



Children and Public Street Protests – a Public Debate of Striking Immediacy in Romania. The Social Media and the Mass-media as Main Vectors to shape up the Dominant Threads of Opinion

Minodora SĂLCUDEAN

Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu, Facultatea de Științe Socio-Umane
Departamentul de Jurnalism, Relații Publice, Sociologie și Psihologie
„Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu, Faculty of Social-Humanistic Sciences
Department of Journalism, Public Relations, Sociology, and Psychology
Personal e-mail: minasalcudean@yahoo.com

Children and Public Street Protests – a Public Debate of Striking Immediacy in Romania. The Social media and the Mass-media as main vectors to shape up the dominant threads of opinion

The recent street events in Romania have ignited a public debate on the topic of children's participation in the street protestings. The mass-media as well as the social media have generated and fueled two diverging streams of opinion: a domineering one, maintaining that the children's presence to such actions is nothing but a genuine practical application of democracy, and a second trend, represented in contrast by a minority claiming that children and infants fetched by their parents to the site of street demonstrations have a potential of becoming victims of political manipulation, being even exposed to risks of possible violence, even in cases of peaceful protesting. In the middle between these seemingly irreconcilable positions stand the experts, who in an attempt to display balanced views, discuss both risks and benefits, ultimately leaving it to the parents' decision whether or not to take their children with them for the street demonstrations they wish to be part of.

Keywords: protests, children #rezist, Romania, social media, mass-media



The social and the media context. Recently, Romania was confronted with street protests of an unprecedented scale since the chute of Communism. Hundreds of thousands of people went out into the streets of the Capital city and of many other major cities of the country in order to demonstrate peacefully against certain political decisions made by the newly installed Government. The climax soon reached by the protests has generated a huge tidal wave of emotion and solidarity among a substantial part from Romania's population.¹Both the Romanian and the

international press have dedicated generous space to the events at the onset of the year 2017. By and large, most of the international quality press's perspective displayed admiration, as they viewed the protests as an incontestably successful test of civic spirit that could only be passed by that sort of democracy that has come of age. Media trusts such as BBC, The Guardian, Die Zeit, Le Monde, Reuters, El Pais etc. have commented the Romanian protestings generously, presenting them as examples of strong-willed opposition in solidarity against corruption.



Sursă foto: <http://www.managerleague.com/images/uploaded/293594/copil-jandarm-inima-romania.png>

The Romanian mass-media, particularly the audio-visual players have chosen vantage points of partisanship and subjectivity. Thus, the pro-Government TV stations who support the election-winning party (the Social-Democrats PSD and the Liberal Democratic Alliance ALDE) displayed much criticism (in various degrees, ranging from subtlety to blunt labeling), using harsh derogatory phrases, for example to accuse the protesters of an attempted „coup d'etat”. At the opposite end were TV stations and media institutions with positive and approving attitudes towards the protests, in a range of similarly scaled degrees, from even-tempered support up to enthusiastic admiration. Even Digi24, considered to be the most balanced of all channels in terms of neutral attitudes towards Romanian realities, has shifted quite much towards a partisan subjectivism in their coverage of events on the site, as well as in opinions voiced in the studio by well-known journalists from within the trust. One conclusion to the aforementioned aspects is that along the hottest days of protesting, the Romanian audio-visual media was polarized in a clear-cut manner, addressing basically the grossly-divided two halves of the public, both subdued in time to their self-chosen media voices that spearhead their embraced opinions, now segregated by opposing values and aspirations. This has led to the birth of a newly-coined phrase of „two different countries called Romania”, called forth by the recent events and heavily circulated by the media these days.

It is a fact that today everywhere in the world where street events happen, from social or political protesting to radical revolutions, the social media have

come to play a crucial role. The same happened on the occasion of these protests ignited by the OUG13² (Government's Emergency Order) which represented a decision of the government considered by so many Romanians to be an unacceptable confiscation of power. Facebook, Instagram and Twitter³ were the first to circulate the fresh information taken from the mainstream media referring to the very controversial political decisions of the new executive power, and here was the space for the first civic reactions, starting with dynamic exchanges of heated-uplines, so that this became eventually ground zero of protestings. In the *social media*, mainly on networks and blogs, the predominant trend of opinion springing from famous *influencers* (artists, writers, etc.) of the young generation especially, was of support, encouragement and mobilization. Contrary to the parties in power and their tailing journalists having repeatedly stated that Fb users are being manipulated, that the protests are being directed by foreign corporate interests, and that Romania's social anatomy is already shaped by a scenario dictated by the occult from abroad, the street protests were spurred by a unique impulse gathered of all reactions from the online medium. Specific to social networks was again a bend towards radicalized attitudes, intolerance, foul humor and arguments aimed at personal attacks, all these being tools used for discrediting political adversaries or simply people of different opinions.

Nonviolent resistance (hashtag **#rezist**) was the principle that governed the demonstrations. There were a few original traits that made the Romanian protestings at the beginning of 2017 be reflected in



such varied manners in the mass-media, whose practice to exploit highly emotion-loaded images is already common knowledge.⁴ There were slogans, messages and original actions of manifold creativity, there was the presence of dogs (tagged with amusing messages on their backs) as well as the presence of many children of all ages. Particularly this latter aspect has ignited big public debate at a certain moment. It all culminated with the news⁵ about the General Mayor of Bucharest, Gabriela Firea (member of the election-winning party, therefore from the same political background as the Government) allegedly having declared her intentions of asking for the parents of children participating in protests to be fined, whereupon she referred to an article of the Law for the protection and promotion of children's rights⁶ saying: [„Children can not be used or exposed by their parents, legal guardians or other persons to whom they are entrusted, or any private organisms authorized as social service entities, or any other public or private institutions, to the purpose of obtaining personal/institutional advantages or of influencing decisions of public authorities.”] From the research I have conducted, I came to the conclusion that the online publications having circulated this information were not able to produce any safe and verified sources. In other words, a public declaration missing, this information ends up barely as rumour. In spite of this, as in many other cases, the pseudo-news has become viral and, more than that, has sparked furious debate online as well as in the mass-media on the topic of **children's participation in street protestings**. Following complaints filed at the Child Protection Institution, this institution has issued a press release, quoting the *UN Convention on Children's Rights* and the Constitution of Romania, where it reads that parents bringing their children to the demonstrations have not violated any law. [“**Even more so, an interdiction for children to participate would limit the parents' rights.**”]⁷

Involving children in the protests. Mass-media and the social media as vectors of influence to the consolidation and radicalization of opinion trends

Regarding the involvement of children in the protests, the public debate on this issue has created a division of opinion trends into two contrasting directions, one pro (which is dominant due to the spreading of information through networks) stating that the practice of democracy is learned by children through their active participation, as well as through emulating after the example of their own parents whom they see marching in the street, chanting and bonding with the crowd in the context of civic, legitimate action aimed at stifling the State's sideslips. The ones supporting this perspective are quoting the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. The convention guarantees a number of rights and freedoms, including

the ones known as opinion freedoms, which guarantee unrestricted expression of thoughts and opinions, to children who are capable of discernment of opinion considering any issues that interest them (article 12), the right to freedom of expression (article 13), freedom of thought, conscience and religion (article 14) or children's rights to freedom of association and freedom to assemble peacefully (article 15).

This argument was also being used by the UNICEF representative in Romania; in the context of public debate on this topic, it has posted the following message on its site: [“participation is a right if the demonstrations are peaceful, if they do not affect the children's upbringing and if the children are not exposed to any risks.”]⁸

The viewpoint opposite to the above (and less visible in the *social media*, but voiced by the mass-media, brings counterarguments, sustaining that a child, especially of a very young age, can not understand the social and political issues at stake, and that in a mass of people prone to degenerate into unwanted and unpredictable incidents (even direct physical confrontations, verbal violence, accidents, etc.) the child becomes vulnerable through exposure. Even more, supporters of this side have been drawing on legal arguments, which has led to them filing complaints⁹ to the Child Protection Authority. Among them is a well-known television star considered to be an *influencee* for his viewers, who has constantly criticized and jeered at the protesters and their actions both in the studio and on his Facebook page.¹⁰

Therefore, the ethical dilemmas in discussion refer to the age of children brought to the protesting sites, to the kind of messages and props these are wearing and to which they are visually and audibly exposed (sometimes even violent, extremist or foul language messages are issued), and to the question of who is taking up responsibility in the case of violent physical confrontation. For example, during the demonstrations in the city of Sibiu, some protesters lit up candles and laid funeral wreaths in front of the headquarters of the governing party, to give the message that they wanted the disappearance/symbolic death of this political party. Against the same party and its leader there were chantings with aggressive and vulgar content. In Bucharest, in one of the evenings, physical confrontations were triggered between groups of people arrived at the site and the gendarms.

In conclusion, departing from the prerequisite that the rioting crowds could be induced to unpredictable behaviors, that there is a potential of conflict *in nuce*, at every action of public protesting, it appears only legitimate to ask ourselves where the borderline between an exercise of democracy on the one side, and the exposure of minor children to questionable, aggressive or risk-containing messages and behaviors lies. The

same *Convention on the Rights of the Child*¹¹ specifies in its Article 3 that, *In all actions concerning children, ... the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration*, which arguments were almost entirely absent from the public press.

One example to sustain the view that the children's participation in protesting is part of their civic education and of an early attempt at exercising democracy is the march of children, organized on a Saturday at noon time in the Capital city, featuring children and adults in a number of recreational activities practiced right there on the pavement. Flags, slogans and anti-corruption messages were also there. The President of Romania implicitly validated this action, by declaring publicly: [*Democracy is never to be taken for granted, and for more democracy, more education is needed. I wish to congratulate the parents who took their children to Piata Victoriei (Victory's Square) to teach them an authentic lesson of democracy*]¹². Certainly this encouragement, although subjective, when coming from such a position of authority has fueled the dominant opinion, helping it gain more advantage. In the same context, in Sibiu (ex-European Capital of Culture) was held an original type of protest through reading: parents and grandparents took their little ones of all ages to the Main Square, where they sat down in circles, reading books for a few hours, while at the same time displaying banners with anti-corruption and anti-government messages.



Sursă foto:

https://www.google.ro/search?biw=1366&bih=638&tbm=isch&sa=1&q=poze+proteste+bucuresti+copii&oq=poze+proteste+bucuresti+copii&gs_l=img.3...817826.824566.0.825113.29.18.0.0.0.547.4852.0j1j1j2j6j2.12.0...0...1.1.64.img..17.9.3760...0j0i67k1j0i8i30k1j0i24k1.5F_GZVDPFWA#imgrc=Aj7RfBEKfwS8TM:&csf=1498729821159

Therefore, the way in which children were included into the street protestings in Romania has potential of furnishing arguments for opinions on both sides. After having monitored the press, one can certainly state that in this interval, the presence of children along their parents, during daytime activities specially created for them, and also in evening marches has increased the sensitivity of mass-media, that have captured and aired an increased amount of images with children. This

is understandable from a journalist vantage point, admitting that people of the press are called to douse their materials with as much emotion as they can, in order to make them attractive. So we had photos of children carrying funny banners, holding flags or chanting slogans as they were sitting on their parents' shoulders. The fact that parents themselves use images of their own children on social networks encourages journalists to exploit these images by turning them into media materials. Even more, some Facebook users acting as *influencers* inside their groups like professors, writers, politicians or artists have gone out into the streets with their own children, uploading selfies in real time or later, thus accrediting the idea that the presence of children in such events may be not only acceptable, but even desirable.

In what pertains to the case of minors, their being photographed or filmed is generally possible without the explicit agreement of their parents. But if such a photo becomes a close-up portrait, there is a requirement to respect the subject's right over the image; in such cases, the parents' agreement to the publication and sharing of that image is mandatory.¹³

The mass-media and social media have played a capital role in promoting the mainstream opinion that supports children's educational benefits through active participation. While the general news channels have maintained a neutral tone in fanning out facts, things are different in the opinion media (especially editorials) where the two diametrically opposing positions have received clearly contrasting and irreconcilable embodiments. Naturally, the social media (in the comments sections of online publications, on blogs, Facebook etc) have picked up the topic and dragged it into the intensely emotional zone of private personal opinions. This was also the place where even journalists and opinion leaders with expertise in the field of press felt like expressing their own points of view.

What do journalists, politicians and public personae have to say

In order to delineate the pro direction, the one supporting children's participation in the protestings, we have selected three relevant comments signed by three lady journalists who are well-known in mass-media. I wish to remind that this viewpoint was also symbolically validated and encouraged by the very President of Romania, Klaus Iohannis, who commended the parents who had taken their children to the demonstrations.

[*Why would we blame the parents who take their children with them to the protesting? Because they "expose them to dangers"? More exactly, what dangers can threaten a citizen participating in a public meeting in a democratic country? Would it be more OK to take your child to a beer festival (or wine festival, or garlic festival...)? To a "Christmas tree lighting up" ceremony that is blocking the*

entire Unirii Square? Is it more OK to take your child to the stadium? Hypocrisy—this is a word I have not used for a long time now.”](Ioana Avădani, director of the Centrul pentru Jurnalism Independent¹⁴ - Center for Independent Journalism)

["Children protesting? Well, let me tell you what I once saw. Two years ago I was in Brussels on the occasion of a conference. I went out in town and I saw groups of children aged 10 to 12, accompanied by an adult person, marching and carrying banners saying *We care*. From time to time, they would shout something, stop and applaud rhythmically. I asked what was going on. I was then told that it was an exercise organized by schools, in which the children were practicing on how to protest within a public manifestation. The groups were then to unite in a larger square. What I mean by this is that protesting too, has to be educated, including its rules of organization. Schools could consider this. So the fact that the parents brought their children now to the city squares is very OK for me. We, too, in 1989 [the fall of Communism] took our 12-year old son with us to the street protesting. And to him that mattered, and he understood. Today you can find him in the Opera Square. (Brîndușa Armanca, journalist and professor¹⁵)"]

["Absolutely out of place is the discussion about why parents take their children with them to the street protests. Children are just little people (it sounds truistic on first sight, I know) that accompany their parents wherever they go: to the seaside, on the Moon, at protests, on trips, on the plane or on a horse-drawn wagon. If there should be any risk, then we are talking about exposure of the entire family essentially, not in particular for children alone.”] (Sidonia Bogdan, journalist¹⁶).

At the opposite end of the opinions rainbow, mass-media hosted various reactions embodied in publicized materials that are clearly against the participation of children in protests. These have managed to delineate a minority, yet strong enough viewpoint to stir debate in the public arena.

For example, a journalist of well-known center-right affinities in Romania was writing five years ago, in a similarly tensed social and political context marred by the same street protesting, a very blunt article¹⁷ on the same topic. It is to be clarified that, although written in 2012, in the current context of these public demonstrations, the article got to be re-shared online by the author's very opponents in terms of political opinions, in order to prove the inconsistency of his own trumpeted principles. Although five years ago he was strongly condemning parents who took their children to street demonstrations, this time Dan Tăpălagă was one of the most active supporters of the protesters, getting even to illustrate one article with a photograph showing a child carried on his parents' shoulders.¹⁸ But for the sake of this study, we must cite his own words written in 2012:

["I have seen with my own eyes and I can say it: those people who go out in the streets carrying their children on their shoulders are simply irresponsible. You are not allowed to expose a minor to a place where violence could break out in any moment. Those television channels who invite 10-year olds in the studio in order to propagate political messages through their presence become guilty of serious breaks of professional deontology, as they are cynically exploiting innocence to purposes of their own propaganda.” (Dan Tăpălagă, journalist)]

["Those who came to the meeting with their children ought to realize that they show how irresponsible they are, they should remove their children from this area that is practically war zone.” (Lia Olguța Vasilescu, Minister of Labour, on the Antena 3 TV channel).]

["Why is it necessary to expose 4, 5, 9 or 10-year olds to public meetings of which they can not understand much at their age? Might it be that memorizing chants of hatred and despise is part of the harmonious evolution of a child? It is hard to believe that 5-year olds may wish to watch a news channel, after which, considering they are being manipulated, to go out in the streets and protest side by side with adults.”¹⁹] (Dragoș Bako, journalist)

["Hereby I want to notify the Child Protection Authority (...) You have brought your child to the protests, breaking the law, you must go to prison. This would be my ruling. Ehhh...the law is not as I would want it, the law would only administer a fine between 5.000 - 10.000 lei. Certainly, those who feel they were done injustice can go to Court.”] (Mircea Badea, television star)²⁰.

I have only considered it justified to give equal space to both pro and con sides of the public discourse around this topic, riddled more or less by subjectivity, in order to highlight that controversial themes usually generate debates between opposite poles, whose emotional intensity is being amplified thereafter by the *social media*, where quite often the viewpoints become radicalized to the detriment of more constructive dialog.

What do experts say?

In order to reconcile the pros and the cons regarding the participation of children in street protests, we have retorted to opinions of experts in Education, Rights of children or Psychology. It is to be noted that the viewpoints of experts take into consideration both the benefits and the risks, placing themselves beyond immediate political convictions that each human being may harbor amidst tense social and political moments. The experts also discuss the issue of children's level of comprehension, of possible manipulation of their

feelings as well as the issue of protection.

„Evaluating children’s participation to public/political demonstrations requires careful consideration of multiple factors, which includes child’s ability to understand the context of and his or her actions during the gathering: Are the children mature enough to understand the aim of the protest? Can they make an informed decision about the issues under discussion? Are they aware of the possible (negative) consequences (e.g. violence, conflict, legal penalties, discrimination and so on) during and after the event? Are the children able to comprehend and analyze the meaning of their own and others’ actions performed during the protests such as the placards they carry, slogans they join, etc.? And finally, are the children instrumentalized or manipulated by others for their own (political) interest?

In other words, democratic objectives or participatory nature of a political protest alone does not necessarily protect or fulfill the rights of a child. For instance, while, enforcing a first-grader to join parents’ public demonstration to protest the recent law about the primary education might constitute an example of manipulation, for a 16 years-old adolescent, joining a social or youth movement to raise concerns about the quality of higher education or about general political or environmental issues may be considered as part of children’s freedom of expression and also youth empowerment for democratic citizenship. In any case, one should be vigilant in encouraging children to take part into a mass political protest if the primary actors, including their legal guardians, political actors or community leaders, cannot ensure the safety of the participants.” Hakan Ergül („Expert trainer, *Child Rights Syllabus* Project, UNICEF collaborator” and Assoc. Prof. Dr., Faculty of Communication Hacettepe University²¹)

[“*In essence, participation to such manifestations can be an extraordinary context of learning for children. In those places we can explain them about suitable and unsuitable behaviors. We can also role model for them behaviors that they envisage. It depends very much on how parents can exploit such events and on how they explain to their children what is happening. I can not say that we are in a position to give a clear-cut answer of yes or no, you can take your children to the demonstrations, or you cannot. Rather, I find it more important that we explain to the children what is actually going on.*”] (Geta Costescu, psiholog²²)

In the same vein, experts of the Institutul de Științe ale Educației [Institute of Education Sciences] that I have consulted to ask for their opinion bring in discussion topics that require adult reflection and contextualization, such as the appropriateness of age, level of understanding and safety of children, thus insisting on the necessity of a very close and responsible bond between parents and children, based on mutual

respect and respecting the rights of children.²³

Following the mass-media debating and the division of the two poles of opinion of the social media, *The Child Protection Authority*, the public institution entitled to express an official expert position, has released a press communique in which it is stated that parents have the exclusive freedom to decide; [“*who have the right to decide whether they will allow, and not infringe the right to free peaceful gathering. We are emphasizing though, that the children’s higher interest comprises their right to social and emotional balance, healthy family life and harmonious development; therefore, parents are required to promote and apply these fundamental principles in all their actions, any decision contrary to this being subject to legal responsibilities and sanctions.*”²⁴]

In the end, in an attempt to boil down several expert viewpoints, we are citing a few passages from an exhaustive and relatively recent study that speaks about this very concept of child participation, which is a sign that Western democracies have been preoccupied with this aspect for a longer time, whereas Romania’s time to confront it has just come.

“Finally, without grassroots structures, children are sometimes used to comply with adult agendas. The pressure on organisations to be seen to be promoting children’s participation in public arenas can and does sometimes lead to an inappropriate precedence being given to involving children in high-level events, at the expense of building sustainable participation within local communities. In such cases, there is a danger that it is the organisation’s agenda that is being prioritised, with children as passive recipients of adult manipulation, rather than as social actors empowered to claim their rights.(...) Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that there is a higher duty of care than when working with adults. For example, whereas adults can make informed choices for themselves as to the nature of risk that they take, children, particularly younger children, may be less able to do so. It is necessary to balance the right to participation with the right to protection, recognising that it can be as harmful to make excessive or inappropriate expectations of children as to deny them the right to take part in decisions they are capable of making.(...) Participation of children must be transparent, accompanied by appropriate information, voluntary, respectful, relevant, child friendly and enabling, inclusive, safe and sensitive to risk and accountable.”²⁵

As can be noticed, experts can not give a straightforward answer on the topic of children’s participation in street protestings; however, they take into discussion in an objective balanced manner an accumulation of factors (context, ethics, age, education and risks) that each and every responsible adult ought to put in balance from a perspective of their children’s higher interest, which is a phrase already promoted



by bigger organizations supporting children's rights everywhere in the world.

Note:

1. On February 5th, 2017 approximately 500,000 people went out onto the streets, "250,000 Bucharesters and other 250,000 Romanians", according to mass-media estimations (other trusts estimated 600,000); one has spoken about an "historical protest". See <http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-21586479-duminica-ziua-care-este-anuntat-cel-mai-mare-protest-impotriva-ordonantei-13.htm>, accessed 10.02.2017.
2. OUG 13/2017 Government Order to the modification and completion of Law nr. 286/2009 regarding the Criminal Code and of the Law nr. 135/2010 regarding the Code of Criminal Procedure, published in M. Of. nr. 92 from 1 February 2017 and later abolished through OUG 14/2017, published in M. Of. nr. 101 from 5 February 2017, among others, attempts at modifying the nature of the crime of „abuse in service”, establishing that crimes of abuse where the damage does not exceed an arbitrarily settled limit of 200,000 lei will not fall under an accusation for criminal offense.
3. The monitoring performed by www.zelist.ro over the time of protestings reveals that the three networks have been used within similar percentage, even if the biggest impact was recorded on Fb.
4. In order to have a general view of the protests and their media coverage we consider the documentary made by Digi24 towards the outset of events to be relevant. This documentary can be found at: <http://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate/evenimente/documentar-digi24-romania-la-protest-povestea-celei-mai-ample-mobilizari-civice-671658>, accesat la: 18.02.2017.
5. Alexandru Panait, <http://www.curentul.info/politic/16663-surse-firea-ar-vrea-amendarea-celor-care-si-au-luat-copiii-la-marsul-anti-gratiere-cu-amenda-intre-5-000-si-10-000-de-lei>, accessed on 14.02.2017.
6. Legea privind protecția și promovarea drepturilor copilului [Law for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Children] 272/2004, article 27, para (4), republished in M. Of. nr. 159 from 5 March 2014.
7. The Digi24 studio, <http://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate/social/cu-copiii-la-protest-specialistii-care-o-contrazic-pe-olguta-vasilescu-671186>, accessed on 14.02.2017.
8. UNICEF România, <http://www.unicef.ro/media/participarea-copiiilor-la-manifestatii-pasnice/>, accessed on 16.02.2017.
9. Viorela Marin, [\[nicusor-dan.htm\]\(http://nicusor-dan.htm\), accessed on 17.02.2017.](http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-21613495-autoritata-pentru-protectia-copilului-primit-25-sesizari-privind-prezenta-copiiilor-proteste-olguta-vasilescu-spune-fost-depuse-doua-sesizari-numele-lui-</div><div data-bbox=)

10 Mircea Badea, on the TV show În gura presei [Gossip in the Press], edition from 15.02.2017.

11. <http://www.humanium.org/en/convention/text/>

12 Agerpres, <http://www.agerpres.ro/politica/2017/02/07/iohannis-felicit-parintii-care-si-au-dus-copiii-in-piata-victoriei-sa-pastram-democratia-vie-12-38-35>, accessed on 15.02.2017.

13. B. Halcu, A. Lisievici, A. Stan, Dreptul la imagine în contextul distribuirii fotografiilor pe rețelele de socializare [TheRightovertheImage in theContext of PhotoSharingonthe Social Networks], Revista Română de Drept a Afacerilor, nr. 11/2014.

14. IoanaAvădani, 4.02.2017, message taken from the Fb page

15. Brândușa Armanca, 5.02.2017, message taken from the Fb page.

16. Sidonia Bogdan, 9.02.2017,message taken from the Fb pge.

17. Dan Tăpălagă, "Ce nu se prea zice despre aceste proteste"[What Is Not So Outspoken about these Protests], 20.01.2012,<http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-opinii-11283116-nu-prea-zice-despre-aceste-proteste.htm>, accessed on 15.02.2017.

18. <http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-opinii-21551169-vazut-proteste-imagine-emblematica.htm>

19. Dragoș Bako, "Schimbzâmbet de copil cu problem de adult"[Swapping a Child's Smile for Problems of an Adult]în, <http://www.tribuna.ro/stiri/editorialul-zilei/schimb-zambet-de-copil-cu-probleme-de-adult-platesc-diferenta-123283.html>, accessed on 12.02.2017

20. MirceaBadea, on the TV showÎngurapresei[Gossip in the Press], edition of 15.02.2017.

21. Viewpoint obtained through electronic correspondence, with quoting rights on13.09.2017

22. Ana Maria Florea Harriossn, interview with psychologist Geta Costescu, 8.02.2017, available at <http://www.rfi.ro/social-92972-copiii-pot-merge-la-protest-sau-nu-raspunsul-psihologului>

23. Viewpoint obtained through electronic correspondence, on14.02.2017.

24.<http://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate/social/cu-copiii-la-protest-specialistii-care-o-contrazic-pe-olguta-vasilescu-671186>

25. Barry Percy-Smith and Nigel Thomas (editors), 2010, A Handbook of Children and Young People's Participation, Routledge, pp.18-21

Bibliography:

Bako, Dragoș, "Schimb zâmbet de copil cu probleme de adult"[Swapping a Child's Smile against Adult Problems], editorial, <http://www.tribuna.ro/stiri/editorialul-zilei/schimb-zambet-de-copil-cu-probleme->

- de-adult-platesc-diferenta-123283.html
- Barry, Percy-Smith; Nigel, Thomas (editors), 2010, *A Handbook of Children and Young People's Participation*, Routledge.
- Frâncu, Marilena, "Proteste ale părinților însoțiți de copii la București, Timișoara și Brașov" [Parents Accompanied by Children Protesting in Bucuresti, Timisoara and Brasov], <http://www.romania-actualitati.ro/proteste-ale-parintilor-insotiti-de-copii-la-bucuresti-timisoara-si-brasov-99032#sthash.AiJLcdCt.dpuf>
- Hodgkin, Rachel; Newell, Peter, (trad. Dana Costin), 2004, *Manual pentru Implementarea Convenției cu privire la Drepturile Copilului*, (Implementation Handbook of the Convention on the Rights of the Child), transl by Dana Costin, Publisher Editura Vanemonde <http://www.unicef.ro/wp-content/uploads/Conventia-cu-privire-la-Drepturile-Copilului.pdf>.
- Olteanu, Anca; Traicu, Andreea, "Mii de părinți și copii, protest în fața Guvernului: Ei au venit cu huliganii, noi venim cu copiii" [Thousands of Parents and Children Protesting in Front of the Government Headquarters: They Have Come with their Hooligans, We Have Come with Our Children] <http://www.mediafax.ro/social/galerie-foto-copiii-protest-impuna-cu-parintii-in-fata-guvernului-ei-au-venit-cu-huliganii-noi-venim-cu-copiii-16149205>
- Panait, Alexandru, "Surse: Firea vrea sancționarea celor care și-au luat copiii la marșul anti grațiere cu amendă între 5000 și 10000 de lei" [Sources: Mayor Firea Wants Those Who Brought Their Children to the Anti-Government March to Be Fined with 5,000 to 10,000 lei], <http://www.curentul.info/politic/16663-surse-firea-ar-vrea-amendarea-celor-care-si-au-luat-copiii-la-marsul-anti-gratiere-cu-amenda-intre-5-000-si-10-000-de-lei>.
- Harris Florea, Ana Maria, "Copiii pot merge la proteste sau nu" [Can Children Go to Protests or Not], interview with psychologist Geta Costescu, 8.02.2017, available at <http://www.rfi.ro/social-92972-copiii-pot-merge-la-protest-sau-nu-raspunsul-psihologului>
- Marin, Viorela, <http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-21613495-autoritatea-pentru-protectia-copilului-primit-25-sesizari-privind-prezenta-copiiilor-proteste-olgota-vasilescu-spune-fost-depuse-doua-sesizari-numele-lui-nicador-dan.htm>.
- Tăpălagă, Dan, "Ce nu se prezice despre aceste proteste" [What Is Not So Outspoken about These Protests], 20.01.2012, <http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-opinii-11283116-nu-prea-zice-despre-aceste-proteste.htm>,
- Tăpălagă, Dan, "Ce am văzut la protest. O imagine emblematică" [What I Have Seen at the Protesting. An Emblematic Image], 23.01.2017, <http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-opinii-21551169-va-vedea-proteste-imagine-emblematica.htm>
- Redacția Agerpres, <http://www.agerpres.ro/politica/2017/02/07/iohannis-felicit-parintii-care-si-au-dus-copiii-in-piata-victoriei-sa-pastram-democratiavie-12-38-35>
- Redacția Digi24, <http://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate-evenimente/olgota-vasilescu-protestatarii-ar-trebui-sa-stie-ca-legea-le-interzice-sa-isi-ia-copiii-la-mitinguri-670607>
- Redacția Digi24, <http://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate-social/protectia-copilului-sesizata-privind-prezenta-copiiilor-la-proteste-669793>
- Redacția Digi24, <http://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate-social/alaturi-de-parinti-la-proteste-ce-verifica-de-fapt-autoritatea-pentru-protectia-copilului-670053>
- Redacția Digi24, <http://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate-social/cu-copiii-la-protest-specialistii-care-o-contrazic-pe-olgota-vasilescu-671186>
- Redacția Digi24, <http://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate-evenimente/olgota-vasilescu-protestatarii-ar-trebui-sa-stie-ca-legea-le-interzice-sa-isi-ia-copiii-la-mitinguri-670607>
- Redacția Digi24, <http://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate-evenimente/documentar-digi24-romania-la-protest-povestea-celei-mai-ample-mobilizari-civice-671658>
- UNICEF România, <http://www.unicef.ro/media/participarea-copiiilor-la-manifestatii-pasnice/> <http://www.unicef.ro/wp-content/uploads/Conventia-cu-privire-la-Drepturile-Copilului.pdf> http://www.dreptonline.ro/legislatie/legea_protectiei_copilului.php
- www.zelist.ro
- <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38952193>
- <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-38936570>
- <http://www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/2017-02/rumaenien-massenproteste-regierung-korruption>
- <https://www.nzz.ch/international/andauernde-proteste-in-rumaenien-leuchtende-trikoloren-gegen-korrupte-regierung-ld.145162>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/feb/12/europe-fragile-democracies-real-danger-of-populist-politics>
- <https://mobile.nytimes.com/2017/02/12/world/europe/romania-bucharest-protests-corruption.html>
- http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2017/02/06/actualidad/1486406224_860059.html
- http://mobile.lemonde.fr/m-actualite/article/2017/02/17/1-humour-arme-anticorruption-en-roumanie_5081499_4497186.html?xtref=http%3A%2F%2Fm.facebook.com%2F
- http://www.playgroundmag.net/cultura/books/poetas-Rumania-llevan-combatir-corrupcion_0_1922207781.html
- <http://www.unicef.ro/wp-content/uploads/Conventia-cu-privire-la-Drepturile-Copilului.pdf>
- http://www.dreptonline.ro/legislatie/legea_protectiei_copilului.php