

## ***Particularities of Organizational Culture in Romanian Companies***

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***Abstract:*** *In the process of transformations in the contemporary economy, the culture of the organization has a special role, which is a determining factor in achieving success in the competitive environment and a defining element, essential for managerial progress. Knowledge and, in particular, awareness of the elements of the culture of the organization are necessary in the practice of modern management. American and Western European specialists presented the organization's culture as a major factor in the organization's sustainability and economic development, starting with the performances of Japanese companies registered after the Second World War. In this paper we set out to study the defining elements of the culture of Romanian organizations after 12 years of accession to the European Union and 11 years after the onset of the global economic and financial crisis. We presented the steps taken to analyse the culture of the organizations; we reproduced the answers of the questioned subjects and their interpretation. Also, we presented the results of our research from the cultural dimensions identified by Geert Hofstede and we also performed a comparative analysis with the study undertaken by Interact and Gallup Organization Romania, in 2005.*

***Keywords:*** *organizational culture, analysis of organizational culture, cultural values, organizational climate*

### **Introduction**

Romania became a member of the European Union on January 1, 2007, and the following year, 2008, meant for Romania the end of the last cycle of economic growth that began in 2000. At the same time, the signs of the beginning of a period of crisis were manifested financial and economic with special implications in the social environment. In this context, the first symptoms were manifested in large organizations and then transmitted to medium and small organizations.

It is known that, in recent years, in Romania many organizations have already been active in other countries; current human resources are better professionally trained and motivated, and moreover, they have contacted other types of cultures, working in multinational organizations; the technique and technologies used are becoming more modern and the response time to the orders issued by the human resource is increasingly reduced. We can say that, some of the determining factors of the culture of an organization (both internal and external) have undergone certain changes in the last years, and thus they influence, in a definitive way, the shaping of the culture of the Romanian organizations.

Approaching a sociological research on the trends that are manifesting at the level of large organizations is of great interest for both managers and public authorities. These introductory arguments justify the actuality and interest in the study.

The knowledge, analysis and enhancement of the culture of the organization are indispensable for both managers and each employee. The cultivation of strong, positive and structured models in matrix or red networks, appropriate management styles, moral management, a value system that promotes the balance between ethics and profit guarantees a long-term strategic orientation, maintaining a social climate that allows the harmonization of the individual interests with those of the organization and a dynamic adapted to the evolutions of the factors of the competitive market environment.

We suggest to the specialists in the field of management consultancy and to the managers of the organizations a new type of product - *the cultural audit*. In the future it is possible to supplement the

quality standards with specific, descriptive and evaluation norms of the culture models of the organizations. In some specialized works, the term of analysis of the culture of the organization is confused with the term of cultural audit (the audit involves comparing the concrete data with standards, norms; until the occurrence of them, the existence of the cultural audit cannot be spoken).

To highlight specific elements of the culture of Romanian organizations, we applied a questionnaire (Annex no. 1); it was completed by employees from different organizations operating in Romania. Due to the fact that we applied a single type of questionnaire to both managers and executives, we included questions to which both categories can answer. The questionnaires were not signed by the employees and neither the name of the organization in which they are employed has been made known.

### **1. Highlighting the Particularities of the Culture of Romanian Organizations During the Pre-accession Period of Romania to the European Union**

In order to highlight the particularities of the culture of Romanian organizations, during the pre-accession period to the European Union, we will first draw some conclusions of a research conducted by Interact together with Gallup Organization in Romania, in 2005, using the Value Survey Module tool, developed by the Institute of Research for Intercultural Communication (IRIC) founded by Geert Hofstede. According to this study (Study on Romanian values and behaviour from the perspective of cultural dimensions), Romania had similar values with other Balkan countries, namely great distance from power, collectivism (low individualism degree), femininity, high degree of uncertainty avoidance and short-term orientation. The study was conducted on a population sample of 1076 respondents. [1]

Thus, Romania, like the other Balkan countries (Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, Macedonia, Albania), was at the opposite pole to the Anglo-Saxon countries, from which it borrowed all practices in the field of general management, strategic management and human resources management.

Within this research, a specific characteristic of Romania was discovered regarding the first dimension, the Distance to Power Index (DPI). This feature has been called the "Power Complex" because the PDI index from the research is very low.

Figures 29 and 33 presented in table no. 1 justified the behaviour of Romanians who, in general, preferred not to intervene in the exercise of authority but to obey the orders given by those in the leadership. Through this behaviour, Romania signalled a need to have authoritarian leaders, centralization in decisions, and the population wanted to follow the rules established by such leaders. Another interpretation of a high index indicates employees who preferred a close relationship with a single boss, in order to obtain his protection and to avoid assuming the responsibility of contrary opinions. The personnel of the organizations did not express opinions contrary to the superior and received orders that they executed without comments.

**Table no. 1. Index values, according to Hofstede's model**

| <i>Country</i>                                | <i>PDI</i> | <i>IDV</i> | <i>MAS</i> | <i>UAI</i> | <i>LTO</i> |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Romania – Interact survey 1/2005              | 29         | 49         | 39         | 61         | 42         |
| Romania– Interact survey 2/2005               | 33         | 49         | 39         | 61         | 42         |
| Romania - Geert Hofstede's estimations (2001) | 90         | 30         | 42         | 90         | 52         |
| Bulgaria – survey 2001                        | 55         | 41         | 48         | 64         | 33         |
| Bulgaria - Geert Hofstede's estimations       | 70         | 30         | 40         | 85         | 69         |
| Greek - Geert Hofstede's estimations          | 60         | 35         | 57         | 100        | 45         |
| Serbia - Geert Hofstede's estimations         | 86         | 25         | 43         | 92         | 52         |

Source: [2]

when:

PDI - the power distance index

IDV - individualism

MAS - masculinity

UAI - uncertainty avoidance index

LTO - long-term orientation

The difference between the expected result (in 2001) and the demonstrated result (in 2005) was given by a question related to the preferred working environment, namely the preference for a boss who consults his subordinates when making decisions. The surveyed sample stated in the majority that there was a preference for a top-down consultative approach. However, observing the behaviour of the majority, the natural conclusion is that, on the contrary, the employees submit to the authority and do not contest it; they are emotionally linked to it.

According to Geert Hofstede, the demonstrated index of distance to power registered in Romania, namely a high index, is due to the inheritance of the Roman Empire. Most of the countries that were occupied by the Romans at the beginning of our era inherited a great distance from the leadership due to the authoritarian style of the representatives of the Empire (for example: Italy, France, Spain).

Regarding the level of individualism, the respondents indicated the level 49 on the scale from 0 to 100, where 100 means high individualism, and figures less than 50 indicate a collectivist society. The positive side is that the majority of the world's population lives in collectivist societies; only a small number of countries have high values of individualism, among which the United States has the highest values (91). The downside is that the collectivist values of a nation are also a barometer for the wealth of a country, because individualism indicates the need for self-affirmation and financial independence of the members of the society. In collectivist countries, individuals are subject to the rules of the social group to which they belong and the society is fragmented into several such groups, united by common interests. The groups aim to promote the interests of their members to the detriment of the other groups. The collectivist mentality considers that resources are limited and that these few inherited resources must be distributed in such a way as to obtain as much as possible, to the detriment of others, and excludes the possibility of multiplying resources by each individual. Collectivism reproduces an agrarian thought, in which the main resource - the land - is limited in surface area and, therefore, who wants more can do it than by dispossessing the one next to it. Another positive side is that the degree of individualism of the population is increasing due to the correlation identified by Geert Hofstede between individualism and the financing received by the respective country. The more a country benefits from external financing, the greater the degree of individualism and therefore the confidence in the individual's ability to create added value, increases. This correlation, however, explains why a poorly developed country (and which often has collectivist values) cannot support it and needs external funds to start learning economic self-support. Agricultural societies tend to develop collectivist values because the members of the society are grouped into extended families to ensure mass production and survival. In hunting societies, in which smaller tribes survived independently, such as those in northern Europe, the values developed were rather individualistic. Moreover, there is also a climatic determination: the closer to the Equator, the more the collectivist tendency grows, due to the predilection of agriculture in these regions, and vice versa.

The study conducted in 2005 showed that Romania is a feminine country, that is, members of the society are looking for an environment in which they can collaborate and request the support of all the members of the society, regardless of their contribution. Also, people are less competitive and do not pursue promotion and profit at all costs. The figure 39 on the scale from 0 to 100, places Romania in the family of countries where the roles between the two sexes are not predetermined and in which men can easily take on responsibilities that, until recently, were considered women. The positive side is that we will not need special actions to promote women in leadership positions or in political structures, because they can advance on their own if they want to, because the opposite sex partners have no tendency (or power) to create discriminatory practices. The negative side is, however, that the women's values of the society determine a lower level of competitiveness of the local organizations compared to those of the external market, and the Romanian employees will not contribute positively to the improvement of the situation. Because feminine values value personal free time and cooperation at the expense of performance objectives, Romanian companies will allow foreign companies to take their place on the market without significant opposition.

The religion of a country can be a source of feminine or masculine values, depending on how it projects gender differences. The Orthodox religion, predominant in Romania, is more inclined towards

the complementarity of the sexes than to the subordination of the man's woman. Geert Hofstede believes that the values of the whole world will become more feminine in time, because the jobs traditionally performed by men have become automated, and the remaining ones are those services that cannot be mechanized and where the human factor and cooperation are the most important. These services require the learning of feminine values.

According to the results of the study presented by Interact and Gallup Organization in 2005, Romania registered a high level of uncertainty avoidance (61), which shows that the population has a high degree of anxiety about the future and prefers the security of today rather than the uncertainty of tomorrow. Such a company cannot strategically plan in the longer term because the future look triggers defensive mechanisms. Some Romanians have difficulty coping with ambiguous situations and contrary opinions of others. If the low degree of individualism is also taken into account, the members of the society cannot tolerate minority opinions. In general, people from such cultures feel more comfortable in general consensus. In times that generate anxiety, such as elections, threats against security and security or in the face of the need to accept something new, "foreign", such as advanced technology or the existence of a minority party, the population reacts negatively and emotionally and opposes acceptance. The high level of anxiety also has an impact on the organizational structure. Preferred actions are those that solve today's ambiguous situation, "quick fixes", without considering their impact on the coming days. The level of anxiety also creates a pressure that favours the momentum, the rush and the expression of negative emotion without control. The forced interference with other nationalities through migration and the struggle to maintain a national identity under many foreign dominions could be an explanation for the high level of anxiety. Together with the level of collectivism of the country, which favours the identification with an interest group and the rejection of the "outsider", the high degree of uncertainty avoidance could have developed as a defence mechanism against "the others".

The results of the study showed that Romania had a low score in terms of long-term orientation, as expected in any region, except for South-East Asia. The short-term orientation (41) indicates an inclination to the present and past to the detriment of investment in the uncertain future, as well as a low level of savings for the future. Short term-oriented companies live mainly through credit instruments. In conclusion, the Romanians also find it difficult to plan in the long and very long term and thus prefer to discuss past experiences to solve the problems of the present.

The short-term orientation is at the root of the low level of reinvested capital and the desire for rapid enrichment. The long-term orientation was identified as a result of the analysis of the values of Confucianism, the pragmatic religion of the population of Chinese origin. Confucianism promotes the virtue and efforts of today to achieve the results of tomorrow. In contrast, other religions, including Christianity and thus Orthodoxy, seek absolute truth and orient themselves to the past and present. The future is destined for the afterlife and has nothing to do with life on earth except as a way of ascension to the absolute. The religious tradition is therefore the main cause of the short-term orientation of all the countries of Europe and also of the United States of America. African societies have the lowest results in this dimension because the pre-Christian religion of this continent mentally guides the members of the society exclusively towards the past and the tradition inherited from the ancestors. Learning a new technology is seen as a danger and a departure from traditional values. This philosophy is in contrast to Chinese values, in which a member of the society prepares to spend even 15 years of apprenticeship in order to master a certain art (for example, martial art).

## **2. Particularities of the Culture of Organizations in Romania, in the Current Period**

In order to identify the particularities of the culture of Romanian organizations in the current period, we distributed a number of 1000 questionnaires (annex no. 1), in organizations with over 500 employees, with national activity and over 5 years old (we mention that over 80% are over 15 years old). We received 978 questionnaires completed by employees from different hierarchical positions, 48% men and 52% women. The companies in which we distributed the questionnaires are active in

one of the following areas: trade, production, construction, agriculture, agricultural products processing, banking and insurance services.

The age structure of those who answered the questionnaire is as follows:

- 16% - under 30 years;
- 30% - between 30 and 40 years;
- 31% - between 40 and 50 years;
- 15% - between 50 and 60 years;
- 8% - over 60 years.

According to the respondents' age at work, the situation is as follows:

- under 1 year - 1%;
- between 1 and 3 years - 9%;
- between 3 and 10 years - 22%;
- between 10 and 20 years - 26%;
- over 20 years - 42%.

According to the seniority in the organization in which they work at the time of completing the questionnaire, 30% stated that they worked in the company for over 20 years, and 28% that they had seniority in the company between 10 and 20 years, which shows stability at the place of work, low staff turnover, employee loyalty. Of the employees who answered the questionnaire, most occupy an executive position (56%), followed by those who occupy a middle level management position (34%) and those who occupy a senior management position (10%).

To the question *Do you know the meaning of the term of culture of the organization?*, 66% answered yes, 20% answered no, and 14% are not sure that what they think means organization culture is also correct.

The elements that have a high influence on the culture of the organization, as the employees surveyed considered, are:

- the products offered and / or the services provided;
- the perspectives and opportunities offered to employees and clients;
- logo of the organization;
- the managers of the organization;
- respect for the customer and customer satisfaction.

Those who responded that the culture of an organization does not influence the perception of partners (15%), argued their response as follows:

- The culture of an organization does not help to attract and maintain customers;
- It is important for the organization to attract as many customers as possible, without being interested in whether or not they get to know it;
- It does not interest anyone who were the founders of the organization or who are the leaders and to what extent each performance has been influenced.

Among the elements of the culture that should be given greater importance in the near future, in the organization in which they work, the employees mainly selected the following:

- respect for partners (customers, consumers, suppliers, banks, public institutions etc.);
- compliance with the legal provisions;
- the perspectives offered to the employees by the organization;
- knowledge and respect of the norms and regulations of the organization;
- the website of the organization;
- advertising through different means (TV, radio, leaflets, brochures etc.);
- the order, discipline and appearance of the interior and exterior spaces.

Due to the economic, social and political instability in Romania, we introduced the following question in the questionnaire: *From a psychological point of view, the change can cause confusion and uncertainty for the people in the organization. How do you think they can be helped to overcome these problems?* (several answer variants could be selected). Most stated that open and clear internal communication is the most important (78%), followed by employees' knowledge of the risks and benefits of change (65%), discussing problems that may arise during the change process, between managers and subordinates (60%), people need to be encouraged to express their feelings of change (45%).

11% of the employees surveyed stated that their relationships with colleagues are good, 12% appreciated the activity of their colleagues and 13% stated that relationships with managers are good. Only 6% of the employees stated that they are supported by their colleagues to improve from a professional point of view and also 6% feel at work as a family.

24% of the employees stated that in the organization in which they work the team work is promoted, 21% claim that the success of the organization depends on each individual employee. It is worth noting that there are difficulties in communicating between departments, referring here to formal communication, which is supported by 21% of employees. At the organizational level, only 17% of those surveyed stated that there is a positive attitude at all the hierarchical levels, and very few (9%) openly express their opinion and act according to what they said.

Some employees among those surveyed know their responsibilities in the workplace and have a job description, but in relation to the total number of those who have completed the questionnaires, we can say that only 45% fall in this category, although from the point of view theoretically, when hiring, each employee must receive a job description and be aware of the responsibilities he has to fulfil.

Only 40% of the employees surveyed know the content of the Organization and Functioning Regulation (ROF) and the Internal Order Regulation (ROI). Companies should make available to the employees, from the moment of their employment, these regulations, display them, and post them on the Intranet network or even the Internet.

Only 8% of the employees questioned are involved in the decision-making process, although the questionnaire was answered by people occupying a top-level management position of 10% and personnel occupying a middle-level management position at 34%. We show from the answers given that, in most of the sample organizations, participatory management is not practiced.

Only 15% of the employees stated that the organization in which they work pays special attention to the human resource by supporting the expenses for specialization, continuous improvement. Although there is more and more talk about career planning and management, only 8% of employees said that the organization in which they work attaches importance to these programs. Only 4% of those surveyed said that they feel like a big family in the organization, although most, 48% of those surveyed stated that the atmosphere in the workplace is not harsh and harsh.

When conducting regular assessments, the management of the organization places greater emphasis on specialized knowledge (15%), the ability to collaborate and cooperate (13%), the ability to solve problems quickly (13%) and on the degree of involvement (12%). The innovation capacity has the lowest score, being selected only by 6% of the employees.

Although most of the employees surveyed replied that the promotion is slow (38% - yes, 24.1% - often), in the organizations is not encouraged arrogance and bureaucracy (62.2%), the jobs are filled according to by the intellectual potential of each one (36.9% - yes, 37.6% - often), the fluctuation of the staff is not high (35.5% - no, 28.4% - rarely).

Most respondents said they feel an integral part of the organization they belong to (always - 45%, often - 40%) and do not think about changing their jobs in the near future (never - 37% , rarely 34%),

but 33% replied that they can also make a career in another organization and are not dependent on the organization in which they work. 55% stated that often, their value system corresponds to that of the organization they work in, and 45% often give up their principles to do what is required of them by the organization. In the organizations in the sample, the necessary information is most often transmitted formally, new employees are helped to integrate, and the human resources respect the activity of the managers of the organization. However, stress in the workplace is high, only 9% of those who responded said that they do not feel stressed at work, while 47% said that they are often subjected to very high stress.

In relation to the changes that have occurred in the last years on social, economic and political level, we set out to find out how certain aspects of the workplace were influenced.

**Table no. 2. Aspects regarding the current situation of the relationship between the employee and the organization and how it has changed over time**

|  | <i>The situation has got bad</i> | <i>The situation has as bad as it was before</i> | <i>The situation has stayed as good as before</i> | <i>The situation has improved</i> |
|--|----------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| Time allowed to family                 | 24%                              | 18%  | 48%   | 10%                               |
| Earnings level (cash or other rewards) | 13%                              | 25%  | 39%   | 23%                               |
| The freedom to express your opinions   | 5%                               | 20%  | 58%   | 17%                               |
| Hierarchical position                  | 6%                               | 15%  | 62%   | 17%                               |
| Work climate                           | 9%                               | 10%  | 61%   | 20%                               |
| Freedom to put ideas into practice     | 3%                               | 18%  | 63%   | 16%                               |
| Colleagues' relationships              | 2%                               | 8%   | 73%   | 17%                               |
| Participation in decision making       | 7%                               | 18%  | 59%   | 16%                               |
| Support from colleagues                | 2%                               | 7%   | 77%   | 14%                               |

97% of the employees who answered the questionnaire stated that they know the logo of the organization in which they work, 94% know the specific colour, and 78% know what the promotional objects of the organization are. Some employees have also exemplified other symbols of the organization in which they work, such as the slogan and uniform.

Regarding the organizational climate in which they work, 75% of the employees replied that they like the environment in which they work. 40% reasoned that it is a pleasant atmosphere, a warm climate, which offers safety and respect. 25% of the employees stated that they do not like the climate in which they work and that they would change the attitude of the managers towards the subordinates, they would like the people in the organization to respect each other, they would change the outdated mindsets and the bureaucracy. Some employees have also completed the fact that the employees should be sent periodically to specialization and training (at the expense of the organization).

Although lately more and more organizations in Romania have developed and implemented an ethical code (following the model of visionary, sustainable companies in developed countries), only 43% of employees stated that the organization in which they work has an ethical code, 16% they stated that the organization does not have its own ethical code, and 41% of employees do not know whether or not the organization has developed an ethical code. Where it exists, the code of ethics is known by 90.5% by employees.

Human resources in Romania are responsible, because 48% of the employees stated that it is important for them to carry out their tasks, and 23% give all their effort in finding effective solutions to the newly emerged problems; 20% of the employees questioned want to maintain a climate in which they feel good and to have a mutual care and respect between colleagues. Only 11% said that it is important to please the boss or influential people in the organization.

Employees who perform their duties according to the job description are the most appreciated in organizations in Romania (24%), but also those who know and respect the rules and procedures in the organization (21%), are reliable, cooperative and in good relations with colleagues (19%).

In the Romanian organizations, diplomas / medals of merit are rarely awarded, instead very strict discipline is promoted (table no. 3).

*Table no. 3. Aspects regarding management-employees relationship*

|   | <i>Never</i> | <i>Very rarely</i> | <i>Very often</i> | <i>Always</i> |
|---|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Diplomas / medals of merit are awarded                                | 34%          | 44%                | 10%               | 12%           |
| Personal success is also publicized                                   | 23%          | 49%                | 17%               | 11%           |
| Failure is tolerated in certain proportions                           | 17%          | 59%                | 21%               | 3%            |
| Personal successes are encouraged                                     | 11%          | 39%                | 32%               | 18%           |
| The norms that maintain the traditions are upheld                     | 7%           | 33%                | 45%               | 15%           |
| Strict discipline is applied  | 6%           | 19%                | 48%               | 27%           |
| The proposals and suggestions from the subordinates are rejected      | 26%          | 48%                | 19%               | 7%            |
| Employees attend courses, training courses (paid by the organization) | 6%           | 33%                | 32%               | 29%           |

The predominant cultural values promoted in the Romanian organizations are (the respondents had only one answer to choose from): seriousness (11%), fulfilment of responsibilities (10%), discipline (10%), sense of responsibility (9%), performance (9 %), punctuality (8%), involvement (8%), participation (7%), morality (6%), creativity (6%), solidarity (5%), self-realization (3%), equality (3%), democracy (3%), autonomy (2%).

### **3. Comparative Analysis between the Results of our Research and the Previous Research**

Presenting the conclusions of our research from the perspective of the cultural dimensions identified by Geert Hofstede and also carrying out a comparative analysis with the study of those from Interact and Gallup Organization Romania (2005), we can say that:

- analyzing comparatively our conclusions with those of Geert Hofstede, Interact and Gallup Organization Romania, we can say that the distance to power in the Romanian organizations has remained as high, the employees are not consulted in the decision making, therefore no management is promoted participatory although the benefits of its implementation are known. People prefer not to take personal responsibilities but to do what they are told to do, following orders received from superiors;
- unlike the interpretation of the Interact study and Gallup Organization Romania, we consider that Romania is a country directed more towards individualism than towards collectivism. We support this because the employees have stated that they do not support each other for professional improvement, that they are not dependent on the organization in which they work and that they can make a career in any other organization because they trust their own strengths and the success of the organization is due to their skills. Although the management of the organizations promotes teamwork and open communication (or at least it is desired at the management level), the employees do not feel like in a family at work, there are difficulties of communication between the departments and the relationships are of collegiality not of friendliness. We can also say that due to the financing from external non-reimbursable funds, the members of the company have more opportunities to become financially independent and to be the authors of their own welfare;
- research by Geert Hofstede and Interact and Gallup Organization Romania showed that Romania is aimed at femininity and not masculinity. We argue that Romania is currently focused more on masculinity than on femininity, because organizations are mainly focused on success, profit, development, competition. The willingness of the organizations to enter the

foreign market and to be competitive in relation to the other companies in the developed countries is manifested;

- the uncertainty avoidance index remained high, because the employees, although confident in their own forces, do not think about changing their jobs, the fluctuation of the personnel in organizations is still low; the employees act according to the instructions received from the management, rather than assume personal responsibilities, they are encouraged to act promptly but with minimal risk;
- organizations are increasingly making medium- and long-term plans, because specialized managers in schools have come to the management, which are not based on the past or on statistics when establishing their strategies and action plans, but more much on intuition and foresight, taking the model of American companies, which are visionary, sustainable, with an activity of over 100 years and looking to the future.

### **Conclusions**

The research was conducted in the second part of 2018 and the first part of 2019 on a sample of 40 large organizations, with over 500 employees each, which have economic activities of national relevance. 1000 people were trained, from different professions, in positions at different hierarchical levels, with seniority and work experience, respecting the proportions by gender (female - male) according to the personnel structure of each company and the structure of employees at national level, of 52% women and 48% men. The interviewed persons were over 30 years old, in proportion of 84%, with seniority of work of more than 3 years, in proportion of 90% and with the seniority in the organization of over 10 years, in proportion of over 58%. The data were collected on the basis of a questionnaire completed under anonymity.

A first finding regarding the organizations included in the study sample is related to the stability of the employees within the same company. Older people in the same organization from 1 to 3 years old and those between 10 and 20 years old have the lowest fluctuation, while young people under 3 years old and people with great experience and over 20 years old have the highest mobility. It can be said that the greatest influence on the culture of the organizations in the analyzed cases has the employees with the age between 1 and 3 years and 10-20 years respectively.

A first aspect taken into consideration when conducting the study concerns the hierarchy of cultural values specific to large enterprises. A set of 15 values was submitted to the attention as follows: punctuality in the program, participation in the decision-making act, equal opportunities for men / women for career promotion, participation in the processes of creativity and innovation, the importance of moral qualities, democratization of management, solidarity between people, the autonomy of the employee at the workplace, the fulfillment of the responsibilities in due time, the self-improvement, the discipline, the sense of responsibility in fulfilling the tasks, the involvement in formulating opinions on the future of the organization, seriousness in respecting the commitments undertaken. The most appreciated values are: seriousness, responsibility and discipline at work and in the last places are considered autonomy, democracy and equal opportunities. People assume and cultivate to a large extent the values regarding the discipline and the fulfillment of responsibilities in the workplace, accepting the authority of the managers and giving up the equal opportunities, autonomy and democracy.

Another aspect regarding all the invisible part of the organizational culture refers to the hierarchy of customs transmitted informally between the members of the organization, from one generation to another. In this sense, the following unwritten norms were tested: good relations with managers, appreciation of the activity of colleagues in the organization, maintaining good relations with colleagues, considering the organization as a second family, taking risks or accepting precise instructions of the leaders, perception of compatibility between words and deeds. both for leaders and colleagues in the organization, the involvement of the organization in the professional improvement of the employees, the receptivity of the leaders to the proposals of the members of the organization, the acceptance of divergent opinions between colleagues, the freedom of action in creativity and

innovation, the agreement and support of the family towards the organization, the encouragement of the individual opinions.

The most popular customs or habits refer to good relationships with both colleagues and management. The receptivity of the leaders to the proposals of the organization and the acceptance of divergent opinions between the members of the organization are appreciated on a medium level. The least appreciated are the disagreements between words and deeds both among the organizational colleagues and at the level of the leaders, which causes a general mistrust between people. Neither family support for the organization is a well-rated custom nor does the family organization enjoy too much attention.

Employees consider that the most important visible elements of the organization refer to the respect shown to partners (customers, suppliers and banks), to respecting the legality (corporate governance) as well as to the knowledge and compliance with the formal norms established by the company. Medium importance is given to real estate symbols (buildings, land, parking lots), the order and appearance of interior and exterior spaces, media advertising, beliefs and values reflected by the behaviour of employees, credible perspectives offered to the employee's employees as well as the technical symbols created by the organization (technological means, inventions, products, licenses, etc.). There are stories and legends of smallest importance regarding the members of the organization as well as the popularity or reputation of the founders and managers of the company.

An important role in shaping and evolving the culture of organizations is the employee-employer relationship. The lack or reduced frequency of some situations indicates a good working relationship. In this sense it is noted the lack of promotion and discouragement of arrogance, bureaucracy or rituals of humiliation and differentiation between people. In the same sense, the initiative of the employees works and the avoidance of conservatism, the priority of the common objectives to the detriment of the individual ones, the clear expression of the internal norms of order and functioning of the company. There are also situations (often or rare) that can lead to the degradation of working relationships. These include the occupancy of the jobs without respecting the intellectual potential of the candidates, the failure to respect the autonomy of the employees in choosing the ways of solving the tasks of service, a relatively calm and protective atmosphere for those who do not accept the competition.

The situations existing in 2019 do not show a close relationship between managers and direct subordinates. Positive stimulation is rarely granted through merit diplomas or through the promotion of meritorious ones. Their failures are not tolerated but the preservation of old traditions is maintained. The proposals and suggestions of the subordinates are not accepted and the participation of the subordinates in the training courses financed by the company is not encouraged. It is surprising that most of the employees argue that the employment relationship is relatively good and could be even better by strengthening (inter) collegial relationships, improving the working climate, encouraging employee input and participation in the decision-making process. There are also employees who say that the situation has worsened or that it has remained as bad at work due to the short time allowed to the family, the small earnings and the low possibility of expressing personal opinions within the organization. However, working relationships and relationships between bosses and direct subordinates do not greatly affect the organizational climate. This finding leads us to the observation that the cultural elements analyzed have a greater influence on the harmony between the members of large organizations. The most significant statements of the persons surveyed highlight the trust that the leaders of the organization enjoy (in large companies the unions are strong), the certain feelings of belonging to the organizational group, the informal communication within the organization, the sustained integration of the new employees in the community, the compatibility of the value system personal with that of the organization. Among the statements that highlight negative influences on the organizational climate we note (di) stress at the workplace (confirmed by the strained relationship between bosses - direct subordinates) and the intention to change the workplace in the near future.

Overcoming moments of confusion and insecurity within the organization is achieved through coordinated actions between management and the people inside the company. The most effective

action is the open and honest internal communication between management and organization, specifying the risks and opportunities offered by the changes that are required at such times.

Similar researches conducted in January - March 2005 by the Gallup Organization are known in collaboration with Interact Romania. In this case, the "Value Survey Module" questionnaire designed by the Institute of Research for Intercultural Communication was established by the well-known Dutch scientist Geert Hofstede. The synthetic conclusions of the 2005 study highlight the following characteristics of the Romanian behaviour from the perspective of cultural dimensions, following the method of Geert Hofstede:

- the power complex shows that Romanians prefer subordination over a single boss and the participatory / cooperative leadership style;
- in Romanians manifests the collectivist mentality, the people obey the rules of the group for the realization of the common social interests;
- there are no discriminatory practices between women and men in Romania;
- Romanians are concerned about avoiding uncertainties through consensus and immediate solutions;
- the orientation in perspective of Romanians aims at short-term objectives.

The research conducted by us during the period 2018-2019 largely confirms the results from 2005 and brings a series of useful additions in management practice. This study looks at organizations within commercial companies (services and production) that differ significantly from organizations in public institutions.

The cultural values subject to the attention of the organizations are perceived differently, the most appreciated being the discipline, the seriousness, the performance, the involvement, the punctuality. Less appreciated was autonomy, equality, democracy. Thus, were confirmed the results of the researches mentioned in 2005 regarding the size of the distance of the members of the Romanian organizations from the power and those regarding the acceptance of equal opportunities.

The unwritten rules and / or customs most respected in the big organizations in Romania refer to cultivating and maintaining good relationships between colleagues, relations between subordinates and supervisor and encouraging divergent opinions. It is noted that there is a tendency to diminish the importance that the family attaches to the organization as well as a decrease of trust between people because between words and deeds is sometimes a big difference. For this reason, a decrease in the collectivist dimension and the orientation towards the individual performance is appreciated. This finding brings to our attention a possible change in the future of the collectivist dimension within the Romanian organizations.

The symbolic, visible cultural elements that have the greatest impact on the members of the big organizations in Romania during 2018-2019 are caused by the corporate governance and its consequences on ensuring an optimistic perspective for companies. The behaviours in the relationships with the partners (suppliers, customers, creditors), the pleasant appearance of the company spaces, the web page, the advertising and the company reports in the media are also appreciated. Surprisingly, little attention is paid to stories or legends about the members of the organization, the popularity of the company's founders, ceremonies and rituals as well as real estate symbols (buildings, offices, parking lots, etc.).

The consequences of the hierarchies regarding the visible and invisible elements of the culture of the big organizations are found in a number of interesting aspects regarding the labour relations and their evolution over time, the social climate within the companies and the ways of overcoming the confusing and insecure states that occur in the situations required by the occurrence of some changes.

Regarding labour relations, we notice the efforts made by both employers and employees to ensure a calm and un-stressed atmosphere, to promote in the career according to criteria of professional competence, not to encourage arrogance, bureaucracy and to practice humiliation or differentiation

between employees. The low interest of employees for ceremonies or rituals is explained by the fact that managers do not create and encourage such situations as ways of motivating organizations.

The good evolution in time of the labour relations is supported mainly by the solidarity between the members of the organizations, the relatively calm working climate, the consistent application of the competence criterion for the hierarchical promotion and the stimulation of the participation of the employees in the decision making. Working relationships can be negatively influenced by limiting family time, slow promotion and limiting earnings.

The organizational climate is influenced to a large extent by promoting and maintaining good informal communication within groups, cultivating a sense of belonging to the group, welcoming and attentive integration of new employees within organizations. The imposition of renunciation of individual principles and habits and organizational stress can be causes of the deterioration of the organizational climate.

Overcoming the moments of confusion and uncertainty in the situations of change that can occur in organizations can be successfully supported by sincere communication between the supervisor and subordinates, encouraging the expression of the most diverse opinions and by carefully assessing the risks and opportunities that may arise.

**References**

[1] Luca Adina, (2005), Study on Romanian values and behavior from the perspective of cultural dimensions according to Geert Hofstede's method, <http://www.i-interact.ro>  
 [2] <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/>

*Annex no. 1*

***Questionnaire developed and applied by the authors to identify the particularities of the culture of organizations in Romania***

*By completing this questionnaire, you contribute to a case study. The conclusions of the study will be introduced in the paper "Analyzing the particularities of the culture of organizations in Romania, after 12 years of accession to the European Union and 11 years since the onset of the global economic and financial crisis". You will also get a better picture of the work environment in the organization you are a member of, as well as the possibilities for improving it. The conclusions of the study will be published and will help bring the level of culture of organizations in Romania closer to that of organizations in developed countries.*

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. Age  
 under 30 years      between 30 and 40 years      between 40 and 50 years      over 50 years
2. F      M
3. Work experience:  
 under 1 year      between 1 and 3 years      between 3 and 10 years      between 10 and 20 years      over 20 years
4. Length in the organization:  
 Under 1 year      between 1 and 3 years      between 3 and 10 years      between 10 and 20 years      over 20 years
5. Job position:  
 high level management      medium level management      execution
6. Organization history:  
 between 5 and 15 years      over 15 years      I don't know
7. Do you know the significance of the term organization culture?  
 Yes      No      I am not sure
8. Does the culture of an organization influence the perception of partners (customers, suppliers, banks, public institutions, society as a whole) on it?  
 Yes      No

9. If you answered "yes" to question no. 8, give grades 1 to 4, depending on the influence of the following elements of the culture of the organization (1 - no influence, 2 - low influence, 3 - medium influence, 4 - high influence):

- ....Buildings, furniture, decoration
- ....Promotional items
- ....Products offered and / or services provided
- ....The logo of the organization
- ....Rituals and ceremonies
- ....The managers of the organization
- ....Perspectives and opportunities offered to employees and clients
- ....The founders of the organization
- ....Others. Which? ....., ....., ....., .....

10. If you answered "no" to question number 8, choose the options that led you to do this:

The culture of the organization does not help to attract and maintain customers  
It is important for the organization to attract as many customers as possible, without being interested in whether or not they get to know it.

It does not interest anyone who were the founders of the organization or who are the leaders and to what extent has each performance influenced

Others. Which? ....., ....., ....., .....

11. Which of the following do you think should be given greater importance in your organization in the near future? (give grades 1 to 4: 1 - should not be given importance, 2 - low importance, 3 - should be given importance, 4 - high importance)

- .... Popularity and reputation of the founders
- .... Popularity and reputation of managers
- .... Real estate symbols (buildings, land, parking lots etc.)
- .... Technical symbols (equipment)
- .... The order, cleanliness and appearance of interior and exterior spaces
- .... The website of the organization
- .... Advertising through different means (TV, radio, leaflets, brochures etc.)
- .... Appearances in the media
- .... Rituals and ceremonies organized by the institution / firm
- .... Stories and legends about the organization
- .... The beliefs and values reflected in the behaviour of the members of the organization
- .... Compliance with the legal provisions
- .... Knowledge and observance of the rules and regulations of the organization
- .... Basic concepts of the leaders of the organization
- .... Perspectives offered to employees by the organization
- .... Respect for partners (customers, consumers, suppliers, banks, public institutions, etc.)

12. Mark the statements that you think are valid for your organization:

I am willing to formally express my opinion, because I am encouraged by everything that happens in the organization

My family is satisfied with my professional achievements within the organization

I have the freedom to implement my ideas

In the organization, I feel like a big family

I am not afraid to disagree with my colleagues

My relationships with colleagues are good

The leaders are receptive to the proposals made by the members of the organization

I appreciate the activity of my colleagues

I am supported by colleagues in order to improve myself, from a professional point of view

Between what I say and what my colleagues do, it is a perfect agreement

My relationships with managers are good

Between what I say and what the leaders of the organization do, it is a perfect agreement

I prefer precise instructions instead of taking personal risk

13. From a psychological point of view, change can cause confusion and uncertainty for the people in the organization. How do you think they can be helped to overcome these problems? Give grades 1 to 4 (1 - not important; 2 - less important; 3 - important; 4 - very important):

- .... Open and clear internal communication
- .... Employees to know the risks and benefits of change
- .... People should be encouraged to express their feelings for change
- .... Meetings between managers and subordinates to discuss problems that may arise during the change process

- .... Others. Which? ....
14. Choose the variants that suit the climate of the organization in which you work:
- Positive attitude at all hierarchical levels
  - The merits of success are of all employees
  - There are difficulties in communication between departments
  - We say what we believe and do what we say
  - We share success and we do not let anyone (among us) suffer defeat alone
  - We work as a team
15. Select the statements that are valid within your organization:
- We establish a plan together and then everyone acts as they wish
  - The Organization and Functioning Regulation (ROF) and the Internal Order Regulation (ROI) are known to all employees, from the moment of employment
  - Employees are involved in the decision-making process
  - Instead of "organization" we can say "family"
  - Employees have sufficient flexibility to have access to different hierarchical levels
  - Employees learn continuously, are sent to specialization courses, training, trainings, etc.
  - Every employee is well aware of their responsibilities (holds a job description)
  - The management also attaches importance to the individual desires of the employees
  - The organization attaches importance to career planning and management programs
16. In the case of performance evaluation (monthly, biannual, annual, etc.), which of the following are taken into account (you can select several variants):
- Specialized knowledge
  - Punctuality
  - Sense of responsibility
  - The ability to solve problems quickly
  - Ability to innovate
  - Adaptability
  - Capacity for cooperation and collaboration
  - Degree of involvement
  - Contribution to the creation of a working atmosphere within the team
  - Others. Which? .....
17. Are the following statements valid in your organization? (1 - yes; 2 - often; 3 - rare; 4 - no)
- .... The atmosphere is harsh and harsh
  - .... The workstations are filled according to the intellectual potential of each one
  - .... The staff fluctuation is quite high
  - .... The rituals of humiliation and differentiation predominate
  - .... The values and norms are clear, expressed in writing, with a formal and rigid tint
  - .... Promotion is slow
  - .... The atmosphere is relatively calm and protective for individuals who hardly accept the competition
  - .... Integration rituals are common
  - .... The common objectives have priority over the individual ones
  - .... There is autonomy regarding the choice of the ways of performing the tasks
  - .... Employees are indifferent to the organization
  - .... Arrogance and bureaucracy are encouraged
  - .... The management promotes conservatism and ignores any suggestions from the employees
18. Do you know the content of the Organization and Functioning Regulation (ROF), valid in your organization?  
If so, when you read it, under what circumstances, how did you get into it? .....
- .....
- If not, why? .....
19. Do you know the content of the Internal Order Regulation (ROI), valid in your organization?  
If so, when you read it, under what circumstances, how did you get into it? .....
- .....
- If not, why? .....
20. To what extent are the following statements valid? (1 - never; 2 - rare; 3 - often; 4 - always)
- .... Your value system corresponds to that of the organization in which you work
  - .... You feel an integral part of the organization you work for
  - .... The organization supports you to improve yourself
  - .... Sometimes you give up your principles to do what is required of you by the organization in which you work
  - .... You are encouraged, at work, to express your opinions
  - .... At work you are under great stress

- .... Service colleagues are receptive to your ideas
  - .... Have all the necessary information, by formal means
  - .... Appreciate, in a positive way, the activity of the management of the organization
  - .... There is a reluctance towards new employees
  - .... Feel discomfort or embarrassment when you have to contradict your bosses
  - .... You can also make a career in another organization; you are not dependent on the organization you work for
  - .... You are thinking of changing your job in the near future
  - .... New employees are helped to integrate into the organization in which you work
21. Lately: 1 - the situation has worsened; 2 - the situation remained as bad; 3 - the situation remained as good; 4 - the situation has improved:
- .... Family time
  - .... Freedom to put ideas into practice
  - .... Earnings level (cash or other rewards)
  - .... Relations with colleagues
  - .... Freedom to express your opinions
  - .... Participation in decision making
  - .... Hierarchical position
  - .... Support from colleagues
  - .... Work climate

**9. Do you know the symbols of your organization?**

| Symbols              | Yes | No | I don't think they exist | They do not exist |
|----------------------|-----|----|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Logo                 |     |    |                          |                   |
| Specific colour      |     |    |                          |                   |
| Flag, pennant        |     |    |                          |                   |
| Promotional objects  |     |    |                          |                   |
| Others. Which? ..... |     |    |                          |                   |
| .....                |     |    |                          |                   |

**10. Do you like the climate of your organization?**

- Yes. Why? .....
- No. What would you change? .....

**11. Has your organization developed and implemented an ethical code?**

- Yes. Do you know its contents? Yes No
- No
- I don't know

**12. What is more important to the people in the organization you work for?**

- To please the boss or influencers of the organization
- To perform their tasks in accordance with established rules and procedures
- To compete in finding effective solutions, in setting new goals
- To care for each other, to maintain a climate in which they feel good

**13. What kind of person is considered a good employee in the organization you work for?**

- The loyal person, loyal to the influential and powerful
- People with entrepreneurial spirit, imagination and courage
- The one who knows and respects the rules and procedures in the organization
- The one who wants to do, knows how to do and takes the initiative, who is fighting for his innovation
- The person who is reliable, cooperative and in good relations with everyone else
- The one who was recruited during the studies and trained in the workplace
- The one who fulfils all his duties, according to the job description

**14. Select the cultural values promoted within the organization in which you work:**

- seriousness
- discipline
- fulfilment of responsibilities
- performance
- creativity
- participation
- involvement
- self-realization
- autonomy
- democracy

- equality
- punctuality
- sense of responsibility
- solidarity
- morality
- Other. Which?  .....  .....  .....

11.

| In your organization:   | Never | Very rarely | Very often | Always |
|---|-------|-------------|------------|--------|
| Diplomas / medals of merit are awarded                                  |       |             |            |        |
| Personal success is also publicized                                     |       |             |            |        |
| Failure is tolerated in certain proportions                             |       |             |            |        |
| Personal successes are encouraged                                       |       |             |            |        |
| The norms that maintain the traditions are upheld                       |       |             |            |        |
| Strict discipline is promoted   |       |             |            |        |
| The proposals and suggestions from the subordinates are rejected        |       |             |            |        |
| Employees attend courses, training courses (funded by the organization) |       |             |            |        |

*Thank you very much!*