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**ENLIGHTENED PARTICIPATION ?
Political learning in a post-communist environment
Lessons from the fall 2000 Romanian campaign**

A lina Mungiu-Pippidi

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A lina Mungiu Pippidi, PhD in Social Psychology is Professor of Political Communication in the Political Science Department of the National School of Government (SNSPA) and Director of the Political Communication Research Center of the Romanian Academic Society.

This project was carried out by the following team members:

Denisa Mândruta, BA in Mathematics, BA in Sociology, is currently enrolled in a Ph.D. Program at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Stony Brook.

Mara Marin, MA in Philosophy, OSI/FCO Chevening Scholar, University of Oxford, MA in Gender Studies, Central European University, is an editor with Romanian Academic Society.

Gabriel Sarafian, senior student in the Political Science Department of Bucharest University is a researcher at Romanian Academic Society.

O ana-Valentina Suci, MA in Sociology, OSI/FCO Chevening Scholar, University of Oxford, assistant lecturer in the Political Science Department of Bucharest University is a senior researcher with the Romanian Academic Society.

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ROMANIAN ACADEMIC SOCIETY

15 Petöfi Sándor, Bucharest 1

Romania

tel/fax (401)222.18.68

tel (401)222.14.05

sar@starnets.ro
<http://sar.org.ro>

SUMMARY

I. Context and Method		2.
II. The Channels		3.
III. The Public		7.
IV. The Message		13.
V. The Campaign Effects		14.
VI. Conclusions		17.
VII.	Policy	recommendations
21.		
REFERENCES		26.
ANNEXES		28.

I. CONTEXT AND METHOD

The 2000 general elections of Romania took place in a non-spectacular, albeit bleak, political environment. These were the fourth round of free elections after the fall of Dictator Nicolae Ceausescu in 1989, although the first since the 1996 switch of power, praised at the time as the first democratic change of government in Romania this century.¹ In other words, the stakes for democracy were not high: it was only the quality of democracy, not its mere existence that seemed concerned at the beginning of the campaign, a belief to emerge seriously shaken at the end. Polls had all along predicted a return to power of PDSR, the main alleged successor party of the Communist one, and a serious setback for the coalition which had governed for four years, made of Liberals (PNL), Christian Democrats (PNTCD), and Social Democrats (PD). Besides these four main parties three others only seemed to matter: the moderate anti-system party Alliance for Romania, an offspring of PDSR, the radical nationalist Greater Romania Party (PRM), and the ethnic Hungarian party, UDMR. Our project aimed to weight the effectiveness of political communications in a post-totalitarian environment, as unlike its Central European neighbours Ceausescu's Romania had been a totalitarian country with a perfect control over public communication and very advanced on the private one, a situation that has seriously shaped the ability to communicate in a democratic environment of its main institutions and the general public. This makes it a particularly interesting case study and we considered of major interest on civic as well as on academic grounds to analyse the overall contribution of electoral campaigns to democratic socialization and the facilitation of an enlightened political participation.

Despite having a few professional pollsters and some beginnings of electoral analysis, mostly for the use of political parties, no serious study was done on the role of the electoral campaign in political socialization and on the political socialization in general in Romania. In fact, we designed the research for this report with extreme caution, since no longitudinal study on a panel sample has been reported before, despite a few alleged attempts at something similar. It is due to this reason that we decided to work with the most reputed Romanian pollster, CURS², and not with students as initially planned, but to involve them rather in the media analysis part.

This report draws mainly on a two-wave panel survey, measured by CURS in the first and last week of the 45 days electoral campaign³. The sampling model was a two-stage random cluster sample and the sampling universe was the population of Romania. The questionnaires were slightly different the second wave compared to the first and were designed entirely by SAR. Despite having 1230 respondents in the first wave and 1205 in the second, the panel was reduced finally to only 755, due to a large number of refusals that we faced in the second wave. Compared statistics of the group which withdrew from the panel compared to the group which stayed showed no significant difference in age, education, occupation and sex, however. Significant differences were found only in the regional residence, but as we did not plan to infer anything on regions this did not affect our study. The analysis is based therefore on practically three different samples, wave one (W1), wave (W2) and

¹ This catch phrase, very popular with domestic and foreign journalists as well, was actually plain wrong: in 1927 the traditional National Liberal Party, after being instrumental in introducing the franchise was also its first casualty, losing to the newly created National Peasant Party.

² The Center for Urban and Regional Sociology, ran by Professor Dorel Abraham.

³ October 5-7 for the first wave; November 21-22 for the second.

panel (P) and we shall quote accordingly at each of our explanatory models, since they are drawing upon different samples.

The questions this report tries to address are broad, as this is the first comprehensive research on the topic. We are interested therefore in the following:

1. The extent to which MEDIA CHANNELS covered elections effectively and their possible partisan connections;
2. The involvement of the public in the campaign, the PARTICIPATION as expressed in interest to the campaign (POLITICAL INTEREST) and decision to vote, the POLITICAL SOPHISTICATION as expressed in awareness of main issues at stake and general knowledge of basic political notions (IDEOLOGY AWARENESS and IDEOLOGY IMPORTANCE); the AGENDA of the public and the extent to which both awareness and agenda were modified by the rate of exposure to the campaign.
3. The extent to which POLITICAL ACTORS (parties and candidates to presidency) managed to effectively communicate their ELECTORAL MESSAGE;
4. The influence of the campaign on POLITICAL LEARNING (increasing one's awareness of both issues and general political notions, such as the left and the right) AND VOTING BEHAVIOR.
5. Mechanisms of political cognition leading to the elaboration of one's vote choice and the extent to which we can speak of 'enlightened participation'.

II. THE CHANNELS

The country has enjoyed for the last ten years a relatively great freedom of political organization and of the media- Romania has a strong private media, including two national TV networks and hundreds of local radio and TV outlets. Around 40 % of Romanians, which amounts to all the urban population is reportedly connected to cable TV as well, and the print press, made mostly of typical or atypical (political, that is) tabloids is not submitted to any kind of legal regulations. One of the main allegations of the 1996-2000 President Emil Constantinescu, in fact, was that private media was responsible for the generalized climate of nationalism and hysteria which raged the public mood mostly during the Kosovo war⁴, but was in fact generalized throughout the whole period of recession, seriously distorting the policy agenda. (1997-2000).

The main source for political news at the national level remains the national television, due to its larger reach. Despite ranking only as third at the urban level TVR still leads nationally. Its main private competitors, PROTV and Antena 1 have quite different reputations: PROTV is considered a Western-oriented network, while Antena 1 put on air a few years ago the extremist leader Jean Marie LePen in a duo with his Romanian counterpart, Corneliu Vadim Tudor, and let them discuss unchallenged throughout the show. Unsurprisingly, the publics of the three channels reflect, due to selective exposure probably, the political values and candidates embraced by journalists. The public of TVR is exceptional in this respect, since most of it is made of people who do not have another option, living in a rural area without cable. Therefore the public of TVR is strongly

⁴ See my analysis of the Romanian press coverage of Kosovo 'The War That Never Was', in the summer 2000 issue of East European Constitutional Review.

collectivistic and votes for Mr. Iliescu. The public of PROTV is individualistic-liberal and preferred the center-right candidates (Isarescu and Stolojan) more, although each in part enjoyed less support than Mr. Iliescu (see Fig. 1). Most of Vadim's Tudor voters with a choice (so from the minority having cable) preferred Antena 1.

Figure 1. Preference for a presidential candidate of the TV networks' audience

Candidate	TVR1	TVR2	Pro TV	Antena 1
Teodor Melescanu	5.0	25.0	3.7	4.2
Mugur Isarescu	12.9	25.0	20.0	19.4
Ion Iliescu	59.4		31.6	33.9
C. V. Tudor	9.0	25.0	7.4	15.8
Theodor Stolojan	8.1	25.0	25.8	18.2
Petre Roman	1.7		5.3	6.7
Gyorgy Frunda	3.6		4.7	1.8

Reads as: "59.4% of the audience of TVR1 supports Ion Iliescu"

The 2000 campaign was regulated for the electronic media by a special ruling of the Broadcasting Board (240 of October 9, 2000). Although drawing upon previously existing 68 and 69 laws for electing the Parliament and the President of Romania respectively, the ruling was quite innovative. It banned campaign ads from other shows than solely dedicated electoral ones (article 21 paragraph 1) and restricted discussion of campaign issues to these shows (Article 8 paragraph one), especially forbidding news bulletins to include campaign news (Art 16 paragraph 2). This practically meant banning candidates from any other broadcasts than those dedicated to the campaign and preventing ordinary talk-show hosts from making electoral editions unless they decided to turn the show entirely into an electoral one. Presence of candidates in news bulletins was allowed only to the extent the news was not related with the campaign and therefore selected on newsworthy grounds only. Other paragraphs of the same Article 8 forbade candidates from attacking each other, while hosts were held responsible for enforcing urbanity of the debates (Article 13). This over-regulating environment, entitled as it was from previous negative campaigns, stopped short of producing positive effects. Regulators forgot a simple reality of the Romanian society, constantly proven true in the last ten years, that rules cannot be enforced against the influential or the bold in the permissive Romanian legal culture and by a weak institution such as the Broadcasting Board. Creating special electoral shows stretched the already scarce human and logistic resources of the electronic media, leading to formal shows moderated by hosts acting as simple switchboard operators. The candidates faced inexperienced or inhibited journalists who either could not or dared not challenge them and the quality of the debate was very low. Most electoral shows were plainly boring, especially the formal ones on the public television, with moderators paying lip service to influential politicians. Even worse, the intervention of the public was very limited, even the usual calls-in during shows decreasing. Journalists invited to second moderators had no chance to put a follow-up question, since they were supposed to put questions in turn. In short, the Board's rulings prompted journalists, especially in the public media, into designing shows lacking both professionalism and ability to serve the public interest—represented by the facilitation of enlightened participation. Furthermore, in the last week of electoral debates even civility was broken savagely by Vadim

Tudor, who threatened to machine gun his opponents, without moderators being able to deal with him. That the responsibility was resting more with the journalists than with the regulations per se was proven by the very good quality of the electoral show put on by Florin Calinescu (PROTV), a star host, who proved able to put up a challenging dialogue with candidates.

The monitoring of campaign news throughout the last four weeks of campaign (October 27-November 23) showed the center-rights candidates had larger coverage than Mr. Iliescu and particularly Mr. Vadim Tudor, who produced less ‘newsworthy’ events. In the coverage of political parties PDSR ranked first, having twice the coverage of the next parties (see Fig. 2 and Fig. 3).

Figure 2. Media-coverage of each candidate to presidency

Candidate	Percentage (%)	Number of news (total: 295)
Theodor Stolojan	29.83	88
Mugur Isarescu	29.15	86
Ion Iliescu	14.23	42
Teodor Melescanu	9.49	28
Petre Roman	8.81	26
Vadim Tudor	6.77	20
Gyorgy Frunda	1.69	5

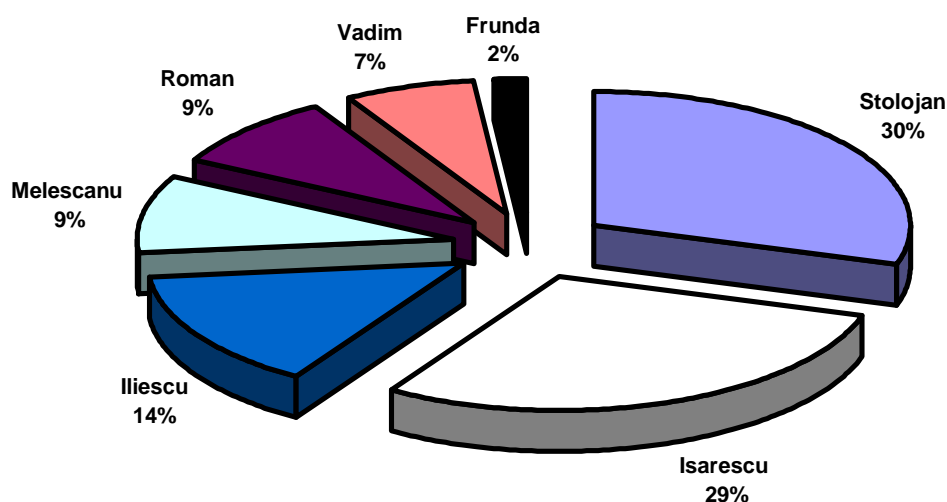
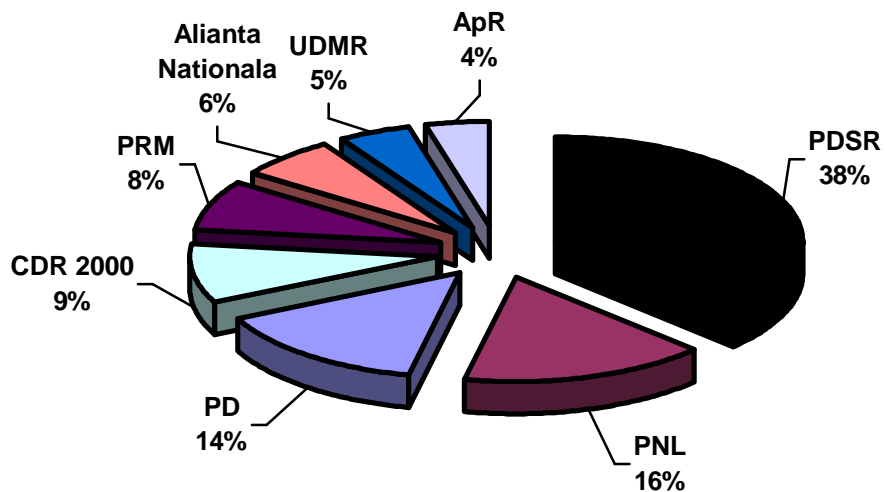


Figure 3. Media-coverage for each party

Party	Percentage (%)	Number of news (total: 376)
PDSR	37.23	140
PNL	16.22	61
PD	14.36	54
PNTCD 2000	9.04	34
PRM	7.97	30
Alianta Nationala	6.38	24
UDMR	4.52	17
ApR	4.25	16



Apart the time dedicated by journalists to what they considered having 'newsvalue', the Broadcasting Board had strict rulings on dividing the time among parties and candidates. Parties received shares proportional to their number of seats in the 1996 Parliament, while newcomers were only allowed to buy limited ad space. Presidential candidates were treated equally, another questionable decision, since it prevented the main ones to

engage in a real debate on issues. Instead 'hosts' were treating the candidates, mostly on TVR and Antena 1, as pupils in a classroom who answered questions or recited programs in their turn, with very limited possibilities of interaction and practically no competent challenging by well-informed journalists or guests. Altogether, the approach of the Broadcasting Board and the incompetence of journalists running electoral shows, notably on public television, led to very formal and unattractive electoral debates, which did not help in clearing issues, stakes or positions. The public expressed its discontent in the evening of legislative elections, most voters deserting the 'talking-heads' channels to watch on PROTV a plainer presentation of results.

Private media, including print press and radio, were free to allocate electoral coverage on commercial grounds, although broadcasters were bound to distribute space within candidates by the same Broadcasting Board rules. The print press was not regulated at all and there parties took advantage by publishing negative ads or trying to prime polls deemed favourable. 'Adevarul' played a very positive role here, denouncing such practices constantly and publishing a good analysis in the end, trying to discriminate which pollster is more reliable. Overall, however, the print press and the electronic media provided poor and misleading interpretations to polls, accusing pollsters now and then that polls are not accurate in predicting results, while from far the most inaccurate was the treatment polls were receiving in newsrooms.

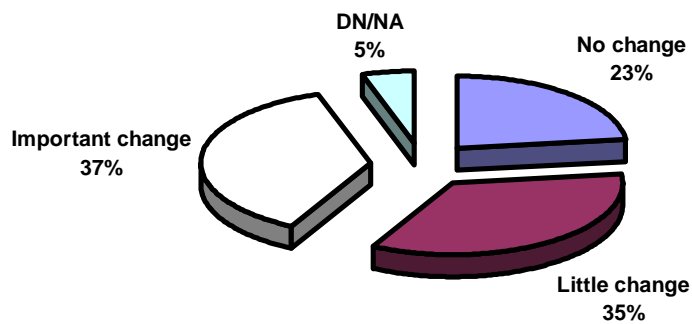
The tabloid press was no more slanderous and aggressive than in-between campaigns. Strangely, scandals which dominated the year, including some based on ongoing investigations (such as the bankruptcy of a major investment fund-FNI, or the French investigation on 1996 money laundering through Mr. Iliescu's electoral campaign) were tuned down during the campaign in most media, except the open partisan newspapers which have limited circulation. The most illustrative example of the press freedom abuse currently practiced by the Romanian media was encountered in *Jurnalul National*, which published a collection of slanderous allegations on former President Emil Constantinescu (some utterly absurd, such as his son being a hit man) as a list of 'scandals' of the Constantinescu presidency, in order to affect the electoral performance of Constantinescu's main advisor, Dorin Marian, then the campaign leader of a main party, PNTCD 2000. Mr. Marian sued the newspaper, but it is hard to estimate the damage to his image for being on the cover of *Jurnalul National* repeatedly with titles associating him with cigarettes smuggling, all on the basis of one source which repeatedly contradicted itself.

III. THE PUBLIC

The public displayed in the same time high interest in the campaign and very low political competence. We encountered a wide-spread perception of a deterioration of living standards (66% declared they were worse off than a year before), as the average monthly wage per household in our sample was of about 90 UPD, with an average of 4.5 years of school graduated. Education and income are strongly correlated (0.52). We are therefore dealing with people at a strong disadvantage, who want to improve their desperate situation by the first means available - elections. They are hence interested in the forthcoming elections but severely bounded in their competence, mostly due to reasons of tremendous poverty and insufficient education. Despite 91% claiming they are going to vote a week later, and the number of undecided voters being relatively low (7%) in the second wave, the turnout was of only 65% in the end. Indirect indicators of turnout predicted a low turnout, however, 58%

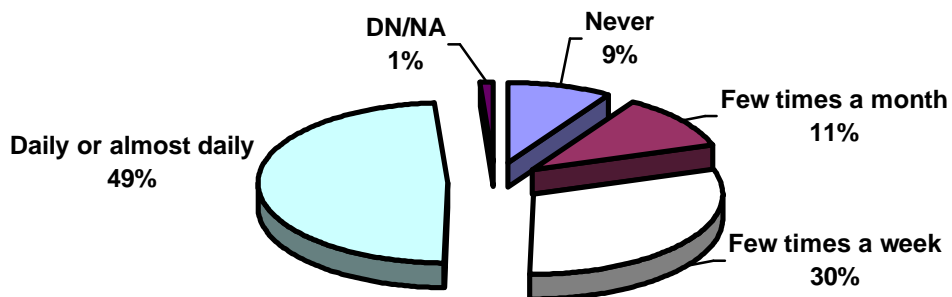
declaring they expected little or insignificant improvement of their life after elections (see Fig. 4) and 59% acknowledging they know nothing or almost on candidates and issues. (see Fig. 1, Annexes).

FIG.4: Expected change in your life after elections



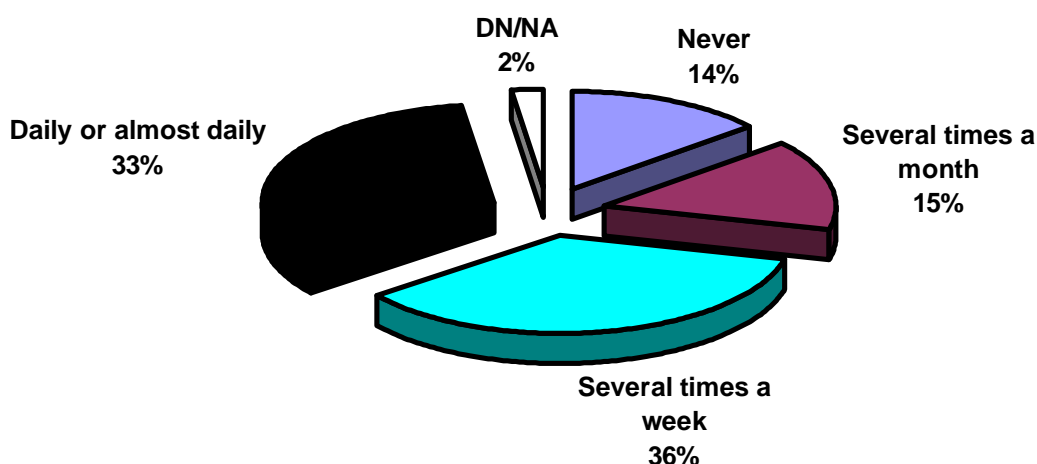
Despite only 22% declaring they are interested and very interested in the campaign 49% watched electoral shows on TV daily and another 30% a few times a week.(see Fig. 5).

FIG.5: Followed campaign on TV



In our view these high figures should be interpreted as television being in Romania the main entertainment device of the poor, who watch, according to audience ratings, soap operas and tele-novelas normally, but eventually campaign shows in electoral campaigns when TV networks run such shows in prime time. Only about 18% confessed reading a daily newspaper almost every day, a figure consistent with the low figure of those claiming they have some interest in politics, and consistent in both waves as well. (see Fig. 2, Annexes). As to those reading ‘weekly’ we decided to rule them out, as Romania has no political weeklies at all, so reading news in fashion or gossip weekly magazines, or reading dailies only occasionally is not really a sign of interest in politics. 69% discussed daily or more often with family or friends on the campaign and elections. (see Fig. 6).

FIG.6: Discussed campaign with family or friends



Our questionnaire included a number of items to measure political competence. We asked people for a self-assessment of their competence first (SUBJECTIVE COMPETENCE), then we tested four major propositions asking them to attribute these ideas to either right or left (AWARENESS IDEOLOGY), to finally ask them to attribute a few well publicized policies to one party or another (AWARENESS ISSUES). Questions were about state versus private property, the role of the state in enforcing the market regulations versus intervening to prevent a too great disparity of revenues, phrased casually. The policies tested for awareness were more specific for Romania and the time of the campaign, reviewing all the constant themes of the Romanian politics: restitution of nationalized property, screening of MP’s for connections with the former Communist secret service, the creation of a Hungarian university, the integration of Romania in the European Union and NATO.

The attribution of statements to either the right or the left was successfully done by only about 45% of the two samples. Between ten and twenty percent ‘tried their luck’ and gave wrong answers and about 45% consistently stated their ignorance.

The situation improved slightly in the second wave, but also it turned out that many respondents had got the right answer first time by sheer guessing, as they guessed wrong or confessed ignorance a second time. The table shows how respondents from the first wave (row) answered a second time (column). About 60% of the panel continued to give the wrong answer or refrain from answering, with some people who answered correctly in the first wave missing this time (about 30%), and about 45% of those who did not give the correct answer first wave succeeding this time. Results from the second wave show that only respondents who gave the correct answer both times can be considered competent and secure of themselves, and these ones are 25% of the sample at the best (ranging between 15 and 25 at the four statements).

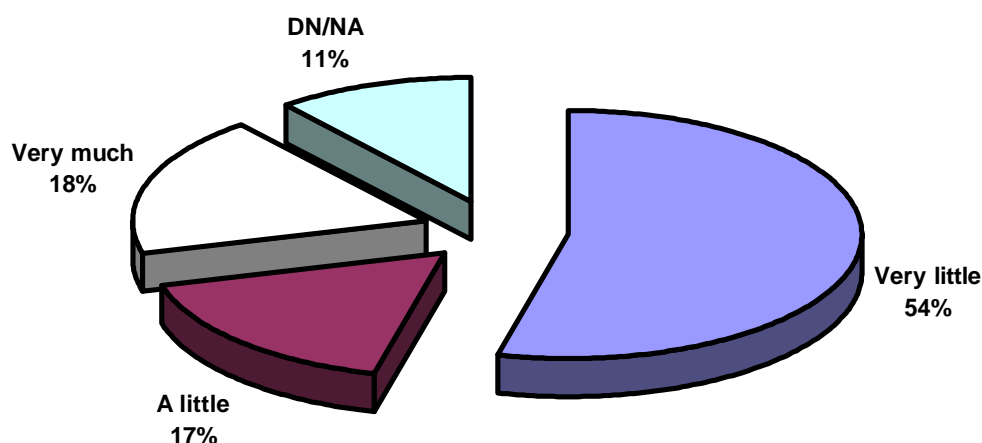
Figure 7. Changes in AWARENESS IDEOLOGY and IDEOLOGY IMPORTANCE from one wave to the other

	Mean W1	Mean W2	Standard Deviation W1	Standard Deviation W2
Awareness ideology	0.3846	0.3911	0.4025	0.3939
Ideology importance	0.3006	0.2792	0.3266	0.3202

Subjective competence increased however after the campaign. The mean of ‘self-assessed competence’ (perception of one’s knowledge of candidates and issues) increased from 0.36 to 0.42 in the second wave. Exposure to more talk on politics misled many to believe they have become more learned or have understood more.

Since respondents discern so little what right or left means there is little wonder they are not at all interested if a candidate stands on the right or on the left side of politics. 70% of the sample declare that personally they are not taking this into consideration when voting: comparing the means of the two waves for the panel sample we find no significant difference (2.32/2.40), so the campaign did not make people more sensitive to the relevance of the classical political dichotomy (see Fig. 7 and Fig. 8). As most candidates refrained from claiming any ideological identity and made no reference to either left or right the result is hardly surprising. It is also not surprising that PDSR’s frequent running of slogans claiming they unified the ‘left’ or ‘social-democrat’ pole made little impression on their voters, precisely the poorest and least educated who do not know, do not understand and consequently do not care about ideological identity.

FIG.8: Candidate-ideology importance



Does it matter to you personally if a candidate stands on the right or on the left?

Who are the more sophisticated? The answer tends to be obvious: those who read more newspapers and watch more politics on television are the wealthier, the more educated, and residing significantly more in urban areas. Men have more interest and probably leisure as well to read, follow or discuss politics than women. Older people discuss significantly more, the younger people in our panel read more newspapers. In rural areas discussion is more spread then following the campaign in newspapers and on TV. All three forms of socialization turn out as significant predictors of the vote intention: people who are more interested in politics are more willing to vote as well. (see Figure 5, Annexes)

We measured the agenda of the public by a single item inquiring for the ‘two most pressing problems’ that the government must address. Respondents chose overwhelmingly (55%) economic problems (33% poverty, 13.5 % inflation, 9 % economic decline), followed by corruption (18%), incompetence of government and political instability (10%), and flight of the young and the bright to the West (5.4%). Rating of the importance of campaign issues was consistently attributed to increase of revenues (77% considering very important the issue of rising pensions⁵ and children allocations), compared to only 30% seeing the EU integration as ‘very important’ and 11% considering privatization the top problem on the agenda. From the restitution issues, very much on the agenda of Parliament and some political parties forests’ restitution only was seen as more important (18%), with 14.6% considering the overall restitution of property seized by communists as very important and 13% being

⁵ As Romania has more pensioners in 2000 than active people this is a general concern; most families include at least a pensioner.

concerned by the fate of the tenants. More important issues emerged such as the corruption of the political class, with 44.6% considering very important that MPs give up their immunity from prosecution, and 23% considering very important that MPs state their collaboration with the former Securitate (as another 22% considered that an 'important' issue, the topic was highest on the public's agenda from all 'dealing-with-the past issues').

The campaign did affect the importance people attributed to the issues. First, some issues were under-covered, despite being on the agenda of the Parliament, like the immunity deprivation of MPs, covered by the Parliament's rather technical regulations. Second, on other issues parties presented similar points of view, with the main party, PDSR, declaring itself pro-market and pro-European. This raised the importance of these topics for respondents, since most of them voted for PDSR. The importance of screening MPs for Securitate collaboration emerged as extremely important as it was on the media agenda: the first files in the history of post-communist agenda were disclosed in the campaign (actually only a couple of days before elections), with the media pushing hard the Council of Securitate Archives to disclose faster the concerned MPs. The restitution of real estate was also a highly covered topic by all sides, since the law had been the main one discussed in the last session of the Parliament, which failed to pass it. The importance of pensions, however, dropped, since the government actually increased both pensions and allocations during the campaign (see Fig. 9).

Figure 9. Paired sample t-test – Evolution of the importance from the first to second wave

Variable	Mean W1	Mean W2	Significance of the difference among means	Correlation (W 1-W2)
Restitution of real estate	2.89	3.07	Significant **	.223 (sig)
Forests restitution	3.16	3.21	Insignificant	.319 (sig)
Protection of tenants	2.92	3.00	Insignificant	.126 (sig.)
Fast privatization	2.90	2.96	Insignificant	.224 (sig.)
State must regain control over economy	3.87	3.70	Significant **	.167 (sig.)
EU integration	3.70	3.86	Significant **	.215 (sig.)
Pensions	4.73	4.67	Significant *	.072 (sig.)
Hungarian university	1.79	1.74	Insignificant	.423 (sig.)
Disclosure of Securitate files	3.17	3.44	Significant ***	.124 (sig.)
MPs to give up immunity	4.09	4.11	Insignificant	.194 (sig)

Significant at .01 level=**, Significant at .05 level =*, Significant at .00 level=***

IV. THE MESSAGE

How did the political parties succeed to transmit their messages in this environment and to the receiver described above? The obvious conclusion is that for most part and time they did not. Few respondents attribute few issues correctly to political parties, and the respondents of the winning parties know less on issues than the ones of the former coalition of government. There are great differences among supporters of specific parties when comparing scores of issues awareness. The most competent are the voters of CDR 2000 and UDMR in the first wave and the least competent the voters of PDSR in both waves of the survey. Generally speaking voters of the parties belonging to the former government coalition are more informed on issues. The performance was relatively stable from wave one to wave two, with a slight increase of the PRM and a decrease for the Liberals' supporters (see Fig. 10).

Figure 10. Issue awareness by party preference

Party-preference	Mean 1	Mean 2	Std. Deviation 1	Std. Deviation 2
PDSR	3.27	3.89	2.79	2.90
CDR 2000	5.23	5.11	2.75	2.89
PNL	3.89	5.26	2.84	2.57
PD	4.00	4.64	3.00	3.09
ApR	4.39	4.19	3.05	2.86
PRM	3.98	4.01	2.53	2.55
UDMR	5.47	5.09	3.13	3.06
Other parties	2.50	3.43	2.88	2.77
Undecided	2.82	3.62	2.94	3.32
DN-doesn't vote	1.51	2.81	2.46	2.72
NA	2.23	3.94	3.19	3.24
Total	3.34	4.05	2.94	2.90

The issues correctly attributed are the ‘scandal’ issues, notably the Hungarian university, attributed by the highest number of respondents⁶ (48%) to the Hungarian party and its former allies PNTCD and PNL. The issues that divided the government coalition over four years, and hence managed to stay constantly on the media’s agenda follow it: the unsuccessful forests’ (36%) and real estate restitution (28%). The opposite extreme is made by the issue of changing the regulations of the Parliament in order to be able to deprive MPs charged by Criminal Courts easier of their immunity (former regulations required a two-thirds majority vote on the issue; new proposal endorsed a simple 51% majority). Championed for years by a PNTCD Senator, Vasile Lupu, this issue was not publicized even by his own party, with the results that only 1.5% respondents in the second wave attributed it to Christian Democrats. As for the Liberal Party, its lack of public identity is striking. Not even voters of the former coalition are able to attribute it correctly some policy, due to their weak association with and inconstant promotion of policies in the agenda, and their long standing position as minor partners within the

larger center-right coalition. Only privatisation, a common-sense liberal issue is attributed to Liberals by a larger number of respondents (11%), but 29% attribute it to Christian Democrats as well; the same with restitution of property, which was high on the liberal agenda, but in a less definite form than on the PNTCDs agenda (*restitutio ad integrum*). Consequently, the overwhelming majority attributes this policy to PNTCD, not the Liberals (41% , respectively 5%).

Christian Democrats and Liberals may be blamed for their unprofessional dissemination of message, since their public is the most educated and interested in politics. PDSR, the winner of the elections, is in a more paradoxical situation. Its change of message (pro-market, pro-European integration) was seized by 14% of the sample only, despite tremendous publicity. The unsuccessful ApR, which did not reach the electoral threshold and was quite vocal in promising a substantial rise of the pensions was entirely missed by respondents, who attributed this policy, in order, to PDSR and PNTCD.

That Romanian parties have a weak policy identity is hardly news. But the hard truths to acknowledge here are two: one, that policies matter a lot less than ‘image’ of the leaders and of the parties, and ‘image’ is made more of symbolic than technocratic substance, even if to some extent it is policy-based; and, two, that people attribute policies they feel right to parties they prefer and policies they dislike to parties they antagonize, on reasons of cognitive convenience mostly. The issue on pensions, which had the largest importance, was attributed by PNTCD voters to PNTCD, by liberals to PNL, by PDSR voters to PDSR. The move of the Prime Minister Mugur Isarescu (closer to PNTCD) to increase pensions may have confused some voters: but Liberals, as a fact, never endorsed this move and their presidential candidate consistently refused to make promises that would have implied more spending.

In models explaining the voting choice for PDSR, the trust in Ion Iliescu accounts for almost the total variance (86% cases correctly predicted), while socialist and nationalistic values, although highly significant predictors, predict only 46% of PDSR voters.. When PNTCD and PNL were united, ideology mattered more when explaining the choice for their alliance, as their voters were the most educated (but also because they had so unpopular leaders; their one leader through 1996-2000, President Constantinescu, mattered less than Iliescu, but still considerably).

V. THE CAMPAIGN EFFECTS

We range media effects by using Norris’ classification (Norris 2000) in long-term (cumulative effects) and short-term (campaign) effects. We are interested here mainly in the second category. The results that have turned out are paradoxical at the best, but otherwise discouraging. Evidence points to the campaign playing a positive role in increasing the awareness to few policy issues and knowledge of the candidates, even if only a minority makes use of this advantage (see for example Fig. 11). On other items, such as the general awareness of what is left and right in politics the campaign played no role at all, despite parties relying on this identification quite strongly (PDSR ads proclaimed an unification of the left; CDR 2000 posters invoked the atheism of the left to mobilize voters against PDSR). Cross-tabulations between those who improved their performance in political knowledge between the first and the second wave and their exposure to the media showed significant differences between respondents who recorded a progress and those who did not. The former followed the campaign closely

⁶ Based on wave 1.

than the latter, they read and watched more campaign news and shows. The results of discussing politics had a similar influence only on restricted issues, but overall people who discuss politics evolved better and learned more than those who did not. Individual improvement was not however reflected at the sample level.

Figure 11. Issue-awareness: Real estate confiscated by Communists should be restored entirely

	Incorrect W2	Correct W2
Incorrect Wave 1	47.5%	52.5%
Correct Wave 1	20.1%	79.9%
Total	27.7	72.3%

Legend: the answers from the 1st wave are on the row, the answers from the 2nd row are on the column.

As to the finality of these learning exercises, we found no evidence that this improvement in issue awareness of some voters led them decisively in making a choice based on enlightened participation. Most voters migrated from PDSR to PRM: this move from mild populism to radical populism is hard to explain by more ‘political learning’. Our evidence points to the fact that political learning was quite ineffective to trigger a change in political options. The little change that was may have affected the Liberals, a party with a weak political identity which had the highest turnover of voters throughout the campaign. Voters’ confusion has ended three days before the final vote, when a massive third fled the Liberal Party. These more educated voters had all along placed a high importance on issues such as screening MPs for collaboration with the Securitate, so they deserted the party after news had broken its head was formally proven as being a collaborator by the Council of Archives.

Voters migrated importantly during this campaign compared with the previous ones (see Fig.12). This is due to the instability of the political environment: the government coalition vanished, the CDR changed composition, the Liberals courted PDSR’s offspring ApR and to some point even PDSR before deciding they should remain on their own, and Vadim Tudor was granted for the first time the right to appear in the same shows with ‘serious’ candidates and took advantage of it.

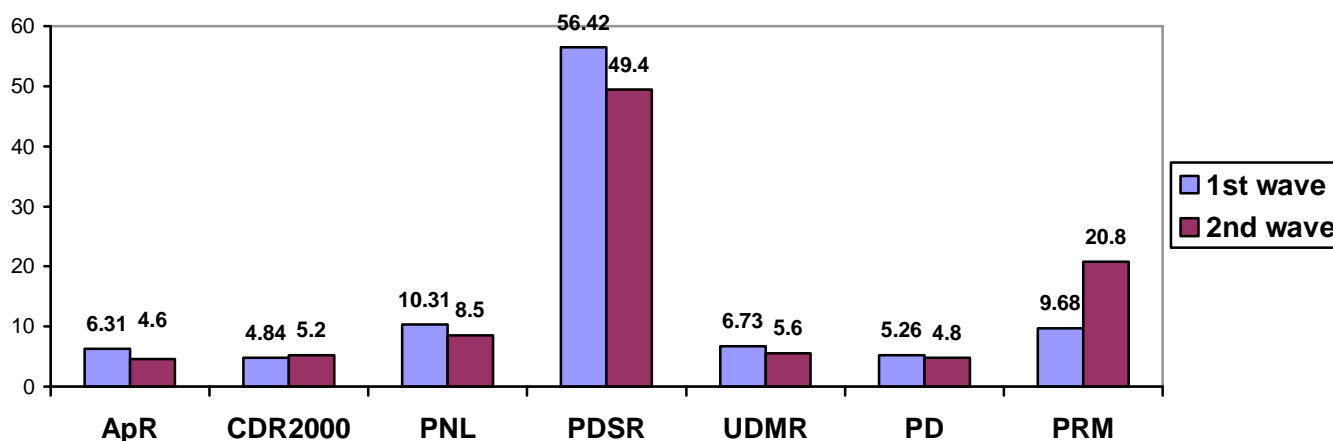
Figure 12. The change of votes from the first to the second wave

		Answers in wave II (November)						
		ApR	CDR2000	PNL	PDSR	UDMR	PD	PRM
Answers in wave I (October)	ApR	46.7%	6.7%	13.3%	20%	3.3%	6.7%	3.3%
	CDR2000	4.3%	47.8%	17.4%	17.4%	0	0	13%
	PNL	2%	16.3%	38.8%	20.4%	0	4.1%	18.4%
	PDSR	2.2%	0.7%	3%	73.8%	0	1.1%	18.1%
	UDMR	0	6.3%	6.2%	0	81.3%	3.1%	3.1%
	PD	0	4%	12%	12%	0	56%	16%
	PRM	0	0	4.3%	23.4%	0	2.1%	68.1%

Figure13. What party are you going to vote on the 26th of November 2000? (answers from the first and second waves)

Party	1 st wave (%)	2 nd wave (%)
ApR	6.31	4.6
CDR 2000	4.84	5.2
PNL	10.31	8.5
PDSR	56.42	49.4
UDMR	6.73	5.6
PD	5.26	4.8
PRM	9.68	20.8

Legend: The above table is drawing upon panel figures, so it should be used to read trends only.



The largest phenomenon observable is the flow border between PDSR and PRM: 18% of PDSR's voters crossed to PRM from the first to the second wave, compared to 23% who migrated the other way around, but since PDSR's share was largest in absolute numbers the gain was PRM's. The party with the most unstable constituency was PNL, only 38% from the first wave declaring they would vote this party in the second one. Around 34% of the voters with a clear party preference in wave one changed it until wave two, the figure of the total potential constituency amounting up to roughly 25%.

The 2000 campaign was characterised by strong discontent of the voters and discomfort with existing political options, which led in the end to a smaller turnout than predicted: 65%. In fact the best turnout predictor turned out to be not the direct question, but our question on self-competence: people who felt they knew little or nothing on candidates did not improve from the second to the first wave of the survey and in the end they did not vote. Since Romanians hardly give socially undesirable answers, and the pressure to vote from the media is usually strong, this self-competence measure, together with the figure of those declaring they are undecided may also prove in the future better suited to predict turnout.

Overall and despite proving that individuals who followed the campaign more increased both their subjective competence and their score on the political knowledge issues we cannot say that the campaign had a

significant role in increasing knowledge of politics and participation at the panel level. Those who became disinterested and later dropped out deciding they would not vote, compensated the few people who learned and increased their subjective competence. Comparing answers in the two waves of expectations from elections (would they lead to a significant changes in the respondents' lives) we notice people did not become either more optimistic or more pessimistic. *Respondents who have a lower opinion of their political competence rated the campaign higher*, but overall the campaign was considered more informative the more people discussed or watched TV, with controls of education, income, sex and residence (see Fig. 6, Annexes).

Most people claim they make a judgement all by themselves, influenced neither by local opinion leaders, nor by media pundits. People are not always aware they are influenced, however, so these self-reports have to be considered cautiously. Some opinion leaders are associated with some candidates in multiple regression models explaining the vote for presidential candidates. Respondents who stated that the opinions of Ion Cristoiu matter for them are more likely to vote for Vadim Tudor and Ion Iliescu, those who appreciate the opinions of C.T. Popescu are more likely to vote for Stolojan or Isarescu. Trust in Marius Tuca did not turn out a significant predictor for any of the candidates.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

1. Short-term versus lasting effects of the media

Figure 14 shows the influence of general political interest (following politics in newspapers and on TV; discussing politics) together with campaign interest items. We notice that education is an important determinant of subjective competence, of attributed importance to ideology and of political awareness. Of status items the size of the town is also a predictor for political awareness and subjective competence. With controls of income, education, town size, age and campaign interest items, regular use of television news and political shows remains a strong predictor of improved performance in political awareness, and the general habit of discussing politics is causing a raised interest for the electoral campaign, as the campaign is one main discussion topic. Following campaign on TV is a highly significant predictor of all the items, minus importance of ideology, and the one main cause of improvement in political awareness from the beginning to the last of the campaign. Its lack of significance for the importance attributed to ideology should come as no surprise, as such abstract issues are seldom featured on television. Its singular role among political communication factors in determining improvement in issues awareness, however, is of great interest. Following the campaign in newspapers renews interest for politics and enforces subjective political competence; it also, to a less extent, contribute to issues awareness and attribution of importance to ideology. Discussing about the campaign with friends and family plays a similar role, except for increasing awareness to issues. In other words, talking politics is essential for political socialization and interest, but is less reliable in order to increase political knowledge per se.

Figure 14. The role of political communication factors

Determinants	Subjective competence	Ideology importance	Issue awareness	Improvement in issue awareness	Interest for the campaign
<i>Status</i>					
Age		*			
Education	**	**	***		
Size town	*		**		
Income					
<i>General political interest</i>					
Watch on TV				**	
Reads newspapers					
Discuss politics					**
<i>Campaign interest</i>					
Followed on TV	***		***	***	***
Followed in newspapers	***	*	*		***
Discuss on	***	**			***
Adjusted R square	0.354	0.10	.213	.039	0.342
Std. Error	.182	.272	.070	.088	.188

Legend: * significant predictor at $p < 0.05$; ** significant at $p < 0.001$; *** significant at $p = 0.000$

2. Videomalaise versus mobilization role of the media

The Romanian media was constantly accused of portraying public life, and especially political life, in violent and catastrophic terms. This is especially true about tabloid print press. However, there is no connection to be found between more reading of newspapers (most of them tabloids) and a catastrophic perception of the state of the economy, when the right controls are activated. The perception of a difficult time for the country is strongly predicted by one's family economic performance, and television consumption is even a negative predictor (in other words people who watch more television are more willing to evaluate the situation mildly than in radical terms). We found no evidence that media is demobilizing people from vote: quite to the contrary. The best informed voters, those with a high level of subjective competence were overall more mobilized than the others. This mobilization is not campaign-related though: they are the voters who constantly watch, read and discuss more on politics, so this is a positive lasting effect of the media.

3. The role of campaign in facilitating political learning

The campaign matters only for increasing the feeling of self-competence, therefore for mobilization; it does not contribute to the overall political learning (ideology awareness and issue awareness) and consequently it does not increase the importance of ideology in making a choice.

4. Priming effect on issues' importance, but un-consequential for the vote

The campaign plays a role in priming some issues over others: the importance of EU accession, for instance, increased in importance due to media's coverage of EC's evaluation of Romania's progress and extensive debates on the topics among parties. No correlation of such effect with vote choice was found, however. The parties, which primed more the EU accession, CDR 2000 and PDSR, either stagnated or lost voters during the campaign.

5. The more sophisticated voters are the more open to influence by opinion leaders

Models explaining the influence of opinion leaders (see Fig.7, Annexes) turned out residence in larger towns and higher education as determinants, with controls of age and media consumption. Intermediation of political choice by pundits is therefore quite unlikely in the case of most respondents. The persuasive influence of dominant media characters is exercised over a small urban group of sophisticated voters. Its limitation is due to its purely cognitive essence: pundits provide interpretation, not hard facts, and these interpretations are hard to grasp by the large mass of unsophisticated voters. Selective exposure is at work with sophisticated voters as well, and this probably accounts for a large part of the correlation we found between trust in some pundits and vote for a certain party or presidential candidate. We may have a causal relation here, but it is hard to be certain of its sense: in other words, we cannot state if people vote for Mr. Vadim Tudor because of their trust in Ion Cristoiu, or simply people who sympathise more with Vadim or Iliescu prefer Ion Cristoiu because he expressed views closer to their own throughout the campaign. In any event, despite interpreting with some reservations the low figure of those being aware of - and acknowledging - some influence from the pundits or the local leaders the real figure is low indeed. Credibility transfers worked poorly during campaign (such as the help of Mircea Dinescu, himself enjoying a large amount of trust, for Teodor Stolojan) because of the low effect of intermediates in general. The only lasting influence is the influence of in-groups of family and friends. These groups are the ovens in which political preference is baked, grows, becomes mature and is reinforced.

6. An impression-driven model of political judgement

What are the grounds on which people vote, since we have seen that both ideology and issues matter so little? The main answer is: the lasting impression of candidates' personalities or parties distinctive traits on people. This is not to imply that a political judgement is solely based on affective grounds: in people's evaluation, as we see in focus groups, other elements also show up, such as one's evaluation of a candidate's ability to master issues and live up to his promises. Although this type of judgement is not solely affective, but

includes a few cognitive elements as well, our evidence points to an impression-driven model of both candidate and party choice (McGraw and Lodge: 1989). In focus groups candidates and parties are revealed as strongly associated with one prominent feature of their history (*Petre Roman? How many times he changed his friends? Constantinescu? He is so weak...*) and it is this dominant feature which serves as a cue for judgement, even if the candidate may have changed doctrine or behavior since. For a candidate to challenge this dominant impression of him or herself, based on affective grounds mainly (he is either liked or disliked) changes over time based on either new or revised stands on issues is largely inconsequential. Only radical events, as Vadim provided in his last TV featuring in the campaign are powerful enough to either make or change an impression. By answering questions addressed to other candidates, seen as more serious than he used to be considered Vadim managed to change in three days the impression that he is only a clown. More than a radical, he proved he was a knowledgeable radical and this was to a large extent what the public wanted from a politician. He was defeated by the more powerful image of Mr. Iliescu as a balanced and steady politician, and it is exactly this contradiction between the two that the media, scared by Vadim's success, played on strongly after the first round. Most of the other candidates did not manage to impress nothing on the public and so they could not make it to the second round.

7. More TV space means more influence?

Only if the impression given is the right one. PDSR lost votes despite enjoying TV time, and CDR 2000 missed the entrance to the Parliament. The two technocratic candidates had very poor television performances and they ended the campaign with less than half the trust capital they had started with. There is positive correlation between the degree of awareness of media characters and the frequency of their TV appearances, but a less obvious one between the latter and the trust they are credited with. Mircea Dinescu, who is seldom on TV enjoys due to his strong popularity a larger degree of trust than many who feature often. Former Prime Minister Mugur Isarescu, despite having the first good economic results in years to sell, and featuring in news bulletins more often than any other candidate, has only lost grounds during campaign, as his team was unable to create the 'right' impression of him for the voters.

8. The role of the campaign in changing the party and candidate preference

In order to answer this we did the following: we isolated the respondents who changed their preference and created a dummy variable with 1 coded for change and 0 for keeping the old political preference. We used this dummy variable as a dependent variable in a multiple logistic regression model and we found that people who discuss more about politics in general are more resistant to change, while those who followed more the campaign on TV were subjected to more change. With all the status and media consumption controls active residence in the urban areas turned as a significant predictor (see Figure 11 in the Annexes). In other words, people are more likely to change their vote if they reside in the urban areas, watch more television and are less bound by their group. The whole battle of this campaign shortcut the rural areas, where half of the voters live instead strongly disputing the urban areas between the two center-right candidates and Vadim Tudor.

VII. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy-makers, NGOs

That most people are not sophisticated voters in a country with barely ten years of democratic history is not surprising. The public evolved from previous in-depth reports⁷: today there is a majority in favour of political pluralism that did not exist back in 1990. But on more complex, less clear cut issues the public is still at a loss and heavily determined by Communist times socialization. The best example is privatization. Privatization is neither popular, not even considered important (it is ranked among the less important campaign issues), but privatization is the one main solution to solve the economic problems that make everybody's concern. Technocratic candidates of DC and PNL (two economists) had consequently poor performances. Selling privatization cannot be the job of presidential candidates and during campaign times only. The poor record of popular sympathy of privatization, also manifested in the tremendous opposition to privatization of trade unions is raising serious questions about the success of the campaign to re-socialize Romanians to a world of market economy. The same goes for the public's endorsement of policies supporting loss-making state enterprises (see Fig. 8, Annexes). This combination of concern with corruption of the political class, addressed by extremist candidate Vadim Tudor only, and the total lack of interest and understanding of solutions to the economic problems is a dangerous one. The market message and the EU message circulated poorly in the campaign because they circulate poorly most of the time.

A larger commitment of the media, politicians and civil society is needed in order to address this fundamental problem. If people are cut in their understanding on how to pass from problems to solutions when relying extensively on TV talk-shows or informal chat for their political information they really cannot find a clue on how to pass a judgement. No one can supplant the television on this role. The print press also presents privatization only as a source of corruption: no wonder Romanians fear and distrust foreign managers who dare to buy Romanian socialist-times companies. The eleven years of transition were quite lost in terms of re-socializing Romanians to the rule of law and the market economy. The NGOs should act as coalition-builders in favor of a large dissemination of a number of essential pro-rule of law and pro-market messages. These coalitions should assemble public agencies, such as public broadcasters, political parties, the government and the private media in a joint effort to sell capitalism and Europe, in other words, to achieve the process of resocializing Romanians by letting them know these are the new norms and anything else can be discussed, but is not deemed acceptable in the present day Romanian society.

Regulating agencies and the media

We have shown that the campaign led a few individuals to improve their awareness of issues. But many remained confused, and the majority made little of the campaign, despite a tremendous waste of air space. The

⁷ Mungiu-Pippidi [1999] 'Romania: from Procedural Democracy to European Integration', in Kaldor and Vejvoda eds, *Democratization in East Central Europe* London: Cassell

ignorance of the basic political dichotomy left-right is more serious than it seems, since people do not have a similar cue for orienting themselves and grasping if the political supply answers their needs or the policies proposed are even remotely feasible. Parties have a weak identity and politicians are not reputed in Romania for competence or ability to express themselves. The main duty of the media to be enforced by regulators then is not to prevent conflict – as long as it stays civil conflict is desirable in a good debate- but to help by all available means to foster a debate able to provide even unsophisticated voters with the means to judge the credibility and the message of candidates. Some of the regulations promoted last fall, despite being based on good intentions actually went against this supreme need for clarification of the policy debate. Candidates better placed in polls and therefore with a greater chance of being elected President should be given more space: putting together fourteen candidates in a talk-show goes against any chances of a thorough debate. The fall 2000 campaign did not have one good debate among candidates to compare with the 1996, 1992, even 1990 ones on public television. Was this loss compensated by the absence of negative ads? No; the television effect, which led to the growth of Vadim Tudor's support in only a few days is attributable to the mismanagement of the debates by networks prompted by over-regulating. A reputed radio journalist, Paul Grigoriu, for instance, interviewed Vadim Tudor in the last week of the electoral campaign on public radio not even daring to ask for proof when Vadim openly slandered all his opponents, including would-be President Iliescu, his main counter-candidate. Besides, it is not during the campaign that Romanian broadcasters should be committed to civility, but during the rest of the year as well. Some shows openly promote xenophobia, racism, furious nationalism and revisionism without any intervention from the Broadcasting Board, despite the 1991 Constitution forbidding such displays and the topics being often totally parallel with the real public agenda as expressed in polls.

In conclusion, the attempt to cope with Romania's conflict-driven and superficial media was poorly addressed by over-regulating the electoral campaign, a move that further weakened the quality of the policy debate. Romania needs a better regulatory framework to enforce some 'political correctness' policies permanently and the enforcement of already existing libel legislation. These should be the priorities of regulating agencies such as the Broadcasting Board. The management of the campaign, especially on electronic media, should be left in the future as much as possible to journalists who would then organize it by professional standards, making it more attractive and memorable. No motivation or compulsory rule can substitute for the need of journalists to have high audience ratings and satisfy their public. The risk of having self-assertive journalists with some partisan stands challenging politicians is worth taking under these circumstances. In a post-totalitarian country a journalist able to challenge a politician is a sign of democratic health. Inhibited or over-courteous hosts, mainly on public channels show only that journalists in the public media are still at the mercy of political authorities.

Political parties and public media

The difference in freedom between public and private media continues to be striking. Not that public media is subjected to the authority of the government, it is far more subtle than that: it is subjected to political authority, which means in practice the authority of the strongest parties and interest groups. To use the consecrated Italian term, patterned at the Italian public channel RAI the public media is the object of

'lotizzazione', the influence is divided among political parties, leaving practically no area free from political intervention. The politically appointed Boards are behaving below any acceptable standards: the TV Board watched a Board member and representative of a political party, Irina Radu, becoming the main moderator of electoral shows, despite never having fulfilled such a task before and doing it with striking lack of professionalism.

The only solution to this is to address directly the problem before reaching a crisis on the Czech pattern. When in opposition, parties become sensitive to the problem of public television: when in power they take again advantage of it. The freedom of public media has no champions in Romania, the last years depriving of credibility the few who used to champion for it but have since proven unable to use the legal framework and the TV Board they are part of to fight for it. The solution is, of course, to remove the political authority as far as possible from public broadcasters. The new government is looking for ways to amend the TV law since it has no majority in the Management Boards of both TV and Radio. It also has no majority in the Broadcasting Board, since these Boards all reflect the majority of the formerly elected Parliament. A rush move to end these Boards is not possible: broadcasting legislation is 'organic', that means it needs two-thirds of Parliament for revision. It is a better time than any for the new government party to negotiate with the opposition and propose an innovative revision, putting an end to direct political influence: the indirect one will persist for a long time to come, as everywhere in continental Europe. This would mean replacing the three Boards with one Broadcasting Board, appointed by Parliament as well as civil society (such as minority groups), and the authority of this Board on editorial matters suppressed. Politicians will have to draft good rules for the whole media and means to enforce them, but except for general regulations they will have to trust the journalists in public media the same way as they are constrained to do with those in the private media. It may seem a far shot, but the alternative to this is deadlock in the present situation.

It is in the best interest of all political parties to go along with this solution. It is also in the interest of parties to realise before long that they cannot grow into mature organizations at the current level of policy and public debate. The change of power in Romania is due more to the public periodically despairing of one of the two major alternatives due to the continuous degradation in living standards than to what one could consider reasonably as being a true political preference. Political preferences are really accessible only to a privileged minority in the rural, post-totalitarian Romania: and many steps need to be taken before improving, in time, this situation.

THE MAIN ROMANIAN POLITICAL ACTORS

1. Post-communists and their splinters

FSN (National Salvation Front) = umbrella movement led by Ion Iliescu which took over the state administration immediately after the December 1989 revolution; it was dominated by former Communist Party cadres who had been sidelined under Ceausescu, but included many other younger political entrepreneurs

PD (Democratic Party) = the younger reformist wing of FSN headed by the former prime minister Petre Roman; they left offices after Roman and Iliescu broke up in 1991 and the conservatives around the president blocked the reforms initiated by the government

PDSR (Party of the Social Democracy in Romania) = initially called FDSN, this is the mainstream FSN of president Iliescu after Roman's split

ApR (Alliance for Romania) = more or less the same scenario was repeated soon after PDSR lost the 1996 elections: the more reformist and pro-European wing under the former foreign affairs minister Theodor Melescanu went away to form its own party and parliamentary caucus; scored below the threshold in 2000

2. Anti-communist block

PNTCD (National Peasant Party-Christian Democrat) = historic party created in 1926, banned during the communist regime and resurrected in December 1989, it has been the backbone of the anti-communist opposition and the dominant member of CDR

PNL (National Liberal Party) = historic party created in the 19th century, banned during the Communist regime and resurrected in December 1989, saw many splits between 1992 and 1996 before it managed to bring most of the dissidents back to fold in the last two years; it has been the (restive) junior partner of PNTCD in CDR; before the 2000 local elections it finally quit CDR

CDR = umbrella alliance of PNTCD, PNL and various other minor parties and civic movements set up in 1992 in order to defeat PDSR in elections; in 2000, re-baptized CDR 2000 it scored much below the electoral threshold for an alliance

3. Other parties:

UDMR (Democratic Alliance of Hungarians from Romania) = the political outlet of the Hungarian minority set up in 1990, a reliable pro-reform member of the former ruling coalition, it has been dominated most of the time by its moderate, consociationalist wing

PUNR (Party of the Romanian National Unity) = nationalist regional party based in Transylvania, natural foe of UDMR; vanished after its best known member, the mayor of Cluj, joined PRM

PRM (Greater Romania Party) = xenophobe and populist movement led by the maverick writer CV Tudor (actually an electoral vehicle for its leader), it continues the national-communist ideology of the Ceausescu regime

UFD (Alliance of the Rightist Forces) = splinter from CDR after the 1996 elections, it advocated a "purer" liberalism and courted the younger voters for a while; before the 2000 elections re-entered CDR

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ANNEXES

Figure 1. Self-assessed knowledge on candidates

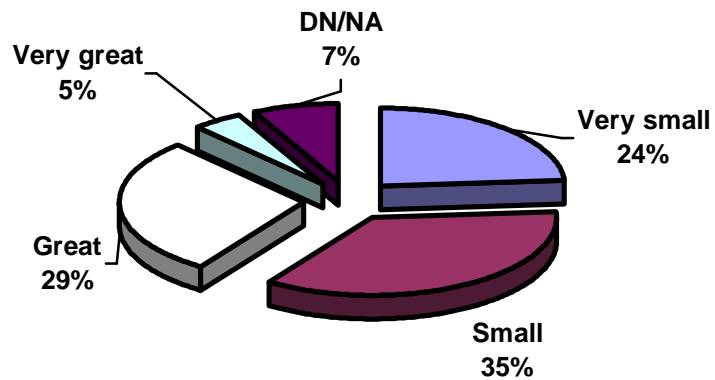


Figure 2. How often do you read political news in newspapers?

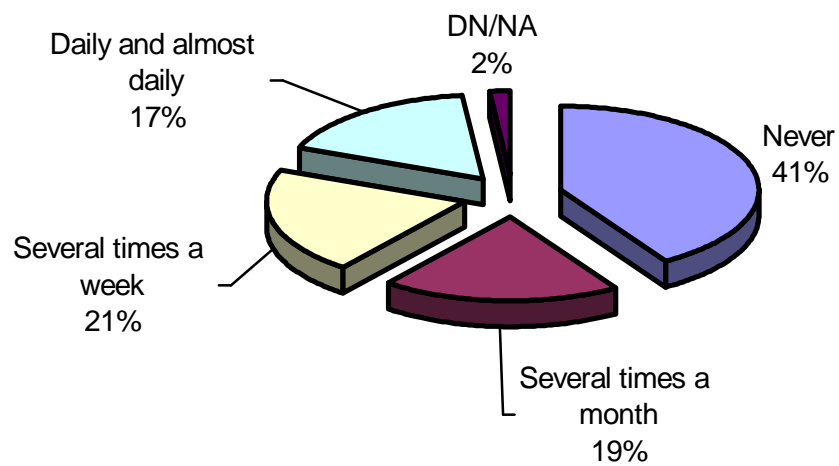


Figure 3. How often do you watch news and political shows on TV?

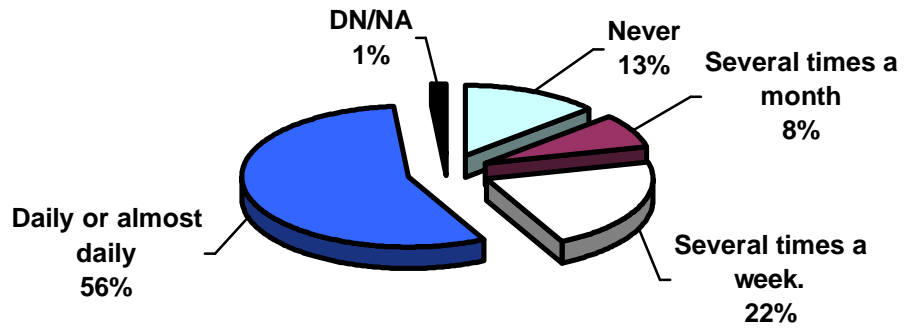


Figure 4. How often do you discuss politics with family and/or friends?

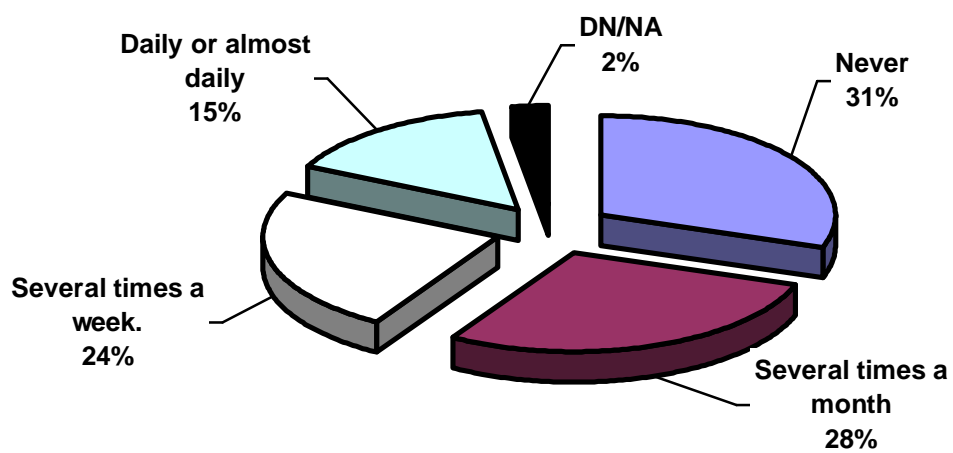


Figure 5. Explanatory model with PARTICIPATION as dependent variable:

Determinants	B	Exp (B)	Sig.
Wealth	.000	1.000	
Age between 25-30	-.201	.818	
Age between 30-40	.041	1.042	
Age between 40-50	.969	2.636	*
Age between 50-65	.522	1.686	
Age over 65	.008	1.008	
School	.039	1.040	
Sex	.008	1.008	
Urban	.082	1.085	
Reads newspapers	.689	1.991	*
Talks politics	.885	2.424	**
Watches politics TV	.435	1.546	

Legend: * significant predictor at $p < 0.05$; ** significant at $p < 0.001$; *** significant at $p = 0.000$

Standard error = .477

Adjusted R Square = .148

Figure 6. Explanatory model of the subjective rating of the electoral campaign as 'informative'

Determinants	Significance	Beta
Income		-.049
Age		.028
Education		.010
Sex		-.003
Urban		-.029
Followed campaign in newspaper		.061
Followed campaign on TV	***	.324
Discussed campaign with family and friends	***	.199

Legend: * significant predictor at $p < 0.05$; ** significant at $p < 0.001$; *** significant at $p = 0.000$

Standard error = .039

Adjusted R Square = .226

Figure 7. Explanatory model of trust in opinion leaders influence

Determinants	Std. Error	Beta	Significance
Education	.004	.191	***
Age	.005	.042	
Interest in politics- factor score W1(read, watch, discuss)	.008	.003	
W2 Ideology matters -from 0 to very much	.024	.200	***
Town size	.005	-.162	***

Legend: * significant predictor at $p < 0.05$; ** significant at $p < 0.001$; *** significant at $p = 0.000$

Standard Error = .036

Adjusted R Square = .136

Figure 8. Loss-making state-owned companies should be supported by the Government

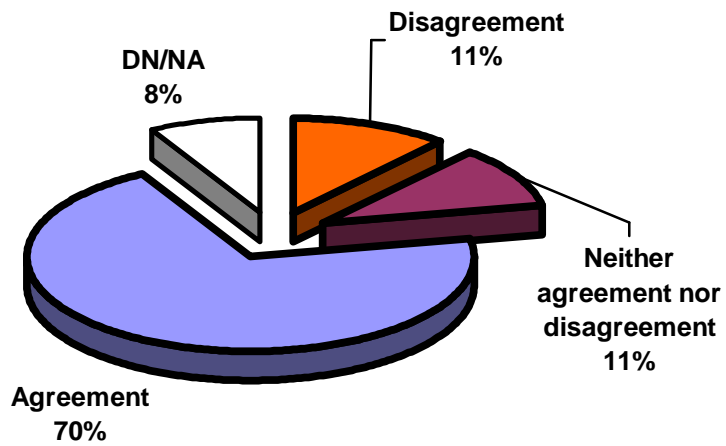


Figure 9. During this campaign, have you changed your opinion on any of the candidates so much as to change your vote?

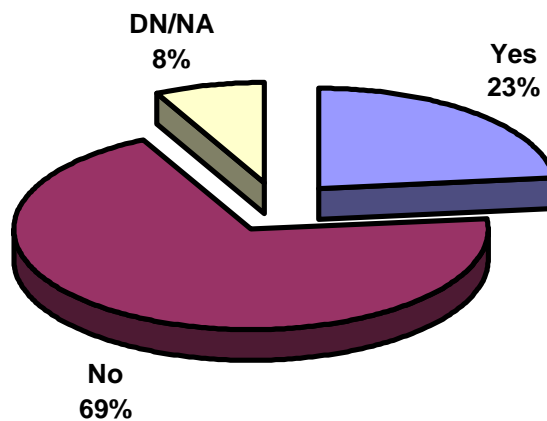
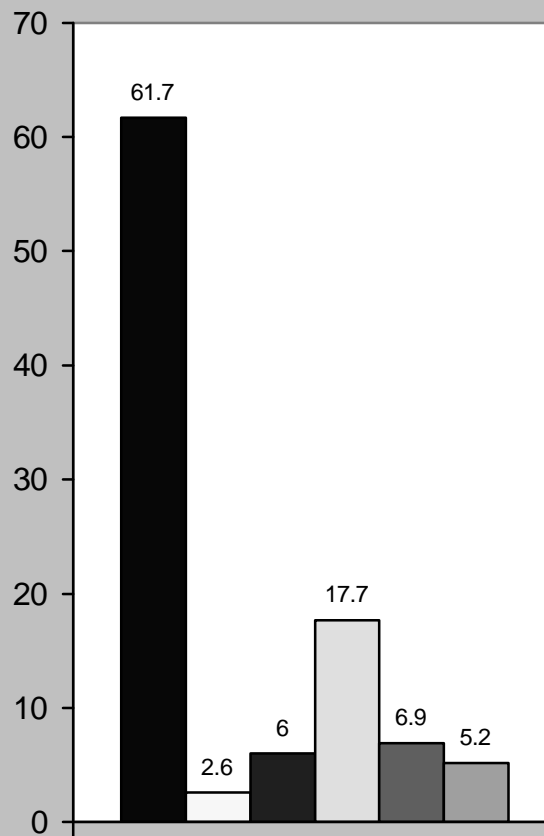


Figure 10. Acknowledging opinion leaders



■ I make my choice without taking into account what others think	61.7
□ The opinion of important people from my town/village/office matters to me	2.6
■ I rely on the opinions of well-informed people on TV	6
□ The opinions of my family and friends matter to me	17.7
■ I follow the majority	6.9
□ DN/NA	5.2

Figure 11. Explanatory model with dependent variable change in party preferences:

Determinants	B	Sig.	Exp (B)
Wealth	.000		1.000
Age			
Education	.005		1.005
Sex	-.012		.988
Urban	.358	*	1.431
Reads newspapers wave1	-.286		.751
Talks politics wave 1	-.786	**	.456
Watches politics TV wave1	-.210		.811
Reads newspapers wave 2	-.196	**	.822
Talks politics wave 2	.955		2.598
Watches politics TV wave 2	.352		1.423

Legend: * significant predictor at $p < 0.05$; ** significant at $p < 0.001$; ***significant at $p = 0.000$

R square = .073

Standard Error = .339

Figure 12. Do you read political news in newspapers?

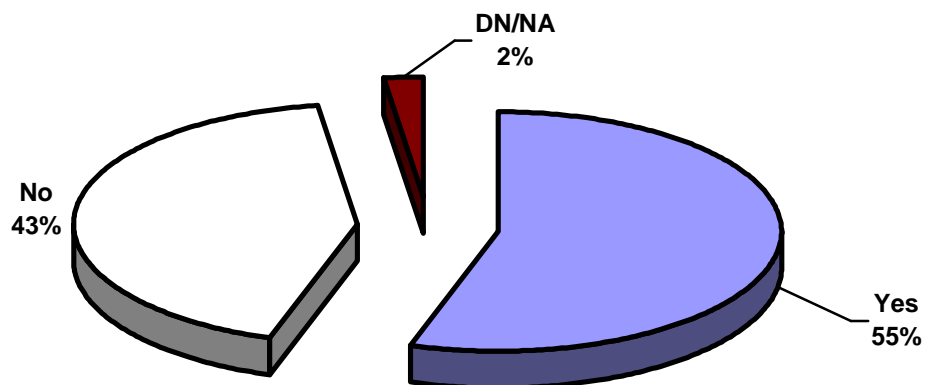


Figure 13. Which newspaper do you read?

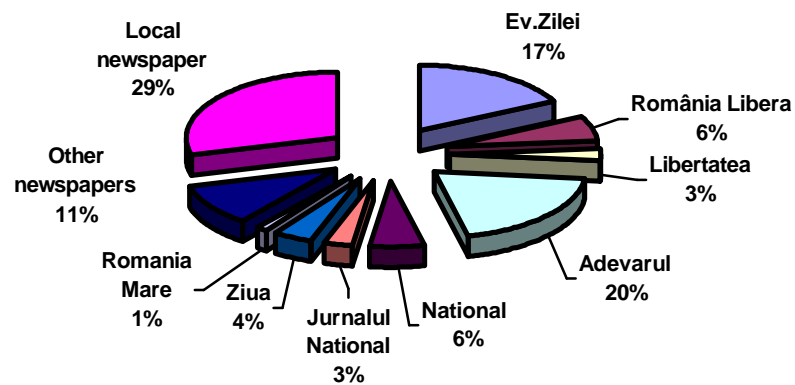


Figure 14. Only those who know the official language should have the right to vote

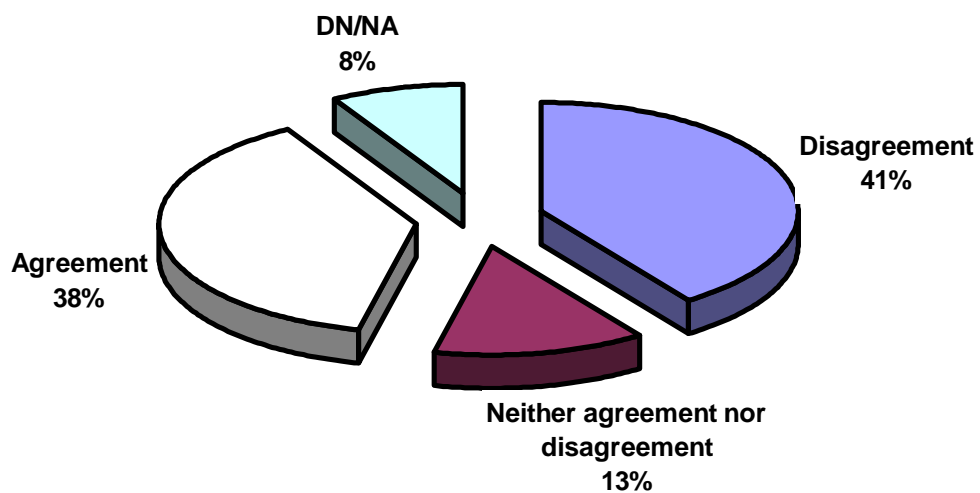


Figure 15: How would you evaluate your economic situation and that of your family?

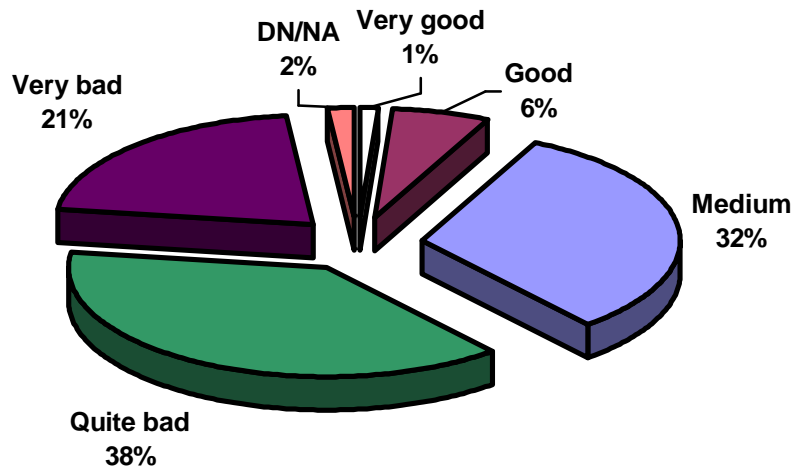


Figure 16. Self-assessment of interest in politics

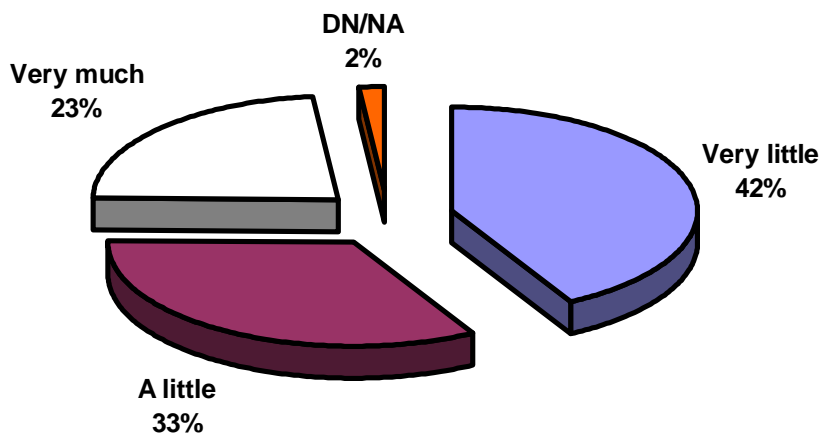


Figura 17. The preference for a TV channel of the voters of the main presidential candidates

Candidate	TVR 1	TVR 2	Pro TV	Antena 1
Teodor Melescanu	54.5	3.0	21.2	21.2
Mugur Isarescu	37.4	0.8	30.9	26.0
Ion Iliescu	52.2		14.8	13.8
C.V. Tudor	37.6	1.2	16.5	30.6
Theodor Stolojan	25.4	0.9	43.0	26.3
Petre Roman	17.1		28.6	31.4
Gyorgy Frunda	46.4		32.1	10.7

Reads as: "37.4% of Mugur Isarescu's potential voters watch TVR1"

Figure 18. On which TV channel do you watch most often the news and the political shows?

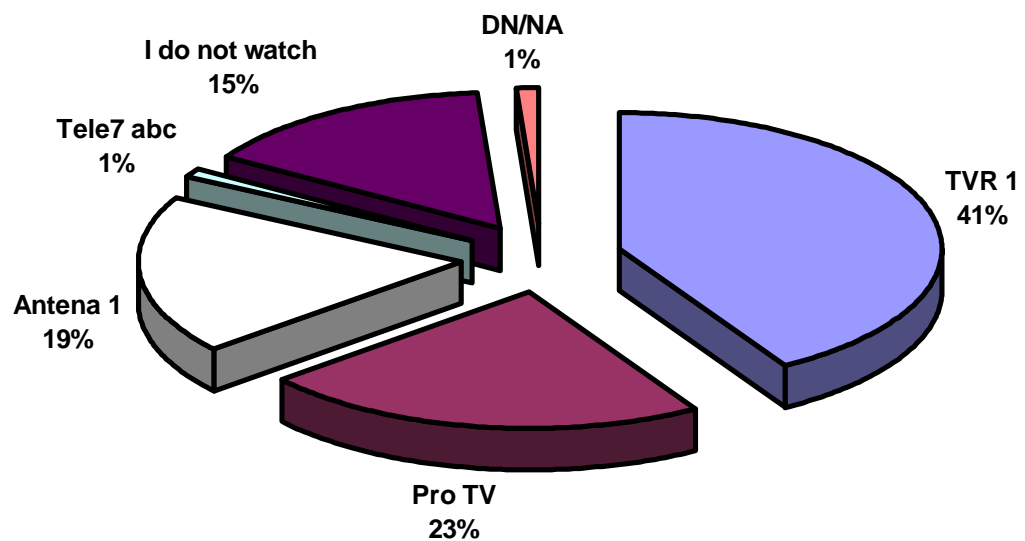


Figure 19. Opinion on the length of the campaign

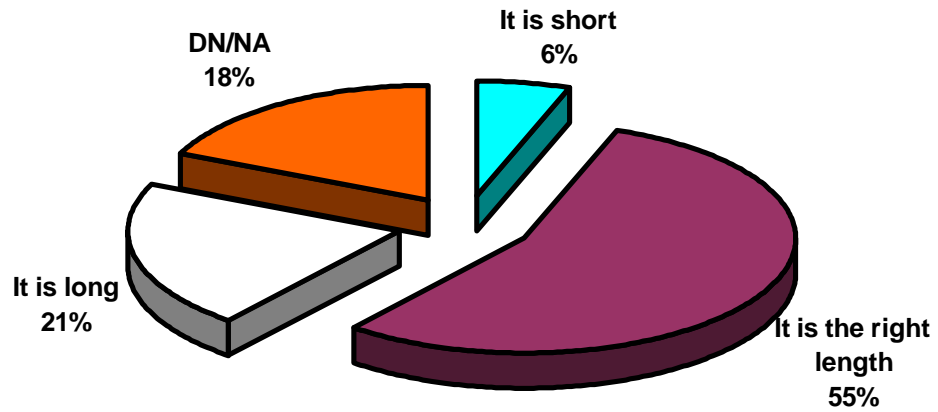


Figure 20. Recall anything interesting from the campaign TV show just seen?

