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# **Time-Constraint and Socio-Demographic Characteristics of population in Romania**

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# **Time-Constraint and Socio-Demographic Characteristics of population in Romania**

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## ***Abstract***

Even though you are not an economist or perhaps a psychologist, you surely thought that all the tasks you have to arise in a single day you must use only twenty-four hour day or just lower.

The objective of this study is to measure the time used by Romanian people, in correlation to social and demographic characteristics (age groups, gender, residence area, education attainment, professional status etc.).<sup>1</sup>

Time constraint is an economical issue reflecting the scarcity of resources. In this approach, time could be considered an economical resource. The twenty-four hour day is the length of time for all people; the difference consists in how we use this time.

The available time is insufficient to carry out the desired activities either they paid or non-paid activities. From the point of economists view, time - like any economical resources - is always insufficient, because the time is limited.

One of the questions we try to answer in this study is if the social and demographic characteristics of Romanian people are related to a specific structure of activities for they allotted their available time.

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<sup>1</sup>Data source: Time Use Survey – NIS, Romania, 2000

## Introduction

The main purpose of this paper is to examine how we use to spend our time as one of the main determinants that could show the pattern of our lives. This paper is based upon Time Use Survey (TUS) carried out by Romanian National Institute of Statistics providing information on the allocation of time in household activities by various categories of persons and types of households. Data on time use offer a measure for daily activities and for the living standard.

The objective of this study is to analyze the structure of the time used by Romanian people, in correlation to social and demographic characteristics (gender, age, residence area, education attainment, professional status etc.).

The Romanian TUS is a household survey that was conducted from August to September 2000 and it provides comparable results with other European surveys as part of the harmonized European Time Use Survey.

Data collection was performed using different data recording techniques, as questionnaires and daily dairies. Household units completed an interviewer-administrated questionnaire witch requested certain general information on all the individual household members and also information about the household. Every person over the age of ten years (within the household) filled an individual questionnaire (interviewer administrated) collecting information regarding the respondent. Each respondent was also requested to complete two dairies (one for the weekly day and other for week-end). The dairies were filled with information about the activities performed by respondent during a day (main activity and second activity).

## The activities and socio-demographic dimensions

Analysing the survey results there were used certain groups of activities, according to EUROSTAT recommendations, resulted from aggregation of the activities contents in the detailed list, as the following:

- ▶ **Personal care:** sleep, eating, other activities of personal care, resting day;
- ▶ **Work, education, household care, travels:** economic activity, study, household and family care, including volunteer activities and travel;
- ▶ **Free time:** watching TV, other means of information – mass-media, religious, civic, political and volunteer activities, cultural activities, sports, hobby, games, social life (visits, conversation etc.) and other activities of spending time.

In this study, the socio-demographic dimensions are considered the following: age, sex, and civil status, level of education, professional status, residence area and geographical area. This paper is structured according to each dimension.

In the next section of the study it is analyzed the structure of time allotted to the main activities by one or more socio-demographic characteristics with respect to the respondents' perception and evaluation of time.

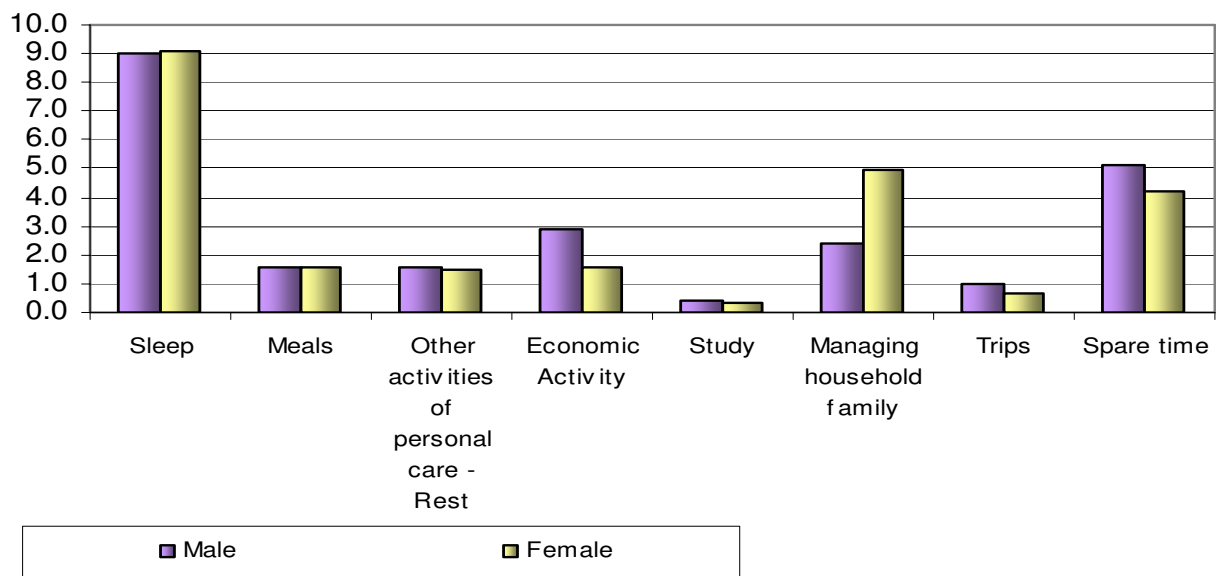
## 1. Gender and group of age

Gender is an important dimension that could show the how people spend their time and the way in that they decide to managing the available daily time. Analyzing the main activities performed by people, the men and women perform similar levels of total work, but men primarily perform paid work and women primarily perform unpaid work, as it is illustrated in the figure 1.

For the personal care activities represent the men allot 12,3 hours per day and 12,2 hours - women. The time spent in economic activities (2,9 hours) is bigger at men than at women (1,6 hours), these representing 5,0 hours per day with household and family care activities.

This distribution of activities creates unequal ability to makes choices during free time, as men control more of the finances available for use during free time activities than women.

**Figure 1. Daily average time of the main activities – working and weekend days**



Age also determinates differences between people regarding the modalities of using the time, and in the type of activities developed by them. It has to be noted that the reference age of the survey was 10 years old and over.

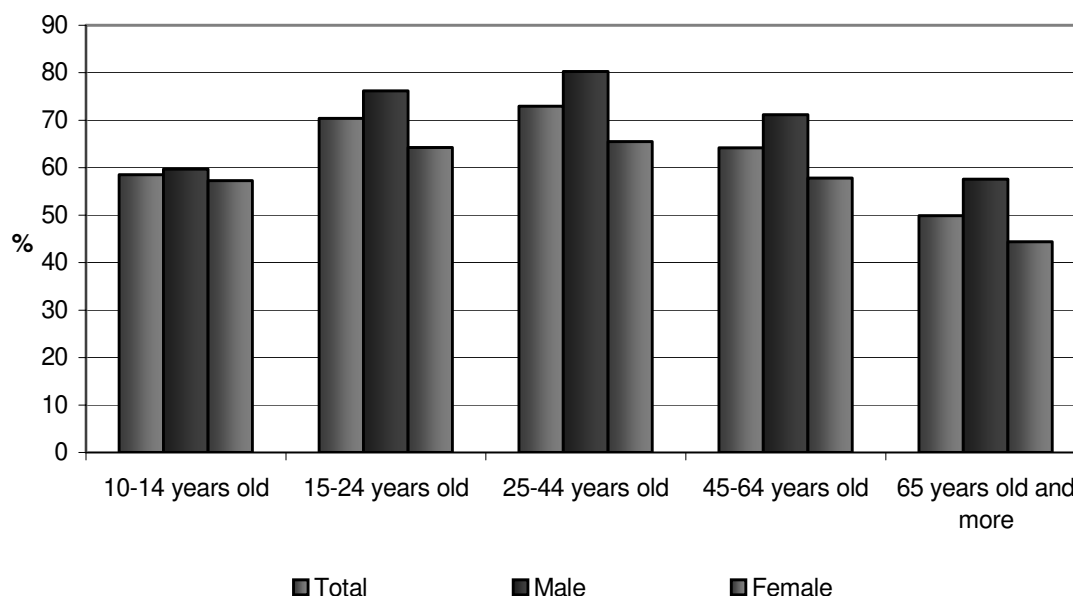
By groups of ages, the participation in the activities of household and family care was of 84,7%. The range of participation increases with the age, reaching 91,5% at the persons

of 65 years old and over. The both men and women allot the same average time for study, but there exist differences between ages: 2,2 hours for 10-14 years old and of 0,8 hours for 15-24 years old. If analyze the entire life cycle, if the age increases the time for study decreases.

The time allotted to household care activities included in household and family care represents more than a half of time dedicated to work, education, and travels (3,7 hours comparing to the total of 7,1 hours).

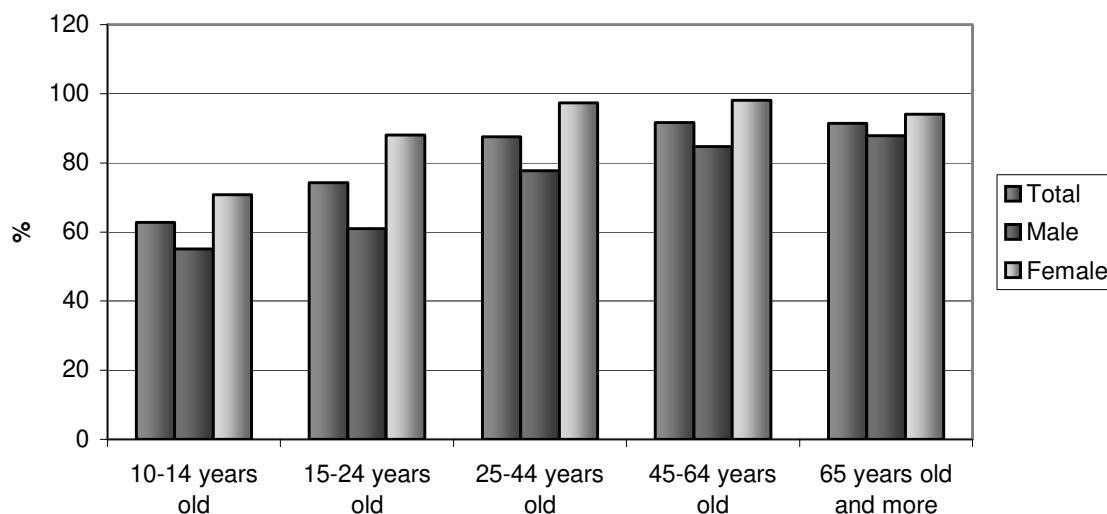
Despite of the traditional division of roles in which the men and women are responsible in the framework of households, a comparison of the average of time allotted by man for this kind of activities is almost equal with the average of time allotted by woman. This fact underlines that household tasks in Romania are divided relatively in balance.

**Figure 2. The participation ratio of the population in the household and family care activities, by sex and groups of age – working and weekend days**



Referring to leisure time, the men and women enjoyed comparable levels of free time and performed similar levels of personal care. Differences between the way of spending the free time could be observed in the participation or practising of some cultural, sportive activities, or certain hobbies, thus: men allot to these activities one hour while the women 0,5 hours.

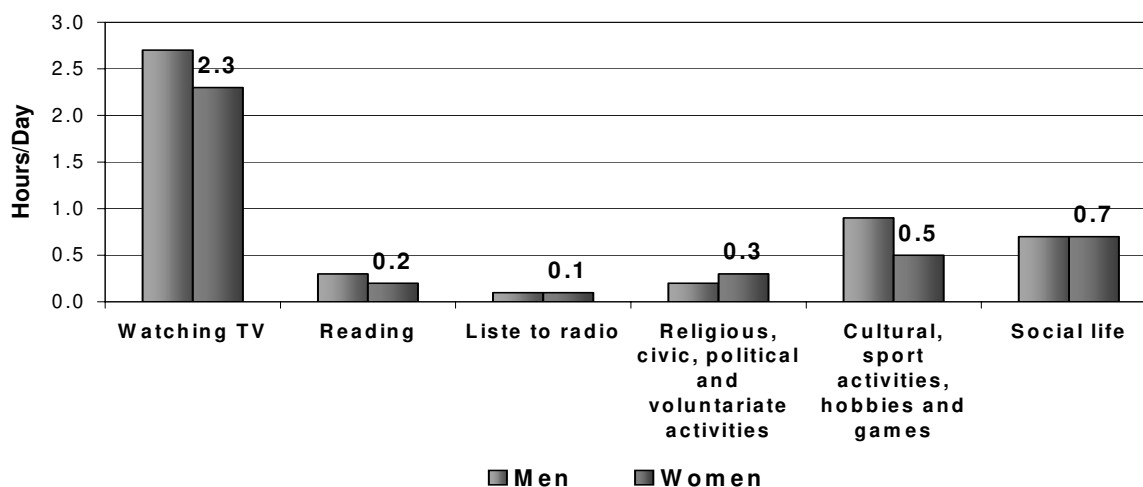
**Figure 3. The participation ratio of the population in travels, by sex and groups of age - working and weekend days**



The persons in the 25-44 years old age group are people who travel a lot (73,0% of the total time spent by Romanian people in travel). On the another hand, the aged people (65 years old and over) are the most static persons (49,9%).

For Romanian people, the free time is spent watching TV (2,5 hours) or other mass media information (0,4 hours), taking part in civic, religious, political activities (0,3 hours), sportive activities, hobbies, games (0,7 hours) and visits, conversations, other activities (0,8 hours).

**Figure 4. Daily average time of different activities of spending the free time -working and weekend days**



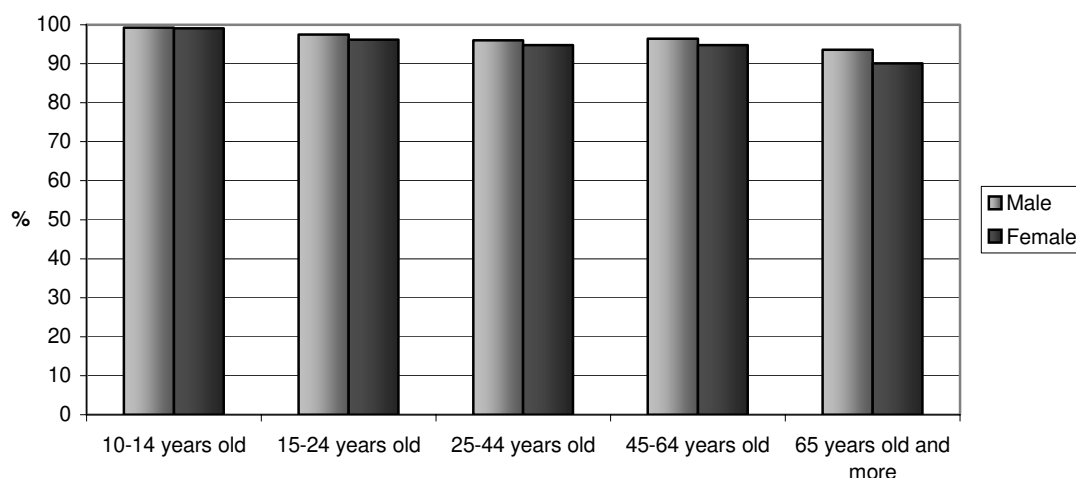
The modalities of spending the free time and in an adequate way the duration of the activities made by men and women depend also of age (see table 1).

**Table 1. Daily average time of different activities of spending the free time - working and weekend days**

	TOTAL	GROUPS OF AGE				
		10-14 years	15-24 years	25-44 years	45-64 years	65 years and over
<b>MALE</b>	<b>5,1</b>	<b>6,5</b>	<b>6,1</b>	<b>4,6</b>	<b>4,8</b>	<b>4,6</b>
Watching TV	2,7	2,7	2,6	2,8	2,9	2,5
Other mass media activities	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,3	0,4	0,5
Religious, civic, political and volunteer activities	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,4
Cultural, sportive activities, hobbies, games and creation activities	1,0	2,8	1,8	0,6	0,5	0,3
Social life (visits, conversation)	0,7	0,3	0,9	0,7	0,6	0,7
Other activities of spending the free time	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,2
<b>FEMALE</b>	<b>4,2</b>	<b>6,3</b>	<b>5,2</b>	<b>3,6</b>	<b>3,9</b>	<b>3,9</b>
Watching TV	2,3	2,7	2,4	2,2	2,4	2,0
Other mass media activities	0,3	0,8	0,7	0,2	0,2	0,3
Religious, civic, political and volunteer activities	0,3	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,4	0,6
Cultural, sportive activities, hobbies, games and creation activities	0,5	2,0	0,9	0,3	0,2	0,1
Social life (visits, conversation)	0,7	0,5	0,9	0,6	0,6	0,8
Other activities of spending the free time	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1

People of 25-44 years old have the less spare time of 4,1 hours while the group between 10-14 years old have more free time of 6,4 hours, this happening for both sexes. A shorter period of the free time is men at the people of 65 years and over of 4,2 hours, men having 4,6 hours, with 0,7 hours more than women.

**Figure 5. The share of population who carried out specific activities of free time, by sex and groups of age – working and weekend days**

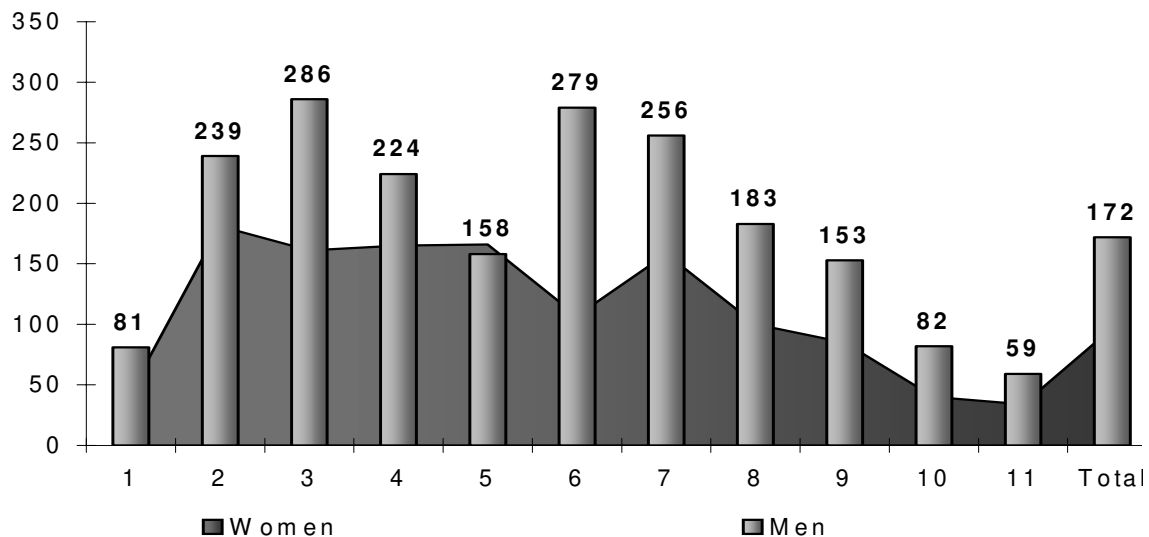


A higher share of population (95,5%) allotted a part of the day to typical activities of **free time**, with a small difference between men and women (96,4%, respectively 94,6%). This share decreases as the age increases, reaching from 99,2% at the persons of 10-14 years old, at 91,6% at the persons of 65 years old and over.

## 2. Civil status

The figure bellow shows that young person aged less than 25 years old, without children and living with their parents, as so persons aged 65 years old and over spent the most less time in economic activities.

**Figure 6. Daily average time spent on employment activities by gender and category of person**



1. Person <25, no children <18, living with parents
2. Person 25-44, no children <18, living with parents
3. Person <45, living in couple, no children <18
4. Person <45, no children <18, living in other arrangement
5. Single parent (all ages) youngest child <18
6. Person (all ages) living in a couple, youngest child 0-6
7. Person (all ages) living in a couple, youngest child 7-17
8. Person 45-64, living in couple, no children <18
9. Person 45-64, no children <18, living in other arrangement
10. Person 65 and above, living in couple, no children <18
11. Person 65 and above, no children <18, living in other arrangement
12. All

It is known that married men aged less than 45 years - without minor children - participate the most of time in economic activities. Within the category *person (all ages) living in a couple, with a youngest child 0-6 years old*, the time reported by women on

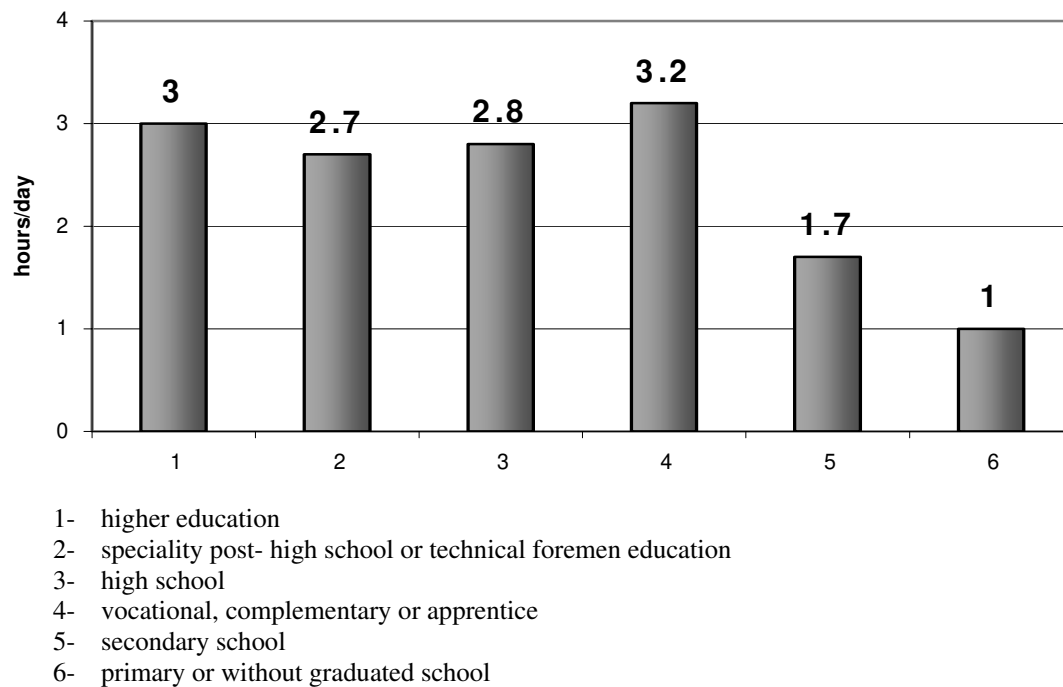


employment activities is at the highest difference compared to the men one (1hour and 47 minutes compared to 4hours and 39 minutes).

### 3. Level of education and Professional status

The structure of spending time differs essentially by level of education. The university graduated persons allot a daily average of 2,8 hours for household activities every day of week, while the persons with primary school allot 3,6 hour daily for the same activities. Keeping in mind the same dimensions of educational level, the difference is bigger for the time spent in economic activities (3 hours for university graduated persons and only 1 hour for persons with primary school).

**Figure 7. Average time of economic activity, by level of education - working and weekend days**



As the table 2 reflects, referring to the occupational status of people, the employees women 96,7% allotted a part of their time for household activities in comparison with 76,7% among employees men (the difference being of 20,0 percentage points).

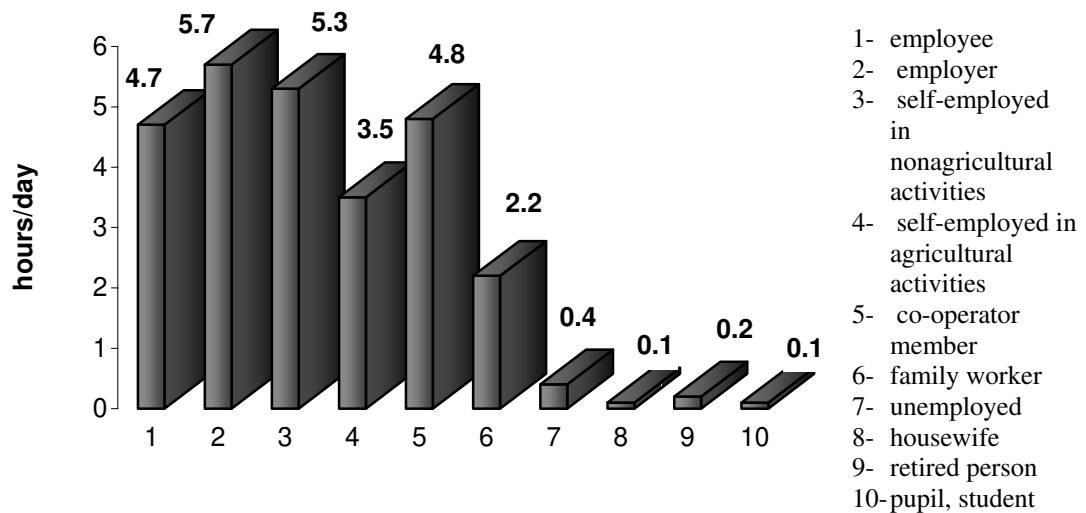
**Table 2. The participation ratio of the population in the main activities, by sex, groups of age and occupational status – working and weekend days**

%

GROUPS OF AGE						
	TOTAL	10-14 years old	15-24 years old	25-44 years old	45-64 years old	65 years old and over
<b>EMPLOYED PERSONS</b>						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85,8</b>	-	<b>73,2</b>	<b>85,7</b>	<b>89,1</b>	<b>96,3</b>
Male	76,7	-	60,7	76,7	80,9	93,0
Female	96,7	-	89,5	97,2	98,4	99,2
<b>UNEMPLOYED</b>						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87,7</b>	-	<b>77,9</b>	<b>93,7</b>	<b>93,9</b>	-
Male	81,5	-	68,4	90,5	90,0	-
Female	96,5	-	93,3	97,9	99,6	-
<b>INACTIVE PERSONS</b>						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>82,9</b>	<b>62,8</b>	<b>74,2</b>	<b>94,2</b>	<b>95,1</b>	<b>89,6</b>
Male	72,6	55,1	58,6	73,5	91,1	85,4
Female	89,7	70,8	86,3	97,7	97,7	92,3

Analysing the participation ratio on groups of age is noticed that these are growing with the age, also at men and also at women, varying from a minimum of 70,8% for girls (10-14 years old) to a maximum of 98,1% for women of 45-64 years old and from a minimum of 55,1% for boys (10-14 years old) to a maximum of 87,9% for men of 65 years old and over.

**Figure 8. Average time of economic activity, by occupational status - working and weekend days**



The inactive persons are those who allot less time for household and family care (82,9%). But, this smaller value, in comparison with the value registered at the employed persons and unemployed (85,8%, and 87,7%), is explained by the fact that in this group of population are included pupils and students who carry out less this kind of activities.

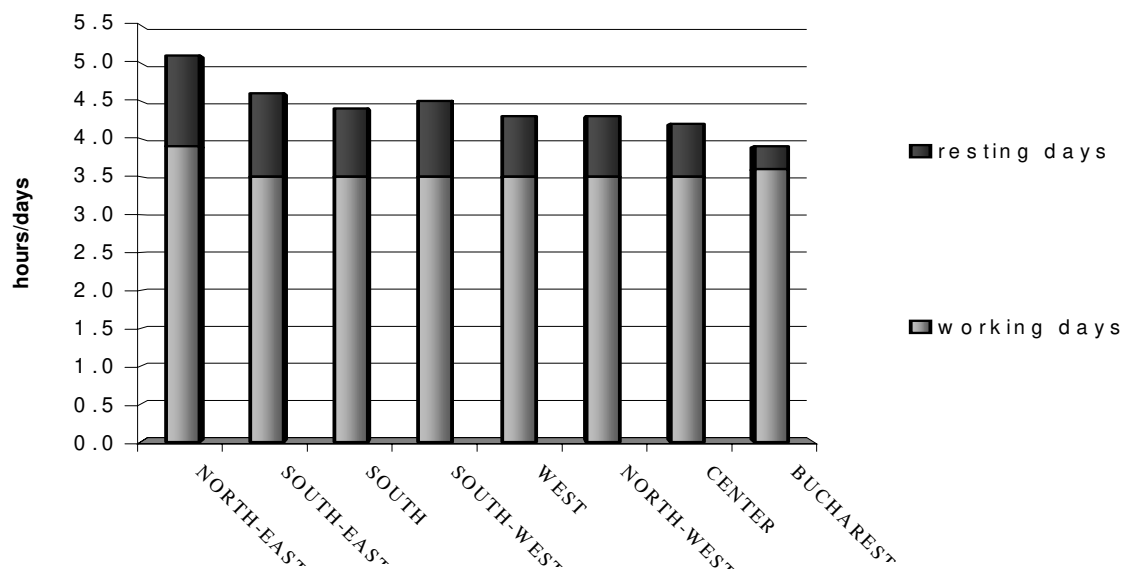
Especially, due to the fact that every working day the employed persons go to the working places, those have a superior share compared to unemployed and inactive persons, regarding travels.

#### 4. Residence and geographical area

Considering another dimensions influencing the structure of spending time, we analyzed the budget of time by residence area (urban and rural) and by the regions of Romania (North-East, South-East, South, South-West, West, North-West, Centre and Bucharest). The choice of spending time in the certain activities by people from urban area it differs a lot compared with the activities performed by people living in the rural area. In this sense, more persons participate to household and family care in rural than in urban (87,3% compared to 82,6%). But, at the group of age of 65 years old and over this difference is almost insignificant (0,5 percentage points: 91,2% in urban and 91,7% in rural). If at this group of age in urban is found maximum ratio, in rural this appears at group of age 45-64 years old (94,1%).

By gender, it is noticed that the differences between the two residence areas are small for time spent in household and family care in the case of the woman, excepting only the group of age 10-14 years old (7,1 percentage points). For the group of age of 65 years old and over in urban the share of women is more than the share corresponding from rural with 1,5 percentage points. Additional, the population from the rural area spend in economic activity with 18 minutes much more than people living in the urban area.

**Figure 9. Daily average time economic activity, by regions - working days and resting days**



Among regions, in North-East more persons allot time for household and family care than the persons from the other regions (88,4%). To the opposite side are Bucharest (82,1%) and Centre (81,7%) regions.

In Bucharest is registered the lowest daily average time for economic activity, of 2,0 hours, comparing to the maximum level from the North-East region of 6 hours per day.

Regarding leisure time, the people living in North-East benefit the average of 0,6 hours per day of free time, while in West people spend 0,9 hours. Generally, the free time differs according to the occupational status and age.

## **Conclusions**

A first view on allocation time data by gender dimension indicates that Romanian women work longer in household activities than men while men spend more time in paid work, but this is happen also almost all the countries across Europe. On the other hand, the geographic, economic, social policy and social power factors impose various constraints on people's daily schedules. Time use data could provide an indication of the effects of various determinants on the behaviour of the people and the way in which people choose to allocate their time during the day. This is one of the expectations from the next Time Use Survey that will be developed in Romania to the near future.

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