

**THE ROMANIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM:
AFTER THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF NOVEMBER 30, 2008**
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The elections of November 30, 2008 are the sixth electoral test organized since the fall of communism. These elections have been organized on the basis of a new electoral law – the fourth in two decades.¹ All the post-December electoral regulations have been inspired by a proportional philosophy. Until the 2008 scrutiny, the two Chambers were elected on the basis of a PR system with closed lists in multi-member constituencies having as a territorial reference the county and a mechanism of allocation of mandates based on the electoral coefficient and the redistribution of the largest remainders method applied first at the level of the county and then at the national level. The district magnitude has varied from one law to another (see table 1), being an “implicit threshold” quite important for small parties. An electoral threshold of 3% was introduced in 1992, and then increased, after 2000, to 5% for parties and, respectively 8-10%, depending of the number of parties associated, for coalitions.

STEPPING STONES: TOWARDS A NEW ELECTORAL LAW

For the last decade, many voices of Romanian society, discontent by the vote based on lists, have called for a revolution of the electoral system, more precisely the “introduction of the uninominal vote”. A modification in this sense was proposed only in 2007 by the Association *Pro Democrația* and resumed by the Liberals of the Tăriceanu’s government. This government demanded a vote of confidence, on October 29, 2007, for a bill that foresaw a mixt electoral system in which half of the members of parliament were to be designated in single-member colleges by a plurality formula, while the rest of mandates were to be obtained, accordingly to a proportional rule, by the candidates that lost the competition. The project passed the two Chambers but was called for as unconstitutional by the President November 21, 2007, the

Court declaring that several of its provisions did not respect the Constitution.ⁱⁱ In exchange, Traian Băsescu called for a referendum for the adoption of a two-ballot majority-plurality system, in single mandate constituencies. Inspired by the French system for the election of the National Assembly, the bill, also supported by the Partidul Democrat Liberal, stipulated that each deputy or senator was to be elected if he obtained half plus one of the votes of the electors registered on electoral rolls. When none of the candidates could achieve such a majority, the mandate was attributed to one of the top two candidates remaining, on the basis of a second round where only a simple plurality was needed to win. Even if 81.36% of the electors declared they were favorable to the proposal made by the President, the referendum was invalidated because only 26.51% of the electoral body was present at the polls, the law requiring at least a 50-percent voter turnout.

In the end, the parliament adopted an electoral law in March 2008 that continued neither the PNL's bill, nor the President's project. The Law introduced, at the proposal of a social-democrat senatorⁱⁱⁱ, an eclectic electoral formula, according to which "deputies and senators are chosen in single-member colleges... through a uninominal vote according to the principle of proportional representation" (art. 5 p. 1). Colleges, sub-unities of the constituencies, are organized on the basis of a representation norm of a deputy for each 70.000 citizens and a senator for 160.000 citizens. The college is single-member because each "political competitor" submits one candidature. But the distribution of mandates is made accordingly to contradictory methods, a combination between a majoritarian formula and a proportional one: as such, win mandates all those candidates that manage to obtain minimum 50% plus one vote in the colleges in which they competed; if they do not achieve this majority, we resort to a proportional distribution based on the same method of electoral quotas, calculated at two levels – in each constituency (county) and, respectively at the national level, on the basis of the aggregation of the largest remainders (art. 48), reuniting for each party the votes granted to candidates that they endorsed. The law created for the first time a constituency outside the country and introduced an alternative threshold: if a political competitor does

not obtain the percentages already mentioned it has to occupy at least six first places in the deputy colleges and three in the senatorial ones to enter the parliament. In exchange, the March 2008 law specifies that in the case of partial elections a system of vote *à l'anglaise*, that is first-past-the-post electoral system is used (art. 48, let. 17).

AN OVERVIEW OF THE ROMANIAN ELECTIONS: 1990-2008

The electoral body shrunk from 1990 to 1992, so as to grow then constantly until 2008 when it arrived to almost 18.5 million electors. This evolution was not bereft of surprises: for example, at the 2000 general elections the electoral body amounted to 17.699.727 voters, a number 2 millions bigger than the one from the local elections organized 6 months earlier, when the permanent lists included only 15.641.534 electors. In exchange, as table 2 indicates, electoral turnout followed a downward curb: more than 6/7 in 1990, 3/4 in 1992 and 1996, so as to oscillate around 2/3 in 2000 and 2004, descending dramatically at less than 40% in 2008.

The proportion of valid ballots, that attest the degree of civic competency, was constantly of 93-95 % with only one exception, the 1992 elections when 12% of the votes were annulled (see table 3). Unfortunately, until the last elections, it was not known how many of the votes annulled were the expression of protest or the refuse of the “political class”. The 2008 law introduced the distinction between *annulled* and *blank votes*, differentiating thus the ballots on which the stamp was not applied correctly and, respectively the ballots without a choice for a particular candidate. As table 3 bis shows, at the November 2008 elections, around 2% of the votes expressed were blank.

Between 1990 and 2008, **the total number of competitors that deposited candidatures** at the general elections, alone or in alliances, was of 200 (see table 4). Sixty percent of them submitted lists once and only 13 of them participated to all the six elections held between the period 1990-2008, of which 11 are, in fact,

minorities' political representatives (Lipovans, Germans, Bulgarians, Armenians, Magyars, Turks, Greek, Czech, Slovaks, Polish, Serbian, and Ukrainian). The two parties present six times in front of the electorate are the Partidul Ecologist Român and the Partidul Național Liberal that submitted candidate lists also in the framework of alliances, PER 3 times and PNL twice.^{iv} The solution of alliances was embraced in fact at each electoral test but became less and less frequent as time passed: indeed, if in 1992 the 79 lists included 92 political organizations, at the 2008 elections only two of the 29 competitors that entered the competition for the Lower House of the Parliament were electoral alliances.^v Paradoxically, from the six elections organized in Romania after 1989, the last four have been won by a coalition or an electoral alliance: after the victory of the Frontul Salvării Naționale in 1990 and respectively of the Frontul Democrat al Salvării Naționale two years later, the 1996 elections were won by the Convenția Democrată Română, in 2000 the Polul Democrat-Social din România imposed itself, four years later – the Uniunea Națională PSD+PUR, and in 2008, the Alianța politică PSD-PC had won most votes.

The number of parties that submitted candidate lists decreased over time. If we are to compare the lists submitted at the six post-communist electoral consultations, we shall see that in a first moment the number of parties is reduced only in what regards the elections for the Senate. In this case the decrease is not the effect of juridical constraints (such as the electoral threshold) but a result of the strategy of the national minorities' representatives: after the 1992 elections, these realized that the Senate is inaccessible for them and stopped submitting lists for the superior Chamber. Only the coming into force of the 2003 law produced a significant cut in the total number of the electoral contestants: if in 1990, to the mandates of the Lower Chamber, aspired 71 political competitors, in 2004 these were only 52, including here the minorities' representatives; at the Senate, the decrease is even more important: from 59 in the first year of post-communism to 25 at the 2004 elections. At the first European elections, held November 25, 2007 13 lists of parties and an independent candidate participated to the competition, whereas, in 2008 we have 10 parties in competition for the Senate and 11 for the Chamber of Deputies (see

table 5). Not only the number of parties but also the number of their members decreased after 2003. Thus, the 27 parties existing in 2003 counted together 1.735.430 partisans, that is, 10% of the citizens that have the right to vote, whereas at the end of 2007, as table 6 shows, the 21 parties had in total 1.302.417 members.

The number of parliamentary parties resulting of the post-communist elections varies, as table 7 indicates, between 5 and 12 in the Senate and, respectively, between 24 and 27 at the Chamber of Deputies, the latter including the minorities' representatives that do not surpass the threshold but gain representation with one mandate, their number rose from 11 in 1990 to 13 two years later, to 15 in 1996 and to 18 after the 2000 elections. The 2000 elections represent a key moment in the consolidation of the Romanian political stage. At the 2004 elections we have practically the same parties with the specification that two of the parties (PDSR and PSDR) had merge (under the name of PSD). In exchange, the 2008 elections eliminate a parliamentary party (PRM).

An important parameter for the characterization of the political system, the **effective number of parties** calculated after the formula of Marku Laakso and Rein Taagepera portrays a dramatic instability of the Romanian political spectrum: in 19 years the political system of Romania experienced three different formulas because it passed from the quasi-absolute domination of one party in 1990 to the multi party model without a dominant party between 1992 and 1996, so as to gain in 2000 the traits of a multi party system with a dominant party. After the 2004 elections, Romania had again a multi party system without a dominant party, a fact confirmed after the 2008 elections (see table 8). The average value of the effective number of parties ($N = 3.69$) situates the Romanian political system in the Lijphart's table on 36 democracies, very close to the one of Iceland (3.72) with the difference that the number of elections that took place in Romania is smaller, and the range value is bigger than in the Icelandic case. If we exclude the 1990 elections, then the average effective number of parties has the value of 4.10 (with a minimum of 3.19 and a maximum of 5.18), the Romanian system becoming closer to the Belgian one.^{vi}

ELECTORAL DISPROPORTIONALITY: PAST AND PRESENT SITUATION

The dimensions of the legislative have been, during the entire post-communist period, favorable to the expression of a very high proportionality because the Parliament is, as table 9 shows, oversized: in fact, far from respecting “the rule of cubic root” – conforming to which the total number of mandates of the inferior Chamber tends to be equal to the cubic root of the number of the population – the Romanian legislative corresponds to a population of 36 million people, much more than the actual population of the country. But this favorable condition was not put to a good use. Between 1992 and 2000 the electoral system produced what Daniel Barbu called “proportional non-representativeness”^{vii}, in the sense that a considerable number of votes were granted to parties that did not enter the Parliament, being redistributed to parties that surpassed the legal electoral threshold: for example in 2000, 20% of the voters’ choices, or in absolute terms around 2.3 million votes for the Chamber and 2.2 million for the Senate did not find their political expression in Parliament. In 2004, the weight of these “squandered” votes decreased significantly in both Chambers, reaching around 11-13%. At the elections for the European Parliament of November 2007, the five parties that obtained mandates (PD, PSD, PNL, PLD, UDMR) and the independent candidate that managed to gain a seat in PE achieved together 4.197.345 of votes of the 5.122.226 valid votes, thereby squandered votes represented 924.881 votes (18.05%). The elections of November 2008 constituted in this sense a surprise, as they reduced the percentage to 6-7% (see table 10).

Votes’ redistribution in favor of parties that passed the electoral threshold was beneficial primarily to the party classed on the first place. Sometimes, as in 1990 or 2000, the electoral bonus was of 10%, other times the difference between the percentage of votes and that of mandates was minimal. In 2008, as it can be seen from table 11, this difference barely surpassed 1%. What is even more interesting is the fact that the increase in non-representativeness was accompanied by a progressive reduction of the effective number of mandates allocated through the redistribution of votes granted to the parties that did not pass the

electoral threshold, even though, especially in the case of the Senate, this proportion remained, including in 2004 of over 50%. In 2008 the system of transformation of votes into mandates changed, the candidates that obtained half plus one of the votes in the college in which they ran won a seat of deputy or senator, while the other mandates were redistributed proportionally at the level of the county and then, again proportionally, at the national level. In spite of the majoritarian bonus the system evolved practically in the parameters of 2004 as table 12 shows. It is interesting to note that the number of mandates distributed following the “direct” victory in colleges was of 85 at the Chamber (around 27%) and 31 at the Senate (around 22%). This means that the number of mandates distributed at the county level – 160, respectively 41 – was the determining factor in the creation of the general equilibrium of representation.

Electoral disproportionality measured with the help of the formula of Michael Gallagher is in the case of the Romanian political system of 18.47, a value that places it between the last two cases of democracies in the classification realized by Arend Lijphart, more exactly between Jamaica (17.75) and France (21.08). This positioning is surprising if we take into account the fact that the Jamaican system is a plurality one and the French one a majoritarian one while the Romanian system is – at least through its intentions – a proportional system. In the list realized by Lijphart the closest PR systems by their characteristics to the Romanian system are those of Venezuela (G=14.41), Costa Rica (G=13.65) and Columbia (G=10.62), all three considered as genuine examples of the mode in which can be perverted the proportional logic. Overcoming the disequilibria produced in these three countries, *the Romanian system is the most disproportional PR known system*. More than this: Venezuela, Colombia and Costa Rica are, as Romania, presidential democracies but the disproportionality which affects them is due before everything to presidential disproportionality and not to the legislative one; in Romania the exact contrary occurs, while in our case legislative disproportionality varies as it can be seen in table 13, between 4.36 and 9.38, in Venezuela, Colombia and Costa Rica, according to Lijphart^{viii}, the same parameter varies between 2.96 and 4.28. The majoritarian effects of the Romanian

political-electoral system remain very significant even after the last elections, although somehow diminished.

The voting system introduced in 2008 has had major inequitable effects. As table 14 shows, there is no correspondent between the number of mandates won, the number of first placed seats obtained in colleges and the number of colleges won with absolute majorities: PSD is the first from the point of view of seats won with 50%+1, the first one from the point of view of votes obtained at the national level, but the second one from the point of view of mandates won. PNL has 37 first seats in the Chamber (4 being won with more than 50%+1) and 15 first seats at the Senate (1 with a majority in the college), but 65 deputy seats and 28 senators. PDL obtained 196 first seats in colleges and only 166 mandates. If we take into consideration the largest constituencies (see table 14 – 3), the one represented by the municipality of Bucharest, we observe that in the 28 colleges, only 3 candidates gained the mandate with more than half of the votes of the citizens who came to the urns in the college (2 from PSD and one from PDL). PNL, which was third in 25 of the 28 colleges, obtaining also a second place and two fourth places, reached 5 mandates. PDL was in the first place in 20 colleges gaining 12 mandates, and PSD, winner of the other 8 first places won 11 mandates, of which 4 on the second place!

2008 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS: FOLLOW-UP

The 2008 elections did not radically modify the political parties' landscape. In fact, only ten of the 200 parties that have participated to elections between 1990 and 2008 have managed to pass at least three electoral tests, obtaining actually each time, between 85% and 98% of the parliamentary mandates. Thus, these ten parties are the ones that played a decisive role in the Romanian political life (see table 15). The 2008 elections brought about two novelties: the first is the loosing by the PRM of the statute of parliamentary party after four legislatures in which it had between 3 and 20 % of the mandates. The second novelty is brought by the third consecutive entry into parliament of the representatives of PC:

as in the past this thing happened in the framework of an alliance with the social-democrats. As table 15 shows the other 9 parties had different strategies in what concerns the access to the legislative and the participation to government was not conditioned by the embracement of one of these strategies. Derived from a “common branch” – called in 1990 Frontul Salvării Naționale – PDSR and PD have chosen different paths to impose themselves in front of the electorate. Under the name of FDSN in 1992, of PDSR in 1996 and 2000, of PSD after 2001, the party regrouped around Ion Iliescu participated alone to the electoral tests of 1992 and 1996 (winning the first and loosing the second) and in coalition after 2000, 2004 and 2008 (winning elections in the three cases but participating to the government only after 2000 and 2008). Partidul Democrat which became after December 2007, Democrat Liberal, presented itself alone in 1992 (under the name of FSN) as in 2000 and 2008, respectively, in coalition with PDSR in 1996 and with PNL in 2004 managing to enter the government not only in these two cases, but also after the elections of 2008. Partidul Social Democrat Român, alone in 1990, became member of the Convenția Democratică din România in 1992, of the Uniunea Social-Democrată in 1996 and of the Polul Democrației Sociale din România (PDSR) in 2000, these last two alliances allowing it to participate to the government. The fourth successful party, Partidul Ecologist Român was alone in 1990, than a member of the CDR in 1992 and 1996, elections following which it obtained a few mandates. Participating once again alone in 2000 and 2004, it was not able to send representatives in Parliament and in 2008, PER allied itself with Partidul Verde inside the Alianța Partidul Verde Ecologist but failed again to enter the Parliament. At their turn, Partidul Național Țărănesc Creștin Democrat and Partidul Național Liberal chose different strategies: PNL had its own lists in 1990, 1992, 2000 and 2008 (the second time missing the entry in Parliament) and was part of the winning coalition (CDR) in 1996; in 2004 it submitted common candidatures together with the democrats, under the name of Alianța Dreptate și Adevăr PNL-PD, managing to form the government even if they came up second at the legislatives. After it submitted its own list in 1990, PNȚCD opted for the variant of the coalition for the electoral tests organized between 1992 and 2000, this formula bringing to it the second place in 1992, the first place

in 1996 and total failure at the 2000 elections (under the name CDR2000). In 2004 it failed again to enter the Parliament this time on its own lists and in 2008 it stopped presenting candidatures. Uniunea Democrată a Maghiarilor din România passed alone all the six electoral tests, with an average of 25 deputies and 11 senators. Partidul Unității Naționale a Românilor surpassed the threshold both in coalition (in 1990, together with the Partidul Republican) and when it had its own lists (1992 and 1996); in 2000, associated with Partidul Național Român it failed to enter the Parliament; the same thing happened four years later when it had no more electoral allies; the party was erased from the Register of Political Parties in 2006. Finally, Partidul România Mare participated alone both to the four victorious electoral tests and to the failed one of 2008.

If we don't follow the electoral strategies of parties but the ideological relations between them, departing from the criteria used after 1989 to describe the politics of Central and Eastern Europe^{ix}, we have a more complex picture, with nine ideological families. As it can be observed easily from table 16, four of these families – the greens, the extreme left, the minimalist agrarians and the defenders of particular interests – have an insignificant presence between one and two percents, even though sometimes, as it was the case with the greens at the beginning of the transition, they managed to send elected representatives in the Chambers. The other families have a sinuous evolution. The scene is dominated by social-democrats who have an electoral mean of over 40 percents and who never descended below 30%, being divided until the 2004 elections including when one of the parties of this direction – Partidul Democrat – made a radical ideological realignment, entering the family of European popular. The liberals and modernist conservatives are just as divided as the social-democrats with a mean of over 20% with very strong variations from one electoral test to the other, but with a spectacular consolidation in the last years, which led to the 2008 situation when two right parties – PNL and PDL – had together more than half of the options expressed at the urns. On the third place from the point of view of the electoral score is the family of national-populist and extreme-right with a mean of 10.81 in the six elections: after a historic maximum in 2000, when PRM gathered one fifth of the votes expressed, at the 2008 elections

this family descended at 5 percents, results that add in fact the performances of PRM (3.15%) and PNG (2.27%). On the following place in the general classification, with almost 9 percents, is the family of national minorities formed of UDMR and a number of 11-18 organizations of other minorities. Finally, on the fifth place, organized around PNȚCD, is the agrarian Christian-popular family and of the identitarian right, with an average score of 7 percents, but in a strong downward since 2000. ^x

Because of the division of political families and the profound polarization of the party system, many times the articulation of majorities is placed under the sign of the unpredictable and of fragility. This fact is even more clear as, excepting the 1990 elections that had as a result “a won majority”, the electoral system had as a main political consequence the appearance of “natural minorities” and, in consequence, the negotiation of the formation of plural parliamentary majorities and, in several cases, instable. It has to be added that in three out of four cases, respectively in 1992, 2000 and 2004 these parliamentary majorities were not found integrally at the level of the government formula, the cabinets Nicolae Văcăroiu, Adrian Năstase and Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu being minority cabinets (see table 17). Let’s remark finally the decisive weight of the electoral formula that allowed, between 1992 and 2004, that coalitions with a minority of votes have a majority of parliamentary mandates. The 2008 elections are inscribed in a different logic, the “grand coalition” realized by the PSD and PDL had at the urns two thirds of the votes expressed.

The political color of these majorities and its adversaries is changing significantly after each election. Between 1990 and 1992 we have the powerful domination of a left linked rather to the neo-communist^{xi} identity than to the European values: intolerant with its political adversaries, arriving to the use of force (with the occasion of the incursions of miners in Bucharest in May 1990 and September 1991), nostalgic of a totalitarian economic past, with cultural options constructed around a national identity defined on an ethnic basis and opposing the occidentalization of the public space, this left had against it an alliance rather informal and, in any case, incoherent^{xii}, constituted by the Liberals (PNL), the

fraction PNTCD and the members of the Magyar minority (in total around 16% of the votes in 1990); beginning with 1991 after it eliminated Petre Roman, the left directed by President Iliescu on the path of the radical refuse of political and economic reform found in the small liberal party an ally of circumstance to support a government led by Theodor Stolojan and which was meant to prepare the new elections. Between 1992 and 1996, the nationalist-identitarian options and conservative of the economic and social structures of the previous regime formed a weak majority (42% of votes, 51% in mandates), but which knew to impose itself in front of a liberal right lacking unity (6.5% of the votes in Parliament versus 3.6% outside of it), in front of a Christian-agrarian family that held only 10% of the parliamentary seats, face to a social-democrat adversary (FSN/PD) refused for a long time as a partner by the supporters of modernization (10% of votes) and in front of a Magyar minority which was reduced to the statute of “committed spectator” (7.5%). Between 1996 and 2000, the political system was defined by the fragile equilibrium between a pro-occident and liberal in economy coalition, but very divided on social and administrative problems (with almost 50% of votes – CDR^{xiii}, USD and UDMR, each in part being already a coalition), and, on the other side, a left losing speed (PDSR) and which made an appeal, once in opposition, to the national-populists and radical-extremists, nostalgic of communism regrouped around PUNR and PRM. After the 2000 elections, social-democracy – still lacking unity, but under a different formula (PDSR and PSDR merging against PD) – opened its gates to a collaboration with the party of the Magyar minority (UDMR), abandoning the alliance with the extreme-right (PRM). The occidentalist right lost thus not only the support of the Christian-democrats (that could not enter the Parliament anymore and who experienced at their turn at the beginning of 2001 internal division), but also that of UDMR, who became a faithful member of the new parliamentary majority. The 2004 elections created an unseen situation in Romanian politics. Three are the traits of this situation. In the first place, the elections confirmed the parliamentary statute of the six parties that had entered the Chambers four years before. In other words: for the first time after 1989 there was no new party entering the Parliament and no party that lost its parliamentary status. What changed was the weight of mandates, the big winner

in relation to the 2000-2004 legislature being PNL, and the big loser – PRM. In the second place, contradicting (almost) all the sociological and political science estimations, the electorate voted one winner at the parliamentary elections – that is the National Union PSD+PUR (with around 37% of the votes) – and a winner for the presidential elections supported by the second placed at the legislatives – Alianța DA (which had won 31.3% of the votes). The third novelty resides in the post-electoral faith of alliances realized for elections. If in 1996 and 2000 the coalitions that had won elections formed the government, in 2004, the winning coalition in elections (formed of PSD and PUR) broke, PUR passing to the side of the Alianța PNL-PD to form the government, after having supported, in a first moment, December 20, 2004, PSD and PRM for the election of the presidents of the two Chambers. The victory in the presidential elections of the candidate of the Alianța DA, Traian Băsescu, led thus to the distribution of power, a natural corollary in fact, of the proportionalist effects of the legislative election itself. Călin Popescu-Târiceanu became prime minister with the vote of 265 of the 465 senators and deputies from PNL, PD, UDMR and PUR, but also from the national minorities. It was a majority more eclectic than the ones that succeeded themselves since 1990, that is more than the revolutionary and national-identitarian left (of 1990-1992), more than the left conservatism with a powerful nationalist tint (from 1992-1996), than the center-right liberalism, ambiguous and varied, open to radical occidentalization (of 1996-2000), and more than social-democracy looking for a reformist definition in economy and of a protecting vision in the social field (2000-2004). The situation changed radically at the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007 when PUR (which had become Partidul Conservator) left the government, and then the PD was eliminated from the cabinet. Instead of a quadripartite cabinet, April 2nd, 2007 a bicolor government, PNL-UDMR, was sworn in. As the government defined itself primarily in opposition to the president it was in fact the creation of a regime of cohabitation with an ultra-minority government supported by a coalition that did not want to display itself publicly; a coalition which meant however, a massive political bloc of almost four fifths of the entire legislative (see table 18). Thus, the weakest direct support created the most compact direct support. The 2008 elections brought in exchange to the government

a bicolor coalition PSD-PDL. Its creation was possible as, for the fourth time after the fall of communism the organizers of elections went to the opposition.

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Since 1996, Romania has a democratic culture based on discontinuity or rupture and not on consensus or equilibrium. This aspect is important for Romania which knew the unique party under communism and in the inter-war period had what Mattei Dogan called “governmental Parliaments and not parliamentary governments”^{xiv}, in so much as the organizer of the election designated by the King won without mistake the elections.

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ⁱ The first post-communist elections were regulated by the Law-decree no. 92 of March 1990. Those from the period 1992-2000 were held on the basis of the Laws no. 68 and 69 of July 1992, modified several times. The 2004 elections were organized on the basis of the Laws no 370 and 373 of September 2004 and those of 2008 on the basis of the Law 35 of March 2008.

ⁱⁱ See the Decision of the Constitutional Court of Romania no. 1177/2007, which answered the Intimation of unconstitutionality of the Law for the election of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate and for the modification and completion of the Law no. 67/2004 for the election of the authorities of the public local administration, of the Law of public local administration no 215/2001 and the Law no. 393/2004 regarding the Statute of local elected representatives.

ⁱⁱⁱ The paternity of this formula was reclaimed by the PSD deputy Anghel Stanciu, in an interview to the Romanian section of BBC, March 9, 2008.

^{iv} For the problem of volatility see Maurizio COTTA, „Structuring the New Party Systems after the Dictatorship. Coalitions, Alliances, Fusions and Splits During the Transition and Post-transition Stages“, in Geoffrey PRIDHAM & Paul G. LEWIS (edited by), *Stabilising Fragile Democracies*, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, pp. 70-71.

^v These are the Political Alliance PSD + PC and the Partidul Verde Ecologist, an alliance of the Partidul Verde and PER. The numbers indicated include the national minorities' organisations.

^{vi} See: Arend LIJPHART, *Patterns of Democracy. Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1999 – citat după *Modele ale democrației*, translation by Cătălin Constantinescu, Polirom, Iași, 2000, p. 85.

^{vii} Daniel BARBU, *Republica absentă*, Nemira, 1999, pp. 163-180.

^{viii} Arend LIJPHART, *op. cit.*, pp. 156 and 159.

^{ix} Christian VANDERMOTTEN, Pablo MEDINA LOCKHART, „La géographie électorale de l'Europe centre-orientale“, in Jean-Michel DE WAELE (ed.), *Partis politiques et démocraties en Europe Centrale et Orientale*, Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles, Bruxelles, 2002, pp. 17-34.

^x For other details see Cristian PREDĂ, Sorina SOARE, *Regimul, partidele și sistemul politic din România*, Nemira, 2008, pp. 108-117. The following fragments resume, in a form updated with the results of 2008, paragraphs of the quoted volume, specially pp. 123-126.

^{xi} For such a characterization, see for example Guy HERMET, *Le passage à la démocratie*, Presses de Sciences Po, Paris, 1996, p. 72.

^{xii} The lack of unity and incoherence of the opposition in this period were already remarked by Tom GALLAGHER, in an article that compares the reinvention of democracy in Romania and Portugal, „The Emergence of New Party Systems and Transitions to Democracy. Romania and Portugal Compared“, in Geoffrey PRIDHAM & Paul G. LEWIS (edited by), *op. cit.*, p. 211.

^{xiii} An analysis of CDR can be found in Dan PAVEL, Iulia HUIU, „Nu putem reuși decât împreună“. *O istorie analitică a Convenției Democratice, 1989-2000*, Polirom, Iași, 2003.

^{xiv} Mattei DOGAN, „Romania, 1919-1938“, in Myron WEINER, Ergun OZBUDUN (ed.), *Competitive Elections in Developing Countries*, Duke University Press, 1987, pp. 369-389.