THE EVOLUTION OF THE NUMBER OF ADOPTABLE CHILDREN WITH A PUBLIC PROFILE WITHIN THE SPECIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM IN DIFFERENT DEVELOPMENT REGIONS IN ROMANIA

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Abstract: Since 2016, Romania opened the path to the adoption of adoptable children in the special protection system, creating a distinct section in the National Adoption Registry (R.N.A.), called public profile. The purpose of this study is to observe the evolution of the number of children from the special protection system for which a public profile was created, the evolution of the number of adoptions from the public profile, as well as the failed matches of children adopted from the public profile, in the period 2016-2021, depending on the development regions of Romania. We used as a research method the secondary analysis of the data provided by the National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoption. The results of the analysis show that although between 2016-2021 the North-East Region had the highest number of children in the special protection system, it also had among the lowest rates of children enrolled in the public profile out of the total number of children in the system from that region. Bucharest-Ilfov is the region with the fewest children in the protection system, but also with the fewest children with a public profile and the lowest rate of children with a public profile compared to the total number of children in the system. And yet, the data show that at the level of developing regions, there is no connection between the high number of children in the special protection system and the high number of children with a public profile. If we look at the figures reported at the county level, there are counties such as Iași, Vaslui, Dolj, Olt, Timiș, Bihor, Satu-Mare, Mureș, which have both the most children in the system and the most children with a public profile. We believe that other explanations should be sought and we recommend expanding research in the field, possibly through qualitative research to identify the criteria used by DGASPCs to create public profiles and the strategies to stimulate adoptions.

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Résumé : Depuis 2016, la Roumanie a ouvert la voie à l'adoption d'enfants adoptables dans le système de protection spéciale, en créant une section distincte dans le Registre national des adoptions (R.N.A.), appelée profil public. Le but de cette étude est d'observer l'évolution du nombre d'enfants issus du régime de protection spéciale pour lesquels un profil public a été créé, l'évolution du nombre d'adoptions issues du profil public, ainsi que les échecs d'appariement des enfants adoptés issus du profil public, dans la période 2016-2021, en fonction des régions de développement de la Roumanie. Nous avons utilisé comme méthode de recherche l'analyse secondaire des données fournies par l'*Autorité nationale pour la protection des droits de l'enfant et l'adoption.* Les résultats de l'analyse montrent que bien qu'entre 2016 et 2021, la région du Nord-Est avait le plus grand nombre d'enfants dans le système de protection spéciale, mais aussi avec le moins d'enfants à profil public et le taux d'enfants à profil le plus bas par rapport au nombre total d'enfants dans le système. Bucarest-Ilfov est la région avec le moins d'enfants dans le système de protection, mais aussi avec le moins d'enfants avec un profil public et ayant le plus faible taux d'enfants avec un profil public par rapport au nombre total d'enfants dans le système. Et pourtant, les données montrent qu'au niveau des régions en développement, il n'y a pas de lien entre le nombre élevé d'enfants dans le système de protection spéciale et le nombre élevé d'enfants à profil public. Si nous regardons les chiffres rapportés au niveau des comtés, il y a des comtés tels que Iaşi, Vaslui, Dolj, Olt, Timiş, Bihor, Satu-Mare, Mureş, qui ont à la fois le plus d'enfants dans le système et le plus d'enfants avec un profil public. Nous pensons que d'autres explications doivent être recherchées et nous recommandons d'élargir les recherches sur le terrain, éventuellement par des recherches qualitatives dans le but d'identifier les critères utilisés par les DGASPC pour créer des profils publics et les stratégies pour stimuler les adoptions.

Mots-clés : distribution adoption, children with a public profile, evolution by development regions.

Rezumat: Începând din 2016, România a deschis calea spre adopție a copiilor adoptabili aflați în sistemul de protecție specială, creând o secțiune distinctă în Registrul național pentru adopții (R.N.A.), denumită profil public. Scopul acestui studiu este de a observa evoluția numărului de copii din sistemul de protecție specială pentru care a fost creat un profil public, evoluția numărului de adopții din profilul public, precum și a potrivirilor întrerupte ale copiilor adoptați din profilul public, în perioada 2016-2021, în funcție de regiunile de dezvoltare ale României. Am utilizat ca metodă de cercetare analiza secundară a datelor furnizate de Autoritatea Națională pentru Protecția Drepturilor Copilului și Adopție. Rezultatele analizei arată că deși între 2016-2021 Regiunea Nord-Est avea cel mai mare număr de copii în sistemul de protecție specială, avea printre cele mai mici rate ale copiilor înscriși în profilul public raportat la numărul copiilor din sistem, din regiune. București-Ilfov este regiunea cu cei mai puțini copii aflați în sistemul de protecție, dar și cu cei mai puțin copii cu profil public și având rata cea mai mică a copiilor cu profil raportat la numărul total al copiilor din sistem. Și totuși, datele arată că la nivelul regiunilor de dezvoltare, nu există o legătură între numărul mare al copiilor din sistemul de protecție specială și numărul mare al copiilor cu profil public. Dacă privim cifrele raportate la nivel de județ sunt județe, precum Iași, Vaslui, Dolj, Olt, Timiș, Bihor, Satu-Mare, Mureș, care au atât cei mai mulți copii în sistem, cât și cei mai mulți copii cu profil public. Deși în unele

regiuni se observă că numărul mai mare de adopţii din profilul public implică şi un număr mai mare de potriviri întrerupte, asocierea dintre cele două nu poate fi generalizată. Considerăm că ar trebui căutate alte explicaţii şi recomandăm extinderea cercetărilor în domeniu, eventual prin cercetări calitative, cu scopul de a identifica criteriile folosite de DGASPC-uri pentru a crea profilurile publice şi strategiile pentru a stimula adopţiile.

Cuvinte cheie: adopţii întrerupte, copii cu profil public, evoluţia pe regiuni de dezvoltare.

Introduction

The National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption (ANPDCA) provides annual reports on the situation of the child in the special protection system. On the institution's website, you can find statistical data on children and adoption, annual statistics by county and region regarding the number of children in family-type services (with professional foster carers, with relatives up to the fourth degree, with other families/persons), children in public residential services. Data on adoptions by year are made public by the National Adoption Registry, showing data on the number of children adopted according to the national and international adoption procedure by gender, and age group. There is also available data on the number of adoptable children nationally by gender, age group, and how many of the adoptable children are included in the public profile of adoptable children, by gender and age group. Another category of available information is that which refers to the annual number of adoptable children in foster care according to the 5 possibilities: with a professional foster carer, with another family/person, with relatives up to the fourth degree, with guardians or in residential type services. However, there is no data on the number of adoptable children in the protection system by county and region, as well as on the number of children with a public profile or failed matches according to county and region.

In this article, based on the data available on the institution's website, as well as those received following a request to ANPDCA regarding the number of children included and adopted from the public profile, as well as the number of matches by counties and regions, to observe for how many children in the special protection system the General Directorates of Social Assistance and Child Protection (DGASPC) has generated public profiles and if there is a link between the number of children in the special protection system in the county/region and the number of children with a public profile, but also a link between the number of children adopted from the public profile and the number of failed matches in each region. The analyzed period covers 2016-2021. Starting in 2016, Romania opened the path to the adoption for adoptable children in the special protection system, creating a distinct section in the National Adoption Registry (R.N.A.), called public profile.

About adoptable children from the special protection system in Romania

In 1989, in Romania, after the fall of the communist regime, it is estimated that almost 100,000 children were institutionalized, out of which 30,000 were adopted internationally by families saddened by the conditions in which they were kept (Mihăileanu, 2021). In different countries, there are various forms of adoption, from closed, open, national (domestic) to international adoption. The form of adoption recognized and practiced in Romania is closed national (or domestic) adoption (Bejenaru & Roth, 2011).

Due to a legislative vacuum, until 2004 in Romania some adoptions raised suspicions because of the lack of transparent information and a centralized database that could be monitored. The first laws in the field of child rights protection passed in 2004 (Law 272/2004) and of the legal status of adoption (273/2004, with subsequent amendments from 2016), while the methodological norms for the implementation of the law were published only in 2021. Although the laws were in conjunction with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children deprived of parental care were kept in the state's protection system indefinitely at the disposal of the biological parents even if many of these parents no longer maintained contact with their children.

In Romania, each year, fewer children were adopted compared to the number of eligible children and certified adopters and adoptive families. Between 2014 and 2017, almost half of abandoned children were reintegrated into their biological families and more than a third were placed in foster homes. Many children found a home in a foster family or stayed with relatives or in foster care with families supported by NGOs. A small number of children (3.4%) were placed in institutions. Since 2004, the number of children in the protection system and those placed in institutions has decreased substantially. The number of children eligible for national and international adoption decreased between 2014 and 2017, while the number of parents certified for adoption increased (Popescu et al, 2019).

Even with the legislative changes of 2016, when a parallel matching system was introduced by opening the list of „difficult to adopt" children, later, in 2020, becoming the „public profile of adoptable children" accessible to all certified adopters, the problem of providing adopters and/or adoptive families to children in the system persists. In Romania, from a social point of view, adoption is still not seen as an option for the child, but rather to meet the needs of the adopting families. The studies (Buzducea & Lazăr, 2011) show that among the motivation to adopt very rarely appears the idea of giving a child the chance to have a family, the main motivation being either infertility or the inability of the couple to have more children. Adoption is seen as a „remedial" action against infertility or against the inability of a couple to have another biological child, often due to medical reasons (Buzducea & Lazăr, 2011). In Romania, we do not have enough families to adopt the children already declared adoptable and almost half of the adopters and/or certified families are waiting for a match with a child other than those already declared adoptable (Mihăileanu, 2021). A 2021 study of (neo)Protestant religious

communities shows that the main obstacles to encouraging families to adopt are lack of exposure (they never thought about these issues), ignorance of the process and fear of excessive bureaucracy. Other reasons cited in the same study include fear that they will not cope with challenges, fear that the families will not be able to love the child as much as the biological children, fear of negative spiritual influence, and fear that they will return to their biological parents when they grow up (Mihăileanu & Sârbu, 2021).

The percentage of children declared adoptable is extremely low, if we compare it with their retention rate in the system. We have 3000 children declared adoptable annually by court order and only about 1200 are adopted each year. The recovery of children depends on the time between the moment of abandonment and the moment they are integrated into a family. The faster the children's integration is done, the better the children recover, both on biological (cerebral) and psycho-emotional levels. In the absence of adopters and/or adoptive families accepting the currently available adoptable children and analysing the trends and the direction towards which Romania is heading by encouraging individuals and families to become professional foster carers, we notice how, instead of looking for a solution to encourage adoption, the development of a group of specialized people is desired - the training of professional foster assistants, which partially solves the need for family integration of children, through the measure of family placement, but not as a final solution like adoption. In these conditions, the risks of adverse effects on the psycho-emotional and physical development of children remain high, and their well-being and best interests remain partially ensured. The care and upbringing of children deprived of parental protection should be done in adoptive families and their upbringing in foster families should not be encouraged, which has a temporary character according to L272/2004, art. 62, para. 1. The lack of direct interaction with children in the protection system may be one of the reasons why adopters/adoptive families wait years to be matched with a child. Perhaps one of the solutions for adopters and/or families certified as adopters (according to L273/2004) in order not to wait many years, would be for the state to provide the legal framework and encourage them to make a minimum mandatory number of visits to the foster care centres, to temporarily host children during the holidays or to facilitate simply sporadic holiday actions. Some studies show that the chances for families that are involved in any way in the situation of abandoned children to take a child in foster care or adoption increase to 50% (fostering), respectively 65.5% (adoption) (Mihăileanu & Sârbu, 2021, p. 92). Poverty, lack of knowledge about child development, pregnancy and family planning, but also limited access to health services, especially for rural residents, are among the reasons that play an important role in the field of child and family well-being. And the cultural aspects, the framework and the traces left by the communist legacy should be taken into account when considering the analysis of the development of children's abandonment and adoption in Romania (Popescu et al., 2019).

Research Methodology

The purpose of the research was to observe how many children in the special protection system the General Directorates of Social Assistance and Child Protection (DGASPCs) generated public profiles.
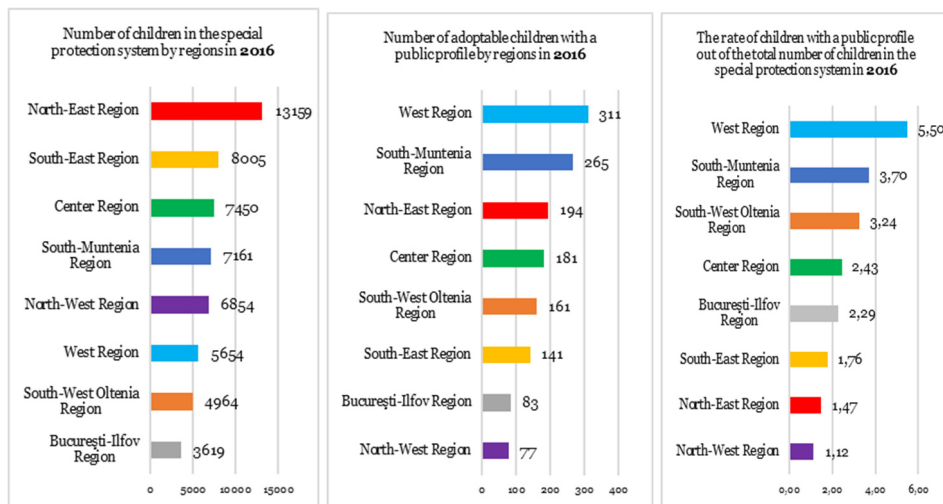
The objectives of the research were to (Obj.1) identify a connection between the large number of children in the protection system and the large number of public profiles generated, depending on the development regions and to (Ob2.) observe a connection between the number of adopted children from the public profile and the number of failed matches of children adopted from the public profile, depending on the development regions of Romania. The research method used is the secondary analysis of the data made available by the National Authority for the Protection of Child Rights and Adoption (ANPDCA) in 2022. The 2 research questions from which we started the analysis are (1) Why do some regions have more children registered in the public profile than others? and (2) Why are there more failed matches in some regions than in others? Please see below the results of the analyses based on the quantitative data obtained from ANPDCA.

Research results

Since the data provided by the National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoption (ANPDCA) were distributed by county, in the first phase of the analysis, we centralized the number of children in the protection system on the 8 development regions of Romania. Romania has 8 development (classified as NUTS-2 level) as follows: West Region (consisting of Arad, Caraș-Severin, Hunedoara and Timiş counties), N-W Region (consisting of Bihor, Bistrița-Năsăud, Cluj, Maramureş, Satu-Mare and Sălaj counties), The N-E Region (composed of the counties of Bacău, Botoşani, Iași, Neamț, Suceava and Vaslui), the S-E Region (which includes Brăila, Buzău, Constanța, Galați, Tulcea and Vrancea), the S-M Region (with the counties of Argeş, Călăraşi, Dâmbovița, Giurgiu, Ialomița, Prahova and Teleorman), S-W Oltenia Region (where Dolj, Gorj, Mehedinți, Olt and Vâlcea counties are included), B-I Region (which contains the 6 sectors of the Municipality of Bucharest plus Ilfov county) and Center Region (with Alba, Braşov, Covasna, Harghita, Mureş and Sibiu counties). After the data centralization by region, both the number of children in the special protection system and the number of children for which a distinct section was created in the R.N.A. for a public profile, we calculated, for each of the 8 regions separately, the rate of children enrolled in the public profile out of the total number of children in the protection system. The results and graphs are shown and explained below.

In 2016, the year in which the system with the public profile of adoptable children was implemented, no connection is observed depending on the development regions between the number of children in the protection system and the number of children with a public profile. If the North-East Region had the most children, 13,159 in the protection system, this region was the third region with the most children enrolled in the public profile in 2016. The West Region was in 2016
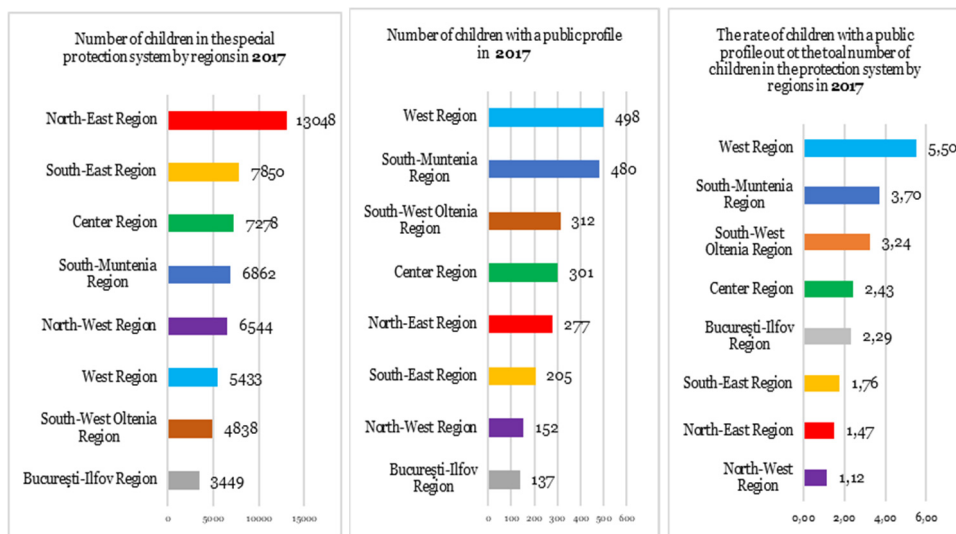
the region with the most children enrolled in the public profile with 311 children, although, in terms of the number of children in the protection system, it was the sixth region, with 5654 children in the system. The West Region had in 2016 the highest rate of 5.5%, of children enrolled in the public profile out of the total number of children in the system of protection, but did not have the highest number of children in the system (Fig. 1).

Source: ANPDCA, 2022

Figure 1. Distribution of the number of children in the protection system, the number of children with a public profile and the rate of children with a public profile, by region, in 2016

And in 2017, the North-East Region had the highest number of children in the protection system, with 13,048 children, followed by the South-East Region with 7,850 and the Center Region with 7,278 children in the system. But most children registered on the public profile in 2017 were not in any of these 3 regions. The West Region also had the most children with a public profile in 2017, 498 children, followed by the South-Muntenia Region with 480 children in the public profile and the South-West Oltenia Region with 312 children in the public profile. The highest rate of children with a public profile out of the total number of children in the system was the highest in 2017, in these 3 regions: West Region with 5.5%, South-Muntenia Region with 3.7% and South-West Oltenia Region with 3.2%. In 2017, the Bucharest-Ilfov Region had the fewest children in the protection system and the fewest children enrolled in the public profile, but the lowest rate of children in the public profile compared to the number of children in the system were in the North-West Region and North-East Region, the region that also had the highest number of children in the protection system (see Fig. 2).
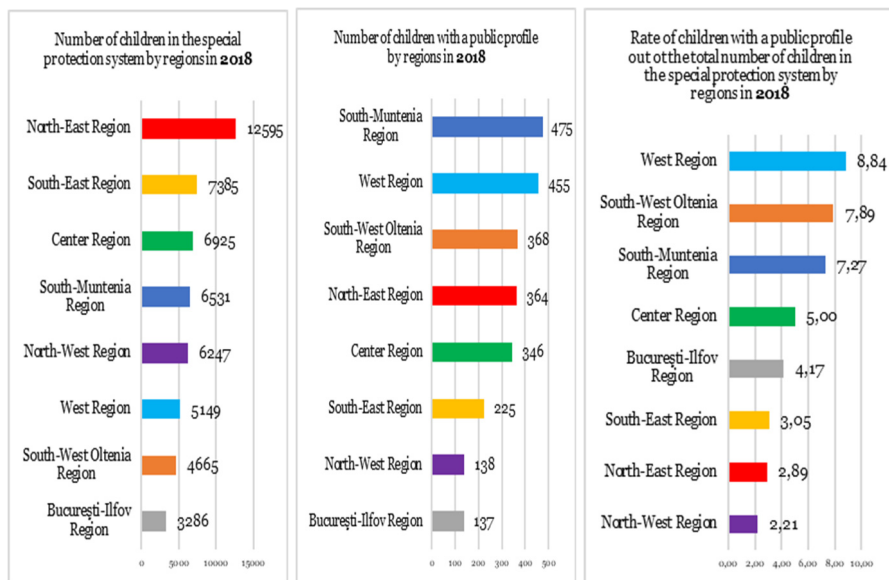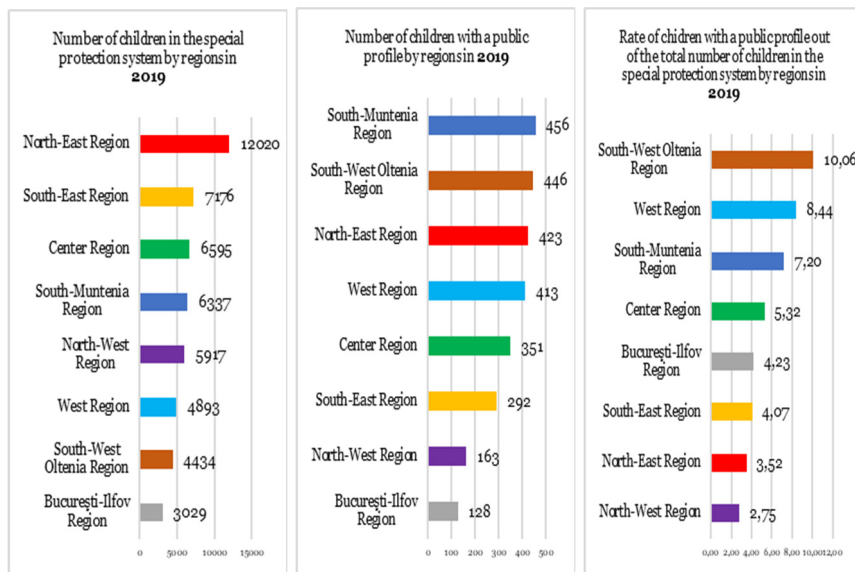
Source: ANPDCA, 2022

Figure 2. Distribution of the number of children in the protection system, the number of children with a public profile and the rate of children with a public profile, by region, in 2017

In 2018, the North-East Region also had the highest number of children enrolled in the public profile, 12,595 children, followed by the South-East Region with 7,385 children in the system and the Centre Region with 6,925 children. But most children registered in the public profile were not in any of these 3 regions. In 2018, the South-Muntenia Region was the region with the most children for whom a public profile was opened, namely 475 children, although it was the fourth region with the most children in the protection system.

The West Region was the second region with the most children enrolled in the public profile, with 455 children, and the third region was Southwest Oltenia with the most children with a public profile, 368, although it was the second to last region in terms of the number of children in the system of special protection with 4665 children in the system. The fewest children in the protection system, but also children registered in the public profile, were in the Bucharest-Ilfov Region in 2018, with 3286 children in the system, respectively 137 children with a public profile. The lowest rate of children with a public profile about the total number of children in the special protection system was in the North-West Region at 2.2% and the North-East Region at 2.8% (see Fig. 3).

In 2019, the North-East Region remained the region with the most children in the protection system, with 12,020 children in the care of the state, but it had the third highest number of children for whom a public profile was opened, 423 children, after the South-Muntenia Region with 456 children enrolled in the public profile and the South-West Oltenia Region with 446 children registered in the public profile. Although the South-West Oltenia Region was 2019 the second to last

region in terms of the number of children in the protection system, it was the second region with the most children enrolled in the public profile and had the highest rate of children with a public profile out of the total number of children in the system, 10%. In 2019, the Bucharest-Ilfov Region was the region with the fewest children in the protection system, with 3,029 children, but also with the fewest children with a public profile, 128 children registered in the public profile, but the lowest rate of children with a public profile out of the total number of children in the protection system, was in the North-West Region (2.7%).

Figure 3. Distribution of the number of children in the protection system, the number of children with a public profile and the rate of children with a public profile, by region, in 2018

The highest number of children enrolled in the public profile was in 2019 in the South-Muntenia Region, with 456 children, being also the region with the third highest rate of children with a public profile compared to the total number of children in the system, with 7,2% after the South-West Oltenia Region with 10% and the West Region with 8.4% (Fig. 4).
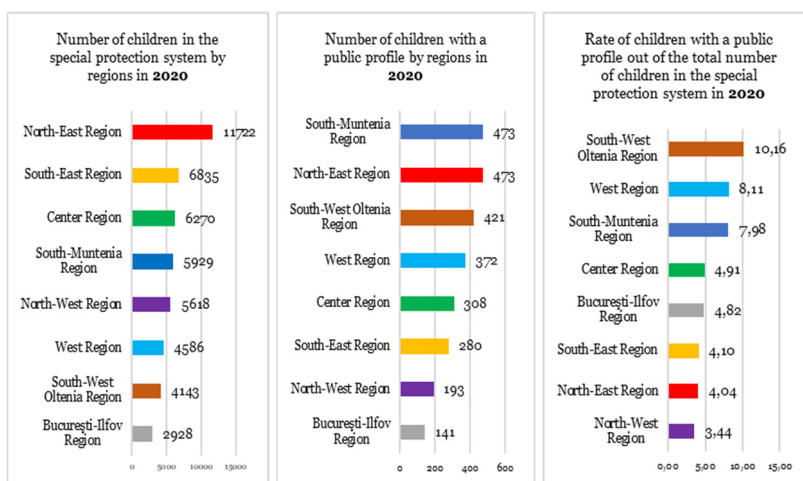
In 2020, the North-East Region had the most children in the special protection system and the most children enrolled in the public profile, with 473 children with a public profile, along with the South-Muntenia Region, but it had among the lowest rates of children with a public profile compared to the total number of children in the system, 4%. The South-West Oltenia Region, which was the second region with the fewest children in the system, had the highest rate of children with a public profile out of the total number of children in the system, 10%. The Bucharest-Ilfov Region was the region with the fewest children in the protection system, with 2928 children, and the fewest children with a public profile,

with 141 children, but it was the fifth region with the highest rate of reported children with a public profile out of the total number of children in the protection system (Fig. 5).
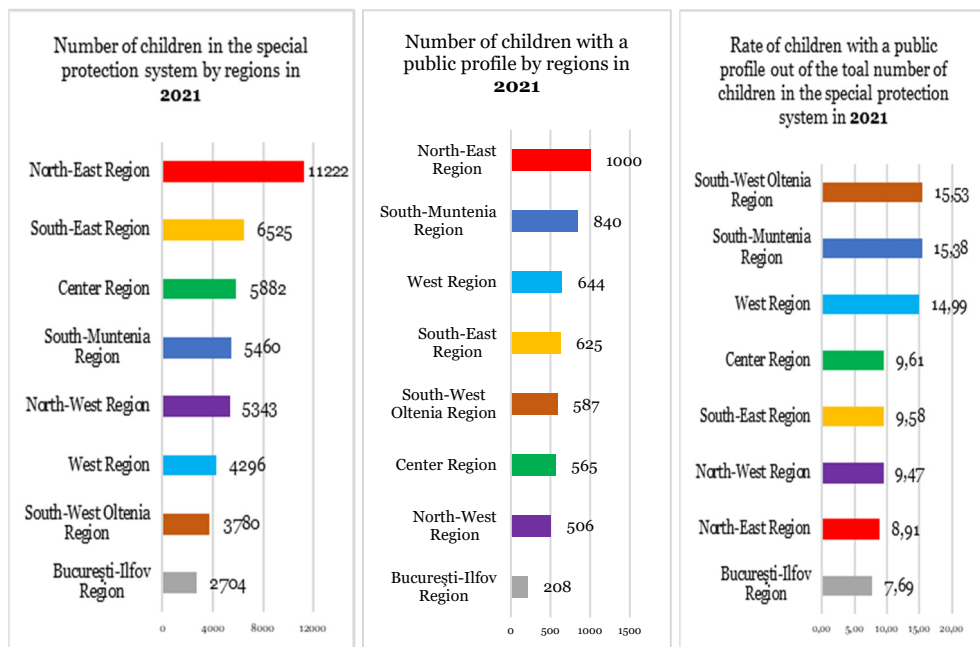
Figure 4. Distribution of the number of children in the protection system, the number of children with a public profile and the rate of children with a public profile, by region, in 2019

Figure 5. Distribution of the number of children in the protection system, the number of children with a public profile and the rate of children with a public profile, by region, in 2020

In 2021, the North-East Region was also the region with the most children in the protection system, with 11,222 children, and it was also the region with the most children for which a public profile was opened, with 1000 children, but it had among the lowest rates of children with a public profile compared to the total number of children in the system, with 8.9% children with a profile out of the total number of children in the protection system in the region. The second region with the most children with a public profile was the South-Muntenia Region with 840 children, which is also the second region with the highest rate of children with a public profile out of the total number of children in the system, among the regions, having a rate of 15% with children with a public profile of the total number of children in the system per region. The South-West Oltenia Region has the highest rate of children with a public profile out of the total number of children in the system per region, 15.5%, although it is the second to last region in terms of the number of children in the protection system with 3780 children in the system in 2021. The Bucharest-Ilfov Region was in 2021 the region with the fewest children in the protection system, 2704 children in the system, the region with the fewest children with a public profile, 208 children, and the region with the lowest rate of children with a public profile out of the total number of children in the protection system with a rate of 7.6% (see Fig. 6).
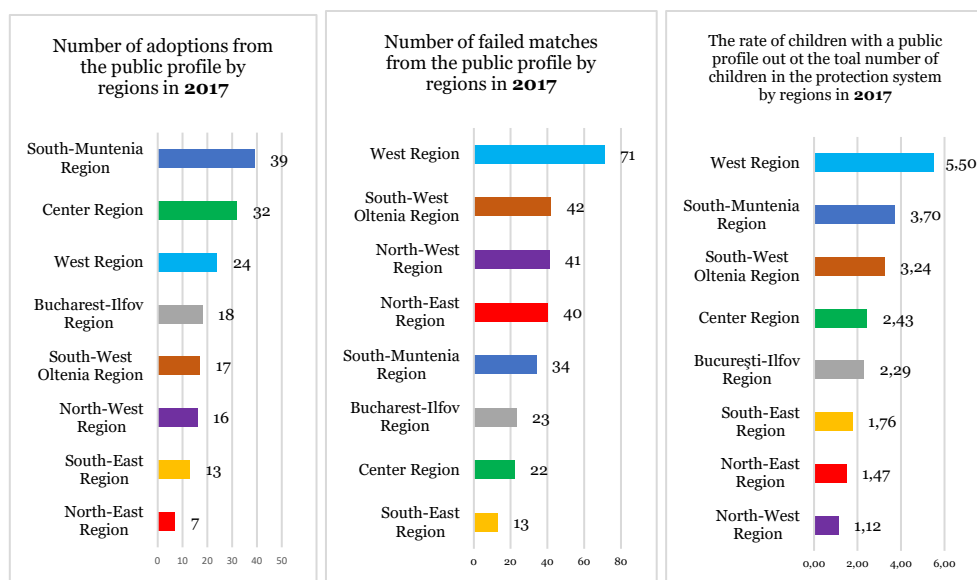

Source: ANPDCA, 2022

Figure 6. Distribution of the number of children in the protection system, the number of children with a public profile and the rate of children with a public profile, by region, in 2021

After the first year of implementing the public profile section in R.N.A. (National Adoption Registry) in 2017, no relationship is observed between the number of children adopted from the profile and the number of failed matches of children adopted from the profile.

The most adoptions from the public profile were in the South-Muntenia Region, with 39 adoptions, but the West Region had the highest number of failed matches of children selected from the public profile, with 71 failed matches, at 24 adoptions of children from the profile. The Northeast Region had the fewest public profile adoptions but had 40 failed matches. The South-East Region had a special situation, wherein 2017, although it had among the fewest adoptions of children from the public profile, 13 adoptions, it also had the lowest number of failed matches of children selected from the public profile, 13 failed matches (Fig. 7).
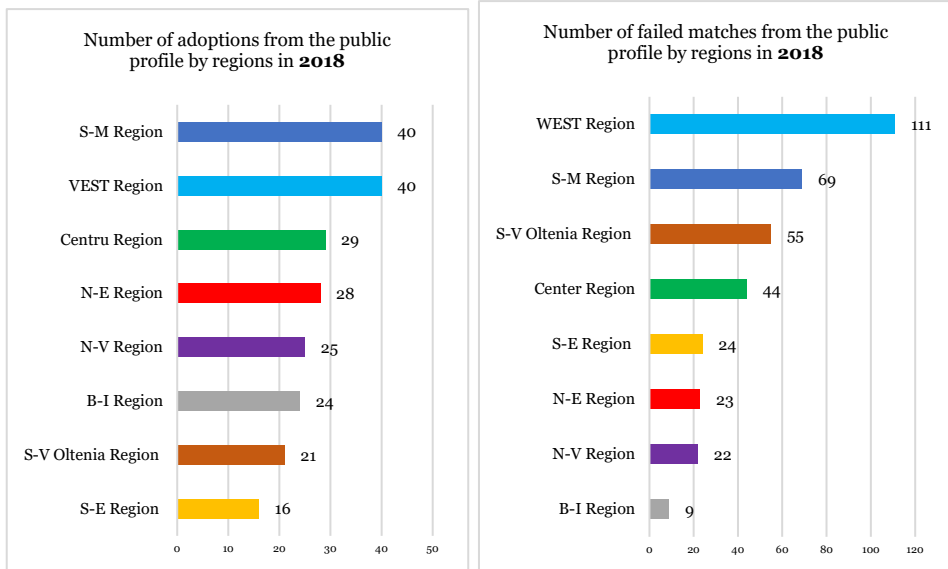

Source: ANPDCA, 2022

Figure 7. Number of adoptions from the public profile and number of failed matches from the public profile, by region, in 2017

In 2018, the South-Muntenia Region and the West Region were the regions with the most children adopted from the public profile, each with 40 cases of adoption of children from the public profile, but they were also the regions with the most failed matches of children selected from the profile, with 111 cases in the West Region, respectively 69 cases of failed matches in the South-Muntenia Region (Fig. 8).
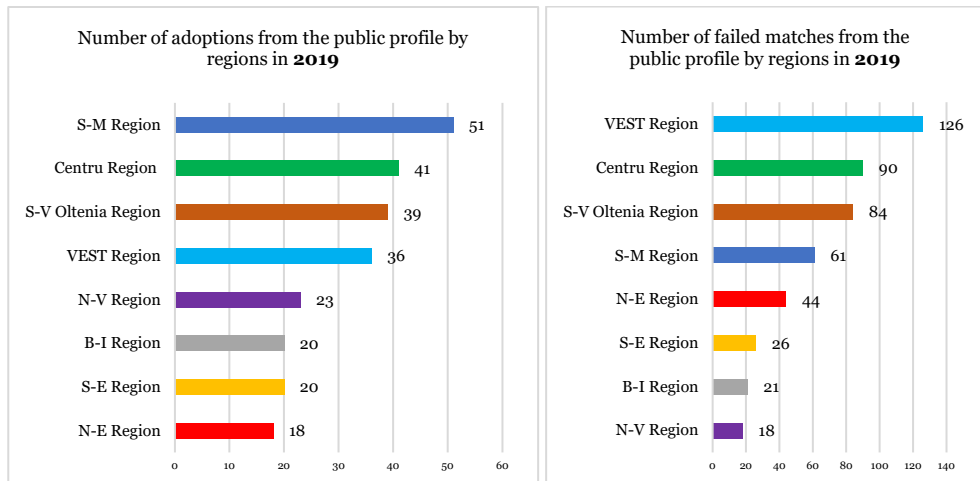
In 2019, although the South-Muntenia Region also had the most children adopted from the public profile, with 51 adoptions, it had the fourth-highest number of failed matches. The Center region was the region with the second most adoptions of children from the public profile and the second region with the most

failed matches of selected children from the profile, namely 90 failed matches. The West Region had the highest number of failed matches from the public profile, with 126 failed matches in 2019 at 36 adoptions from the public profile. The North-West Region had the fewest failed matches of children selected from the public profile with 18 cases (Fig. 9).

Source: ANPDCA, 2022

Figure 8. Number of adoptions from the public profile and number of failed matches from the public profile, by region, in 2018
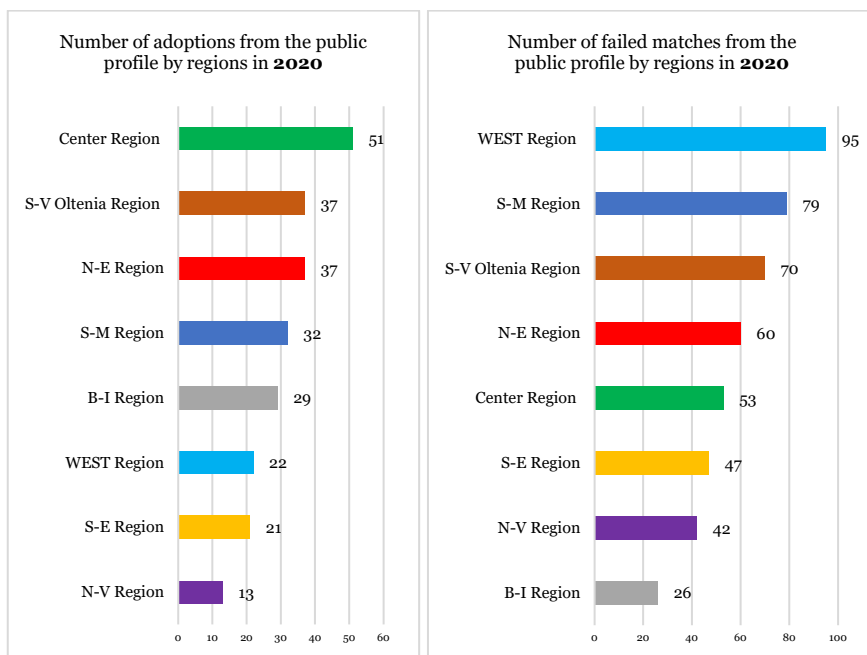

Source: ANPDCA, 2022

Figure 9. Number of public profile adoptions and number of failed matches from a public profile by region in 2019
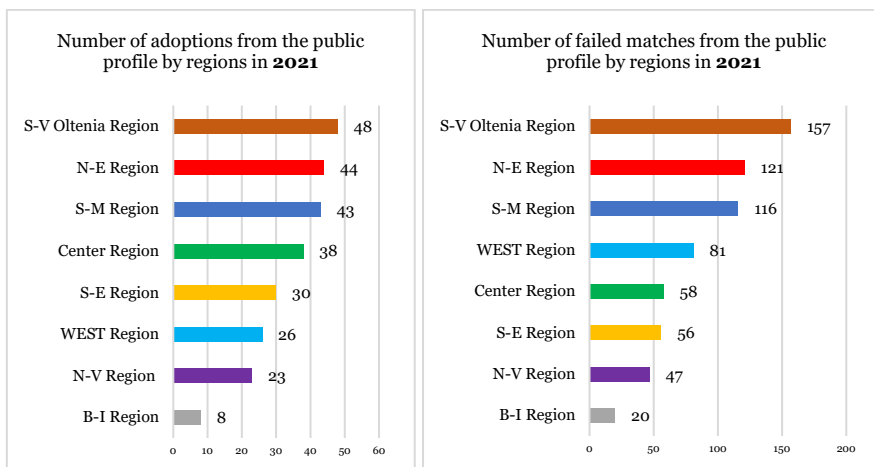
In 2020, the West Region had also the most cases of failed matches, with 95 situations, but it was the third region with the fewest adoptions of children from the profile, with 22 adoptions. The most adoptions in the profile in 2020 were in the Centre Region, with 51 adoptions and 53 failed matches. The North-West Region had the fewest adoptions of children selected from the public profile, 13 adoptions, which was also the second to last region with the fewest failed matches selected from the public profile, 42 cases (Fig. 10).

In 2021, a connection is again observed between the number of children adopted from the public profile and the number of failed matches of children selected from the public profile by development regions. Thus, South-West Oltenia, North-East and South-Muntenia Regions, despite having the highest number of children adopted from the public profile, 48, 44 and 43 adoptions, also had the highest number of failed matches selected from the public profile, namely 157 failed matches in the South-West Oltenia Region, 121 failed matches in the North-East Region and 116 failed matches of children selected from the public profile in the South-Muntenia Region. The North-West and Bucharest-Ilfov regions had 2021 the lowest number of children adopted from the public profile, 23 and 8 children adopted from the public profile, but they also had the lowest number of failed matches, 47 in the North-West Region and 20 failed matches from the public profile (Fig. 11).

Source: ANPDCA, 2022

Figure 10. Number of public profile adoptions and number of failed matches from the public profile by region in 2020

Source: ANPDCA, 2022

Figure 11. Number of public profile adoptions and number of failed matches from a public profile by region in 2021

Conclusions and discussion:

Trying to answer the question of why some regions have more children registered in the public profile than others and setting as our objective to identify a connection between the high number of children in the special protection system and the high number of public profiles generated for adoptable children in the system, depending on the development regions of Romania, the hypothesis that the regions with a large number of children in the system are also the regions with more children for which a public profile was created was not confirmed. Analysing the data reported by DGASPCs to ANPDCA in the period 2016-2021, except 2021 when indeed the North-East Region was the region with the most children in the system, over 11,000 children, and it was also the region with the most children with a public profile, 1000 children, although it did not have the highest rate of children with a public profile from the total number of children in the protection system in the region (being only 8.91%, in the penultimate place among the 8 development regions), in all other years there is no relationship between the total number of children in the system in each region and the number of children with a public profile per region. In the period 2016-2021, although the North-East Region had the most children in the system it was the second to last in terms of the rate of children with a public profile in the region out of the total number of children in the system. In 2016-2018, the West Region had the highest rate of children with a profile (5.5% in 2016 and 2017 and 8.84% in 2018) although in terms of the number of children in the system, it is the third region with the fewest children in the system. The South-West Oltenia Region had the highest rate of children with a public profile per region compared to the number of children in the system, per region, in 2019 10.06%, in 2020, 10.16% and in 2021, 15.53%, although in these 3 years, the South-

West Oltenia Region is in the penultimate place in terms of the total number of children in the system per region, before the Bucharest-Ilfov Region which had the fewest children in the protection system among all 8 development regions.

Although if we do not take the region as a reference point to analyse the connection between the high number of children in the system per region and the high number of children with a public profile, take the county as a reference, we observe, for example, that in the most recent year taken into analysis, 2021, in some regions there is a connection between the total number of children in the system per county and the total number of children with a public profile per county. For example, in the North-East Region, in 2021 the counties of Iași, Vaslui and Bacău were the counties with the most children in the system, but also the counties with the most children with a public profile (Iași - 3131 children in the system and 210 children with a public profile, Vaslui – 2667 children in the system and 337 children with a public profile). In the South-West Oltenia Region, Dolj and Olt's counties were the counties with the most children in the system, but also the counties with the most children with a public profile (Dolj had 1166 children in the system and 197 children with a public profile, Olt had 814 children in the system and 193 children with a public profile). In the West Region, Timiş County was 2021 the county with the most children in the system, 1715, and the county with the most children with a profile, 294. In the North-West Region, the counties of Bihor and Satu Mare were the counties with the most children in the system, 1420, respectively 951 children in the system and 153 children in Satu Mare with a public profile and 124 children with a public profile in Bihor, being both the counties with the most children in the system in the region and the counties with the most children with public profiles. In the Central Region, Mureş county was the county with the most children in the system, 1420 children, and the county with the most children with a public profile, 179 children. The conclusion is that at the county level, in some regions, there is a link between the number of children in the special protection system and the number of children for whom a public profile was also opened, but if we consider the figures at the regional level, the link is no longer preserved.

Regarding the second research question, namely why in some developing regions, the number of failed matches is higher compared to other regions, and having as our objective is to observe if there is a connection between the number of children adopted from the public profile and the number of failed matches of children adopted from the profile, depending on the development regions of Romania, the hypothesis that the regions with more children adopted from the public profile are also the regions with more failed matches was partially confirmed. Thus in 2018, the South-Muntenia Region and the West Region were the regions with the most children adopted from the profile, 40 children per region, but they were also the regions with the highest number of failed matches, 111 in the West Region and 69 failed matches in the South-Muntenia Region. And in 2021, the regions where the most children from the profile were adopted were also the regions with the highest number of failed matches, thus the South-West Oltenia

Region and the North-East Region where the most children were adopted from the public profile, 48 children, respectively 44 children, had 157 failed matches, 121 cases. The South-Muntenia Region was in third place in terms of the number of children adopted from the profile, with 43 children adopted from the profile, and also in third place in terms of the number of failed matches, with 116 cases.

In conclusion, we believe that we need to seek other explanations and we recommend extending the research in the field of children's adoptions from the public profile and failed matches from the public profile. We aim to carry out qualitative research to be able to identify the criteria that the General Directorates of Social Assistance and Child Protection (DGASPCs) use to create public profiles and what strategies they use to stimulate adoptions. At the moment, we can assume that there is a possibility that some DGASPCs create more attractive profiles for children while others open profiles mainly for healthy children with more chances of adoption. The explanations can vary considerably.

Acknowledgement

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