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**Doctoral Thesis Summary:**

***The Occupational Profile of Romanian Parliamentarians: A  
Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament (Senate and  
Chamber of Deputies) and the European Parliament***

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# **The Occupational Profile of Romanian Parliamentarians: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament (Senate and Chamber of Deputies) and the European Parliament**

## **- SUMMARY -**

### **Research problem:**

The PhD thesis titled *The Occupational Profile of Romanian Parliamentarians: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament (Senate and Chamber of Deputies) and the European Parliament* addresses a critical issue for the optimal functioning of representative democracy in Romania: the need to develop and implement a clear and well-founded occupational standard for Romanian parliamentarians.

The choice of this topic stems from the observation of frequent dysfunctions in the exercise of parliamentary duties, which has led to a significant decline in public trust in democratic institutions. It also reflects the ambition to contribute to enhancing professionalism and transparency in the political sphere. These problems are further exacerbated by the absence of a normative framework explicitly defining the competencies required for parliamentarians, ensuring that they fulfill their roles in a transparent and responsible manner.

This thesis seeks to address these deficiencies by proposing an occupational standard applicable not only at the national level but also within the broader context of the European Parliament. This standard should regulate the essential competencies of parliamentarians, with a focus on accountability, transparency, and professionalism, all grounded in the theoretical principles of representative democracy.

### **Research status:**

The dissertation makes significant contributions by proposing an integrated model of competencies for parliamentarians, encompassing both technical and professional skills as well as personal and social competencies. This model is supported by rigorous analysis of collected data, providing a solid foundation for the practical implementation of the occupational standard.

Another novel aspect of the work is the use of transactional analysis to identify and reduce negative psychological games in the parliamentary context. This innovative approach complements traditional perspectives and offers concrete solutions to improve the organizational climate and individual performance.

### **Originality of the study:**

The research was structured in several stages, each contributing significantly to the understanding and development of an occupational standard for parliamentarians.

Stage 1: Analysis of specialized literature: Initially, a review of the existing literature, including studies, reports, and legislative documents, was conducted. The goal of this analysis was to identify existing models and understand the challenges and solutions applied in other contexts.

Stage 2: Online questionnaire (found in Appendix 1) : The second stage involved the development and application of an online questionnaire addressed to Romanian parliamentarians. This tool was designed to collect relevant data about their daily activities, the skills they deemed essential, and their opinions on the need for an occupational standard. The responses were analyzed to identify trends and significant correlations.

Stage 3: Transactional and SWOT analysis: In the third stage, transactional analysis and the SWOT matrix were employed to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the implementation of an occupational standard. These methods allowed for a holistic approach and a deeper understanding of the organizational and psychological context in which parliamentarians operate.

Several challenges emerged during the research. One of the most significant was accessing a sufficient number of respondents, given the demanding political, public, electoral, and legislative schedules of parliamentarians, as well as the reluctance of some members to participate in the survey. Additionally, the process of data collection and interpretation was complex, requiring a high level of focus to ensure the validity and relevance of the results.

Another challenge was related to the diversity of responses and the difficulty of identifying uniform criteria that could be applied broadly. This required a detailed analysis and a flexible approach to draw relevant and applicable conclusions.

### Research design, methodology and paradigm:

Methodologically, due to the complexity and depth of the study, this research incorporates a variety of sources and documents that are essential in constructing a conceptual framework for parliamentary typology. As an interdisciplinary approach, combining political science, sociology, law, and parliamentary administration, the study's initial methodological step involves analyzing key events that have shaped the parliamentary profile over time. Although the contexts and historical periods may differ, each setting provides valuable insights into the legal, political, and intellectual development of both the Romanian and European parliamentarians, with the aim of testing the validity of the working hypothesis.

In examining the previously outlined political events, drawing parallels between the Romanian case and that of the European Union is essential in gathering enough direct data to provide a preliminary answer to the research question. Comparative analysis will assess both the similarities and the divergences in the socio-political structure of parliamentarians.

Additionally, the research includes a comparative narrative analysis of the socio-political profile of Romanian parliamentarians, as well as reviews of social reports across different electoral periods. The

SWOT diagram is employed to diagnose both Romanian and European parliamentarians' strengths and weaknesses.

The findings of this research will make a significant contribution to political science by identifying a potential occupational standard for Romanian and European parliamentarians through transactional analysis and sociological research (using a semi-structured interview with 30-35 parliamentarians and MEPs). Case studies on the evolution of parliamentarians from political representatives to professional social actors, as well as monitoring via the Principal-Agent method applied in Poland, form the core of this investigation.

The professionalization or standardization of the "parliamentarian" role should be examined through several lenses: parliamentary work as a unique profession, with adequate remuneration; professionalism, in terms of competency and continuous specialization; and the psychosocial motivation behind choosing a political career.

The intellectual inquiry into the parliamentary profile will address both cognitive and practical needs. From a thematic standpoint, this thesis distinguishes itself through its originality, offering new perspectives in two main areas: legislative and sociological explanations of the concept of an occupational profile and its comparative analysis in relation to parliamentary career standards. Finding answers to questions regarding its evolution and significance represents a key challenge in both political science and public policy research.

This thesis aims to explore the possibility of developing an occupational standard for Romanian parliamentarians.

In the course of this work, I will address the following key points:

The theoretical foundations of representative democracy and the role of occupational standards in strengthening it;

Parliamentary competency models found in academic literature and their relevance to the Romanian context;

The methodology employed in designing the questionnaire and analyzing the collected data;

The research results and their interpretation in relation to parliamentary theory and practice;

Recommendations for implementing an occupational standard and the expected impact on the Romanian political system.

This thesis adopts the Chicago citation style, which is widely used in academic publications in the field of political science. The choice of this style ensures clarity and consistency in referencing, enabling a structured and unified approach to citing sources. All materials referenced, including foundational works and case studies, follow this citation format. The bibliography has been compiled in accordance with Chicago guidelines (as outlined at [https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)), ensuring complete transparency of the consulted sources.

## Objectives of the Thesis:

The thesis is structured around clearly defined objectives, each contributing to the development and promotion of a coherent occupational standard that meets the current needs of Romanian democracy while aligning with European requirements. The implementation of such a standard can significantly impact the quality of the legislative process and public trust in democratic institutions. The primary goal is to professionalize the role of parliamentarians by establishing a clear and coherent occupational standard.

### **1. Developing an Occupational Standard for Romanian Parliamentarians:**

The first objective of the thesis is to create a coherent occupational standard based on a detailed analysis of both classical and modern theories of representative democracy. The analysis integrates contributions from Plato, who highlighted the inherent risks of democracy, and John Stuart Mill, who emphasized the importance of education and civic responsibility for a functioning democratic system. Giovanni Sartori's theories on accountability and transparency provide a modern and practical framework for developing an occupational standard.

This standard seeks to define clear and measurable competencies, including technical, professional, personal, and social skills, all necessary to ensure the efficiency, integrity, and accountability of Romanian parliamentarians. The legal and administrative implications of implementing such a standard are also analyzed, proposing a set of criteria for evaluating and monitoring parliamentary performance.

### **2. Comparative Analysis between the Romanian Parliament and the European Parliament:**

Another major objective of the thesis is to conduct a detailed comparative analysis between the Romanian Parliament and the European Parliament. This analysis identifies essential similarities and differences between the two institutions, aiming to develop an occupational standard adaptable to both contexts. It includes an evaluation of how the principles of representative democracy are applied in each setting and how they shape the occupational profile of parliamentarians. The analysis covers organizational structure, legislative procedures, control systems, the balance of powers, and the relationships between parliamentarians and their constituents in both institutions. This comparison reveals how national and European contexts influence the perception of the necessary competencies for parliamentarians and how these competencies can be standardized.

### **3. Applying the Principal-Agent Model to Clarify Parliamentary Responsibilities:**

The thesis applies the Principal-Agent model to clarify the relationship between voters and parliamentarians, where relevant. In a representative democracy, parliamentarians act as agents of their constituents (the principals), with the responsibility to represent their interests transparently and responsibly. Using this model in the development of an occupational standard allows for a clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of parliamentarians, ensuring accountability to the electorate.

The Principal-Agent model is used in the thesis to assess how parliamentarians can be monitored and evaluated based on their legislative and representative performance. Control and evaluation mechanisms are proposed to ensure that parliamentarians fulfill their mandates in line with voters' expectations and the public interest.

#### **4.Using Transactional Analysis to Improve the Organizational Climate:**

An innovative objective of the thesis is the use of transactional analysis to improve the organizational climate within the Romanian Parliament. Transactional analysis is a psychological tool that helps identify and manage dysfunctional interactions between parliamentarians. In the parliamentary context, this tool can be used to reduce tensions and promote more effective and constructive collaboration.

The thesis proposes applying this analysis to improve interpersonal relationships among parliamentarians, thereby reducing negative psychological games that can affect legislative decisions and cooperation among members. This objective is crucial for creating a healthier and more productive working environment in parliament.

#### **5.Conducting a Quantitative Study to Validate Standardization Proposals:**

Another essential objective of the thesis is to conduct a quantitative study to validate the proposed standardization of the parliamentary role. This study, carried out through online surveys addressed to Romanian parliamentarians and Members of the European Parliament, collects relevant data on their perceptions of the necessary competencies and their responsibilities towards voters.

The data analysis from this study provides a solid empirical foundation to support the proposed competency model in the occupational standard. Additionally, the study allows for adjustments to the initial proposals based on the practical realities of parliamentary work, ensuring their relevance and applicability.

### **Main results achieved:**

The research conducted in this thesis led to the formulation of an integrated competency model for parliamentarians, which includes technical, professional, personal, and social skills, all of which are essential for the effective exercise of parliamentary duties. These competencies are clearly defined and measurable, providing a solid normative framework for evaluating and monitoring parliamentary performance.

#### **1.The Integrated Competency Model:**

The proposed model encompasses technical competencies, such as knowledge and correct application of legislation, professional competencies related to the development and evaluation of public policies, personal competencies including communication and negotiation skills, and social competencies, which focus on the ability to collaborate effectively with other parliament members and civil society.

## **2.Application of the Principal-Agent Model:**

The Principal-Agent model was selectively applied to clarify parliamentary responsibilities in relation to voters. This approach enabled the definition of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that ensure parliamentarians act in the public interest and respect their electoral mandate. The model was used to structure the occupational standard to reflect responsibility and transparency as fundamental values of representative democracy.

## **3.Improvement of the Organizational Climate through Transactional Analysis:**

The use of transactional analysis demonstrated that it can significantly contribute to improving interpersonal relationships within the parliament. The findings show that reducing psychological games and promoting open and honest communication among parliamentarians can greatly enhance the efficiency of the legislative process and create a more harmonious and collaborative working environment.

## **4.Validation of Standardization Proposals through Quantitative Studies:**

The quantitative study provided valuable data that allowed the validation and adjustment of the initial standardization proposals. The analysis of the survey results showed that the majority of parliamentarians believe that a clear occupational standard would improve accountability and parliamentary performance, confirming the relevance of the research and the proposed model.

## **5.Case Study – The Four Proposed Occupational Standards:**

A central element of the thesis is the case study, which presents four occupational standards proposed for national and European parliamentarians. These standards were developed to ensure that parliamentarians possess the necessary skills to fulfill their roles efficiently and responsibly.

1.Occupational Standard for National Parliamentarians: This standard defines the essential competencies required for the role of a parliamentarian in Romania, focusing on accountability to voters, the ability to develop and evaluate legislation, and transparency in decision-making. It also includes criteria for periodic performance evaluation of parliamentarians.

2.Occupational standard for European Parliamentarians: Adapted to the European context, this standard emphasizes the competencies necessary to represent national interests within the European Parliament. It focuses on diplomatic skills, knowledge of European legislation, and the ability to negotiate and collaborate at an international level. Harmonization of this standard with the European Parliament's requirements is proposed, ensuring consistency among parliamentarians from different member states.

3.Occupational standard for Parliamentary Accountability: This standard highlights the importance of parliamentary accountability and includes measures for the periodic evaluation of parliamentarians' performance



relative to voter expectations. Feedback mechanisms are proposed to allow citizens to assess their representatives' activities, ensuring a constant connection between parliamentarians and their constituents.

4. Occupational Standard for Transparency and Integrity: This standard proposes concrete measures to increase transparency in parliamentary activities and ensure integrity in the relationships between parliamentarians and voters. It includes requirements for the periodic publication of activity reports, declaration of conflicts of interest, and ensuring public access to relevant information.

## **Structure of the thesis and argumentation of each chapter:**

### **Introduction:**

The introduction outlines the reasons behind the choice of this research topic, emphasizing its importance in the current context of Romanian democracy. The thesis is based on the premise that standardizing the role of parliamentarians can significantly enhance professionalism and transparency in the political sphere. The main objective of the research is to propose a coherent set of occupational standards for parliamentarians, grounded in a comprehensive analysis of the functions and competencies required for the role.

This section formulates the working hypotheses and highlights the originality of the study, through its interdisciplinary approach and the use of innovative analytical methods, such as transactional analysis and the SWOT matrix.

Initial observations indicated that the parliamentary function in Romania suffers from significant dysfunctions, manifested by a decline in public trust in democratic institutions and the lack of a clear normative framework regulating the competencies needed for the effective exercise of parliamentary mandates.

In this context, the thesis aims to propose an occupational standard model that can be applied both at the national level and within the European Parliament, thereby contributing to increased accountability, transparency, and professionalism among parliamentarians.

## **Chapter I - Foundations of Representative Democracy: theoretical aspects**

### **1.1. Classical Forms of Representative Democracy:**

This subsection explores the evolution of the concept of representative democracy, starting from classical theories such as those proposed by Plato, who emphasized democracy's vulnerabilities to demagoguery and instability, to modern theories of representation discussed by John Stuart Mill and Giovanni Sartori. A central aspect of the discussion is the Principal-Agent model, which explains the

relationship between voters and parliamentarians, highlighting the challenges and risks associated with this relationship, such as informational asymmetry and moral hazard.

1.2. The Evolution of Democracy from the Perspective of National Representation – A Comparative Historical Model, Analysis of the Romanian Parliamentarian vs. the MEP: Parliamentary Evolution 2016-2020. The Use of the SWOT Matrix as a Comparative Study Tool:

This subsection analyzes the evolution of Romanian parliamentarism in a comparative context with the European Parliament, using the SWOT matrix to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with the parliamentary role. The analysis focuses on the development of the parliamentary function in Romania from the interwar period to the present, highlighting the transition from an elite-based system to a democratic one, open to broader citizen participation.

**Table no.1. - SWOT Analysis of the Parliamentary Mandate 1919-1920<sup>1</sup>:**

Weaknesses	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Political divergences generated by ideology and external influences on parliamentarians from Transylvania, Bucovina, and Bessarabia, contrasting with those from the Old Kingdom. ;</li> <li>-Lack of legislative integration and centralization needed to complete the legal recognition process for all Romanian provinces as part of Greater Romania, only concluded in 1921-1922.;</li> <li>-Diverse political pluralism without an adequate electoral threshold, leading to frequent tensions in parliamentary decision-making;</li> <li>-Experienced parliamentarians from conservative, liberal, and socialist/agrarian backgrounds not supporting the initiatives of new parliamentarians from Bessarabia or Transylvania; <sup>2</sup></li> <li>-Political instability and external influences often undermined continuity and coherence in legislation implementation. Corruption was a significant issue, impacting public trust;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Symbolic involvement of King Ferdinand in overseeing the management of the first parliamentary year;</li> <li>- Patriotic enthusiasm of parliamentarians, driven by the hope for the full realization of the Great Union.;</li> <li>- Experienced political leaders and experts from various fields (military, legal, engineering, medical) who held leadership or administrative roles in multiple empires;</li> <li>-Specialists and experts recognizing the importance of creating a specialized group for the new Romanian Parliament;</li> <li>-Rapid adoption of legislation to recognize the unification of historical provinces with Romania and the first laws on universal suffrage, land redistribution, and reforms;</li> <li>-Drafting and debating legislative proposals for the centralization of financial resources and credit systems, supervised by the Romanian Central Bank.;</li> <li>-Predominantly voluntary action with extended sessions to debate legislative initiatives for national legal uniformity;<sup>3</sup></li> <li>- a long tradition of parliamentarism combined with a</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Dacian Vasincu. "Evolution or Involvement of Parliament: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament after the Great Union and the Present Parliament." *Polis: Journal of Political Science* 7, no. 3 (25), New Series (June-August 2019): 25–35. Accessed October 30, 2023. <https://revistapolis.ro/evolutie-sau-involutie-parlamentara-analiza-comparativa-a-parlamentului-romaniei-dupa-marea-unire-si-a-celui-actual/>.

<sup>2</sup> Dacian Vasincu. "Evolution or Involvement of Parliament: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament after the Great Union and the Present Parliament." *Polis: Journal of Political Science* 7, no. 3 (25), New Series (June-August 2019): 25–35. Accessed October 30, 2023. <https://revistapolis.ro/evolutie-sau-involutie-parlamentara-analiza-comparativa-a-parlamentului-romaniei-dupa-marea-unire-si-a-celui-actual/>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

	constitution guaranteeing fundamental rights and freedoms, providing a solid foundation for democratic functioning.
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<p>-King Ferdinand's declaration regarding agrarian reform served as a motivating factor for the rural population, including peasants and small agricultural producers;</p> <p>-The international context was marked by various peace conferences and the civil conflict that transformed into the Russian Revolution;</p> <p>-The European geopolitical configuration facilitated the formation of nation-states and the recovery of lost territories, such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Italy, and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia;</p> <p>-Social tensions in the former empires (Hungary, Germany, Austria) created favorable conditions for the formation of military and diplomatic alliances aimed at controlling these countries and preventing possible attacks against Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (which later became Yugoslavia);<sup>4</sup></p>	<p>- The territorial claims of Soviet Russia and its refusal to recognize the union of Bessarabia with Romania;</p> <p>-The growing threats posed by communist and fascist ideologies in Europe;</p> <p>-The emergence of new totalitarian and dictatorial states on the ruins of old empires, such as communist Hungary, fascist Italy, and the rise of Hitlerism in Germany;</p> <p>-The impact of war on global geopolitics, which contributed to shaping the Great Economic Depression of 1929-1933.<sup>5</sup></p>

This analysis highlights the significance of the first Parliament of Greater Romania, and the interpretation of its results will be further detailed in comparison with the evolution of parliamentarism. Romanian parliamentarism, from its formation in the 19th century up to the interwar period, developed in a complex context shaped by both internal and external challenges. The 1866 Constitution, and later the 1923 Constitution, laid the foundations of a bicameral system, solidifying the role of Parliament within the state. This legal framework was essential for the development of Romanian democracy, providing a structure for national representation and decision-making.

Subsequent evolution, especially during the communist era, was marked by the near-total suppression of Parliament's role, transforming it into a formal institution devoid of real power. The restoration of democracy after 1989 brought Parliament back to the center of Romanian political life, but the process of rebuilding was fraught with difficulties, including the lack of a stable political culture and

<sup>4</sup>Dacian Vasincu. "Evolution or Involution of Parliament: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament after the Great Union and the Present Parliament." *Polis: Journal of Political Science* 7, no. 3 (25), New Series (June-August 2019): 25–35. Accessed October 30, 2023. <https://revistapolis.ro/evolutie-sau-involutie-parlamentara-analiza-comparativa-a-parlamentului-romaniei-dupa-marea-unire-si-a-celui-actual/>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

persistent tendencies of corruption and nepotism. These challenges have shaped both public perception of the institution and its effective functioning.

### **Parliamentary Evolution 2016 – Present, from a SWOT Perspective**

Since 1989, the Romanian Parliament has undergone numerous transformations, some perceived as progress, others as regression, depending on one's perspective. Among the most notable changes was the introduction of the single-member constituency voting system in 2008, followed by a return, in 2016, to a modified version of the list-based voting system.

The Romanian legislative body has evolved significantly in recent decades, undergoing a series of transformations aimed at both adapting parliamentary structures to new democratic realities and responding to emerging social and political challenges.

The post-2016 period marked a unique moment in the evolution of Romania's legislative framework, characterized by the return to the list-based voting system—a decision that sparked intense debates about the efficiency and representativeness of this system. The return to list-based voting was justified by the need for greater political coherence and the desire to impose stricter party discipline, in contrast to the fragmentation and volatility generated by the single-member constituency system. Although some analysts viewed this decision as a step back, it actually reflects a pragmatic adaptation to the Romanian political context, where major parties preferred to exercise tighter control over the candidate selection process, minimizing the risk of independent "local barons" straying from party lines.

However, the adoption of the list-based voting system also had negative consequences, such as the increased centralization of power within the parties and the diminished direct accountability of parliamentarians to voters. This system strengthened the control of party leaders over members of Parliament, limiting individual initiative and fostering near-total subservience to party directives. As a result, the functioning of Romania's legislative body has become more dependent on the political interests of party leadership, to the detriment of true representation of citizens' interests. This trend has contributed to a decline in public trust in Parliament, which is increasingly seen as disconnected from the needs and aspirations of the population.

The influence of the single-member constituency system on the decision-making power of Romanian parliamentarians marked a significant shift from the list-based period, where decisions were largely controlled by the centralized leadership of political parties. This shift from centralized authority to a more localized political dynamic was, in many cases, misunderstood and poorly implemented. Beginning in 2016, there was a partial return to the list-based system, reflecting an adaptation of parliamentary mechanisms to the political ambitions that had emerged after 1990. This change contrasts with the period following the Great Union, when the electoral structure remained constant for two decades.

As in many other participatory democracies, Romania is still in the early stages of transforming its parliamentary system from the centralized, unicameral model of the totalitarian regime to a more

decentralized level, where local communities participate in selecting candidates for both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, with a division of responsibilities in the bicameral system.

This thesis proposes an experiment designed to be more accessible. To understand the diagnostic analysis presented below, it is important to consider the evolution of the post-communist political elite and clarify the stages that have shaped the political mentality of parliamentarians. This mentality can either be a vulnerability or an asset in defining the mechanisms of the Romanian political system.<sup>6</sup>

The stages mentioned constitute essential conclusions regarding the evolution of contemporary parliamentarism. The comparative SWOT matrix will consolidate the elements that will serve as the pre-argument for incorporating parliamentarians into the structure of occupations in Romania. This also applies to those who carry out their activities according to the organizational model of public policy management in Romania—high-ranking civil servants—who, from the middle level of public decision-making, often assume the actions of political authorities. In this capacity, they act either as elected officials or, as the Principal-Agent model suggests, as agents of the principal's interest (the public opinion, the voters).

**Table no.2. - SWOT Analysis of Parliamentary Evolution 2016-present:**

Weaknesses	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organizational self-sufficiency, with decision-making characteristics typical of the early 1990s and 2000s, which have persisted to the present day;</li> <li>- The perpetuation of a clientelistic relationship between parliamentary and specialized administrative bodies within the two Chambers;</li> <li>-Demotivation of high-performing parliamentary public servants through the limitation of objective-based management activities (without partisan interests);</li> <li>-The increasing number of political officials in public roles, aimed at centralizing parliamentary decisions in favor of a single political formation;</li> <li>-Decreased efficiency of parliamentary activities, with decisions increasingly subordinated to mono-political and governmental interests;</li> <li>-Stereotypical parliamentary actions and the lack</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The presence of political actors with parliamentary experience who represent a balance of institutional values;</li> <li>-The maintenance of traditional working practices, characterized by consistent results in the application of parliamentary procedures (the stages and forms of the legislative procedure);</li> <li>-The preservation of parliamentary hierarchy through cross-party compromise, aimed at balancing legislative decisions on public interest areas (e.g., debates on justice reform bills, discussions on the state budget bill according to the constitutional procedures of 2001, and projects and strategies related to GDP in education, defense, etc.);</li> <li>-Maintaining an institutional appearance with positive effects on the balance of power between the parliamentary majority and opposition;</li> <li>-The consolidation of party unity and decision-</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup>Dacian Vasincu. "Evolution or Involution of Parliament: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament after the Great Union and the Present Parliament." *Polis: Journal of Political Science* 7, no. 3 (25), New Series (June-August 2019): 25–35. Accessed October 30, 2023. <https://revistapolis.ro/evolutie-sau-involutie-parlamentara-analiza-comparativa-a-parlamentului-romaniei-dupa-marea-unire-si-a-celui-actual/>.

<p>of substance in legislative projects (proposals, interpellations, etc.), in contrast with the high volume of formal submissions;-Superficial transparency in parliamentary oversight mechanisms, especially the politicization of parliamentary inquiry committees monitoring public institutions and national security activities;</p> <p>-centralizarea excesivă a puterii în cadrul partidelor, determinată de sistemul de vot pe listă, a diminuat autonomia individuală a parlamentarilor și a redus diversitatea de opinii și inițiative legislative.<sup>7</sup></p> <p>- Excessive centralization of power within political parties, driven by the list-based voting system, which has reduced individual autonomy for parliamentarians and decreased the diversity of opinions and legislative initiatives;</p> <p>-Excessive politicization of public roles within Parliament has undermined meritocracy and promoted a system of political patronage, negatively impacting the efficiency and impartiality of the legislative process.<sup>8</sup></p>	<p>making coherence within Parliament has allowed for the adoption of coordinated policies, reflecting a clear and consistent political line;</p> <p>- The experience accumulated by some parliamentarians in legislative procedures has ensured continuity in the legislative process and facilitated the effective application of parliamentary procedures;</p> <p>- The digitization and informatization of parliamentary activities have increased transparency and accessibility in the legislative process, facilitating citizen participation in political debates and monitoring parliamentary activities;</p> <p>- The continued professionalization of the parliamentary body: despite political fluctuations, the 2016-2020 period saw an increase in the number of parliamentarians with relevant experience in various fields, including law and economics. This professionalization has been further supported by easier access to educational resources and continuous training.<sup>9</sup></p>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<p>- The year 2019 marked a significant legislative moment for the Romanian Parliament, due to the benefits brought by assuming the Presidency of the Council of the EU;</p> <p>- Legislative and identity-related directions regarding the application of the EU acquis were clarified during the Presidency of the Council of the EU;</p> <p>- E-governance platforms and social media networks were utilized to intensify debates and increase public interest in parliamentary policies and procedures;</p> <p>- The progress of innovative technologies</p>	<p>- A significant portion of the electorate, representing over 70% according to the most recent opinion polls, expresses disappointment and dissatisfaction with the impact of parliamentary decisions on key public policies such as education, healthcare, pensions, and salaries;</p> <p>- In a dynamic international context, characterized by European Parliament elections, political changes in the Republic of Moldova, and various electoral processes in European and Asian countries, the balance of power in the Middle East is shifting, while the rise of nationalism and extremism in EU parliaments is becoming increasingly visible;</p> <p>- There are pressures for ethnic regionalization and</p>

<sup>7</sup> Dacian Vasincu. "Evolution or Involution of Parliament: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament after the Great Union and the Present Parliament." *Polis: Journal of Political Science* 7, no. 3 (25), New Series (June-August 2019): 25–35. Accessed October 30, 2023. <https://revistapolis.ro/evolutie-sau-involutie-parlamentara-analiza-comparativa-a-parlamentului-romaniei-dupa-marea-unire-si-a-celui-actual/>.

<sup>8</sup> Radu Carp and Constantin Iordachi. *Public Policy and Politics in Romania*. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2012, 45-60.

<sup>9</sup> Alina Mungiu-Pippidi. *The Quest for Good Governance: How Societies Develop Control of Corruption*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, 145-160.

<p>globally significantly influenced the way parliamentary activities were publicized;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunities emerged to enhance public engagement by organizing online conferences to facilitate direct dialogue between parliamentarians and citizens.</li> </ul>	<p>territorial autonomy, supported by countries like Hungary and Russia, in the context of a lack of adequate legislative response from the Romanian Parliament;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The persistence of corruption and political nepotism represents a serious threat to the integrity of the parliamentary system, undermining citizens' trust in the legislative process;</li> <li>- The rise of extremism and nationalism in the European and global electoral landscape may cause instability in the Romanian political scene and intensify social and political tensions;</li> <li>- The risk of a new global economic crisis could negatively impact the Parliament's ability to implement effective policies and may exacerbate Romania's political and economic instability. .<sup>10</sup></li> </ul>
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Source: Dacian Vasincu, "Evolution or Involution of Parliament: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament after the Great Union and the Present Parliament," *Polis: Journal of Political Science* 7, no. 3 (25) (June-August 2019).

Analiza SWOT a evoluției parlamentare din perioada 2016-prezent indică un **echilibru precar între avantajele sistemului de vot pe listă și provocările generate de centralizarea puterii și politizarea excesivă**. Deși Parlamentul României a demonstrat o capacitate de adaptare și de consolidare a unor practici legislative eficiente, **persistența unor practici politice nepotrivite și a lipsei de transparență** subminează stabilitatea și eficiența instituției. **Oportunitățile oferite de integrarea europeană și de digitalizarea activității parlamentare** trebuie valorificate pentru a depăși amenințările și pentru a restabili încrederea cetățenilor în procesul democratic .

**SWOT Analysis of Parliamentary Evolution from 2016 to the Present** indicates a precarious balance between the advantages of the list-based voting system and the challenges generated by the centralization of power and excessive politicization. While the Romanian Parliament has demonstrated an ability to adapt and consolidate efficient legislative practices, the persistence of inappropriate political practices and lack of transparency undermines the institution's stability and effectiveness. The opportunities offered by European integration and the digitization of parliamentary activities must be leveraged to overcome the threats and restore citizens' trust in the democratic process.

<sup>10</sup> Dacian Vasincu. "Evolution or Involution of Parliament: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament after the Great Union and the Present Parliament." *Polis: Journal of Political Science* 7, no. 3 (25), New Series (June-August 2019): 25–35. Accessed October 30, 2023. <https://revistapolis.ro/evolutie-sau-involutie-parlamentara-analiza-comparativa-a-parlamentului-romaniei-dupa-marea-unire-si-a-celui-actual/>.

**Effects on Results/Validation of Comparative SWOT Analyses:** By utilizing the two SWOT matrices, an evolution can be observed that can be interpreted as either positive or negative, depending on the perspectives of Romania's parliamentary political class during pivotal moments in history. Nevertheless, as a lesson from the past that seems to repeat itself, both during 1919-1920 and between 2016-2019, short-term political interests were sanctioned by electoral developments. The Conservative Party, for instance, exerted its last political influences until 1922, while ALDE, following its failure in the May 2019 European elections, sought a convenience alliance with the Pro Romania Party to maintain its political presence. Those responsible for governance, both then and now, were politically sanctioned and lost parliamentary representation.

Beyond certain subjective observations, the National Liberal Party (PNL) represents historical stability, surviving through adaptive decision-making both in 1919 and during the 2016-2019 period. However, there are some significant differences concerning the values, national interests, and political ideologies expressed in the public sphere by political leaders in the Romanian Parliament between 1919-1920 and 2016 to the present. In the Parliament of Greater Romania, legislative acts prioritized national interests and a clearly defined country program, supported by representative political formations, over personal or regional interests, even amidst temporary procedural tensions and confusion. The Royal House, with King Ferdinand and Queen Maria, played a mediating political role, while experienced politicians like those from the Brătianu family, Marshal Alexandru Averescu, Take Ionescu, along with pragmatically patriotic leaders from former Austro-Hungarian territories such as Vasile Goldiș, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, Iuliu Maniu, Ion Nistor, and nationalist agrarians from Bessarabia like Ion Inculeț and Pantelimon Halippa, contributed to the political and socio-economic stability of the new state. In contrast to that formative period of Romanian parliamentarism, marked by institutional chaos after a devastating war, the current legislature is dominated by personal interest groups that often generate a form of decision-making anarchy intended to serve the personal advantages of political leaders, especially those in power.

Since 2016, a clear national project has not been articulated at the parliamentary level, unlike in the 1919-1920 period, when the juridical and constitutional acts of the 1918 union were regulated, and the first Parliament of Greater Romania established the fundamental structural reforms whose effects are still felt today.<sup>11</sup>

Beyond certain subjective observations, the National Liberal Party (PNL) represents historical stability, having survived through adaptive decision-making both in 1919 and during the 2016-2019 period. However, there are significant differences regarding the values, national interests, and political ideologies expressed in the public sphere by political leaders in the Romanian Parliament between 1919-1920 and 2016

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<sup>11</sup> Dacian Vasincu. "Evolution or Involvement of Parliament: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament after the Great Union and the Present Parliament." *Polis: Journal of Political Science* 7, no. 3 (25), New Series (June-August 2019): 25–35. Accessed October 30, 2023. <https://revistapolis.ro/evolutie-sau-involutie-parlamentara-analiza-comparativa-a-parlamentului-romaniei-dupa-marea-unire-si-a-celui-actual/>.



to the present. In the Parliament of Greater Romania, legislative acts focused on national interests and a clearly defined country program, supported by representative political formations, rather than personal or regional interests, even amidst temporary procedural tensions and confusion. The Royal House, with King Ferdinand and Queen Maria, played a mediating political role, while experienced politicians such as the Brătianu family, Marshal Alexandru Averescu, Take Ionescu, alongside those with a pragmatic-patriotic perspective from former Austro-Hungarian territories like Vasile Goldiș, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, Iuliu Maniu, Ion Nistor, and nationalist agrarians from Bessarabia such as Ion Inuleț and Pantelimon Halippa, contributed to the political and socio-economic stability of the new state. Unlike that initial period of Romanian parliamentarism, marked by inevitable institutional chaos following a devastating war, today's Legislature is dominated by personal interest groups that often generate a form of decision-making anarchy, intended to serve the personal advantages of political leaders, especially those in power.

Since 2016, no clear national project has emerged at the parliamentary level, in contrast to the 1919-1920 period, when the juridical and constitutional acts of the 1918 union were regulated, and the first Parliament of Greater Romania established the fundamental structural reforms whose effects are still felt today.<sup>12</sup>

If, during the 2016-2019 period, the legislative priorities of the most significant post-communist political formation, the Social Democratic Party (PSD), were largely focused on legislative changes targeting specific cases involving individuals with political ties and image-driven initiatives, such as unsustainable salary and pension increases in the public sector, a century ago, institutional reforms—such as agrarian, electoral, and educational reforms—were profound and had a significant impact on Romanian society, being supported by the entire political spectrum of the time.<sup>13</sup>

In light of the observations made by political scientists Radu Carp and Constantin Iordachi in their study *Public Policy and Politics in Romania*, which explores the relationship between Parliament and public policy, it can be concluded that the Romanian legislature from 2016 to the present exhibits both significant strengths and vulnerabilities that require attention. Institutional adaptability and parliamentary experience are key advantages that can support the positive evolution of the legislature. The two authors argue that, despite legislative changes, the effective implementation of reforms remains a major challenge due to a lack of coherence in the decision-making process and political interference.<sup>14</sup>

Cu toate acestea, pentru a contracara amenințările externe și vulnerabilitățile interne, este imperativă consolidarea coerenței politice și alinierea legislativă la standardele europene. Acest lucru nu doar că va îmbunătăți performanța parlamentului, dar va și întări poziția României pe scena internațională.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Dacian Vasincu. "Evolution or Involution of Parliament: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament after the Great Union and the Present Parliament." *Polis: Journal of Political Science* 7, no. 3 (25), New Series (June-August 2019): 25–35. Accessed October 30, 2023. <https://revistapolis.ro/evolutie-sau-involutie-parlamentara-analiza-comparativa-a-parlamentului-romaniei-dupa-marea-unire-si-a-celui-actual/>.

<sup>14</sup> Radu Carp și Constantin Iordachi, *Public Policy and Politics in Romania* (Budapesta: Central European University Press, 2012), 45-60.

However, to counter external threats and internal vulnerabilities, it is imperative to strengthen political coherence and align legislation with European standards. This will not only improve parliamentary performance but also enhance Romania's position on the international stage. As highlighted in previous conclusions, a comparison of the two legislative periods reveals a decline in the political role of parliamentarians in the context of their vocation as genuine representatives of national interest. The perception of societal values and political principles has undergone fundamental changes between 1919-1920 and the 2000-2019 period.<sup>15</sup>

It can be stated in this subsection that, although Romania has made significant progress in aligning its parliamentary structure with EU standards, major challenges still remain regarding the centralization of power, transparency, and representativeness. The SWOT matrix, used as a comparative tool, highlighted both the strengths and weaknesses of the current system, providing a solid foundation for the further development of parliamentary democracy in Romania.

In this context, the need for continuous reforms is emphasized, aimed at improving parliamentary transparency and efficiency, reducing the centralized influence of political parties, and strengthening Romania's role within the European Union.

1.3. Major European and National Political Actors in the 2019 European Parliamentary Elections: This subsection provides a detailed analysis of the main political actors from Romania and the European Union who participated in the 2019 European parliamentary elections. It discusses the profiles of the representative political parties, their impact on representative democracy, and how they contribute to shaping the occupational profile of parliamentarians.

## **Chapter II**

### **The socio-political profile of Romanian Parliamentarians: A case study approach**

2.1. The profile of Parliamentarians in the Romanian Legislature: This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the socio-political profile of Romanian parliamentarians, covering both the 1990-2007 and 2007-2022 periods. The case studies presented offer a clear view of the evolution of this profile, highlighting the changes in the perception and role of parliamentarians in society. The comparative analysis between different generations of parliamentarians underscores the need for the professionalization of the parliamentary function, especially in the context of the socio-political transformations that have taken place in Romania over the past decades.

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<sup>15</sup> Dacian Vasincu. "Evolution or Involution of Parliament: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament after the Great Union and the Present Parliament." *Polis: Journal of Political Science* 7, no. 3 (25), New Series (June-August 2019): 25–35. Accessed October 30, 2023. <https://revistapolis.ro/evolutie-sau-involutie-parlamentara-analiza-comparativa-a-parlamentului-romaniei-dupa-marea-unire-si-a-celui-actual/>.

The chronological evolution of modern parliamentarism can be outlined as follows:

**1989-2004:** A political-parliamentary elite began to take shape, consisting of parliamentary actors influenced either by the interwar organization associated with former historical parties (PNTCD, PNL) or by structures derived from the former communist regime (FSN/PD, FDSN/PDSR/PSD, PUNR, PRM). These actors played a decisive role in Romania's societal shifts (e.g., the University Square protests, the miner-led protests, financial collapse, the silent destruction of the industrial sector, massive layoffs, failed privatizations, and the elimination of Romanian foreign trade trusts). These changes also led to the identification of significant corruption cases, associated with financial scandals such as BANCOREX, the International Bank of Religions, SIDEX, the CARITAS pyramid scheme, the FNI scandal, etc.

**2004-2012:** Romania's parliamentary political class became clearly divided between left and right. On one side were those who, despite having a neo-communist tradition, adopted Western democratic communication forms. On the other side were those who claimed to understand the public's discontent and began promoting reforms aimed at democratizing party interests, decentralizing administration, and reducing corruption at both local and central levels. This period was marked by the figure of Traian Băsescu and the Democratic-Liberal Party, who were seen as leaders and mediators of the political scene, engaging in negotiations and alliances with the younger "barons" from the Social Democratic Party (PSD).

An examination of the careers of the current political elite reveals that the recruitment of political personnel in parliamentary democracies follows well-established paths for both parliamentary and government positions. For government functions, the typical trajectory includes parliamentary experience, often through involvement at the local level, advancement into administrative roles, or promotion to executive positions, which have become common routes to ministerial appointments. Additionally, a growing number of parliamentary candidates began demonstrating political experience at the local level (35% in 2008). The modification of the electoral code in 2008, through the introduction of single-member constituencies, intensified the preference for the majority system, leading to a rapid increase in the number of parliamentarians with extensive political experience and strong local connections.<sup>16</sup>

In reality, the main political actors in Romania aim, beyond the initial professionalization of political life, to gain early control over the process of appointing public officials. This strategy is supported by several factors that contribute to the consolidation of party influence within governmental structures. The formation of governments consistently demonstrates an interest in placing representatives from the central party leadership into ministerial positions.

Since 1996, in most cases, ministers have been selected from the ranks of leaders of the ruling parties.

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<sup>16</sup> Laurențiu Ștefan and Răzvan Grecu, „The ‘Waiting Room’: Romanian Parliament after 1989,” în *Parliamentary Elites in Central and Eastern Europe. Recruitment and Representation*, coord. Elena Semenova, Michael Edinger, și Heinrich Best (Oxon: Routledge, 2014), 194-217, 204.

In the early 2000s, politically affiliated officials had, on average, six years of political experience, and all ministers had, on average, five years of political experience. In more recent governments, political experience has become an increasingly relevant factor in the selection of government personnel. The same trend can be observed in the selection of candidates for parliamentary elections. Although the re-election rate for parliamentarians is relatively low compared to other countries in the region, they generally have a long history of political activity. A public barometer noted that members of the Chamber of Deputies had, on average, 7.2 years of party experience.

The main trends in recruiting political elites highlight the parties' efforts to ensure stability and loyalty among their representatives in public office. There are favorable conditions for consolidating a strong political presence within institutions, such as the concentration of votes on the main competitors, the close link between the central party leadership and political decision-makers, and the increased importance of political experience in candidate selection. However, parties fail to exert adequate control over institutional behavior. All political formations face a significant lack of loyalty to the party, a phenomenon particularly evident at the parliamentary level.<sup>17</sup>

3. **Between 2012 and 2016**, a new generation of politicians emerged, though still with limited political power compared to the existing establishment, and they came into conflict with the outdated and stereotypical behavior of parliamentarians shaped by the events of December 1989. These new "young wolves" can be divided into two categories of development: one group driven by personal pragmatism, prioritizing individual interests over collective ones, with the ambition to control all public decision-making spheres, and a second group, educated in the West, which blends personal ambition with public interest (based on the principle: if I succeed, others will benefit too), while also forming a cold, rational political vision, devoid of the political sentimentalism of the past.<sup>18</sup>

4. After the parliamentary elections of December 2016, and even more so following the 2020 election, the second faction of the parliamentary elite began to consolidate its position, marking the start of a new political phase **during the 2016–2024 period**. This era is characterized by a practical approach focused on short- or medium-term goals, such as gaining control of institutions, particularly the judiciary, downplaying the importance of anti-corruption efforts in public discourse, and adjusting Romania's geopolitical stance within the spectrum of regional conflicts, either by aligning more closely with the West or by opening relations with Russia or Israel, with the risk of limiting compromise options.

This period can be referred to as the "Teleorman Oligarchy Era," marked by the influence of leaders like Liviu Dragnea, who played a significant role in shaping the political direction of the Social Democratic Party (PSD). Other key figures during this time include Carmen Dan, heading the Ministry of Internal

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<sup>17</sup> Alexandra Iancu, "The Role of Founding Elections in Defining the Party System: Electoral Clarification versus the Failure of Parties in Government (1990-2014)," *Sfera Politicii* 23, no. 3 (185) (July-September 2015): 36-38.

<sup>18</sup> Dacian Vasincu, "The Parliamentary Uninominal Vote from the Perspective of the 2008 and 2012 Parliamentary Elections – An Analysis of the Socio-Electoral Profile of the Current Parliamentarian," *Punctul Critic* no. 02 (12)/2014, ed. Fundația Culturală Ideea Europeană (Bucharest, 2014): 53-64.

Affairs, Lia Olguța Vasilescu at the Ministry of Labor, Darius Vâlcov, influencing financial policies from behind the scenes, and Viorica Dăncilă, Romania's Prime Minister, all with strong ties to the same sphere of influence.

This stage was followed by the "Buzău-Timiș Democratic Duo," represented by leaders such as Marcel Ciolacu, Lucian Romașcanu, Sorin Grindeanu, and Alfred Simonis, as well as the "Minority Presidential Era" under Klaus Iohannis, Romania's first president from the ethnic German minority, which has almost disappeared from present-day Romania.

The Permanent Electoral Authority conducted a study from November 2015 to February 2016 titled "Electoral Processes Organized in Romania – Interest and Perception." The outcome was a "RESEARCH REPORT - Electoral Processes Organized in Romania"<sup>19</sup>, This well-anticipated the situation at the time and provides a detailed analysis of the profile of Romanian parliamentarians and their professional evolution from 2016 to the present. This analysis highlights significant changes in Romania's political and administrative system, as well as how the experience and competencies of parliamentarians have evolved over time.

Several key criteria are identified in establishing a profile of Romanian parliamentarians:

- parliamentary recruitment in Romania is largely influenced by political affiliations and informal networks of influence;
- loyalty to the party and the ability to mobilize the electorate are essential in selecting candidates for Parliament;
- formal requirements regarding education and professional experience exist, but they are often secondary to political affiliation. These characteristics reflect a power structure in which party leaders have significant influence over the selection process.<sup>20</sup>

Over the past decade, the profile of Romanian parliamentarians has evolved significantly. A substantial number of new members of Parliament come from diverse professional backgrounds, including the private sector, academia, and public administration. This diversity brings a broader range of perspectives and competencies to the legislative body.

Parliamentarians with prior experience in public administration or the private sector bring valuable skills that enhance their understanding of legislative processes and increase their ability to formulate effective policies. This is essential for improving the quality of legislation and ensuring that legislative decisions are well-founded and informed.

Political and legislative reforms in recent years have significantly impacted the professional development of Romanian parliamentarians. These reforms were designed to increase transparency and

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<sup>19</sup>**Permanent Electoral Authority**, "Research Report: Study on the 2016 Elections," conducted by the research team composed of Liviu Iolu, Daniela Andrei, and Andrei Popescu, 2016, pp. 7-9, accessed on August 6, 2024, <https://www.roaep.ro/prezentare/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Raport-de-cercetare-studiu-alegeri-2016-pt.-site.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

accountability in the legislative process, improve parliamentarians' competencies, and encourage greater involvement in the formulation and implementation of public policies.

The parliamentary evolution from 2016 to the present reflects a continuous process of adaptation and modernization of Romania's political and administrative system. Romanian parliamentarians have undergone changes and challenges that have influenced their professional profile and the skills needed to fulfill their legislative roles. Although challenges remain in terms of professionalization and continuous training, reform and modernization efforts have positively influenced the quality and efficiency of parliamentary activity.

The analysis outlines the transition from a totalitarian political system to an emerging democracy, highlighting how these changes have affected perceptions of the role and responsibilities of parliamentarians. In this transition, the lack of a clear occupational standard has contributed to current dysfunctions in the exercise of parliamentary duties. This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the socio-political profile of Romanian parliamentarians, highlighting the changes that have occurred across various historical periods. The case studies presented underscore how the national context has influenced the competencies and perceptions of the parliamentary role. The chapter also explores the challenges related to the professionalization of the role and emphasizes the need for an occupational standard to address these challenges.

## **Chapter III**

### **The occupational standard for Romanian and European Parliamentarians**

#### ***3.1. The Evolution of the Role of Romanian Parliamentarians versus European Parliamentarians***

This subsection examines the evolution of the parliamentary role in Romania and other European countries, analyzing the differences and similarities between them. The discussion focuses on the transition from a system where the parliamentary role was seen as a vocation to one where it becomes a well-defined career, with specific duties and clear evaluation criteria.

#### ***3.2. Conceptualizing the Occupational Standard for Parliamentarians***

In this subsection, an integrated competency model for parliamentarians is proposed, including technical, professional, personal, and social competencies. The model is based on transactional analysis, which allows for the identification and reduction of negative psychological games in the parliamentary context, thereby contributing to a healthier organizational climate and improving individual performance.

#### ***3.3. Quantitative Research Study – Data Interpretation from Online Surveys and Research Report***

This subsection presents the results of a quantitative study based on online surveys, which gathered relevant data from Romanian parliamentarians and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). The analysis of the data provides a solid empirical foundation for the proposed standardization of the parliamentary role, highlighting the importance of the competencies identified in the proposed model.

### ***3.4. How Can an Occupational Standard for a Parliamentarian/MEP Be Established?***

This subsection discusses the steps required to implement an occupational standard for parliamentarians and MEPs, emphasizing its importance in enhancing transparency and accountability in the exercise of parliamentary duties.

#### **- Proposing an Integrated Competency Model:**

The core of the thesis proposes an integrated competency model for parliamentarians, which can be applied both in Romania and at the European level. This model is based on the analysis of the competencies required for the efficient functioning of a parliamentarian, including technical competencies (knowledge of legislation), professional competencies (policy drafting and evaluation), personal competencies (communication and negotiation), and social competencies (effective collaboration with other parliamentarians and civil society).

#### **- Comparing National and European Standards:**

This chapter conducts a comparative analysis of the competencies required for Romanian parliamentarians and those required for MEPs. Differences and similarities between the two legislative frameworks are identified, and adjustments are proposed to harmonize national standards with European ones, while taking into account the national cultural and political context. The standardization proposals are presented in detail, including competency profiles that can be applied both at the national and European levels.

#### **- Using Transactional Analysis:**

The thesis proposes an integrated competency model for parliamentarians, based on transactional analysis and the results of the quantitative study. The chapter details the evolution of the parliamentary role in Romania and other European countries, highlighting relevant similarities and differences.

This psychological method helps identify and manage dysfunctional interactions between parliamentarians, contributing to the creation of a more harmonious and productive working environment.

The Principal-Agent model is selectively applied where necessary to clarify parliamentary responsibilities and ensure an effective relationship between parliamentarians and their constituents.

### **Conceptualizing the Occupational Standard for Parliamentarians Using Transactional Analysis**

Establishing an Occupational Standard for Romanian Parliamentarians and MEPs is a complex process that requires the identification of essential competencies and responsibilities. In this context, Transactional Analysis (TA), through concepts such as psychological contracts and the Drama Triangle, provides a solid theoretical framework for understanding and managing relationships and behaviors within an organizational setting. Applying these concepts can facilitate the creation of an occupational profile that includes the necessary competencies and desired behaviors.

According to Eric Berne's theory, transactional analysis is described as a series of transactions that involve a trap, a stratagem, a response, a shift, and a diversion, ultimately leading to an unfavorable outcome. Understanding these transactional dynamics is crucial for recognizing dysfunctional patterns in parliamentary interactions and for promoting healthier, more constructive relationships among members.

By incorporating the concepts of psychological contracts, which are unwritten expectations between individuals, and the Drama Triangle, which illustrates the roles of victim, persecutor, and rescuer in conflict scenarios, TA allows for the identification of underlying power dynamics and emotional triggers. This insight can then be used to develop a more effective occupational standard that fosters responsible, transparent, and accountable parliamentary behavior.

Applying these TA principles to the role of parliamentarians and MEPs will help define not only the technical and professional competencies required but also the emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills needed to navigate complex legislative environments. This, in turn, contributes to creating a more efficient and cohesive parliamentary system that is better equipped to serve the public interest.<sup>21</sup>

On the other hand, psychologist Vann Joines defines Transactional Analysis (TA) as "a process in which we act with a hidden motivation, unknown to the adult consciousness, which becomes apparent only when all participants change their behavior. This process leads to a state of confusion or general misunderstanding, where each party believes the others are to blame."

This definition highlights the unconscious dynamics that often drive interactions in organizational and political settings, including in parliamentary contexts. By bringing these hidden motivations to light, transactional analysis can help uncover the underlying issues that lead to miscommunication and conflict. Understanding these dynamics is key to promoting more effective collaboration and decision-making within legislative bodies.<sup>22</sup>

### ➤ **Occupational Profile and Transactional Analysis:**

- **Occupational Profile of the Parliamentarian:** • Professional and Educational Competencies: Establishing professional criteria based on the parliamentarian's experience and education. This includes higher education, university performance, and specific professional training aligned with international standards such as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08). These competencies aim to ensure that parliamentarians possess the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their legislative duties effectively.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> **Eric Berne**, *What Do You Say After You Say Hello? The Psychology of Human Destiny* (Bucharest: Trei Publishing House, 2006), Psihologia AZI Collection, 449-494.

<sup>22</sup> **Ane-Mary Ormenișan**, "Transactional Analysis from an Organizational Perspective," June 20, 2014, accessed October 5, 2024, <https://www.learningnetwork.ro/articol/analiza-tranzactionala-din-perspectiva-organizationala/3951>.

<sup>23</sup> **International Labour Organization (ILO)**, *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08)*, accessed July 16, 2024, <https://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco08/>.



- *Contribution to Community Projects*: Assessing the parliamentarian's impact on local communities and their role in community development, similar to models applied in Germany and France, where continuous education and the development of transversal skills are essential.
- *Political Activity*: Active participation in political organizations at various levels (local, county, regional, national) and the application of a uniform European standard to facilitate transnational mobility and cooperation.
- *Integrity and Ethics*: Maintaining a high level of integrity and professional ethics in all activities, ensuring transparency and accountability in the exercise of parliamentary duties.

➤ **Applied Transactional Analysis:**

- *Psychological Contracts*: Parliamentarians must understand and adhere to both implicit and explicit psychological contracts with voters, political parties, and their colleagues. These contracts encompass mutual expectations regarding behavior, performance, and accountability. Recognizing these unspoken agreements helps maintain trust, ensures alignment with public and political expectations, and fosters responsible decision-making within the legislative environment.<sup>24</sup>
- *Drama Triangle*: Raising awareness of the roles of persecutor, rescuer, and victim, and avoiding these behaviors in political relationships. Instead, promoting the Winner's Triangle, which fosters constructive and cooperative roles, emphasizing empowerment, care, and assertiveness in interactions.
- *Effective Communication*: Developing communication skills to ensure transparency and clarity in relations with colleagues, voters, and other stakeholders. Effective communication enhances trust and facilitates more productive legislative processes by minimizing misunderstandings and promoting open dialogue.

➤ **Objectives and Methodology**

**Objectives:** The creation of an occupational standard that defines the necessary competencies for becoming a parliamentarian or Member of the European Parliament (MEP), based on the identified professional and behavioral criteria. This standard will integrate elements from the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Romanian Classification of Occupations (COR) to ensure compatibility and recognition at an international level.

**Methodology:** The use of surveys to collect data on the competencies and experiences of current parliamentarians. Transactional analysis will be applied to identify and address negative behaviors, while promoting effective communication and cooperation. Collaboration with community institutions, such as the

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<sup>24</sup> Vann Joines, *TA Today: A New Introduction to Transactional Analysis* (Chapel Hill: Litespace Publishing, 1987), 102-105.

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), will ensure the alignment of national standards with European ones.<sup>25</sup>

- **Evaluation:** Monitoring the performance of parliamentarians based on the defined occupational standard and adjusting the criteria according to feedback and the results obtained. Additionally, the continuous alignment of the standard with developments in the National Qualifications Framework (CNC) and European lifelong learning policies will be ensured.
- **Conclusions:** The application of transactional analysis in establishing an occupational standard for parliamentarians can contribute to creating a more effective and ethical political environment. By understanding and managing psychological contracts and avoiding manipulative behaviors, parliamentarians can improve their relationships and performance, ultimately benefiting society as a whole. This standard could serve as the foundation for a pilot project aimed at defining and implementing an occupational standard for both Romanian parliamentarians and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), utilizing the collected data and the principles of transactional analysis.

## **Methodological Considerations and the Design of Quantitative Research**

**Research Problem:** The central research problem is the identification of the key elements required to establish a potential occupational standard for Romanian and European parliamentarians, taking into account the experience and competencies they accumulate throughout their terms.

### **Key Questions of the Quantitative Study:**

1. What legislative and administrative competencies do parliamentarians acquire during their mandates?
2. How do parliamentarians perceive their legislative work in the context of establishing it as a specific occupation?
3. What criteria can be identified to define an occupational standard for Romanian and European parliamentarians?

### **Objectives:**

1. To assess the level of legislative and administrative knowledge acquired by parliamentarians during their mandates.
2. To identify parliamentarians' perceptions regarding the necessity and utility of defining their work as a specific occupation.
3. To establish the necessary criteria for a potential occupational standard for Romanian and European parliamentarians, based on legislative and administrative competencies.

### **Working Hypotheses:**

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<sup>25</sup> European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP). "European Qualifications Framework (EQF)," accessed July 16, 2024. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/ro/tools/european-qualifications-framework>, 28-32.

1. Parliamentarians acquire a significant level of legislative information and administrative competencies during their mandates.
2. The majority of parliamentarians view legislative work as a vocation, but they recognize the need for clear occupational standards to ensure the professionalization of their role.
3. Common criteria can be identified to establish an occupational standard, based on the legislative and administrative competencies and responsibilities.

**Research Method:** An online questionnaire: Structured with both closed and open-ended questions, the survey will be applied to Romanian parliamentarians and European parliamentarians. The questionnaire will include sections on socio-demographic data, expectations and motivations, parliamentary activity, and the identification of whether there is a need for an occupational standard. The questionnaire is included in Annex 1, following the thesis bibliography.

### **Target Population/Sample:**

**Target Population:** Romanian parliamentarians and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), both current and former.

#### **Sample:**

- **250 Romanian parliamentarians**
- **25 Romanian MEPs**

**Data Collection Period:** June 24 - July 25, 2024 (with two follow-up emails sent to official addresses and 25 phone calls made).

#### **Responses Received:**

- 34 Romanian parliamentarians from the 2020-2024 term
- 2 MEPs from the 2019-2024 term
- 1 MEP from the 2024-2029 term

#### **Declined Responses:**

- 16 parliamentarians and 3 MEPs reported that the questionnaire was too complex, stating that they perceive parliamentary work as a vocation rather than a typical occupation.

#### **Non-Responses:**

- 200 parliamentarians and 24 MEPs did not respond by the document drafting date (July 29, 2024).

### **Research Limitations:**

1. **Response Rate:** The relatively low number of responses may limit the generalizability of the results for the entire population of parliamentarians and MEPs.
2. **Subjectivity of Responses:** Parliamentarians' perceptions of their work may be influenced by personal and political factors, potentially affecting the objectivity of the data.

3. **Questionnaire Complexity:** Some parliamentarians found the questionnaire too difficult, suggesting either a lack of understanding of certain aspects of their role or the need for simplified or clarified questions for future studies.

### **Data Processing:**

#### **Qualitative Analysis Grid:**

- **Coding and Analysis:** Open-ended responses will be coded and analyzed.
- **Identification of Themes:** Key themes and subthemes related to legislative competencies and perceptions of parliamentary work will be identified.
- **Content Analysis:** This will be used to extract and interpret relevant meanings from the qualitative data.

#### **Cause-Effect Analysis:**

- **Socio-Demographic Variables:** Investigating the relationships between these variables and perceptions of the need for an occupational standard.
- **Impact of Prior Experience:** Analyzing the effect of previous experience on accumulated legislative competencies and views on the professionalization of the parliamentary role.
- **Contextual Variables:** Evaluating how factors like electoral affiliation, constituency, and mandate length influence parliamentarians' competencies and perceptions.

### **Research Paradigms:**

The research adopts a **positivist paradigm** for the quantitative analysis, aiming to identify causal relationships and generalize findings based on statistical data. In parallel, the **interpretive paradigm** is employed for the qualitative analysis, allowing for an in-depth understanding of the context and the meanings perceived by the participants.

### **Questionnaire Applicability:**

The questionnaire serves as a key tool for assessing the impact of parliamentarians' work. The online format allows for the identification of experiences and professional evaluation needs for national representatives. The data collected will be analyzed to identify criteria for an occupational standard and to inform public policy decisions aimed at professionalizing the parliamentary role.

## **Data Processing, Results Interpretation, and Research Report**

### **Current Context:**

In light of the previously discussed chapters, it is evident that the organizational structure of Romanian parliamentarians is diverse and complex, influenced by geopolitical movements that impact parliamentary activity. Examples include the economic and social effects of the war in Ukraine and price increases due to the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2022. As a result, the heterogeneous nature of Romanian parliamentary activity necessitates a shift in legislative action and mindset, adapting to different periods as outlined in this research.

### **General Perspectives:**

- **Sample Results:** A total of 34 parliamentarians and 3 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) completed the questionnaire.
- **Socio-demographic Profile:** The majority of respondents are serving their first term in office and have higher education, with backgrounds primarily in engineering, medicine, law, and economics.
- **Motivations:** The primary motivations for continuing a parliamentary career are the desire to implement projects for their electoral constituencies and the ambition for a future political career.
- **Optimism about Future Terms:** Respondents were generally satisfied and optimistic about their future term in office.

### **Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis Methods:**

1. **Coding and Thematization:** Information from interviews and group discussions was coded to clarify recurring themes and patterns. This process allowed for structuring data in a way that highlights essential aspects of the discussions and facilitates interpretation.
2. **Comparative Analysis:** Qualitative data were compared across different cases or contexts to identify similarities and differences, providing a deeper understanding of the studied phenomena.
3. **Descriptive Statistics:** Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as means, medians, and standard deviations, to summarize and describe the main characteristics of the datasets.
4. **Regression Analysis:** This method was employed to investigate the relationships between independent and dependent variables, assessing the potential impact of specific factors on the studied outcomes.
5. **Cost-Benefit Analysis:** Financial and economic data were analyzed to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of public policies, comparing their costs with estimated benefits.
6. **Modeling Methods:** Statistical and econometric models were used to simulate different scenarios and predict the long-term effects of analyzed policies.

### **Preliminary Results:**

These results represent initial findings regarding the perception of the questionnaire, the identification of parliamentary activity, and the level of awareness and commitment to the role of being a parliamentarian, either as a profession or merely a vocation.

### **Respondent Distribution by Terms:**

- 50% are serving their first term

- 22.2% are in their second term
- 27.8% have served at least two terms

**Optimism about Future Terms:**

- 21.6% are very optimistic
- 29.7% are fairly optimistic
- 43.2% are cautious
- 5.4% are pessimistic

**Motivations for Future Candidacy (combining two options):**

- 43.8% to continue their political career
- 81.3% to carry out projects for their electoral constituency
- 6.3% for a future public career

**Perception of Parliamentary Activity:**

- 47.2% believe that being a parliamentarian is a profession
- 52.8% see it as a temporary opportunity

**Need for an Occupational Standard:**

- 71.4% believe an occupational standard is necessary
- 28.6% do not believe it is necessary

**Criteria for an Occupational Standard:**

- 80.8% professional experience
- 57.7% political activity at local and national levels
- 61.5% contribution to local community projects
- 38.5% educational background and academic performance

This analysis highlights the varied perceptions of Romanian parliamentarians regarding their role, as well as the growing recognition of the need for a standardized occupational framework to professionalize the legislative function.

**Conclusions of the Quantitative Research Study Report (Based on the Online Survey) – Effects and Impact**

The primary goal of this study was to evaluate the need and opportunity for establishing an occupational standard for the position of parliamentarian, drawing from data collected through an online survey applied to a representative sample of Romanian parliamentarians. The analysis included an assessment of the socio-demographic profile of respondents, perceived competencies necessary for parliamentarians, and suggested criteria for developing an occupational standard. These conclusions aim to contribute to the foundation of a normative framework that ensures professionalism and integrity in the parliamentary mandate.

The sample consisted predominantly of first-term parliamentarians with higher education and postgraduate degrees from diverse fields such as law, economics, engineering, and social sciences. Most respondents were male, aged between 40 and 60, from various regions of Romania, reflecting the country's geographical and cultural diversity.

The survey results reveal that the majority of respondents consider the establishment of an occupational standard for parliamentarians necessary. This standard is seen as essential for ensuring professional competence and integrity among elected officials. Respondents emphasized the importance of clear criteria for evaluating parliamentary activity, including professional experience, political involvement at local and national levels, and contributions to the community.

Among the competencies deemed essential for a parliamentarian are good faith, integrity, legal knowledge, analytical skills, communication abilities, and relevant professional experience. These competencies reflect the respondents' expectations that parliamentarians should not only represent public interests but also be capable leaders, formulating effective policies and making informed decisions.

#### **Key Criteria Identified for an Occupational Standard:**

- **Professional Experience:** Evaluating the professional background of the future parliamentarian in their respective field.
- **Political Activity:** Involvement and engagement in political organizations at the local, county, regional, and national levels.
- **Community Contribution:** Role in developing and implementing community projects.
- **Educational Quality:** The academic achievements and educational level of parliamentarians.
- **Integrity:** Adherence to ethical and deontological standards in public office.
- **Legislative Vision:** Respondents highlighted that parliamentary activity should be based on legislative initiatives, amendments to government bills, questions and interpellations, and political declarations. These activities are considered fundamental to effectively representing citizens' interests and exercising parliamentary oversight over the executive.
- **Professionalization of the Parliamentary Role:** Most respondents recognize the need for professionalizing the parliamentary role and establishing an occupational standard. This would enhance the legislative and administrative competencies of parliamentarians, ensuring more effective and accountable governance.
- **Evaluation Criteria:** Professional experience, political activity at local and national levels, contributions to local community projects, and educational quality are considered essential criteria for establishing an occupational standard. These should be included in any framework for evaluating parliamentarians.
- **Need for Training Programs:** To support the professionalization of the parliamentary role, continuous professional development courses should be introduced to improve the legislative and

administrative competencies of parliamentarians. These programs could include courses in legislation, public administration, political ethics, and public communication.

- **Oversight and Evaluation:** Implementing a system of monitoring and evaluation of parliamentary activity, based on the identified criteria, could ensure accountability and transparency in governance. This system could include periodic performance assessments of parliamentarians and feedback from constituents.

### **General Conclusion:**

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that the establishment of an occupational standard for parliamentarians is perceived as essential for ensuring a high level of competence and integrity in legislative activity. The implementation of clear professional criteria, the promotion of continuous education, and the clarification of parliamentary roles and responsibilities are crucial steps toward improving parliamentary performance and creating a more transparent and efficient political system. Such an initiative could significantly contribute to increasing public trust in democratic institutions and strengthening democracy in Romania.

## **Chapter IV: Final Conclusions of the Thesis**

### **4.1. Summary of the Main Research Objectives**

This subchapter consolidates the key objectives of the research and explains how they were achieved through detailed analysis and the standardization proposals presented in the thesis. The primary goal of the study was to assess the need for and propose an occupational standard for parliamentarians, addressing the critical aspects of professionalism, competence, and ethical conduct in the legislative process. Through the study, it has become evident that standardizing the role of parliamentarians is a crucial step toward enhancing both the quality of governance and public trust in political institutions.

The specific objectives of the research included:

- **Identifying the necessary competencies for parliamentarians:** This was done through comparative analysis between national and European standards, highlighting both technical and soft skills required for effective parliamentary work.
- **Assessing the need for an occupational standard:** The findings from the quantitative research demonstrated a strong consensus among parliamentarians on the importance of creating a clear, standardized set of expectations for their role.
- **Providing a framework for continuous professional development:** Recognizing that the role of parliamentarian is dynamic and requires ongoing learning, the thesis proposes programs for the



professionalization of parliamentarians through continuous training in areas such as legislation, public policy, and ethics.

The research successfully met these objectives through the development of an integrated model that includes both technical and professional competencies essential for parliamentary work. Furthermore, the proposals for national and European-level standardization create a solid foundation for future implementation.

#### 4.2. Proposals for Standardization at the National and European Levels for Parliamentarians and MEPs

This subchapter outlines concrete proposals for standardizing the parliamentary role, both at the national level in Romania and at the European level for Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). These proposals include detailed occupational standard sheets designed to serve as practical guides for ensuring high performance and accountability in the execution of parliamentary duties.

##### *Proposed National Occupational Standards for Romanian Parliamentarians*

1.	<b>Competencies:</b>
○	<b>Technical Competencies:</b> Knowledge of national laws, understanding of legislative procedures, and the ability to draft and amend legislative proposals.
○	<b>Professional Competencies:</b> Skills in public policy analysis, strategic decision-making, and collaboration with other branches of government.
○	<b>Ethical and Integrity Standards:</b> Adherence to high ethical standards, transparency in public office, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest.
2.	<b>Training and Development:</b>
	- Continuous education in legislative processes, public speaking, and negotiations.
	- Training on the ethical responsibilities of public office and mechanisms for ensuring accountability.
3.	<b>Evaluation and Monitoring:</b>
	Regular evaluations based on performance metrics, including legislative output, participation in parliamentary sessions, and responsiveness to constituents' needs.

##### **Proposed European Occupational Standards for MEPs**

###### 1. Competencies:

- **Diplomatic and International Relations Skills:** The ability to represent national interests within the European Union while maintaining collaborative relations with MEPs from other member states.
  - **Legislative Competencies:** In-depth understanding of EU laws, policies, and institutional processes.
  - **Negotiation and Collaboration:** Competency in working within multi-lateral frameworks to negotiate and implement EU-wide legislation.
2. **Harmonization with National Standards:**
- Ensuring that MEPs uphold the same level of accountability and performance standards as national parliamentarians, while also adapting to the specific requirements of the European legislative environment.
3. **Evaluation and Continuous Learning:**
- Implementation of cross-border training programs to equip MEPs with skills in areas like international diplomacy, EU law, and intercultural communication.
  - Regular assessments to ensure alignment with EU policies and to encourage transparency and responsiveness to both European and national constituencies.

### **Occupational Standard Sheets for Parliamentarians and MEPs**

The thesis includes detailed occupational standard sheets, designed as comprehensive profiles of the competencies and responsibilities required for both national parliamentarians and MEPs. These sheets serve several functions:

- **Defining Competencies:** They lay out the technical, professional, and ethical competencies expected of a parliamentarian, specifying the knowledge and skills required to fulfill legislative duties.
- **Guidelines for Professional Development:** They provide a framework for continuous education and professional growth, ensuring that parliamentarians remain effective in their roles throughout their terms.
- **Evaluation Metrics:** The sheets include criteria for performance assessment, with benchmarks for evaluating legislative output, public engagement, and adherence to ethical standards.

These proposals aim to professionalize the role of parliamentarians, ensuring that they are well-equipped to address the complex challenges of governance. By standardizing the expectations for their role, these occupational sheets will help parliamentarians perform their duties with greater accountability and effectiveness, both within Romania and at the European level.

**PROPOSAL - OCCUPATIONAL STANDARD SHEET FOR PARLIAMENTARIAN-  
RESPONSIBLE AS REPRESENTATIVE**

*(Principal-Agent Model)*

**SECTION A - LABOR MARKET CRITERIA**

**1. Job Title and COR Code:**

- **Parliamentarian**
- **COR Code:** [111211 – Parlamentar]

**2. International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08):**

- **ISCO-08 Code:** [1112 - Legislators, senior officials, and managers]

**3. Activity Domain:**

- Legislative and policy-making activities at the national level, focusing on representing the interests of constituents, drafting laws, and overseeing government policies.

**4. Responsibilities and Skills**

**4.1 Specific Responsibilities:**

- **Legislative Drafting and Adoption:** Creating, analyzing, and voting on laws at the national level, ensuring they align with national interests and democratic principles.
- **Representation:** Acting as a direct representative of the electorate, ensuring their needs and opinions are considered in policy decisions.
- **Monitoring and Accountability:** Overseeing the implementation of laws and holding the executive accountable through parliamentary inquiries and investigations.
- **Public Engagement:** Maintaining ongoing communication with constituents and organizing consultations to gather input on policy matters.

**4.2 Skills:**

- **Legislative Expertise:** In-depth knowledge of the legal framework, national regulations, and parliamentary procedures.
- **Communication Skills:** Ability to effectively communicate with constituents, peers, and the media, both in writing and orally.
- **Negotiation and Diplomacy:** Skills in negotiation and building consensus across party lines and with external stakeholders.
- **Critical Thinking:** Ability to critically assess policy proposals and their potential societal impact.

- **Leadership:** Strong leadership qualities to guide legislative projects and represent national interests at international forums.

## 5. Qualification Levels

### 5.1 Qualification Levels according to National and European Frameworks (CNC and CEDEFOP):

- **Level 7-8** according to the **European Qualifications Framework (EQF)**
- Minimum qualification: University degree, preferably in law, political science, or public administration.

## 6. Access to Related Functions or Professions (COR)

### 6.1. Access to Same-Level Professions:

- The parliamentarian position offers opportunities for horizontal mobility to other legislative or public administration roles based on experience and recognition of competencies.

## 10. Program Details for Education and Professional Training

### 10.1 Specific Requirements for Program Entry:

- **10.1.1 Required Skills and Competencies for Entry:**
  - Understanding of national and international political systems
  - Skills in public policy analysis and legal drafting
  - Experience in public speaking and negotiation

### 10.1.2 Standard Program Entry Conditions:

- **Education Levels:**
  - Bachelor's degree as a minimum; Master's degree preferred in law, political science, or public administration.

### 10.1.3 Special Requirements:

- Prior experience in legislative, executive, or public administration roles is preferred.

## SECTION B - REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### 11. Description of Education and Professional Training Program

#### 11.1 Minimum Qualification and Experience Requirements for National Parliamentarians:

- **Experience:** Minimum of 5 years of relevant experience in a political, legal, or public administration role.
- **Political Involvement:** Active participation in local, regional, or national political organizations.

- **Legislative Contributions:** Prior involvement in drafting or contributing to legislative initiatives.
- **Community Engagement:** Demonstrated commitment to community development through direct involvement in local projects.

## 12. Integrity and Ethics

- **Ethical Background:** A clean professional and personal record, free of corruption or unethical behavior.
- **Adherence to Ethical Standards:** Compliance with established ethical guidelines and codes of conduct in all legislative and representational activities.

This occupational standard aims to ensure that national parliamentarians meet clear and professional criteria for legislative effectiveness, integrity, and public responsibility.

Based on these considerations, and drawing from the coding and indicators established in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) as well as national standards through the National Qualifications Framework (CNC) and the Romanian Classification of Occupations (COR), a draft occupational standard sheet for Members of the European Parliament (MEP) has been developed:

## OCCUPATIONAL STANDARD SHEET FOR A MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT (MEP)

1. Occupation Title: Member of the European Parliament (MEP)
2. COR Code: 1112 (Legislators, Senior Executives, and Public Administrators)
3. ISCO-08 Classification: 1111 (Legislators)
4. Activity Domain:
Legislative and policy-making activities within the framework of the European Union, including drafting, adopting, and overseeing legislation that affects the European Union and its member states.
5. Responsibilities and Skills:
5.1 Responsibilities:
Legislative Drafting and Adoption: Proposing, analyzing, and voting on European legislation in alignment with the interests of both the European Union and the national state.
Representation of Citizens: Acting as a representative of citizens of the member state in legislative discussions, ensuring that their interests are reflected in EU decision-making processes.
Monitoring and Oversight: Evaluating and ensuring the effective implementation of EU legislation at national and EU levels.
International Collaboration and Negotiation: Collaborating with other MEPs and EU institutions to negotiate and represent the member state's interests.

Public Engagement: Facilitating dialogues with citizens, conducting consultations, and gathering feedback on legislative matters.
Adherence to Ethical Standards: Maintaining transparency and upholding ethical standards in all activities and decisions.
5.2 Skills:
Legislative Knowledge: Deep understanding of European legislative frameworks, treaties, regulations, and directives.
Negotiation and Diplomacy: Expertise in handling complex negotiations in political and legislative settings.
Multilingual Communication: Proficient in at least two official EU languages for effective communication and negotiations.
Analytical and Critical Thinking: The ability to assess and critically evaluate legislative proposals and their potential impacts.
Leadership and Strategic Decision-making: Strong leadership capabilities to manage teams, projects, and to make strategic legislative decisions.
6. Qualification Levels:
EQF Levels: 7-8 (Advanced degrees and professional qualifications).
7. Access to Related Professions:
Career Transition: MEPs can transition to other high-level leadership roles within EU institutions, international organizations, public administration, or policy advocacy roles, given their advanced legislative expertise and experience.
8. Access Requirements
Education: University degree in law, political science, international relations, public administration, economics, or related fields.
Professional Experience: Relevant experience in a legislative, executive, or representative role at the national or international level.
9. Professional Development and Continuous Training
Ongoing Professional Development: Participation in continuous professional training programs focusing on EU law, international relations, diplomacy, and communication strategies to maintain and improve competencies related to the role of an MEP.
10. Ethical Conduct and Integrity
Ethical Standards: MEPs are expected to adhere to strict ethical guidelines and demonstrate integrity in all legislative and representational activities.
Transparency: Maintaining transparency in legislative processes and public communication.

This draft occupational standard aligns with both the EQF and national standards, ensuring that the function of MEP is clearly defined, with competencies, responsibilities, and qualifications that promote efficiency, accountability, and professionalism in EU governance.

#### **4.3. Final Considerations: Contributions and Relevance**

The thesis concludes with an analysis of the original contributions made by the research, highlighting its significance for political science and its potential to improve democratic systems. The limitations of the research are also discussed, alongside recommendations for further study to ensure the effective application of the proposed standards. This chapter emphasizes the relevance of this work to the future of representative democracy and governance.

### **General Conclusions**

The doctoral thesis titled "The Occupational Profile of Romanian Parliamentarians: A Comparative Analysis of the Romanian Parliament and the European Parliament" offers a significant contribution to understanding and developing an occupational standard for parliamentarians. Through a detailed and interdisciplinary analysis, the thesis proposes a comprehensive competency model that supports the professionalization of the parliamentary role, aiming to increase transparency and accountability within the legislative process.

The research emphasizes the need for the professionalization of the parliamentary function as a central element for enhancing public trust in democratic institutions and improving legislative performance. By selectively applying the Principal-Agent model and the principles of Giovanni Sartori, the thesis ensures a clear and efficient regulation of the relationship between parliamentarians and voters, thereby reinforcing the foundation of representative democracy. The implementation of these standards is seen as an essential step toward increasing transparency and accountability in representative democracy, both in Romania and at the European level.

## **Annex 1 - Sample Questionnaire: Occupational Profile of a Parliamentarian**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE - OCCUPATIONAL PROFILE OF A PARLIAMENTARIAN**

INTRODUCTION: Hello! My name is Dacian Vasincu, a PhD candidate in Political Science and International Relations at SNSPA, and I have been a public servant at the Romanian Senate for over 19 years. I kindly ask for your help in completing this questionnaire, which is part of my sociological research related to my doctoral thesis entitled: The Occupational Profile of the Romanian Parliamentarian – A Comparative Analysis between the Romanian Parliament and the European Parliament.

The questions aim to evaluate the level of legislative knowledge accumulated by parliamentarians during their mandate. Based on the research results, we will attempt to identify criteria for establishing an occupational standard for parliamentarians. The questionnaire consists of relatively simple questions, and data confidentiality will be maintained according to current legislation. Completing the questionnaire should take no more than 5-10 minutes.

#### **GENERAL SECTION (G.S.)**

G.S.1. In the current 2020-2024 legislature, are you serving your first term, or have you served previous terms? (select one option)

- 1. YES, first term      2. NO, second term      3. NO, I have served at least two terms*

G.S.2. How optimistic are you about the future of your mandate as a senator? (circle one option)

- 4. Very optimistic      5. Fairly optimistic      6. Cautious, prudent      7. Pessimistic*

G.S.3. Will you run in the 2024 parliamentary elections? (select one option)

- 1. YES      2. NO*

G.S.4. If you answered YES to the previous question, please specify which of the following reasons motivate you for a new parliamentary mandate (select up to 2 options):

- 1. To continue my political career      2. Because I have no other alternative at this moment  
3. To complete projects for my electoral district      4. To have a future public career*

#### **POLITICAL AND PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES (P.P.)**

P.P.1. What are the main parliamentary acts a parliamentarian should carry out? (select up to 3 options)

- 1. Legislative proposals      2. Political statements      3. Questions and interpellations      4. Plenary session interventions  
5. Amendments to bills and interventions in specialized committees      6. All of the above*



P.P.2. On what should a parliamentarian or MEP base their activity to stand out electorally? (select up to 3 options)

*1.Legislative initiatives and amendments to government bills    2.Political statements and interventions in the Senate Plenary on internal or external policy topics    3.Questions and interpellations as parliamentary control over the Executive    4.Simple motions and co-initiating no-confidence motions*

P.P.3.1. Do you believe that central-level parliamentary actions have a local impact in the electoral district where you were elected? (select one option)

*1.To a great extent    2.To a large extent    3.To a small extent    4.Not at all*

P.P.4. What competencies should someone possess to become a parliamentarian or MEP? (please specify up to 3 competencies below)

### **PARLIAMENTARY OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS (P.O.S.)**

P.O.S.1. What is your profession? (please specify the occupation or profession based on your educational background in 2 words)

P.O.S.2. How often do you practice your current profession while serving as a parliamentarian? (select one option)

*1.There is no incompatibility; I practice both my profession and my parliamentary role.    2.Since becoming a parliamentarian, I practice my profession less frequently.    3.My profession is my main focus; parliamentary politics is secondary.    4. Being a parliamentarian is a profession, and I prioritize it, postponing everything else.*

P.O.S.3. Is being a parliamentarian an opportunity to advance your political career, or is it just a temporary opportunity? (select one option)

*1.It is just a temporary opportunity; I have another career.  
2. It is a starting point to continue building a parliamentary career.*

P.O.S.4. Where do you see yourself in 4 years? (select one option)

*1.Continuing my parliamentary career  
2.In local politics or another political domain, but not as a parliamentarian  
3. Pursuing a non-political career*

P.O.S.5. Based on your previous answers, do you believe it is necessary to establish an occupational standard for the role of parliamentarian?

*YES    NO*

P.O.S.6. If you answered YES (to the previous question), what would you consider necessary for the creation of such a standard? (select up to 3 options)

1. *Establishing professional criteria (experience in the profession of the future parliamentarian)*
2. *Political activity at local, regional, or national organizational levels*
3. *Contribution to community projects and the role in developing the community from which the future elected official comes*
4. *Educational quality and academic performance*
5. *Favorable or unfavorable family history, which constitutes an element of public sympathy*
6. *Financial power and management of public or private organizations previously coordinated by the future elected official*

### **SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA (S.D.)**

S.D.1. Please specify your electoral district (county). (This question does not apply to MEPs.)

S.D.1.1. Do you consider yourself a representative of one of the historical regions below? (select one option)

1. *Banat*
2. *Bessarabia*
3. *Bukovina*
4. *Crișana*
5. *Dobrogea*
6. *Moldova*
7. *Muntenia*
8. *Oltenia*
9. *Maramureș*
10. *Transylvania*
11. *Bucharest*
12. *I belong to Romania, not a specific historical region.*

S.D.2. What is your age according to the categories below? (select one option)

1. 23-30 years
2. 30-40 years
3. 40-50 years
4. 50-60 years
5. 60-70 years
6. Over 70 years

S.D.3. What is your level of education according to the categories below? (select one option)

1. *High school*
2. *Higher education*
3. *Doctorate*
4. *Prefer not to say*

S.D.3.1. What is your field of expertise/specialization? (select one option)

1. *Economics*
2. *Education*
3. *Law*
4. *Engineering*
5. *IT/Information Technology*
6. *International Relations*
7. *Social Sciences (sociologist, anthropologist, psychologist, etc.)*
8. *Other*

S.D.4. Are you married? (select one option)

1. *YES*
2. *NO*
3. *In a consensual relationship*

S.D.5. What is your ethnicity? (select one option)

1. *Romanian (including Aromanian, Bessarabian/Moldovan, etc.)*
2. *Roma*
3. *Hungarian*
4. *Ukrainian/Russian*
5. *Other*

S.D.6. What is your religion? (select one option)

- 1.Agnostic    2.Atheist    3.Buddhist/Hindu    4.Christian Orthodox    5.Christian Catholic (Roman Catholic  
or Greek Catholic)    6.Christian Protestant    7.Christian Neo-Protestant  
8.Other Christian denomination    9.Muslim    10.Jewish

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