

Publishing psychology in Romania: past challenges, present opportunities and future perspectives

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Abstract

The present paper will review Romanian psychology publications and will put a particular emphasis on both the process and current conditions of publishing psychology materials in this country. The article will be structured around three main sections. First, in order to have a broad image of how psychology developed as a science and the challenges it had to face in Romania, a short description of the general context will be offered. The body of the paper will present the key Romanian psychology journals along with other sources, like magazines or online materials, portraying the series of opportunities authors have nowadays to publish their work. The discussion will include high-rated academic journals, academic journals that are edited by universities or professional associations, as well as magazines offering more “popular” versions of psychology. A particular interest will be given to student journals since they represent a niche in the field and emerged from the students’ need to make their voice heard and to prepare for an active professional life as future psychologists. One such initiative will be discussed at length: the case of Europe’s Journal of Psychology, an online open access publication edited by a group of volunteers originally from the University of Bucharest. In the end, a section will be dedicated to the synthesis of the main advantages and disadvantages of the Romanian psychology publishing system and the ways in which a European Publication Platform could answer the needs of both authors and readers in Romania and not only.

Key words: psychology; scientific communication; journals; information dissemination; online publishing; open access; Romania

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Psychology in Romania: A Long but Agitated Past

Romania, a European Union member since January 2007, is located in South-Eastern Central Europe. Having the 9th largest territory and the 7th largest population of current EU member states, Romania is home for around 22 million people. Today a semi-presidential unitary state, the country's recent history has been greatly marked by the decades of communism ended with the revolution of December 1989. In order to fully understand the current situation of psychology in Romania a short historical overview is necessary since many of today's difficulties psychologists are confronted with stem from the communist years.

However, the first thing to be acknowledged is a long tradition of studying psychology in Romania, one initiated very early after the foundations of scientific psychology had been set (Mânzat, 2003). The first laboratories were established in the main academic centers by students of Wundt bringing with them ideas about experimental psychology: Eduard Gruber founded a laboratory of experimental psychology in Iași in 1893, followed by the laboratory in Bucharest in 1906 organized by Constantin Rădulescu-Motru and some time after by the one in Cluj, in 1922, under the coordination of Florian Ștefănescu-Goangă.

Among the group of renowned Romanian psychologists at the beginning of the last century we also find other names such as that of: Nicolae Vaschide who worked in France with Alfred Binet, Vasile Pavelcu, a student of H. Piéron and P. Janet or Mihai Ralea who founded in 1955 "Revista de Psihologie" (The Psychology Journal), being the first director of the Psychology Institute at the Romanian Academy (1956) and the first president of the Romanian Psychologists' Association (1964). Among the main psychological theories formulated in this initial period stand the energetic personalism of Rădulescu-Motru, the theory of psychic relativity by Gheorghe Zapan and an exceptional envisioning of generalized cybernetics in the form of Odobleja's consonantism (a decade before the work of N. Wiener). Notably, several prestigious international scholars have been born in Romania, although this information is often obscured: David Wechsler (the father of the well-known intelligence tests WAIS, WISC and WPPSI), Jacob Levy Moreno (the founder of psycho-drama and sociometry) and Serge Moscovici (famous for this theory of social representations).

Unfortunately, the '50s brought hardships for all psychologists from communist countries under the URSS influence. The situation in Romania became even more dramatic during the late '70s / early '80s when psychology had been forbidden after a manoeuvre by communist authorities to portray leading psychologists as members of a secret religious organization that threatens the state (see Neculau, 2004). Since psychology was seen as a subversive science for the regime (along with sociology) it disappeared as an academic discipline and former students were sent to other departments such as history or philosophy, where the communist doctrine thrived. Many great names of Romanian psychology at that time suffered the consequences of this political decision and were assigned to "re-education through labour" meaning that they generally had to occupy positions in factories as simple workers. This anathema over psychology vanished only after the communist regime had been overthrown by the revolution in '89.

Nowadays psychology is not only reinstated as a scientific discipline but has transformed into a vigorous science, one attracting annually thousands of students. In fact, eight state universities in the main cities of Romania include psychology faculties and many other private universities offer a degree in psychology. The national association of Romanian psychologists (APR) and the College of psychologists make constant efforts to represent the

ever-growing community of psychologists in Romania and to build the necessary legal framework for the practice of psychology. Along with them, national organizations (like the one for the study of industrial-organizational psychology, APIO, or the Romanian Society of Experiential Psychotherapy, SPER) and research institutes are actively involved in developing psychological theory and research. But, along with a struggle for recognition and social visibility, the psychology community in Romania experiences the profound need to recover from decades of absence, to diminish the gap with Western psychology and, above all, to re-write its history after the fall of communism (Culic, 2005).

Signs of Progress: Present Opportunities

As discussed above, the situation of psychology and psychologists in Romania is constantly improving and, of course, this is also reflected in terms of publications. Nevertheless, the progress in this last field is hardly documented in official documents. In fact from the beginning it must be said that one of the main difficulties one has when trying to discover data about the situation of psychology publications in Romania is that there are almost no data out-there to be found. The level of transparency current journals have is quite low and most of them either don't measure or don't communicate several important indicators in the existence of a journal. For example issues related to the number of copies or the re-distribution / re-usage, costs of publishing or impact factors are unknown for an outside reader. Despite these inconveniences an overview of the main indicators will be offered at the beginning, based on official or personal estimations, which will give the readers a better idea of how things stand in the Romanian context.

- **Accessibility.** *Generally scientific psychology journals only have a print format and are fee-based.* While top journals like the *Journal of Cognitive and Behavioral Psychotherapies* give their readers the opportunity to view contents online other journals offer just abstracts and some only titles. This is a major disadvantage for disseminating information through publication in journals since those interested are forced in most cases to find out for themselves if new editions have been published and what their content is (the practice of having a fully-documented web-site of the journal is also in its infancy). Furthermore, even the prints of many journals are not found in every bookstore of major cities (although some like *Revista de Psihologie Organizațională*, *Journal of Organizational Psychology*, and *Revista de Psihologie Socială*, *Journal of Social Psychology*, are printed by Polirom, a well-established Romanian publishing house). The most common situation is for scientific journals to be printed in a limited number of copies (a few hundreds) and distributed mostly around the academic center editing them (for example distributed through the bookstores of the university or, and this is quite common, through members of the publishing board of the journal). In other cases, when published by a professional association (for instance *Psihologia Resursei Umane*, *Psychology of Human Resources*, edited by APIO, the Association for Industrial / Organizational Psychology), the journal is generally accessible to subscribed members of the association.
- **Cost.** *The price of journals normally orbits around five Euro per copy.* More prestigious journals (like the *Journal of Cognitive and Behavioral Psychotherapies* or *Psihologia Resursei Umane*, the *Psychology of Human Resources*) offer the possibility of annual subscriptions and journal prices may vary according to the type of subscribers (for the

former journal it depends on the country of the subscriber). Although this price may seem relatively small it is significant for many Romanian readers wanting to find the most recent psychological information on the market. Fortunately authors are usually never asked for any contribution towards the costs of publishing in journals (although they may also not be remunerated for sold copies). Because of this, many prefer to search for free and online information, much more accessible but usually not of high-quality in scientific terms. One of the few exceptions is that of *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, an electronic journal promoting scientific empirical and fundamental research in all psychological fields.

- **Reviewing.** *Romanian academic journals adopt a system of peer review.* As their Western colleagues, Romanian psychologists greatly appreciate the value of peer review and journals try very hard to include as many prestigious psychologists as possible (from Romania but also from abroad) in editorial boards to gain more credibility in the eyes of their readers. What is not transparent in most cases is if the system is that of blind peer review or not. The length of the review process varies greatly. In most cases submitted articles are considered for the next issue (for most journals the number of submitted articles is not very high and therefore the time between submission and publication is rarely more than four or six months). Subsequently, articles are not usually rejected (except by top Romanian journals) but either accepted as they are or, more often, modified at the request of reviewers.
- **Language.** *The publication language is, for most journals, Romanian.* Of course an exception is that of international journals like the *Journal of Cognitive and Behavioral Psychotherapies* or *Europe's Journal of Psychology*. Most other publications ask authors to write their abstracts in English and/or French (or even publish articles from foreign authors in English or French occasionally). On the one hand, this is appreciated by Romanian readers that are not proficient in English but is a source of dissatisfaction for authors wanting to disseminate their findings internationally.
- **Impact and reputation.** *Generally the impact factor is unknown; reputation is given by accreditation (CNCSIS).* The practice of promoting or gaining international recognition and including impact factors in the journal's presentation is still in its beginning in Romania first of all because it is only in the last decades that psychologists became more aware of their value and second because the general quality standards need to be improved in order to achieve such recognition. The national institution ranking scientific journals is *Consiliul Național al Cercetării Științifice din Învățământul Superior* (CNCSIS) translated as the National University Research Council. According to a specific methodology the Research Council groups all journals into five categories: A, B+, B, C and D. The C and D journals are of lower standards while A journals are ISI indexed (a position obtained in Romania, in what psychology is concerned, only by the *Journal of Cognitive and Behavioral Psychotherapies*). This classification is very important for authors; especially the ones pursuing an academic career, since most of them make huge efforts to publish their articles in CNCSIS recognized journals and their books at accredited publishing houses.

The above provided the main lines of publishing psychology materials in Romania. The next section will focus more on the existing journals and will discuss for each the data available in terms of accessibility, cost, reviewing, language, impact and reputation.

The Main Academic Journals

It could be said that, despite the relative small number of scientific journals (considering the growing number of psychologists), authors can find opportunities to publish in all major areas of psychology, the best represented domains being: clinical psychology and psychotherapy, social and industrial/organizational psychology. There are also non-specialized journals that welcome contributions on any topic within psychology (like *Revista de Psihologie*, the Psychology Journal of the Romanian Academy or *Europe's Journal of Psychology*).

The present section will discuss the situation of eight journals, among the most prominent Romanian academic psychology publications.

1. *Journal of Cognitive and Behavioral Psychotherapies*

As mentioned from the general presentation, the *Journal of Cognitive and Behavioral Psychotherapies* has a top position among Romanian psychology journals. Appreciated as an A category publication by CNCISIS, the journal is abstracted in Thomson ISI / Web of Science Social Science Citation Index (SSCI); SCOPUS; PsycInfo; International Bibliography of Social Science (IBSS); full text in EBSCO and ProQuest. The impact factor of the journal is to be first calculated in 2009. The average rejection rate in the past four years was around 45%.

Published in Cluj initially under the name *Romanian Journal of Cognitive and Behavioral Psychotherapies* (founded in 2001 and serving as the official publication of the Romanian Association of Hypnosis and Cognitive Behavioral Psychotherapy), it shortly grew in international visibility and changed title as well as target audience (and is currently jointly published by the International Institute for the Advanced Studies of Psychotherapy and by the Applied Mental Health International Institute, Romania). Aiming to be a contribution to cognitive and behavioural psychotherapies especially in Eastern and Central Europe, the journal also extended its advisory board to include distinguished professionals from and outside of Romania (most from the USA).

The journal publishes original papers principally dealing with cognitive and behavioral therapies, including hypnosis and hypnotherapy, and also related issues from a broad range of disciplines: psychology, psychiatry, medical and mental specialties. Editions of the journal are published biannually (in March and September). Authors are advised to prepare their manuscripts in English following the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Articles can be found on the journal's website and cover a wide range of topics with a particular focus on empirical work and evidence-based practice. In terms of journal fees, the regular rate for institutions is currently 100 USD per year (for those from USA and the EU), or 25 USD per year (for those from Central and Eastern Europe). Individual subscriptions are also welcomed at a one-year rate of 25 USD (for USA and the EU) or four USD (for Central and Eastern Europe).

Considering the above we can conclude that the *Journal of Cognitive and Behavioral Psychotherapies* is one of the best success stories in terms of Romanian psychology publications. Its growing international prestige makes most clinical psychologists in Romania aim to have articles published in its pages. What is also important to note is that this journal benefits from institutional support and from a tradition of cognitive psychotherapies in the academic center of Cluj.

2. *Cogniție, Creier, Comportament / Cognition, Brain, Behavior*

Another good example of this tradition is also the journal *Cogniție, Creier, Comportament / Cognition, Brain, Behavior*, edited again in Cluj by the Romanian Association for Cognitive Science and the Centre for Applied Cognitive Psychology (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca). The journal is currently abstracted or indexed by the following: PsychInfo, International Bibliography of Social Science, EBSCO, ProQuest. It was also included in the B+ category by CNCSIS in 2007. The journal is published four times a year and includes contributions in Romanian, English and French.

The journal's declared aim is to contribute to the progress of knowledge in three main areas: information processing, behaviour analysis and cognitive neuroscience. Original articles, both fundamental and applied research, are welcomed from the following domains: psychology, neuroscience, artificial intelligence, computational linguistics, ethology, anthropology and philosophy of mind. It also includes metaanalysis and reviews, as well as commentaries and interviews. Authors are advised to follow the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association set of rules when editing.

The journal promotes a system of double blind peer review supported by a prestigious advisory/editorial board including academics and professionals from Romania and abroad (Europe and the United States). What is important to note is that the website of the journal offers only the abstracts (free of charge), and sample articles, so interested readers can find articles only in print. As far as the prices are concerned in 2007 the annual subscription was 25 Euro for individuals and 50 Euro for institutions from Central and Eastern Europe, and 40 Euro for individuals and 60 Euro for institutions from Western Europe and USA.

3. *Psihologia Resurselor Umane (The Psychology of Human Resources)*

However Cluj is not only a major center for clinical and cognitive therapists but also a point of reference for industrial and organizational psychologists. The journal *Psihologia Resurselor Umane* is the official publication of the Association for Industrial/ Organizational Psychology (APIO) in Romania. Therefore, it is free of charge for all subscribed members of APIO.

The journal, published mainly in Romanian, appears twice a year (in April and October), and welcomes contributions in the field of human resources and, more generally, organizational psychology. Abstracted by PsychInfo and recognized by CNCSIS as B+ category in 2007, the journal is also supported by an editorial/advisory board including prominent names of I/O psychology from around the world. Supporting a system of peer-review, *Psihologia Resurselor Umane* uses three reviewers for each submitted article.

The journal's webpage (part of the general APIO website) includes the table of contents of past issues (in English and Romanian) and the abstracts in English. From this point of view the journal can be accessed most easily only by members of the Association for Industrial/Organizational Psychology, the ones receiving the printed copies. The annual fee for APIO members is currently 30 Euro but membership is not open for everyone. Being a professional organization membership and therefore access to the journal is offered mainly to psychologists specialized in I/O psychology and/or working within this field.

4. *Psihologia Socială (Social Psychology)*

If Cluj, as can be seen from above, is a well-established center for the study of both clinical/cognitive and industrial/organizational psychology, the academic center from Iași has a national and European reputation for the study of social psychology. As a recognition of this the Laboratory for the Study of the Social Field in Iași edits *Psihologia socială* (Social Psychology). Classified in the B category by CNCSIS in 2007, this journal welcomes articles on topics ranging from social cognition, communication, group dynamics and social influence to inter-group relations, attitude change and social representations. In addition, articles coming from related fields such as social anthropology and organizational psychology are also published occasionally.

Publishing in Romanian (with English/French abstracts) the journal also includes quite often articles (like interviews) in English or French. Authors are advised to send their articles twice a year (the journal appears biannually, in March and September). Peer-review is assured by the academics from the editorial team. The webpage of the journal includes only the table of contents from former numbers but, being published by Polirom, a prestigious Romanian publishing house, printed copies can be found in major bookstores across the country (for about five Euro per copy).

5. *Revista de Psihologie (Psychology Journal of the Romanian Academy)*

Having a symbolic value among psychology journals, *Revistei de Psihologie*, the Psychology Journal is edited by the Psychology and Philosophy Institute “Constantin Rădulescu-Motru” at the Romanian Academy. Also included by CNCSIS in the B category in 2007 the journal publishes articles from all areas of psychology and is edited in the Romanian language.

Due to its connection to the academic and research environment, *Revistei de Psihologie* has always included prestigious members in its editorial board, members that strive to impose high-quality standards for published articles through the system of peer review.

The journal is received by subscription and on the website those interested can find only the table of contents of past issues. It normally publishes four per year organized in two edited volumes (no. 1 - 2 and no. 3 - 4).

6. *Revista de Psihoterapie Experiențială / Journal of Experiential Psychotherapy*

As explained above, not all academic journals are edited by universities or academic centers. One good example of this is *Revista de Psihoterapie Experiențială* or the *Journal of Experiential Psychotherapy* published by the Romanian Society of Experiential Psychotherapy (SPER). The society, founded in 1997, has close ties with the University of Bucharest and therefore the journal has most articles signed by academics/practitioners and postgraduate students.

Among the topics published in *Revista de Psihoterapie Experiențială* stand obviously those related to psychotherapy, especially humanistic/experiential and the psychotherapy of unification. The journal includes theoretical articles but welcomes most of all examples of good practice or studies with practical application in terms of therapeutic results, personal or

social development (from the psychology of couples and child psychology to the use of metaphors and art therapy).

Importantly to note, *Revista de Psihoterapie Experiențială* has recently started to publish bilingual articles (Romanian and English, in general) so the content is now accessible for readers outside of Romania as well. This also made the journal advance to a B category journal in the CNCISIS categorization classified in 2007. The review of all articles is done by members of the editorial board, acknowledged therapists and clinicians. Unfortunately readers can only find the table of contents electronically and have to look for copies mainly at SPER offices or university bookshops.

7. *Revista de Psihologie Organizațională (Journal of Organizational Psychology)*

Also connected to the university center from Bucharest is *Revista de Psihologie Organizațională* or Journal of Organizational Psychology. This journal is edited by the Centre for Applied Psychology (from the University of Bucharest) at Polirom publishing house. Having four issues per year, the journal is published in Romanian (although it may include occasionally articles in English or French). It welcomes contributions on topics like: organizational efficacy, leadership, decision making, negotiation, organizational diagnosis, organizational culture, etc.

In 2007 it was acknowledged by CNCISIS as belonging to the D category. Although the journal doesn't have a webpage, information about the content of recent issues can be found on Polirom's website and hard copies can be purchased (for about five Euro per copy) from the main bookstores across the country.

8. *Revista de Psihologie Aplicată (Journal of Applied Psychology)*

Although the three main academic centers (București, Cluj and Iași) edit most academic psychology journals, other universities in the country are not left behind in terms of publications. As an example we find *Revista de Psihologie Aplicată* or the Journal of Applied Psychology, edited quarterly since 1999 by the Centre of Psychological Studies and Research (the West University of Timișoara). In tune with the title, authors are invited to publish psychological materials with a pronounced applicative nature from a variety of fields: organizations, education, law, mass-media, art, religion, politics, health, economics, etc.

The journal is published in Romanian and, partially, in English and all article abstracts are available on the webpage of the journal. In 2007, *Revista de Psihologie Aplicată* was classified by CNCISIS as a category D journal. The review of all received submissions is performed by members of the editorial board, well-known Romanian professors from different academic centers.

In concluding, the panorama of psychology publications in Romania is quite diverse and dynamic. The eight journals briefly described above are complemented by other publications that may include psychological content, also monitored by CNCISIS. As can be noticed, none of the above journals dealt particularly with school or educational psychology. This is why academics and practitioners in the field publish either in "generalist" journals, in psychopedagogy journals or publications of NGO's like FICE-Romania, dedicated to the social

protection of the child (see Negovan and Glăveanu, 2005). Notably though, the National Association of School Psychologists has just began editing, in Oradea, the journal *Psihologie Școlară* (School Psychology), at its first issue in 2008.

Other Sources of Psychological Information

Academic journals are not the only sources for authors to publish psychological materials and for readers to obtain such materials. Other classes of publications, more or less close to the academic or scientific form of publishing exist and three of them will be discussed here: student journals, magazines of psychology and online materials.

Among student journals in Romania the most successful is *Profil*, the journal of students in psychology and educational sciences (usually the two are studied in the same faculty). At a general level students' journals or magazines can be considered a developing niche, one emerging from the need to publish and exchange psychological information even from undergraduate years.

Following similar aims, *Profil* is defined by a "by students, for students" philosophy, one supported also by psychology teachers (a fact that may also explain its success). This journal is edited by the Psychology Student Association from Sibiu and dedicated to students from all over the country. A result of a collaboration between students and teachers since the year 2000, *Profil* is printed in a number of 300 copies and distributed free of charge for students from other university centers in the country such as those from Sibiu, Timișoara, Cluj and București.

Therefore, in terms of accessibility one could say that *Profil* does an excellent job for disseminating information: it is open and quite reachable plus it has a well-organized website presenting past and current issues (generally in terms of articles only "incentives" are given on the website and readers are requested to find the printed copies) and also other types of important information for psychology students (such as future events and professional opportunities).

Of course, all the journals above, either by academics or students, have some difficulties in reaching the general public. On the one hand, the information included in them (especially in high-quality scientific journals) could hardly be understood by non-specialists and, on the other hand, their relatively small number of copies and "closed" circles of distribution make them dedicated to a specific target (generally people studying/working in the academic environment or in research).

The "lay" public has other sources for obtaining psychological information and the best known of them is the magazine *Psihologia Azi* (or *Psychology Today*). This monthly magazine, edited in Romania since November 2003, is printed in a number of 20.000 copies and distributed all over the country. Since it is addressed mainly to a non-specialist public eager for psychological information (mostly practical information or articles offering a psychological approach/analysis focused on important persons or events for the Romanian society) and due to its relatively large distribution, *Psihologia Azi* stands out as an example of an influential and non-academic source.

Nevertheless, the magazine has attracted several high-rated practitioners or even academics to write articles or be in charge of certain columns, therefore adding more weight and credibility to the information presented. Yet, the scientific community is much more

attracted to publish in scientific journals accredited by CNCSIS and see in *Psihologia Azi* a source of “popular” psychology, one “translated” for the general public.

More recently *Psychologies* also entered Romania showing that the Romanian psychology market is attracting more and more publications of “popular” psychology.

Finally, another major source of psychological information for “lay” readers interested in psychological topics is of course the Internet. Being probably the first place people consider when in need of any kind of “psychological advice” the Internet is a rich resource for psychology articles in Romanian. Several portals specialize in publishing such information free of charge and in an attractive format (for example PSIHO life or Psihologie.ro). Unfortunately most of the time the information presented on Internet portals is questionable from the point of view of quality and doesn’t benefit from any form of peer review. Nonetheless, it may be informative and drive interested readers to other sources such as books or academic journals.

Europe’s Journal of Psychology: The Idea that Grows

Fortunately there are also journals that, while keeping the benefits of publishing online and open access, strive also to offer high-quality psychological information. This was the aim behind *Europe’s Journal of Psychology* (EJOP), initially an initiative of a small group of undergraduate students from the University of Bucharest. Being part of this initial group, and currently editor of the journal, I will present more extensively the activity of this publication since EJOP is in an almost unique posture: that of a scientific open access/ online journal.

The idea behind *Europe’s Journal of Psychology* was that of starting a journal where students could publish their work along with recognized professionals and consequently could learn early in their career what exactly to expect from a process of peer-review. At the same time, also because of a lack of funding, the first option was that of editing an electronic journal (especially since the costs of printing and distributing copies are incomparably higher). But this wasn’t the only reason behind starting an online publication: in a day when most scientific communication takes place through the Internet and people all over the world make their ideas known through the World Wide Web, an electronic journal would be much more efficient in disseminating information. And this was and still is one of the main aims of EJOP, that of allowing all interested persons, from Romania and from abroad, to freely access high quality information.

In order to allow this exchange to take place the language of publication was another thing to consider. Again in order to maximize the journal’s chances of being European or international, publishing in Romanian and thus securing only a Romanian public at best, was not a viable option. English has been chosen as the language of the journal and although this diminished the chances of receiving more articles from Romanians (considering the fact that not all Romanian psychologists or psychology students are proficient in English) it increased international visibility. As confirmed in the last years, these decisions helped EJOP become one well-established and credible source for both authors and readers from Romania and beyond.

The first edition of *Europe’s Journal of Psychology* has been posted in February 2005. The journal edits four issues per year (in February, May, August and November) and all of them are available at www.ejop.org. Throughout time EJOP managed to gather an increasing number of scholars interested in the project and expended its editorial board and scientific committee. It

also constantly received contributions from authors all around the Globe proving to be more than a European journal but an international one in every sense of the word.

Again in order not to limit the possibilities of receiving materials, a vital aspect in every journal's economy, EJOP is not a specialized journal but welcomes contributions from all areas of psychology, both fundamental and empirical research. Currently its permanent sections are: editorial, book review, interview, literature review, theoretical contribution and research report. A special column is Global PsyPulse presenting psychological events and institutions/research centers worldwide. Initially named Europe's Im-Pulse (a column including primarily article related to European issues), the increasing international profile of the journal justified this change. And this international profile is sustained by the increased number of authors outside of Europe publishing in *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, many contributions coming from the US and Asian countries.

The diversity of contributions (in terms of authors' nationality) is matched by the diversity of members from both the Editorial Board and the Scientific Committee. The journal's Honorary President is Prof. Cary Cooper, a prominent UK scholar in organizational psychology and health psychology. The Scientific Committee includes professors from Romania (Horia Pitariu, Daniel David, Ovidiu Bajenaru, Irina Holdevici, Ruxandra Rascanu, and Bogdan Cezar Ion) and abroad (Paul Spector, Ronald Burke, Nicholas Kuiper, Mark Taylor, Georg Lind, John Morreall, and Nicola Schutte). Other scholars are included in the Editorial Board, the ones usually invited to make reviews for the submitted articles. EJOP adopts a peer-review practice and made public its review form (found in the Submission Guidelines section). Most of the times articles are included in the review process for the next issue (unless they are received three weeks before editing an issue, a minimal time for the review process to take place). Usually the review process takes one to two months and the rejection rate is very low (authors can be asked to make some changes or elaborate more on their ideas). In order to keep the system working as fast as possible authors are requested to follow the general guidelines imposed for publication (mainly to adopt the APA style).

As these four years of experience have taught us there are advantages but also difficulties of publishing an open access electronic journal. Among the advantages stand the fact that materials are easily accessed and authors all around the world have the opportunity to disseminate their research in a relatively short time. Second, the body of acknowledged scholars supporting EJOP as members of both the Editorial and Scientific Committee is a guarantee for the quality of the review process and this drastically sets *Europe's Journal of Psychology* apart from other electronic psychology sources having a dubious quality.

At the same time many challenges are to be faced. First and foremost EJOP exists due to the pro bono work of all members from the editorial team. Authors are not asked to pay anything for having their articles published and there is no institutional organism (university, association or research institute) supporting the editorial activity. The lack of funding makes even more distant the perspective of also editing some printed issues. Second, we are currently aiming to achieve both national and international recognition for *Europe's Journal of Psychology* by gaining CNCIS accreditation and including the journal in the PsychInfo system. Currently the impact factor of the journal is unknown and all the reasons above unfortunately keep EJOP from becoming a first-rank academic journal. Nevertheless, at the moment the journal has a very high visibility on the Internet being indexed on many directories such as PsychDirectory, ezilon.com, Encyclopedia of Psychology, Answers.com,

Open Directory, Google Directory, Journal Finder, world-newspapers.com, Amoeba Web, Reasoned.com, SelfGrowth.com, The Psychology Wiki and many others.

Envisioning a European Publication Platform

All the data above about existing Romanian journals serves to build an image of the current situation in terms of both strong and weak points and primarily in terms of the publishing needs and realities of the Romanian context. This final section will review the main aspects and, in the light of this information, will try to envision a European Publication Platform tailored to the needs and expectation of the Romanian community of psychologists. Many of the conclusions here may well be valid for other European countries, especially from Eastern Europe.

The increasing number of academic journals in post-communist Romania (along with the increasing number of faculties offering psychology degree courses) shows a definite interest in this topic, an interest of authors to publish and therefore communicate their ideas, and an interest of the specialist public to assimilate these new ideas. On the other hand the general public is also very much interested in psychological information and many electronic sources (although promoting more “popular” versions of psychology) gain more and more visibility. At the same time members of the professional community (either involved in a teaching or research career) make constant efforts to publish in recognized and established journals (one of the most important criteria being the CNCISIS classification of scientific journals). Interestingly enough, young professionals and students are also aiming to have their work published and therefore the niche of student journals is also developing. Another general plus of the Romanian system is that the review generally doesn’t take very long (between two to three months on average) and articles are by and large considered for the next issue.

There are also several serious problems the publishing system in Romania has when it comes to disseminating psychological information. First and foremost a limited number of journals enjoy international recognition (three are indexed by PsychInfo: *Journal of Cognitive and Behavioral Psychotherapies*, *Cogniție, Creier, Comportament / Cognition, Brain, Behavior* and *Psihologia Resurselor Umane*) while other strive for gaining a better CNCISIS evaluation. Second, most of the times journal material is only available in print and the printed copies of the journal are not easily found (they may require annual subscription or membership of a professional organization). The two journals that can be more easily found in bookstores are those edited by Polirom: *Psihologia socială* and *Revista de Psihologie Organizațională*. Third, the language of publication is often a problem since those journals publishing in English (like *Journal of Cognitive and Behavioral Psychotherapies* and *Europe’s Journal of Psychology*) are less accessible for both authors or readers who are not proficient in English while the other journals in Romanian can only be read by the Romanian public and therefore are almost “absent” internationally.

Considering the above, the idea of a European Publication Platform could be very appealing for the Romanian public as long as it responds to its needs, such as:

- **Accessibility.** The articles should be accessible for both a specialist and non-specialist public. Online publishing is therefore an excellent option since it makes the dissemination of scientific materials much easier and potentially has a greater impact not

only at a European but at an international level. Also concerning accessibility a very important feature of the Platform should be its open access policy. Although journal prices in Romania can't be considered enormous they still require a considerable financial effort for most of their readers.

- **Openness.** This aspect must be considered under a double aspect: language and published topics. As far as language is concerned, many Romanian authors would appreciate the opportunity of publishing in Romanian but would also enjoy knowing that their ideas can be read and understood by the larger non-Romanian public. Under these circumstances the solution would be either for the Platform to include both a Romanian and English version of the same article or to include a Romanian and a shorter English version (of one or two pages, in any case longer than the usual English abstract). In terms of topics it would be best for the Platform to have a generalist approach and to welcome articles from all fields of psychology, basic or applied (from theory of psychology to applied branches such as psychology and education, art, industry, transport, health etc.).
- **Visibility.** Related to the first two criteria, a visible Platform would be one that is well-known among the members of the Romanian and European community of psychologists. In order to gain visibility news about the existence and the purpose of the Publication Platform must be spread across European universities and research centers. Being an electronic resource the Platform should also be “visible” and easily accessible on the Internet.
- **Transparency.** One of the key elements most authors look for is the transparency of the publication process and also a relatively short time of review. In order to achieve this, the Platform should make the review criteria public and should get as many professionals as possible engaged as reviewers in order to speed up the process. Furthermore, authors that have submitted their manuscripts could have their own account within the Platform and check the status of their paper whenever they want. Through this account they should be able to upload papers (as a form of submission) and receive the feedback forms from reviewers. Surely this kind of transparency and efficiency would be greatly appreciated by most authors.
- **Accreditation.** The general tendency today in Romania is for psychologists (at least those working within academia) to pursue publication in accredited journals and especially in those enjoying international recognition (basically being indexed by PsychInfo and/or ISI). This is why the European Publication Platform would greatly benefit from gaining similar recognition and, in so doing, would become much more inviting for scholars. In Romania, as well as most other countries, authors that work to produce articles are almost always motivated by their need to make their ideas public but also by more “practical” reasons such as career progression. And in order to advance in their career they have to publish in top quality journals. These journals present two distinctive features, that should also be found at the Publication Platform: being abstracted/indexed internationally and having an editorial/advisory board of prestigious scholars to guarantee the high quality standards of publication;
- **User friendly format.** Although the above aspects are of crucial importance there are also other criteria essential for an online publication. One of these concerns the exterior aspect and, in particular, the user friendly format this kind of publications should develop. In other words authors and readers should be able to easily “find their way” through the Platform’s website.

- **Promote communication.** Publishing online also brings with it new opportunities in terms of enhanced communication between professionals. One of the main benefits of having an electronic publication, along with open access and international visibility, is the possibility to have a much more “dynamic” format and to actively promote communication between scholars. This can be done in many ways starting from allowing readers to make comments/review articles online to setting up discussion forums on controversial topics or topics debated in recently published articles. This system would definitely engage more psychologists across Europe not only to publish or read the articles but also to participate in the scientific process in less “traditional” ways.

In concluding, the idea of a European Publication Platform would be more than welcomed by the Romanian public. Nevertheless, in order to be successful this Platform should take into account both the strong and weak points of publishing psychology in Romania, in order to retain the former and address the latter. In doing so, the envisioned Platform should be accessible, open, visible, transparent, accredited, user-friendly and capable of promoting communication among scholars. Above all, it should stand as a symbol of high-quality research and practice in contemporary European psychology and by this contribute to its expansion and to a more equal and open dialogue with the American psychology.

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