

# Spatial Visualisation of Ethnic Structure Changes in the Apuseni Mountains (Romania) 1880–2011

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Mădălin-Sebastian Lung

*Faculty of Geography, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca*  
*lungmadalin@yahoo.com*

Gabriela-Alina Muresan

*Faculty of Geography, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca*  
*alina.muresan@ubbcluj.ro*

## SUMMARY

This study aims to present a comparative analysis of the ethnic structure of the population in the Apuseni Mountains (in Romania) during three censuses: in 1880, 1930, and 2011. It emphasises ethnicity continuities and discontinuities, as well as the historical moments that left their mark on that evolution. Statistical data were processed, resulting in the tables showing the ethnic structure of the Apuseni, with absolute as well as relative (percentage) values for each ethnic group. Data were also processed with the aid of ArcGIS 10.3, generating maps of the territorial distribution of the ethnic groups for each administrative-territorial unit. The results show that Romanians maintained their continuity in the mountain area, while other ethnicities changed significantly in terms of numbers and percentages of the total population. The Jewish community was persecuted during the Second World War, finding themselves on the brink of disappearance at the 2011 census. German communities suffered from the socialist policies of deportation to the Soviet Union and other states. Slovaks, deeply affected by industrial restructuring, began to emigrate after the fall of communism in 1989. The most dynamic ethnic group are the Roma, who, according to the censuses, continuously increased in number and percentage.

KEY WORDS: Apuseni Mountains, ethnic structure, Romania

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The population of a land, a region, or a country, or even the entire Earth, is set apart by several different characteristics. Some of them are gender, age, ethnicity and language, religion, professional activity, education level, and residence (Nicoară, 1999). The ethnic structure of a population can help one develop an image of the different ethnic communities in a territory (Paşa

and Garayeva, 2018). From this point of view, Romania is considered a national state, with a relatively homogenous ethnic and linguistic structure (Muntele and Ungureanu, 2017), where Romanians register more than 80% of the country's population (Pop and Rusu, 2014).

This study intends to analyse the ethnic structure of the population residing in the Apuseni Mountains, using statistical data from the 1880, 1930, and 2011 censuses, highlighting the continuity and stability within this demographic parameter, but also the discontinuities mostly caused by historical events that took place in the area.

Studies on the ethnic structure of the population of Romania or some of its regions were mostly conducted by Pop (1991, 2004), Ilieș (1998), Crețan (1999), Bodocan (2001), Șișeștean (2002), Tofan (2014, 2015), Pop and Rusu (2014), Vasile and Dobre (2015), and Lung (2019).

The ethnic structure of a territory is influenced by a series of political, historical, economic, demographic, and social factors. Among them, the historical one seems to be the most important, as the ethnic and linguistic structures of a current population are based on the ethnogenesis process (Ungureanu and Muntele, 2006) and are influenced by several social and political events. The Apuseni Mountains, a part of the three Romanian geographical-historical regions (Transylvania, Crișana, and Banat), were part of the Habsburg and Austro-Hungarian Empire during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. On 1 December 1918, those three provinces, together with Maramureș in the north and Bessarabia in the north-east, were merged with the Motherland into a Great Union. These territorial changes, along with colonisation (during the Habsburg and Austro-Hungarian rule), as well as emigration and immigration after the Great Union of 1918, modified the ethnic and religious structures of the population.

Between the three censuses used in this study (1880, 1930, and 2011), the ethnic structure of the population of the Apuseni Mountains varied considerably. According to Vasile and Dobre (2015), three factors were responsible for this dynamic: a) birth rates and average number of children per family; b) health and life expectancy; c) emigration. These somewhat explain the changes within the ethnic composition.

The ethnic structure of a population is a demographic indicator that has been assessed over time through different means. Although censuses are held in Europe every ten years ever since the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, questions regarding language and nationality did not use to be included in

the questionnaires. Language was introduced as a census category in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (first in Belgium in 1846, then Prussia and Switzerland in the 1850s) (Arel, 2002).

At the different sessions of the International Statistical Congress, the issue of language was tackled indirectly (Vienna, 1857) or just mentioned (London, 1860), while more focus was put on the concept of “nationality”. In 1872, in St. Petersburg, a consensus was reached by registering the category of “nationality” through language. Statisticians concluded that language is the only valid category that might statistically capture nationality (Arel, 2002). At the same time, language is seen as the best measurable objective indicator, as each person knows their language, in contrast to “nationality”, which involves a subjective evaluation (Arel, 2002).

In Eastern Europe, the question concerning language was also introduced as an exclusive criterion for nationality during the censuses of the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Labbé, 1998). In Transylvania, the category used by the Austrian-Hungarian authorities for the 1880 census was “mother tongue”.

In this paper, data for the analysis for the year 1880 were taken from Rotariu, Mureşan and Semeniuc (1997), who gathered and processed the data from a study published in Budapest in 1882: *A Magyar Korona országában az 1881. év elején végrehajtott népszámlálás főbb eredményei megyék és községek szerint részletezve, II kötet*. As the authors do not possess the original paper, the data were used as they appear in Rotariu, Mureşan and Semeniuc (1997). According to them, the criterion used to distinguish ethnic affiliation was the mother tongue.

However, at the 1930 census, which some claim to be the most comprehensive census conducted in Romania (Bodocan, 2001) (at least until the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century), the notion of *neam* (nation, people, kin) was introduced. It was defined as “the people to which someone feels connected through tradition and feelings” (Manuilă, 1938, Preface). Despite being a subjective criterion, it was perceived as most adequate to provide information about the size of each ethnic group, taking into account “the individual feeling of ethnic belonging of each citizen” (Manuilă, 1938, Preface), who best knows in which ethnic group he/she is.

Before analysing the ethnic structure of the Apuseni Mountains, it is necessary to briefly present the numerical evolution of the population in this territory during the last 100 years. Until the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the region had seen an almost constant population increase (the demographic

apex was reached at the 1941 census). Some areas from the Apuseni Mountains even had a population surplus, which led to migration towards scarcely populated parts of the country and industrialised cities, which were located primarily on the border of the mountain area and required extensive labour force, but also to other continents (Plăiaş, 1994; Bolovan, 1998; Drăgan, 2011). In the 1940s and 1950s, the population began to decline. This tendency continued and especially worsened in the 1960s. The major cause of this phenomenon was migration, which, despite being constant in the mountain area ever since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, grew more intense between 1966 and 1980. It was generated by substandard living conditions, a harsh climate less suitable for agriculture, a lack of facilities, and poor infrastructure. Still, the main cause was the forced industrialisation of towns in the region or at the periphery, and the collectivisation of agriculture in the communities bordering the mountain area (Drăgan, 2011). Since 1980, this negative migration had overlapped with the natural deficit, leading to a continuous and evident decrease in population. Population emigration first and foremost caused a reduction in the number of inhabitants, followed by the depopulation of some areas. The population density in the Apuseni Mountains is roughly 28 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup> (Mureşan, 2016), a much lower value than in other similar mountain areas in Europe (for instance, the French Central Massif has an approximate population density of 46 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>).

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In the process of designing this study, statistical data from the 1880 (Rotariu, Mureşan and Semeniuc, 1997), 1930 (Manuilă, 1938), and 2011 (National Institute of Statistics – NIS) censuses were used. Although a long period passed between the last two censuses, data relating to the communist period (1948–1989) were omitted. The censuses during that period are not credible due to the incertitude of data correctness and omission of statistical data. For instance, the atheist communist regime did not register the population based on religion, thus creating a “prolonged statistical gap” (Muntele and Ungureanu, 2017: 295) between 1930 and 1992. Furthermore, data on ethnic structure are incomplete and incorrect (for instance, the number of Roma and Jews was undervalued) (Bodocan, 2001).

All data were processed using Microsoft Excel 2013. Three tables were created based on the results (one for each census), comprising the total number of people as well as their percentages. Data processing was supplemented

by referring to scientific, geographic, and historical literature, which allowed for a better understanding of the context in which different ethnic groups evolved in the Apuseni Mountains.

Figure 1. Geographical location and administrative structure of the Apuseni Mountains



Source: own study

Administratively, the Apuseni Mountains include 153 administrative-territorial units (Drăgan, 2011), 13 of them being urban areas (cities, towns), and 140 rural areas (communes). However, it is worth mentioning that, in 1880, six of these communes did not exist. For this reason, they were excluded from the analysis (Arieșeni, Ciuruleasa, Gârda de Sus, Horea, Negreni, and Valea Ierii). Using the cartographic method a map was created with the geographic

location of the Apuseni Mountains within Romania and its administrative structure (Figure 1). Thus, Geographic Information Systems (ArcGis 10.3) were used. The same procedure was employed when creating maps showing the territorial ethnic distribution for each administrative-territorial unit during the three censuses: 1880 (Figure 2), 1930 (Figure 3), and 2011 (Figure 4).

The Apuseni Mountains form the northern group of the Romanian Western Carpathians and extend across six counties (Alba, Arad, Bihor, Cluj, Hunedoara, and Sălaj). Their surface area is 10750 km<sup>2</sup>. Their northern limit is the Barcău Valley, while their southern border is in the Mureş Valley. The Transylvanian Depression borders the mountains to the east while the Western Hills border the Apuseni to the west (Pop, 2000).

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Ethnic structure of the Apuseni Mountains at the 1880 census

Table 1 presents the ethnic structure of the Apuseni Mountains in 1880 as composed of six ethnicities, including a row for *other ethnicities*. The same table also informs of the majority held by ethnic Romanians, who registered a percentage of 89.50%. That suggests that the Apuseni Mountains are a space in which the Romanian core continued to resist a succession of cycles, in which customs, traditions, culture, religion, and affiliation to one's birthplace had combined harmoniously, leading to the prosperity of Romanians. Lagging behind Romanians in terms of percentage and actual numbers was the Hungarian ethnicity, which registered the second-largest share, or 7.90%, at the 1880 census. These two ethnicities were the largest (demographically) in the Apuseni, the remaining ones registering below 1%. However, it should be pointed out that there were 4,206 German ethnics and 4,002 people of Slovak origin, their numbers being heterogeneously distributed across the Apuseni Mountains.

The 1880 census identified four 100-percent Romanian settlements at the local level, their ethnic structure comprising only Romanians. One of the oldest Romanian settlements is the Râmeţ commune from the Alba Apuseni, forming one of the most ancient Romanian nuclei in this region. The Cluj Apuseni Mountains host two more communes, Mărişel and Râşca, which played an important historical role due to their location. As completely Romanian entities, these settlements had a crucial role in the fight for national unity, especially during the 1848 revolution. The series of purely Romanian settlements also includes Ştei from the Bihor Apuseni.

Table 1. Ethnic structure of the Apuseni Mountains at the 1880 census  
(According to mother tongue)

<b>Ethnic groups</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Romanians	417,098	89.50
Hungarians	36,812	7.90
Germans	4,206	0.90
Slovaks	4,002	0.86
Ruthenians	80	0.02
Croats/Serbs	47	0.01
Other	3,804	0.82

Source: data processed based on Rotariu, T-I., Mureşan, C. and Semeniuc, M. (1997). *Recensământul din 1880, Transilvania [The 1880 Census, Transylvania]*. Bucureşti: Editura Staff.

Hungarians prevailed in six territorial units (Aleşd, Feniş, Huedin, Izvoru Crişului, Rimetea, Sâncraiu). In Rimetea, Alba Apuseni, Hungarian influences adapted best, the local ethnic structure comprising 94% Hungarians, the largest community in the Apuseni in 1880 at the administrative-unit level. The situation was similar in n Huedin, Cluj Apuseni, where ethnic Hungarians reached 91% of the total population. In the remaining administrative units mentioned above, the ethnic structure was more balanced despite a Hungarian majority. In 1880, Hungarians were found in most administrative units in the Apuseni, except 11 that registered no Hungarians at the 1880 census (Avram Iancu, Blăjeni, Bulzeştii de Sus, Ceru-Băcăinţi, Igneşti, Întregalde, Mărişel, Mogoş, Râmeţ, Râşca, and Ştei).

German ethnics registered below 1% of the regional ethnic structure, but the communities found in the Apuseni numbered 4,206 people. The largest regional community was located in the Hunedoara Apuseni, registering 1,776 Germans (42.23% of the total regional German population). The largest local German community in the Apuseni was in Certeju de Sus – 669 people.

In 1880, the Slovak population of the Apuseni Mountains was mostly concentrated in two large local areas, comprising 59.75% of the entire regional Slovak population. The most interesting local community was found in the Şinteu commune in the Bihor Apuseni, where they held the vast majority with 96%. The second-largest local community was in the Plopiş commune in the Sălaj Apuseni, where they reached a percentage of 42% of the ethnic hierarchy, following Romanians, which accounted for 54%. The Plopiş commune was the only unit in the Apuseni Mountains where the ethnic struc-





language. Consequently, many Jews declared themselves Hungarians, and this assimilation affected the ethnic and religious structure of the population (Bolovan, 2005).

### 3.2 Ethnic structure of the Apuseni Mountains at the 1930 census

The 1930 census was the first population count conducted after the Great Union of 1918. Moreover, it was the first demographic census performed by Romanian authorities. The preparation and implementation of this process were entrusted with the scholar Manuilă Sabin, who would have to direct a thorough demographic review of Romania.

The 1930 census showcased a wide variety of ethnicities in the Apuseni region. The ethnic structure of the Apuseni contained 12 ethnic groups, some larger than others. In the entire Apuseni mountain area, Romanians were the *de facto* ethnic majority, with a percentage of 89.05% and a total number of 532,430. They were followed by Hungarians, who constituted 6.90% of the population and totalled 41,245 people. The third-largest ethnic group was Slovaks, registering 1.64%, or 9,793 people. Among the remaining groups, the Roma formed an important community of 6,810 people and a percentage of 1.14%. In 1930, there were 5,297 Jews who made up 0.89% of the ethnic structure of the Apuseni. There were also 2,156 ethnic Germans, with a percentage of 0.36%. The remaining ethnic groups registered low numbers of members. Besides the mentioned ethnicities, there were several with fewer than 100 people: 85 Serbs and Croats, 58 Ruthenians, 38 Russians, 13 Bulgarians, 4 Poles, and 3 Armenians. Table 2 shows the Apuseni mountain area as a Romanian powerbase, where the spirit of traditions, customs, and culture was strongly crystallised after the 1918 Union.

Following the analysis of the 1930 census, one can observe the existence of administrative-territorial units ethnically comprising exclusively Romanians, with Râmeț and Râșca keeping their status and continuity from the 1880 census. Therefore, in the first census following the Great Union, three 100-percent Romanian communes were identified – two in the Alba Apuseni: Poiana Vadului and Râmeț, and Râșca commune in the Cluj Apuseni area.

The history of the Apuseni Mountains was crisscrossed by several significant events, which influenced the ethnic structure of the area. Even though that structure was dominated by Romanians in 1930, there were six administrative units where Hungarians formed an ethnic majority (Finiș, Huedin,

Izvoru Crișului, Rimetea, Săvădisla, and Sâncraiu). The largest Hungarian community, however, was in Huedin, which counted 3,810 Hungarians in 1930. On the other hand, there were ten administrative units with no Hungarians recorded (Albac, Balșa, Blăjeni, Bulzeștii de Sus, Cărpinet, Ceru-Băcăinți, Mărișel, Tomești, Vadu Moților, and Vidra).

Table 2. Ethnic structure of the Apuseni Mountains at the 1930 census

Ethnic groups	Number	Percentage (%)
Romanians	532,430	89.05
Hungarians	41,245	6.90
Germans	2,156	0.36
Russians	38	0.01
Ruthenians	58	0.01
Serbs, Croats	85	0.01
Bulgarians	13	0.00
Slovaks	9,793	1.64
Polish	4	0.00
Jews	5,297	0.89
Armenians	3	0.00
Roma	6,810	1.14

Source: data processed based on Manuilă, S. (1938). *Recensământul general al populației României: din decembrie 1930. Vol. 2: Neam, limbă maternă, religie* [General census of the Romanian population: from December 1930. Vol. 2: Nation, mother tongue, religion]. București: Editura Institutului Central de Statistică.

Slovaks were distributed across 62 administrative units in the Apuseni Mountains. These were mostly small communities with fewer than 100 ethnics. However, in 10 units their number was over 100, and even 1000 individuals. Slovaks formed the majority in two of these cases. One was in the Șinteu commune, located in the Bihor Apuseni, where there were 3,119 people in 1930, and the other was Plopiș from the Sălaj Apuseni, with a community of 2,341 inhabitants. The ethnic structure of the Șinteu commune was dominated by Slovaks, while Jews formed the second-largest group with 26 individuals. In the case of the Plopiș commune from Sălaj, the situation was much more balanced, with 2341 Slovaks, followed by 2,226 Romanians. The largest concentration of Slovaks in the Apuseni Mountains was in five administrative units (Aleșd, Aușeu, Borod, Lugașu de Jos, and Șinteu), encompassing 57.2% of the total Slovak population.

The first Slovak families came to the wooded areas of the Bihor and Sălaj Apuseni from Gemer, Kysuce, and Orava in 1785. Five years later, other Slovaks arrived, this time from Zemplin and Gemer, establishing the settlements of Borumlaca and Vărzari. They were invited by the magnate Bárányi to work in logging, receiving land in return for their services in the deforested areas. In 1817, count Bánffy brought Slovaks to Valea Târnei and Şinteu. In 1830, Slovak settlers established two new communities, Socet and Huta-Voivozi. By 1918, internal migration occurred within the Apuseni Mountains, with Slovak communities settling Borod-Şerani, Marca-Huta, Plopiş, and Lugaşu de Sus. After the World War II and with the establishment of the communist regime, mountain settlements were excluded from the “collectivisation umbrella”, therefore preserving the Slovak private household. However, agricultural land in the valley was collectivised, with nefarious consequences for the Slovak population. Some mining operations were initiated and a glass factory was built in Pădurea Neagră, providing steady jobs for men. That created a binary management system, as women farmed the land and raised animals, mostly cattle. Likewise, after the World War II, some Slovaks from Huta Voivozi, Pădurea Neagră, and Şinteu started migrating towards the oil extraction fields of Suplacu de Barcău (Ştefanko, 1998). The 1960s marked the beginning of a new, bidirectional phase in the Slovak migration. Due to massive industrialisation, some migrated to industrial centres such as Derna, Aleşd, Voivozi, while some unexpectedly migrated towards rural areas with active agriculture, such as Urvind, Aştileu, and Tileagd (Ştefanko, 2004: 20–23).

In 1930, besides Romanians, the most distributed ethnic group across the whole administrative spectrum was the Roma. Only 18 administrative units recorded no Roma people. Roma distribution was generally homogenous, with small communities, mostly below 100 individuals. Only 20 administrative units had populations above 100. The largest Roma community was registered in the town of Huedin, the Cluj Apuseni, reaching 328 people in 1930.

Roma ethnics were first mentioned in Huedin in 1809 when Antal Kallo and Gyuri Varga first arrived at the Bánffy estate. In 1934, 38 nomad Roma families settled in Huedin, but the local authorities refused to let them stay and tried to have them redistributed to other areas. However, due to the coming winter, the Roma were permitted to remain in the settlement. In the spring of 1935, they were moved to Almaşu, Fildu de Jos, Jebuc, Izvoru Crişului, and Sfăraş. Their distribution was not complete since most of them stayed

in Huedin where they built huts and hovels. That place was dubbed The Old Fortress II by socialists (Filip and Mătiş, 2014: 125–126).

The Jewish community was best represented in the Cluj Apuseni, with a total of 1,937 people. Besides, on this side of the Apuseni, Huedin registered the largest Jewish community in the region, reaching 1,018 individuals. The area least populated with Jewish communities was the Alba Apuseni, where only 186 people were registered in 33 administrative units. Only 17 units recorded Jewish communities, the largest being Vinţu de Jos, with 65 people.

The Jewish community of Huedin was a strong, tightly knit construct, as they built a synagogue in 1853. Jewish populations were known to have been migrating towards the central and eastern parts of the European continent since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some of them reaching the area of Huedin (Gyémánt, 2004: 75). However, the magyarisation process implemented by the Dualist monarchy impacted the Jews, as many declared themselves as Hungarians or Germans in 1910 (Rotariu et al., 1999–2006: 240–241). However, after the 1918 Union, the end of the Dualist period, Jews did not leave Huedin. Their stay was recorded in the 1930 census when they registered 18.8% of the population of Huedin (Klepner, 1988).

The largest German population was in the Hunedoara Apuseni, comprising 860 people. Many Germans inhabited Băiţa (155), Brad (154), and Geoagiu (153). One might observe that 53.7% of the German population of the Hunedoara Apuseni lived in these administrative units. The Sălaj Apuseni featured the smallest German community, with only 14 people distributed across three communes: Plopiş (10), Sâg (3), and Halmăşd (1).

Serb and Croat ethnics were recorded in 31 administrative units, the largest community counting ten people in Sebiş in the Arad Apuseni. Furthermore, this particular area of the Apuseni Mountains featured more than half of the entire Serb-Croat community of the Apuseni Mountains in 1930 (50.5%).

Ruthenians were less represented than Serbs and Croats, being recorded in 18 territorial units. The largest community was found in Abrud in the Alba Apuseni, where 17 Ruthenians lived in 1930. The second largest community was in Poieni in the Cluj Apuseni, but comprised only 9 people. The presence of this ethnicity was extremely low, mostly one or two people per administrative unit.

Russians settled four units in the Alba Apuseni, the largest community being the one in Abrud, with 34 ethnics, followed by Câmpeni (2), Albac (1), and Zlatna (1).



### 3.3 Ethnic structure of the Apuseni Mountains at the 2011 census

From 1930 to the last census held in 2011, the ethnic structure of the Apuseni Mountains contracted significantly in terms of numbers (table 3). In general, the population of the Apuseni decreased, while in some ethnic communities these sharp decreases were caused by historical and political developments. Since Romanians preserved their ethnic prevalence, registering 89.16% in 2011, the Apuseni Mountains continue to hold the title of traditional Romanian mountain space (table 3). Following Romanians, the Hungarian population had 5.36%, registering a numerical decrease of 20,623 people, which entails a drop by 50% compared to 1930. The most significant increase in population was registered by the Roma community, by 145.05%. Their participation in the ethnic structure increased from 1.14% to 4.33% in 2011. Ruthenians were the second ethnicity that had grown, from 58 individuals to 664 people in 2011. The Roma and Ruthenian communities are, therefore, the only ones to have recorded demographic growth between 1930 and 2011.

The largest dysfunction was registered for the Jewish ethnics, who suffered massive persecutions during the World War II. The problems for Jews began as Romania, and implicitly the Apuseni Mountain space came under the influence of Nazi Germany.

The significant demographic decrease began in 1941 when the authorities introduced mandatory labour for all Jewish men between the ages of 20 and 48, while in 1943, there were 74 work detachments in Transylvania. These units were tasked with building railroads, working in mining and logging operations, while some were sent to the frontlines. Many Jews died of malnutrition as well as lack of proper care (Ardeleanu et al., 1985 cited by Gyémánt, 2004: 124). The so-called Final Solution of the Jewish problem was slowly implemented as Hungary was occupied by German troops. A distinctive mark was introduced (yellow star), involving an aggressive curtailment of Jewish rights of movement. They were also removed from public offices, their estates and wealth confiscated, and their shops closed. Most Jews were moved to the ghettos of Oradea, Cluj, Dej, Șimleul Silvaniei, and Sighet, where they lived under precarious conditions. The ghettos were lacking sanitation, food was scarce and low-quality and many people underwent daily torture. In June 1944, the Jews were deported to Auschwitz, as part of the attempt to end half a millennium of Jewish life and culture (Vágó, 1966; Carmilly-Weinberger, 1995, 1996; Ardeleanu et al., 1985 cited by Gyémánt, 2004: 126).

Table 3. Ethnic structure of the Apuseni Mountains at the 2011 census

<b>Ethnic groups</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Romanians	343,311	89.16
Hungarians	20,622	5.36
Germans	159	0.04
Turkish	6	0.00
Ruthenians	664	0.17
Serbs	3	0.00
Italians	24	0.01
Slovaks	3,547	0.92
Polish	4	0.00
Jews	3	0.00
Armenians	3	0.00
Roma	16,688	4.33
Chinese	17	0.00

*Source: data processed based on the National Institute of Statistics (2019). Recensământul populației și al locuințelor din 2011 [Population and Housing census of 2011], <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online/>.*

The German community was the next to lose its population in large numbers, reaching only 159 people in 2011 compared to 1930 when the Apuseni Mountains were inhabited by 2,156 Germans. Immediately after 23 August 1944, when Romania switched sides against Germany, many German ethnics were arrested. The project implemented by the National Democratic Front from 24 September 1944 was deeply anti-German. It included, among other things, the confiscation of all German assets and wealth, but also the nationalisation of German enterprises along with the enterprises of their accomplices (Șandru, 2007). In 1945, Moscow decided to deport Germans to the USSR, taking men aged between 17 and 45 and women between 18 and 30. During 1948–1949 and 1950–1951, some of those deported returned, but many died due to poor living conditions (Schieder, 1957 cited by Gheorghiu, 2015: 77, 97). In the 1960s, German migration intensified, as more and more emigration applications were being submitted for approval, the longing to reunite with their families being more than apparent. Kinship relations were causing an increase in emigration demands (Baier, 2013 cited by Gheorghiu, 2015: 205).

By the 2011 census, the Slovak population from the Apuseni Mountains had decreased dramatically. From 1990 onwards, coal mines had begun to shut

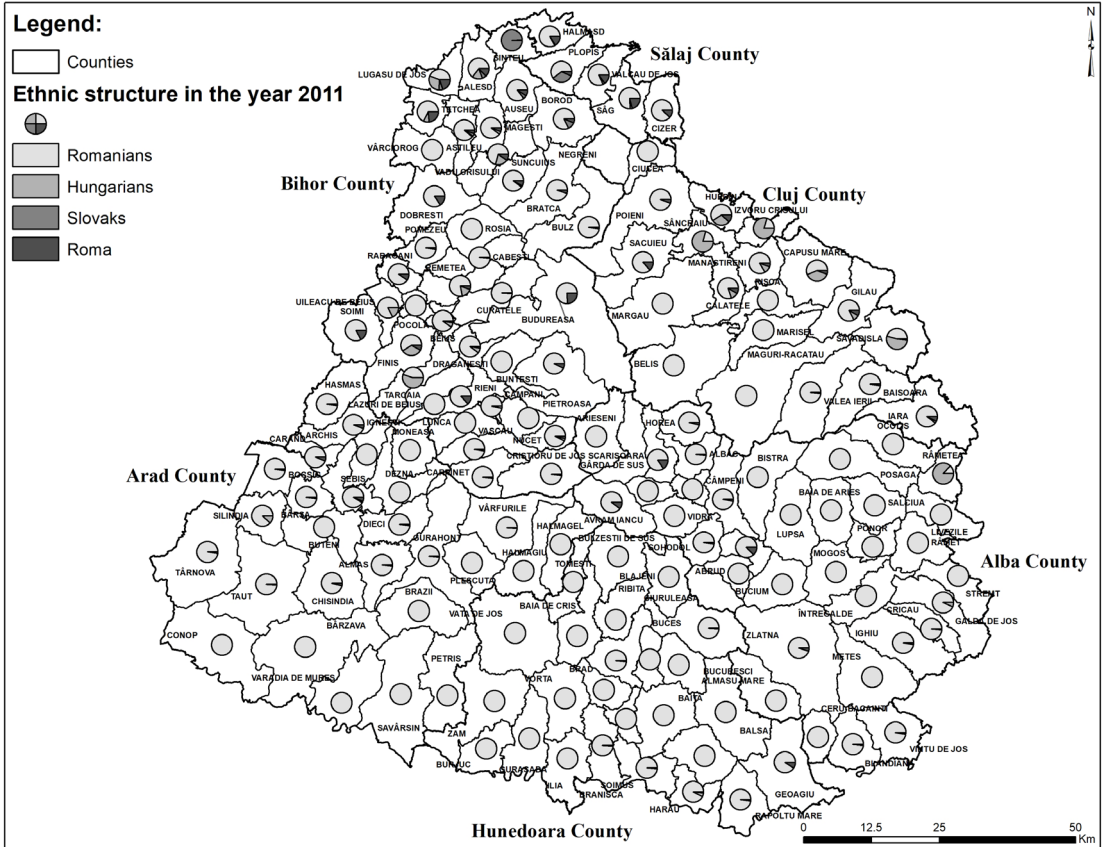
down, which contributed to massive layoffs. In search of jobs, Slovaks started migrating to Italy, the Czech Republic, Spain, Germany, Austria, and Slovakia. A part of the Slovak population moved to the villages of Banat, especially Butin, Nădlac, and Vucova (Štefanko, 1998). Industrial restructuring, as well as shutdowns of mining and other industrial operations, were the main causes of the emigration of Slovaks (Štefanko, 2004: 24). Therefore, Slovak villages in the Apuseni Mountains became depopulated, while the remaining Slovaks were mostly assimilated by the Romanian population, irreversibly changing their social-cultural profile (Šusteková, 2007).

At the 2011 census, there were five localities in the Apuseni Mountains with a Hungarian majority (Izvoru Crișului, Rimetea, Săvădisla, Sâncraiu, and Târcaia). Compared to 1930, Hungarians lost the ethnic majority in Huedin and Finiș. In the commune of Târcaia, there was a reversal as Romanians were more numerous in 1930, by 61 people, while in 2011, Hungarians had a larger population than Romanians, by 201 people. The largest Roma community was in Aleșd, with a total number of 1,213 people in 2011, which marked a dramatic increase compared to 1930 when there were only 13 people. This ethnicity was not recorded in 45 administrative units but continuously prospered in the same communities as in 1930 when they were fewer. In Huedin, their numbers increased by 222.25%, as many had moved from the neighbouring rural areas to more central, urban areas. In the commune of Șinteu, Slovaks dominated the ethnic fabric as in 1930, despite losing 68.45% of their population. Ruthenians prospered in the Apuseni Mountains, the largest community being the one in Târnova, which increased from 11 people in 1930 to 557 in 2011. Excluding Târnova, this ethnicity was solely found in 11 administrative units (Bârzava, Călățele, Cărpinet, Dobrești, Gurahonț, Răbăgani, Săvârșin, Șilindia, Tăuț, Vărădia de Mureș, and Zam) at the second census of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. German communities had been steeply declining during this period, being recorded in only 25 administrative units in 2011. Most Germans were registered in Aleșd, at a total of 24 people. In 1930, the largest community, the one in Băița, registered 155 people, while in 2011, the entire German community in the Apuseni Mountains numbered 159 people. The hardest-hit ethnic community was the Jews. If the Apuseni had more than 5,000 Jews in 1930, the census in 2011 recorded only three, in Aleșd. The political context of the world war and the change in government massively contributed to the disappearance of Jews from the Apuseni Mountains. In 2011, three new ethnicities were recorded, but in very low numbers. Therefore, 24 Italians were inhabiting six territorial units (Brad, Geoagiu, Iliă, Sâncraiu, Sebiș, and Vințu de Jos).



Three units registered 17 Chinese ethnics (Beiuș, Brad, and Ștei), while six Turkish nationals lived in Lunca and Vințu de Jos.

Figure 4. Ethnic structure of each administrative unit in the Apuseni Mountains in 2011



Source: data processed based on the National Institute of Statistics (2019). *Recensământul populației și al locuințelor din 2011* [Population and Housing census of 2011], <http://statistici.inse.ro:8077/tempo-online/>.

One might observe that, between 1930 and 2011, the ethnic structure of the Apuseni Mountains underwent major changes, since ethnicities that flourished in 1930 almost disappeared by 2011. The cause of those ethnic dysfunctions was a series of historical and political events that had significant repercussions on the continuity of many ethnicities. Many anti-ethnic policies were primarily directed against Jewish communities, and then German

communities. However, some ethnicities increased in numbers during this period. After 1989, a new wave of migrations began, especially from Slovak communities, as they went abroad in search of work. Their old places of employment were long gone as the mining activity had decreased and eventually closed indefinitely.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The ethnic structure of the Apuseni Mountains changed many times from one census to another, as some ethnicities experienced continuities and others discontinuities. The ethnic structure diversified as time passed, from less than eight ethnicities in 1880 to 12 in 1930 and 13 in 2011.

Romanians maintained their continuity as the majority ethnicity between 1880 and 2011, clearly dominating the ethnic structure at the regional and, in many cases, local levels. However, other ethnic groups decreased numerically during this period. In other cases, some ethnic populations increased more or less during this interval. Apart from Romanians, the most important ethnic groups in the Apuseni were Hungarians, Germans, Slovaks, and the Roma.

The mentioned dysfunctions were caused by a series of historical and political events that left their mark on the continuity of several ethnic groups. Anti-ethnic policies were primarily aimed at Jewish communities, then Germans, who massively migrated after the institution of communism in Romania in 1948.

After 1989, a new migration phase began, mostly from Slovak communities, whose members went abroad looking for work as their traditional mining jobs receded or disappeared altogether. The most flourishing ethnicity was the Roma, continuously increasing from the 1930 census.

However, it must be pointed out that statistical data must be used carefully when tackling the issue of ethnicity, especially in the case of some ethnic groups such as the Roma (Stojšin, 2015). Many members tend to alter their declaration regarding nationality during censuses and “hide under the umbrella of other nationalities” (Nemeş, 1940: 8). Thus, some hide their ethnicity (motivated by the desire to “escape” a life typical for Roma communities and integrate into the most favoured ethnic majority, especially when they reach a certain level of education and status, or out of fear of social exclusion) (Knežević, 2013). Moreover, a large number of Roma people are registered, such as those returning from other European countries or those

living in informal communities (Stojšin, 2015). That is why, as shown by Knežević (2013: 42, 45), one must take into consideration that statistics only provide information about the population that considers itself as Roma and declares their ethnicity as such, which enables the scientific study of “Roma-declared population” and not their actual number.

Even though some administrative-territorial units lost some ethnic groups between 1930 and 2011, some hosted major ethnic communities, which continuously gained population.

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## **Prostorna vizualizacija promjena etničke strukture u planinama Apuseni (u Rumunjskoj) u razdoblju od 1880. do 2011.**

Mădălin-Sebastian Lung, Gabriela-Alina Muresan

### SAŽETAK

Cilj je ovog istraživanja predstaviti komparativnu analizu etničke strukture stanovništva u planinama Apuseni (u Rumunjskoj) tijekom triju popisa stanovništva: 1880., 1930. i 2011. godine. U njemu se ističu etnički kontinuiteti i diskontinuiteti, kao i povijesni trenutci koji su utjecali na te promjene. Obrada statističkih podataka rezultirala je izradom tablica s prikazom etničke strukture Apusena koje uključuju apsolutne i relativne (postotne) vrijednosti za svaku etničku skupinu. Podaci su obrađeni i s pomoću alata ArcGIS 10.3 te su izrađene karte teritorijalne raspodjele etničkih skupina za svaku administrativno-teritorijalnu jedinicu. Rezultati pokazuju da su Rumunji održali kontinuitet u planinskom području, dok su se druge etničke skupine znatno promijenile u pogledu broja i postotka ukupnog stanovništva. Židovska je zajednica podvrgnuta progonu tijekom Drugog svjetskog rata, a na popisu stanovništva 2011. našla se na rubu nestanka. Na zajednice Nijemaca negativno su utjecale socijalističke politike deportacije u Sovjetski Savez i druge države. Pod znatnim utjecajem industrijskog restrukturiranja Slovaci su se počeli iseljavati nakon pada komunizma 1989. Najdinamičnija su etnička skupina Romi čiji je broj i postotak neprestano rastao u popisima stanovništva.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: planine Apuseni, etnička struktura, Rumunjska