



Școala Națională de Studii Politice și Administrative

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Domeniul de Doctorat SOCIOLOGIE

SUMMARY

The transition of Romanians' food consumption habits after 1989
Study case: Mogoșoaia commune

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The work "Transition of the eating habits of Romanians after 1989: study case Mogoșoaia commune" aims to analyze eating habits and the behavior of the population in terms of food for a limited geographical area, based on the transformations in society after 1989. Thus the work wants to identify the way in which the societal transformations after 1989, an important moment from the social point of view and which influenced numerous changes at all levels of society, led to the change in the food consumption habits of the Romanians. Through this work, a diagnosis of the general trend of the population's behavior at the national level will be made, through the analysis of some statistical data, a short diagnosis according to what the population consumes and how the consumption of some foods evolved after 1990. While for the commune I will follow Mogoșoaia through the interview and questionnaire applied to identify eating habits.

The objective of the work is to identify the way in which capitalism has influenced/changed the food consumption habits of the inhabitants of Mogoșoaia. The increase in the standard of living of the population generates a shift from the need to eat to the pleasure of eating, and food becomes more and more, for households with high incomes, a space of creativity in the preparation of the menu, of freedom of choice. Households with modest incomes generally turn to products with a low degree of processing and implicitly with low added value, as a result of which a large number of processing operations of the purchased products take place in their own kitchen. Another important objective is the identification/analysis of the possible impact that culture has on the way the citizens of Mogoșoaia feed themselves.

In this context, the main and secondary objectives of the study, which our approach aims to analyze, are the presentation of the main eating habits of Romanians (from modernity to contemporaneity), the identification of the impact that the transition had on the eating habits of Romanians, the analysis of the influence internal migration (from the village to the city) and the effects it exerted in terms of food consumption habits, the analysis of the influences exerted by traditions, customs, religious, cultural, political customs on the way Romanians eat . The purpose of the paper is the comparative analysis of the way in which the eating habits of the Romanians evolved in the process of transition from communism to democracy for a geographically delimited area, Mogoșoaia commune, Ilfov county.

The main objectives of the research are:

- Making a diagnosis of food consumption behavior in Romania in the post-December period.
- Identification of the social factors that contributed to the change in the eating habits of the inhabitants of the Mogoșoaia commune, after 1989 by applying research tools.
- Explanation of how the change in eating habits of the inhabitants of the Mogoșoaia commune took place after 1989.

The work will be structured in five chapters, through which the following aspects will be addressed: in Chapter 1 the motivation and methodological framework of the work and a synthesis of the current state of knowledge will be presented, in Chapter 2 the theoretical framework of the theme from the perspective specialized literature, both at international and national level, in Chapter 3 food and eating habits will be addressed, in Chapter 4 a diagnosis of food in post-December Romania will be made and its evolution trends and in Chapter 5 will be presented the research results, respectively the analysis of the questionnaire and interview results for the geographical area of the case study. Food is a complex phenomenon, an object of research that allows multiple possibilities of approach. In recent times, food has become one of the important topics of sociological research and the sociology of food can thus be defined as a specialized research area that aims to help understand contemporary transformations and highlight the causes of food crises. This field of research did not constitute a major interest because it represented rather a theoretical paradox because culinary practices represent a place of expression of identity and expose codes of social differentiation. Eating is an activity determined and framed by social rules, which we habitually fulfill, most of the time from our experiences.

Food studies, as a distinct field in sociology, has seen extensive interest and growth. Previously, studies of food production and consumption typically fell within the realm of health research, agrarian studies, development sociology, agricultural economics, or social anthropology. Rural and natural resource sociologists have long emphasized the management and impact of food

production systems in their work. In classical volumes, food was usually mentioned as an example of social classification or social problems, rather than as a distinct object of study. Since the 1980s, sociologists' attention to how food strengthens social bonds; marks social and cultural differences; and is integrated into forms of social organization, from households to empires, has grown. The early 21st century interest in food, both by researchers and the general public, is due to an increased awareness of the global nature of markets and politics, concerns with health and safety, and the ways in which cooking and dining in city have become fodder for the media spectacle.

Today, sociologists of food display considerable diversity in their theoretical approaches, research methods, and empirical foci. Sociologists draw on both classical and contemporary sociological theorists to study the production, distribution, and consumption of food, and how food and eating are integrated into social institutions, systems, and networks. Currently, sociologists contribute to research on inequality and stratification, culture, family, markets, politics and power, identity, status, social movements, migration, labor and work, health, environment and globalization. Sociological work on food in the late 20th and early 21st centuries is characterized by two overlapping strands: food systems (derived in part from agricultural production studies and applied extension, as well as environmental, development, and rural sociology) and food politics, identity, and culture (which reveals anthropological and social cultural-historical emphasis). Both are situated in the emerging interdisciplinary research field of food studies, which has gained a greater institutional footing in universities in Europe and Australia than in the United States and Canada (but this may be changing). Sociologists working in the two strands examine issues of food and inequality, trade, labor, power, capital, culture, and technological innovation. This article presents social science research and theorizing about what we eat, how we produce and buy food, who benefits, who we eat with, what we think about food, and how food fits into contemporary social life. The 1980s and 1990s saw the publication of several landmark works (in the United States, Great Britain, and Australia) providing overviews of food and nutrition as specifically sociological topics of inquiry. For many cultures around the world, food is what brings people together. The post-communist period led to changes in society, primarily through the development of a free market that determined the population's easy access to a diversity of products in all categories, including food. Then there was the advent of supermarkets which led to an invasion of food products, most of them processed, which have not exactly healthy content. Access to these

products creates the conditions for a chaotic or unhealthy eating behavior, which is based on processed products, with a high salt and sugar content, to the detriment of an organized diet, based on healthy, natural or "bio" foods and food cooked. From the specialized literature, there is international interest in the food consumption behavior of the population, in the context of numerous diseases that have as their main cause the consumption of various foods or unhealthy diets. The diversity of research and their deepening through the analysis of sub-topics such as the type of diets, the content of meals or the proportion of nutrients in food diets highlight the importance of the topic. Thus, for Romania, the research is not at such an advanced level as at the international level, but there are studies that show how the behavior of the population has changed in terms of nutrition, the role of nutrition in the occurrence of certain diseases, etc. Nutrition is of particular importance both in promoting and maintaining health throughout life and in adopting a balanced diet. A balanced diet is important in determining the incidence of chronic diseases and their alarming prevalence in today's civilization, including obesity, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, osteoporosis and dental disease. The World Health Organization reports that chronic diseases have contributed about 60% of all reported deaths worldwide (almost half of this figure being caused by cardiovascular diseases) and almost 46% of current global morbidity, 79% of deaths in world due to chronic diseases in developing countries.

The area chosen for the case study is the commune of Mogoșoaia, Ilfov county, which developed continuously after 1989, both from the perspective of the opportunities that appeared in this area, and due to its proximity to the city of Bucharest. Economic development after 1989 did not only bring benefits among the population. If the standard of living has increased, it has led to the opportunity for citizens to have access to a diversity of foods, but what kind of foods and how they influence eating behavior will be ascertained in the research carried out. However, it can be assumed that the accessibility to a varied range of foods can negatively influence the food diet, having serious consequences among the health of the population. Significant changes in food consumption are a concern in the literature, especially when characterizing consumption styles by region. New ways of eating cannot be imposed, they must be integrated into people's daily lives, which involve foods that people want to eat. Consequently, the "sustainability" of diets involves factors beyond the nutritional or environmental characteristics of foods, such as affordability of diets. In this context, there is growing recognition that sustainable diets must be 'cultural',

'appropriate' (or 'culturally acceptable'). An important role in nutrition is played by the notion of culture, which affects sustainable diets. Thus, sustainable diets are those low-impact diets that contribute to food and nutrition security and the development of healthy lives for present and future generations. In recent years, both internationally and domestically, food consumption patterns have changed. The coronavirus pandemic accelerated this transition, which also contributed to the emergence of new trends in consumer behavior. The approach of digitization and globalization has a significant impact on food consumption and purchasing habits. In many cases, the preference for domestic products is the result of consumer values, but the impact of the Covid-19 virus must also be monitored in this area. A consumer's choice to pay attention to a product's origin, its provenance, its local production and environmental impact is a way of expressing awareness. Product choice may also be motivated by the consumer's preference for the labor economy of the place or region where they live, reflecting a conscious choice. It is precisely along these values that the difference between generations must be emphasized, which can also be a driving force behind a system of preferences for a certain product. The difference between generations can be traced in many aspects, such as the choice of product, brand or service. General consumer characteristics are important in the context of food perception and preference by reflecting differences in generational values in food consumption. Petrovici (2000) conducted a study on the analysis of food consumption patterns in Romania. Romania's transition period towards a more market-oriented economy involved substantial changes in food consumption patterns and significant year-to-year variations. Declining real incomes provide an interesting validation of Engel's law regarding the relationships between household income and food expenditures. There is evidence that the Romanian diet is deteriorating in relation to modern nutritional guidelines, and possible policy responses are discussed. Peter et al. (2021) carried out the work "Dynamics of food consumption in Romania in the period 2008-2019" which aimed to analyze food consumption in Romania in the period 2008-2019 using the data made available by the National Institute of Statistics. Data were processed using descriptive analysis reflected in mean, standard deviation, coefficient of variation and also annual growth rate. First of all, the value of the minimum consumption basket increased representing 7,278 lei in 2020 to ensure a decent living for a family with two adults and two children. Food consumption in Romania represents approximately 21% of the total expenses for the minimum consumption basket. Food consumption was analyzed by food product category, and the results showed an increase in consumption of poultry, pork and sheep, cheese and butter,

fruit, vegetables, jam, honey, ice cream, coffee and tea, as well as a decreased consumption of bread, beef, milk, beans, potatoes, sugar and chocolate. These trends reflect the fact that there is a consumer awareness for their daily diet, and it needs to be healthier and more balanced than before. For the future, consumption must focus on three criteria: health, sustainability and convenience. In this sense, consumption must be based on fresh, natural, organic, healthy, safe and seasonal food provided mainly by local producers and the offer could be supplemented by imports especially for off-season food.

Nutrition plays an important role in promoting and maintaining health. An unhealthy diet can lead to metabolic imbalances and the appearance of diseases that have become increasingly common these days: obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, osteoporosis and dental disease. There are changes in eating habits, in the sense of orienting consumers towards products rich in proteins, fats, carbohydrates, calories, with a low fiber content, to which is added an increasingly sedentary lifestyle. These were caused by the development of industrialization, urbanization and mechanization, changing technologies in food manufacturing, the emergence of fast food and catering, the daily stress of busy working days. The consumer has become more aware that food should be seen not only as a means to satisfy basic needs, but also to cover a spiritual satisfaction during and after consumption. More attention is paid to the available product information, which is carefully studied to be natural, healthy products with high nutritional value. Despite the fact that we live in a "consumer society", the capacity of the stomach is limited, therefore people cannot consume more food, but they could choose higher quality products and consume less. In general, the consumer has his own criteria for buying a food product: utility, novelty, habits, quality (appearance, freshness, taste, aroma, nutritional value), health impact (naturalness, low-calorie food, organic food, food safety etc.), country or region of origin, landmark, price and also other criteria such as to protect the environment.

Voinea et al. (2019) produced a paper "Research on Food Behavior in Romania from the Perspective of Supporting Healthy Eating Habits" in which they highlighted that today's society offers food consumers many options that involve difficult decisions. A modern consumer becomes confused and shows a tendency to lose their traditional habits by being disoriented and stressed by the conflicting messages of the media and warnings to be as slim as possible. However, most experts suggest that adopting a healthy eating behavior based on minimally processed natural

products can contribute to the development of a sustainable food system. The study aimed to design the dietary profile of Romanian consumers by presenting the basic factors of a balanced diet. A quantitative marketing study was conducted in which a face-to-face survey was used. The questionnaire was applied to people over 18 years of age, and the instrument used for data collection was the structured questionnaire, applied to a sample of 1185 Romanian respondents. The following analysis methods were used in this study: factor analysis, cluster analysis, and structural equation modeling. The research results presented the main aspects underlying the classification of food products, the grouping of Romanian consumers according to their interest in healthy eating and the relationships between the specific variables that influence healthy eating habits. These results highlighted the need to support educational campaigns addressed to Romanian consumers that aim to develop healthy eating habits and to create the necessary conditions for remodeling, food supply and contributing to the development of environmental sustainability. This important and debated approach nowadays, when people are witnessing an exponential remodeling and multiplication of the food universe due to the symbiosis between modern food technology and nutrition science. This phenomenon has generated a trend in the supply of organoleptic substances and processed foods. Although, the consumer has the option to choose from a wide range of food products that are usually available.

Despite his sovereignty in the market (the phrase "king of the consumer" appeared during the development of the consumer society), he was always under continuous attack by manufacturers and sellers, becoming a victim of corporate sales tools, which encouraged overconsumption and other eating habits unhealthy. In this context, the emergence of non-communicable diseases related to nutrition can be observed among modern consumers (manifested mainly by the improper application of nutrition principles and by the presence in the daily diet of a multitude of unbalanced food products). For example, the main dietary risk factors in the "Western/North American diet" of modern consumers are high intake of sodium, red meat, fat and sugar, combined with low intake of healthy foods such as whole grains, fruit, nuts and seeds and vegetables. The Romanian population has adopted this type of diet since the fall of the communist regime. In the report of the National Institute of Statistics (2016) it is shown that the food profile of the majority of Romanian consumers can be summarized as follows: the population buys large quantities of cheap and poor quality food products, either because of income or because of

marketing. Unhealthy products, sweets, margarine, street food pastries and bakery products, pork and poultry from industrial farms, as well as sausages and meat-based convenience foods are common in the daily menu of Romanians. Regarding the Romanian Food Guidelines (titled Guide for a healthy diet), which were developed in 2006 by the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with some universities and nutrition institutes, although they do not have a direct focus on sustainability, they present a food model promoted could have different impacts on the environment, through some of its key messages, such as eating lots of grains, eating lots of fruits and vegetables, choosing foods that contain low amounts of fat, eating processed foods that are high in sugar . The basic principles of a healthy diet (variety, proportionality, moderation) are reflected by the graphic representation of the Romanian food guides in the form of a food pyramid, divided into several sections suggesting the seven food groups with the number of servings recommended for each, having at physical activity basis. At the international level, a multitude of studies have recently been carried out to highlight consumers' perception of sustainable food and their desire to adopt its principles. Although most have focused mainly on the issue of diets and their impact on human health, the environment and food systems, showing the importance of the topic of healthy and sustainable food for consumers is growing. Although in Romania there is not much research on consumer perception of food sustainability, previous research still shows the desire of some Romanian consumers to switch to a healthier diet and to consume daily products such as organic food (especially fresh fruits and vegetables), more home cooked food, healthy homemade sweets. For Romanians, the keywords associated with healthy eating are no added sugar, less fat, no food additives, unprocessed, natural, fresh, clean, suitable combinations, moderation, balance.

The general context shows the importance of an in-depth study of food consumption behavior in Romania, as well as the factors that influence it. In this sense, the specialized literature reports, on the one hand, some negative aspects in modern society, such as the encouragement of excessive consumption and a set of unhealthy eating behaviors, and, on the other hand, highlights some positive aspects of today's society, which, in addition to an increased interest in healthy and sustainable nutrition, such as diversifying the sources of information available to consumers, increasing the level of education of consumers that will allow them to establish scientifically based criteria for choosing healthy foods. Considering all this, the premise of the study was that the mass of Romanian consumers could be divided into two categories, interested and uninterested,

depending on the importance they attach to a healthy diet and the implications of their eating behavior. In a continuously expanding economy, food consumption behavior is a separate branch, given the significant changes in food production and consumption. In the statistics of the last years, a strong upward trend in food consumption is indicated. The increase in consumption can be explained mainly due to the numerical and content intensification of products, to which consumers respond with a pro-consumption attitude and consequently, by increasing consumption. These analyzes are carried out internationally, and in Romania the work "The modification of food consumption behavior under the influence of promotional actions" carried out by Mihăilă et al. (2021) have centralized data from the last five years regarding promotional actions among consumers. The research results confirmed the increase in food consumption for most products on the Romanian market, due to the influence of promotional actions, which does not always prove to be favorable to support a stable and strong socio-economic level, given a sustainable market. An atypical situation is encountered for the consumption of fruits and vegetables, for which a very low or even no increase is recorded. The importance and evolution of the specifics of the phenomenon of food consumption are indisputable for economic growth and, implicitly, for general well-being. However, it is advisable to consider the optimal level of this consumption, from the perspective of a quantitative threshold and qualitative recalibration. The general references for the field of food consumption is extremely varied, and the study of the authors mentioned above focuses on consumption behavior, which represents one of the main attractions of the marketing study area, arousing interest. Within the enterprise marketing mission, food consumption behavior is a special subcategory, given the significant realignments of food production and consumption. Statistics from the last 10 years indicate a strong upward trend for all product categories. The research results highlighted the increase in food consumption under the influence of promotional actions, which do not always favorably support a stable, socio-economically healthy and sustainable market. Health, according to the conceptualization in the field of health, the most important factor influencing it is determined by lifestyle. Inadequate lifestyle habits have led to an increase in overweight and obesity, especially in young populations. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), children should be diagnosed as overweight and obese when their body mass index (BMI) is greater than or equal to the 85th percentile and 95th percentile, respectively. For adults, the breakpoints corresponding are 25 kg/m² and 30 kg/m². Being overweight in the young population has serious health implications. The frequencies

of endocrine, metabolic, orthopedic and psychological disorders are significantly higher in children and adolescents with obesity than in people of the same age, but with a normal body weight. Research indicates that approximately 80% of obese teenagers will remain obese into adulthood.

Food consumption patterns have evolved throughout human history, especially rapidly in the last 50 years, hand in hand with the process of globalization. Current diets, which are the result of such a worldwide transformation, are now being questioned on the basis of parameters considered deficient for the nutritional needs of consumers and, in the case of meat, because of the potential impact on the environment. Pineiro et al. (2021) created the chapter "Food consumption patterns: necessary changes and the role of the public sector" through which they addressed the current global food system, types of consumption and the changes that should take place in this system. Thus, the global food system is considered by some specialists to be a total failure in terms of providing adequate food to the world population, which is based on the following considerations: even today, there are a significant number of undernourished people, and the fact that diets are linked to an increase in the occurrence of non-infectious pathologies associated with food, such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension and coronary heart disease. Purchase frequency, shopping habits, place of purchase, and concerns about where to purchase food during the COVID-19 pandemic were analyzed compared to the pre-coronavirus period using descriptive statistics and statistics from an online survey. Three types of behavior were identified as related to frequency of purchase and organization of a shopping list (less often, no change, more often). Two groups of consumers have been identified as related to where they buy food: people with the same habits and people with new habits. Concerns about store location and the choice to buy direct from manufacturers were also investigated using ordered logistic regression. The empirical study revealed new consumption patterns with a reflection on future trends.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its spread at a very high rate has pushed people to experiment with new lifestyle habits. Stopping the spread of the coronavirus pandemic required the imposition of restrictions imposed by the Government, including staying at home. In Romania, in response to the evolution of the epidemic, the government declared a state of emergency on March 16, 2020 for a duration of 30 days, which was later extended. Provisional legislation was passed through military ordinances. On March 29, 2020, a nationwide blockade was instituted, by

Military Ordinance no. 3, which involved several coercive measures such as restricted range of motion; remote work (where applicable); the temporary closure of restaurants, cafes, shopping centers (except for the sale of food) and farmers' markets; reduced opening hours of grocery stores and other restrictions. On May 15, 2020, a state of alert was instituted, whereby some of the restrictions were still in place (eg reduced grocery store hours, closed farmers' markets). All this has led to changes in the daily buying behavior of most consumers, as well as in the lifestyle and eating habits in Romania (as well as in other countries in the South-Eastern European region). When measures are proposed and approved, they must be based on understanding people's changes. They changed their food consumption behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic compared to the pre-pandemic period, as pointed out by Jansen et al. (2021). In this context, the following research questions are raised regarding consumer behavior after the state of emergency compared to the pre-COVID-19 period in Romania: How has the frequency of purchasing food products changed since the COVID-19 pandemic? How has the organization of grocery shopping been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic? To what extent has the location of stores influenced consumers' decision to choose where to buy food products? To answer the research questions, an empirical study was used that investigates the changes in food consumption behavior that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic among consumers in the Northwest Development Region of Romania. The specific objectives were to examine post-emergency consumer behavior compared to pre-COVID-19 in terms of the following: food purchase frequency, shopping habits and place of purchase. New consumption patterns were analyzed for four main food categories (fruit and vegetables, meat and meat products, bread and bakery products, milk and dairy products) with a reflection on future trends.

The emergence of new data on global food consumption in the years 2014-2017 from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has contributed to the analysis of the latest trends in the field. FAO data provided information on the supply of food to market, but did not account for food losses at the household level. They are still a reliable source of information on consumption patterns. This fact has been validated by studies in which food balance data have actually been used to examine consumption patterns. As previous research shows, consumption patterns change as the economy develops. At the same time, they tend to converge globally, and one of the trends observed over the years is that poorer countries are moving to the eating habits

seen in richer countries. This is often referred to as westernization of diets, as it primarily involves closeness to what is established in the US or developed European countries. The unification of the structure of food consumption patterns is observed on a smaller or larger scale throughout the world. In the literature, however, the largest number of studies refer to changes in the diets of Asian countries, which initially differed significantly from Western patterns. The diet of Asians has shifted towards Western models of a diet rich in energy and protein. Similarly, studies of African and Latin American countries indicate diets that are increasingly similar to Western models. Changes in food consumption around the world depend on several major trends, which include urbanization processes, increased consumption of processed foods, increased consumption of food outside the home and a concern for the natural environment, a trend observed mainly in highly developed countries . This is reflected by switching to a diet that does not contain animal products.

Food consumption and the transition of food habits has been studied especially by the social sciences, especially from the perspective of the production process and/or capitalist or industrialist forms of production. This topic is also approached from the point of view of the negative effects on the environment due to the (global) consumer society, and the concept of lifestyles and the field of consumption have attracted more and more attention. For example, at the Rio Summit in 1992, the issue of developing sustainable consumption patterns was discussed. Specific consumption issues have become increasingly important as they affect sustainable development and influence climate change. In this sense, there is the rise of a global consumer society, which takes into account, more or less, Western standards of energy and resource consumption. Lifestyle changes are needed to make a transition to sustainability and stabilize the global climate. Research on consumption and the environment has shown that consumption can be defined as a social process, and consumerism as a social reality that contributes to a substantial extent to the reduction of environmental problems at the local and global level. Thus, the foundations are laid, through some constraints, for the sustainable development of the planet. Society is increasingly modernized and globalized, where industrial food production processes are quite opaque to the general public, but are becoming more and more widespread. There is an increase in people's concerns about the health of food, and there is a continuous expansion of the markets for organic food. There is a repeated manipulation of consumers' growing preferences for

certain foods that they consider healthy, but do not have specific natural qualities. This manipulation occurs frequently through a variety of advertisements that advertise a number of industrial foods as having "natural" product qualities. Increasing sales in the agri-food sector is a priority objective of these advertising strategies in a context of overproduction and obvious oversupply, which in turn translates into stimulating food consumption. Food consumption, production and related processes are responsible for about a third of all global anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. Biodiversity loss, deforestation, water and energy scarcity, and ecosystem disruption are examples of negative externalities of food production. At the same time, dietary trends in Western countries (ie, diets low in vegetables, nuts, and whole grains and high in red and processed meat) are causing major health problems, such as higher risks of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer. To stop this "global syndemic", not only a change but also a profound transition of the food system is urgently needed. In general, the term "sustainability transition" refers to a radical change from one system state to another.

In this context, the literature increasingly focuses on particular points in transition, where a small perturbation can trigger a large response from the system and thus radical system change could be initiated. The social sciences apply the concept of societal transition points to describe fundamental systemic changes in markets, society, or politics. While the tipping points discussed in the field of ecology lead to the collapse of natural systems, a prominent example being the so-called planetary boundaries which, if crossed, would lead to irreparable and unacceptable environmental and climate changes, the societal tipping points discussed in the context of sustainability are positive catalysts that move the system to a more favorable state. A defining quality of such positive peaks is that they are intentional. This is rooted in the fact that social systems, unlike biophysical systems, can change over short periods of time and still thrive. Society's tipping points can occur when a critical mass is reached, at which point small additional interventions can trigger large-scale changes in the system. Thus, the crucial question for sustainability transitions is how to identify actions that create critical mass and tilt the status quo, that is, which actions have the most leverage in the system. A successful societal transition is usually accompanied by behavioral change at the level of individual decision makers. The imminent "plant-based" transition of the food system requires consumers to reduce their meat consumption and increase their consumption of plant-based products (eg, lentils, vegetables).

However, food consumption is very common and consumers find it difficult to change their habits. Policy interventions by public and private entities are crucial for inducing change in consumer behavior. To date, key points in sustainability transitions operate at the macro level, but do not capitalize on existing evidence and theory regarding the drivers and mechanisms of behavior change at the micro level of the individual consumer or citizen. The potential to target demand, and therefore consumer behavior and public acceptance, has been recognized as having enormous potential to achieve a more sustainable food system. The transition literature benefits from a theoretical underpinning of how society's food consumption tipping points are triggered and under what conditions a drastic change in food consumption is likely to occur. Previous research on societal transitions has mainly focused on the energy and mobility sector, and only recently have studies focusing on sustainability transitions in the food sector emerged. Sustainability transitions are rather theoretical, speculative in approach and rarely specific enough to guide action. The dynamics of social systems are often complex and interconnected, and achieving system transformation requires more than a single tipping point. Challenges across multiple subsystems and between different stakeholder groups are essential for a system transformation.

The transition to sustainability of the food system is an example of a complex challenge, not only for the food industry, the agricultural sector and society in general, but also for the individual consumer. Food is deeply rooted in culture, and many Western cultures are centered around animal foods and foods high in sugar and fat. Thus, consumers face a triple challenge: they are asked to change the types of food they eat (especially red meat and less processed dairy products and more protein-rich vegetables such as lentils and whole grains); should purchase food from sustainable production systems (eg organic or other forms of ecological production); to change food-related practices to minimize the amount of food waste in their household. These challenges raise the question of how these far-reaching changes in consumer behavior can be stimulated. Due to the complexity of consumption domains, such as food consumption or mobility, it is often difficult to identify the full range of interventions needed to achieve a global state where consumer consumption patterns are at a sustainable level. As such, an analysis of different case studies becomes crucial for identifying interventions that can serve as a foundation for transformative developments. The period of socio-economic transition since 1990 was accompanied by a decline in living standards, accompanied by an increase in inflation and national

unemployment, which led in particular to an exacerbation of nutritional inequalities. Most Romanian households spend the majority of their budgets on meeting their daily food needs, as many high-quality foods are unfortunately difficult to obtain due to financial barriers. The work "Transition of the eating habits of Romanians after 1989: Mogoșoaia commune case study" aimed at the comparative analysis of the way in which the eating habits of Romanians for a limited geographical area evolved in the process of transition from communism to democracy. Mogoșoaia commune, Ilfov county. In order to deepen this topic, it was necessary to carry out a review of the specialized literature and then an analysis of the behavior of the Romanian population after 1989 in terms of nutrition. Following the review of the specialized literature at the international level and for Romania, an increased importance and interest of this subject at the academic level was found. Thus, at the international level, there are numerous studies that analyze eating behavior by age groups, by types of diets, their content, diseases triggered by an inadequate diet and the programs launched by various states to prevent diseases of the population that are based on the consequences of nutrition. The globalization of food has brought great accessibility to food products and the development of this industry for consumption.

The accessibility of food products has led to chaotic behavior of the population, especially through the abundance of processed products with a high content of Es, but also through the high access to fast food. At the level of Romania, studies and research on eating habits, the food consumption behavior of the population and their effects can be said to be still at an early stage. At the national level, there is a lack of large-scale awareness programs regarding the importance of food consumption, the structure of a person's meals and the health consequences if it is a chaotic food consumption, without a balanced structure of their components. The conducted study highlights the fact that Romanians' diet has changed in the post-December period, adapting to world trends. Food consumption in Romania is characterized both by the trends generated by society and by the income of the population. On the one hand, the population consumes food that does not affect their family budget, when social categories are addressed, and on the other hand, they consume food that integrates them into a certain social category, especially when young people are analyzed. Gradually, the population has replaced home-cooked food with bought, fast-food type, which is addictive and not healthy, being numerous that highlight this. Capitalism has influenced the nutrition of the population at a global level, in this and that of the Romanians, in

the sense that many processed foods have appeared, which contain various ingredients that affect health and create a certain addiction. The evolution of food capitalism also brought negative effects, which are at the level of the health of the population, and in this sense the concept of "bio" among foods appeared and developed, to highlight their quality. Regarding the applied interview, through the research carried out in the Mogoşoia commune, a significant transition was found in the eating habits of the inhabitants of the Mogoşoia commune after 1989, marked by the diversification of the menu and improved access to food. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated some changes, driving increased interest in home cooking and food safety. Future perspectives suggest a positive evolution towards a healthier and more sustainable diet, supported by educational measures and adequate infrastructure. The interview highlighted the fact that before 1989 access to food was low and it was not diversified, which meant that a diet consisted only of the food that was available. After 1989 the access to products regarding the applied interview, through the research carried out in the Mogoşoia commune, a significant transition in the eating habits of the inhabitants of the Mogoşoia commune was found after 1989, marked by the diversification of the menu and improved access to food.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated some changes, causing an increased interest in home cooking and food safety. Food prices have increased, but so has the risk of consuming unhealthy, processed products that have a high salt and sugar content, and in the long term they have adverse consequences on the health of the population. From the interview it was found that the coronavirus pandemic has brought changes in eating habits and behavior in terms of nutritional consumption. After analyzing the results of the questionnaire, applied to a sample of 150 people, population of Mogoşoia commune. After analyzing the responses, the general conclusions revealed that the participating population has both healthy and unhealthy habits. Awareness of unhealthy habits, as it emerged from the analysis, is an important step for changing the diet or correcting it. It was found that the subjects prefer cooked food, less fast food, and breakfast is an important meal that they consider in their diet. Also, another important aspect was the type of food they prefer at the end of the week, which is usually home-cooked. Unhealthy habits included snacking at dinner, eating meat or sausages, and a tendency to eat salty foods. The study participants, for the most part, do not have health problems, and their behavior regarding their nutrition is for reasons of education, precaution or diet. By analyzing the responses of the subjects,

it can be seen that the degree of awareness is high for a healthy lifestyle, however, some unhealthy habits are identified, including snacks at dinner, salty food, high consumption of sausages, but these can be contrasted with eating from places where it is cooked less unhealthy, healthy food or cooked at home on the weekend, high fiber consumption, etc. By carrying out this work, the premises were created to deepen the theme due to the fact that nutrition influences both the health of the population and its living environment. At the international level, numerous studies and programs are carried out that aim to analyze the behavior of food consumption and emphasize the idea of education in the nutrition of the population in order to prevent a variety of diseases triggered and maintained by food. Thus, in order to provide two relevant conclusions-scenarios for the doctoral thesis in sociology entitled "Transition of Romanians' food consumption habits after 1989: Mogoșoaia commune case study", possible future developments were analyzed from the perspective of current international trends, presenting a positive and a negative scenario.

1. Scenario 1: positive evolution - revival of local and sustainable food

In this positive scenario, the commune of Mogoșoaia actively adopts international trends regarding sustainable and healthy food. A growing awareness of the population on the negative impact of modern globalized food (fast food, processed food) leads to a return to traditional and local food practices. Government programs and international initiatives support the development of organic agriculture, food education and supporting local producers.

Impact:

- **Social and cultural:** A revival of local culinary traditions, based on healthy and sustainable products, contributes to strengthening the cultural identity of the community. Traditional foods become more than mere memories of the past, actively integrating into the daily diet of the inhabitants. Food education, supported by schools and the community, leads to a greater appreciation for local recipes and a respect for food traditions passed down from generation to generation.
- **Public health:** A diet based on fresh, local produce reduces the incidence of diet-related chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The commune of

Mogoşoaia becomes an example of good practice in promoting health through food, with a population that benefits from a better general state of health.

- **Economy:** Local agriculture and small food businesses are thriving due to the demand for local and organic products. This economic growth helps create jobs, keep young people in the community and attract tourists interested in authentic dining experiences. Mogoşoaia becomes a model of sustainable rural development, recognized nationally and internationally.

2. Scenario 2: negative evolution - erosion of food traditions and public health crisis

In this negative scenario, the commune of Mogoşoaia continues to be strongly influenced by the trends of food globalization, with a significant increase in the consumption of processed food, fast food and imported products. Western influences, along with economic pressures and aggressive advertising, are leading to a gradual abandonment of traditional eating habits. The lack of effective policies to support healthy food and local agriculture contributes to the deepening of this negative trend.

Impact:

Social and cultural: Traditional eating habits are disappearing, replaced by a globalized and standardized food lifestyle. As younger generations become increasingly influenced by international trends, the cultural identity tied to local food traditions is eroding. Traditional foods are rarely eaten, becoming only a vestige of the past, without a significant role in everyday life.

Public health: The increase in the consumption of processed foods rich in fat, sugar and salt leads to a deterioration in the health status of the population. There is an increased incidence of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. A lack of proper nutrition education and access to healthy food options is contributing to this public health crisis.

- Economy: Dependence on imports and global food chains leads to the decline of local agriculture and small producers. This negative economic development accentuates the migration of young people to the cities and weakens the social cohesion of the community. Mogoşoaia is becoming more and more vulnerable to global economic fluctuations and is losing its local specificity, turning into a suburb without a distinct identity.

These two scenarios offer contrasting perspectives on the future of food habits in Mogoşoaia commune, reflecting both the positive potential of revitalizing food traditions and sustainable development, as well as the risks associated with uncontrolled globalization and the loss of local cultural identity. Political, economic and social choices will play a crucial role in determining the direction this community will take.

As a result of the study, it was found that research or case studies can be deepened to complete the theme, such as:

- Frequent diseases caused by food after 1990 in the commune of Mogoşoaia or in geographical areas that experienced a visible economic development;
- The increase in the number of people suffering from obesity and the effects generated by it on well-defined target groups, children, students or people between certain ages;
- The influence of food on social categories and health