

***TERRITORIAL INTELLIGENCE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT.  
THE RESTORING OF RESULTS OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL INQUIRY  
IN A MICRO-REGIONAL AREA***

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**Abstract:** In its first part the study intends to reunite a series of conceptual delimitations, the focused concepts being especially those of territorial intelligence, community development and governance. The second part of the study, dedicated to our more recent investigations in the Apuseni Mountains (Romania), starts with a short description of the studied territory: the micro-region Albac-Scărișoara-Horea (Alba county). In the sociological inquiry made in the micro-region, among other objectives, we mainly focused on the inhabitants' representations of the studied territory. The results of the sociological inquiry were then restored to the local actors, thus shaping an important instrument of settling territorial intelligence, community development and local governing in a micro-regional context.

**Rezumat:** În prima sa parte studiul își propune să reunească mai ales o serie de delimitări conceptuale, conceptele vizate fiind cu deosebire cele de *intelență teritorială, dezvoltare comunitară și guvernantă*. A doua parte a studiului este consacrată unor investigații recente în Munții Apuseni (România), plecând de la o scurtă descriere a teritoriului studiat: micro-regiunea Albac-Scărișoara-Horea (Județul Alba). În ancheta sociologică realizată în microregiune, între alte obiective, ne-am concentrat atenția asupra reprezentărilor pe care locuitorii le au în legătura cu spațiul studiat. Rezultatele anchetei sociologice au fost restituite către actorii din spațiul studiat, restituirea fiind unul din importantele instrumente ale inteligenței teritoriale, dezvoltării comunitare deopotrivă.

**Keywords:** Territorial intelligence, Community development, Governance, Restoring of results.

**Cuvinte cheie:** Inteligență teritorială, Dezvoltare comunitară, Guvernantă, Restituirea rezultatelor.

## **TERRITORIAL INTELLIGENCE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT. THE RESTORING OF RESULTS OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL INQUIRY IN A MICRO-REGIONAL AREA**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The present study is above all the result of the activities and research developed in a CNCSIS project in Romania. But it is, at the same time, the result of some long reflections with future perspectives.

In its first part, (FUNDAMENTAL NOTIONS AND EXPLORATIVE INVESTIGATIONS), the study intends to reunite mainly a series of conceptual delimitations, the focused concepts being mainly those of *territorial intelligence, community development and governance*. In the same first part, we also focus on a series of methodological specifications, mainly regarding the restoring of the results of the sociological inquiry, a method which we shall refer to along the study.

The second part of the study, dedicated to our recent investigations in the Apuseni Mountains (Romania), begins with a short description of the studied territory: the micro-region Albac – Scărișoara – Horea (Alba county). A series of economic indicators (the percentage of the arable surface, the cattle in a household per 1000 villagers, the milk production) and social factors (mainly the poverty rate) will show us which the specific of the region is, as compared to the rural territory in Alba county or with Alba county as a whole.

Taking into account all these contextual aspects, in the sociological inquiry made in the region, we focused mainly on the inhabitants' representations of the studied territory. We aimed at establishing a hierarchy of the main community and territorial problems (the bad roads, the poor water supply, the poor reception of TV channels) and at identifying other problems as well, which, as compared to those declared by the villagers, are specific for the studied region.

We have believed that the representations of the development opportunities in the micro-region are closely related to the representations of the community-territorial problems. The shaping of a hierarchy at the level of the development opportunities is useful especially when possible projects of development would mean the participation of the inhabitants of the entire micro-region. A hierarchy of the development opportunities is also useful as a starting point for the deep analysis of the community-territorial

problems, when, through restoring, it is subject to the villagers' analysis who participated to its shaping.

Territorial delimitation at micro-regional level, taking into account the administrative territory of several communes, would involve totally the idea of partnership. This type of partnership is well-known in a series of European countries as inter-communal association. Inter-communality relies on a consistent legislative support, for example, in a country such as France.<sup>44</sup> In our sociological inquiry made in the micro-region Albac-Scărișoara-Horea, we were interested in this aspect as well, more precisely in the extent to which the association of the three communes is desired and is seen as a solution to the specific community-territorial problems.

### **1. FUNDAMENTAL NOTIONS: TERRITORIAL INTELLIGENCE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

#### **1.1. Definitions and principles of territorial intelligence**

What is territorial intelligence if it is not the intelligence to live together in a given space-time? asked at one moment Bernard Corbineau. And he went on by saying that "time-space" (*espace-temps*) faces a fast change, without changing the essence of the definition of territorial intelligence (Corbineau, 2005).

Another definition: "The innovative, mutual and network organisation, with a collective or individual purpose, of the set of information and knowledge useful for the development and competitiveness of a territory".<sup>45</sup> The authors of the same site, i-KM.fr, state the following: "... Territorial intelligence is for us the capacity of a territory to provide itself with means and methods pertinent for its development, for its promotion, for the application of the criteria of innovative competitiveness." Territorial intelligence aims also at the notion of "collective intelligence": 1) the

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<sup>44</sup> See Chevenement Law, 1991.

<sup>45</sup> [http://www.i-km.fr/dossiers/dossiers.php?id\\_dossier=3i](http://www.i-km.fr/dossiers/dossiers.php?id_dossier=3i).

application of the animation of networks, 2) the modernisation of the organisation through an innovative policy of human resources, 3) the application of the devices of performing monitoring and 4) *reflections upon the real needs of the small and medium enterprises (PME-PMI)*.

From the lines above results also the fact that sometimes the notion of territorial intelligence is tightly related to the economic domain.

A more complex perspective seems to be proposed by Eric Ferrari: "Territorial intelligence can be synonym to the territoriality which results from the phenomenon of bringing together the resources of a territory and of transfer of competences among local actors of different cultural orientations." It cannot exist, however, without resorting to the technologies of information and without mobilising competences in the service of attractiveness and competitiveness of territories (Ferrari, 2006). In this definition, the stress is laid on the territory and its mastering.

In a study in 2004, Blancherie and François Badénès appreciated that territorial intelligence had the function to "transform the individual intelligence and competence in collective intelligence and competence" (Blancherie, Badénès, 2004), at the same time representing "the transmission of results of the research to the interested public", which meant new relations between culture and innovation at territorial scale and also integrating new practices in sustaining the development.

Aurelien Gaucherand had three starting points for the definition of the notion which presents interest for us here: 1) *economic territorial intelligence* (the creation of products and the animation of the services of economic intelligence for the actors of the economic innovation) 2) *strategic territorial intelligence* (the creation of permanent infrastructures for a strategic supervision - *veille strategique territoriale*); 3) *the administration of territorial communities* – the creation of a resource centre to encourage the development of different "numeric territories" (Gaucherand, 2006).

Consequently, when we say territorial intelligence, we also mean technologies of information used wisely in supporting territorial development.

Taking into account implicitly such an aspect, Philippe Dumas, in a study in 2003, brings to discussion the ethical dimension of territorial intelligence, seen also as expression of territorial information "accessible and free for any citizen" (Dumas, 2003). Dumas speaks of such a "percept of reality in creating the contents of the systems of

territorial information" as "every territorial community gathers various sensibilities and interests, if not conflicting". Everyone must find himself or herself in what can be named "numeric citizenship" (*citoyenneté numérique*) created by the territorial internet sites.

In 2005, Jean-Jacques Girardot presented an ample study under the title "Territorial intelligence and participation". Girardot confesses in his study that he himself proposed the term of territorial intelligence in 1999, in tight relation with that of *territorial engineering (ingénierie territoriale)*, territorial intelligence meaning "putting the management of projects and technologies of information society in the service of sustainable development". Along the development of several projects coordinated by Girardot, a new methodology suitable for the development of territorial intelligence is shaping, a methodology named Catalyse. Catalyse means "methods and instruments which allow the great involvement of territorial actors in the accomplishment of the territorial diagnoses or in the local laboratories in order to elaborate more efficient and pertinent action projects for development (Girardot, 2005). The main characteristic of the Catalyse methodology, according to Girardot, is *participation*. Actors represent first an informal partnership for the making of a data-collecting guide in order to proceed to a social or territorial diagnosis. Each of the actors collects the data at the level of his or her users (*ses usagers*). The data is enhanced for analysis, and then the actors participate to the interpretation of data as well.

For Girardot, the concept of territorial intelligence means "the set of inter-disciplinary knowledge which, on the one hand, contribute to the understanding of the structures and dynamics of the territories, and, on the other hand, intends to be an instrument in the service of the the actors of the sustainable territorial development" (Girardot, 2005).

Territorial intelligence, according to Girardot, relies on six ethical and methodological principles, among which the first is *the principle of participation*.

We consider the identification of the ethical principles of territorial intelligence in the principles of sustainable development of special heuristic value. According to Girardot, sustainable development relies on three principles validated by numerous moral and political instances at world scale: 1) the participation of all actors to development, mainly of the villagers 2) the global approach of the situations, characterized by a proper equilibrium among the economic, social and

environmental considerations 3) the partnership of the actors. These ethical principles associate with three methodological principles able to guarantee their observance 1) the approach of the territory as action space, 2) the dissemination of the culture of evaluation and the administration through projects and 3) the development of the accessibility of the technologies of the information society.

Girardot states that these principles take into account first that the global approach relies on a both territorial and prospective vision and, second, that participation and partnership define territorial intelligence as an approach mainly focused on actors, and which relies on the accessibility of the information technologies as well as on the cooperation of the actors.

### 1.2 Territorial intelligence and community development

Territorial intelligence, we believe, through some of its contents and principles (such as that of participation and partnership) comes rather close to what is called today community development. Being extremely synthetic, Dumitru Sandu writes that community development “*means voluntary changes in, through and for the community*” (Sandu, 2005, p. 15).

These lines, convergent to a great extent shape and improve methodologies of community organisation and planning through participative methods and fund raising for local communities through participation to project auctions. Intervention from outside the community is made only to facilitate the processes within and in a “horizontal” working manner (Buşiu, 2006).

We believe that it is what corresponds, to a large extent, to territorial intelligence, but, definitely, the relations between notions needs deepening, as territorial intelligence seems to aim at a more pregnant scientific dimension and involves the information technologies in knowledge partnerships, which are to found the projects of sustainable territorial development.

### 1.3 Territorial intelligence, community development and governance

A term rather new in the socio-human approaches, “governance” has multiple meanings, most often complementary. Generally, it is accepted that “governance comprises the traditions, institutions and processes that determine how power is exercised, how citizens are given a voice, and how

decisions are made on issues of public concern.”<sup>46</sup> Governance refers to the patterns and the distribution of the institutionalised capacity to make and influence the decisions regarding a certain locality<sup>47</sup>. The characteristics of good governance include: 1) politic responsibility, 2) the freedom of association and participation, 3) a powerful judicial system 4) the bureaucratic responsibility, 5) the freedom of expression and information and 6) the building of the action capacity. All these aspects are seen as essential for sustainable development.<sup>48</sup>

The term of governance seems to make a link between the governing act and especially territory and participation, which, to a certain extent, allows us to identify the closeness of this concept to that of territorial intelligence and also to that of community development.

The principles of good governance (governing) are synthetically presented in the White Paper of the European Governance.

There are five principles which lie at the basis of a good governance and of the changes proposed by the document mentioned above: opening, participation, responsibility, efficiency and coherence (*White Paper*, 2001).

According to the first principle, institutions should be more open and should also use a more accessible language for the public. This is a very important aspect as it would determine an increase of confidence in the complex institutions.

*The principle of participation* starts from the statement that, generally, the quality, relevance and efficiency of the European policies depend on the insurance of large participation all along the process of accomplishing the policies – from their elaboration to their implementation. Larger participation will lead to the increase of trust in the final result and in the institutions which accomplish the policies.

*The principle of responsibility* requires that the roles in the legislative and executive processes be more clearly delimited and associated with a precise responsibility.

<sup>46</sup>[www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/vs-sb/voluntarysector/glossary.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/vs-sb/voluntarysector/glossary.html).

<sup>47</sup>[www.rri.wvu.edu/WebBook/Danson/glossaryterms.htm](http://www.rri.wvu.edu/WebBook/Danson/glossaryterms.htm).

<sup>48</sup>[www.polity.org.za/html/govdocs/white\\_papers/social97gloss.html](http://www.polity.org.za/html/govdocs/white_papers/social97gloss.html)

*Efficiency* associates with opportunity, with the definition of clear objectives and decision-making at the right level.

*The principle of coherence* imposes that policies and actions be coherent and easy to understand under the circumstances of an increase in the complexity of the global and local processes.

In the end, it is appreciated that every principle is important to itself, yet their observance not being possible through separate actions. The principle of the principles seems to be here also that of global approach and this proves how important the perspective of territorial intelligence in sustaining good governance is.

#### **1.4. Methodological aspects: the restoring of results and the action research**

The methodological nucleus of the approaches from the perspective of territorial intelligence is represented by the Catalyse methodology (Girardot, 2005). In its turn, this methodology relies mainly on restoring.

But what is restoring?

Bernard Bergier noticed that the more the research manuals and other methodological guides speak about media and offer advice for the settlement and organisation of data collection, the more the relation with the beneficiary and its impact upon the sociologist and the ethnologist. (Bergier, 2000). The beneficiary focused on by the restoring is represented by the researcher's interlocutors in the field.

Bergier was wondering about the aim of restoring: Is it an ideological instrument, a stimulating procedure or a form of participative management of the researcher? Is it a convention which allows paying the debt to the investigated population? Is it a strategy of complementary investigation, where the restored content is to serve the stimulation to produce and collect new material (information)? Is it a test which allows that the restoring of results be accomplished by separating truth from falsehood? Is it a space of confrontation between likelihood and the research hypotheses?

In short, Bergier was wondering whether we should consider restoring as a constitutive element of the research or as an act outside it?

Bergier will propose the following provisory definition for restoring: "... That act or dynamics through which the researcher shares the provisory and/or definitive results of the worked collected

data with the aim of their analysis, to his interlocutors in the field." (Bergier, 2000, p. 8).

From the definition of restoring proposed by Bergier, we retain the ethical and the heuristic objectives. We could go on talking about a *gift-restoring*, or an *ethical restoring* or a *heuristic restoring*, according to these objectives. We believe, however, that restoring is also related to the strategic action research or to the sociological intervention.

For M. R. Verspieren, it is obligatory that the starting point in the action research be two types of hypotheses: the research hypotheses and *the action hypotheses*. The research hypotheses, when they are validated, have the knowledge production as result, while the action hypotheses aim at the transformation of reality (Verspieren, 1990). The relations between the researcher and the actor in the strategic action research mean, in Verspieren's vision, *the involvement of the actor in the research* and of *the researcher in the action*, which means to educate the researcher to become a practitioner and the practitioners to become a researcher, thus giving birth to a *collective actor*.

Accepting the observations above, we shall distinguish *the gift-restoring*, *the knowledge-restoring* and *the intervention-restoring*.

## **2. THE RESTORATION OF RESULTS OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL INQUIRY IN A MICRO-REGIONAL AREA**

### **2.1. The studied territory and its characteristics.**

The micro-region Albac-Scărișoara-Horea is situated in the North-West of the Alba county. It lies on a surface of 20871 ha, which represents 4.3% of the rural region of the Alba county. Here 4% of the rural population lives (6487 persons) in 3.7% of the households of the villages in Alba (see also Tabel 1, in ANNEXES). At the level of the rural area of the Alba county, women represent 49.6% and in the studied micro-region 48%. The birth rate of the live new-born babies is 9.3‰ in the rural part of Alba and 10.5‰ in the micro-region Albac-Scărișoara-Horea. The deceased represent 15.4‰ in the villages in the Alba county and 10.9‰ in the micro-region. For a population which represents 4%, the total agricultural surface represents only 2%, of which the arable land represents 14%, as compared to 40% in the villages of Alba. The pastures and hayfields represent 86% of the agricultural land in the micro-region, and, correspondingly, the number of cattle is 639 per 1000 villagers as compared to 336 of the total amount of the rural region of Alba. The milk production is 7.8hl/person in the micro-region, only

a little bit higher than that of the total number of villages of the county: 7.4%.

The three communes that make up the micro-region (Albac-Scărișoara-Horea) have several common major problems of infrastructure (transport and telecommunication means, water supply etc.), poverty rates close to one another from a valuable point of view, a lot above the county average and a large number of people of more than 15 years old who graduated primary school at most, consequently with a low education level (Table 2, in ANNEXES).

The differences shown by indicators of human capital (larger amount of population with a lower education level in Scărișoara, a higher amount of unemployment in Albac, a larger percentage of children in Albac) are the specific characteristics of every commune, as C.A. Buțiu notices, but also suggest a certain complementarity in a possible project of micro-regional development (Buțiu, 2006). Although the natural capital is similar (a mountainous region favourable to tourism, animal raising and wood exploitation), Scărișoara was considered as one of the poorest communes in Romania (Sandu, 1999), without achieving remarkable progress in the latest years, while Albac (the centre village) was declared a touristic village (in 2005), on the grounds of human, natural and touristic infrastructure potential. This could be the development pole of the micro-region, according to C.A. Buțiu.

## 2.2. Representations of the Studied Area in the Sociological Inquiry and Restoring

According to the methodological principles of the community development, as Călina Ana Buțiu writes in a recent study, the official statistics and the experts' opinions need to be interpreted together with the villagers' opinions. (Buțiu, 2005).

It is what imposes also the principle of participation at the level of territorial intelligence. Villagers' representations, and implicitly, their opinions were taken by us with the means of a question from the questionnaire of the sociological inquiry, which we presented in Annexes.

As one can see in Table 4, in the hierarchy of the problems to be solved within the village, according to the questioned villagers' representations, the infra-structure problems are primordial, among which the most obvious are transport and telecommunication means as they are directly felt by the villagers and have the quality of being strategic, as their solving leads to the solving also of some personal problems.

The transport and communication means facilitate the touristic investments and afflux, which creates jobs and produces household incomes, and, at the same time, ensure the access to the facilities of the public health system (Buțiu, 2006).

The problem	%
Bad roads	89.3
Difficult water supply	34.3
Lack of phone	14.3
Difficult reception of TV programs	37.9
Other problems (the lack of foreign investment, flood danger, lack of jobs, lack of a garbage pit)	32.1

Table 3. Representations of the studied territory

These data obtained from the sociological inquiry were restored to the local authorities and inhabitants. According to the data in Table 3, the hierarchy of the community-territorial problems is the following: 1. The bad state of the roads (89.3%); 2. not reception the TV programs (37.9%) and 3. the deficient water supply (34.3%). We mention the fact that in the case of the commune Scărișoara, the water supply is on 2<sup>nd</sup> place and the data resulted from the sociological inquiry were presented to our interlocutors, and were followed by the next questions: *Do you agree with this hierarchy? What would be the solutions to each problem?*

Most of the questioned believe that the hierarchy rendered by our inquiry is correct. Those who would change something in the proposed hierarchy would put the water supply on second place or would simply change the hierarchy completely: "I believe that the water supply problem is on first place, then the TV programs reception and on third place the roads." (B.P., Scărișoara) Even the ex-mayor of Albac proposes another hierarchy, also suggesting some solutions to the problems: "My hierarchy is the following: 1. the water supply, 2. roads and 3. TV programs reception. For roads and water the best solution would be the village projects, but not only at local level, the whole region should be united so that several villages should benefit from this. The water supply problem requires a sewer system. As for the TV reception, a solution would be satellite transmission, just as in the case of mobile telephones." (P.G., Albac).

When it is about solutions, first the completion of the begun works is suggested: "The European Community built some roads, but not all of them are finished, they also intend to set one or two cars to take the milk to Albac. Those who started the task should finish the roads." (H.G., Albac).

The apply for EU funds is frequently invoked in the micro-region: "If Bucharest does not approve of the

SAPARD water project, there is nothing we can do.” (T.T., mayor, Albac).

Other references are made to the responsibilities of the department and state authorities: “If we refer to the county roads, we can notice that they are very bad and the State should get involved in order to solve these problems. The State should also involve in renovating the road to Huedin, which crosses our commune.” (C. O., mayor, Horea)<sup>49</sup>.

The mobilization of the local and family resources is secondary as compared to these appeals, but yet firm: “Yes, the roads! But they, lazy people, don’t do anything. In Lăzărești<sup>50</sup> there are 100 beneficiaries of social assistance but they contributed with no shovel of sand to the road. Everyone should have water put up in his household. Why should the Local Council do it for them?! For example, when the Local Council made the water supply system for the institutions in the centre (school, Local Council...), the people in the centre could set it too and one of the beneficiaries asked for a great recompense for the land he gave to the setting-up.” (A. B., priest, Scărișoara).

The incapacity to mobilize the community resources touches also a vital problem such as medical assistance: “The medical building was falling down...it was built 74 years ago by a doctor who settled here. All doctors following him used it and since 1970 there has been no doctor to stay in the village...all of them had been commuters till four years ago when I and my husband moved here. In order to live in the dispensary house, we had to invest 240 million lei for renovation. The Local Council granted us a part of the sum...but not all of it. They prefer living without a doctor”(F.A., Scărișoara).

The restoring of the results to the question related to the community-territorial problems allowed us to identify the level of responsibility corresponding to every problem. See also Table 4.

Table 4. Problems and responsibilities

<i>Problems</i>	<i>Level of responsibility</i>
Roads	<b>State and departmental percentage</b>
Water supply	Community and family percentage
TV reception	Family percentage

<sup>49</sup> The road Horea-Huedin links the counties Alba and Cluj and would pave the way for tourists coming from Hungary and other European countries.

<sup>50</sup> A village in the commune Scărișoara, 10 kilometers away from the centre village.

The convergence of the interests of the three communes can be shaped also from the analysis of the villagers’ representations of what can develop better in the locality (Table 5)

Named here *representations of the development opportunities*, the data given by our inquiry prove a quasi-unanimous agreement regarding tourism as the main economic activity which can develop in the micro-region. The wood industry is an exception, which is on first place for the subjects in Horea (where the exploitation and wood manufacturing is the most consistent source of income). Consequently, for them, the chances of development are related to an economic activity problematic from the point of view of sustainable development.

Table 5. Representations regarding the development opportunities in the micro-region

The development opportunity	%
Tourism	92.9
Animal raising	86.4
Wood industry	83.6
Milk work	70.7
Commerce	57.9
Crafts	57.1
Meat work	52.1
Fruit growing	42.1
Field plant culture	34.3
Another economic activity*	11.4

\*The exploitation of the stone and non-ferrous ores resources, fish breeding, picking and work of wood fruit, dressmaking, bee culture).

As one can see in Table 5, the answers to the question which focused on the economic domains most likely to develop in the communes of the micro-region, give the following hierarchy: 1. tourism (92.9%), 2. animal raising (86.4%), and 3. wood industry (83.6%). Thus, the hierarchy above is different for the villagers in Horea for whom wood exploitation is on first place. Without neglecting this aspect, within restoring, the presentation of the results of the sociological inquiry was followed by the questions: *Do you agree with this hierarchy? What do you think that prevents now households from earning enough money from tourism, animal raising and wood industry?*

As for tourism and its development, the interviewed persons considered that many changes were highly necessary.

Now, according to somebody, the quality of service is doubtful: “I believe that people are not ready for

tourism, as you simply can't send people to a toilet outside or have them sleep in the same room with you. You must have a good room, and a bathroom with a shower and hot water. If you do something, you should do it well." (P.I., Albac).

It is considered that prices are too high as compared to the services offered, even where there are proper accommodation conditions: "Well, people got ready for tourism, but there have been too few people this summer. Maybe, if the prices were lower, tourists would feel encouraged to come. They have rooms and bathrooms but their prices are rather high." (F.A., Albac).

In Horea, not only tourism development is prevented by the precarious infrastructure: "Tourism is prevented by the infrastructure of roads with the Cluj county. From Mătișești to Cluj the road is not asphalted and people don't look for accommodation in Horea." (F.B., Horea).<sup>51</sup>

Bureaucracy is considered a stop in the development of tourism entrepreneurship, which is a primordial condition for investments in this domain: "The State doesn't sustain people who take initiative to set up a commercial company with simple and profitable laws, one needs a lot of documents to register it, doesn't get profitable loans, being prevented by the lack of money." (T. T., Scărișoara).

The micro-region needs another promotion as well: "In our region there are no tourists as the region is not mediated, if there were some better defined touristic objectives, there would be a chance." (P.G., Albac).

In spite of the position it has in our hierarchy, animal raising is not regarded with too much optimism. The numerous stops brought about, such as the quality of the fodder and the lack of market for the products, are the most signalized: "Animal raising would not develop as one cannot raise a cow with the fodders we have here, as they are wild and do not give enough milk." <sup>52</sup> (F.C., Horea); "The villagers raise their animals in their own households, without having the possibility to verify the milk and the milk products, the pork and chicken meat. Centres to collect these products would be necessary, through investment of the state." (D.E., Scărișoara).

The commentaries regarding the wood industry reflect the complexity of the processes related to this domain, which are ecologic, economic and

social. Thus, we notice first the total dependence of the villagers to the wood industry in the region: "With us, if we run out of wood, it's disastrous!" (P.H., Albac). It is then appreciated that the wood industry is difficult and expensive, especially for old people: "Those who take care of the forests earn huge sums of money, but not everybody can be involved as the hills are difficult to climb and it takes several people and you can't go there alone to cut down a Christmas tree and till you cut up some ...and then transport is expensive. In the end, you get nothing." (F.A., 82 years, Albac). The processing work itself is also expensive: "In wood processing, there is not enough money for a sawmill or other tools to work the wood." (T.T., mayor, Albac). In the end, the lack of wood stock leads to unsatisfactory prices: "I think that the market prevents the people from earning sufficient money from this economic activities, the lack of wood stock, if we can say so." (C.O., mayor, Horea).

The exhaustion of wood resources is also signalized: "In wood industry, how can there be wood if it was all cut down?" (A.B., Albac). Hence the emergency signal regarding the impact of wood cutting upon sustainable development: "...They almost finished with wood cutting. They should let the forests grow again so that our grandchildren should also benefit from it." (F.C., Horea); "We should stop cutting wood as we spoil the environment..."(B.C., priest, Scărișoara).

Tourism could succeed the wood industry, according to some opinions: "At present, everybody lives out of wood, and they do what they can do as long as they can do. Then, when the wood is over, tourism can develop." (F.D., Horea).

The problem of the inter-communal association can be an indicator of the cohesion of the studied micro-region in the event of some projects of micro-regional level. Because of this reason, in our inquiry we also focused on this aspect. Conditionally or not, most of the villagers in the three communes consider association necessary (See also Table 6).

<sup>51</sup> See footnote no. 5.

<sup>52</sup> Poor in nutritive substances

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Table 6. The need of inter-communal association

Answers	%
Yes, it is necessary	37.9
Yes, but it depends on the commune it associates with	24.3
No, it's not necessary	27.9
Another answer*	6.4
IDN/IWA	3.6
Total	100.0

\* It depends on the requests imposed by the association<sup>53</sup>

But, as for the commune (communes) with which the association would be made, out of the 33 proposed variants, only 12 make reference to the communes in the micro-region we are interested in. In 11 cases, the association is seen as opportune only if it is made with a commune abroad (Belgium, and then Germany). In four cases other communes in the Apuseni Mountains are indicated (Gârda and the town Câmpeni). In the rest of the cases, communes from rich regions in Romania (Banat) or communes in the plain region in the Alba County (famous for their agricultural resources) are indicated.

In the restoring interviews we asked our interlocutors to comment upon the results of the inquiry and answer the following questions: *What advantages do you think inter-communal association brings? What disadvantages do you think inter-communal association brings? What do you think should be done so that the advantages of the association should increase?*

Analysing the results reflected by the common villagers' answers, we find out first that inter-communal association is the object of more general statements ("Inter-communal association brings neither advantages as "my fire is in my stove but I give you the smoke" nor disadvantages"), statements which come to support the opposition towards the micro-regional association: "I don't consider an association among the communes Albac, Horea and Scărișoara to be proper" (V. L., Albac).

When the association is yet accepted, the commune of Horea is preferred by those in Albac as it is richer: "The association with another commune, for example Horea, would bring only benefits. They

<sup>53</sup> We make reference to the associations of forest owners in the communes Horea, Albac, Scărișoara și Gârda, what in the micro-region is called common ownership or private forestry.

are good farmers and they do only good. Here people are poorer."(B.A., Albac).

In Scărișoara there are some reluctances regarding the association of the communes in the neighbourhood: "Yes, associating is OK, but not among our communes, not with those around us but with one from abroad as those abroad can offer us cooperation models of working together, of setting our shoulder to the wheel.. This is why I see no advantages...Albac and Horea are more developed, but they have their own problems as well..." (F.B., Scărișoara).

In Horea we meet more categorical rejections of associating with a commune in the neighbourhood: "An association with a commune in the neighbourhood would bring only disadvantages. It's better to do something alone than with somebody else. With another commune in another part of the country, yes, it would be something new, investments, modernising."(unemployed, 29 years old, female, Horea).

A commentary which shows a balanced view of the advantages and disadvantages belongs to an intellectual in Horea: "Advantages: sending the funds in an urgent necessity. A disadvantage would be sending the funds to another commune where the mayor has a larger sphere of influence" (B.C., Horea).

But how do the local authorities react to the idea of inter-communal association?

For example, in Albac, we identified two local councillors with totally opposite views: "The association among Albac, Scărișoara and Horea would be good as there would be advantages", considers a councillor in Albac. (P. H., councillor, Albac); "No, I don't agree with such an inter-communal association, the association among Albac, Scărișoara and Horea is not advantageous as out of several poor villages you get a poorer one." (P. I., Albac).

The mayor of Albac sustains the idea of association and finds an argument in the administration of the forest and environmental resources in general: "There are advantages in the domain of private forestry which gathers already the communes Horea, Vadul Moșilor and Gârda. We intend to start collaboration with the communities on the Arieș regarding the cleaning of the Arieș Valley, as the valley is beautiful and must be taken care of. I see no disadvantage."(T. T., mayor, Albac).

The vice-mayor in Scărișoara also expresses his agreement with the idea of association, mentioning

the reduced resources Scărișoara could contribute with as well: “Associating with Horea and Albac would bring us only advantages but not to them as well...[as] we bring almost nothing: neither touristic objectives, nor infrastructure, people are old and we don’t have much labour power as the other two communes have...”(B, 49 years old, vice-mayor, SC). One of the local councillors in Scărișoara sustains the idea of the association due to a cultural and moral need with the perspective of the European integration: “Yes, I would agree with an association as we would have advantages such as culture and positive thinking. There would be no disadvantages. The association with Albac and Horea would also be profitable, all three of them could help one another and they could become a European commune.” (I.V., councillor, Scărișoara).

Similarly to the villagers, the local authorities in Horea do not favour the association either, being rather against it: “No, I don’t favour the association with other communes since the commune can develop on its own.” (F. B., councillor, Horea).

Let us also retain here the idea of a larger association, perhaps at the level of the Apuseni Mountains: “...Not only these three communes should associate, but also the other communes in the region as they are all Romanian living in the mountains”(B.A., Horea).

The same problem of inter-communal association was approached in a group association at the level of the Local Council in Albac.

On this occasion, we found out that the French model of inter-communal association was well-known within the Local Council: “In France, the associations function because the French State encourages and finances this. It is good as, for example, a waste machine (buying and using it) is too much for a single commune feed pipe or waste water treatment system”(M.M., councillor, Albac). Within the same context, it was reminded that in the past there used to be only one commune from Câmpeni to Horea (the commune Râul Mare) and the ecological argument of the association was brought up again: “We, the people in Albac, have already started an ecological action...to gather the waste with a cart. But we do it in vain as the river brings the waste again from Arieșeni and Gârda. We intended once to put up a grating and show the waste to the mayor in Horea...It’s in vain as it is only we who clean up.”(T.B., councillor, Albac).

## CONCLUSIONS AND OPENINGS

In the following lines, we shall concentrate especially on the heuristic valences of the restoring of results, valences underlined by our investigation

in the micro-region Albac-Scărișoara-Horea. In short, what does the restoring of results bring us as information for the organizer of the sociological inquiry?

We first found out that, when it was about hierarchies of the community-territorial problems or of the personal and family problems, through the restoring of results, some of these hierarchies were confirmed and some were infirmed. The possible inconcordances at this level can be valorized in the direction of the deep analysis of the researches, possibly through an improvement of the questionnaire as main instrument of investigation.

The restoring of results seems to be a proper method to identify the solutions to the major problems shown by the inquiry. The settling of the responsibility level, as it is shown in the dialogues with the local actors (villagers and inhabitants) can represent the main gain of the restoring of results as a deep knowledge instrument of the community-territorial problems.

The restoring of results brought forward some community –territorial problems not intended in our inquiry, such as the problem of medicine supply or the problem of general medical assistance. We must mention the fact that although our research focused on the villages in the centre of the commune, many recorded commentaries along the restoring of results made reference to the specific problem of the other villages: isolation, traditional mentality, reduced infrastructure and a necessary continuous high effort to survive.

The restoring of results proved to be no less important in relation to those themes towards which the villagers and the citizens have more or less divergent opinions (the decisional transparency, the participation to the local gatherings already organized or which would have to be organized in future). The fact that the villagers often blame the authorities and the authorities blame the villagers for the lack of accomplishments at these levels (transparency, participation) can represent an important piece of information for the description of certain mentalities and spiritual statuses in the micro-region.

The problem of inter-communal association, analyzed in our research through the restoring at the level of the Local Council in Albac, revealed to us, on the one hand, a high level of theme knowledge (as it is developed in France, for example) but also the confusion between communal twinning and inter-communal association. Such situations had not been anticipated at the time of the making of the questionnaire inquiry.

We can now conclude that the valences of the restoring of results of our inquiry in the micro-region Albac-Scărișoara-Horea, were edificatory in these two directions: 1) the development and deep analysis of opinion and attitude knowledge of the local actors and 2) the signaling of some limits of the inquiry and of its fundamental instrument – the questionnaire.

As for these two consequences, a reevaluation of the whole research of themes such as the ones we focused on in the micro-region Albac-Scărișoara-Horea seems to be necessary in the future. A better adjustment to the specific of the studied territory can represent the key to the new logic of approach.

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## ANNEXES

Table 1. Economic indicators of the micro-region Albac-Scărișoara-Horea,  
as compared to the rural areas of the Alba County

Economic indicators	Rural areas in Alba	Micro-region
Total surface	486965	20871
Number of households	61799	2293
Population	161478	6487
Percentage of women	49.5	48
Live newborn babies per 1000 villagers	9.3	10.5
Deceased per 1000 villagers	15.4	10.9
Total agricultural area	266913	5326
Percentage of arable area	40	14
Percentage of pastures and hayfields	60	86
Cattle in the households of the population per 1000 villagers	366	639
Cow and buffalo cow milk production (hl/1000 villagers)	7.37	7.8

Source: The Statistics Direction of the Alba County ( 2003)

Table 2. Problems of the micro-region Albac-Scărișoara-Horea reflected by poverty indicators

Poverty indicators	The average per micro-region	Average per the Alba county
Poverty percentage <sup>54</sup>	0.41	0.25
The percentage of population with age under 16	22.91	19.1
The percentage of the population with an age over 65	18.21	14.6
The percentage of the population with an age over 15 and with an education with at most primary school	33.84	17.86
Percentage of long-term unemployment	8.51	6.50
Percentage of the population without access to tap water	83.03	45.74

Source: The Anti-poverty and Promotion of Social Inclusion ; taken over from Buțiu (2006).

<sup>54</sup> The poverty rate is calculated according to the methodology elaborated by the World Bank and The Committee Anti-Poverty and Promotion of Social Inclusion, by taking into account some demographic variables (the width of the household, the gender division, age etc.), of some characteristics of the members of the household (education and occupation), data regarding the quality of the household and the access to public utilities and public unities as well as territorial characteristics (the width of the locality, demographic and economic characteristics etc.). See also Lucian Pop, coordinator, *Harta Sărăciei în România. Metodologia utilizată și prezentarea rezultatelor*, București, CASPIS, 2004.

PAPERS ON  
REGION, IDENTITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**QUESTIONNAIRE (SELECTIVE)**

**1.2. In your opinion, what are the main problems which should be solved in this village?**

Problems	YES	NO	IDK/IWA*
Roads			
Water supply			
Telephone			
TV Reception			
Another problem 1 (which)			
Another problem 2 (which)			

\*IDK = Nu știu IWA = Non Raspuns

**1.5. What do you think could better develop in this village in future? [Multiple answer. The corresponding answer is marked with an x and it is written: Another economic activity.]**

Domain	Yes	No	IDK/IWA*
Field plant culture			
Fruit growing			
Animal raising			
Milk processing			
Meat processing			
Tourism			
Trade			
Crafts			
Wood industry			
Another economic activity (which)			

\*IDK = Nu știu IWA = Non Raspuns

2.19. In order to solve mutual problems, in Europe and in many places in the country, several communes organised communal associations, in order to administrate their money better. Do you think that here the association of the commune (name of commune) with another commune would be necessary?

1. Yes, it is necessary
2. Yes, but it depends on with which commune it associates
3. No, it's not necessary
4. Another answer (which)
9. IDK/IWA

2.20. [For those who answer YES (1, 2, maybe 4) to the question 2.13.] What do you think is the best commune?

**INTERVIEW GUIDE – ALBAC (Selection)**

3. Another question aimed at the problems of the village or of the commune. Here the results of our research show us the following order: (1) roads (81.6%); (2) TV reception (40.8%); (3) water supply (36.7%).

3.1. Do you agree with this order?

3.2. What would be the solutions to these problems?

4. To the question regarding the domains which are most likely to develop in Albac, the answers we gathered say the following: 1. tourism (98%), 2. animals growing (79.6%) and 3. wood industry (77.6%).

4.1. Do you agree with this classification?

*4.2. What do you think that prevents now households from earning enough money out of tourism, animals growing, and wood industry?*

7. When asked whether they considered it necessary for the commune Albac to associate with another commune or other communes, most of the villagers (63.3%) answered YES, and a part (24.5%) answered NO.

*7.1. What advantages do you think inter-communal association brings?*

*7.2. What disadvantages do you think inter-communal association brings?*

*7.3. Would an association between the communes Albac, Horea and Scărișoara be suitable?*