenomenon of corruption, which includes the type of regime or political system. The argument goes as follows; regimes who disfavour the circulation of elites (for example, a certain party remains in power for a long time) risk creating parallel structures or processes to the official ones encouraging or fuelling illegal activities (Radu & Gyulian 2010). There are certainly other causes which also helped to pave the way to corrupt behaviour, but overall and as in the case of Romania the concentration of power or the maintenance of power for a long time in the same hands allowed corruption to develop.

However, in order to understand how corruption worked at local levels in Romania, there is a need to understand the situation was different if one had connections. It was possible for some people to receive goods ordinary people could not. Naturally, everyone wanted a better living for themselves and their families. One also has to keep in mind people were not looking for extravagant products, but were trading and paying up for products such as coffee or chocolate

which was considered a luxury. Bribes were given to doctors, police men, vendors, in order for people to receive a basic standard of living. The fear of not receiving enough food and other basic requirement left citizens with no choice but to adopt a corrupt thinking.

Corruption at local level may be attributed to peoples need to survive in a regime where the government controls everything. Moreover, human nature might also be the reason for this unethical behaviour, as according to Radu & Gyula (2010) corruption can be explained through the deficiencies of humanity. Firstly, this opinion was enunciated by Platon, who stated that greed is the ultimate source of corruption and that this erodes community values as well as its common objectives (Warren 2004). In order to satisfy this greed, corrupt people are causing the exclusion of certain social groups from the decision making processes which affects them directly. This in turn results in a democratic deficit, which was clearly seen in Romania during its socialist regime. Nevertheless, this theory cannot be seen as the ultimate cause of corruption, because significant differences between the levels of corruption in various states were discovered and this cannot be explained through the variations of human nature (Radu & Gyulian 2010). It may apply to Romania during Ceaușescu's regime, but should not be seen as a definite explanatory theory.

Low level and High level corruption presented a truly impressive spectrum in Romania, from the administrative to judicial to economic and political branches. Furthermore, the lengthy socialist regime left the Romanian people tired of the constant oppression. While other Eastern European states had a relatively peaceful transition to democracy, Romania had one of the bloodiest revolutions in history. With a small protest in Timisoara on 16 December 1989; a whole revolution began. The word spread to other big cities and the violent protests took momentum, reaching the capital. The regime tried to quiet down the unrests, by deploying tanks on the Romanian population. These aggressive measures did not have the desired effect and the regime fell but not before Ion Iliescu pushed his way to the presidency. Ion Iliescu, an ally of Ceaușescu founded the Exceptional Military Tribunal (Tribunalul Militar Exeptional) which



ordered the execution of Ceaușescu and his wife. Although the regime fell, Romania could not escape from its years of oppression and corruption behaviour easily. With Ion Iliescu in power and in the years that followed, the West increased its involvement in Romania. Furthermore with the country joining various international organisations such as World Trade Organisation and NATO its deeply rooted corruption problems came to the surface.

## **2.2. EU involvement**

European Union began to increase its role and presence in Romania, after the downfall of the communist regime (1989). The collapse of communism left the country in a state of institutional fluidity permitting the state to create new democratic structures as well as political representations (Papadimitroiu & Phinnemore 2008). However, the freshly introduced democracy was still bound to the socialist way embedded by the former communistic state, which still narrowed it to a corrupt and post-communist mentality. Nevertheless, Romania was not alone facing this dilemma, as after the fall of the Soviet Union numerous states emerged and were still holding onto communist ideologies. At this point the EU turned all its efforts on state-building and encouraging a democratic leadership. This was done by trying to export the western belief; and even if the role of the EU as a state-builder in Eastern Europe was essentially indirect, its effects on the development of Romania's political structure were immense (Papadimitroiu & Phinnemore 2008). At that moment the EU employed strong decentralized regional policies which in turn made it difficult for local governments i.e. Romania, to accept the return of "their" country to Europe. Additionally, this posed many complications in fulfilling the European demands for effective government coordination and according to Mendelski (2011), transpositioning the Rule of Law which was one of the basic requirements to become an EU member. Specifically this conditionality saw a lot of resistance from Romania. Overall, it was undeniably

clear that the post-communist Romanian government will find the transition towards a western ideology difficult.

During the changeover period the Romanian political system became exceedingly fragmented with colliding ideologies which slowed down progress (FRIDE 2002). It took over a decade but by the mid-2000s Romania affirmed to the transformational effects accompanying the EU reforms and accession negotiations became a reality. However, the prime accession negotiations began already in 1999 through the decision of the Helsinki European Council (Presidency Conclusions 1999). These negotiations were classified as Romanian's last chance to become part of a developed Europe and to leave its former communist history in the past. Following the years after, the EU imposed very firm conditions as well as limited time to implement new reforms which will allow the country to comply with the Single Market and the European Monetary Union *acquis*. Additionally, Papadimitroiu & Phinnemore stated that "the Europeanising effects on the Romanian economy will almost certainly intensify in the longer run as the full implications of EU membership unfold and the country moves closer towards entry into the Eurozone" (Papadimitroiu & Phinnemore 2008). However, since 2008 these predictions have not become true, as Romania is still not part of the Eurozone, or Schengen area. Nevertheless, under the EU constraining measures and with the help of IMF, Romania managed to design a strategy which helped the country to recover economically, but also to adopt new reforms.

Subsequently to Helsinki European Council, the real accession negotiation regarding Romania began in 2000. The council decided in December 2003 that, if all stated objectives will be achieved, Romania will become a member of the European Union. Romania received a to-do list, containing a series of strategies which will demonstrate the countries determination to become a member. Some of the reforms included the consolidation of the democratic system, which meant the clash of various ideologies. Additionally, Romania had to adopt the rule of law and pledge to respect human rights and freedom of speech. In order to comply with the EU single market requirements Romania had to implement a free-market economy, which for a post-

communistic country was fairly challenging. The aforementioned requirements were vital for Romania's application and according to the presidency conclusions of the Brussels European Summit the Council stated that (Presidency Conclusions 2005, 4):

[...] progress made by Romania in implementing the acquis and commitments entered into as regards, in particular, Justice and Home Affairs and Competition, has made possible to close formally all the outstanding chapters with Romania on 14 December 2004 and accordingly looked forward to welcoming it as a member from January 2007

Consequently, the accession treaty was signed in Luxembourg in 2005 and Romania became an official EU member in 2007. Yet, Romania's membership was granted alongside some conditions, one being the implementation of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism. CVM was introduced as part of the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the European Union in 2007. It was adopted to aid the two countries in improving their judicial system and combat existing corruption as part of the EU Commission decision 13/XII/2006 (Commission of the European Communities 2006). In the case of Romania the CVM was implemented two weeks before its accession and required Romania to report yearly in March on the progress regarding the four benchmarks mentioned in CVM. According to the 2006 decision these four benchmarks were: 1) increased transparency and efficiency in its judicial processes, 2) establishing a verification agency (integrity agency), 3) investigating high-level corruption and 4) adopt further measures to fight corruption especially inside local governments (Commission of the European Communities 2006). Each individual benchmark should be addressed and its progress analysed, therefore by looking at the most recent report it is possible to conclude whether or not the CVM has been successful in Romania since its implementation approximately ten years ago. This has been the most intense measure the EU implemented in Romania with regards to fighting corruption. The most recent report published on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017 analysed the progress of the anti-corruption measures applied ten years ago, including the four benchmarks. With regards to the overall progress, according to the EU, Romania evidently made progress, however in order to see some

of its shortcoming the individual benchmarks have to be analysed and put in perspective with the reality of the current situation. Finally, anti-corruption measures implemented by the EU with the cooperation of the Romanian government need to be identified.

### **2.3. Corruption after EU**

Ten years after Romania joined the European Union, official reports suggest a decrease of corrupt activities. For example in 2007 according to Transparency International Corruption Perception Index Romania placed 69<sup>th</sup> where as in 2016 it placed 57<sup>th</sup>, showing significant progress (Transparency International 2016). European Union also praises Romania's progress in numerous reports regarding the decrease of corruption. In the EU Anti-Corruption report it was stated that this was achieved through the establishment of an institutional anti-corruption framework with the Anti-Corruption General Directorate (DNA) as a specialised prosecution office for high level corruption and the National Integrity Agency (ANI) as a controller for conflicts of interests and inconsistencies in personal wealth of officials (EU Anti-Corruption Report 2014). Furthermore, DNA was praised for their solid track record which included successful investigations in various corrupt activities of high-level politicians as well as revealing corrupt practices in industries such as transport, energy, agriculture, infrastructure, law enforcement, health care and more. Yet with corruption present in such a wide range of industries, it remains a challenge to decide upon the right approach.

Nevertheless, the EU noted a change over the recent years, namely an improvement of the High Court of Cassation and Justice especially "[...] in the adjudication of complex cases" (EU Anti-Corruption Report 2014, 3). Furthermore, the DNA together with the Romanian Ministry of Home Affairs, have adopted the role of a specialised police framework mainly in charge of corruption cases within the police but also other areas. The creation on ANI remains one of the major steps implemented to reduce corruption and according to EU reports, over the last five years its decisions on inconsistencies and administrative procedures regarding conflicts of interest

were over 80% (EU Anti-Corruption Report 2014). This means that a high amount of decisions were taken and confirmed through courts regarding issues of corruption. The EU reports also briefly mention the difficulties ANI is facing, although not much attention is paid to them.

On the other hand, according to the 2013 Special Euro barometer the perceptions regarding corruption in Romania are different from how the rest of the EU sees it (Special Eurobarometer 397 2014).

- 93% of Romanian respondents agreed that corruption is a widespread problem in their country (EU average: 76%).
- 42% say that they were personally affected by corruption in their daily lives (EU average: 26%).
- 82% consider that bribery and use of connections are often the easiest way to obtain certain public services (EU average: 73%).

These results show the scepticism of the Romanian people with regards to the corruption phenomenon which is significantly higher than the EU average. Additionally, in a comprehensive study published by the Romanian Ministry of Administration and Interior nationals were asked various questions with regards to local administrative proceedings. One example included a narrative where a person X is in urgent need of a document from the city hall for the constructions of a house. Once at the city hall, person X find out that issuing the document takes 30 days. Being in need of quick action, only two out of five respondents (21.6%) believe that person X will follow the legal path and wait the 30 days to receive the papers. Nearly half (48.3%) of the general population say that person X would use the name of his relative/friend if they were to work for the respective department in order for the documents to be issued earlier (Ministry of Administration and Interior 2012). The scenario continues as person X finds themselves in need of an additional document. While driving he passes over a red light and is stopped by the police. In this case 50.2% of the general population believes that person X will use his connections to avoid punishment. Finally, once arrived at office issuing the new

document, person X finds out he has to wait again 30 days for it to be issued and is given the opportunity to give an amount of illegal money to obtain the document on the spot. A shockingly 67.8% of the general population believe that person X will offer the requested amount. This shows the extent to which corruption is affecting an ordinary everyday situation and how the majority of the general Romanian population perceived it to be a normal way of conduct.

As previously mentioned, when Romania joined the EU it agreed to implement the CVM as part of its accession requirements. The CVM reports are published twice a year and incorporate progress, challenges and recommendations for the country to further reduce corruption. The performance of the CVM is measured as aforementioned against the four benchmarks areas (integrity, justice reforms, high-level corruption and prevention and fight against corruption in the public sector) and the European Commission decision which established the CVM required all benchmarks to be ‘satisfactory’. Five years after its implementation, in 2012, an assessment was conducted. The results showed that the basic structures needed for the CVM benchmarks were implemented. Nevertheless, the report mentioned that “sustainability and irreversibility of the reforms was still questionable and a track record of implementation which would be required for the Commission to decide to end the CVM was not yet present” (European Commission 2014). The situation according to the CVM reports and other publishing’s connected to the mechanism note overall positive changes in Romania, which happened over the time period the mechanism was implemented. Although, it was highlighted that progress in not straightforward and that progresses in one area may be cancelled out by setbacks in other areas, the overall situation was improving.

Meanwhile, in the country Romanian people became more and more unsatisfied by the constant corruption scandals, involving high-level politicians and the lack of measures against them. The 2014 elections became an expression of the Romanian electorate with regards to the established elites. In the end Klaus Johannis who campaigned on a heavy anti-corruption platform won the presidency. He represented the position of many Romanians, that it of less corruption and more transparency. Yet, the election caused for a few unrests in the diaspora, as

many Romanians residing abroad had difficulties casting their ballot. This was due to the high amount of voters present and also to the tight deadline which refused to be extended by the electoral bureau. Overall, Johannis victory represented the will of the people to eradicate corruption. Since his victory, some high-level cases of corruption were closed, but resistance from the elites remains Romanian's problem. Although, reports and official rankings continue to show improvements, ten years after Romania joined the EU and agreed to all the measures it proposed, civil society showed that actuality looks very different than described in official reports. The uprisings which began in January 2017 made it to the top of international newspapers with lines such as "Biggest manifestation in Bucharest since its return to democracy" (Timpul 2017). This showed how the Romanian people are still impacted by high level corruption and how leaders may see themselves above the law.

The 2017 protests began in January, two weeks after the Socialist Democratic Party (PSD) and Alliance of Liberals and Democrats (ALDE) coalition led by Sorin Grindeanu was sworn into office. The street protests started as a response to the government's decrees which would pardon various crimes and modify criminal code provisions with regards to abuse of power. This included one emergency ordinance (OUG) aiming to modify the criminal code and one bill regarding pardon and amnesty. On the first day of the protests 18 January, approximately 5 000 people protested. In the following days the protests escalated dramatically, throughout the country as well as in the diaspora. The escalation occurred on 31 January 2017, due to the new government secretly approving the ordinance which pardoned certain crimes, especially relating to the abuse of power. Straightaway after it was announced that the ordinance was passed thousands of people went to the streets. The next day over 300 000 people were protesting, making this protest the largest since the revolution of 1989. The peak was reached on 5 February when around 600 000 people took to the streets, classifying it the largest protest since Romanian history. The massive extend of the protest made headlines in the international press and inspired other anti-corruption manifestations in Western as well as Eastern Europe for example Paris, Copenhagen and Tirana.

The ordinance was dismissed already before the massive protests began. Nevertheless the people were demanding the resignation of the government as well as early elections. Thus, the protests continued. On 9<sup>th</sup> February Justice Minister, Florin Iordache announced his resignation. Further reactions included various NGOs and diplomatic missions to Romania heavily criticising the two proposals regarding the pardon and modifications to the penal code. EU Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker and First Vice President Frans Timmermans commonly declared that “the fight against corruption must advance, not cease. We are very concerned with the recent evolvments in Romania” (Brocchetto 2017). In turn, Sorin Grindeanu sent a letter to the Commission president and prime vice-president in which he states that one of the government’s priorities is the fight against corruption and that the justice ministers as well as the foreign ministers are available for any further discussion (National Press Agency 2017). Furthermore, he continued to support the two laws as being in accordance with the EU provisions and by possessing the agreement of the Constitutional Court, the Commission’s recommendations in Venice and the ECHR jurisprudence. Additional members of parliament and various party leaders such as Raluca Turcan acting leader of the National Liberal Party and Nicușor Dan president of the Save Romania Union continued to express their disapproval of the two laws. Moreover, European Commission spokesman said that Romania has declined in terms of proving the irreversibility of reforms, which might have affected the chances of lifting the CVM until the end of the mandate of the present Commission (EurActiv 2017). Furthermore, the overall official position of the EU regarding corruption in Romania became firmer since the protests and public statements warned Romania of backtracking on corruption.

Generally, the aforementioned events clearly show the dissatisfaction of the Romania people with their government and its proceedings. Furthermore, the governmental actions demonstrate that the corrupt ideas of the elites remain an issue. Nevertheless, the public is becoming less willing to accept them in comparison to the past and will take measures to make itself heard. Furthermore, this manifestation classified as the biggest in Romanian history proved that even after ten years of EU measures against corruption, progress reports, international



indexes and academic studies, the citizens relationship with the government is not on good terms. Thus actions and responses to corruption, both from Romania and the EU have been identified and by analysing them an informative gap may be identified.

### 3. ANALYSIS

In the case of Romania, corruption is one of the main issues the country is dealing with. This is highly indicated by the sociological studies conducted among the population, by organisations specialised in set field as well as civil society and international partners. There is a difficulty in achieving a concrete comparative analysis between the various sociological researches conducted in Romania and the actuality of things, as the methodology and structure is very different. Furthermore, according to Radu & Gyulian (2010), there is a difference in the perception of which institutions or areas are the most corrupt, namely the DNA within the Ministry of Administration and Interior placed the sanitary system as a top contender for being the most corrupt area. This is followed by the parliament, government and local authorities. On the other hand, research conducted by the Association for Democracy Implementation places the parliament at the top, followed by government, sanitary system and local authorities. Although the order of the culprits varies, the leaders of the ranking remain the same.

Another issue rising from the different available research is the pessimism of the Romanian population regarding the evolution of the corruption phenomenon. Thus, in most conducted studies over 50% of the interviewees consider the situation to have worsened over the years and future perspectives remain negative (Radu & Gyulian 2010). In the annual reports published by Transparency International Romania's ranking has improved rising by 8 places over a period of 10 years (Corruption Perception Index 2016). It is imperative to mention that the classification of country by its level of corruption is done via a 0-100 scale, where 100 represent the least level of corruption. Thus in 2016, Denmark together with New Zealand received a score of 90 placing them as the world's top least corrupt countries and in comparison Romania received 48 placing it on the 57<sup>th</sup> position. By applying CDA some issues should be addressed regarding the Transparency International ranking, as it hard to believe that Romania is constantly classified below countries with an undeniable higher corruption presence. As a result, it needs to be noted

that CPI offers an insight into the perceptions of corruption in one country, not the actual corruption levels. Therefore, this data should be used carefully when issuing definite reports about corruption. Additionally, in the figure below the European Commission published a country fact sheet, but the original data was retrieved from the Transparency International database.

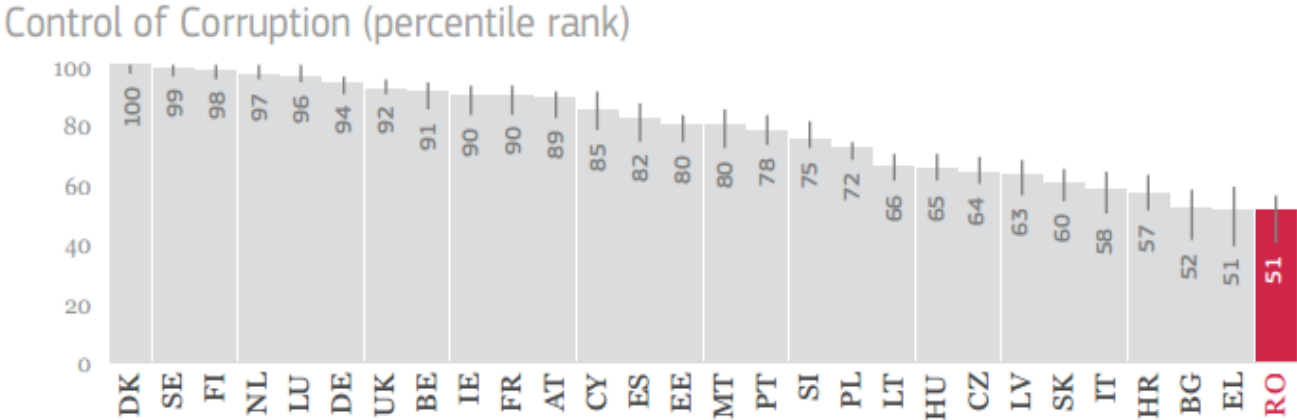


Figure 1. Control of Corruption  
 Source: (European Commission 2014)

Furthermore, in the EU and also according to the ranking published by the European Commission, Romania is in the last place regarding control of corruption. Although the published reports suggest progress on the different anti-corruption benchmarks put in place by the CVM, the ranking shows stagnation. Considering the origins of the data it can be suggested that the EU reports show some discrepancies between what is being published and the reality. This in turn needs to be analysed.

### **3.1. EU Cooperation and Verification Mechanism**

The corruption situation in Romania can also be analysed on the bases of the European Commission reports as well as the CVM after 01 January 2007. In the first report published by the commission in 2007, it was concluded that “In the light of the analysis contained in this report, the Commission does not consider that it is warranted at this stage to invoke the safeguard provisions of the Accession Treaty” (Commission of the European Communities 2007, 20). From the following reports, although slow, a positive evolution can be observed concerning the reduction of corruption. Nevertheless, in the 2010 report of the European Commission to the EU Parliament the country is criticised that “during the last six months, Romania has not been able to keep the momentum of reform it had established by mid-2009” and “in addition, the capacity of the judicial system has been put under further strain by net staff losses and the protests during September” (2010, 3). Furthermore, Romania’s political willingness to fight corruption was hardly criticised throughout the report.

Yet, most of the reports that followed after showed a trend which bears some discussion. Whether based on surveys conducted by public institutions or by NGOs and IOs reports, the general characteristic shows an almost exclusive focus on the shortcoming of the judicial system. It lies in no one’s power to deny the importance of the courts efficiency and no anti-corruption campaign can succeed without the incentive that justice will prevail. However, most experts agree that at least as important as a just system are the managerial measures via which opportunities to commit illegal acts are reduced or even eliminated. The prosecution and punishment of those who commit acts of corruption is difficult, costly and in some cases leads to little results. Moreover, besides the illegal activities of some individuals one must include the corruption of people around them which may lead to a phenomenon of multiplication (Radu & Gyulian 2010). These damages may be avoided via measures aimed at eliminating the possibility of those tempted to commit corrupt actions to put their plans into effect. The aforementioned progress reports published by the European Commission make little or no reference to the anti-

corruption measures regarding elimination of the factors that favours it. Analysing the reports it can be observed that in 2006 there is absolutely no reference to the absence of active measures aimed at eliminating the possibility of breaking the law. Equally, the Commission has held back any propositions or action plans for the Romanian authorities regarding this issue. Thus, the author implies that the published progress reports (CVM), although irrefutably important to the progress of Romania's fight against corruption, lack the real life and social component which is at the base of conducting set illegal activities. Analysing the individual benchmarks of the most recent 2017 CVM report will give an indication of the situation in Romania according to official EU reports.

The first benchmark concerning the judicial system showed institutional and legislative progress in the areas of transparency and accountability. Moreover, the report notes that recent polls display a strong public perceptions relating to judicial independence as well as trust in the judiciary. Nevertheless, additional reactions to this trend were also mentioned such as political and media attacks on judicial organisations, but also particularly intense attacks on DNA (Report on Progress in Romania under the CVM 2017). Since its establishment as the manager of the judiciary, the Superior Council of the Magistracy (SCM) has aimed at defending the independence of the judiciary. Furthermore, the SCM together with the Ministry of the Judiciary have shown willingness to work together in finding solutions to reforms relating to efficiency, resources and workload.

Furthermore, the report mentioned that Romania has adopted a new Civil and Criminal Code which allows for fair trials, set court proceeding and a definite time frame for the rulings. Nevertheless, it is mentioned that regarding the Civil Code implementing the new infrastructure has been postponed which in turn suggest a lack of planning. Interestingly, in the case of Criminal Codes, further proceedings have been hindered by "an unpredictable legislative approach in Parliament" (European Commission 2017, 5). This meaning, the emergency ordinance procedures highly preferred by the parliament, and specifically the two draft OUDs which sparked the biggest protests in the history of Romania. At the beginning of the year

however, the report concluded this benchmark by noting that substantive progress has been made but not withstanding difficulties.

The second benchmark relates to ANI as well as the integrity framework and according to the report the agency started to work in line with the recommendations from the last CVM report. These suggested a closer cooperation with the Permanent Electoral Authority so that integrity decisions would be further applied towards the suitability of the candidates and that ineligible candidates will not be able to candidate or hold public office. Nevertheless, in 2015 the mayor of Bucharest's fifth district Marian Vanghelie was arrested on suspicion of bribery and money laundering (Păun 2016). He was then suspended from office and placed under house arrest. With the investigation still on-going he announced that he will win back his office. Meanwhile, DNA was investigating him for abuse of power and was also checking for forged signatures supporting his new candidacy. When asked he told reporters that he will not be intimidated by the DNA and that if necessary he will campaign from jail (Păun 2016). To this day he remains popular amongst the poor and is now the wheel of the yet still unfamiliar Social Justice Party.

The CVM report considers ANI and the integrity framework to have made overall significant progress, but coming to the third benchmark concerning high-level corruption the report notes that an increase of cases of corruption have been brought forward and that many have gone to trial. Nevertheless, a repetition of similar cases suggests that prevention has had little effect. Finally, it is noted that concerning this benchmark Romania has achieved widespread recognition and has made progress (Report on Progress in Romania under the CVM 2017). Yet, for example the mayor of Craiova (one of Romania's largest cities) and one of PSD's vice-presidents, Lia Olguța Vasilescu was charged on four counts of bribery, three counts of abuse of power and money laundering (Păun 2016). Additionally, she was arrested for a brief time, to be later released as the investigation was still going. Stating she is innocent, she refused to give up her seat as the mayor and became later Minister of Labour. In another case, ex-Minister of Interior and PSD leader, Luviiu Dragnea was accused in 2016 for abuse of power, incitement to intellectual false, electoral fraud and corrupt acts. He was condemned to two years prison with a

four-year suspended sentence (National Press Agency 2016). Following this sentence, Dragnea stated his intention to challenge the verdict at the European Court of Human Rights. Overall, bearing the CVM report in mind and comparing the findings there with the abovementioned examples of high-level corruption cases, it is clear that there are a multitude of issues still to be fixed with regards to corruption in Romania.

The final benchmark tackles corruption at all levels of society, aiming to diminish it. According to the report, progress in this area has been slow, but the new anti-corruption strategy for 2016-2020 shall identify weaknesses by implementing specific measures. The main challenges remain to accurately enforce the measures at all societal levels. As with every report a few recommendations were given concerning specific issues such as implementing a Code of Conduct for parliamentarians and ministers. Furthermore, the Criminal Codes and Codes for Criminal procedures should be finalized as soon as June and the parliament is urged to stick to the deadlines. In order to improve future monitoring and provide accurate statistics the report recommends that the government should implement an Action Plan which will include an appropriate mechanism to provide requested information, but also to monitor the application of court decisions. Additional points include adopting criteria to lift the immunity of parliamentarians, continuing to implement the anti-corruption strategy and keeping procedures transparent. Yet, considering that the Romanian government wanted earlier this year to pass a bill which will pardon certain individuals from being pursued for their crimes, how will the proposed immunity-lift be approved? Resistance against such measures will evidently be present.

The overall conclusions remain similar to every report, namely that “The Commission's 2014, 2015 and 2016 CVM reports were able to highlight a positive trend and a track record pointing to strong progress and growing irreversibility of the reforms under the CVM” (Report on Progress in Romania under the CVM 2017, 14). Nevertheless, this year it was noted that the benchmarks were not fulfilled at a satisfactory level.

### **3.2. Particularistic Political Culture in Romania**

Clearly, the overall situation in Romania concerning corruption is also not at satisfactory levels, yet after so many years under the EU measures one may ask, what are the causes of Romania's failure to combat corruption 20 years after its transition to democracy? Why does this phenomenon persist and even seems to increase in the past years? And why do institutions and laws adopted after western models fail to produce results in Romania? Firstly, corruption has not yet found its origins, although many factors have proven to lead to corrupt behaviour. For example, persistence is a characteristic of corruption, as once it has taken over it is hard to eliminate. Furthermore, the human factor plays a crucial role. According to Bardhan corruption represents what we call an equilibrium dependant on frequency, and the gains one expects from engaging in corrupt activities depend on the number of people one expects to be corrupt (Bardhan 1997). Therefore, acknowledging the fact that other people are also corrupt represents a stimulus for the ones who are tempted to commit such crimes. Likewise, if the number of corrupt people is big, the danger of receiving a punishment is reduced, thus corruption becomes a phenomenon which feeds on itself, as it seems to be the case in Romania.

On the other hand, success stories of eradicating corruption are few and practically only Hong Kong and Singapore have managed to reduce its devastating effects. Nevertheless, these countries are very small and although they may be compared in size to some Eastern European or Central European countries there lays a fundamental difference in societies as well. In Hong Kong great attention is paid on preventive measures, therefore starting from kinder garden children are taught to be honest by confronting them with ethical dilemmas. Raising an honest generation may a good way to eradicating corrupt behaviour. Also, according to executive director of Hong Kong Ethics Development Centre Monica Yu "two generations after adopting this approach against skirting the rules there's evidence of a major cultural shift in the attitude of the local Chinese population" (Laje 2013). Hence, is a cultural shift the only way to successfully eradicate corruption? What has been done in Romania with respect to prevention and eradicating



corruption from a cultural level? With the exception of a handful of televised campaigns, not much has been done. Most of the preventive measures are aimed at governmental institutions and agencies. The National Committee for Prevention of Criminality set up in 2003 “[...] with the role to elaborate, integrate, correlate and monitor the Government’s policy for prevention of criminality at national level” (National Program for Prevention of Corruption, 3) . A great emphasis has also been placed on monitoring set actions and inviting NGOs to participate and offer feedback on the various measures. However, not enough has yet been done on changing the overall behaviour of the people.

Taking a look at Singapore the approach to diminish corruption does not put an emphasis on behaviour but on institutions. For example in the almost six millions metropolis a strong and independent anti-corruption agency holds the power to investigate any person whether Minister, policeman or public servant (Hsien Loong 2016). Additionally, citizens of Singapore remain subject to the countries strict laws even if they operate outside, thus discouraging misbehaviour even outside its borders. However, certain applied policies such as jail sentence may not adhere to the westernized democratic values, which European Union is fighting for, also in Romania. Then again, according to Rothstein the westernized measures which are trying to combat corruption are inefficient and only a “big bang”, where everything has to change preferably simultaneously, may be the option (Rothstein 2007, 24). This may mean radical measures adopted by someone endowed with great authority. The reason given by Rothstein is that when only one set of institutions is reformed then corruption will inevitably spill into others. In order to avoid it, a Schelling-type of “tipping point” is suggested, as a means to reach equilibrium (Rothstein 2007, 24)

If the anti-corruption policy measures are limited to the introduction of small measures (“entry points”), they will not convince enough agents that continuing their corrupt practices are no longer a viable option and the likely result is that the system will not

reach the crucial “tipping point” but slide back into its old practices of systemic corruption.

Analysing the overall efforts put by international actors such as the EU into eradicating corruption in Romania through various policies, measures and programmes, there seems to be little tangible results. This is due mainly to the fact that such internationally funded campaigns do not take into consideration the extent to which corrupt practices are embed in the system. Thus, there is a risk that international anti-corruption measures will be implemented within networks already taken over by corruption. In addition, the failures of set campaigns lead to more frustration among the population as well as loss of trust in the democratic system

Furthermore, as mentioned in previous chapters, unethical practices may be caused among other reasons by the tradition and culture of one country, as it is the case of Romania. It is common knowledge for the Romanian people that in the past (before the communist regime) the buying and selling of public office was unquestionably practiced. Corruption has historically deep roots in this country and according to political scientist Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, this type of culture of privilege rules society based on particularism (Munghiu-Pippidi 2006). This is turn allows for unequal treatment to become an accepted norm and instead of changing these practices, a struggle to become part of the privileged group is generated. Pippidi (2006) also notes that bribery is often used as a tool for people of lower status to ensure equal treatment. Rothstein also suggests that within such a particularistic political culture, where connections and influence are used as currency, implementing a few institutions operating by western standards will not be successful because they will be swallowed by the dictating particularistic political culture (Rothstein 2007). Furthermore, Mungiu-Pippidi states (2006, 87):

Based on my personal experience as an initiator of a successful anticorruption campaign in Romania (as well as a researcher of many failed efforts), I believe that electoral revolutions can lead to consolidated democracies only if they are followed by revolutions

against particularism, and that nothing short of such a revolution will succeed in curbing corruption in countries where particularism prevails.

Expectedly Romania has gone through many corruption scandals throughout the years. During the communist regime, individuals appointed in public positions were chosen purely on subjective criteria. Thus, an unwritten general rule existed that in order to attain certain positions one needed a party card and high-level relationships. On the other hand, lower-status individuals suffered from a lack of goods and services so they needed to turn to alternative methods to obtain them; in most cases to bribery. As a result, this long tradition led to a high degree of accepting corruption and as Romanians got used to informal methods of obtaining their needed goods, they stopped considering corrupt behaviour as harmful as citizens of western nations do. This has been seen, when previously convicted persons were elected to become official in the Parliament as well as mayors and county councillors e.g. mayor of Craiova. Analysing the social factors that drove Romania into the arm of corruption helps to understand that the issue is not just on the surface. Thus, EU progress reports may show some parts of the struggle however their proposed reforms do not tackle the issue at its roots, but only on the surface. As it has been seen earlier this year corruption brought people to the streets and will continue to do so until the reporting side ceases to emphasise minimal progress.

Nonetheless, why does Romania still remain a special case when discussing corruption? One may compare it to other Eastern European or even Central European countries as they seem to share a similar historical background. This may be true to some extent however differences can be seen in areas such as language, civil society and more relatedly decentralization and public system reforms. According to the article published by the Institute of Local Development (2012), Romania still suffers from a destructive combination of political and administrative functions which in turn lead to a contaminated relationship between political accountability and administrative capacity. The report also states that some countries such as Poland have managed to reform their administrative branches to some extent through a decentralisation process. As a

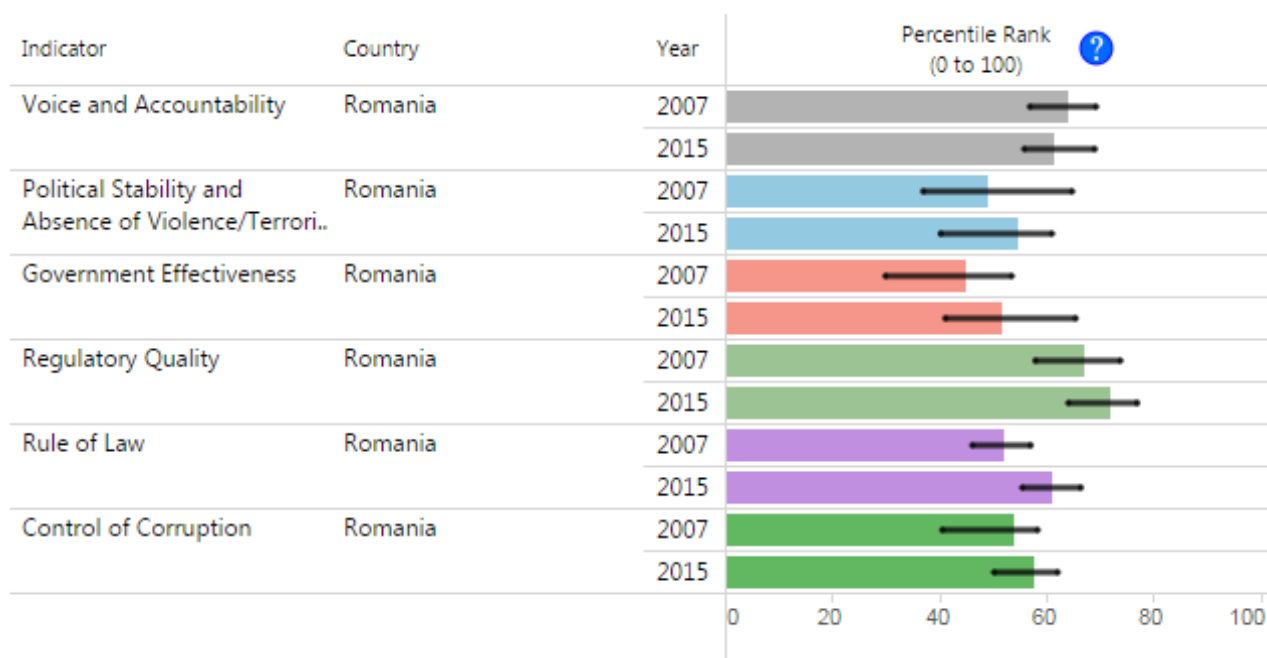
result, they are more capable to absorb EU help and avoid overlapping interest which may lead to corrupt behaviour. Moreover, media and civil society have been more involved in fighting corruption as for example the Maidan protests (2013) which put in motion actions against corruption in Ukraine. This phenomenon seems to have also finally reached Romania, possibly initiating the long awaited changes.

Consequently, when helping to fight corruption in Romania the EU may deliberate what the most opportune moment is to do so and implement their recommendations when the timing is right. Thus, when is the perfect timing for fighting corruption? The general opinion reads that when there is nothing to lose by being corrupt, it becomes impossible to fight it. Therefore, it is best to attack such a particularistic system during a crisis, such as an economic crisis or societal stress. Additionally, major political turns may also provide a favourable setting for anti-corruption measures and policies. For example, when post-communist Romania joined the EU, groups invoked EU conditionality to fight against particularism (Munghiu-Pippidi 2006). Some time has passed since then and no major political turns are seen in the nearest future. However, various societal unrests have taken place in Romania such as the biggest anti-corruption protests ever in the history of the country. This major event is still fresh in people's minds and may qualify as a catalyst for implementing anti-corruption strategies.

However, for these efforts to be successful the international community needs to keep a resilient external pressure for more accountability as well as transparency. Moreover, mechanisms encouraging free and fair competitions ought to be implemented in every sector. These suggestions are not to replace the existing tools, but to encourage the application of the right instruments in the right environment. For example, an anti-corruption agency may work very well in a country like Australia which has an old tradition of independent judiciary, however when the same agency were to operate in the former Soviet Union it will not be as successful. Another important fact pointed by Pippidi (2006) is that there are no 'win-win' anti-corruption campaigns; there will be a loser in the end and the challenge for corrupt societies remains to identify who stands to lose at the top.

### 3.3. Good Governance Indicators

In addition, analysing Romania's governance through the lens of the six indicators proposed by the World Bank, might serve as a guide to understand where the discrepancy between the reality and the various reports, surveys and rankings lie. The figure below shows the various indicators since Romania joined the EU in 2007 until 2015. Although all indicators allow for a an understanding of governance, in the case of corruption in Romania the main indicators to acknowledge are Voice and Accountability, Government Effectiveness, Ruler of Law and Control of Corruption. Since Romania joined the EU, there has been a clear improvement in many of the aforementioned areas. Nevertheless, the perceptions of citizens relating to their participation in electing the government as well as freedom of expression decreased. Conversely, considering the actions taken by the Romanian people in January 2017, it is fair to assume that other government indicators may hint in the future towards these trends and mirror the gravity of the situation regarding corruption in Romania.



## Figure 2. Governance Indicators – Romania

Source: (World Bank 2015)

Although the indicators provide an insight into the progress of Romania over a period of eight years, there are some examples where the ineffectiveness of the government has led to protests and critiques from both inside Romania and outside. For example, during the 2014 presidential elections Romania's Central Electoral Bureau refused to grant several request from the Romanian embassies to extend the polling deadlines. As a result, thousands of voters were not able to cast their ballot and this led to protests both in the country and abroad. The author took part in the overseeing the polling stations at one of the Romanian embassies during the election day and due to the rules set from the electoral bureau people outside the embassies ground were denied voting, therefore people were asked to wait inside the territory of the embassy so that they could cast their ballot. Furthermore, in the same year the DNA revealed an enormous corruption scandal involving “deeply rooted clientelistic networks back over four governments” (Wagner & Pop-Eleches 2015, 2). Although the DNA tried to take action against these practices they were constantly undermined by the parliament's attempts to legislate ambiguities enabling corrupt behaviour as well as its refusal to lift the protection of parliamentarians. These actions showed the existing conflicts of interest and the inability of the Romanian judiciary to handle these issues. Contrasting these occurrences to the EU CVM report on Romania from the year 2014, there is little if no mention at all about the gravity of the situation, yet according to the conclusions the report (2015, 12):

[...] was able to highlight a number of areas of progress, some of which showed a resilience which indicated signs of sustainability. This trend has continued over the past year. The action taken by the key judicial and integrity institutions to address high-level corruption has maintained an impressive momentum, and has carried through into

increased confidence amongst Romanians about the judiciary in general, and the anti-corruption prosecution in particular.

Associating the report findings with the reality of what happened in 2014 in Romania, there is in some aspects a slight discrepancy. Although the report mentioned the standard issues of existing corruption and absence of integrity in some governmental decision, these issues are not stressed enough. Furthermore, policy-making in Romania continues to be a considerably disorganised process, as it heavily relies on government emergency ordinances (OUG) as instruments. Such ordinances have a history of being controversial in the eyes of the Romanian public, as in 2014 an OUG was introduced which superseded an earlier legislation excluding locally elected officials from moving their place of residence due to political reasons, yet allowing a 45-day period to change their political association. Nevertheless, the OUG that set the biggest protest in Romania in motion was the ordinance that pardoned certain crimes committed by people holding office. Thus, looking at the indicator Control of Corruption although it published changes from 2007 until 2015, it showed progress. The progress however did not reflect the situation in Romania.

Voice and Accountability remains the only indicator which dropped since Romania entered the EU. Undeniably citizens have felt that their role in appointing their government has been disregarded in favour of elitism and nepotism. The 2014 elections, which resulted in the presidency of Klaus Johannis, underlined the crisis of confidence in the political elite and pushed the country into a state of uncertainty regarding its economic and political future. Despite calls for his resignation as both, president of the Social Democrats and Prime Minister, Victor Ponta who lost the presidency, succeeded to hang onto his government for almost a year, but resigned in November 2015. Concerns regarding corruption arose immediate after the elections. The electorate chose Johannis as an expression of their dissatisfaction with the established elites. Nevertheless, in the first weeks of the new presidency the prospects of cooperation between Johannis aggressive anti-corruption platform and Ponta and his party agenda were causing plenty

of scepticism. Nevertheless, following the new presidency, the parliament overwhelmingly overruled a PSD proposal which would have favoured those convicted of corruption. It seemed that the message of the Romanian electorate refused to be heard by the PSD. This in turn, heightens the tensions of the large pool of popular discontent, which keeps being fuelled by constant revelations of politicians involved in corruption scandals. According to Wagner, such public dissatisfaction might benefit Iohannis pro-Western reforms, but it could also allow support for extremist groups, as it was done in 2000 where a similar political crisis drove the Romanian citizens to support a candidate with questionable morals and views (Wagner & Pop-Eleches 2015).

Correspondingly, the growing mobilization among Romanians in the past years, including social media among the younger population, have proven to be a crucial catalyst in Iohannis election as well as in removing corrupt individuals from top positions. Protests such as the one at the beginning of 2017 have showed that the citizens do have power to change those in power. They also gave a glimpse of the deeply rooted corrupt practices of the ruling elites and at various other levels as well. Furthermore, a few high-profile prison sentences show that the efforts in combating corruption yielded some results. Yet, further progress is only expected if agencies such as DNA or ANI remain free from any political influence from the Romanian elites. Additionally, the presidency of Iohannis who campaigned on a promise to diminish corruption and to reduce the role of the state in the economy seemed slightly indecisive and uniformed. The protests of 2017 put himself and his presidency to the test. In the end he was able to conduct a dialogue with the protestors, while participating himself in the first large demonstration. He left absolutely no doubt on which side he stood and made sure that the government's plan would not find another gateway through the parliament.

The Rule of law in Romania showed an increase over the years, suggesting that citizen's perceptions with regards to their government's ability to provide for them and keep them safe have improved. However, corruption cases and the way the government is presumably handling them shows that justice is still in the hands of those who pay the most. For example, 2014 the at



that time acting Prime Minister Victor Ponta interfered in a money-laundering and tax-evasion case involving Lukoil refinery located near Ploiești. The investigation seized the companies accounting documents based on the suspicion of losing approximately EUR 230 million (Biro 2014). As the investigations continued, the Russian embassy to Romania threatened that Lukoil will close down the refinery. As a response Ponta urged the prosecutors to stop the seizure procedure. The Prime Minister justified his involvement and his reactions by suggesting that it is his responsibility to protect the 3, 500 employees of the refinery which will lose their jobs if it were close down (Biro 2014). Twenty-four hours after Ponta's reaction, the prosecutors put a halt to the seizure procedures and the company was welcomed to re-start its operations. In turn Ponta showed his appreciation by stating how relieved he is that work can resume at the refinery and that the employees will keep their jobs. Overall, there still is an executive pressure aimed at influencing high-profile court cases which in turn undermines judicial freedom. Nonetheless, various corruption scandals which resulted in the arrest of several high-profile individuals such as Prosecutor Angela Nicolae (High Court of Cassation and Justice) and Judge Stand Mustata show on one hand, the gravity of the issue, but on the other progress (Wagner & Pop-Eleches 2015).

Moreover, analysing the governance indicator Rule of Law it was identified that additional sources contributed to the general data provided by this indicator. The information based on data from sources such as Freedom House, Global Integrity Index, Economist Intelligence Index, Gallup World Poll and many more (see Appendices). However, when breaking down the different data from these sources which make up the overall trend of Romania in terms of these six dimensions, there are some inconsistencies in the results themselves. Thus, with regards to the Rule of Law indicator the sources show different trends; for example Freedom House had a score of 0.50 for Romania in 2007 and 0.54 in 2015, whereas Political Risk Services International had 0.67 in 2007 and 0.58 in 2015. These small divergences can be found throughout the various six indicators from the years 2007 to 2015.

Many of the factors contributing to what constituted governance in Romania haven shown improvements, but these include data assessment which incorporated numbers and

calculations. Difficulties arise when official reports only consider numerical data in their assessments, as corrupt activities are almost always followed back to human decisions. Although empirical reports are not to be entirely dismissed, quality research may be more beneficial in trying to understand the corrupt way of thinking in Romania. Overall, the current political situation in Romania remains fragile and the country's future growth prospects rely on the government's aptitude to improve governance in key areas and refining the country's ability to implement anti-corruption measures.

Finally, when analysing government indicators and applying these statistics a distinction should be made between actual corruption and low state capacity. In a policy paper published by the UK's Prime Minister Office political scientist Fukuyama stated they are very different "[...] a squeaky-clean bureaucracy can still be incompetent or ineffective in doing its job, while corrupt ones can provide good services" (Fukuyama 2016). He further suggests that besides low corruption levels, good governance need a states' capacity which is defined as the human, organisational and material resources required to carry out effective and efficient mandates. It is also linked to the knowledge of public servants and whether they are given enough authority to fulfil their tasks. Making this distinction between the two allows for a better understanding of the effects of corruption in different countries.

For example in the 2014 World Bank Governance indicators, namely in the Control of Corruption indicator China ranked in the 47<sup>th</sup> percentile which was behind Ghana but ahead of Romania (World Bank 2014). Nevertheless, China is known to have a great state capacity. In the Government Effectiveness indicator China ranked in the 66<sup>th</sup> Percentile while Romania in the 55<sup>th</sup>. This in turn shows the common observation that China has plenty of state capacity to achieve its goals; even though the general perception suggest high levels of corruption. Therefore, such data needs to be carefully taken into consideration as it may not distinguish between crucial factors which influence the levels of corruption in a specific country.

## CONCLUSIONS

The phenomenon of corruption is one that humanity has been fighting with for centuries. Many have defined it and proposed ways to eradicate it, yet it remains deeply rooted in many societies. Romania remains until today at the top of Europe's most corrupt countries. The issue of corruption in post-communist Romania has been the main culprit impeding economic and political development. It has been an element which has sabotaged the journey and aspirations of Romania to enter 'normality' after the revolution of 1989. With the start of the negotiations for Romania's accession to the European Union an increasingly frequent foreign signal had made corruption one of the key negative points in its accession process. After signing the accession treaty in 2005, corruption became one of the main problematic chapters which could be used to postpone the country's accession. As a result, the Romanian government, in collaboration with various civil society organisations and with the assistance of international bodies attempted to re-introduce integrity and trust towards state institutions.

After ten years of EU membership the aforementioned actions show some improvements on the front of corruption but not enough to avoid mass protests and not enough to tackle corruption at its roots. EU published reports provide information on progress and offer further recommendations, yet the reality is that Romanians have not truly changed. Corrupt thinking still exists starting from local levels up until state leaders. Therefore, this paper claimed that there is a substantial informative gap between reports published by the EU with respect to corruption developments in Romania and the reality. Moreover, it aimed at identifying this gap and the extent to which it affects anti-corruption measures in Romania. Through the prism of the case study and CDA the research was conducted the following conclusions were drawn:

Almost a decade after joining the European Union the efforts of eradicating corruption in Romania have been sizeable on both sides. However, the most important measure from the EU came with Romania's accession conditionality, namely the CVM. Under this mechanism ANI

was established and through its actions some progress was made. Yet, according to the examples given throughout this paper corrupt practices still remain. With regards to the European Union and its measures to combat corruption in Romania the author notes that after analysing various reports against the actual situation in the country, it can be said that; the tone used to express the development of Romania's fight against corruption is generally a soft one. The CVM reports which are published every six months encompass the four benchmarks which Romania needs to fulfil at a 'satisfactory' level. Although, some critique is noted in some reports, especially in the latest one (published January 2017), the given recommendations lack substance. In order to understand the underlying problem of corruption in Romania, one has to refrain oneself from introducing even more institutions aimed at combating corruption by following a 'western' approach.

The 'western' approach of combating corruption results in many cases to excessive investments in various projects, strategies and measures which when implemented may fall victim to an already existing corrupt network reducing their actual progress to null. Yet, the various foreign organisations may include the inevitable initial progress in their reports, which may look good on paper but it obscures the reality. When it comes to the European Union's report on Romania's progress in the fight against corruption, the provided information remains objective and unbiased, yet it does not in many instances reflect the actuality. The protests earlier this year should be a wake-up call for the Romania government, as well as the EU. With an overwhelming 600.000 Romanians on the street as well as the additional protests organised by the diaspora, they showed the extent to which the civil society is dissatisfied with the corrupt practices amongst high-officials as well as local authorities.

It is imperative for the Commission to understand the depths to which corruption is rooted in the system. Furthermore, it needs to be acknowledged that superficial measures will have little to no effect at all on a system operated by people 'naturally' inclined to corruption. Although many scholars theorised the origins of corruption as well as its developments it can be concluded that set behaviour is conditioned by several factors such as: human nature, historical

developments regime type as well as the relationship between the government and its people. It is no secret to any Romanian that such practices have occurred for decades. Therefore, the human factor plays a very important role in designing anti-corruption strategies. Although the standard suggestion is to reduce the incentive when it comes to set activities and to increase the punishment when caught, it may not be successful. This is because; making corruption harshly punishable needs a political support as well a system to do so. However, when implementing such a system it may be implemented through networks which are already corrupt. Furthermore, policy makers need to take into consideration the surroundings fuelling corrupt activities. For example if one person is taken bribes in exchange for something it will spill over into other people's way of behaving, changing their way of approaching the situation as well. Unfortunately, corruption is a virus which spreads very fast and finding an adequate cure remains difficult.

On the other hand, heavy particularistic political culture in Romania has been highly omitted from many EU reports and has become the main barrier in successfully reducing corruption. Scholars have identified this issue in the past and proposed various steps to try to tackle it. One of the first steps as suggested by Munghiu-Pippidi (2006) to stop this vicious cycle of particularism is to build an "insurrectional army" which will organise the lower-status people in a system against the elites. This union should include groups who stand loose from most of corruption, not only civil society but also NGO's, media and possibly at least one political party. This may create incentives for other parties to join this competition and prove who is cleaner. All in all, providing a game-like scenario for who is the least corrupt will generate competition for the top position. Secondly, the government should aim at institutionalising norms of universalism, for example the government could agree on some minimal criteria regarding integrity and incorporating them into a political program. They would have to be debated, negotiated and agreed upon by the parties, but in the end they could be used to monitor politicians (Munghiu-Pippidi 2006).

Although EU has been an indispensable help for Romania, the aforementioned measures should be designed with the help of the home government, as they are directly part of the system. Nevertheless, international assistance remains crucial in order to push for the approval of institutional weapons which can then be used by independent anti-corruption organisations. This of course cannot be successful if the government is not cooperating and cannot be implemented if civil society is not actively involved. A few features of such institutional weapons will include the obligatory disclosure of wealth by civil servants and politicians as well as transparency in political processes.

When it comes to measuring corruption, ranking and polls do not offer an ultimate way of identifying the correct levels of corrupt activities, but allow for an indication of how it is perceived in a specific country. Furthermore, the six dimensions of good governance also remains an indication of the levels of corruption. With respect to the indicators Romania seems to have improved since joining the EU. However, from all indicators Voice and Accountability was the only one who dropped. This trend accurately reflects how the Romanian population feels with regards to their leaders and governmental institutions. Many are losing their respect and trust in these institutions as more and more high-level cases of corruption are coming to the light. The remaining indicators show progress in areas such as Rule of Law and Government Effectiveness. Yet what remains questionable is the Control of Corruption indicator which showed an improvement as well. Throughout the EU CVM reports progress on corruption is also hinted, yet exemplified were provided where there is a clear high-level of corruption present (i.e. Ponta & Lukoil and Lia Olguța Vasilescu). With regards to indicators, the author notes that additional factors should be considered when applying the respective data, as it does not differentiate between certain features of good governance and corruption.

Overall, the research conducted has found that materials published by the European Union with regards to its measures helping Romania to combat corruption, although informative they lacks an insight into the reality of things. While the EU is indeed highly preoccupied and informed on Romania's struggle with corruption its deeply settled roots into the system are often

ignored. Applied measures are kept on western standards, which many researches argue that they lead to little progress. The substantial efforts of the Union to help Romania should not be disregarded, but they should also not be put on a pedestal, as corruption is still pervasive in Romania.

All in all, a small but noticeable discrepancy has been found between the EU published reports, other international reports regarding Romania and how the country is actually coping with the issue. Although the informative gap is not a sizeable, it has been identified that there is an absence of measures particularly aimed at understanding and changing behaviour in order to prevent corrupt activities. Furthermore, attention needs to be paid at the channels through which the EU in implementing measures, as they remain at the risk of falling directly into the arms of corruption. Therefore, the EU is advised to provide more comprehensive reports which correspond to the actuality and include specialist measures tailored to diverse corrupt behaviours.

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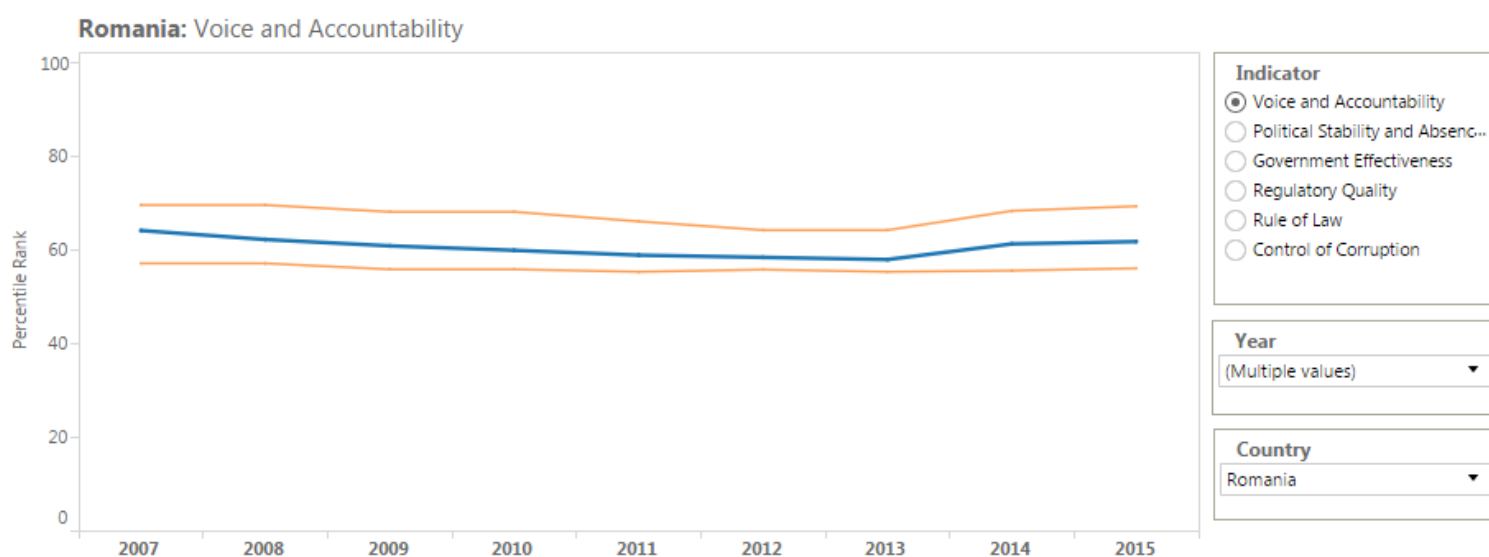
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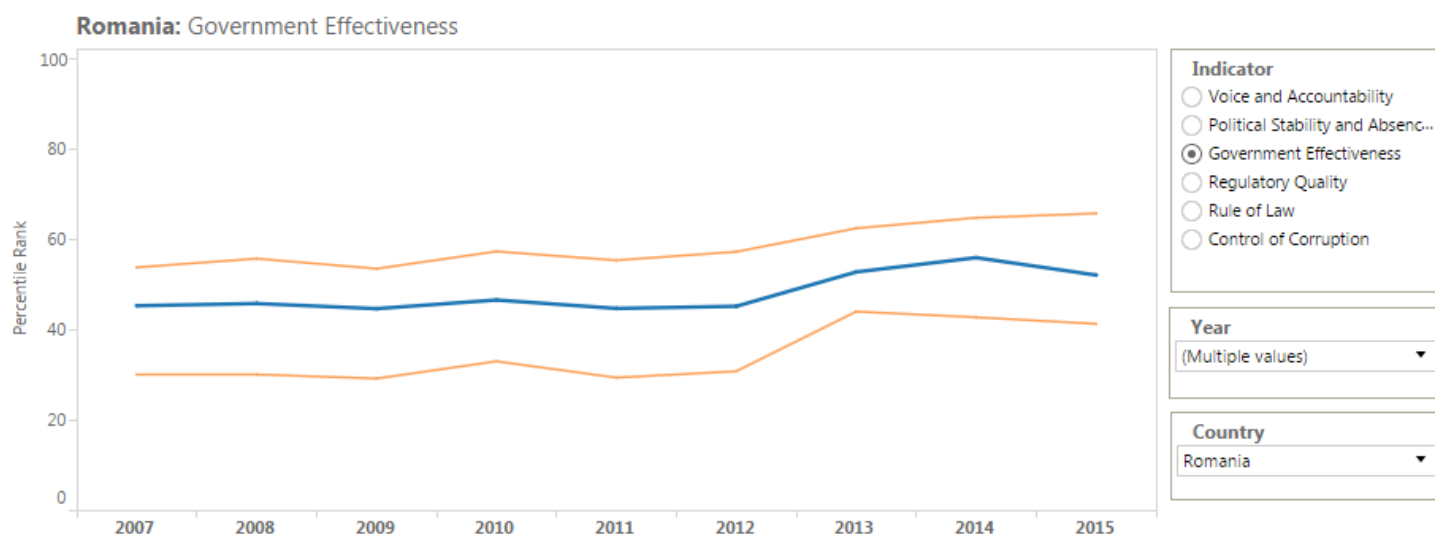
# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1. Worldwide governance indicator ‘Voice and Accountability’ 2007-2015 Romania



Source	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Bertelsmann Transformation Index	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.75	0.75	0.77	0.77
Cingranelli Richards Human Righ..	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75		
Economist Intelligence Unit	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58
Freedom House	0.71	0.71	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.69	0.69	0.68	0.69
Gallup World Poll	0.33	0.36	0.33	0.16	0.18	0.27	0.30	0.25	0.32
Global Insight Business Conditio..	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.63	0.63	0.63		
Global Integrity Index	0.71	0.68	0.68	0.69	0.69	0.69			
IFAD Rural Sector Performance A..	0.62								
Institute for Management and Dev..	0.34	0.31	0.43	0.36	0.42	0.28	0.32	0.35	0.27
Institutional Profiles Database	0.87	0.87	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79
International Budget Project Ope..	0.62	0.62	0.59	0.59	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.75	0.75
International Research and Excha..	0.65	0.64	0.58	0.57	0.59	0.54	0.55	0.58	0.58
Political Risk Services Internation..	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92
Reporters Without Borders Press..	0.89	0.91	0.89	0.85	0.84	0.77	0.77	0.75	0.76
World Economic Forum Global C..	0.39	0.42	0.37	0.40	0.36	0.39	0.41	0.46	0.41
World Justice Project					0.56	0.61	0.59	0.63	0.63

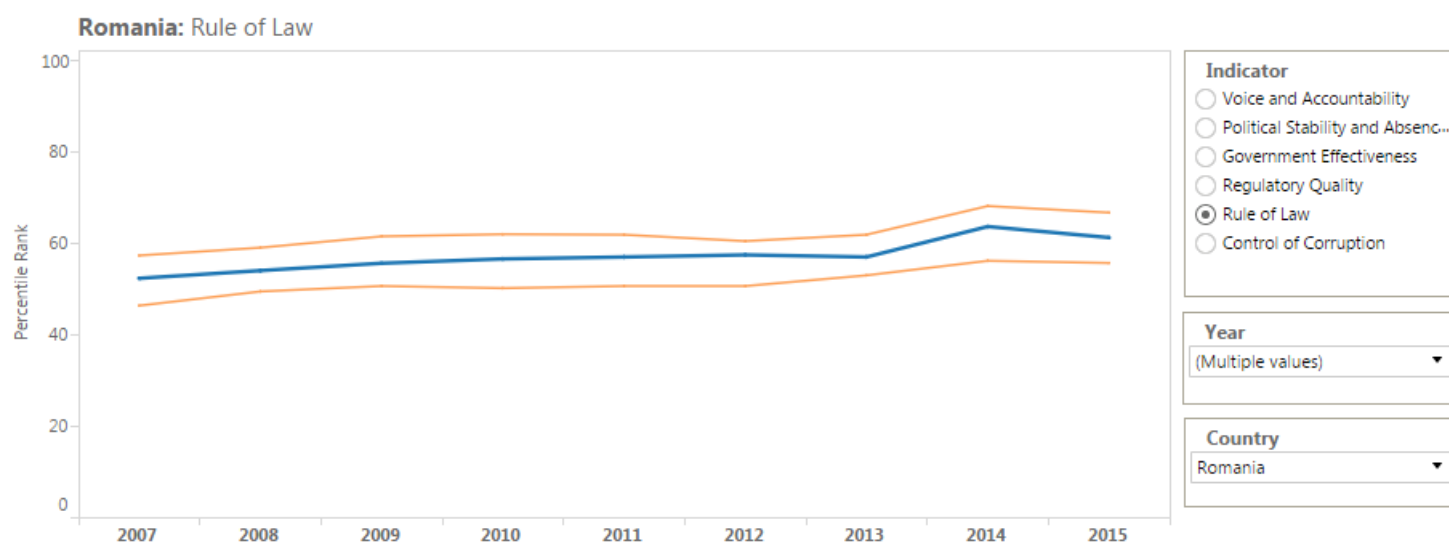
## Appendix 2. Worldwide governance indicator ‘Governance Effectiveness’ 2007-2015 Romania



Source	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Bertelsmann Transformation Index	0.72	0.72	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67
Business Enterprise Environment Survey	0.79	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.75	0.75	0.75
Economist Intelligence Unit	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.38	0.38	0.38
Gallup World Poll	0.54	0.53	0.55	0.52	0.51	0.55	0.54	0.55	0.60
Global Insight Business Conditions and Risk Indicators	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.72	0.67
IFAD Rural Sector Performance Assessments	0.60								
Institute for Management and Development World Competitiveness Index	0.34	0.27	0.29	0.36	0.38	0.32	0.40	0.37	0.36
Institutional Profiles Database	0.50	0.50	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63
Political Risk Services International Country Risk Guide	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessments	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report	0.34	0.34	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.36	0.47	0.51	0.46

## Appendix 3. Worldwide governance indicator ‘Rule of Law’ 2007-2015

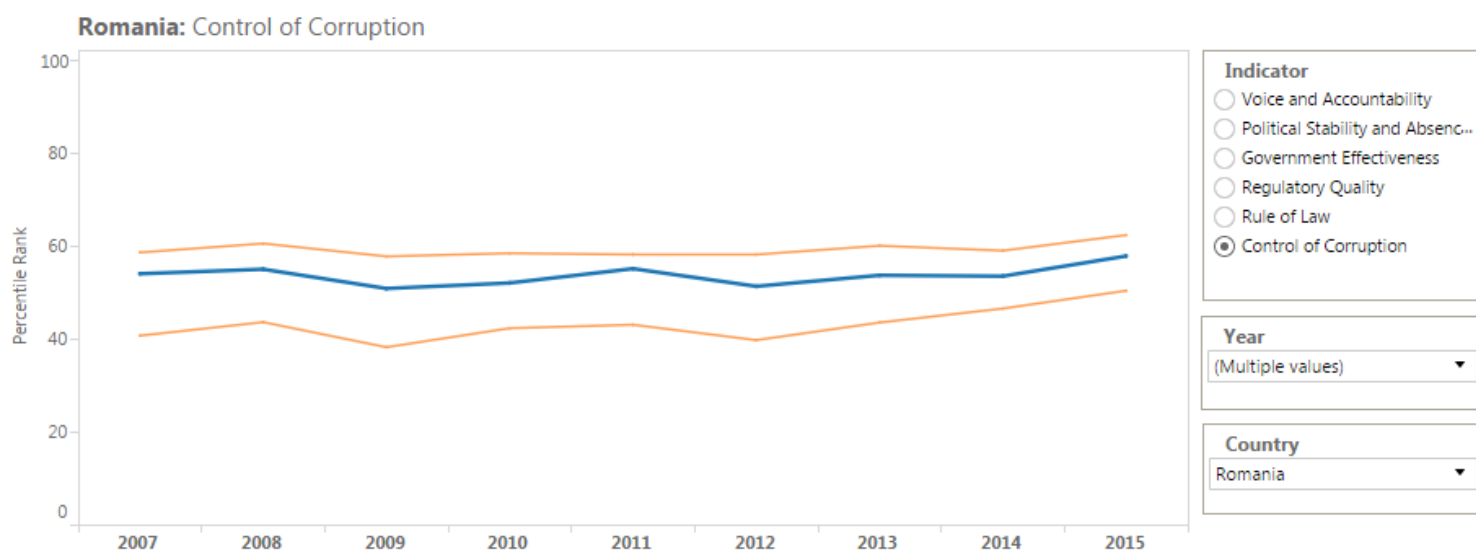
### Romania



Source	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Bertelsmann Transformation Index	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.75	0.75	0.83	0.83
Business Enterprise Environment..	0.49	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.89	0.89	0.89
Cingranelli Richards Human Righ..	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50		
Economist Intelligence Unit	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.59	0.59	0.59
Freedom House	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54
Gallup World Poll	0.64	0.62	0.58	0.55	0.57	0.60	0.60	0.61	0.64
Global Insight Business Conditio..	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.67	0.61
Global Integrity Index	0.64	0.62	0.62	0.64	0.64	0.64			
Heritage Foundation Index of Eco..	0.30	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.35
IFAD Rural Sector Performance A..	0.62								
Institute for Management and Dev..	0.32	0.33	0.28	0.29	0.38	0.34	0.42	0.31	0.44
Institutional Profiles Database	0.42	0.42	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57
Political Risk Services Internation..	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58
US State Department Trafficking i..	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67
World Bank Country Policy and I..	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
World Economic Forum Global C..	0.49	0.53	0.52	0.53	0.41	0.46	0.43	0.49	0.53
World Justice Project					0.64	0.67	0.67	0.70	0.70



## Appendix 4. Worldwide governance indicator ‘Control of Corruption’ 2007-2015 Romania



Source	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Bertelsmann Transformation Index	0.65	0.65	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.60	0.60	0.70	0.70
Business Enterprise Environment..	0.73	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.81	0.81	0.81
Economist Intelligence Unit	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Freedom House	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.54	0.54
Gallup World Poll	0.16	0.13	0.13	0.09	0.13	0.20	0.23	0.19	0.14
Global Insight Business Conditio..	0.38	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.67
Global Integrity Index	0.85	0.65	0.65	0.78	0.78	0.78			
IFAD Rural Sector Performance A..	0.49								
Institute for Management and Dev..	0.17	0.11	0.10	0.13	0.17	0.13	0.20	0.02	0.19
Institutional Profiles Database	0.33	0.33	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Political Risk Services Internation..	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.33	0.33	0.42	0.42
Transparency International Globa..	0.63	0.57	0.58	0.48	0.48	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58
World Bank Country Policy and I..	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
World Economic Forum Global C..	0.45	0.53	0.47	0.46	0.39	0.38	0.39	0.45	0.35
World Justice Project					0.60	0.50	0.50	0.52	0.52