

ȘTEFAN MOLOCEA, *Motivational mechanisms for elites' upward mobility. A case study*

**Abstract:** This paper aims to study the phenomenon of elite mobility in terms of their personal motivation for which they choose to move towards the political and decision-making power center. The research focused on the members of the Cluj elite. Studying the variation of motivation in mobilising local elites at a central level is useful because it helps us understand more and better from this perspective Romania's political elite. The research questions that this study tries to answer are related to personal, social or professional motivations for each member of the studied elite. Currently, due to the lack of awareness and the small number of studies in this field, especially those focused on Romania, I considered more important exploring and describing the incentive factors that have emerged from the qualitative analysis of data produced through interviews. In this study, the interview was used as a research tool, considering that the results will help to better understand these motivations. The data collection was conducted by discussing with a number of members of the elite from Cluj, talks that lasted for about 20-30 minutes. Eight members of the elite, from various professional sectors were interviewed. Theories and studies on elites and their mobility have shown so far that individuals' motivation for starting such a process can be very diverse, furthermore, being dependant on personal characteristics such as: desire for political power, certain friendships with politicians, family tradition, the desire to achieve a higher degree of prestige and also occupational characteristics, such as a more competitive work environment or for professional promotion. The interview data analysis revealed that the strongest motivation for local elite members to move to Bucharest was largely linked to the professional position held previous to one in the central administration, while secondary motivations that arose from the response interpretation considered the civic attitudes of the respondents, their desire to do something good for the community or their attempts to reconcile the past with the present, towards creating a democratic future. Somewhat surprisingly, financial considerations, or the ones of obtaining political power were not deterministic in the cases of the studied subjects. Of the three general dimensions created especially for use in data interpretation, the social dimension was of the least interest among the subjects. Visibility was a factor that had a rather negative influence on respondents. The emotional dimension provided surprising results. First, a formal party affiliation or a strong ideology is a motivating factor only if missing. Secondly, the variable of a "team movement" is one that is both highly polarising, but also one that generates contradicting opinions. The most powerful motivational dimension proved to be the professional one, as the local elite's decision to move to Bucharest was very strongly linked to their respective previous occupations.

**Keywords:** Cabinet, interview, Cluj, politics, career, decisions.