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**WG3: Public Administration Reform in CEE and CA**

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Author(s) **Tudor Cristian Ticlau**

Babes-Bolyai University  
Cluj-Napoca Romania

Hintea Cristina, Hintea Cristina, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca,  
Romania

Title **The Role of Leadership in Community Resilience**

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**Abstract** One of the major objectives of EU policies is to reduce the economic, social and territorial inequalities between the multitude of regions of EU member states and create a coherent and balanced regional development mechanism. In spite of major efforts, especially with the enlargement of the Union in the last 20 years, this has remained a major challenge. One approach in understanding both the differences in regional development but also the factors influencing these differences is resilience analysis.

Resilience studies (Shaw and Maythorne, 2011; Martin and Sunley, 2014; Boschma, 2014; Cellini and Torrasi, 2014) can offer a more comprehensive understanding concerning the capacity of a socio-economic system s(city, region, country) to sustain long-term development periods, as they usually incorporate large sets of internal and external conditionalities and thus offer a better understanding of the factors involved in such a process. The current paper intends to contribute to this area by analyzing the role of leadership (political, administrative, civic) in increasing community resilience to different types of shocks (social, economic, demographic). By using a mixed methodology of meta analysis and case studies we highlight the influence leadership has on the overall resilience of local communities - the capacity to sustain and recover from shocks - and how it relates to other factors that are usually included in resilience studies ( economic, social, demographic). Given that new member states have been subject to an array of structural changes brought on by EU joining process, we consider the case of Romania as highly relevant for such an analysis, as its peripheral condition (geographic, economic), coupled with low administrative capacity and high levels of corruption have both reduced the potential benefits of joining the EU and increased the importance of developing resilience.

The study brings an important contribution to understanding the role played by leadership in fostering community resilience, a factor that is

usually absent from resilience studies.