

ETHNICAL MINORITIES IN THE ROMANIAN SECTOR OF DOBROGEA

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Abstract. The evolution of ethnic minority communities in the Romanian sector of Dobrogea (the counties of Tulcea and Constanța) after the year 1990 is discussed based on the 1992, 2002 and 2011 census data. The analysis focusses on the structure, evolution and territorial distribution of each ethnic community at regional, county and settlement level and the changes experienced in their ethnic structure following the collapse of the communist political system and the increasing globalizing fluxes. Finally, the ethnic diversity index is calculated at locality level. The presence of ethnic minorities in Romania, with highlight on the study region, is the outcome of a lasting historical evolution of good co-habitation relations between the local majority and the newcomers, devoid of inter-ethnic conflicts. Dobrogea's ethnic communities would mingle, tolerating one another, borrowing one another's life-style, a reality that has in time developed a unique co-habitation pattern known as the Dobrogean inter-ethnic model.

1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The ethnic structure of a territory is the result of a time-long historical, social and economic evolution. The ethnic minorities do confer an area's cultural diversity, the work of a lasting history associated with a complex of culture and civilization phenomena underlying the co/habitation of various ethnicities (Nicoară, 2005). Several definitions of ethnic minorities have in time been produced. According to Sylvie de Tirilly (1995, p. 36), a numerical minority group distinguishes itself from the majority population by national, cultural, and linguistic traits (p. 36). Jackson Preece (1998, p. 28) defined the minority as a numerically lower group than the rest of a state's population, a group that has a non-dominant position, is well-defined historically, having settled in the territory of that state; the group's members are nationals of the respective state, but have ethnic, religious, linguistic, or cultural traits distinctively different from those of the population at large, exhibiting, even implicitly, a feeling of solidarity in conserving their own culture, traditions, religion, or language (p. 28).

The definition of ethnic minorities given by the United Nations Organisation reads as follows: a group of citizens of a state which constitute a numerical minority, share different ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics than the majority population; they display a feeling of solidarity, motivated implicitly by a collective rush to survive in order to obtain factual and legal equality with the majority population (Necula, 2009).

There are states in which the term ethnic minority is equivalent with national minority, avoiding thus possible confusions when it comes to implementing international regulations. In effect, there are also other terms that define the ethnic/national minorities, e.g. in Poland, Albania and Hungary they speak of linguistic, religious and cultural minority and only seldom use the term national or ethnic; in Croatia, Slovenia, or Cyprus, they opt for ethnic community or minority; in Finland it is racial/ethnic minority or group, etc. (Brădățeanu, 2014).

In the Romanian geographical literature, the ethnic minority is defined as the human group or collectivity formed on the territory of another state and is less numerous than the autochthonous population; the respective group is linked historically to the latter, but has distinct traits related to its own ethnic specificity (Erdeli *et al.*, 1999, p. 197).

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The ethnical minorities have in time contributed to completing Romanian traditions and culture, offering an overall image of their spread country wise and of the way in which the traditions of these ethnicities are interacting mutually, and influencing one another (Mihăilescu, 2017).

In view of it, ever since Romania had initiated EU-membership procedures (Law 33 issued on April 29, 1995) harmonised EU provisions on the rights and protection of ethnical minority groups, also ratifying the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, a document adopted by the European Council at Strasbourg on February 1, 1995. According to Census data (2011), Romania numbered 3,328,773 persons (16.54%/total) who declared themselves as belonging to some ethnical minority communities. The greatest proportion was held by the Magyars (Hungarians) with 1,227,623 pers. – 36.9%; next in line coming to Rroma (Gypsies), 621,753 pers./18.7%/total numbers, because very many Gypsy ethnics either refused to declare themselves as such, presumably because of social prejudice, while some others, having assimilated to a certain extent, or themselves unaware of any ethnical appurtenance (Zamfir *et al.*, 1993 & Bunescu, 2014). Far behind come the Ukrainians and the Germans (50,920 and 36,042 pers., respectively). Except for the Rroma, the Csângo (Hungarians who live in Moldavia) and the Macedonians hold an insignificant proportion in the national ethnical structure; persons of other, or undeclared, ethnicity were numerically on the increase compared to the previous census (2002); all the other ethnical communities registered fewer inhabitants (Table 1).

Table 1

Ethnical minorities represented in Romania

| Minorities | No. of members (pers.) | | Parliamentary representation (mandates) | | Cultural representation (No.) | | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------|---|----------|-------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| | 2002 | 2011 | Senators | Deputies | Central newspapers | County newspapers | Political newspapers | Cultural newspapers | Other publications | Publishing houses |
| Magyars | 1,431,807 | 1,227,623 | 9 | 21 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 7 | Ld. | 25 |
| Rroma | 535,140 | 621,573 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | 1 | 1 |
| Ukrainians | 61,098 | 50,920 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | 3 | 1 |
| Germans | 59,764 | 36,042 | – | 1 | 1 | – | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Lippovan–Russians | 35,791 | 23,487 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | 2 | 1 |
| Turks | 32,098 | 27,698 | – | 1* | – | – | – | – | 1 | – |
| Tartars | 23,935 | 20,282 | – | 1* | – | – | – | – | 1 | – |
| Serbs | 22,561 | 18,076 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | 2 | – |
| Slovaks | 17,226 | 13,654 | – | 1** | – | – | – | – | – | 1 |
| Bulgarians | 8,025 | 7,336 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | 2 | – |
| Croats | 6,807 | 5,408 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | 2 | – |
| Greeks | 6,472 | 3,668 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | 2 | – |
| Jews | 5,785 | 3,271 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | 1 | 1 |
| Czechs | 3,941 | 2,477 | – | 1** | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Poles | 3,559 | 2,543 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | 1 | – |
| Italians | 3,288 | 3,203 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | 1 | – |
| Chinese | 2,243 | 2,017 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Armenians | 1,780 | 1,361 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | 2 | 1 |
| Csângo | 1,266 | 1,536 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Macedonians | 731 | 1,264 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Other ethnics | 16,119 | 18,524 | – | 2 *** | – | – | – | – | 1 **** | – |
| Undetermined ethnicity | 1,941 | 123,6810 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |

*joint representation of the Turkish and Tartar Muslim communities, ** joint representation of the Czech and Slovak communities, *** joint representation of the Albanian and Ruthenian communities, **** Albanian publication.

Sources: The 2002 and 2011 census data, the Romanian Government, Department for Interethnic Relations.

The most numerous ethnical groups were found in Transylvania, Crişana, Banat and Dobrogea, regions featuring the most complex ethnical structure compared to sporadic minority occurrences in other parts

of Romania. These communities have 19 associations for the protection of the national minorities, with membership in the country's Parliament, (47 mandates to the Senate and the Deputy Chamber). Three central newspapers, 7 county ones, 7 political weeklies, and 9 cultural reviews are published in the languages of the minorities, 23 publications are edited by national minority organisations and 34 publishing-houses put out works in minority languages.

Looking at Table 1 data, one sees a good political and cultural representation at national level of the Magyar minority (one Parliament member/40,921 pers., one publication in Hungarian/61,381 pers.), second in line coming the Rroma, actually poorly represented (one Parliament member and one cultural publication/621,573 pers.). A well-represented historical minority are the Germans. The base of the hierarchy is even more disproportionate: the Armenians (1,361 pers.) are represented in Parliament, have two cultural publications and a publishing-house, while larger communities, e.g. the Chinese or the Csângò, have no political, or cultural representation either; other minorities, e.g. the Albanians and the Ruthenians, statistically ranked under 'other ethnicities', are nevertheless represented in Parliament. There are a lot of reasons behind this situation, both historical (the Chinese community being of relatively recent date in Romania) and cultural, social and, last but not least, political.

2. METHODOLOGY

An analysis of Dobrogea's ethnical communities proceeds from bibliographical sources, from the historical and geographical context, as well as from their emergence and evolution. Next, the statistical data yielded by the 1992, 2002 and 2011 censuses will be used to get an insight into the overall and local (settlement level) ethnical structure in Dobrogea after 1990.

The last section of the paper is devoted to calculating the ethnical diversity index in order to find the share of the minority population per total Dobrogea population. Noteworthy, in calculating this share of the majority population versus that of the other ethnical minorities, people who had not declared their appurtenance to any ethnicity were not taken into account. The minorities taken into calculation were from Constanța and Tulcea County, registered at the last census: Hungarians, Rroma, Ukrainians, Germans, Turks, Lippovan-Russians, Tartars, Serbs, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Croats, Greeks, Italians, Jews, Czechs, Poles, Chinese, Armenians, Csângòs, Macedonians and other ethnics.

Noteworthy, in calculating the proportion of the majority population and of the other ethnical minorities, missing information from people who had not declared their appurtenance to any ethnical group, was not taken into account.

The main goals of this study were as follows: a comparative analysis of the ethnical structure of Dobrogea's population (basically in its two counties: Constanța and Tulcea) and the changes occurred as a result of the socio-political and economic modifications experienced by Romania in the course of time. Also, the idea was to present the nationalities in terms of their numerical importance, inter-ethnical relations, common traits acquired by co-inhabitation inter-ethnical relation.

3. STUDY-AREA

Historical and geopolitical background of the formation of minority ethnical communities.

Dobrogea is a cross-border region (23,320 km²) which extends on the territory of three states: Romania (67.7%) and Bulgaria (32.3%) of the region's total surface area. Speaking in terms of administration, this territory includes two Romanian counties, two Bulgarian provinces and another five villages, as well as a small Ukrainian sector, namely Insula Șerpilor (Serpent Island) and another four islands south of the Chilia Arm thalweg (Nicoară, 2009) (Table 2).

Table 2

The administrative structure of Dobrogea

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Romania | 15, 570 km ² | Constanța County | 12 towns (of which 3 municipia) and 58 communes |
| | | Tulcea County | 5 towns (of which 1 municipium) and 46 communes |
| Bulgaria | 7, 412 km ² | Dobrici Province | 8 municipalities |
| | | Silistra | 7 municipalities |
| | | Razgrad Province (partially) | Konevo and Raynino villages in Isprih Municipality, Mădrevo and Terter in Kubrat Municipality |
| | | Varna Province (partially) | Gheneral Kantardjievo Village in Aksakovo Municipality |

Dobrogea's boundary lines are: the Lower course of the Danube in the north and west, the Black Sea in the east, and some Bulgarian provinces and communes, conventionally traced, in the south.

The Romanian sector of Dobrogea is the largest and most homogeneous administratively (15,570 km², 897,165 inhabitants). It encompasses two counties Constanța (7,071 km², 684,082 inh.) in its southern half, and Tulcea (8,499 km², 201,462 inhabitants.) in the northern one. Population density values between the two counties are distinctively different: 89.2 inh. (above the all-country average of 84.4 inh./ km²) in the former and only 23.7 inh. in the latter caused by the low Danube Delta density level (4.88 inh./ km² on average) (Damian, 2013 & Dogaru, 2013).

A favourable geographical position, between the Danube and the Black Sea accounts for Dobrogea becoming in time a social-economic, but moreover, ethnical and cultural region (Sallanz, 2005 & Nicoară, 2006).

An ancient Thracian hearth (the Gumelnita and Hamangia cultures), the Antiquity saw Dobrogea possessed first by the Greeks, who built the cities of Histria and Callatis – in the Romanian sector, and Dionysopolis in the Bulgarian one), then ruled by the Romans (as Scythia Minor Province) and the Byzantines. The early Middle Ages witnessed a strong Slav influence from the south, hence the diversification of its ethnical structure, seen on the maps of the time, which marked it as *Valacia minor*, *Bulgaria tertia*, *Graecia tomitana*, *Despotatus Vicinensis*, or later on (14th cent.) *a treia Bulgaria* (the third Bulgaria).

Dobrogea was first annexed to Wallachia (1388–1389) by Voivode Mircea the Old, but after his death, with the Ottoman Empire advancing to Central Europe, the Province fell under its rule (1418–1421) at the time of Turkish Sultan Mehmet I (Rădulescu & Bitoleanu, 1998), the Turks possessing it for over 450 years, when the largest ethnical communities – of the Turks and the Turkish-Muslim Tartars were settled here to defend the borders of the Ottoman Empire. Later on, beginning with 1492, came the Jews (from Andalusia in Spain) after Granada was conquered by the Catholics, but in 1948, they would leave for the State of Israel which was founded that year.

In time, the number of Muslims (of Muslim Turks, in particular) kept growing, they becoming the majority population (Ekrem, 1994). According to the Ottoman Administration, the largest communities of *giaoours* (people of non-Islamic faith) were the Romanians and the Bulgarians joined later by Armenians and Greeks (engaged in trade), Gypsies, Gagautzi (Bulgarian adherents to Islam), etc. (Gemil, 2008). The Lippovans of the old Orthodox rite, who opposed the reprisals initiated by the Russian Tzar Aleksei Mihailovich, would settle in the north of Dobrogea beginning with the 18th cent., after the schism in the Russian Orthodox Church (Ipatiov, 2002).

Since Dobrogea was a border region of the Empire, it was not deemed to be of particular strategic or economic importance, so that port activities were all but disappearing. Coastal towns turned into fishermen villages. However, inland settlements, like Babadag and Medgidia, emerged as market-places. Dobrogea became a destination for the transhumant shepherding of Transylvanian sheep-breeders (from Mărginimea Sibiului, in particular), the Getic Subcarpathians and Moldavia, who used to winter here. These migrations are also attested by the fact that, in 1870, the Ottoman

authorities designated monk Nifon Bălăşescu (born in Sibiu County and made a monk at Căldăruşani Monastery) as director of the Romanian schools from Dobrogea (Stănciugel & Bălaşa, 2005).

With the rising of the Russian Empire and its advance up to the Mouths of the Danube (18th–19th cc.), the geo-strategic balance in the Danubian-Pontic region suffered radical changes (Popa, 2006), Dobrogea becoming a battle-ground between the Ottoman and the Russian empires, especially after 1812, when the Russians annexed Bessarabia, the Danube being a common border between the two empires. A deal was struck between the Sultan and the Tzar for an exchange of populations: the Nogay Tartars and the Turks from the Bugeac came to Dobrogea, while an equivalent number of Bulgarians and Gagautzi settled in the south of Bessarabia. Also, most Germans were colonised in Dobrogea after 1840 (the majority choosing to repatriate after 1940) (Stinghe, 2007); Greeks and Italians were brought in later (when the European Commission of the Danube, set up in 1856, intended to begin big infrastructure works), and were engaged in the processing of sandstones in the settlements of Măcin and Iacobdeal, as well as in red limestones at Agighiol, Mahmudia and Babadag (Heller & Sallanz, 2009).

In this way, Dobrogea's cosmopolite ethnical structure took its final shape, being included in the Romanian Kingdom after its independence was acknowledged and the South Bessarabian communities of Cahul, Belgrad and Ismail were ceded to the Russian Empire (1878).

The Romanian administration installed in Dobrogea after the end of the Russian-Turkish War and the conclusion of the San Stephano Treaty, did considerably increase Dobrogea's geopolitical importance, Romania getting direct access to the Black Sea; noteworthy, it was the time when the Feteşti–Cernavodă bridge system was being built for straight railway connection with Bucharest and the rest of the country; also Constanţa harbour underwent management works.

After the Second Balkan War (1913), Romania annexed Cadrilaterul (The Quadrilateral) – South Dobrogea, a territory owned (except for two years during the First World War) until 1940, when Adolf Hitler ordered King Carol II to resolve territorial disputes with Bulgaria, the frontier-line becoming that of 1912. That territorial surrender was associated with an exchange of population, in that the Bulgarians from the Romanian sector of Dobrogea were moved to Bulgaria and the Romanians from the Cadrilater were brought into the counties of Constanţa and Tulcea. At the same time, the Turks would emigrate in mass to the new Turkish state, were Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's policy encouraged the repatriation of Balkan muslims (after 1923) (Ekrem, 1994) (Fig. 1).

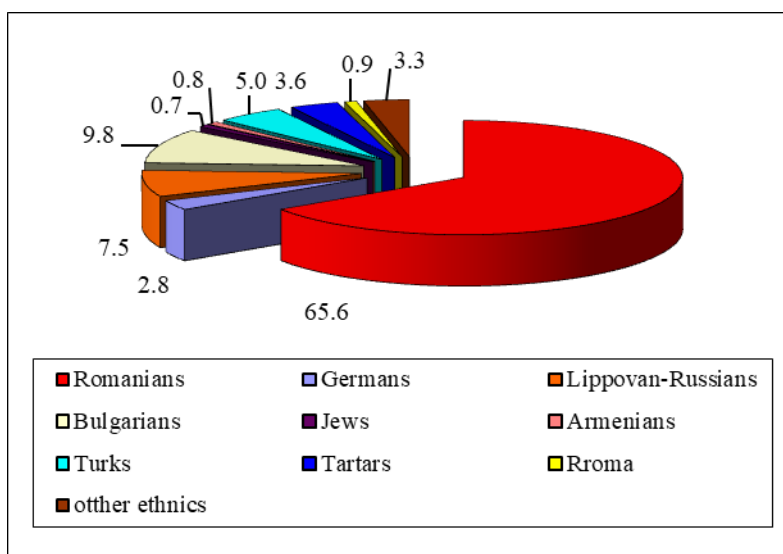


Fig. 1 – The ethnical structure of the Romanian sector of Dobrogea (1930 Census).

The communist period had a huge negative impact on Dobrogea's economy as the collectivization of agriculture got momentum (Bordânc, 2008); on the other hand, measures taken to attain big economic and infrastructure targets, such as extension and modernisation of Constanța harbour, the construction of the Danube-Black Sea and Poarta Albă–Midia Năvodari navigable canals, as well as the beginning of building works at the first atomic-electrical central in Romania (at Cernavodă) are worth-mentioning. The opening of these big building sites encouraged the workforce from other zones of the country to come to Dobrogea, which did significantly contribute to increasing the share of Romaninans in the region's ethnical structure (Kahl & Sallanz, 2006) (Table 3).

Table 3

The share of Romanians in the ethnical structure of the Romanian sector of Dobrogea. Evolutions (1930–2011)

| Census years | Population total (inhabitants) 100%) | Romanians | | Ethnical minorities | |
|--------------|--|-------------|------|---------------------|------|
| | | inhabitants | % | inhabitants | % |
| 1930* | 815,475 | 360,572 | 44.2 | 454,903 | 55.8 |
| 1956 | 635,950 | 560,521 | 88.1 | 75,430 | 11.9 |
| 1966 | 510,346 | 447,305 | 87.6 | 63,041 | 12.4 |
| 1977 | 863,348 | 784,930 | 90.9 | 78,418 | 9.1 |
| 1992 | 1,020,106 | 926,495 | 90.8 | 93,611 | 9.2 |
| 2002 | 971,643 | 883,620 | 90.9 | 88,023 | 9.1 |
| 2011 | 824,677 ** | 751,250 | 90.1 | 73,427 | 9.9 |

* including the Cadrilater (South Dobrogea), a territory passed under Bulgarian administration in 1940.

** calculations did not include the 72,488 inhabitants who had not declared their ethnicity.

After 1990, the population of Dobrogea followed the general evolution trend of Romania's population, namely a steady decrease from 1,020,106 inhabitants in 1992 to 971,643 in 2002, and 897,165 in 2011. The Romanians had continually held an absolute majority (over 90% population total) (Table 3) with a slight proportional decrease between 2002 and 2011, largely because of the increasing Rroma minority. Beside, despite the cosmopolite character of Dobrogea's population at the beginning of the 20th century, the share of the region's ethnical minority communities was below the national average (9.9% versus 11.1% total population).

The last census data (Oct. 20, 2011) show that the main ethnical minorities in Dobrogea are still the historical ones, namely, Turks (2.5%) and Tartars (2.19%), remnants of the 457 years of Ottoman rule, and the Lippovan–Russians, a border minority or the followers of some refugee communities arrived in Dobrogea in the wake of some particular historical and political circumstances. The Rroma community appears to be steadily increasing (officially more than 1% of the total population), concomitantly with the almost symbolic proportion of the other cross-border minority – the Bulgarians (only 55 persons).

4. THE ETHNICAL STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION IN THE ROMANIAN SECTOR OF DOBROGEA. EVOLUTIONS – 1990–2011

Looking at 1992, 2002 and 2011 census data on the ethnical structure of the population, and to subsequent statistical estimations, one finds a steep numerical decline both in the majority population and in most minority ethnical communities, at both regional and national levels. The 1992 census data, show the two Dobrogea counties (Constanța and Tulcea) with a total of 1,020,106 persons out of which 926,495 Romanian ethnics (90.83% in all) and 9.17% minority ethnics/total population of Dobrogea.

Numerically represented were the Turks (27,386 pers., 2.68% of total population), next the Lippovan–Russians (25,773 pers., 2.52% of total population) followed in decreasing order by Tartars (24,265 pers., 2.38%/ population total), Rroma (Gypsies) (6,910 pers., 0.67%/ population total), Ukrainians (4,092 pers., 0.90%/ population total), Magyars (1,716 pers., 0.17%/ population total), and Greeks (1,170 pers., 0.11%/ population total). Other minority communities had up to 1,000 members: Germans (626 pers.), Armenians (618 pers.), Bulgarians (277 pers.), Jews (128 pers.), Serbs (96 pers.), Slovaks (69 pers.), Poles (66 pers.), Czechs and Croats (18 and 8 pers., respectively). Some minorities registered 361 pers. in all; 40 people did not state their ethnicity (Fig. 2).

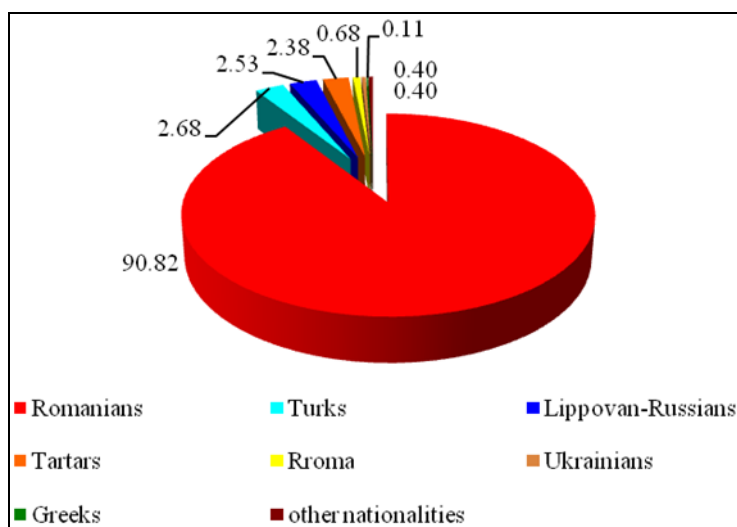


Fig. 2 – The ethnic population structure (%) in the Romanian sector of Dobrogea (1992 census data).

The 2002 census reveals a numerical decrease per total population and per ethnic minorities as well, both throughout Romania and in Dobrogea region, too. Thus, the total population of Constanța and Tulcea counties registered 971,643 persons, basically a decrease of 48,463 pers. caused by low birth-rates, a negative natural balance, and emigration from Romania of a significant number of young people. Self-declared Romanians were 883,620 pers. (90.94% of the total population), a slightly higher population (by 0.11%) than at the 1992 census, the ethnic minorities numbering 88,023 pers. (9.06% of the total population).

Census data revealed a situation similar to the previous one, namely, a dominant Turkish population (27,580 pers., 2.83%/population total), mildly increased (by 0.15%) versus the 1992 census data, followed by the Tartars (23,409 pers., 2.4% of population total) who decreased by 856 pers., the Lippovan–Russians (21,623 pers., 2.22% of population total) with 4,150 pers. less than in 1992, which could be accounted for either by many people having emigrated to other countries or by others who declared themselves Romanians (a situation found in the course of field investigations in the Danube Delta villages) (Gâștescu & Știucă, 2008; Damian, 2013).

The other ethnic minorities (in decreasing order): Rroma (Gypsies) – 8,295 pers. (by 1,385 pers. more than in 1992); Magyars (Hungarians) / 1,056 pers.; Germans – 398 pers.; Italians – 214 pers.; Bulgarians – 135 pers.; Jews – 72 pers.; Poles – 61 pers.; Slovaks – 37 pers.; Serbs – 34 pers.; Czechs and Csângòs (24 pers. each); Croats – 24 pers.; Chinese – 9 pers. Another 798 persons belonged to other ethnicities, 67 persons did not state their ethnical appurtenance (Fig. 3).

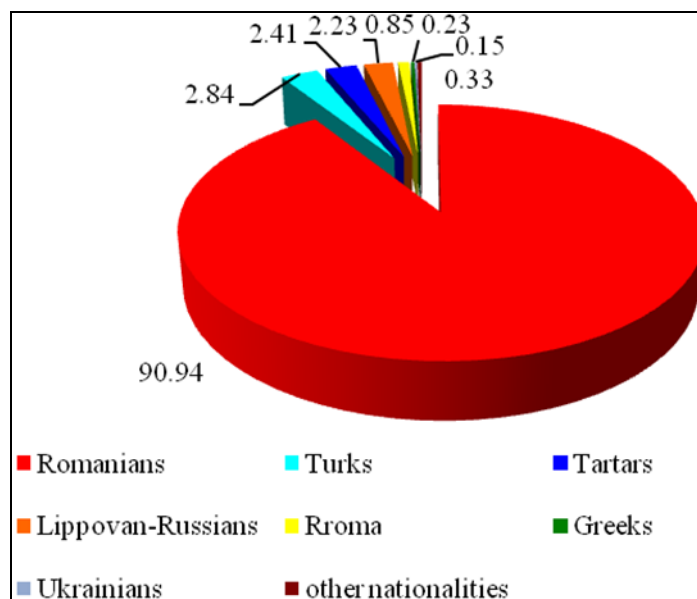


Fig. 3 – The ethnic population structure (%) in the Romanian sector of Dobrogea (2002 census data).

The 2011 census data show the same 2002 steadily decreasing general population trend. Thus, from 897,165 pers. in 1992, one finds by 122,941 fewer people than in 1992 and by 79,478 than in 2002.

The absolute majority is still Romanian (751,250 pers., 91.10% of total population), however, percentages are lower than in 1992 and 2002 when they represented 90.83% and 90.95% respectively/total population of Dobrogea, a decrease caused mainly by a statistical situation, since very many people (72,488 inh.) did not declare they ethnicity (Table 3).

Just like at the previous census, the ethnical rank of minorities remained the same, first coming the Turks (22,494 pers., 2.5% population total), followed by the Tartars (19,719 pers., 2.19% of total population) and the Lippovan–Russians (13,904 pers., 1.54% of total population) (Fig. 3).

Rroma (11,976 pers. (by 5,066 more than in 1992; Greeks – 1,444 pers.; Ukrainians – 1,168 pers.; Macedonians – 557 pers.; Magyars – 512 pers.; Armenians – 317 pers.; Germans – 163 pers.; Italians – 114 pers.; Bulgarians – 55 pers.; Csàngòs – 51 pers.; Jews – 43 pers.; Poles – 26 pers.; Serbs – 20 pers.; Slovaks – 9 pers.; Chinese – 8 pers.; Croats – 5 pers.; Czechs – 3 pers. Other ethnics: 778 pers.; undeclared ethnical appurtenance: 72,488 pers. (Fig. 3).

The 2002 and 2011 censuses listed new ethnics – the Chinese and the Csàngò; the Macedonians also appear in the 2011 census data (Fig. 4).

Since the two counties of Dobrogea's Romanian sector have a very diverse ethnical structure, the region could be viewed as a model of ethnical co-habitation. A number of 18 ethnical communities are statistically reported, 11 of them being better represented numerically (Turks, Tartars, Lippovan–Russians, Rroma, Greeks, Ukrainians, Macedonians, Magyars, Armenians, Germans and Italians) (Fig. 5). All of them have succeeded in preserving their characteristic traits, over time that is, language, traditions, and customs. A great many ethnicities who live in Romania between the Danube and the Black Sea reflect the centuries-old history of these places which had experienced the rule of several foreign powers.

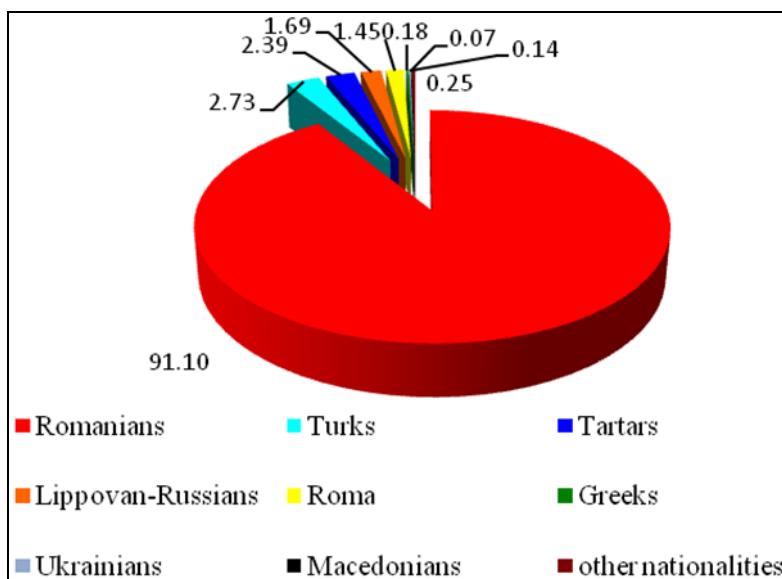


Fig. 4 – The ethnic population structure (%) in the Romanian sector of Dobrogea (the main ethnical minorities)(2011 census data).

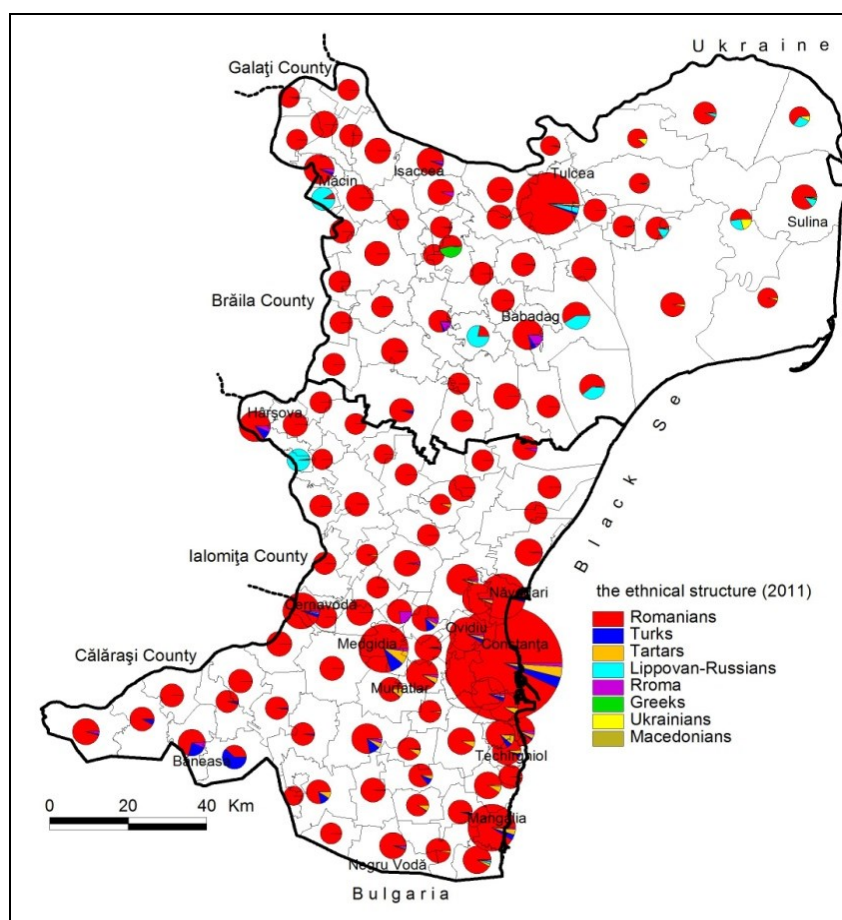


Fig. 5 – The ethnic structure of the population at settlement level (2011 census data).

5. AN ANALYSIS OF ETHNICAL COMMUNITIES IN THE ROMANIAN SECTOR OF DOBROGEA (2011)

5.1. The Turkish Community

According to the last census data (2011), the Turks represent the most numerous ethnical minority in the two counties of the Romanian sector of Dobrogea (22,494 pers., 81.2% of all the Turks living in Romania). Most of them are found in Constanța County (20,823, 3.4% of this County's population), in the towns of Constanța (6,525 pers.), Medgidia (3,340 pers.), Mangalia (1,474 pers.), Băneasa (1,136 pers.), and in the communes of Dobromir (1,751 pers.) and Cobadin (1,026 pers.). In Tulcea County, the homonymous county-seat town – Tulcea, is their preferred residence (819 pers.); apart from Dobrogea, important Turkish communities are reported in Bucharest City and in the counties of Călărași and Brăila.

The first references to the presence of Turks on the territory of today's Romania date back to the year 1264, when the Byzantine Emperor Mihail Paleologul (Palaiologos) sent there a troop of 12,000 soldiers to defend the Empire against foreign enemies. They founded the settlement of Babadag (translated as 'father of the mountains') (Bărbuleanu, 1998). The next wave of Turks would settle in Dobrogea after having conquered the town of Varna (1484), stimulating economic relations with the Ottoman Empire (Mustafa, 1978 & Ekrem, 1994).

With the Romanian administration installed in Dobrogea (1878), the Balkan Wars (1912–1913) and the foundation of the modern Turkish State (1923) are historical moments that marked the repatriation of the Turks from Dobrogea. Thus, 1930 census data report 5,983 Turkish ethnics in Constanța County and 2,285 in Tulcea County compared to some 100,000 in 1834 (Hellert, 1847 cited by Mustafa, 1978, p. 49). From 238 mosques in 1990, no more than 72 have remained in all of Romania. The Great Mosque was built in Constanța (1903) by order of Romania's King Carol I (1913); the oldest, 'Esmahan Sultan' Mosque (1575), stands in Mangalia Town. The Turkish Democratic Union, with headquarters in Constanța, is represented in Romania's Parliament and has subsidiaries in most counties.

5.2. The Tartar Community

The second representative ethnical community is that of the Tartars, who kept settling in Dobrogea along several successive stages (beginning with the 18th cent.). The next wave appeared after the Crimean War (1853–1856) when, under pressure from the Russians, the Tartars left Crimea, occupied the Casimcea River basin as far as Cape Midia, the whole Carasu Valley region up to Vadu settlement. This community was engaged mainly in agriculture, horse-breeding, carting and trade.

The first assessment of this community was made at the 1912 census (25,000 pers.) numbers falling (in 1930) to 1,668 pers. in Constanța County and to only 39 pers. in Tulcea County; at the end of the 20th cent., the 1992 census data indicated 24,596 pers., (the Tartar minority representatives estimating nearly twice as many – ca. 55,000 pers.) (Romania, a Europe in Miniature, 2005). The next two censuses (2002 and 2011) registered a steady decrease: 23,935 pers. and 20,282 pers., respectively, generally in keeping with the overall trend in Romania's population.

The counties of Constanța and Tulcea hold 97.2% of all the Tartar ethnics in Romania (19,600 pers. in the former county and 119 pers. in the latter one, the largest communities being registered in the towns of Constanța (8,724 pers.), Medgidia (3,987 pers.), Mangalia (1,415 pers.), Valu lui Traian (1,323 pers.), Techirghiol (743 pers.), Murfatlar (705 pers.), Cobadin (576 pers.), Valea Nucarilor (509 pers.), Ovidiu (442 pers.), Topraisar (440 pers.), Agigea (439 pers.), Eforie (395 pers.), etc.

The Tartars of Dobrogea boast a rich cultural heritage based on their history and traditions (Nuredin, 1998). The community is represented politically by the Democratic Union of Turkish-Muslim Tartars.

5.3. The Lippovan–Russians Community

The members of the Lippovan–Russian community are Orthodox believers of the Old Rite, known by the name of *starovere* (of the old faith), or *starobreatzi* (of the old rite). They settled on Romanian territory, especially in Dobrogea and Moldavia, in the wake of the church reforms initiated by Tzar Aleksei Mihailovici (1629–1676) and promoted by the Patriarch Nikon (1605–1681), reforms that triggered discontent and protests among the clergy and the faithful of the Russian Church, the new canons being perceived as an unacceptable infringement on the Orthodox teachings. Internal disturbances within the Church, especially loss of Russian believers in the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the decisions made by the Great Orthodox Synod in Moscow to adopt liturgical and ritual decisions promoted at the time of Patriarch Nikon, triggered the 1666–1667 schism. The supporters of the old rules (e.g. *starovenyi*), being persecuted, had to seek refuge in some more isolated places of the former Russian Empire, in border areas, or in neighbouring countries (Romania, a Europe in Miniature, 2005). Initially, Russian *Starovenyi* chose the Don and Kuban regions, settling in Romanian territory beginning with the 18th cent., and being known by the name of Lippovans.

Dobrogea hosts about 60% of all the Lippovan community in Romania (13,904 pers., out of a total of 23,487 pers.) mostly in Tulcea County at Sarichioi (3,417 pers.), Tulcea Town (3,129 pers.), Carcaliu (3,046 pers.), Ghindărești (2,576 pers.), Jurilovca (2,330 pers.) and Slava Certeză (2,309 pers.). More numerous Danube Delta communities live in the villages of Sfîstofca, Periprava and Mila 23; in Constanța County they are reported in Constanța City and Năvodari Town.

The Lippovan–Russians are Orthodox of the Old Rite, the Church playing a decisive role in preserving their identity. Speaking old Russian, interspersed with some Ukrainian and Romanian words, as well as customs and traditions represent a particularity of this population (Echim, 1995). The Lippovan–Russian community was officially recognized in January 1990, when the Community of the Lippovan–Russians in Romania was founded with a view to preserving their ethnic identity.

5.4. The Rroma Community

This is one of the most numerous ethnic communities in Romania, with some 12,000 persons that declared themselves of belonging to it. Unlike the previously depicted ethnic communities in Dobrogea, the Rroma represent only 2% of all resident Rroma in Romania.

Originating from India (Punjab Region), they appear to have migrated there about one-thousand years ago in the wake of some invasions. Their massive migration to Europe began in the 14th cent., when the Turks conquered the Greek port of Gallipoli (Petcuț *et al.*, 2003). They appeared in the Romanian Countries that same century. Main occupations: copper makers, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, and singers. After the 1848 Revolution, all people were declared free and equal, Gypsy serfdom being abolished for good in 1856 (Riski, 1974 & Barany, 2002).

Most Rroma people live in Constanța City and in the localities of Cuza Vodă, Medgidia, Hârșova, Cernavodă, Castelu, Cobadin, Băneasa, Eforie, Năvodari, Ovidiu, Murfatlar, Mihail Kogălniceanu, Valul lui Traian, Cumpăna; in Tulcea County, they are found in Babadag, Tulcea City, Măcin, Ciucurova, Niculițel and Casimcea (Romania, a Europe in Miniature, 2005).

Demographically speaking, this ethnicity behaves atypically (Ringold, 2000) compared to the Romanian population, having steadily grown by 1,385 pers. (1992–2002 census data) and by 3,681 pers. (2002–2011 census data). Besides, birth-rates with this community are higher than among other ethnics. Politically, they are represented by the Partida Rromilor – Europa.

5.5. The Greek (Hellenic) Community

Greek ethnics number 1,444 pers. in both counties, 39.3% of all Greeks residing in Romania, over half of them (898 pers.) live in Izvoarele Commune (Tulcea County), Constanța (231 pers.), and Tulcea (208 pers.) cities, as well as in the town of Sulina (62 pers.). A Greek population came to Dobrogea as early as the 17th cent. BC, founding the first settlements on the banks of the Sinoie Lake (Istros town, named Histria by the Romans), and Tomis (today's Constanța) in the 6th cent. BC; in the south of Dobrogea, Greeks from Heraclea Pontica set up the town of Callatis (currently Mangalia). In Ancient Times, the Black Sea cities, populated largely by Greeks and Dacians, discharged an intense commercial activity. After the year 1,000, the Genoese traders would arrive on the Black Sea shore, and establish numerous commercial localities, extending their influence farther in, along the Danube, and founding the towns of Giurgiu and Calafat (Brătescu, 1928).

5.6. The Ukrainian Community

The Ukrainians rank sixth (1,168 pers.) among the other ethnics of Dobrogea, they amounting to only 2.3% of all this ethnicity in Romania. Some of them settled in Dobrogea and in the Danube Delta with Turkish accord (late 18th–early 19th cc) under the reign of Empress Catherine II persecutions. In the Danube Delta they are called 'haholi', an appellation distinguishing them from the Lippovan–Russian ethnics (Nichersu & Iacovici, 1995).

In Dobrogea, one finds them especially in Tulcea County (1,079 pers.) and mostly in the Danube Delta: Tulcea City (376 pers.), the villages of Murighiol (91 pers.), Crișan (247 pers.), Mahmudia, Pardina, Sfântu Gheorghe, Frecăței, Chilia Veche and in the town of Sulina (45 pers.); in Constanța County, the majority live in Constanța City (61 pers.).

That there are fewer Ukrainian ethnics results from their declaring themselves Romanians; some field investigations, conducted in the Danube Delta, show them to be the majority population in some village lanes at Crișan, and Sfântu Gheorghe (Damian, 2013). Ukrainian is frequently heard spoken especially by elderly people, but also by members of other age-groups.

Among themselves, they speak both the 'haholi' and the Romanian languages, quickly passing from one language to the other. They are proud of their origins, though nobody tries to establish any contact with its their native country. Outside the Delta area and before foreign tourists who come to their villages, they call themselves Romanians. If one insists on finding their nationality, the answer is 'in Tulcea Town we are Romanian, because there are more Romanians there, and we live in this country, do you not? In the village we are Ukrainians, because more of us are here'.

The Ukrainian population practices agriculture, fishing, animal-breeding and hunting. They settled mostly in the Danube Delta, primarily because of the natural factors (vast water expanses protecting them), originating from regions where they used to fish and till the land. If in time, some of their customs have been lost, the Ukrainian language has been well-preserved. In the villages of Sfântu Gheorghe, Dunavăț and Murighiol they go by the name of 'haholi', being known as '*ukrainians*' in Crișan and Caraorman.

5.7. The Macedonian Community

This community numbers 557 people, being the eighth ethnical minority in Dobrogea. They live especially in the cities of Constanța (370 pers., 66% of total) and by far fewer in the other localities: 64 at Mihail Kogălniceanu, 47 in Tulcea Town, 18 at Năvodari, 17 at Medgidia, 10 at Eforie, etc.

5.8. The Armenian Community

The Armenians live in the city of Constanța (230 pers.) and the town of Tulcea (35 pers.), and, here and there, in another 17 settlements of Constanța County, in particular. They settled in Dobrogea in the 14th cent. as traders, bankers and handicraftsmen, influencing the economic and spiritual life of Constanța City.

5.9. The Magyar (Hungarian) Community

The 2011 Census data registered 512 persons, most of them in the towns of Constanța (214 pers.), Mangalia (82 pers.) and Tulcea (40 pers.). It appears that part of this ethnical minority are followers of the Moldavian Csângòs who had migrated in this area ages back to defend the borders of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In war-time they would settle here (especially at Oituz, Constanța County) to never return to Moldavia (*Romania, a Europe in Miniature, 2005*).

5.10. The German Community

German ethnics in Dobrogea number 163 people, who live mainly in Constanța City (86 pers.) and in Tulcea Town (18 pers.). Small German communities are also found in Mangalia, Năvodari, Eforie Nord, Medgidia and in Cumpăna Commune.

5.11. The Italian Community

The Italians in Dobrogea (114 pers.) reside especially in Constanța City and in a north-east area of Tulcea County (at Greci and Măcin).

The presence of this community is connected with the colonisation of the Black Sea towns (13th–14th cc.) by the maritime towns of Genoa and Venice with the agreement of the Byzantines and the Ottomans. Part of the Italians would settle in Dobrogea after Romania's War of Independence (1878), when this province passed under Romanian administration. Occupations: stone-cutting and land-tilling (the case of Italians in the Greci–Măcin area).

5.12. The Bulgarian Community

For all its being a cross-border minority, there are quite a few Bulgarian ethnics in the Romanian sector of Dobrogea; most of them live in Constanța City and in Tulcea Town. After the Treaty of Craiova (1940), when southern Dobrogea – Cadrilater (the Quadrilaterul) passed under Bulgarian administration, an exchange of population took place between Romania and Bulgaria, whereby 80,000 Romanians had to move from south-to-north Dobrogea and 66,000 Bulgarians shifted from the north of the province to the Cadrilater (*Romania, a Europe in Miniature, 2005*).

During the Ottoman rule, a part of the Dobrogea Bulgarians' forefathers had emigrated from Bulgaria to the north of the Danube, while another part no longer moved to the south of Dobrogea (Cadrilater) as stipulated under the Craiova Treaty.

Other ethnical minorities in the Romanian sector of Dobrogea are in smaller numbers: the Csângòs (51 pers.), Jews (43 pers.), Poles (20 pers.), Serbs (20 pers.), Slovaks (9 pers.), Chinese (8 pers.), Croats (5 pers.) and Czechs (3 pers.) (2011 census data).

5.13. The Diversity Index in Dobrogea

In order to better illustrate the number of ethnic minorities, the ethnic diversity index/administrative unit was calculated by looking at the proportion of minorities/total population. Next, the results obtained were normalized by the minimum–maximum normalization technique referring the difference between the real value and the minimum value to the difference between the maximum and the minimum value. The minorities taken into calculation were from Constanța and Tulcea.

The mean of this indicator for the two counties registered a score of 0.135, that is, 0.14 in Tulcea and 0.13 in Constanța. Highest index values were recorded in the east of Dobrogea and in a few Danube Delta settlements, which confirms the large number of ethnic groups (Ghindărești – 1.00; Carcaliu – 0.93; Slava Cercheză – 0.81; Dobromir – 0.65; Crișan – 0.50; Izvoarele – 0.48; Sarichioi – 0.44; Jurilovca – 0.40; C.A Rosetti – 0.36; Băneasa – 0.34; Babadag – 0.30, etc.).

Lowest index values (0.01–0.08) registered the west Dobrogea settlements of Turcoaia, Luncavița, I.C. Brătianu, Peceneaga, Ostrov, Topalu, Rasova, Oltina, Ion Corvin, etc. bordering on the counties of Călărași, Ialomița, Brăila, and Galați (Figure 6).

The fact that higher values are found sea-sidewise comes from migratory peoples having in the course of time settled in the proximity of the littoral, where conditions were propitious to the development of commercial activities, especially sea-connected transport and trade.

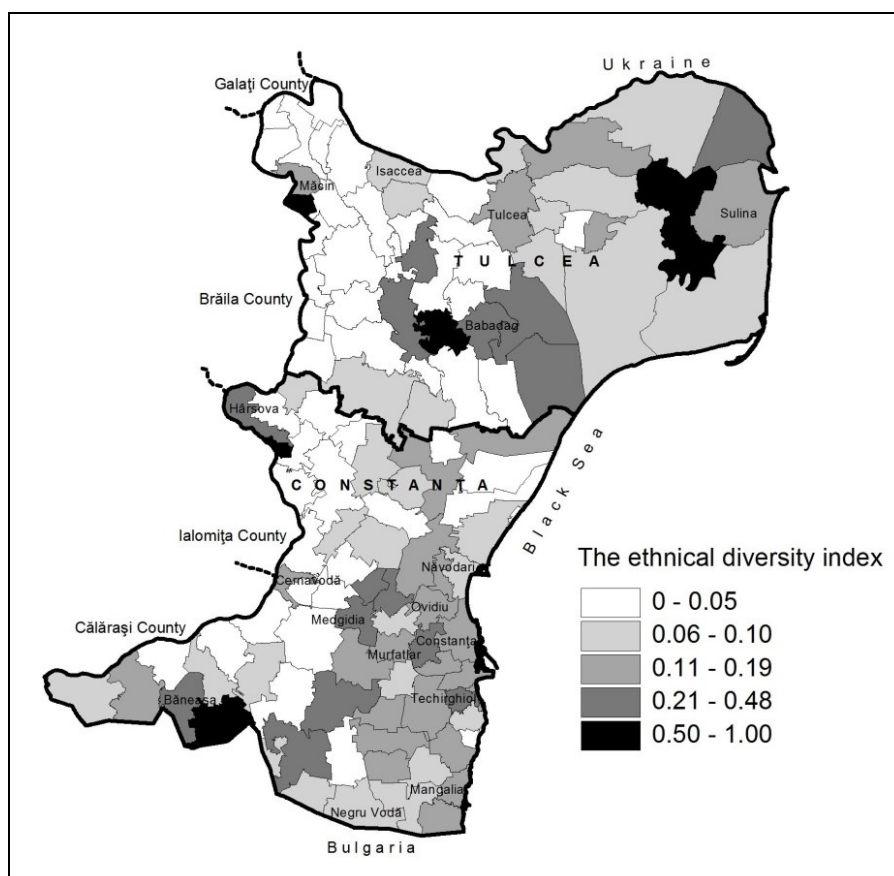


Fig. 6 – The ethnic diversity index in Dobrogea.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Dobrogea has always been a cosmopolite region with numerous co-inhabiting ethnicities living on its territory, a reality bespeaking of the region's tumultuous history. Despite the numerous minority ethnics, cohabitation was devoid of tensions and conflicts, this area being considered a multicultural model in which the Romanians represented the majority population. According to Brătescu (1923), the population of Dobrogea, Indo-European, Semitic, Mongolian, Latin, German and Slav, with Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant Christians, side-by-side with Muslims and Mozaics; a Europe and an Asia in miniature; a huge live ethnographic museum, this is, in brief, the icon of the great River'.

Historical documents on Dobrogea and the Danube Delta evidence the permanence of the autochthonous Romanian population joined by other allogeous ethnicities that have shaped certain cultural particularities by cohabiting with the autochthonous population. Here is what Grigore Antipa wrote (1914): 'also today are old people who tell how their parents had been the first overseers at the trawls and were the first to teach the Cossaks to draw the trawl'.

Each minority ethnical community in Dobrogea has become both an emitter and a receptor of cultural elements, interacting with and borrowing one another's way of life. Thus, a culture specific to this region has in time emerged, containing elements common to all ethnicities and elements characteristic of each of them. The ethnical communities, distinguished by traditions, religions and way of life have respected and tolerated one/another, constituting a unique model, the so-called 'Dobrogea inter-ethnical model' (Brătescu, 1928).

Characteristic of the whole analysed period and of the four censuses taken into calculation 1930, 1992, 2002 and 2011 is the presence of a majority Romanian population, even through of their rates differing from one period to the other (64.7% in 1930, 90.94% in 2002 and 90.10% at the last census. The numerically important minorities have remained the same, with only hierarchical changes in their order (the 1992 census showed the Lippovan–Rusians rank second after the Turks, while at the next censuses this positions was occupied by the Tartars); thus the first positions go to the Turks, Tartars and Lippovan–Rusians followed by Roma, Greeks, Ukrainians, Macedonians, Armenians and Italians. The last census (2011) shows the presence of Macedonians in rather lower numbers in Dobrogea (557 pers.)

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