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“Online Shopping: A Cross-Cultural Analysis between France and Romania”

**To what extent are risks and motivations of the French and Romanian online
shoppers different?**

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Affidavit Statement

I declare, under pains and penalties of perjury, that this declaration was written independently and with no other external help. The thoughts taken from foreign sources, directly or indirectly, are all designated as such.

This paper was not given in this, nor in a similar form, to any other examination authority, nor has it previously been published.

Ioana Cristina Gramschi

Paris, 17.09.2015

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1. Introduction

This chapter will introduce the reader to the aim of this thesis and the structure through which the purpose should be met. The aim will be presented first, along with an initial perspective over the theory in the field. This will explain what the focus of this paper and research is. Secondly, the following part will explain the importance of each chapter and topic in this thesis, in order to achieve a global perspective on the topic.

1.1. Purpose of the Paper

The internet today is a very complex medium that is largely spread and has a multitude of uses. It has changed many previous habits such as the way we communicate, the way we inform ourselves or seek information, the classical media and their channels, our social activities but also the economy (Lumpkin & Dess, 2004).

More and more companies sell their products online or are trying to penetrate this market. Nowadays, we can even find many firms that solely have an online platform for their products. E-commerce is a market in itself, having rules and customers, who have other motivations to shop than the ones shopping in the offline market. That is why numerous studies have been developed on the topic and this particular study will try to deepen this knowledge by comparing two countries with two different E-commerce dimensions. It goes without saying, that the internet has enabled a major change in business, economy as well as buying and selling habits (Maamar, 2003).

However, the aim of this study is to dig deeper and understand more of what is behind the selling and the buying processes. There is a good base of literature that is researching this topic, which helps creating this paper as well. Many researchers have concentrated on the behaviour of the online users and shoppers, in order to understand what incentives they have to do so (Childers, 2001; Senecal, Kalczynski & Nantel, 2005) or what stops them from doing it? Is it perceived risks (Gefen, Karahanna, Straub, 2003; O'Cass and Fenech, 2003; Holloway and Beatty, 2003), acceptance of technology (Davis, 1989; Agarwal and Prasad, 1998), trust in E-commerce (Gefen et al., 2003; Warrington, Abgrab., Caldwell, 2000; Mcknight & Chervany, 2002), or rather self-confidence online and familiarity to the internet (O'Cass & Fenech, 2003)?

An additional interesting point in the focus of this paper is a cross cultural analyse, comparing Romanian and French internet users. Through a presentation of the context in each country, it will be made clear that E-commerce is not equally developed in both countries. The question here is to what extent are the behavioural aspects of the two groups different? Or are the online shopping habits of

the Romanian and French users different? If yes, in what way? Is it rather the incentives, the risks or the media literacy and use of the internet generally?

Research shows a lack of information and studies on the European E-commerce and the habits of users in this geo-political space. There are even less studies focusing on a parallel between Western and Eastern Europe, which could be relevant and interesting to the field, given the extremely different background of the two regions (political and economic). Such a comparison could bring many valuable understanding points for the further development of E-business or its adaptation to individual markets.

All of these elements explain the importance of this study, proving that the two E-commerce markets are indeed different. That is why I will approach this topic in my Masters' Thesis, as well as the online shopping behaviour of a sample of the two populations. The main point to be answered is to what extent the incentives, the behaviour or the perceived risks would be similar between the new media channels and online shopping in particular.

1.2. Context of the Thesis

According to an eMarketer¹ Study (2014), this market had went up by 20% in 2014. However, it is fairly interesting, that the E-commerce market is not homogenously developed. That is why the topic of this study is relevant. Several aspects in France and Romania will be analysed, trying to understand to what extent is the industry different (technological aspects, law norms) but also the behaviour of the consumers (the focus of this paper in the end). If the behaviour proves to be different, could it be because of the mentality or cultural aspects? Is it the industry that still has to develop or is it also the mentality of the people, in order for E-commerce to work even better.

There are many differences between France and Romania and many elements play an important role in understanding the process. Firstly, the internet penetration is a relevant factor. According to Internetworldstats, only 49,8% of Romanians had an internet connection in 2013. Even though the people who will be answering the survey will be contacted through the internet, the low internet distribution could influence the industry of E-commerce in the first place. In France, at the same point in time, 83,3% of the population had internet access. A study from Cushman & Wakefield (2013) ranked France as number 4 in the online Retailer Business, whereas Romania only ranked place 50 (p.8). In order to succeed a homogenous and fair ranking, the study used 13 indicators that helped when comparing and analysing the countries in parallel.

¹ Online Research Marketing Agency

Furthermore, there are discrepancies and similitudes to be seen on other levels as well. People seem not to have the same degree of trust in online shopping and ordering through the internet. That is why this study will also focus on the Media Use of the New Media and the internet, to see if users do indeed trust the internet or E-commerce and if they perceive it in different ways. According to the European Commission (2011), 29,6% of the French media users are interested by the online news offer (quoted in Latzer, Aubert, Just, Korinth & Saurwein 2012: 25). On the other hand, Fotiade & Popa (2008) have shown that the motivations in the use of media of the French and Romanian internet users isn't all that different. The users in both countries seek information online, spend time on social networks and seek entertainment and exchange (p. 14).

However, the same or similar media consumption does not imply the same media literacy. This aspect would be considered as a mentality and educational factor in the E-commerce topic. Statistics from Celot & Pérez Tornero (2010) show that Romanian users would prove a lesser media literacy (p. 58). The study concentrated on the E-skills or "basic computer skills" of people from various countries, belonging to the European Union. Standards and indicators were, of course, developed, in order to collect correct information and generate fair results. Each of these factors and indicators was also accompanied by key values and codes that made an average for every country. France scored 117,39 while Romania only 21,74. As already stated, this aspect may be important in explaining internet or E-commerce trust.

Although roughly half of the population Romania's has an internet connection, this does not also guarantee media literacy in relation to the new media channels. When it comes to E-commerce and online shopping there are other numbers that show differences between the two countries – according to Fevad² (2014), 59% of French online consumers shopped online (p.1), in Romania the value only goes as high as 27% (Georgescu, 2013: 3).

Finally, between two countries that have so many differences, as listed above, it can be supposed that there are differences in mentalities and habits as well. This paper will explore this aspect equally. The industries may not be the same, but people's behaviours may not either.

1.3. Thesis Overview

The structure of the paper will allow to understand various factors that influence the users' behaviour. The first chapter focuses on the background of each country. It is described prior to the theoretical background in order to gain more understanding of the two respective frames of each country. Several

² E-commerce and online shopping authority France

factors will be analysed, all of which can have an impact on the E-commerce industry as well as on the users' perceptions.

Given that both states belong to the EU, some general data about the European legal frame will be given. Further on, details and concrete examples about the legal systems in France and Romania will be compared and explained (from E-commerce laws to fraud). Afterwards, the political and economic contexts will be also be described, following particularities that could influence E-commerce. The infrastructure frame will then be handled, since it can impact the delivery of online shopping as well as the payment system. Another part will concentrate on the technology affinity of each country and on the main online shops. Finally, cultural traits will be described and will explain in what way culture is linked to mentalities and attitudes of the users, influencing their consumers' behaviour. The theory of Hofstede (2010) will be used in order to explain cultural dimensions relevant for the two countries.

The second chapter is based on a literature review. Firstly, the industry of E-commerce will be defined to make it clear what the industry looks like, what is behind it, how it is implanted and why. A short presentation of E-commerce in Europe will follow, in order to link the two countries to their general common frame.

The next part is more complex and focuses on media literacy, in order to describe users' knowledge related to the media. Afterwards, several models are implied, models that explain why and how people use the media (such as the Uses and Gratifications theory of Blumler & Katz, 1974 or the Escape theory of Katz & Foulkes, 1962). This is important because the internet is in the end a new channel of media communication and it is the platform of E-commerce. Depending on how people view this, it may impact their online shopping behaviour.

The following sub-chapter introduces the reader in the perceptions of the users related to E-commerce and analyses their trust in the internet as well as in E-commerce and online shops. Moreover, the main risks that can cause scepticism by online shoppers will be described and, complementary to them, the main incentives behind online shopping will also be explained. Research enables to have portraits of the general online shoppers, which will then be shortly presented. Finally, a part on abnormal shopping and online shopping behaviour is indispensable to the study, in order to complete it and guarantee a global understanding of the field and of the psychology of the users.

The description of the empirical study comes next, presenting the method used, the sample description and the results. The results' part is divided into three, as follows: the results afferent to Romania will be analysed and described, verifying the hypothesis and the leading question of the study; afterwards, the results of the French respondents will be analysed in the same way as the Romanian ones; finally, when both sets of data have been explored, a cross-cultural analysis is

conducted, comparing relevant data of the two countries and understanding what is different and what is similar.

The discussion chapter will explain the results and why they might be in contrast or alike, by connecting them to the theoretical background and the context of the two countries. Moreover, limitations to the study will then be observed and departure points for further research will be enabled, based on all the prior data.

The last two parts will enclose the appendix (tables and the survey that was used for the study) and the references that inspired the paper.

2. Background of the two countries

Both France and Romania belong to the European Union, which is trying to uniform the commercial habits across the member states. However, this is yet to be accomplished. There are still issues when it comes to accessing various sites throughout the EU, there is a lack of access to certain contents and the impossibility to order online across all EU countries. These obstacles mainly exist because of the local legal frames that are not always the same (ECC-Net, 2015, p. 3).

“However, there are still barriers to cross-border trade, such as differences between national laws on sales. Traders discouraged by complicated and costly procedures that must be met in order to adapt to these differences lose annual contracts of at least 26 billion euros” (Munteanu, 2012, p. 811). Besides that, according to the Eurobarometer, 71% of the European enterprises would rather have access to a single European law frame, a single set of norms that could be applied, in an effective way, all throughout the European Union. There are indeed laws which oversee this field, however not working that effectively when implemented in each country because of the local norms (p. 811).

One field that meets problems when it comes to cross country distribution are copy right goods that need licensing. In a study conducted by the European Centre of Consumers in France (April, 2015), this issue is analysed and detailed in order to find an effective solution. In the study, the European Centre of Consumers in France states that it is still difficult for users in some member countries to order online certain goods protected by local copy right laws from other European states (p. 3). The European Union is seeking to uniform its services among the European members and no longer discriminate because residence. However, there are still fields that are not included in their directives and this discrimination fails to be dissolved. Some real problems that cause this are costs of delivery, uncertain transportation or even language barriers (p. 4). This blockage works in different ways, such as Geographical blocking, Re-routing, refusing to sale (depending on the users' IPs) or lack of licencing

faced to copy rights (p. 8, 9, 11). The European Union institutions are coping with this issue and wish to find solutions (p.16). These aspects may be applied in analysing Romania and France as well.

Consequently, it is obvious that there are various elements that create the business environment in each country, from law and finance or political aspects, to infrastructure or culture ones.

In this sense, Zaharia & Enăchescu (2014), states that “the last place that Romania is in the EU, on the use of the Internet by individuals for the purchase of goods and services should give for thought primarily to those responsible for the education of individuals to use IT@C, to know that facilities are offered, and, not least, to develop necessary infrastructure” (p. 6).

This part is dedicated to exploring the relevant differences between the two concerned countries.

2.1. The Law Frame in France and Romania

It is very interesting to take a more detailed look into the E-commerce norms and laws of each of the two countries. This forms the industry but also the habits of the consumers. While some aspects are very similar, there are others which are divergent between the two states and this could be another step through which a difference in E-business can be explained in this context. The governing laws in this area are: in France, the Hamon on E-commerce, distance sales, consumers’ rights (French Gov., 344/2014, 17.03.2014) and in Romania there is one law on E-commerce (Romanian Gov., Law 365/2002, last edited on the 21.03.2003) and a more specific one on the consumers’ rights that was last edited through an Emergency Ordinance (Romanian Gov., no. 34/2014, 04.06.2015).

First of all, what is relevant for this topic, is also the presentation and accessibility to the afferent laws. In France, users have access to several sites that are user-friendly and optimised for the readers. They are all available for download or lecture on the internet. However, the French version seems to be more optimised. On the Site of the French Government and on the Finance Rights site, the law is broken into categories, summarising all the essential facts (Vente en ligne, E-commerce, 15.06.2015). Moreover, they are interactive, represented by pictures and even explanatory videos in order to appeal to more viewers. In this way the laws are accessible to all users who may not have the time or the understanding of going through the whole legal text. Besides, the sites are user-friendly, the design is modern and easy to use thanks to the implementation of hyperlinks leading to all the categories. This can lead to the presumption that it is easier for users to get informed once they desire to.

In Romania, the laws are accessible to all users but there is no optimisation of their content. The readers can find the legal texts with no summarising, no interactive design nor categories or hyperlinks

(Legea nr. 365/2002 privind comerțul electronic³). The Romanian Government site doesn't have a legal section, where laws may be found and explained. There are other sites that are dedicated to publishing laws online, more specifically, law sites or the ministry sites. However, this lack of optimisation and a non-user-friendly system may cause a first access problem for users. If they do not understand the system properly, they may have a higher dose of reticence when buying online or using E-commerce services. They might find it more difficult to seek out information, to educate themselves or to become familiar to their rights.

Nevertheless, when it comes to the content of the enumerated laws, the articles state quite the same thing, since both countries are member states of the European Union. They have to take into consideration the European Union's legislation, although sometimes they still form local laws and mind-sets and when different, they may create different mentalities as well or at least various expectations and habits of the respective citizens. Bingham stated that the law is the "science of the government" (1912, p. 9) and this science may vary. The mentioned laws (Hamon, French Gov. 344/2014, 17.03.2014, Romanian Gov., Law 365/2002, last edited on the 10.05.2006, Romanian Gov., no. 34/2014, 04.06.2015) all aim to protect the consumer and oblige business to inform the users of all steps and relevant points they may need to know. These pieces of information may include everything from prices, additional taxes and fees, ways of payment, everything there is to know about the company or distributor (when not the same), delays, etc. They also protect the users concerning personal information they are required to give to companies. Finally, fraud and payment are also detailed in these laws, aiming to protect consumers against online deceit.

Even though articles and norms against fraud are present in the specified laws (Hamon, French Gov. 344/2014, 17.03.2014, Romanian Gov., Law 365/2002, last edited on the 10.05.2006, Romanian Gov., no. 34/2014, 04.06.2015), Romania is still at high risk for online fraud. Forter⁴ (2015) has created a ranking, showing which countries are the most corrupted when it comes to fraud. Even though fraud in Africa, South America and Asia are higher than on the other continents. Consequently, they ranking concluded that the five most fraudulent countries are: Indonesia, Venezuela, South Africa, Brazil and then, on place five, Romania (Forter, Global Fraud Trends, May 2015).

This may be explained through the political background of Romania which became a democracy in 1990. This implied a young and immature system, a lack of protective mechanisms and effective implementation of laws (Radulescu, 2011). Once cards were released, fraud immediately increased in Romania, in the year 2000. Slowly, various verification systems were created by applying filters to each

³ Law no. 365/2002 concerning e-commerce

⁴ Forter – institution fighting against fraud, through a new system

transaction and manually verifying any suspicious transfers along with the adaptation to the payment standards of international cards (p. 79). The General Inspectorate of the Romanian Police (IGP) reported that card frauds were still increasing in 2008. The lawbreakers find new technical ways of doing so and they commit these illegalities through fast payment systems that are offered thanks to the internet. The IGP also reported that even notorious networks of criminals that have beforehand been active in cars, drugs, or human trafficking have reoriented their activities towards fraud on the internet, given the easy access to technology and difficulty in tracking their actions (p. 80). One ordinary way of losing the card data is by paying on an SSL site (older and more insecure, registering your information that can be hacked) (p. 85).

Another way of understating this is through the following quote: “Industries, which develop fast, are often vulnerable to fraud schemes invented by those seeking to gain capital using new criminal opportunities, outdated security measures and outdated laws” (Radulescu, 2011, p. 86).

This does not mean that with every transaction there is fraud, neither does it mean that there are no safe online shops or that people can’t buy safely online. But maybe in combination with lack of experience or a lower media literacy (as seen in [chapter 1.2.](#)), this can cause trouble and scepticism. Besides, if this kind of behaviour or threat continues, it can minimize the trust in E-commerce and online transactions (Worthington, 2009).

But there is yet another problem. In an Euromonitor International report (2011), it is shown that many Romanians are not highly financial literate. Many did not try to understand the economic, financial and banking system of the country until the crisis hit and improvements started being made (p. 7).

In France, the main fraud cause is counterfeit, which often works by stealing card details and producing new cards with the data (Worthington, 2009), however it is not as high as in Romania.

“The fraudsters will attack the countries where the level of card payment security is weakest and they are themselves increasingly professional and international in their outlook.” (Worthington, 2009, p. 402).

There are various institutions fighting against fraud, on a European or local level, such as the OLAF – European Anti-Fraud Office or on a local level, such as DLAF in Romania – Department of fight against fraud, DNLF – Délégation nationale à la lutte contre la fraude. These institutions usually work along with the police departments, banks and governments of each afferent country.

Besides these elements, there are more factors that will influence the growth of E-commerce in a country. In this sense, Dreher and Gassebner (2013) conducted a study in order to find out in what way corruption influences the regulations on entrepreneurship and business. In their study, they

included 43 countries in the period of time between 2003-2005 and they discovered that corruption is directly linked to the regulation behaviour and usually, countries where it is easiest to make business are the ones where the government plays an important role in regulating the system, creating new set of laws and rules for the private sector. According to their ranking, France occupies place 38 (with a reform in 2014) and Romania ranks 73 (with 3 reforms in 2014). When it comes to actually creating a new firm and building a business, the capital required by the government along with the bureaucracy measures also influence the easiness of starting a business. The relevancy of these factors is such that the easier it is to build a business, the more investments the country may attract, the more ideas, the more companies and it can eventually create an optimal environment for the growth of each industry. Given that Romania does not rank that well shows that developing an E-commerce company for that matter, may be more strenuous then elsewhere, and thus slow the process (Aristovnic & Obadić, p. 765).

Additional aspects create and influence the business environment in each country and the E-commerce industry relies on them, such as any other industry. The following parts will analyse the politics, finance, infrastructure and cultural items and continue the comparison between the two states.

2.2. The Political and Economic Background

The political frame influences the economic growth, stability and investments. That is precisely why it is relevant to focus on this point in this part and understand what the context in these countries is. E-commerce, as an industry that is part of the economic field is linked to this context. If the Romanian situation is more thoroughly explained than the French one, it will be because there are more relevant issues or a more drastic frame to describe.

When it comes to corruption, it is linked to political instability in Romania. Since there are not necessarily official corruption problems in France, this aspect is mostly relevant for the case of Romania. So what about the political instability? It has been proven that this negatively influences the economic stability and growth as well.

The European Bank (EBRD) and the World Bank conduct BEEPS (Business Environment and Enterprise Performance Survey) regularly. These studies are based on the reports of local managers who are directly confronted to the working environment. Romania is one of the countries taken into consideration, and the main problems or obstacles in Romania, when doing business, are corruption, the political instability and the tax administration (EBRD, BEEPS, 2014). All of these elements represent

serious drawbacks for the economic situation. Furthermore, transport is also a considered issue on the list (although not ranking very high).

However, the three main aspects potentially harming the Romanian economy and business are the three listed above: corruption, political instability and tax administration (EBRD, BEEPS, n.a., Country Profile, Romania).

What does the political instability mean, more precisely? Starting from 1990 (after the Romanian Revolution), the state has had the most changes of prime-ministers among all the European Union members. Foreign investments dropped in 2012 down to 1,1 billion euros from 9,5 billion in 2008. Besides, in 2012, Romania has had three cabinets, proving a high instability (Timu & Vilcu, Bloomberg, 3.12.2012).

“This affects foreign investments as companies become very suspicious about being in a country where they don’t know what to expect”, said Michael Taylor⁵ (as quoted by Timu & Vilcu in Bloomberg, 3.12.2012). Scepticism rises, investors are more hesitant, the local currency is dropping and the economy becomes uncertain. This can be an explanation for the slower growth of E-commerce in the country. If economy as a whole is affected by these factors, the industry of E-business can only be influenced as well and may hinder the investment of many international E-commerce giants.

In 2015, the situation has not drastically improved, despite the positive expectations. The National Direction against Corruption (DNA) has been arresting businessmen, politicians, law representatives for fraud and corruption. This led to an increased trust of the population in their actions – 61,4% agree and trust these arrests (Inscop⁶, 19.05.2015). Furthermore, the current prime-minister has also been accused of fraud being sent to trial and that is why he is expected to abdicate his role. This will further destabilise the Romanian political and economic frame (Agerpres⁷, 16.07.2015). The Finance Minister has abdicated not long ago, after being charged with bribery and destabilising the situation even more (Williams & Ilie, Business Insider, 8.04.2015).

Finally, a study conducted by KeysFin (2015) showed that the investors were indeed concerned, even in 2015, by the internal situation in Romania and mentioned the political situation and the finance field as destabilising factors.

These aspects create a hostile environment for economic growth in Romania and E-commerce can only be assimilated to it.

⁵ Senior analyst at Oxford Analytica, UK

⁶ Research institute

⁷ National Press Agency Romania

In France, the situation seems to be calmer than in Romania. Although the left party is in power and they occupy both the presidency and the prime-minister's roles, there haven't been very tumultuous political periods. However, the crisis hit France quite hard and the extreme right-wing party is gaining more and more votes. The crisis caused a drop in the economic growth that France still finds difficult to repair and ensure consistent progress. However, the expectations are positive for the future (Marion, BFM Business, 28.03.2015).

Furthermore, investors are interested in France and they rely on their stable system. On the one side, there are local and national investments, on the other side there are also foreign capitals invested in businesses in France. A national institution called The French Association of Investors for Growth⁸ (ANIF) handles a lot of the inside investments, supporting local companies by finding investors and capital, by creating job offers and helping the growth of the business field in France. The ANIF can accompany firms in different steps of their progress, depending on their needs. (ANIF, n.a.). ANIF helps and invests in companies of all fields but 15% of their attention was given to information and e-companies, being more than 700 firms (AFIC Etudes and Ernst and Young, 2014).

Furthermore, according to an Ernst and Young study (2014), France's attractiveness for investors has increased by 18% from 2013 to 2014. However, France does not seem to be the most attractive country in the EU (placed after the UK and Germany). The points that should be improved and slow down business are the costs of the business and employees, the not very friendly administrative and juridical systems and the tax administration system. But the investors declare themselves "satisfied" by the French market, therefor further investments, foreign capital and companies are to be expected.

Yet another Ernst and Young study on investment in Europe (2014) states that "comparing 2009-2013 and 2004-2008 reveals some significant winners and losers. Eastern Europe which attracted substantial investment in the 2000s was the major loser from the financial crisis with project numbers down 12% whereas Western Europe the numbers rose 19%. (...) The top five 'losers' were all Eastern European countries as Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria's investments all halved in the period".

All of this data shows a clear discrepancy between Romania and France and their economic environment. Once again, since E-commerce is a real business field for both countries, the economic context, such as the political one, can have consequences on its development.

⁸ L'Association Française des Investisseurs pour la Croissance

2.3. Infrastructure Frame

There is one more factor that belongs to the background section because it directly influences the economy of the countries but is, at its turn, affected by politics. According to the Competitiveness Report (World Economic Forum, 2010), one of the main pillars for a growing economy is infrastructure.

There are many differences between France and Romania on this level. The World Bank (2014), constituted an international scorecard in order to compare the infrastructure of the world countries based on the same factors. These factors are: the efficiency of the process, the quality of the trade and transport, the ease of arranging prices for transportation, the quality of the logistic services, the capacity to track and trace transportations, the timeframe of transportation and delivery (accuracy and speed). All of these factors influence economy, growth and also the E-commerce field. Deliveries depend on the quality of these aspects and when they are not met, it can constitute a problem for this particular industry. In this ranking, France was on place 13 in the world and Romania on place 40. Among the European Countries and the EU Members, Romania has one of the lowest qualities of infrastructure. Almost the same size as the UK, it only has three highways that summed up come down to less than 500 kilometres.

According to the Global Competitiveness Report (World Economic Forum, 2014), the infrastructure remains a major issue (along with the ones quoted above such as corruption, instability and taxes) in the economic growth. The Forum evaluated the total quality of the Romanian infrastructure at a 3.4 out of 7 mark, they have 2.1 out of 7 for the quality of the roads and 2.3 out of 7 for railroads (p. 325). Meanwhile, France received a 6.3 out of 7 for the total quality of the infrastructure, 6.4 for the roads and 6.3 for the railroads (p. 187). If the gap is so major, it can certainly explain the economic discrepancy and the difficulty of growth of the E-commerce and delivery sectors in Romania.

A very eloquent example that proves that the lack of infrastructure has lost Romania investments would be the Apple case. They initially wanted to open a Backend office and Support Centre in Romania, Braşov, but after travelling from Bucharest to the named city, the Vice President decided the handicap of the infrastructure was not worth the investment (Ziarul Financiar, 15.06.2015). Could this be a strong reason for other companies as well? Research has shown that infrastructure plays a major role in the development of all business sectors.

However, the transportation infrastructure is not the only relevant one. Another issue is the banking infrastructure. There are differences between the two countries. For example, in Romania there are still high banking fees when consumers want to pay by card. This makes it difficult for small retailers to have POS (or card payment systems) and they are still less used in Romania than in France

(Euromonitor International, 2014). Not only that, but the digitalized banking system in Romania still has to develop in order to allow clients to access all services online with no issues and no fees. This can be an explanation for reticence or simply lack of knowledge in paying online. In France, the use of cash is expected to truly decline because of the cards' competition. "Consumers prefer the convenience and security of using financial cards now that the majority of French retailers accept card payment" (Euromonitor International, 2014). In the European Union, in 2013, the highest number of card transaction was effectuated in France (European Central Bank, 2013).

However, even more influential points should be taken into consideration to fully understand the environment in the two countries. The following subchapter will concentrate on rather cultural issues or specific aspects relevant for each state – Romania and France.

2.4. Technology and Shops

There are many specific elements defining the business context of Romania and France. And there are local aspects but also some that are rather international.

One of the first points to be mentioned is the fact that Romania, although in the EU, is not in the Eurozone. This attracts different fees, taxes and another currency for all international businesses or investments. The inflation is still relatively high and the economy is not balanced enough, Romania not being yet "ready" to adopt the Euro and might not be for several years from now (Trotman, The Telegraph, 18.04.2013).

Furthermore, one relevant issue is how ready or open to innovation and technology each country is. As seen in the first part of this paper (see chapter [1.2.](#)), the media literacy and the basic computer skills, along with the penetration rate of the internet in each country, are subject of a relevant discrepancy between the two states. Additionally to that, there are differences on the level of innovation and willingness to innovate. The Global Competitiveness Report (The World Economic Forum, 2014) analysed this data. Here are some relevant statistics for the topic of E-commerce growth: in France, the internet access in schools received the 4.4 mark out of 7 points, for the availability to the latest technologies France received 6.1 points, a grade of 5.5 for the firm-level technology absorption, and 4.8 for the capacity to innovate (p. 186). On a different level, Romania classified as follows: 4.5 points for the internet access in schools, 4.3 for the availability of technologies, also 4.3 for the technology absorption by firms, and only 3.4 for innovation (p. 525). These statistics show a mentality and industry that still need to evolve in order to let certain industries progress, therefore it may be yet another factor explaining the differences in the E-commerce statistics between the two countries. Innovativeness has been analysed in intercultural marketing

studies and Truong (2013) considers that cultural norms and values or variations can influence a market and the adoption of innovation, proving that this industry does not work in the same way everywhere, it needs to adapt and there is not an universal unique truth about its success. The Digital Divide and Media Literacy as such are also variables in this equation. They have already been presented in a previous chapter (see [part 1.2.](#)).

It is quite clear that the two economies work differently and E-commerce would as well. One aspect that proves this is the main online shops and retailers in each state. Firstly, it is considered that in France there are more than 120.000 E-commerce shops, while in Romania there are only 5.000 (E-commerce News, 2014, 2015). It is true that the Romanian sector is developing and increasing every year but the current values speak for themselves. Which are the most popular ones, what kind of products do they sell and are they local or international? Comparing two rankings of the top 10 online retailers in Romania and France, it became obvious that the frame is not the same. Both countries have a top of the 10 most visited E-stores. This ranking is based on the visits and number of users on the site, not on the capital or net worth of the respective companies.

Taking France for instance, the 10 main E-shops at the last check of FEVAD will be presented as follows – the retailer's name and the nature of the retailer. On the first place there is Amazon, a global retailer with an everything-pallet of products. Number two there is Cdiscount, a French website that also offers all products. Third came Fnac, a French brand for electronics, media and cultural goods. eBay is next, having the same profile as the first two, general retailer with a wide offer of products, global like Amazon. Carrefour follows, a French online supermarket. Then, on place 6 there is PriceMinister, again a general retailer combining several niches. The next one was Voyages SNCF which is the national railroads company. LaRedoute came on place 8 which is specialised on fashion but offers products in the home-area as well. French to begin with, it has also become international. Number 9 is Vente-Privée which is an international fashion outlet shop. Finally, on number 10 comes E-Leclerc which is a car-related retailer that also offers multimedia products, trips and wines (FEVAD, n.a.). It is obvious that a few international E-commerce giants are much appreciated in France, along with national shops.

In Romania, the situation is quite different. What is interesting to notice is the fact that the main online shops are mostly Romanian and not such international giants. The list of these retailers is as follows. On the first place there is eMag, an electronics Romanian retailer that has evolved and has started offering a larger range of products up to multimedia, sports articles or toys. Number 2 is ShopMania, also a Romanian general shop. On place 3 follows QuickMobile, an electronics Romanian shop. Next there is yet again an electronics shop, called Altex that also has home-products. Elefant follows on

place 5, combining all product niches. Flanco, another electronics shops ranks 6th. Domo follows on place 7, with electronics mostly but also some baby-related products. Number 8 is a shop called Libris, selling books and multimedia or cultural goods. On place 9 comes PC Garage which is once again an electronics shop. Finally, number 10 is F64, another electronics retailer (TreeWorks⁹, March 2015).

The obvious conclusion is that in Romania there are only Romanian retailers among the top 10. This again may be explained through the investments, economy and infrastructure aspects that have already been described (See [part 3.2.](#)). Furthermore, what is interesting to notice is that all of these Romanian online shops are mostly electronic retailers. In contrast to the French virtual market, there are no international or global stores. This is due to the fact that companies such as Amazon or eBay do not have an afferent Romanian shop. If Romanian users wish to order from an European Amazon site, they can do so by paying additional delivery fees. For a standard delivery for multimedia goods users should pay 5 euros and an additional 2,5 euros per kg. For any other products the standard delivery goes up to 7,5 euros plus the additional kg fee. Finally, for the Express delivery 11 euros should be payed by the customer, plus 3 euros per kg (Amazon, n.a., retrieved from [Amazon.de](#)). These fees are rather high and may be an impediment to cross-border online shopping.

Once again, there is proof that the two systems work differently and this can also attract different shopping behaviours and create distinct industries. One final aspect that will be analysed in the frame of this paper are the cultural aspects that could influence an industry such as the E-commerce branch.

2.5. Cultural Aspects

In this chapter, general cultural theories but also some specific factors to each culture and country will be presented. How do the mentalities work, and do they have an impact on online shopping as well? Each previous factor that was described can presumably form and define the mind-set of the peoples in each respective country. Moreover, different historical frames have most probably also influenced today's mentality and industry.

It is especially important because, aside from the current aspects that were explained, two random countries will also have cultural differences, implying mind-set ones. For marketing, communication or E-commerce in this case to work, each industry has to be adapted to the local trends. Research has been made on this topic and more and more marketers and companies follow and implement cultural dimensions to their research of the market and the actual business plan. As Kozinets (2001) explains it, consumer culture means making "collective sense of their environments and to orient their

⁹ Web Consulting Firm

members' experiences and lives". There are set of images, texts, commercial ads special for each country and each understanding.

Anould and Thompson (2005) developed the theory of CCT (Consumer Culture Theory) which refers to sociocultural, ideological, experience-related, symbolic or mythical spheres of consumer research. They consider these facts as indispensable in understanding distinct marketplaces, it encourages understating consumption in specific contexts. That is exactly why a cross-cultural study is interesting. The same questions and same topics are handled, that may have sets of different perceptions and answers, depending on the afferent frame. Consumers have personal goals they seek to attain through the marketplace which follow cultural patterns. Following this philosophy, the case of Romania and France will be compared. On the other side, the CCT acknowledges that the marketplace also produces symbols which consumers interpret and form individual or collective identities (Thompson & Hirschman 1995; Murray 2002; Schau & Gilly 2003). This also means that in a single cultural context there can be heterogeneous identities and mentalities, numerous interpretations and behaviours, which the theory explains as well (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). This is one aspect, which makes this kind of research more difficult and sets limitations.

Approaching the concrete cases of Romania and France, it needs to be understood that Romania was under a communist regime for 50 years. Other set of norms were reinforced and the society as well as the economy worked differently to all capitalist states. This also influenced the mentality of people and can impact the habits and use of the consumers but also of the business sector. "The way in which trade was organized, the place of consumers in communist philosophy and the attitude of the communist authorities towards electronic computers use, has had more influence on the using the Internet by individuals for purchasing goods and services" (Zaharia & Enăchescu, 2014, p. 17).

Moreover, there is a different trust perception, according to culture and habits. In E-commerce the trust factor seems to be of importance, thus is the understanding of the culture for a growing industry (Doney, Cannon & Mullen, 1998).

Social interaction also has a significant influence on the decision to buy and works differently across cultures. For example, Hassanein and Head (2007) found that the more social a site would appear, the more trust it can gain from its users, more enjoyment and perceived usefulness. However, some cultures may need more of this social interaction dose than others to perceive these benefits. To best understand this statement, the Theory of Hofstede (1984) is most helpful. He classifies and categorises countries depending on their cultural main variables. He considers that these variables form and define a society, therefor the mentalities of the citizens as well.

One of his categories includes individualism and/or collectivism (Hofstede, 1984). Romania is considered to be a collectivistic country, whereas France a rather individualistic one (The Hofstede Center, n.a.). This is reflected in the attitudes of people. Collectivism for a country means that citizens define themselves through “We” and belong to groups (of friends, extended family, etc.). This loyalty will often influence decisions and way somebody thinks (Hofstede, 2005), hence social sites may influence Romanian’s decisions to buy, more than these aspects influence the French users. Trust could be based more on these social aspects in a country like Romania.

Moreover, Romania is also considered a country that knows Power Distance. Although France is one as well, the gap is relatively big between the two (The Hofstede Center, n.a.). This means that individuals would not be equal in a society and the ones who feel like they belong to these groups will accept anything that comes from the power. People in Romania would accept a strong hierarchy and may not try to change this and the power games (Hofstede, 2005). This is an important trait in explaining all the instabilities and lack of discipline presented in the previous chapter. That is why it is considered as a relevant cultural trait for this topic (see parts [3.1.](#), [3.2.](#), [3.3.](#)).

A third variable in Hofstede’s Theory (1984, 2005) is the Uncertainty and the Avoidance dimension. Both France and Romania rank very high on the avoiding uncertainty scale. This means that the people in both countries feel threatened by unknown situations, they do not like ambiguous experiences and remain more rigid than others. When applying this theory to E-commerce, all the unexpected situations defined in the Theoretical Background (see parts [4.2.2.](#), [4.2.3.](#)) could create an ambiguous frame that users could wish to avoid. This can thus play a role in influencing trust in E-commerce, in shops with no human interaction or in products they have never seen but also on habit.

Combined to the Hofstede values, it is also important to understand the cultural activity of going to the mall of Romanians. It is not only recreational but also perceived as highly social (Săgeată, 2010). Shopping malls are more than just commercial for Romanians since they are associated to luxury, fashion and socialising. People go to the mall to see what the new trends are but also to meet other people and be seen in such a frame. Shopping centres are often associated to wealth and social status, filtering a certain circle of the population, hence the powerful socialising value. Moreover, there are many office buildings in such commercial complexes and even the Civil Status Office in Iulius Mall Timișoara (Western Romania). Linking Hofstede’s collectivism and avoidance of uncertainty values, this attitude makes sense. However, it does not mean that French malls have no social value, but for the Romanian ones it is a priority.

Beside these inherited cultural traits, there are also more practical ones linked to the previous chapters. One example is the use of payment by card. While in France people have the habit of doing

so and using as little cash as possible, in Romania the situation is different, as explained above (see chapter [2.3.](#) and [2.1.](#)). People are not as used to online banking services, to card payments and therefore online payments. This is, in the end, a cultural issue as well, since it is a habit of the majority of the population and a way of perceiving things, a way of acting.

All of these aspects give birth to the curiosity behind this study and the respective comparison. Several cultural traits are different between the two peoples and it is interesting to see to what extent these influence the perceptions of online consumers.

3. Theoretical Background

E-commerce and Internet Use have become quite popular topics that concern experts more and more. It is a new dimension of Sales, Marketing and Communication, but as it seems, with customers having relatively different incentives of buying than the traditional ones. Numerous studies focus on these two themes, analysing and explaining them. The internet is an essential new media channel and mean of interchanging all sorts of information, which have revolutionized the classical ways of communicating. Thanks to its general ease of access, the internet encourages freedom of speech and active or passive exchange of information. Naturally, E-commerce is dependent and built on this network.

In this first part, the field of E-commerce will be described. This is an initial point that needs to be defined. Several theories on media literacy and media use will be presented afterwards. It is important to understand this aspect of the topic, since the internet is a pull online medium that has active users with certain preferences. Additionally, a sub-chapter of this part is dedicated to explaining the different incentives behind online shopping, also including trust in technology or in E-commerce itself. These three dimensions are meant to help understand the phenomenon of E-commerce. This will create a base for the online survey that deepens the theory and accesses the users directly, in order to find out their impulses, in a comparing manner between France and Romania, two different samples.

3.1. E-commerce

As already stated, the purpose of this paper is analysing users' attitudes related to E-business. But in order to fully understanding these phenomena, it is firstly essential to also take a detailed look into E-commerce. What does it mean, how or why does it work. This part will be a short introduction to the subject of business online, consumers but also companies. It is important to know that "retailers have

worked through the stages of shock, denial, anger, grief and acceptance in coping with the Internet, and are now rushing to identify and secure ways to protect their customer relationship franchise” (Katros, 2000, p. 75). E-commerce needed its time to be accepted and evolve to what users are familiar with today.

3.1.1. Defining and explaining

E-commerce firms or online retailers can be defined as “firms that derive a significant or rapidly growing proportion of their revenues from transactions over the Internet” (Amit & Zott, 2000).

The internet has truly revolutionised the way in which business works. We must not forget that it did not only change the media but also each and every enterprise surviving in a competitive market. It provides ease of access, organisational assets, communication and information exchange but also building new kind of relations and links between users and sellers. The internet has enabled a new model of interacting on several levels (Rodríguez Del Bosque & Herrero Crespo, 2011). Obviously, there are still limitations and the internet is still a very heterogeneous market but it is evolving and so it has till now, at a very alert pace. The two authors, Rodríguez Del Bosque and Herrero Crespo, consider that there are various marketing strategies that have been developed and yet there is still a lot of research to be made on the subject (p. 161).

Furthermore, what is interesting to understand is the fact that companies that are online have also adopted a new product, a new channel and new strategies so it is not only about the consumers’ behaviour in the end (Honeycutt Jr., 2005). Companies want to adapt their sale forces so employees must also be trained accordingly to the new vision. In this respect, “managers can also be motivated to adopt technology because by not acting, other firms may accrue a competitive advantage” (Gilbert, 2004). Often enough firms will adopt the SFA model (sales force automation) which allows to do more with less personnel. But adapting to E-commerce or simply launching an E-business needs investment, time and commitment. In order for the companies not to fail, they need to also become more consumer-oriented, work more efficiently but also apply knowledge transfer within the firm (Honeycutt Jr, 2005).

Radhakrishnan, Zu, and Grover (2008) conducted a study saying that IT (information technology and in this context, companies integrating this system) would give a competitive advantage. The authors consider that “effective deployment and use of IT in organizations can bring about differential value to organizations by creation of organizational capabilities” (Radhakrishnan et al., 2008, 1106). In their study they question the performance an enterprise will prove if using IT and how they position themselves in comparison to others belonging to the same industry. They enumerate a series of

advantages of firms integrating IT systems, such as lower total costs (since more functionalities will work through the same system), better organisation, in certain cases higher productivity, better capabilities (for instance analyse and forecast of markets), innovativeness, etc. (p. 1110). Another relevant aspect that deserves being treated separately, given the topic of the paper, is the improved relation to clients through IT systems. It will be easier to answer the current demand, but also be active when it comes to services and transactions launched by clients, through the atomisation of the customers' service (p. 1115). All of these aspects are important in the field of E-commerce and explains possible motivations of enterprises of firstly, adopting IT measures and systems and, secondly, integrating them in their communication and relations with the client, thus adding value to the business.

An additional study to the topic of value in E-commerce is the one from Zott, Amit and Donlevy (2000), which constructed two main strategies for E-commerce companies in Europe that have proven to work and add value. Evans and Wurster (1999) defined two main characteristics of E-commerce: Reach and Richness. Zott et. al. (2000) added, however, Digital Representation as well. The concept of Reach, goes without saying, refers to the communication potential of the internet, crossing borders and enabling suppliers, producers and consumers all over the globe, much easier. There are less boundaries on all levels (p. 464). Richness means that information is much more symmetrical for both sellers and buyers, they are more informed but also equally informed for that matter, there is an enhanced flow of knowledge on both sides and in exchange. However, one issue would be the Digital Representations. The authors note that it may be more difficult for consumers to purchase and interact with websites, not having human interaction, not seeing the actual products and maybe consequently building an attitude of mistrust (p. 465). Below, a representation of these relations.

Beside these main characteristics, Zott et. al. (2000) also developed two values of E-commerce that they consider makes this field work and evolve. These are "how effective their business model is" and how strongly it "draws and retains customers" or, as they note, how "sticky" a website is (p. 467). They defined and explained both concepts thoroughly. Firstly, they considered that companies should use the internet in order to increase their efficiency, thus creating value on all levels such as when it comes to the supply chain (by reducing costs), providing a large palette of products and services, allow the consumer to have a convenient experience and save time but also cut down the inequality in information (p. 468). Interestingly enough, all of these values can also be translated into the consumers' incentives, as it will be explained in the representative part.

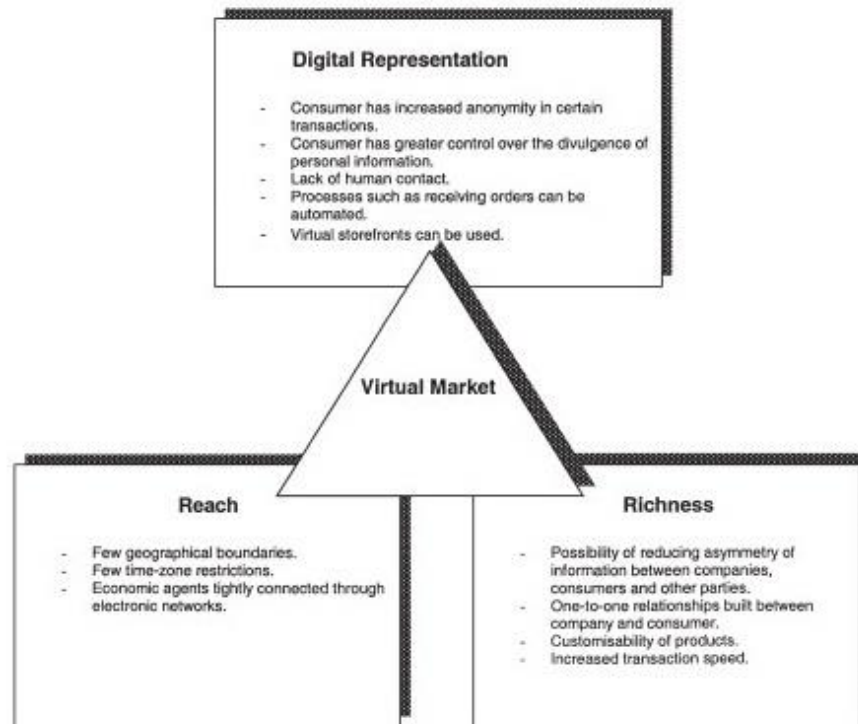


Figure 2 - Virtual Market Representation, Zott et. al., 2000, p. 465

The second way of adding value to the E-business, according to Zott et. al. (2000) is being attractive for customers. This further ensures a higher volume of transactions. But drawing users to your website requires several actions such as rewarding customers for their loyalty, personalising products and services to individuals, creating virtual communities and also gain a positive reputation when it comes to their transactions (p. 471). These points would basically build a more stable relation between the customers and the seller and some of the values are easier to obtain on the virtual market, thanks to the channel of the internet, than in offline shopping. This is due to the fact that it is easier to contact the user and to follow his/her actions. Even though there is an indisputable series of advantages related to E-commerce, these points may also be subjected to problems if not ran correctly and efficiently. Furthermore, since the Internet is a free channel, that can be used by anyone and by any other company, “a failure to operate in these ways could lead to competitors moving ahead” (Burt & Sparks, 2003, p. 278). This shows a certain pressure on business to evolve.

What is quite clear is that E-commerce is changing the way business works and many firms want to adapt to these techniques. In order to do so, there are numerous steps that have to be made, as cited above, in order to ensure efficiency and success when changing. Dussart (2000) argues that the Internet will cause eight simultaneous and interdependent “re-revolutions” in the business field—defined as re-vamping management, re-storing control, re-launching the economy, re-configuring

offers, re-structuring markets, re-distributing power, re-defining relationships and re-organising channels. All these aspects enhance the importance of E-commerce.

Studies have argued that E-commerce can bring value to enterprises on various levels, if applied correctly and this probably constitutes the main incentives of the firms to adopt the model of E-commerce. As Burt and Sparks (2003) noted, “ultimately, the real benefits of e-commerce arise from how tasks and activities are performed within the retail channel, and how changes impact upon ownership, costs and efficiency” (p. 284). However, failures also occur often, which leads to the statement that E-commerce is a different, strong market which is also very competitive and evolving constantly. Competition in E-business may look differently than that of the offline market and commercial barriers may impede certain retailers to adapt.

3.1.2. Evolution in Europe

In order to correctly understand the users’ attitude in each country, a first perspective on the E-commerce in Europe is also of importance. It is essential to understand that E-commerce may work differently according to the different markets and various users that are active on the respective markets. In Asia, in Europe and in the US, E-commerce would have not evolved in the same way. This part will briefly explain the development of E-business in Europe, so that afterwards an even more detailed analysis between France and Romania can be properly done.

The main factor that enables E-commerce, is, quite obviously, the internet and having an internet connection or at least having the habit of using it. According to statistics in a press release of the European Commission (May 2014), the digital situation in Europe has truly evolved. In 2010 only 60% of the EU inhabitants used the internet once a week. In 2014, this number is up to 74%. Only 20% of the EU citizens have never used the internet. Another interesting number is the number of EU inhabitants already having shopped online, which is 47%. Moreover, online purchases constitute 3% of the European retail trade. But the growth of homogenous virtual markets is still facing various obstacles (European Commission, 2009, Consumers in Europe).

Furthermore, nearly half of EU users, who have a home connection, (45%) shop online and among these, 11% shop from retailers of other European countries. The European Union has very ambitious objectives related to the development of E-commerce. The Digital Agenda of the EU wants to reach a goal of 50% of users shopping online and 20% of those shopping from foreign shops, situated in the European space by 2015 (ECC-Net, 2014, p. 5). There are several reasons why the European Union is encouraging the growth of this business field would bring many advantages to both buyers and

traders. It is estimated that customers can save almost 11.7 billion euros per year if they shop online (Munteanu, 2012).

A series of measures is suggested by the EU, in order to reach its goals. Firstly, the EU encourages the facilitation of procurement of goods and services through the electronic market. It also demands a better model of delivering products across EU countries (in terms of profitability and efficiency). By implementing standards, it would make retailers ensure more accurate or quality information about their products and prices. Furthermore, the EU encourages the developing of the internet and of its infrastructure in more remote places and in rural areas. Finally, it wants to ensure a better protection against abuses, fraud or risks that may be encountered on the internet by users. And yet another aspect that is relevant for the growth of E-commerce is constituting a solid, common legal framework for online exchanges (European Commission, 2011, European contract law in consumer transactions - Report).

It is clear to state that, although E-commerce has been developing in the last 20 years in Europe (Munteanu, 2012), there are still important issues that need to be referred. For example, 12% of internet users in countries across the European Union have been confronted to online fraud, and, more than that, up to 8% were victims of identity theft (ECC-Net, 2014, p. 4). Furthermore, “almost half (48%) EU consumers said they were more confident when ordering goods or services via the Internet from sellers or providers in their own country” (The Gallup¹⁰, 2011, p. 6). This shows that E-commerce still needs to evolve to become a cross-country business.

3.2. Media Literacy and Media Use

This chapter will explain media literacy but also media use. What do both concepts mean and what are some relevant theories defining them.

3.2.1. Media Literacy

The concepts of media literacy and media use have changed dramatically with the birth and spread of the internet. Media literacy does not mean the same thing as in the '90ies, and that is because the communication competencies have modified. They now have a different form (Treumann, Baacke & Haacke, 2002, p. 20).

People learn how to communicate, how to understand communication processes and how to handle media. It is an always-evolving process through which the personal communication abilities are improving (Treumann et al., 2002, p. 20). This concept means that the public is not purely passive but

¹⁰ American research-based, global performance-management consulting company

takes over an active role when it comes to the media use. Different abilities and indicators show how media literate a user is. Some of the indicators helping measuring media literacy are selectivity, critical sense, sense of risks, a high level of expectancy or cognitive elements (p. 228).

To understand these affirmation better, the Knowledge-Gap theory is an interesting approach. Through this theory it is explained that society is divided in several educational levels and people with a higher level of education tend to get informed faster or more efficiently than people with a lower level of education (Tichenor, Donohue & Olien, 1970). In 1983, this theory was refined by Etfema who concluded that the most relevant factor in this equation is not the education level, but the personal interest. That means that people who are interested by a certain topic will seek information quicker than the others (p. 517). The two versions of the theory, however, show and prove that the users are active and often selective when it comes to the use of the media.

3.2.2. Uses and Gratifications Model

Another mile stone in this field is the Uses and Gratifications Model, developed by Blumler and Katz (1974). It obviously evolved as a consequence of many previous studies. This model implies various elements that are all showing that the public is not at all passive and it is looking for a series of gratifications that it can reach through the media (p. 167).

A brief illustration of it:

The Users and Gratifications Model (Blumler & Katz, 1974, p. 167)

The public is active and has expectations

The recipient decides, if the exchange of communication takes place or not

Media is not the only alternative that provides gratifications

The recipient is aware of this process

The public has its own categories and understanding of the media

This valuable theory can then be applied to the field of online shopping and its public. The main aspect to be implemented in this area is the selective use that proves that there are different motivations and incentives, depending on the users. They are not all lead by the same interests and may not react the same way to a certain content, since the reasons behind media use are subjective. That means that they know they can choose what they want to see and what they want to avoid. Firstly, before arguing this further in the online shopping field, a theoretical transition to other valuable theories, to the new media and to the internet is also relevant.

3.2.3. The Escape Concept

The model of Users and Gratifications is related to the one of the Escape (Katz & Foulkes, 1962). The latter refers to an escape from the daily world and trouble thanks to the media and all its forms. This implies that users become interested in media content and stimuli because it is a way of forgetting and leaving troubles behind, escaping their daily routine. Moreover, the public may experience positive emotions that help them break the typical society norms and create for themselves a personal relaxation mood. It is considered that the recipients are “deprived and alienated” so they “turn to the dreamlike world of the mass media for substitute gratifications”. One of the consequences of this act would be alienation and isolation from the actual social scene (p. 379). The public may even identify itself with the media followed. That is why it is difficult to define only one portrait of users who use the media in this way – studies have been conducted, showing women, children and also men are subject of this phenomenon, each looking, however, for something that suits their personal understanding of an escape (p. 381). However, factors that seem to favourably influence people in doing this are stress, anxious feelings, or isolation. That is when the media is there, as a relief and compensation medium.

Another concept also considers that the media does not only help compensate certain lacks but even encourage and help maintaining existing relations and contacts (Katz & Foulkes, 1962, p. 382). Movies, for instance, could play such a role. It goes without saying that different contents and social contexts seem to also have various impacts on recipients. Some media products will be used for bonding and surrounded by others, certain products will rather be used in isolation or when feeling deprived. This is the experience that is more likely to cause isolation or higher exposure to the media (p. 382-384). The concept may also be applied to the internet firstly and to the field of E-commerce and online shopping.

3.2.4. The Expectation-Confirmation Theory

The Expectation-confirmation Theory (ECT) of Oliver (1980) is closer to the E-commerce area. It has already been used several times in order to measure the satisfaction of consumers but also to understand their behaviour better. The question leading it is – is the user willing to use a certain medium again, if satisfied or avoid it if rather unsatisfied? Would this stop him from doing it again?

Obviously, this theory is a very valuable instrument in the area of online shopping because it allows to understand the expectations, incentives and attitudes of the consumers better. The ECT (Oliver, 1980) proves once again, that the users are active and they have clear expectations from the media and their services. Can a positive, respectively, a negative e-shopping experience influence users' behaviour in

the future? In a study conducted by Oliver, he formulated pre- and post- surveys and concluded that the confirmation of the expectancies or on the contrary, the impossibility to reach the users' expectations at the end of the exchange process can influence and change the future behaviour of the consumers (p. 466). That is naturally why this theory is included in the paper and it will help to compare the attitudes of the two categories of users involved – Romanian and French.

3.2.5. New Media

The new media is a new communication category that imply new channels. Grewe (2012) stated that when it comes to the new media, the channels to be taken into consideration are the computer, the internet and the mobile phone (p. 5).

The New Media has become interactive and has revolutionised the classical way of communicating. There are billions of searches online every day, individuals look up concepts, words, services, places or products (Graham, Schroeder, Taylor, 2013). In other words, "digital searches mediate our interactions with an enormous networked store of knowledge, with social networks, with commercial trading partners, and with the world around us" (p. 1366). Because of the enormous amounts of information present on the internet, users will learn how to become more selective, rank and filter it.

Furthermore, the new media is a pull-media system, opposing push-media. The term of push-media means that the media channels publish and spread their pieces of information actively, in order to attract the public and recipients. On the contrary, pull-media absolutely needs an active public that will seek information, or services, on its own. This is mostly the case for internet use, with some exceptions such as newsletters, direct marketing or push-pull campaigns. When it comes to pull-media, the selectivity possibilities of the users increase (Grupe, 2011, p. 203).

Additionally, addressing the activeness of users, studies were conducted to see to what point users can actually become the media producers (through videos, blogs, etc.). As Meyers (2012) expresses it, there is a new class of media and actors involved in it that break the classical media frames. This was made possible by the internet. Media in the twenty-first century is represented by the "breaking down of barriers between traditional media industries and the telecommunications sector ... redefining the way music, film, radio, television, newspapers and books are produced, manufactured, distributed and consumed" (Burnett & Marshall, 2003, p. 1). This implies that the well-formed hierarchies of the media are transforming and losing in importance since users can now be participants by editing content, commenting, collaborating, seeking information and selecting, proceeding to different types of actions online (Hugger, 2014, p. 17).

If these new channels have a different approach from the side of the recipients, it goes without saying that their analysis should also be handled differently. Does spending time online and affinity to the new media increase online shopping? Related to this topic, the first Hypothesis was build and will be verified in the results' part.

H1: The more time a user spends online, the more he will shop.

3.2.6. Information Systems

To what extent is technology also a relevant actor in the equation of the media and its public? Bhattacharjee (2001), has translated Oliver's Expectation-confirmation Theory (1980) to „Information systems“ (IS). He wanted to find out when the acceptancy of these systems occurs and in what cases can this initial acceptance lead to a continuous behaviour. The aim was to better understand the behaviour of the users of these systems. In order to do so, he had a sample of 1.000 online banking users that he approached thanks to a survey. The following points were handled: satisfaction, the perceived use of the activity, to what degree were the expectations reached (by comparing pre- and post- reactions) and finally, the intention of reusing the respective service. The results have shown that the satisfaction of the users was directly proportional with the intention of continuing the use of those services.

These theories help in conceiving this thesis by applying the quoted factors and points to the online shopping dimension and by comparing the two groups of users in the end. The aim is to find out if this satisfaction also plays a major role when it comes to online shopping, if it influences the online shopping behaviour and if it is the same case for both countries.

3.3. Behavioural Online Shopping – Trust and incentives

E-commerce and online shopping are becoming more and more interesting topics. That must also be due to the fact that internet access has improved, at least in Europe. It is obvious that the internet and technological characteristics play an important role in online shopping and the evolution of E-commerce. However, there are other factors that have an enormous influence on this industry – it all depends on the behaviour of the users. And their behaviour is dictated by various incentives, perceived risks or fears when shopping online. This part will approach this topic in order to better understand how the online users experience E-commerce.

3.3.1. Theory of Planned Behaviour

When the behaviour of the consumers becomes a topic, an indispensable theory should be approached. This is the Theory of Planned Behaviour or the TPB (Schifter & Azjen, 1985). They concentrated on the way the behaviour of the individual changes depending on specific requirements he may have and resources he finds. This theory puts intention as the first influencing factor for action because it can explain the effort that one is ready to put into a certain action (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB is divided into three, in order to approach each possible side of the behavioural act. These three aspects are: attitude towards behaviour, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control. The first one defines the positive or negative attitude concerning a certain action, its possible results and consequences. The second handles the influence other people could have on the decision to act (a third party such as family, friends, colleagues). And finally, the third one refers to the individual's understanding concerning the needed resources or opportunities for conducting the action itself (Ajzen & Madden, 1986).

This model has become a reference in the research of E-commerce and online shopping behaviour and it constitutes a launching point into understanding the psychological and behavioural profiles of users, thus militating for a deeper perspective of action. It was relevant to include it in this paper as a start point to the behaviour of online users, which will be further analysed thanks to a rich palette of theories.

3.3.2. Trust and Use of the Internet

Trust in technology and E-commerce is a complex concept and implies several dimensions. Is there a link between easiness with technology and buying online? Many studies tried to understand how an internet user acts and what determines him to behave in certain ways. Moreover, the technical aspects of a website for instance could maybe play a role on the credibility of the site and the trust of the consumer. In this sense, several studies have been conducted.

Warrington et. al. (2000) actually stated that trust in the online environment is even more important than by offline shopping precisely because of the physical distance and the separation between the buyer and the seller.

Models of technology use

A first relevant example is the study from Gefen, et. al. (2003) that considers that trust in an online retailer is the main factor that explains a constant behaviour, meaning re-visiting and re-buying from a specific retailer. This attitude would be based on two dimensions – the impression that the website

ensures (inspired from the TAM Model of Davis) and the trust in the shop itself. Back to the TAM Model of Davis (1989), it was conceived to measure two aspects, namely the perceived usefulness and the ease of use or user friendliness of the website (p. 320). This means that the recipients hope that the technological activity that they are conveying is useful and improves their efficiency and their performance. If the efficiency does not increase when using a certain technological channel, then the motivations of the users may change as well. But even when the efficiency does increase in the perception of the user, the system should also be user friendly and cause no complications or discomfort in order for the user to remain motivated and understand it easily (p. 320). So it goes without saying, that these two dimensions and in general, technical aspects also play a big part in the credibility of a site and the user's attitude. Based on this model, two hypothesis for the study were built.

H2: The higher the perceived usefulness of the purchase, the more likely are internet users to shop online.

H3: The higher the perceived user friendliness of the online sites, the more willing are online shoppers to buy.

Several models have been developed to explain the information technology issue, because researchers realised how important this aspect is, when it comes to using the new media and, consequently, when interacting with E-commerce. Another rather personal or specific model is the personal innovativeness of information technology (PIIT), created by Agarwal and Prasad (1998) which is defined as "the willingness of an individual to try out a new Information Technology" (p. 206). What this instrument is supposed to measure, is habits of individuals related to information technology, such as how often an individual tries out new systems, how curious someone is when it comes to the quoted field, pleasure in experimenting with new information technologies or, on the contrary, avoidance of them. This model is relevant for E-commerce since it explains the perspective of the users and a pattern of behaviour that can be translated to online shopping as well. The PIIT model also inspired a hypothesis because it seemed relevant to understand how important internet affinity was to online shoppers.

H4: The more open to new technologies users are, the more likely they are to shop online.

When analysing the individuals' acts related to E-commerce and the new media, the concept of internet self-efficacy is also relevant. O'Cass and Fenech (2003) based this notion on the Eastin's Social Cognitive Theory (2002) and applied it to the internet. It measures to what extent individuals trust their capacities of successfully organizing themselves and this in relation to the internet. This may also constitute a throwback for individuals who are not used to the internet, who do not consider

themselves at ease with this channel and therefore with E-commerce or online shopping. They clearly state that it is usually experience and the previous acceptance of IT models that make users be confident and trust their internet self-efficacy and they are the most likely to become web shoppers. (p. 84). This theoretical point lead to the fifth hypothesis.

H5: If the user considers himself internet self-efficient, he will be more willing to shop online.

Lu, Yao & Yu (2005) also conducted a study wanting to find out to what extent social influence plays a role in the decision of consumers to use the new information systems. The way they define social influence is the following: “perceived pressure from social networks to make a certain behavioural decision” (p. 249). They consider that being connected (through wifi) to different networks creates social circles that end up affecting or influencing one’s opinions, decisions and even behaviour “through interactions and communications” (p. 250). The study shows that the perceived usefulness of using the new technologies but also the perceived ease of use and self-efficacy on the internet are positively affected by social factors such as subjective norms and image (p. 259).

It is undoubtedly interesting to see how many models were developed about the use of the internet and the habits and capacities of the users. Most patterns can further be applied to new surveys and research thanks to their complex degree and their flexibility. They are important as well in understanding the phenomenon of E-commerce and internet use on a general scale. It can also indirectly influence trust in the internet (when confident in personal skills).

However, trust in E-commerce has a double dimension. It works directly, according to Gefen (cited in Gefen et al. 2003) but also indirectly according to Jarvenpaa, Tractinsky, Saarinen & Vitale (cited in Gefen et. al., 2003). It is indirect when the perceived risk is very low (p. 55).

Furthermore, trust is also linked to the concept of familiarity. When the user knows the retailer already and is familiar with it, then its willingness to buy online may increase because the trust is also higher (Gefen et. al., 2003, p. 63). On the contrary, the lack of trust is the main reason for which users avoid online retailers or shops, according to Lee and Turban (as cited in Grabner-Kräuter & Kaluscha, 2003, p. 784). This phenomenon could be explained by the fact that the user feels more vulnerable and dependable when he or she interacts with an online medium or when online shopping. The user has to be “willing to depend” as explained by Mcknight and Chervany (2002, p. 60). That is why, in the end, trust is such an important factor. The user sets him/herself in a vulnerable spot and needs to be sure he/her will not be taken advantage of. If certainty is not an issue, the online shopping may be avoided (from the retailers not having gained the trust of the users).

Holloway and Beatty (2003) suggested that an important way of earning users' trust is by confirming their requests and expectations and doing that also in the case of a service failure. Post to their conducted study, they discovered that if the users were brought to complain to the retailer but the online shop handled their inquiry well and left them satisfied, this earned their confidence, trust and commitment (p. 93). The trust problematic seems essential and that is why an additional hypothesis is based on it.

H6: Trust in E-commerce positively influences the online shopping act.

However, even if people are regular internet users, what makes them online buyers in the end? This is an important question that represents the bridge between individuals who use the internet and the buyers. Moreover, it allows a more detailed introduction in the attitudes of the users. The risks and incentives per se will not be analysed yet but in the parts to come.

Rodriguez del Bosque and Herrero Crespo (2011) treated this topic quite thoroughly, basing their hypothesis on numerous models such as the Theory of Planed Behaviour, the model of Taylor and Todd (1995) or the TAM Model. They conducted their study on two groups of people, internet users that had never shopped online previously and experienced virtual shoppers, aiming to discover the differences and behaviour of each group. They confirmed the fact that the users' attitude towards E-commerce has a direct influence on the intention to buy online and furthermore, that the subjective norm also plays an important role in the buying decision-making and this is valid for both samples. Interestingly enough, they also concluded that high control on the internet would not constitute a real motivation to shop online. They consider it is rather low control that impacts the buying decision negatively and, on the contrary, ease of use may not be in itself an incentive (p. 171). The perceived control mentioned is based on two aspects – perceived self-efficacy and existing conditions (such as equipment, computer, internet) (p. 172).

Further on, risks and incentives will be described to understand what lies behind the act of online shopping and why users are there or avoiding it. Finally, when it comes to the study, it will be interesting to compare and analyse if the two groups of recipients meet the same fears and same motivations or to what extent.

3.3.3. Perceived Risks when Online Shopping

There are numerous reasons why users may not want to shop online and this part of the paper is dedicated to the perceived risks of the process.

Studies tried to categorise the risks that are perceived by users when online shopping. In the study of Gefen et al. (2003), it was concluded that the main risks is fear of unfair prices, of false information,

violation of the private sphere, payment security – implying illegal use of the bank data or following bank transactions (p. 55).

So what about web security and its perceived risks? This seems to be a major concern for many potential online shoppers. O’Cass and Fenech (2003) describe it as an individual consciousness about web security when giving away personal or financial data. Some users do not feel at ease if they are asked to fill in personal information, they may not feel secure nor safe doing so. They state that “a Web user that has little trust in a Web retailer, or views the Web as having a low level of security is unlikely to become a Web shopper” (p. 84).

This leads to the notion of privacy security developed by Smith, Milberg, & Burke (1996). They divided this concept into four main possible risks: data collection, errors, unauthorized secondary use and improper access. Users may worry that the personal information they provide will be used to different aims than the stated ones, will be given to other companies (sometimes for marketing purposes) or it will simply be stored for unknown periods of time and unknown reasons.

Furthermore, users see many other risks when thinking of online shopping. They often refer to an issue of service, what they can expect and what quality of service can online retailers truly offer? Holloway and Beatty (2003) focused on this very problem and analysed which services worried the potential consumers the most. They rename risks such as credit card security and privacy but they bring new notions such as on-time delivery, ease of navigation or simply human interaction that is present when offline shopping. They also aim to answer to the problematic of service failure management, do online retailers have good management plans to recover from a failure or not and to what point can that discourage clients? This may be a topic that is not quite so often analysed and yet it can explain behavioural continuance or, on the contrary, interruption. They state that “service failure is a driving factor in customer switching behaviour” (p. 93).

Holloway and Beatty (2003) wanted to find out what services fail most often, according to the consumers’ experiences and this is what their survey was about. The main problems they found were delivery problems, web design issues, payment problems, security problems (the latter two already evoked), product quality issues and customer services problems (p. 95).

The issues with delivery meant late arrivals, wrong product delivery or deliveries sent to the wrong address (Holloway & Beatty, 2003, p. 95). This means that this particular service is also to be seen as a potential risk while online shopping. This paper will try to find out if consumers in France and Romania worry about this aspect and if there are any differences on this point.

Another fear that installs by consumers is the quality and responsibility of the consumers' service. Holloway and Beatty (2003) found out that many users who have already shopped online met many difficulties in contacting this particular service in order to fix various problems that had occurred during the online shopping (as noted above, issues with payment, technic aspects, delivery etc.). This becomes another risk to be taken into consideration by potential online buyers (p. 97).

Moreover, aspects related to the quality of the product and the impossibility of seeing or touching the goods before purchasing them are also relevant. Certain studies show that this constitutes a real problem for some recipients and it instaurates doubt and avoidance, according to Advertising Age (as quoted in Childers, 2001, p. 515; Holloway & Beatty, 2003). The product quality goes hand in hand with a possible fear of disinformation – lack of accuracy of the information about the product or about the service (Szymanski & Hise, 2000).

Another very interesting finding by Holloway and Beatty (2003) is the fact that most customers in their study, who had had a negative experience when online shopping, were not willing to buy online from the representative retailers anymore, some even considered suing or giving aggressive negative feedback to somehow repay their felt injustice (p. 97). This data is interesting when associated to the ECT of Oliver (1980) that would explain to what extent broken expectations cause dissatisfaction and a behaviour switch. Acknowledging the risks-part as relevant to online shopping, a hypothesis will explore the perceived risks of users.

H7: The more risks are perceived by the internet users, the less they are willing to shop online.

Even though there are some risks to be taken into account when online shopping, there are also numerous incentives that push internet users to seek online shopping, products or online services. Certain recipients will be sceptical but many are also used to E-commerce and have strong arguments and motivations for it. This aspect is also relevant to the aim of this paper because it will enable a global understanding of the E-commerce sphere and also a more detailed perspective into the behaviour of the online users.

3.3.4. Main Incentives

When considering online shopping, a lot of research has been focusing on the attitude of the users and their incentives. According to Babin, Darden, & Griffen (as cited in Childers, 2001), the motivations of the online shopping consumers are divided into useful shopping and the hedonistic shopping (p. 513). That means that users want to be efficient and they are need-oriented, that is why they shop online. At the same time, people may also experience shopping online as an “adventure”, as Sherry concluded (quoted in Childers, p. 513). These two dimension are confirmed and revised by several

studies such as one from Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) which described consumers as “problem solvers” or seeking “fun, fantasy, arousal, sensory stimulation and enjoyment” (as quoted in Childers, p. 513). This model could be applied to the survey of this thesis to see if the categories of users verify with the Romanian and French recipients.

The paper of Childers (2001) was also based on the TAM Model of Davis (1989), quoted beforehand. This instrument was helpful to determine or verify once more whether the acceptance of new technologies as well as the perception of these can truly influence users’ behaviour. During this particular study, the people of the sample were placed in front of two different types of stimuli in order to find out if there is a link between user friendliness and the need-oriented shoppers or between ease of use and pleasure and hedonistic intentions of online shopping, resulting in a positive correlation (p. 515).

One of the main incentives of the users is finding advantages and benefits for themselves, trying to have an optimal experience. In the case of online shopping, there are various aspects that seem to positively influence the users. According to Hoffman and Novak (as cited in Childers, 2001), such factors are interactivity and the possibility of researching additional information, this implying an active involvement. Furthermore, the flexibility of the new media is also a relevant element, meaning that users are not dependent on a place or time for shopping (p. 515). Price can also play a role in online purchase. Another interesting concept is the “convenience” or comfort which, according to Hofacker (quoted in Childers), means that users appreciate being able to avoid all sorts of trouble that occur while offline shopping – traffic, parking, waste of time, waiting in line and so on (p. 516).

Yet another relevant dimension for this field of online shopping is understating to what extent can outside suggestions from a third person or “word of mouth” act upon the behaviour of the users. Previous studies have shown that the shopping decision can be influenced by an external suggestion or recommendation. Duhan, Johnson, Wilcox & Harell (as cited in Senecal et al., 2005), defined various sources: other consumers (such as family, friends or other internet users), or experts (p. 1601). An additional motivation was suggested by Häubl and Trifts (as quoted in Senecal et al., 2005) – expert-systems that help the user select, find an informed and personally adapted decision when online shopping (p. 1601). These aspects constitute a sort of motivation for online shoppers since it can influence their decision making or trust in the product, in the retailer or be more certain of what they are buying.

Rodriguez del Bosque and Herrero Crespo (2011) discovered in their study, that “the influence of a third party on the intention to make a transaction on the internet is higher in the case of individuals who have never made an online purchase” (p. 171). They explain this through the Theory of

Information Processing¹¹, suggesting that users who already have direct experience with online purchasing will be less influenced by a third party than by their own acquired experience or attitude, since this is direct knowledge about the system and own subjective norms (p. 171).

On the contrary, the users who already have a direct experience concerning online shopping might keep their own opinions and rituals in this field. This phenomenon could be explained by the Theory of Attitude Formation (TAF) (Ajzen 1991, as quoted in Rodriguez del Bosque & Herrero Crespo, 2011, p. 172), so that direct experience reinforces individuals' beliefs and gives rise to a more consistent attitude-intention relationship.

The last theories quoted are very valuable when understanding the behaviour of online users. They handle both groups of users (potential and regular online shoppers) and define a mechanism that guides them in their decisions. The research for this study is clearly dependent on the incentives perceived by the users when online buying as well, hence another hypothesis:

H8: The more motivations internet users find in online purchasing, the more likely they are to shop online.

Lian and Lin (2008) conducted a different analysis, trying to see how much the product types and categories can influence the shopping decision of consumers. These categories were linked to the theory of "high" and "low" product involvement, first developed by Zaichowsky in 1985 and revised in 1994. Product involvement shows how relevant a product for a certain person or consumer is. In 2002, Koufaris formulated the concept of product involvement yet again. For him, if a product is linked to a personal hobby, then the involvement would be higher than by other normal products. Chauduri (2000) stated that there is a correlation between a high-involvement product and information research. That would mean, that the higher the product involvement, the more information the user would need and want to find about it in order to make the buying decision. Taking these theories into consideration, Lian and Lin showed that high product involvement has a positive effect on the willingness to buy online (p. 62).

Interestingly enough, one of the motivations of users for buying online was the possibility to research more and find supplementary information about the desired products. This would imply that users will be pleased to buy high-involvement products because the information offer on the internet is valuable and it conveys credibility and trust but also increases satisfaction (Lian & Lin, 2008; Szymanski & Hise, 2000). In order to verify to what extent product involvement plays a role in the shopping

¹¹ A model used in Cognitive Psychology to describe how individuals think critically and how they process information

behaviour of Romanian and French users, another hypothesis was formed. Additionally to that, an overview of the products bought online is also relevant, thus the construction of another hypothesis.

H9: The higher the product involvement of the internet user, the higher the willingness to shop online.

H10: Product categories and types influence the internet users' willingness to shop online.

It is obvious that there are numerous and various motivations for online purchasing and maybe subjective norm plays an important role in it as well. The study of Rodriguez del Bosque and Herrero Crespo (2011) concluded, for example, the following: "the results obtained in the empirical research carried out reveal that attitude, influence from a relevant third party and PU¹² in the system constitute the main direct determinants of the intention to adopt virtual commerce" (p. 173). This study considers more incentives however, since its purpose is to add value and information to the existing research.

The incentives are the factors that motivate consumers prior to purchase. There is, however, another interesting aspect that is worth being described and that is the notion of e-satisfaction (Szymanski & Hise, 2000). They first developed this because of the rise of online retailers and their constant promise of satisfactory experiences. So they wanted to define what makes an online consumer satisfied. What are his priorities and his expectations? They also noted, like other researchers, the advantage of convenience of site design, they transformed web security into a positive point, into an incentive, but they also brought into discussion merchandising (p. 311). Interviewed consumers all seemed to appreciate the liberty of choice and the filters that help them find the right products quickly. Furthermore, when it comes to the product, they seem to seek them online when they are speciality items, goods that are produced in limited quantities, unavailable products in shops, variety and information sources (p. 312).

Finally, what Szymanski and Hise (2000) wanted to prove or find out, was to what extent can these factors ensure satisfaction with consumers (p. 312)? Satisfaction is the attitude that is adopted post to purchase, that is why it is important and different that the previous described theories. So broken into another question, which factors meet the customers' needs to the fullest? The elements they found were convenience, site design and financial security, as the main ones that ensure e-satisfaction (p. 318).

The previously-described theories are all relevant to the aim of the research. The hypothesis and the research question of the paper will be inspired from these theories but, at the same time, they will

¹² Purpose of use

also help enormously when interpreting the results and the consumers' behaviour. They are also relevant because they explain users' view and perception of the new media, their mentalities and attitudes, their relation to them and to E-commerce and online shopping.

It is particularly interesting to understand that there seem to exist certain behavioural patterns that are very often related to the ECT Theory. As already quoted above, users who felt dissatisfied often switch their attitude and are unwilling to interact again with the retailer that has disappointed them. Quite the reverse, if they evaluate the process on the whole as being satisfying, they are likely to commit and offer their trust. This led to a hypothesis related to the ECT Theory.

H11: According to the ECT Theory, a positive or a negative online shopping experience will respectively influence the future online behaviour.

But when it comes to a repetitive online shopping experience, it is also relevant to note that consequences may also occur, much as when offline shopping. These more subtle risks, which are rarely considered (at least not consciously) by users will be presented in the following part of this paper.

3.3.5. Typology of the Online Shopper

As previously written, there are studies trying to categorise online shoppers between the "problems-solvers" or the hedonistic shoppers (see chapter [4.2.4.](#)). However, linked to the incentives that were presented in the above chapter, in this part a brief profile of the online e-shopper will be summarised, based on the study of Media Matrix and McKinsey (Hamilton, 2000). The classification is as follows:

- (1) The simplifiers – these users are lucrative but lack patience. They do not spend a lot of time on the internet but are responsible for half of the online transactions.
- (2) The surfers – they look at 4 times more online pages, through different browsers. They might spend up to 32% of their time online.
- (3) The connectors – these users are new to the internet and are less likely to e-shop. They prefer offline markets and brands they are familiar with.
- (4) Bargain shoppers – consumers who seek out bargains, deals and sales. They seem to enjoy finding good prices.
- (5) The routine followers – they mainly use the internet for information purposes.
- (6) The sportsters – users that are sport enthusiasts and are highly interested in visiting sports and entertainment pages.

To this classification, however, the notions introduced by Sherry (1992) and Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) are also interesting, that is why a seventh category will be added.

(7) The adventurer – seeking fun, arousal, fantasy and hedonic experiences while e-shopping.

Having typologies it is easier for researchers to understand consumers, their demands and expectations. This means that they can adapt their offer and services better, which is one of the main challenges of E-commerce. At the same time, it reminds that users are different and look for various things, they are driven by personal interests and motivations and are heterogeneous.

3.3.6. Abnormal Shopping Behaviours

As noted above, there is a series of possible negative outcomes from E-commerce and online shopping. For a long time now behaviours and psychological profiles of addicted shoppers have been analysed. Are these profiles also valid for the online users? Studies argue that shopping addiction is very much present online as offline. Firstly, unregulated buying behaviours will be defined and further they will be translated to the online medium. Eastin and LaRose (2002) consider that these actions can lead to bankruptcy, life crisis, broken homes and families, social issues.

a. Impulsive Buying

Rook and Fisher (1995) developed the concept of impulsive buying. Until that point, impulsive buying had mostly been perceived as a negative trait and linked to poor education, poor reason or even social problems. Through their study, the authors wanted to create a more neutral perspective on the subject. They explain that for an individual to act in this way it would mean he has an “impulsive buying trait tendency” that is combined to their “normative judgement” (p. 305). But the authors explain that even if the stimuli is there, in order for the purchase to be made, there has to be a positive evaluation reason on the part of the buyer. Negative evaluations are also possible which will impede the purchase.

Rook and Fisher (1995) presume this impulsiveness means for consumers to act after a pattern – on a whim, buying spontaneously, without truly reflecting of it and do it quickly. Their “shopping lists” would be more flexible and they are open to exterior stimuli that may change their shopping behaviour. Such buyers are considered to be led by emotions and immediate gratification (Hoch & Loewenstein, 1991). Impulsive buyers are also considered to feel these stimuli more often than others. In extreme cases it can be stated that the purchase action is uniquely driven by stimuli and is applied immediately, with no reflecting time. However, the purchase is not always finalised, having other factors interfere.

One of the main factors that interfere with spontaneous buying stimuli is the normative evaluation (Rook & Fisher, 1995). This is defined as consumers' judgments about the appropriateness of making an impulsive purchase in a particular buying situation" (p. 306). Other normative aspects will help the consumer to control and frame his or her actions (such as rent, lifestyle or general expenses and budget). Although in most cases impulsive buying does not surpass social norms, it can cause individual problems and sometimes community ones.

b. Compulsive Buying

A way of firstly explaining compulsive actions is through the description of Popkin (1989), saying that the concerned individuals will be "feeling an urge or need to behave, failure to control this feeling, increased arousal prior to committing the behaviour, gratification while committing the behaviour, and regret or depression after engaging in the behaviour are all considered to be common to a variety of impulse control disorders."

This psychological profile was applied to the compulsive buyer. Faber and O'Guinn (1989a) consider it is essential to understand negative behaviour of shoppers, only then can the theory be complete. Consequently, they learned about compulsive buying and defined it as follows: "chronic, repetitive purchasing that becomes a primary response to negative events or feelings" (p. 155). Although in the beginning it may guarantee some benefits and positive effects, becoming compulsive turns the act into a harmful action. As the authors state it, the consequences are not only financial but also social and psychological.

The profile of a compulsive buyer may be described as individuals with lower self-esteem than other buyers, with a considerable tendency to fantasize, higher levels of depression, anxiety and obsession problems, individuals who do not buy in order to possess things but rather to answer to their psychological issues (Faber & O'Guinn, 1989a). The main questions that drive the authors are how can these buyers be identified (it seems that they often feel ashamed or at unease to seek for help) and how widespread they are. The way it usually materialises is by an urge to shop and spend but feeling guilty afterwards and it affects women more often than men (however, not exclusively).

Testimonials of compulsive buyers may sound like "I often buy something I don't need, when I didn't have a lot of money left" or feeling anxious and restless when not shopping, seeking out short-term gratification so the bought object would release this tension and make them feel better, until the guilt installs (Faber & O'Guinn, 1989a).

It is essential that researchers understand the negative shopping behaviours as well – they are relevant, complete the perspective of users and remind users that there can be more harmful effects

than believed because they “are not just isolated to the individuals affected but extend also to their families, friends, and co-workers as well as the public at large through increased costs for health care, crime control, products, and credit” (Krych, 1989).

c. Addictive Buying

Finally, another abnormal shopping portrait is that of the addictive buyers. One way of describing abnormal behaviour is by acknowledging it refers to individuals who perform a certain activity until it becomes harmful, be it socially or physically. Yet they continue the activity, although they intend to stop and meet difficulties in this direction and although others recommend stopping the respective activity as well (Krych, 1989).

Krych (1989) defines addiction as “repetitive loss of predictable control of the addictive behaviour, which results in adverse consequences” for the individual or even friends and family. Related to the shopping behaviour, this would translate into a person trying to stop his or her shopping actions and not being able to do so, even though negative consequences occur. The addict may find justifications and a defence mechanism in front of others. Before performing the addictive action (in this case, shopping), the individual finds him/herself in distress and the particular action seems to play the role of an escape, hence the difficulty of giving it up. A cycle is created between the person finding the only distress manner in its addictive shopping, deepening problems, acknowledging these issues and nevertheless, experiencing the hardship of stopping.

Finally, LaRose (2001), combined all of these three portraits and theories into one frame of social behaviour, under a perpetual behaviour that proves different levels of deficient self-discipline or regulation.

Interestingly enough, the depression and anxiety experiences that seem to encourage abnormal shopping behaviours (Faber & O’Guinn, 1989a) can be related and explained through the Escape model of Katz and Foulker (1962) as well (chapter [4.1.3.](#)).

d. Deviant online shopping behaviour

After describing general profiles of shopping addictive behaviours, this part will focus on studies that translated these initial theories to the field of online shopping. There are studies showing that online buyers may be even more compulsive than the offline ones (Donthu & Garcia, 1999), or that students are more likely to fall into this addictive online shopping behaviour because of their affinity to computers, regulated online shopping and unregulated offline shopping, new acquisition of a credit card or even vulnerability to depression (Eastin & LaRose, 2002). Furthermore, when shopping from home, individuals who are feeling guilty with their actions find it easier to hide themselves from a

potential critical eye of the society, hence justifying the dangers of online shopping for deficient self-regulating users (Lee, Lennon & Rudd, 2000). The concept of self-regulation in the field of shopping belongs to Bandura (1991) and it includes the variables of self- observation, judgmental process, and self-reaction. However, this mechanism does not work efficiently every time and that is when unregulated buying occurs most often.

In what other ways can E-commerce affect such vulnerable individuals? LaRose (2001) states that appreciated E-business sites may have more influence on users because of attractiveness and interactivity, products' descriptions that tend to be embellished, e-mail alerts and newsletters that generate excitement, receiving offers and sales tips, having online communities and forums of other online buyers, free gifts, or always being available. All of these external stimuli can weaken self-discipline when it comes to online shopping, thus enabling a deviant behaviour.

Self-regulation can further be influenced by additional factors such as "outcome expectations" and "self-efficacy" as noted by Bandura (1986). This implies that users expect positive results from their shopping spree, having found good deals and bargains, increasing convenience in finding the right product or being convinced of reaching effectiveness. It is interesting that these factors were also quoted in the incentives part of the paper. Hereby are the potential drawbacks of the initial advantages, if not easily contained and managed by users. Eastin and LaRose (2002) conducted a study to verify the accuracy of these factors and the outcome did confirm the fact that depression (as a factor of erasing self-discipline), lack of self-regulation, positive expectancies and previous internet experiences are directly linked to online shopping as a deviant behaviour. They state that "taken together, unregulated online buying tendencies, expectations about e-commerce outcomes, and self-efficacy beliefs offer a powerful socio-cognitive explanation of online buying that accounts for two-fifths of the variation in shopping behaviour" (p. 560).

There are several ways to control this issue and certain therapists specialise in it. One of the main measures is re-establishing the self-regulatory mechanism, keeping diaries and being able to analyse personal behaviour, but also learning what factors trigger such behaviours in order to avoid or control them (Young, 1998).

It is essential to understand that not all online shopping behaviour is deviant. It only becomes so when it fits one of the psychological portraits described above. This kind of behaviour exists in offline stores as well but is seemingly enhanced by the E-commerce world because of stronger stimuli and less time for the personal self-regulatory system to be activated. This part of the paper was relevant in order to make it transparent, that the thesis aims to offer a global vision of E-commerce and not only the positive points. The following chapter presents the empirical research and the results of the surveys.

4. Study

As already stated, the study is a cross-cultural analysis on the Romanian and French user's behaviour. The main research question is "In what way are motivational or risk factors of the internet users in Romania and France different?" The hypothesis were already listed along with the literature and will be presented yet again during the analysis so as to avoid confusion or lack of clarity. This chapter will address the study, the method, the sample of each country and, it goes without saying, the analysis of the results based on the hypothesis and their comparison. It will be followed by the discussion and limitation points.

4.1. Method

Research in the Communication's and E-commerce's field is diverse and complex. For this study, the method of the survey was chosen. This seems to be natural, since the attitudes of the consumers had to be understood. The advantage of the survey are the real opinions on very specific subjects. Möhring and Schlütz (2010) defined the concept as an instrument thanks to which many individual answers would be generated that all comply with the research question and the milestones of the study. The frame is constructed by the researcher, meaning the theme, topic, questions or situations in which the respondent will be put in.

The survey was programmed in Unipark and afterwards it was exported in the IBM statistics' program, SPSS, which allowed to analyse the data. In the beginning of the survey, all recipients were informed of how the survey would work, to what particular details they needed to pay attention (so as to reduce as much as possible the probability of error), on the anonymous character and the purpose of the study. The survey was translated into French and Romanian to ensure clarity to all respondents. It was also programmed twice on the Unipark software. The questions remained exactly the same in both cases.

As already presented in the literature review, many theories enabled the construction of this paper and study. Categories of questions were made, thanks to the PIIT model (created by Agarwal & Prasad, 1998), the Self-Efficiency category (O'Cass & Fenech, 2003), the TAM model was also implemented (Davis, 1998). These instruments show to what extent are users at ease with the internet and the technology. Further, categories of questions on trust, motivations and risks or product involvement were made in order to understand what fuels online shoppers. The ECT Theory (Oliver, 1980) was also an inspiration point for the survey. The scale was a five-point Likert-Type scale (1 corresponding to

“totally agree” and 5 to “totally disagree”). Some scales were reversed in the survey in order to surprise the respondents and thus avoid the formation of a reflex when answering.

After collecting the data, it was noticed that, for certain items, data was missing. This data was not deleted, nor assimilated to the Mean of other existing items so as not to lose other important data that the respondents did fill in and to avoid speculation. As Cohen and Cohen explained, this could lead to “a loss of statistical power and a larger standard error” (1983). Mostly, the missing data was excluded from the results through the missing data function, individually, for every item introduced in SPSS.

Certain items were grouped into scales in order to have a more condensed output. All scales were programmed as follows: the content-similar items were added up and divided by their initial number. Afterwards, a Reliability test was done and some variables were recoded, depending on the meaning and phrasing. Firstly, the case of Romania will be described and following this one, the French case will be explained, since the databases were initially analysed separately.

When it comes to Romania, almost exactly the same scales as for France were formed. The first scale built was the PIIT scale (Cronbach’s Alpha=0.73), defining the willingness to try new technologies. For this scale, one item was recoded to follow the same content logic as the other two coded items, therefore v_17 became v_17_RE (M=2.2, SD=1.3). The two other items were v_15 (M=1.95, SD=0.97) and v_16 (M=1.82, SD=0.99). Following this one, there was the Efficiency scale (Cronbach’s Alpha=0.74), made out of three items: v_20 (M=1.23, SD=0.62), v_21 (M=1.2, SD=0.61) and v_22 (M=1.45, SD=0.86). The next scale is the TAM Utility scale (Cronbach’s Alpha=0.91), constructed as follows: v_33 (M=2.28, SD=1.12), v_34 (M=2, SD=1.2), v_35 (M=1.96, SD=1.12), v_36 (M=1.85, SD=1.08) and v_37 (M=2.1, SD=1.24). Another scale was the TAM Ease of Use scale (Cronbach’s Alpha=0.62). For this scale two items were recoded once more, as follows: v_38 into v_38_RE and v_39 into v_39_RE. The values of the four items of the scale are: v_38_RE (M=2.73, SD=1.17), v_39_RE (M=2.11, SD=1.2), v_40 (M=2.26, SD=1.02), v_41 (M=1.86, SD=0.94). The Trust scale was built afterwards (Cronbach’s Alpha=0.9), based on 4 items: v_43_RE (M=2.76, SD=1.2), v_44_RE (M=2.73, SD=1.17), v_45_RE (M=2.63, SD=1.16), v_46_RE (M=2.93, SD=1.23) and v_47_RE (M=2.73, SD=1.25). A Convenience scale was also built (Cronbach’s Alpha=0.7). Three items belong to this scale – v_48 (M=2.09, SD=1.03), v_49 (M=2.15, SD=0.98) and v_50 (M=1.51, SD=0.88). Two items v_53_RE (M=2.76, SD=1.19), v_54_RE (M=2.31, SD=1.07) formed the Price scale (Cronbach’s Alpha=0.74). Further, the Pleasure scale was constructed (Cronbach’s Alpha=0.83), based on two recoded items and three original ones: v_58 (M=2.12, SD=0.96), v_59 (M=2.53, SD=1.01), v_60_RE (M=2.27, SD=1.04), v_61_RE (M=2.19, SD=1.09) and v_62 (M=2.26, SD=1.07). Other scales were formed, such

as the Personal Information scale (Cronbach's Alpha=0.59) which will be kept this way because of content-related interests. It was made out of three items: v_63 (M=1.21, SD=0.57), v_64 (M=2.02, SD=0.98), v_65 (M=1.71, SD=0.86). An Uncertainty scale was also constructed (Cronbach's Alpha=0.83), out of three items: v_68 (M=2.68, SD=1.29), v_69 (M=2.68, SD=1.23), v_70 (M=3.38, SD=1.28). Further, the scale of Payment was built (Cronbach's Alpha=0.69), based on two items: v_79 (M=3.86, SD=1.19) and v_80 (M=3.1, SD=1.32). A scale on Delivery was also constructed (Cronbach's Alpha=0.78) which was made out of two items: v_84 (M=2.47, SD=1.12) and v_85 (M=2.63, SD=1.22). Another lower scale when it comes to the Cronbach's Alpha (0.53) was built based on content interests – the Design scale based on three items: v_89 (M=1.17, SD=1.87), v_90 (M=1.87, SD=0.9) and v_91 (M=1.12, SD=0.41). Following this one, the Product scale was formed (Cronbach's Alpha=0.81) out of two items: v_94_RE (M=2.09, SD=1.19) and v_95_RE (M=2.02, SD=1.26). The next one was the Customer's Service scale (Cronbach's Alpha=0.57), made with three items: v_99 (M=2.43, SD=1.08), v_100 (M=2.94, SD=1.09) and v_136 (M=1.34, SD=0.72). Afterwards, based on the ECT Theory, a Satisfaction scale was done (Cronbach's Alpha=0.85) thanks to two items: v_105 (M=1.65, SD=1.08) and v_106 (M=1.4, SD=0.91). Additionally to that, a Disappointment scale was also constructed, based on the same theory (Cronbach's Alpha=0.49). Two items were used: v_110 (M=1.43, SD=0.78) and v_111 (M=1.19, SD=0.47). The items of these scales may be analysed separately as well, if considered relevant. Finally, a last scale of Product Involvement was built (Cronbach's Alpha=0.75) thanks to two items: v_115 (Mean=1.35, SD=0.62) and v_116 (Mean=1.14, SD=0.4). The scales will constitute dependable variables. There are also individual items left that will be used in the analysis as such.

The first scale in the French database was PIIT (Cronbach's Alpha=0.70). Three items were built into this scale and because of the content compatibility, v_17 was recoded as such: v_17_RE. The three coded items were v_15 (M=2.83, SD=1.12), v_16 (M=2.12, SD=0.99), v_17_RE (M=2.53, SD= 1.2). The second scale was the Self-Efficiency (Cronbach's Alpha=0.73), when using the internet. The three variables that were summed up were v_20 (M=1.51, SD=0.78), v_21 (M=1.34, SD=0.71) and v_22 (M=1.33, SD=0.67). Following these ones, the TAM Utility scale (Cronbach's Alpha=0.80) was built out of 5 items: v_33 (M=1.98, SD=0.9), v_34 (M=1.63, SD=0.97), v_35 (M=1.8, SD=0.95), v_36 (Mean=1.57, SD=0.77), v_37 (M=1.56, SD=0.77). The next scale was the TAM Ease of Use (Cronbach's Alpha=0.62). For this scale, 4 items were used, among which two recoded: v_38_RE (M=2.86, SD=1.08), v_39_RE (M=2.34, SD=1.11), v_40 (M=2.18, SD=0.86), v_40 (M=2.18, SD=0.86), v_41 (M=1.84, SD=0.785). The following scale is the Confidence scale (Cronbach's Alpha=0.86), built out of 4 items: v_43_RE (M=2.73, SD=1.09), v_44_RE (M=2.81, SD=1.06), v_45_RE (M=2.85, SD=1.06) and v_47_RE (M=2.72, SD=1.10). The Convenience scale was then formed (Cronbach's Alpha=0.54). Although the Cronbach's Alpha is not that high, from a content point of view, it was logical to build the items together: v_48 (M=1.59,

SD=0.78), v_49 (M=1.99, SD=0.83), v_50 (M=1.25, SD=0.48). A Price scale was also built (Cronbach's Alpha=0.77) out of two items: v_53_RE (M=2.9, SD=1.18) and v_54_RE (M=2.38, SD=1.12). The following scale was the Pleasure scale (Cronbach's Alpha=0.74). For its formation, two items were recoded (v_60 and v_61), because of content meanings. Consequently, the scale looks as such: v_58 (M=2.03, SD=0.71), v_59 (M=2.35, SD=0.86), v_60_RE (M=2.25, SD=1.04), v_61_RE (M=2.32, SD=0.95) and v_62 (M=2.15, SD=0.85). Personal Information was another scale created (Cronbach's Alpha=0.61), formed out of 3 items: v_63 (M=1.74, SD=1.02), v_64 (M=1.19, SD=0.58), v_65 (M=1.81, SD=0.91). An Uncertainty scale was also built (Cronbach's Alpha=0.81) with the following three items: v_68 (M=3.17, SD=1.15), v_69 (M=2.87, SD=1.13), v_70 (M=3.63, SD=1.1). Yet another scale was intended to be build, the Payment scale, unluckily less reliable (Cronbach's Alpha=0.22). This is why it was not kept as in the case for Romania and the items will be analysed individually. A scale on Delivery risks was also created (Cronbach's Alpha=0.57) out of two items v_84 (M=2.5, SD=1.13) and v_85 (M=2.82, SD=1.29). A Design scale followed (Cronbach's Alpha=0.54), formed out of the three items: v_80 (M=2.81, SD=1), v_91 (M=2.18, SD=0.39), v_91 (M=2.83, SD=1.02). Additionally to that, a Product scale was also constructed (Cronbach's Alpha=0.66), made out of two items, v_94_RE (M=2.45, SD=1.32) and v_95_RE (M=2.52, SD=1.79). The scale Customer's service was also built (Cronbach's Alpha=0.49) based on a content logic. The three items forming it are v_99 (M=2.28, SD=1.07), v_100 (M=1.44, SD=0.8), v_101 (M=2.58, SD=1.11). Furthermore, following the ECT Theory, a Satisfaction scale was put together (Cronbach's Alpha=0.59) with two items v_105 (M=1.41, SD=0.75) and v_106 (M=1.22, SD=0.48). Based on the same theory, a Disappointment scale was also formed (Cronbach's Alpha=0.64) out of two items v_110 (M=1.38, SD=0.83) and v_111 (M=1.22, SD=0.67). Finally, a last scale was constructed – the Product Involvement one (Cronbach's Alpha=0.56), built out of three items, v_115 (M=1.62, SD=0.81), v_116 (M=1.21, SD=0.51) and v_117 (M=2.09, SD=1.04).

It is interesting to notice that most scales were built identically for France and Romania. However, the Cronbach's Alpha is often different which may lead to understand that maybe there were interpretation differences. All questions and answer possibilities were formulated in the same way and yet it seems that sometimes people perceived them differently. This increases the interest in cross-cultural research even more.

Variables' sets were also constructed for both countries, when having a multiple-response question. Either more answers were coded through 1 and taken into consideration in the analysis or, when the answer possibility was hierarchical, then only the first-selected items were considered and coded through 1. These variable sets were the same for both countries, therefore they will only be presented once. The first items coded as a set were the ones starting from v_9 up to v_14, defining the online activities of users. The next set was from v_73 to v_78, items which were on the possible risks

perceived by users. By coding these with 1, it will be obvious what the main risk is and for how many users. Finally, in order to find out what people buy online, v_120 to v_135 were also analysed in a set. Each of these items defines a product category and the set coding allows to see which type of product is bought most often online, but also having a decreasing ranking. Another relevant aspect are the UV – there are 8 about the shopping online behaviour such as how often people buy online, if they buy online more often than offline or when did they start.

Before presenting the results, the sample will be described.

4.2. Sample description

All respondents were connected via Internet and could fill the survey online. The purpose of the samples was that they be heterogeneous, that is why the respondents do not belong to one single category. The sample includes both users from Romania and from France and they will be described separately, as the surveys and the data exported were also distinct. The samples will be described rather thoroughly in order to achieve a deep and complete understanding of the users' profiles.

In Romania, the sample is constituted of 203 valid answers (respondents who finished the questionnaire), equally distributed: 50.2% women and 49.8% men (decimals given by missing entries). Among these, 59.7% are between 18 and 39 years old, 9% are between 40 and 49, 17.6% are between 50 and 59, 11.2% are above 60 and 2.6% under 18. When it comes to the education of the respondents, 94% finished superior studies (bachelor, masters or PHD), the rest being in high school or having finished a professional formation. The occupation of the participants is various as well: 75% are employed or independent, 10% are students, 9% retired, 2% pupils and the rest either unemployed or doing other activities. The revenue category shows that 15% of the respondents consider having a low income, 58% a medium one and 27% a high one. This dimension is interesting to see to what extent can income play a role on the habits of shopping and online shopping of users. Furthermore, 2% of the respondents do not have an internet connection at home. Among the respondents, 55% said shopping online rather often, 15% were neutral and 30% said not buying online often. Only few shop online more often than offline, namely 24% and 10% never shop online. Another 5% said they shop online very rarely or only using online services such as bill payments.

Comparing the gender categories, it seems that men buy online more often than women, since 60% of the men respondents declared so and only 48% of the women and also rank higher for buying online more often than offline (18% women and 29% men).

Another interesting variable is the age of the respondents and what it says about the online shopping habits. The age-group that shops online the most often are the ones between 18 and 29 and the group 30 – 39. Out of 101 participants of the first category, 66% say they buy online often and out of 32 belonging to the second category, 62% often shop online. The users in the age group of 40-49 are not bad customers of E-commerce either, with 44% saying they shop often online, very similar results to the 50-59 group among whose users 43% also shop online frequently. The group of over 60 years old is not as active in this field with only 23% of respondents responding that they shop online rather often and finally, the least active category is the one of users under 18, among whom only 17% would buy online fairly often. This could be related to income.

The research on the occupation item is indeed revelatory, showing that out of all the Romanian respondents, comparing occupations, it is the employed or independent category that buys online, representing 97.5% of the people saying they often buy online. It is not as if they were the only ones to shop online but on the Likert scale, this percentage is representative for the value 1 (completely agree). Among the people who buy online rather often (Likert scale value 2), 77% of them are still the employed ones, 12% are students, and 5.4% retired individuals.

In France, the sample is poorer than in Romania, with a total of 143 respondents (counting the valid answers) among whom 49.2% are women and 50.8% men. Among them, 66.4% are between 18 and 29, 16.1% between 30 and 39, 2.7% belong to the category of 40-49 years old, 7.4% of the 50-59 one, 2.7% over 60 and 4.7% under 18. The last institution the respondents graduated from (indicating their level of education) is more various than in Romania, having 4% who have not yet or at all finished high school, 8.7% who have a high school degree, 12.8% did a professional traineeship and the rest of 74.5% has a study degree (bachelors, masters or PHD). In terms of occupation, 4% of the French respondents are pupils, 20% are students, 65% employed or independent, 4% unemployed, 1.3% retired and 5.4% belong to the “other” category. Considering the income, only 13% declare having a high one, 54% say it is medium and 27% small (it is considered that pupils may have allocations). Just as in Romania, 2% of the respondents do not have an internet connection at home. When it comes to the frequency of online shopping, it seems that there are more French online shoppers than Romanian ones, 70% declaring buying often online. However, the habits are similar when comparing offline and online shopping, since only 30% saying they shopped virtually more often than offline. Moreover, 8.5% of the French users declared never shopping online, a percentage not too different from that of the Romanian users.

In France, there is also a difference between online shopping habits depending on gender. However, the results are the other way around than in Romania, showing that it is women who buy online more

often than men. Among the female respondents, 76% of them said shopping online often and 63% of the men. Unlike in Romania, in France 30% of both female and male said buying online more often than offline, proving a very balanced attitude between the genders.

The age item makes a difference in the online shopping habits. In the 18-29 year-olds group, 72% of them say buying online often. The users' group of 30-39 also shop online frequently given that 79% among them confirmed it. The users representing the 40-49 group all said they buy rather often online (100%), 60% of the 50-59 age category also answered buying online frequently. In the category of older than 60 years old, 50% of the respondents said shopping online often and only 16.7% of the ones younger than 18 buy online often. Comparing to Romania, a divergence can be noticed when it comes to the age groups of over 40 years. At the same time, an inactivity on the part of minors is also to be mentioned and it will be verified through the income item.

Some differences are once again noticed between Romania and France when it comes to the occupation item (thus income). Only 76.5% of the employed and independent confirm shopping online often as an absolute. On the Likert scale, once again, value 1 is associated to "completely agree". 14.7% of the students also confirm this absolutely. However, among all the people who buy online rather often (value 2 on the Likert scale), 21% of the students do (so all up 35.7%), 10% of the unemployed also do, 1.5% of the retired do and 9% of the "other" category do as well. No pupil says buying online often (0%). It is interesting to see that compared to Romania, the consumers are more heterogeneous in terms of income when shopping online.

Several discrepancies can be noticed between the habits of the two countries. As mentioned above, in total, there are more French online shoppers than Romanian ones. Secondly, in Romania men shop online more often than women, while in France it is the reverse situation. Furthermore, all age groups and occupation categories seem to be more active in France (with the exception of pupils). In Romania, it seems that employed people (thus individuals with a stable revenue) buy online more often than the others and, simultaneously, users seem less active in online shopping along with age, unlike the French respondents who are less dependent on the age item.

Having explained the samples and fixing the context, the results will be further analysed, building a cross-culture analysis in the end.

4.3. Results

The Romanian results will firstly be presented, followed by the French results and then by a cross-country analysis. What is relevant in the comparison of the two countries, what is different and what is similar?

4.3.1. Romania

The Romanian data will be analysed and through it, all hypothesis will be probed. The Hypothesis will be once again written, in order to avoid confusion.

H1: The more time users dedicate to online surfing, the more likely they are to shop online.

In order to verify this statement, the Correlate Function was used and the DV_25 (often shop online) was compared to the IV_8 (how much time users spend online). The result is a significant, positive relation between the two (Spearman's $\rho = 0.346$, $p < 0.01$). This means that the more time users spend online, the more likely they are to shop online, thus confirming H1. In order to verify details better, a Crosstab was also formed and indeed, people who most often buy online are the ones spending more than 8 hours a day online (24,5%). Regardless of how much time the users spend on the internet, they do not shop online more often than in a non-virtual market (See [Table 36](#) in the Appendix).

This affinity to online shopping translates into several dimensions that is why the following hypothesis will investigate which elements are the most important – technology, self-efficacy, the usefulness or the ease of use. Firstly, H2 will be analysed. Inspired by the TAM Model of Davis (1989), described in the theoretical part, two hypothesis were formed and the first one of these is the perceived utility of the purchase and its influence on the shopping behaviour of users.

TAM Model

H2: The higher the perceived utility of the purchase, the more likely are internet users to shop online.

Shortly explaining this hypothesis, it means that people look for a utilitarian reason for shopping. They need a purpose and the more useful their buying is, the more likely they are to do so. As a reminder, a scale of the utility of purchase was formed and will be used for the analysis. The results for this hypothesis are very interesting, the correlation function showing a strong and positive relation between the utility of the purchase scale (as described in the Method chapter) and buying online (Spearman's $\rho = 0.724$, $p < 0.001$). It is clear that the more useful the purchase is considered by the user, the higher the probability is that he or she buys online. Besides, Romanian respondents seem to

link utility strongly to the frequency of buying online rather than offline, since the correlation results for this relations are as follows: Spearman's $\rho = 0.567$, $p < 0.001$. Furthermore, a relevant aspect of the correlations' results is the fact that people who perceive online shopping as highly utilitarian, tend to have started online shopping more than 5 years ago. The temporal item used in this case is the DV_27 (I started more than five years ago, measure with the Likert scale as well) and it was correlated to the TAM utility scale. The outcome is a rather high positive correlation (Spearman's $\rho = 0.451$, $p < 0.001$), proving the above-stated affirmation. As a last verification of the hypothesis, an additional correlation was conducted, between the DV_31 (buying online monthly) and the respective scale, resulting yet again in a positive and very significant relation of the two (Spearman's $\rho = 0.652$, $p < 0.001$). The more useful the purchase is considered, the more frequent (once a month) will users buy online. This shows once more that the utility of purchase, as described by Davis (1989) is a major incentive for buying online. The second hypothesis of the TAM Model refers to the other dimension of Davis' system (1989), the ease of use. The coefficients allow to conclude that H2 is confirmed.

The second hypothesis of the TAM Model refers to the other dimension of Davis' system (1989), the ease of use.

H3: The higher the user friendliness of the online sites, the more willing are online shoppers to buy.

What exactly is user friendliness? It is how easily a user finds his or her way on an online site, how easy it is for him to find, save and purchase products. Correlating the two elements, the ease of use scale and the DV_25 (often shop online), the outcome is a positive and relatively strong one (Spearman's $\rho = 0.492$, $p < 0.001$) and it shows that indeed, the easier it is to use the services of a site, the more likely are Romanian users to stay on board and shop online. Further correlations were made to deepen the research and understating of the attitude of the users, alike to the previous cases. In consequence, when correlating the DV_26 (buy online more often than offline) to the scale, the outcome shows that users may buy online more often than offline thanks to the ease of use of the visited sites (Spearman's $\rho = 0.436$, $p < 0.001$). They have also been buying for a long time as the temporal item shows it (DV_27). There is a rather strong relation between the two items (the mentioned scale and "I started buying online over 5 years ago): Spearman's $\rho = 0.428$, $p < 0.001$. And lastly, the frequency of buying online also seems to increase, thanks to the correlation of the DV_31 (buy online monthly) and this scale (Spearman's $\rho = 0.446$, $p < 0.001$). This shows once again that the H3 is confirmed and with strong results. Romanian users appreciate the ease of use of sites and this encourages them to buy online frequently.

Further on, it will be tested to what extent the openness to technology of individuals influences the online shopping behaviour.

Technology affinity

H4: The more open to new technologies users are, the more likely they are to shop online.

To analyse this hypothesis, the PIIT scale will be used (see above). Correlating the DV_25 (I often buy online) to the respective scale, a positive and relatively high coefficient was obtained (Spearman's $\rho = 0.402$, $p < 0.001$). The result shows that the more affinity users have to technology, the more likely they are to shop online. Moreover, these users also seem to buy more often online than offline. This is implied by the correlation of the DV_26 (I shop online more often than offline) and the PIIT scale (Spearman's $\rho = 0.357$, $p < 0.001$). Moreover, the more technology affine users are, the longer ago they have started shopping online (over 5 years), as the correlation between DV_27 and the scale shows it (Spearman's $\rho = 0.298$, $p < 0.001$) and also shop monthly online as shown by the correlation of the DV_31 (I shop online monthly) and the PIIT scale (Spearman's $\rho = 0.300$, $p < 0.001$). Adding all the data up, the hypothesis 4 is confirmed and valid.

The following one refers to the personal perception of self-efficiency of the users and it will be probed by using the Self-efficiency scale.

H5: If the user considers himself internet self-efficient, he will be more willing to shop online.

A first correlation between the DV_25 and the mentioned scale was done and resulted in a positive, significant outcome (Spearman's $\rho = 0.461$, $p < 0.001$), showing that the more self-efficient a user feels, the more likely he is to buy online. Further verification was done through correlations: the DV_26 (buy online more often than offline) was correlated to the scale and brought a positive but medium result (Spearman's $\rho = 0.250$, $p < 0.001$), showing that these users buy online slightly more than offline. But they also seem to buy monthly, judging by the correlation between the scale once more and the DV_31 (shop online monthly) (Spearman's $\rho = 0.301$, $p < 0.001$). All the results are positive and significant. The value of the coefficients starts from medium strong to rather high, therefore the correlations are relatively strong and the hypothesis 5 is confirmed.

Another relevant aspect is the trust of the users towards E-commerce and the way this influences their online shopping attitude. The following hypothesis refers to this question.

H6: Trust in E-commerce positively influences the online shopping act.

Several analysis were made on the basis of this hypothesis. A first correlation was realised between the DV_25 (often buy online) and the trust scale, resulting in a positive, medium relation (Spearman's $\rho = 0.256$, $p < 0.001$). This shows that the more trust people have in E-commerce and online shops, the more they are willing to buy often online. However, the correlation is not very high. Moreover, users who trust online stores may buy a little more often online than offline, as it comes out from the correlation of the "I buy online more often than offline" and the trust scale (Spearman's $\rho = 0.166$, $p < 0.05$), although the correlation is rather low. More on, respondents who trust virtual shops seem to buy online more frequently (monthly) as shown by the correlation of the DV_31 (I buy online monthly) and the trust scale (Spearman's $\rho = 0.230$, $p < 0.001$).

I trust online shops		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complet de acord	27	10.3	12.9	12.9
	Parțial de acord	36	13.8	17.2	30.1
	Indiferent	29	11.1	13.9	44.0
	Parțial în dezacord	90	34.5	43.1	87.1
	Complet în dezacord	27	10.3	12.9	100.0
	Total	209	80.1	100.0	
Missing	-77	38	14.6		
	0	14	5.4		
	Total	52	19.9		
Total		261	100.0		

Table 1 - H6 Romania - Trust in online shops

Adding all up, the hypothesis is confirmed since all relations are positive and users seem to be slightly influenced by their trust, therefore, the more they trust online shops, the more they will buy online and the more frequently. However, an explanation for the low and medium relations in the correlations could be the fact that many Romanian users don't trust online shops that much. Using the frequency function, it came out that only 30% "trust online shops", while 14% were neutral and the remaining 66% do not trust online stores (out of 209 valid answers). This is a relevant finding for the shopping behaviour of the Romanian shoppers.

Risks

Further it will be analysed what influences people's online shopping behaviour. Which are the risks they perceive and what influence they have, what impact do motivations, how important is trust or the ease of use of sites but also what products are bought online the most.

When it comes to the main risks, a set of variables was made to find out what worries people the most. The most important risk that Romanians perceive is the product quality of the online order. 40% of respondents, almost half of them, felt like this was the major risk. The second perceived risk was security, 22.1% saw this as the main problem when buying online. Delivery came next since 14.9% of

the Romanian participants named this one as the major issue, followed by payment, design and customer's service (out of 195 valid answers).

\$MainRisk Frequencies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
What is the main risk that concerns you? ^a	Delivery	29	14.9%	14.9%
	Design	11	5.6%	5.6%
	Payment	24	12.3%	12.3%
	Security	43	22.1%	22.1%
	Prod quality	78	40.0%	40.0%
	Customer's service	10	5.1%	5.1%
Total		195	100.0%	100.0%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Table 2 - H7 Romania - Main risks

The next hypothesis was related to risks' perception and in what way this influences the online shopping behaviour.

H7: The more risks are perceived by the internet users, the less they are willing to shop online.

Based on the found theory, there are many risks that can push away online shoppers and influence their behaviour. That is why this hypothesis is a very complex one and will be treated as such. There are several scales that address the risks' perception of users related to online shopping. Each scale will be described in order to see to what extent each barrier affects users, are there certain risks that have a higher impact than others? This will be analysed in the following part. The conclusion will be based on all the scales, thus the confirmation or disapproval of the hypothesis.

As explained previously, there are several scales that relate to risks. The first one is the Private issues scale. When correlated to the DV_25 (I often shop online), the Spearman's coefficient indicates a very significant negative relation between the two = -0.230, with $p < 0.001$. This shows that the higher the perception of the risk of privacy, the less likely are users to buy online, thus influencing the shopping attitude. Furthermore, sustaining the same conclusion, when comparing the privacy variable with the DV_26 (buying online more often than offline), a very significant negative relation was the outcome once again (Spearman's $\rho = -0.208$, $p = 0.004$). This shows that the higher this risk is considered, the more preferable offline shopping would be for the users. Finally, in order to further examine this conclusion, the privacy scale was correlated with DV_32 (never buy online), giving a positive very significant relation (Spearman's $\rho = 0.217$, $p < 0.01$) and ensuring that the users considering this risk as high rarely buy online.

The following scale describing risks is the uncertainty one. This was correlated to the DV_25 (often buy online) and the outcome was interesting: the relation is highly significant and negative

(Spearman's $\rho = -0.342$, $p < 0.001$), meaning that the higher uncertainty risks are considered, the less likely are users to buy online. Yet again, correlating this scale to the DV_26 (shopping online more often than offline), the outcome is a negative, significant one (Spearman's $\rho = -0.231$, $p < 0.001$), thus showing once more that people perceiving these risks are more likely to buy offline. It was also concluded that they are not very frequent online shoppers all up, given that in the correlation of DV_31 (buying online monthly) and the Uncertainty scale, the Spearman's ρ was a negative and very significant one: -0.329 , $p < 0.001$.

When it comes to payment, the results are interesting. Through correlating the DV_25 (often shop online) to the payment as a risk scale, the Spearman's $\rho = -0.359$ was found, with $p < 0.001$. This means that the higher the payment risk is considered, the less likely are the users to shop online. Just as in the previous cases, users perceiving a payment risk would rather buy offline, thus their likelihood of shopping online decreases (Spearman's $\rho = -0.254$, $p < 0.001$), and they do not buy online very frequently as shown when the scale was correlated to the DV_31 (buying online monthly), given that the relation was negative and very significant once more (Spearman's $\rho = -0.364$, $p < 0.001$).

Although delivery was stated as an important risk, perceived by many users and considered by a few as one of the most important, this does not seem to impede online shopping. When correlating DV_25 (often shop online) with the delivery scale, the Spearman's ρ was -0.130 so negative indeed, but very slim and $p = 0.07$, thus not very significant. The same goes for the DV_26 (buy online more often than offline), the outcome being the following: Spearman's $\rho = -0.100$, $p = 0.17$. The DV_31 (buy online monthly) didn't make much difference, since the Spearman's ρ in the correlation with the scale was -0.071 and $p = 0.33$. Although the reliability of the scale was high, the correlation results are not significant. That is why the elements were also broken and analysed separately. In this case, correlating users who expect delivery problems and DV_25 gave a Spearman's ρ of -0.206 $p < 0.01$, whereas users worrying about product confusions correlated to how often they buy online had the following outcome: Spearman's $\rho = -0.237$ $p < 0.001$. Both relations are negative and very significant, showing that delivery-related risks may cause scepticism when online shopping. In other words, the higher the delivery risks are, the less likely are people to purchase products online.

The design risk does not seem to influence the habit of online shopping strongly. When the DV_25 and the design scale were correlated, the Spearman's ρ was equal to 0.152 and $p < 0.05$. A rather low and positive relation between the two, because of the formulation of the questions. They were all positive and interrogated if the users found design and the technical aspects of a site important, hence, the positive correlation (the more important the design is for users the more likely they would be to buy online). However, the design scale doesn't have a very strong impact on the users. After

correlating several DV to the design scale, the only additional significant result was the one between the design scale and the DV_31 (shop online monthly): Spearman's $\rho = 0.167$, $p < 0.05$. This remains a weak correlation.

The product scale is the following one to measure the perceived risks of users. The correlation results between this scale and the DV_25 (often buy online) are once more negatively significant (Spearman's $\rho = -0.271$, $p < 0.001$). Online shopping seems less attractive when users take the product quality/aspect risk into account. And indeed, users who perceive this risk will buy more offline than online (Spearman's $\rho = -0.288$, $p < 0.001$). Moreover, the riskier people find ordering online products, the less frequently they shop online, given that the correlation results are as follows: Spearman's $\rho = -0.315$ $p < 0.001$.

Finally, the Consumer's service scale was also correlated to the DV_25 (often shop online). The Spearman's ρ is equal to -0.285 in this case, and $p < 0.001$. This means that the less confidence users have in the customer's service, the less likely they would be to buy online. Once more, people do seem to prefer shopping offline than online, since the results of the DV_26 (buy online more often than offline) correlation to this scale were negative and significant: Spearman's $\rho = -0.267$, $p < 0.001$. They also buy less regularly (less than once a month), when perceiving a service consumer's risk, this correlation having a Spearman's $\rho = -0.265$ and $p < 0.001$.

Except for the design perception, the other issues constitute real risks that users take into account while online shopping. As it has just been proven, the Hypothesis 7 is confirmed and users do seem to buy online less when they perceive a risk strongly. However, interestingly enough, the correlation results are not very high either. This could lead to believe that although some risks play a role in influencing the attitude of consumers, they might not be as strong as to stop them from shopping online completely or not strong enough to stop all users from doing so. The risks seem to be acknowledged and also seem to reinforce the hypothesis but rather moderately.

Incentives

Further on, the topic of incentives will be discussed and the next hypothesis analysed.

H8: The more motivations internet users find in online purchasing, the more likely they are to shop online.

In order to read the results for this hypothesis, once again several scales will be analysed, since there are more than one scales of items related to motivations.

The first one is the Convenience scale. Through a correlation between the DV_25 (I often shop online) and this scale, a positive and very significant result was found. The Spearman's rho is equal to 0.432, $p < 0.001$. This shows that the more convenient people find online shopping, the more likely they are to shop virtually. It seems that the convenience of E-commerce is a strong motivation for Romanian consumers. Moreover, when the scale was correlated to the DV_26 (shop online more often than offline), another positive relation was found with a significant Spearman's rho of 0.342, $p < 0.001$. In other words, this means that the higher the convenience of shopping online, the more likely are people to do it in favour of offline buying. Finally, users who find the convenience motivational, are also more likely to buy online every month, since the correlations between the two items, DV_31 (buy online monthly) and the scale resulted in a significant Spearman's rho of 0.386, $p < 0.001$.

The next scale is the price one. The Spearman's rho for this one when correlated to the DV_25 (often buy online) is low but significant and positive: 0.193, $p < 0.01$. The better the prices online, the more likely are users to buy online, but the impact is moderate. Users seem to notice prices online but it is not the main incentive to convince them buying. The prices also don't necessarily seem to incite users to buy more online than offline, since the Spearman's rho is 0.166, $p < 0.05$ (correlation between the DV_26 and the scale). So the more attractive the prices online, the more users will prefer online shopping to offline buying. However, it seems that the good prices found online could encourage users to buy online more frequently all up, around once a month. In this correlation, the Spearman's rho (= 0.210 with $p < 0.01$) proves a positive and significant relation. In order to inspect the hypothesis further, the scale was also broken into the two initial items and the frequencies of both were analysed through the descriptive statistics function. This allows to see that 22% of the Romanian users (out of 200, due to missing data) are neutral to the statement "online shopping helps me save money" and only 49% agree to this (Likert reversed scale: "complet de acord" = 5, "complet în dezacord" = 1). This is no vast majority and it probably explains the feeble correlation between prices online and the actual online shopping habits.

I find good deals online		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complet în dezacord	12	4.6	5.8	5.8
	Parțial în dezacord	25	9.6	12.1	17.9
	Indiferent	39	14.9	18.8	36.7
	Parțial de acord	84	32.2	40.6	77.3
	Complet de acord	47	18.0	22.7	100.0
	Total	207	79.3	100.0	
Missing	-77	46	17.6		
	0	8	3.1		
	Total	54	20.7		
Total		261	100.0		

Table 3 - H8 Romania - Shopping online helps save money

Online shopping helps me save money					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complet în dezacord	21	8.0	10.5	10.5
	Parțial în dezacord	37	14.2	18.5	29.0
	Indiferent	44	16.9	22.0	51.0
	Parțial de acord	73	28.0	36.5	87.5
	Complet de acord	25	9.6	12.5	100.0
	Total	200	76.6	100.0	
Missing	-77	46	17.6		
	0	15	5.7		
	Total	61	23.4		
Total		261	100.0		

Table 4 - H8 Romania - I find good deals online

The last scale out of the motivations' is the personal pleasure one. Through the correlation function it was found that this incentive plays an important role in the online shopping. Comparing the DV_25 (often buy online) to the pleasure scale, the Spearman's rho is 0.568, $p < 0.001$. The result shows a high, very significant relation between the two. The more convenient online shopping is, the more users will shop virtually. It seems this is the main motivation of Romanian users to shop online. The relation between this scale and the item 36 (shopping online more often than offline) resulted in a Spearman's rho of 0.449, $p < 0.001$. Once more, a rather high bond and a significant, positive one. It shows that the more pleasure users get from online shopping, the more they are willing to replace offline shopping through the virtual market. And additionally to that, the outcome of the correlation between shopping online monthly (DV_31) and the pleasure scale resulted in: Spearman's rho = 0.587, $p < 0.001$. A positive strong relation between the two, concluding that the higher the personal pleasure while online shopping, the more frequently users will do it. After the three analysis it is safe to state that the pleasure incentive is the strongest for online shopping. Indeed, a frequencies table allowed to also see that 62% (out of 206) of the Romanian respondents specifically said they enjoyed online shopping (Likert scale "complet de acord" = 1 and "complet în dezacord" = 5). With these results, the H8 is confirmed, because it is clear that when people perceive motivations behind the online shopping process, they are more likely to do it. Nevertheless, the incentive that seems to impact the online

I like shopping online					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complet de acord	58	22.2	28.2	28.2
	Parțial de acord	70	26.8	34.0	62.1
	Indiferent	53	20.3	25.7	87.9
	Parțial în dezacord	14	5.4	6.8	94.7
	Complet în dezacord	11	4.2	5.3	100.0
	Total	206	78.9	100.0	
Missing	-77	46	17.6		
	0	9	3.4		
	Total	55	21.1		
Total		261	100.0		

Table 5 - H8 Romania - Enjoyment online shopping

shopping behaviour the most is the personal pleasure, followed by convenience and only poorly by price. This can lead to a future discussion point, namely, maybe there are other incentives that fuel the users more.

Product involvement and categories

The following hypothesis is related to the product involvement of the users and aims to find out what impact this plays on online purchasing.

H9: The higher the product involvement of the internet user, the higher the willingness to shop online.

As already explained, the logic behind this hypothesis is that online users can find all information about products, thus this would encourage them to also buy them online. Product involvement materialises in a research attitude of the users. They would want to seek information, to understand the product. All details and pieces of information would be relevant for such a situation (Zaichowsky, 1985). The frequency function applied to IV_115 (research before shopping online – see table 6) and IV_117 (information is more important than price and entertainment – see table 7) shows that 95% of the users (out of 190) admit to researching before buying online. Moreover, 83% of the respondents (out of 186) find information more important than the price or the entertainment. This proves that information is indeed important for the Romanian users, but does this affect their online shopping behaviour or not?

Correlating DV_25 (often shop online) to the IV_115 (I research a lot before buying), the result is low and insignificant (Spearman's $\rho=0.116$, $p = 0.116$). This would not impact online shopping. The outcome when correlating IV_117 (Information is more important than price or entertainment) to the same DV_25 is even weaker (Spearman's $\rho=0.053$, $p = 0.473$), once again showing no significance.

Research information before buying online					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complet de acord	136	52.1	71.6	71.6
	Parțial de acord	44	16.9	23.2	94.7
	Indiferent	9	3.4	4.7	99.5
	Complet în dezacord	1	.4	.5	100.0
	Total	190	72.8	100.0	
Missing	-77	58	22.2		
	0	13	5.0		
	Total	71	27.2		
Total		261	100.0		

Table 6 - H9 Romania - Research information before shopping online

Information is more important than price or entertainment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complet de acord	95	36.4	51.1	51.1
	Parțial de acord	60	23.0	32.3	83.3
	Indiferent	14	5.4	7.5	90.9
	Parțial în dezacord	16	6.1	8.6	99.5
	Complet în dezacord	1	.4	.5	100.0
	Total	186	71.3	100.0	
Missing	-77	58	22.2		
	0	17	6.5		
	Total	75	28.7		
Total		261	100.0		

Table 7 - H9 Romania - Information more important than price or entertainment

The next step was a correlation between the actual product involvement scale with the DV_25 (Spearman's rho = 0.069, p = 0.350). This is an insignificant result which leads to considering that the product involvement is unrelated to the online shopping behaviour. Investigating further, the DV_26 (buying online more often than offline) was correlated to the scale and a negative, very low relation was the outcome (Spearman's rho = -0.52, p = 0.485). Yet again, the hypothesis is weakened by the results which show that high involvement doesn't positively influence the online shopping attitude. Compared to several other IVs of the questionnaire, the correlation remains close to zero. The correlation with the DV_31 (buying online monthly) is also very low (Spearman's rho = 0.037, p = 0.627) as is the one with the DV_32 (I never buy online) which results in: Spearman's rho = 0.082, p = 0.267.

An interesting outcome was obtained when correlating the DV_25 (often buy online) and the item 118 (I buy personal or emotional products). In this case, the Spearman's rho was equal to 0.309, p < 0.001. This shows that Romanian users do indeed buy personal products online – the more personal products they may find, the more they will buy online. Furthermore, an additional correlation (IV_118 and DV_26 – buy online more often than offline) brings another positive relation, but a rather low one (Spearman's rho = 0.220, p < 0.01). The respondents are likely to buy personal products online a little more than offline. However, the influence remains rather low and when faced to the other results, they do not sustain the hypothesis. Consequently, it goes without saying that the hypothesis 9 is not valid for the Romanian users and the product involvement does not influence the online shopping behaviour much. It doesn't seem to have a high impact in any direction.

Analysing all the data, it would mean that people do need and seek information but this doesn't necessarily influence their purchase positively. It can be a lack of information on the Romanian sites, maybe a low quality of information that does not convince users to buy virtually. Concluding, however,

the hypothesis cannot be sustained by the results and therefore is not valid in the case of the Romanian users.

H10: Product categories and types influence the internet users' willingness to shop online. In order to find this out, item 119 (I don't like buying everything online) was correlated to the previous-mentioned dependable variables 25 (often buy online), 26 (buy online more often than offline) and 31 (buy online monthly). The outcomes are rather high and negative, as follows: the first correlation is very significant and shows that the more people dislike buying everything online, the less often they shop online (Spearman's $\rho = -0.422$, $p < 0.001$). The second relation is also negative and relevant, proving the same logic as the first – if the user doesn't like buying everything virtually than the less likely he is to shop more often online than offline (Spearman's $\rho = -0.451$, $p < 0.001$). Finally, when correlated to the last item, yet another negative significant result was obtained, following the same sense as explained before (Spearman's $\rho = -0.404$, $p < 0.001$). The more selective people are with the online-ordered products, the less frequently they will buy online. Out of the 190 respondents (valid answers), 77% expressed their preference to not buying just everything online, as the frequency function showed. Thus, the H10 is confirmed, product categories do influence the users' behaviour ("Complet de acord"=1, "Complet in dezacord"=5).

I am not OK buying anything online					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complet de acord	93	35.6	48.9	48.9
	Parțial de acord	53	20.3	27.9	76.8
	Indiferent	28	10.7	14.7	91.6
	Parțial în dezacord	9	3.4	4.7	96.3
	Complet în dezacord	7	2.7	3.7	100.0
	Total	190	72.8	100.0	
Missing	-77	58	22.2		
	0	13	5.0		
	Total	71	27.2		
Total		261	100.0		

Table 8 - H10 Romania - Buying everything online

However, it is interesting to see, what the product categories that Romanian users like buying online are. Using the Multiple response function a data set was made and its frequencies were then analysed. The results can be read in the Table 9, in descending order of preference. In the equivalent part of the French results' chapter, the same table will appear. A comparison will be made in the cross-analysis chapter.

What kind of products do you buy online?	Number of answers	Percentage
Trips' reservations, tickets	124	68.3%
Electronics	125	66.1%
Clothes and accessories	95	50.3%
Books, movies, music	91	48.1%
Cinema, theatre, museum tickets	90	47.6%
Cosmetics and beauty products	69	36.5%
Sport articles	49	25.9%
Licences, Software (games excluded)	39	20.6%
Insurances	38	20.1%
Furniture and decoration	37	19.6%
Personalised products	33	17.5%
Video games	29	15.3%
Toys	27	14.3%
Food	24	12.7%
Cars or afferent accessories	17	9%
Collection products	3	1.6%

Table 9 – H10 Romania - Product categories by online shopping

Expectation-Confirmation Theory

Yet another relevant aspect of the online shopping behaviour is the satisfaction and the disappointment of users as a consequence of previous experiences. In order to explore these dimensions, Oliver's ECT Theory (1980) is the basis.

H11: According to the ECT Theory, a positive or a negative online shopping experience will respectively influence the online shopping behaviour.

Firstly, the influence of satisfaction with online shopping will be investigated. Secondly, the disappointment of previous experiences will be put to the test and following, a comparison will be possible in order to see if one of the two has a higher impact than the other.

The satisfaction scale was correlated to the DV_25 (often buy online), DV_26 (buy online more often than offline) and DV_31 (buy online monthly). The results of the first correlation are positive and significant (Spearman's $\rho = 0.314$, $p < 0.001$), the second one is also positive and medium in strength

(Spearman's $\rho = 0.279$, $p < 0.001$) and the third one follows the first ones by being positive and significant (Spearman's $\rho = 0.300$, $p < 0.001$). The outcome proves that people who are satisfied with their previous online shopping experiences are positively influenced in their future behaviour. The more satisfied they are, the more they buy online, sometimes more often than offline and the more frequently. A further insight in the problematic shows that 84% of the users (out of 188) buy from shops that have already satisfied their expectations and 89% of them say being satisfied when their expectations were met (percentages obtained thanks to the frequency function (Likert scale "Complet de acord"=1, "Complet in dezacord"=5). The first part of the hypothesis is thus confirmed.

I buy from shops that have convinced me

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complet de acord	122	46.7	64.9	64.9
	Parțial de acord	36	13.8	19.1	84.0
	Indiferent	15	5.7	8.0	92.0
	Parțial în dezacord	6	2.3	3.2	95.2
	Complet în dezacord	9	3.4	4.8	100.0
	Total	188	72.0	100.0	
Missing	-77	57	21.8		
	0	16	6.1		
	Total	73	28.0		
Total		261	100.0		

Table 10 - H11 Romania - Buying from shops that have convinced me

For its second dimension, the disappointment scale was used and correlated to the same dependable variables DV_25 (often buy online), DV_26 (buy online more often than offline) and DV_31 (buy online monthly). The first result pointed out a negative relation (Spearman's $\rho = -0.071$, with $p = 0.334$). The second correlation was also negative and low (Spearman's $\rho = -0.088$, $p = 0.238$) as for the third one, still negative and very weak (Spearman's $\rho = -0.031$, $p = 0.683$). The second part of the hypothesis can't be considered as confirmed, since the relations are very weak. Using the frequency function, it is obvious that almost 92% of the respondents (out of 193) avoid shops that have disappointed them (Likert scale "Complet de acord"=1, "Complet in dezacord"=5). This means that having unpleasant online experiences makes users definitely avoid certain shops but not online buying and E-commerce all up.

However, among the two, the satisfaction scale has stronger results and thus a stronger impact on the online shopping behaviour. The more satisfied consumers are, the more they will shop online. The more disappointed, the more they will avoid specific shops that didn't meet their needs.

Concluding, Romanian users seem rather familiar to online shopping and do it often. The incentives and advantages of E-commerce prevail over the risks and negative experiences. The motivation that impacts online shopping the most is personal pleasure while the risk that scares them away the most is the quality of the payment one. However, this only influences part of the consumers as shown by

the above correlations. Just as in the case of the ECT Theory, satisfaction has a stronger influence than disappointment on the future behaviour.

In the following part, the results corresponding to the open question item users will be analysed.

If I am disappointed by a shop I will avoid it

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complet de acord	133	51.0	68.9	68.9
	Parțial de acord	44	16.9	22.8	91.7
	Indiferent	10	3.8	5.2	96.9
	Parțial în dezacord	4	1.5	2.1	99.0
	Complet în dezacord	2	.8	1.0	100.0
	Total	193	73.9	100.0	
Missing	-77	57	21.8		
	0	11	4.2		
	Total	68	26.1		
Total		261	100.0		

Table 11 - H11 Romania - Avoiding shops that have disappointed

Qualitative research

In order to understand the online shopping attitude of the users better, an open question about possible negative experiences was asked. This point is the item 104. In order to analyse the content of the answers, certain codes were used. Each scale created in SPSS (see Method), corresponding to a risk, was noted with a number. The content was then read and the respective risks were recognised and coded. The risks which were being followed were the ones listed previously, namely: privacy, uncertainty, payment, delivery, design, product and customer's service. Through this method, all of the answers were summed up and can now be presented. The purpose is to see which risks have been experienced the most in the actual E-commerce and online shopping system, as well as how many of the users have not experienced any inconveniences while online shopping.

Out of the 203 people who answered the questionnaire, not all of them have had problems when online shopping, namely only 69 people shared their negative experiences. In other words, 34% of the people who have been buying online have had various inconveniences. As a reminder, some people, never shop online – almost 10% of the asked people answered never doing so. Another 5% said they shop online very rarely or only using online services such as bill payments. Judging by the open questions' answers, this is either because of lack of trust or because of a personal preference.

The main problem that was mentioned by the Romanian users was product-related. The problems quoted were different: quality of the product, size, receiving broken products (simply not working or having been deteriorated on delivery), receiving a different product or size from what they had ordered which obviously determined a belated delivery of the right one. Out of the 203 respondents, 37 (18%) declared having had a product-related problem.

The next category which caused inconveniences was the delivery. Users received their deliveries late, they complained about commercial sites not having an own distribution chain but working with separate delivery companies which do not keep the promises and standards made by the shop, the difficulty of contacting the delivery responsible, although only ordering once some had to pay for several deliveries because the products were distributed by different firms and some did not even receive the delivery. Out of the 203 Romanian respondents, 16 were confronted with belated deliveries or similar inconveniences as quoted above, namely 8%.

The uncertainty issue was quoted by 7 people (3%), due to various situations such as the bankruptcy of the shop they ordered from (the payment was however done) or lack of information about the services.

Furthermore, only 3 people complained about payment issues. One of them specified fraud and being stolen his credit card data, the others were rather displeased with the payment system (for example not receiving a confirmation) or facing problems getting back the money they paid for products they never received.

Concerning the design category, only 3 people were displeased because the site was not updated (stock information, appropriate product information).

Once more, only 3 people specified having had trouble with the customers' service. They either faced difficulties in contacting them, they were not willing to help, or there was a lack of information about the service.

No complaints whatsoever were made about privacy, people did not state feeling in one way or another threatened by the collection of personal information or harassed with information, emails or newsletters they hadn't asked for.

4.3.2. France

The same analysis will be performed for France. As a reminder, the first hypothesis is as follows:

H1: The more time users dedicate to online surfing, the more likely they are to shop online.

The hypothesis was tested using the correlation function. The DV_25 (often shop online) was correlated to the IV_8 (how much time users spend online). The result is low but fairly significant, but not attesting a very strong influence of the time spent online on the likeliness of shopping online (Spearman's $\rho = 0.177$, $p < 0.05$). Some additional analysis were made so as to deepen the understanding of the correlation between the two factors. A crosstab (see [table 37](#) in the appendix) shows that there is not a very strong difference between users spending different amounts of time

online and their shopping habits. This is obvious through the following percentages: 80% of those spending more than 8 hours online buy often online, 75% of the users who spend between 4 and 8 hours online also do, 62% the ones who are less than 4 hours a day online do as well, and the ones spending time online every second day surprisingly say to 100% that they shop often or fairly so online. Furthermore, regardless of how much time online they spend, users do not seem to buy online more often than offline. Out of the users buying online monthly, 64% of those spending more than 8 h online often shop virtually, 52% of those spending between 4 and 8 h also do and 75% of the users only spending time online every second day shop often online. This reinforces the previous logic of a poor influence of the time spent online on the online shopping frequency. Despite of the correlation being positive and rather significant, the habits of the people do not seem to confirm H1 for France. The time online item is not the major factor in buying online.

TAM Model

The following hypothesis is constructed thanks to the TAM Model of Davis (1989).

H2: The higher the perceived usefulness of the purchase, the more likely are internet users to shop online.

As the hypothesis was already explained in the previous chapter (see [4.3.2.](#)), the analysis will be made directly. Using the correlation function, the link between the DV_25 (I often shop online) and the utility scale was formed. The outcome is positive and rather high, showing that the more useful the purchase is considered to be, the more often French users will shop online (Spearman's $\rho = 0.504$, $p < 0.001$). In order to explore the possible link between the utility and the frequency of online shopping, two more correlations were made. Firstly, the DV_26 (shop more often online than offline) was correlated to the mentioned scale, resulting in a positive and significant coefficient (Spearman's $\rho = 0.420$, $p < 0.001$), showing that the more useful the purchase is, the more likely users are to buy online rather than offline. Secondly, the correlation between DV_31 (shop online monthly) and the utility scale was analysed, obtaining a positive, rather strong correlation once more (Spearman's $\rho = 0.357$, $p < 0.001$). This proves once again that the higher the utility, the more frequent users will shop online. Moreover, just like in the case for the Romanian users, the French users for whom the utility of purchase is important started shopping online more than 5 years ago, outcome resulted from the correlation of the utility scale and the DV_27 (started more than five years ago, measured in the Likert scale): Spearman's $\rho = 0.313$, $p < 0.001$. Adding up all the results, it can be concluded that the utility of purchase is an important factor when online shopping, having a positive impact on the behaviour of users and thus confirming H2 for France.

The following hypothesis refers to the second aspect of the TAM Model. H3 has also been explained in the previous chapter (see [4.3.2.](#))

H3: The higher the user friendliness of the online sites, the more willing are online shoppers to buy.

Once again, the correlation function was used in establishing the relation between the items and the scale. DV_25 (often shop online) was firstly related to the ease of use scale, resulting in a positive but moderate outcome (Spearman's $\rho = 0.218$, $p < 0.01$), showing that the easier a site is to use, the more likely people are to shop online. Onwards, the DV_26 (shop more often online than offline) was also correlated to the ease of use scale and had a positive but low coefficient (Spearman's $\rho = 0.163$, $p = 0.057$). This means that the user friendliness only plays a minor role in the preference of the users for online shopping, rather than offline. However, the easier a site is to use, the more frequent (namely monthly) users buy online, obtaining a positive, intermediate correlation (Spearman's $\rho = 0.257$, $p < 0.01$). The positive coefficients confirm the third hypothesis. Nevertheless, the influence of the ease of use of sites on the online shopping behaviour of the French users seems to be moderate.

Technology affinity

The next hypothesis is related to the openness to new technologies and how this may impact the willingness of users to shop virtually.

H4: The more open to new technologies users are, the more likely they are to shop online.

For testing this hypothesis, the afferent PIIT scale for France was used. The DV_25 (often buy online) was correlated to the PIIT scale and resulted in a positive, intermediate result (Spearman's $\rho = 0.200$, $p < 0.05$). This shows that the more open people are to technology, the more they will shop online, but the correlation is only moderate. Further on, the DV_26 (buy online more often than offline) and the DV_31 (buy online monthly) were correlated to the scale but resulted in small coefficients, not indicating a significant or influential correlation, thus not influencing the online shopping behaviour. The first result is as follows: Spearman's $\rho = 0.83$, $p = 0.328$, so not statistically significant. The second coefficient is Spearman's $\rho = 0.99$, $p = 0.243$. Thanks to the first correlation, it can be considered that the hypothesis 4 is confirmed. However, it is interesting to notice that the links are not very strong so it seems that French users are not that influenced by their openness to technology in order to buy online. There are probably other, stronger incentives that fuel their online shopping behaviour, which will be analysed onwards. In order to deepen the understanding of these correlations, the frequency function was used. This showed that 71,2% of the French users (out of 142) are open to technology and try out new technologies, thus implying that it is not that French

users would not be open to this area, but rather that this simply does not influence their online shopping attitude.

The following hypothesis is related to the personal perception of self-efficiency.

H5: If the user considers himself internet self-efficient, he will be more willing to shop online.

The probing of H5 is based on the self-efficiency scale, correlated to the relevant items. The scale was firstly correlated to the DV_25 (often buy online) and resulted in a positive, rather strong coefficient (Spearman's $\rho = 0.374$, $p < 0.001$). This shows that the more self-efficient a user considers him/herself when using the internet, the more likely they are to buy online. A second correlation of the same scale and the DV_26 (shop online more often than offline) was created and shows once more

Try new tech		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complètement d'accord	40	24.8	28.2	28.2
	Partiellement d'accord	61	37.9	43.0	71.1
	Indifférent	29	18.0	20.4	91.5
	Partiellement en désaccord	7	4.3	4.9	96.5
	Complètement en désaccord	5	3.1	3.5	100.0
	Total	142	88.2	100.0	
Missing	-77	16	9.9		
	0	3	1.9		
	Total	19	11.8		
Total		161	100.0		

Table 12 - H4 France - Try new technologies

a positive, intermediate link between the two, meaning that the preference for online shopping rather than offline shopping increases with the self-perception of internet efficiency (Spearman's $\rho = 0.206$, $p < 0.05$). Further on, the self-efficiency also plays a role in the frequency of online shopping, by influencing this positively, as resulted from the correlation between the afferent scale and the DV_31 (buy online monthly): Spearman's $\rho = 0.266$, $p < 0.001$. All coefficients are intermediate or towards high, confirming the H5.

The following aspect that will be analysed is the trust users have in E-commerce and the way in which this influences the online shopping attitudes.

H6: Trust in E-commerce positively influences the online shopping act.

Several correlations were made once more on the basis of this hypothesis. As in the previous cases, the DV_25 (often buy online) was correlated to the trust scale (the one described in the [Method](#) chapter). The results of this correlation are, however, not significant (Spearman's $\rho = 0.162$, $p = 0.063$). The second correlation compared the DV_26 (buy online more often than offline) to the scale and resulted, once more, in an insignificant coefficient that doesn't prove any influence of the

confidence of the users on their preference of buying online rather than offline (Spearman's rho = 0.57, p = 0.517). Finally, the last correlation does have a positive but rather small coefficient, showing a weak link between the DV_31 (buy online monthly) and the confidence scale (Spearman's rho = 0.209, p < 0.05). Interpreting this result, it would mean that the more confidence people have, the more frequently and regularly they would buy online. To conclude, the results are quite weak to confirm the hypothesis 6. Despite the last positive coefficient, there is no correlation between trust and the online shopping behaviour of French users. In order to understand this phenomenon, a frequency table was also created. It shows that 52,6% of the French users (out of 135) don't really trust online shops, while 17% of them are neutral (Likert scale "Complètement en désaccord"=1, "Complètement d'accord"=5). Although the percentage is higher than the Romanian one, trust doesn't seem to play an active role in convincing users to shop online more.

Globally, I trust online shops		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complètement en désaccord	13	8.1	9.6	9.6
	Partiellement en désaccord	58	36.0	43.0	52.6
	Indifférent	23	14.3	17.0	69.6
	Partiellement d'accord	33	20.5	24.4	94.1
	Complètement d'accord	8	5.0	5.9	100.0
	Total	135	83.9	100.0	
Missing	System	26	16.1		
Total		161	100.0		

Table 13 - H5 France - Global trust in online shops

Risks

The next step of the paper's analysis is understanding how risks may influence the behaviour of French users when it comes to online buying. As already shown for Romania, the main perceived risks by the French users will also be analysed. A set of variables was constructed and afterwards, thanks to the frequencies function, the following percentages were found: the main risk French users consider is the quality of the product with up to 33% of them choosing this one (out of 124). The second one is delivery, with 22.6% of the users picking this as the main problem they take into account. Payment and security also seem to be serious risks for the French users, with 19,4% of them choosing each of these risk-categories. Next comes customer's service and design (see table 14). The values are not very far from the Romanian ones, having the same risk hierarchy as perceived by the users. The H7 deepens this aspect.

\$MainRisk Frequencies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
What are the main risks? ^a	Delivery	28	22.6%	22.6%
	Design	2	1.6%	1.6%
	Payment	24	19.4%	19.4%
	Security	24	19.4%	19.4%
	Prod quality	41	33.1%	33.1%
	Customer's service	5	4.0%	4.0%
Total		124	100.0%	100.0%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Table 14 - H7 France - Main Risks

H7: The more risks are perceived by the internet users, the less they are willing to shop online.

There are many types of risks that users take into account when shopping online, as showed by the theory and the questionnaire. That is why this hypothesis is very complex and will be analysed in several steps, alike to the Romanian one. Each risk-related scale will be correlated to the dependable variables and all together, they will construct the testing of the hypothesis.

The first scale is the Privacy one. It was correlated to the DV_25 (often shop online) but the outcome is insignificant (Spearman's $\rho = -0.028$, $p = 0.755$). This shows no impact of the privacy risk on the online shopping attitude. Further on, the same scale was correlated to the DV_26 (buy online more often than offline) and resulted in similar coefficients as the previous experiment (Spearman's $\rho = 0.005$, $p = 0.954$). The result is not significant and shows no correlation between the two items. Finally, the DV_31 (buy online monthly) was also tested but the outcome was, though negative, insignificant once more (Spearman's $\rho = -0.036$, $p = 0.689$). No correlation between the privacy risk and the online shopping attitude was found. However, interestingly enough, frequency tables showed that people do take this risk into consideration with 83% of the French users admitting it bothers them sharing so much personal information on online sites and 81% of them are worried that sites collect too much personal information about users. Though this is certainly a perceived risk, it does not impact the online shopping habits.

The uncertainty scale will show if users are more influenced by this risk category. Once again, the DV_25 (often buy online) was correlated to the uncertainty scale and resulted in a negative, significant outcome (Spearman's $\rho = -0.273$, $p < 0.01$). This means that the more pregnant the uncertainty risk is considered, the less likely are people to shop online. Onwards, the DV_26 (shop online more often than offline) was also correlated to the same scale, obtaining a negative but weak and insignificant result (Spearman's $\rho = -0.160$, $p = 0.077$). This implies that the uncertainty risks do not play a role in

the preference of online shopping over offline buying of the users, there is no strong correlation. Finally, the DV_31 (buy online monthly) was also correlated to the uncertainty scale and resulted in a negative, intermediate coefficient (Spearman's $\rho = -0.261$, $p < 0.01$), proving that the higher the uncertainty-risk perception of the users, the lower the frequency of online shopping. All in all, the correlations are significant and prove that uncertainty plays a role in the buying behaviour.

In contrast to the Romanian scales, the payment scale was not kept as such for France because of the low reliability results. Therefore, the items that were intended for the scale will be analysed individually. The first one is the IV_79 (my credit card information is not endangered by the online payment), which was correlated to the DV_25 (often buy online). Although the results are slightly negative, there is no significant coefficient to show that users thinking their credit card information would be endangered will shop less online. Thus, these coefficients will not be repeated. The IV_80_RE will also be correlated to the dependable items. V_80 (worried about fraud) was recoded because the scale was inversed in the questionnaire. The results of these correlations are more interesting and show that this risk perception may have an influence on the behaviour of the consumers. V_80_RE was firstly correlated to the DV_25 (often shop online) and obtained a negative but unreliable coefficient (Spearman's $\rho = -0.136$, $p = 0.131$). However, when correlating the same independent variable to DV_26 (buy online more often than offline), the coefficient is stronger and significant (Spearman's $\rho = -0.178$, $p < 0.05$) hence proving that the more users fear fraud, the less they are ready to give up offline shopping for online buying. Finally, the frequency correlation between IV_80_RE and DV_31 (buy online monthly), showed that the more worried French users are about payment fraud, the less regularly they want to buy online (Spearman's $\rho = -0.301$, $p < 0.001$). This is the only correlation that is truly significant in the payment-risk-category. It shows that, although users may feel threatened by fraud and by sharing their credit card information, this will not stop all of them and not in all cases from purchasing online. On the whole, it does not seem to be a radical influencer for the online shopping behaviour.

The delivery scale brings other interesting results. This scale was correlated to the DV_25 (often buy online), resulting in a negative, intermediate coefficient (Spearman's $\rho = -0.206$, $p < 0.05$). Its interpretation reads that the higher the delivery risk perception, the less likely are users to buy often online. However, this risk doesn't seem to influence the online to offline preference of the users very much, given that the result of this afferent correlation (delivery scale and the DV_26) is not significant. The regularity of the online purchase is, however, impacted by the delivery risk, hence in the correlation of the DV_31 (buy online monthly) to the delivery scale, there was a medium, negative and very significant result (Spearman's $\rho = -0.265$, $p < 0.01$). This means that users will indeed buy less frequently online, the higher they fear delivery problems.

The following scale is the design-related one. In Romania, the design did not have a strong impact on the online shopping behaviour of the users, just as it doesn't have a great influence in France either. Post correlations, it is safe to say that all coefficients were weak and insignificant thus that design does not stop French users from shopping online. The results were as follows: the Spearman rho of DV_25 (often buy online) and the design scale was 0.080, $p = 0.376$; DV_26 (shop more online than offline) and the design scale had a Spearman's rho of 0.062, $p = 0.499$ and DV_31 (buy online monthly) correlated to the same scale resulted in a Spearman's rho of 0.103, $p = 0.257$. It is interesting, however, that the design is noted as important by users (85% of them saying so), but it does not stop them from purchasing online.

The product scale brought, once more, interesting results. This risk does not seem to influence online shoppers very strongly either. The product scale was firstly correlated to the DV_25 (often buy online). The coefficient was negative but weak and insignificant (Spearman's rho = -0.072, $p = 0.424$), showing that the perceived product-risks do not influence the online shopping habits. Further on, the DV_26 (buy more often online than offline) was also correlated to the scale and resulted in results of poor relevance (Spearman's rho = -0.067, $p = 0.464$) just as the last one: DV_31 (buy online monthly) and the product scale resulted in a Spearman's rho of -0.107, $p = 0.238$. None of the results are significant, thus the concern related to products will not impede French users to shop online.

The last scale out of the risks' category is the customers' service scale. This one was also correlated to the DV_25 (often shop online) and the equation revealed negative, but rather weak results (Spearman's rho = -0.201, $p < 0.05$). Reading into it, it does mean that to a low extent, the more worried the users are about the customers' service, the less likely they are to shop online. The correlation to the DV_26 (shop more often online than offline) is insignificant and shows no impact of this service on the shopping preference of the users (Spearman's rho = -0.010, $p = 0.912$). Finally, concerns about the customers' service seem to influence the frequency or regularity of online shopping, since the results of this afferent correlation are as follows: Spearman's rho = -0.242, $p < 0.01$. To sum up, this service can impact the habits of online shoppers but not very strongly.

In conclusion, out of all the risk categories, not all of them play a role in impeding online shopping in the case of French users. Uncertainty, delivery, payment and the customers' service risks seem to be the strongest ones to stop some of the potential clients from shopping online. However, even for these ones, the correlations are not very high but can confirm the hypothesis 7, since the more risks the users perceive, the less they want to buy online. But there are several other risks that do not influence their shopping behaviour, even if the users are aware of their existence, such as the design,

the product or the privacy risks. It remains then to discover, if the incentives are much stronger and impact more on their habits.

Incentives

H8: The more motivations internet users find in online purchasing, the more likely they are to shop online.

For the exploring of the motivations that fuel users to buy online, scales were also built, as described in the [Method](#) chapter. The first of these ones is the convenience scale, which was correlated to the DV_25 (often buy online). This first analysis had positive and very significant results (Spearman's $\rho = 0.389$, $p < 0.001$), proving that users considering online shopping convenient are more likely to buy online than others. The second correlation linked the DV_26 to the scale, to see if users buy more online than offline thanks to convenience and the results were positive and significant (Spearman's $\rho = 0.272$, $p < 0.01$). Yet another positive, rather strong correlation was found by linking the DV_31 (buy online monthly) and the convenience scale (Spearman's $\rho = 0.292$, $p < 0.001$). These results show that convenience motivates users to buy often, regularly, and even more often online than offline.

Does the price influence the users in the same way? The price scale was correlated to the DV_25 to find out if French users shop often online and resulted in insignificant coefficients (Spearman's $\rho = 0.124$, $p = 160$). The second correlation, between the DV_26 (shop online more often than offline) was also irrelevant (Spearman's $\rho = -0.011$, $p = 0.903$) and so was the third one as well (DV_31 – shop online monthly and the price scale) which resulted in a Spearman's $\rho = 0.137$, $p = 0.118$. By taking the items of the scale and analysing them separately, the correlations did not change. This would mean that the prices of the products online do not have a positive influence on the online shopping habits of the French users. And indeed, through a frequencies table it was showed that only 45% of the users think they save money when online shopping (out of 132), while 66% of them approve

Save money					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complètement en désaccord	13	8.1	9.8	9.8
	Partiellement en désaccord	47	29.2	35.6	45.5
	Indifférent	23	14.3	17.4	62.9
	Partiellement d'accord	36	22.4	27.3	90.2
	Complètement d'accord	13	8.1	9.8	100.0
	Total	132	82.0	100.0	
Missing	System	29	18.0		
Total		161	100.0		

Table 15 - H8 France - Save money while online shopping

finding good deals online, out of 131 (see the results in Table 15 and Table 16). The Likert scale measured “Complètement d’accord”=1 and “Complètement en désaccord”=5.

The following scale that measures the incentives for online shopping is the personal pleasure one. Just as for Romania, this seems to be the strongest motivation for online shoppers. Correlating this scale to the DV_25 (often buy online), the outcome is positive and relatively strong (Spearman’s rho = 0.493, $p < 0.001$). This shows that the more pleasurable the online shopping experience is, the more often people will buy online. The personal pleasure factor also influences positively the preference of online shopping over offline shopping as it comes out from the correlation of the DV_26 (buy online more often than offline) and the pleasure scale (Spearman’s rho = 0.305, $p < 0.001$). The third correlation proves once again that the more pleasurable it is for users to shop online, the more frequently they will do it, namely monthly, as resulted from the last correlation between the DV_31 (shop online monthly) and this respective scale (Spearman’s rho = 0.318, $p < 0.001$). As a frequency table shows it, almost 70% of the French respondents (132 for the given question, with 18% of data missing) admit to enjoying shopping online, thus explaining the strength of this incentive on their purchasing behaviour.

		Good deals			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complètement en désaccord	28	17.4	21.4	21.4
	Partiellement en désaccord	58	36.0	44.3	65.6
	Indifférent	18	11.2	13.7	79.4
	Partiellement d'accord	21	13.0	16.0	95.4
	Complètement d'accord	6	3.7	4.6	100.0
	Total	131	81.4	100.0	
Missing	System	30	18.6		
Total		161	100.0		

Table 16 - H8 France - Finding good deals online

Summarising the results afferent to the H8, the hypothesis is confirmed. French users are more willing to shop online when they find advantages to doing so. The most influential aspect is the personal pleasure, followed by the convenience and only then by the prices.

		I like shopping online			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complètement d'accord	28	17.4	21.2	21.2
	Partiellement d'accord	64	39.8	48.5	69.7
	Indifférent	33	20.5	25.0	94.7
	Partiellement en désaccord	5	3.1	3.8	98.5
	Complètement en désaccord	2	1.2	1.5	100.0
	Total	132	82.0	100.0	
Missing	-77	28	17.4		
	0	1	.6		
	Total	29	18.0		
Total		161	100.0		

Table 17 - H8 France - Enjoyment online shopping

Product involvement and categories

The next hypothesis focuses on the product involvement of the French users and seeks out to link to what extent this influences the online shopping habits.

H9: The higher the product involvement of the internet user, the higher the willingness to shop online.

This hypothesis was already explained in the chapter of the Romanian results, therefore the results will be directly presented. Just as for the Romanian hypothesis, frequency tables were created to understand how many of the users concentrate on information when buying online. The IV_115 was the first one to be analysed (research information before shopping online) and showed that out of 123 respondents (23.6 % missing data), 70% of them will do that. Another 73% of them (out of 123, with 23.6% missing data) consider information more important than price or entertainment. These data are to be found in Tables 18 and 19. Similar to the Romanian case, the French users prefer having the necessary information before purchasing online. Several correlations were built to test the hypothesis. First of all, IV_115 (see above) was correlated to the DV_25 (often shop online) and resulted in an insignificant coefficient (Spearman's $\rho = 0.096$, $p = 0.289$), proving no influence of the information seeking on shopping online often. Further on, the DV_25 was also correlated to the IV_117 (see above) but did not obtain more relevant results (Spearman's $\rho = 0.023$, $p = 0.803$), not proving any significant correlation between the two items.

The next correlation was between the product involvement scale and the DV_25, once again obtaining an insignificant outcome, attesting to no correlation between the two factors (Spearman's $\rho = 0.028$, $p = 0.755$). When the scale was correlated to the DV_26 (buy online more often than offline), a weak and irrelevant result was obtained (Spearman's $\rho = 0.149$, $p = 0.101$). All of these data fail to sustain the hypothesis.

Research info on prod before buying online					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complètement d'accord	60	37.3	48.8	48.8
	Partiellement d'accord	53	32.9	43.1	91.9
	Indifférent	6	3.7	4.9	96.7
	Partiellement en désaccord	2	1.2	1.6	98.4
	Complètement en désaccord	2	1.2	1.6	100.0
	Total	123	76.4	100.0	
Missing	-77	36	22.4		
	0	2	1.2		
	Total	38	23.6		
Total		161	100.0		

Table 18 - H9 France - Researching information before shopping online

To understand the attitude of the French users alike to the Romanians, the correlations between the IV_118 (I buy personal or emotional products online) to the DV_25 and DV_26 (see label above) were explored but once more, no relevant outcome was obtained (the first correlation resulted in a Spearman's rho = 0.008, p = 0.930 and the second in a Spearman's rho = 0.026, p = 0.779). Thus it is not possible to confirm the Hypothesis 9 for the French case. Users do not seem to shop more online if their product involvement is high.

However, what kind of products do French users purchase online? The next hypothesis focuses on this point.

Info is more important than price or entertainemet					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complètement d'accord	36	22.4	29.3	29.3
	Partiellement d'accord	54	33.5	43.9	73.2
	Indifférent	17	10.6	13.8	87.0
	Partiellement en désaccord	14	8.7	11.4	98.4
	Complètement en désaccord	2	1.2	1.6	100.0
	Total	123	76.4	100.0	
Missing	-77	36	22.4		
	0	2	1.2		
	Total	38	23.6		
Total		161	100.0		

Table 19 - H9 France - Information more important than entertainment

H10: Product categories and types influence the internet users' willingness to shop online.

The correlation method was used for this Hypothesis as well. Item 120_RE (I don't like buying anything online – the same as for Romania, but since the surveys were separate, minor technical discrepancies appeared) was correlated to three items: DV_25 (often buy online), DV_26 (buy online more often than offline) and DV_31 (buy online monthly). The results for the first correlation are negative but not very strong (Spearman's rho = -0.260, p < 0.01). The following correlation showed that people who do not like buying everything or anything online do not buy online more often than offline, obtaining a negative relation (Spearman's rho = -0.252, p < 0.01). As for the last correlation, users who do not like shopping online for anything will not buy monthly but the link is not very strong so a real influence

I am not OK buying anything					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complètement d'accord	28	17.4	23.0	23.0
	Partiellement d'accord	43	26.7	35.2	58.2
	Indifférent	17	10.6	13.9	72.1
	Partiellement en désaccord	14	8.7	11.5	83.6
	Complètement en désaccord	20	12.4	16.4	100.0
	Total	122	75.8	100.0	
Missing	-77	36	22.4		
	0	3	1.9		
	Total	39	24.2		
Total		161	100.0		

Table 20 - H10 France - Not ok buying everything online

cannot be determined (Spearman's $\rho = -0.104$, $p = 0.255$), having no statistical value. Furthermore, the frequency function shows that 55% of the respondents (121 of them, with 24% of missing data) said not buying anything online and 14% were neutral. In spite of the last correlation, the two other relations confirm the hypothesis but in a moderate way, because they show that users are not willing to buy all product categories online.

What kind of products do you buy online?	Number of answers	Percentage
Trip reservations, tickets	95	77.2%
Clothes & Accessories	89	72.4%
Electronics	76	61.8%
Cinema, theater, museum	61	49.6%
Sport articles	43	35%
Books, movies, music	41	33.3%
Furniture and decoration	33	26.8%
Cosmetics and beauty	30	24.4%
Food	28	22.8%
Video games	22	17.9%
Personalised products	19	15.4%
Toys	12	9.8%
Licences, Software (no games)	11	8.9%
Insurance	11	8.9%
Cars or accessoires	10	8.1%
Collection products	2	1.6%

Table 21 - H10 France - Products purchased online

A table was constructed to show what French users buy online the most and be able to compare their preferences to the Romanians (see Table 21).

Expectation-Confirmation Theory

The last hypothesis focuses on Oliver's ECT Theory (which was explained in the [literature review](#)).

H11: According to the ECT Theory, a positive or a negative online shopping experience will respectively influence the online shopping behaviour.

Just as previously, the hypothesis will be analysed in two steps, based on the two formed scales – the satisfaction and the disappointment one. Following this first aspect, a comparison between the two will be possible.

For the first step, the satisfaction scale was correlated to the main DVs of the paper. The result of the correlation between the DV_25 (often buy online) and this respective scale was positive and significant (Spearman's $\rho = 0.201$, $p < 0.05$), showing that the more satisfied the users are with their online shopping experiences, the more likely they are to continue buying online. Correlating the satisfaction scale to the DV_26 (buy more often online than offline), the result was rather insignificant, proving no real correlation between the two items (Spearman's $\rho = 0.127$, $p = 0.164$). However, the more satisfied the users are, the more frequently they seem to purchase products online, as shown by the correlation between the same scale and the DV_31 (buy online monthly): Spearman's $\rho = 0.190$, $p < 0.05$. Summing up, satisfaction seems to play a moderate but positive role on the online shopping behaviour of the French users. Investigating further, a frequency tables was also constructed and this made it obvious that 94% of the users (out of 123 valid answers) purchase products online from shops they already know or have already satisfied their expectations just as 98% of them (of 123) feel satisfied when their expectations are met.

I buy from shops that convinced me		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complètement d'accord	82	50.9	66.7	66.7
	Partiellement d'accord	34	21.1	27.6	94.3
	Indifférent	3	1.9	2.4	96.7
	Partiellement en désaccord	3	1.9	2.4	99.2
	Complètement en désaccord	1	.6	.8	100.0
	Total	123	76.4	100.0	
Missing	-77	36	22.4		
	0	2	1.2		
	Total	38	23.6		
Total		161	100.0		

Table 22 - H11 France - Buying from shops that have satisfied me

The second half of the hypothesis concentrates on the role disappointment plays by users. The same correlations as above were made but the results were rather irrelevant. Thus, the disappointment scale and the DV_25 (often buy online) are not correlated since the Spearman's $\rho = 0.030$, $p = 0.742$, the DV_26 (shop online more often than offline) is also not correlated to the disappointment of users (Spearman's $\rho = 0.069$, $p = 0.449$). This clearly shows that being disappointed in online shopping, due to previous experiences, does not influence the general shopping behaviour. However, 92% of the French users (123 valid answers) do avoid shops that have disappointed them.

If I am disappointed by a shop I will avoid it		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Complètement d'accord	91	56.5	74.0	74.0
	Partiellement d'accord	22	13.7	17.9	91.9
	Indifférent	5	3.1	4.1	95.9
	Partiellement en désaccord	3	1.9	2.4	98.4
	Complètement en désaccord	2	1.2	1.6	100.0
	Total	123	76.4	100.0	
Missing	-77	36	22.4		
	0	2	1.2		
	Total	38	23.6		
Total		161	100.0		

Table 23 - H11 France - Avoiding a shop if disappointed

Putting the data together, the hypothesis is only partially confirmed. Whereas satisfaction does seem to impact the users' behaviour positively, disappointment does not seem to impede the French users from shopping online further. The only condition that appears for them is the avoidance of the shops that have not met their expectations, but not the avoidance of online shopping on the whole.

The following part of this chapter will address the open question of the questionnaire, which focuses on the problems encountered by the French online shoppers.

Qualitative research

Just as for Romania, item 104 was an open question about the online shopping experiences of the French users. The same method as described in the equivalent chapter for the Romanian users was implemented.

In France, 62 also had problems with online shopping, meaning almost 42% of the users, a higher percentage than in Romania. As a reminder, 8.5% percent of the users do not usually shop online. That does mean that half of those who did have encountered inconveniences.

Just as in Romania, the main negative experience online shoppers have had is related to the product. Among the 143 respondents, 25 or 20% of them said being disappointed in the received products. Many times it was a size issue, sometimes receiving counterfeits, other times the quality of the product did not satisfy or they were even broken upon arrival.

The second most frequent issue was the delivery, with 17 or 13% of users complaining about it. Mostly, they mentioned late deliveries, or not receiving the product at all. In contrast to Romania, respondents did not specify trouble contacting the delivery service.

Further on, uncertainty constitutes a third inconvenient experienced by online shopping. Among the users, 6 of them or 4.8% did mention having had problems linked to this. Usually it was lack of

information which led to disagreeable consequences (either paying more than indicated or being surprised by products).

Payment risks were also encountered by 5 shoppers, or 4% of them. One respondent experienced fraud by having had too much money taken from his account, other times users had difficulties being reimbursed when the product did not come or didn't correspond.

4 shoppers also complained about the customers' service, either because they never answered after contact which made it impossible to solve their inquiries or because they had to dedicate a great deal of effort to repair the issues.

Finally, the same amount of people as by the previous problem, namely 4, specified design-related issues caused by the lack of update of the sites.

All up, it seems that many users had problems upon online shopping and yet it is interesting to see that the majority still continues to shop online. Compared to Romania, there are no real differences but rather similarities between the unpleasant experiences.

In conclusion, there are many online shoppers in France and many who enjoy it. There are more female online shoppers than male but the age is not a key factor, since most age-groups shop online. There are aspects that motivate the French users to shop online and others that make them hesitate. However, the incentives seem to have a stronger impact on the online shopping behaviour than the possible risks and this in spite of having already had negative experiences while online shopping. And although many French users do not trust online shops entirely, they still do it, fuelled by their personal pleasure and for the convenience of it.

4.3.3. Cross-Cultural Analysis

In contradiction to the expectations, there do not seem to be many radical differences between Romania and France when it comes to the clients of E-commerce and online shopping. In the chapter presenting the background of the two countries, discrepancies could be seen between the states, from an industry point of view. In this chapter, the users' attitudes will be directly compared. How did they react to the questionnaire, to the same questions asked and what are their habits?

The method of comparing the two countries will be rather technical. Each theme point and hypothesis was reviewed and the results of the two countries compared. All results will be exposed here but only the differences will be described into detail.

Firstly, the sample comparison will be reminded, although it was already briefly presented in the afferent chapter (see chapter [4.2.](#)). The data will be commented more in relation to the following

hypothesis. In order to see all the data better, several tables were created. Each interest category is indicated for each country. First of all, more people shop in France than in Romania. In Romania, 55% said shopping online often, while in France the percentage is of 70%. Among these users, in Romania 60% are male and 48% female. In France, 63% are male and 76% female. An obvious difference between the two is seen, since in France it's females who shop more online and in Romania it's males. This could be related to technology affinity or income.

Who shops online more?	Romania	France
Male	60%	63%
Female	48%	76%

Table 24 - Gender comparison

Another interesting parallel is between the age groups and online shopping. (See table 25).

Age groups	Romania	France
< 18	17%	16.7%
18-29	66%	72%
30-39	62%	79%
40-49	44%	100%
50-59	43%	60%
> 60	23%	50%

Table 25 - Age group comparison

As a first comment, it is interesting to see that all age-groups shop online. The one age group that shops the least is the one of users under 18, which could be related to income. All up, however, each age group in France shops more than the afferent age group of people in Romania. The peek in Romania is established by the age group 18-39. Although users belonging to the older age-groups also shop online, it is less than 50% of them and there is a clear difference between the age categories. It could be concluded that this preference is related to technology affinity and easiness. In contrast, in France this discrepancy between the age groups is weaker since all groups (except for the ones under 18) shop online in proportion of at least 50%. The age group 40-49 is peeking with 100% of the respondents admitting to shopping online, it can be presumed on a basis of convenience.

When it comes to the time spent online, a discrepancy in the habits of people is noticed. In the case of Romania, the time spent online (could be synonym to familiarity or easiness with technology) influences people shopping online, whereas in the case of France this doesn't impact the buying behaviour of the users much. The online shoppers are more uniformly spread among all the groups of users, regardless of how much time they spend online. Below, see table 26.

Time spent online	Romania	France
	% of users saying they shop online often	
More than 8h a day	74%	80%
More than 4h a day	52%	75%
Less than 4h a day	32%	62%
Every second day	25%	100%
At least once a week	0%	40%
Less than once a week	0%	No respondents

Table 26 - Time spent online and online shopping comparison

As shown in the table, in France almost all users, regardless of how much time online they spend, shop online rather often. There are no respondents who spend time less than once a week on the internet. This could imply that in France it's not the affinity to the internet that convinces people to shop online but other motivations such as convenience or pleasure. In the case of Romania, this affinity plays an important role in the shopping behaviour.

The second hypothesis addresses the impact of the utility of the purchase on the online shopping behaviour. However, on this level there are no differences between the two countries. In both cases the H2 is confirmed with rather strong correlation coefficients, showing that for Romania as for France, the more useful the purchase is perceived to be, the more likely are the users to shop online. Thinking of Hofstede's cultural dimensions (1989), it can be considered that the uncertainty/avoidance aspect relates to this hypothesis and its results. People want to know what they are buying, why they are doing so, having a clear purpose for the purchase.

Concerned items	Romania		France	
TAM Utility of purchase	Spearman's rho	Significance	Spearman's rho	Significance
I shop online often	0.724	$p < 0.001$	0.504	$p < 0.001$
I shop online more often than offline	0.567	$p < 0.001$	0.420	$p < 0.001$
I shop online monthly	0.652	$p < 0.001$	0.357	$p < 0.001$

Table 27 - TAM Utility of purchase and online shopping comparison

Further on, the third hypothesis is related to the user friendliness of sites and how these may influence online shopping. For Romania, the hypothesis was confirmed with rather strong results whereas for France, although the hypothesis was also confirmed, the coefficients were much weaker. This shows a stronger impact of the ease of use on the Romanian users than on the French users. Linked to the

media literacy, it could mean that French users are more equipped to surf any kind of sites and are less influenced by such aspects, feeling more at ease or simply more familiar. Meanwhile the Romanian users need easier sites that avoid uncertainty and have certain outcomes. Since there are less Romanian shoppers, it can also be presumed that this industry has not penetrated the habits of users as well as in France and until it does, online shops still need to be friendly to win the mentality of the users on their side and encourage everyone to purchase products online. Below are illustrated the correlation results (of the ease of use scale and the IVs) of both countries in parallel.

Concerned items	Romania		France	
TAM User Friendliness	Spearman's rho	Significance	Spearman's rho	Significance
I shop online often	0.492	$p < 0.001$	0.218	$p < 0.01$
I shop online more often than offline	0.436	$p < 0.001$	0.163	$p = 0.057$
I shop online monthly	0.446	$p < 0.001$	0.257	$p < 0.01$

Table 28 - Ease of use and online shopping comparison

The above hypothesis goes hand in hand with the following one which tested the influence of the users' openness to technology (based on the PIIT theory) on their online shopping behaviour. Once again the Romanians are impacted by their openness to technology to shop online but the French users are not. Although they are open to technology (see [frequency results H4](#)), they are not influenced by this in their habits. Linking this to a problem of literacy, mentality and habit of shopping online often, it may be explained why for the Romanian users, the more open they are to technologies, the more they will shop online and why for the French users no difference is made.

Concerned items	Romania		France	
PIIT	Spearman's rho	Significance	Spearman's rho	Significance
I shop online often	0.402	$p < 0.001$	0.200	$p < 0.05$
I shop online more often than offline	0.357	$p < 0.001$	0.083	$p = 0.328$
I shop online monthly	0.298	$p < 0.001$	0.099	$p = 0.243$

Table 29 - Openness to technology and online shopping comparison

More French users usually purchase products online, thus this may have become more of a habit, of a mentality and they are less blocked by technical aspects when doing so, in contrast to the Romanians who still repose on these issues. A table captures the results of the relevant correlations.

On another lever, the self-efficiency perception does influence users in both countries positively. If external aspects such as technology or the ease of use of the sites do not impact French users, this dimension does. This shows that it is important for users to be familiar to the internet, be at ease when surfing online and seeking for retailers or products on their own, in order to decide if to shop or not online. The correlation results are rather similar between the two countries and yet, the Romanian correlations are fairly stronger and more significant, sustaining the previous logic. They are illustrated in the Table 30, found below.

Concerned items	Romania		France	
	Spearman's rho	Significance	Spearman's rho	Significance
I shop online often	0.461	$p < 0.001$	0.374	$p < 0.001$
I shop online more often than offline	0.250	$p < 0.001$	0.206	$p < 0.05$
I shop online monthly	0.301	$p < 0.001$	0.266	$p < 0.001$

Table 30 - Self-efficiency and online shopping comparison

The next variable that was analysed in the behaviour of the online shoppers was the trust item. It seems that for Romanian users, trust plays a more important role in convincing them to shop online more often than for the French users. The hypothesis for the case of France can hardly be sustained by the weak results, showing almost no correlation between trust and the decision to buy online (also due to a low significance). A possible explanation for that is the fact that there are more Romanian users who do not trust online shops than French ones, thus implying a higher importance. In Romania, 66% of the respondents do not trust online shops and 14% are neutral, while in France only 52.6% do not trust them and 17% are neutral.

Concerned items	Romania		France	
	Spearman's rho	Significance	Spearman's rho	Significance
Trust				
I shop online often	0.256	$p < 0.001$	0.162	$p = 0.063$
I shop online more often than offline	0.166	$p < 0.05$	0.057	$p = 0.517$
I shop online monthly	0.230	$p < 0.001$	0.209	$p < 0.05$

Table 31 - Trust and online shopping comparison

However, even in Romania's case, trust is not the most important factor that impacts the online shopping behaviour, since the correlations are not that strong. Below, a table representation of the results.

The following comparison-point are risks for Romania and France. Firstly, an interesting difference about the main risks perceived is to be noted. For both countries, the quality of the product is said to be the biggest concern of users shopping online (Romania = 40%, France = 22.6%). However, the second point is security for Romania, with 22.1% of the respondents naming it (which can be related to a lower trust level, to a higher fraud frequency in Romania, as explained in the country's background, or to a higher impact of the technical aspects of online shopping on users). For France, the second concern is delivery (22.6%). In Romania, the third one is delivery as well (14.9%), while for France is was payment and security (19.4% for both). These results can easily be consulted in the afferent tables ([Romania](#), [France](#)).

When analysing each scale individually, for both countries, the outcome was not the same. It seems that all up, Romanian users are more influenced by the perception of risks than French users when it comes to online shopping. The correlations are stronger for most of the scales. One of the habits that is influenced the most is the frequency or regularity of online buying. If there is a risk perceived, most users, both for France and Romania, are likely to buy less regularly (not once a month), all the while not stopping shopping online entirely. As stated, most risks have a greater impact on the Romanian users, such as the privacy risk, the uncertainty (slightly higher correlation for the case of Romania), the payment risk, the product and the consumer's service. However, French users seem to be more concerned about delivery issues than Romanian ones. Finally, the risks that impact neither of the countries are the design-related ones. Interestingly enough, users in both countries are aware of risks, as seen in the previous paragraph. However, the influence of this perception on buying online is only intermediate for both of them, thus not impeding users to shop online. Some are influenced by possible risks, but the correlations are not very high. Once again, this attitude can be related to the above-explanations such as the trust level, the security level in each country, the percentage of users shopping online regularly, etc. The table below illustrates the results.

Explanations for the table: on the left side of the table, each risk-scale is present. For France, instead of the payment scale, only the IV_80_RE (I worry about fraud) will be represented (because of reliability problems of the scale). On the right side, the results for each country are described, on the basis of the three main dependable variables: DV_25 (I often shop online), DV_26 (I shop online more often than offline) and DV_31 (I shop online monthly). For each of these items, both the Spearman's rho and the Significance value are presented, in correlation to the afferent scale.

Risks	Romania						France					
	Spearman's rho			Significance			Spearman's rho			Significance		
	25	26	31	25	26	31	25	26	31	25	26	31
Privacy	-0.230	-0.208	-0.217	p < 0.001	p < 0.01	p < 0.01	-0.028	0.005	-0.036	p=0.755	p=0.954	p=0.689
Uncertainty	-0.342	-0.231	-0.329	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	-0.273	-0.160	-0.261	p < 0.01	p=0.077	p < 0.01
Payment	-0.359	-0.254	-0.364	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	-0.136	-0.178	-0.301	p=0.131	p < 0.05	p < 0.001
IV_80_RE												
Delivery	-0.130	-0.100	-0.206	p = 0.07	p < 0.05	p < 0.01	-0.206	-0.104	-0.265	p < 0.05	p < 0.01	p=0.251
Design	0.152	0.100	0.167	p < 0.05	p= 0.173	p < 0.05	0.080	0.062	0.103	p=0.376	p=0.499	p=0.257
Product	-0.271	-0.288	-0.315	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	-0.072	-0.067	-0.107	p=0.424	p=0.464	p=0.238
Cons. Service	-0.285	-0.267	-0.265	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	-0.201	-0.010	-0.242	p < 0.05	p=0.912	p < 0.01

Table 32 - Risks and online shopping comparison

On the other side, there are also the incentives that will be analysed in parallel between the two countries. If the risks do not impact the online shopping behaviour that strongly, maybe it is the incentives that convince people of buying online and win over the risks. There are yet a few differences to be noted regarding these factors. Both users from Romania and France shop online out of convenience but also out of personal pleasure. For the French respondents, 70% of them said they enjoy online shopping and 62% of the Romanian participants said the same thing. However, the price does not influence the online shopping habits of users, as resulted from the correlations. This is a paradox when compared to the following data: 45% of the French users consider they can save money when shopping online and 66% of them indicate finding good deals online. In Romania, the situation is similar with 49% of the users considering that online shopping helps them save money and 22% being neutral. Given that the correlations are between the price scale and the online shopping behaviour are not very high (especially in the case of France) and that less than half of the users consider that they are saving money online, the explanation for these results must lie therein. It is interesting to see, therefore, that the other motivations have a greater influence on the users. In Romania, the personal pleasure scale occupies first place. All up, however, the correlations for the incentives are indeed stronger for both countries than the risk or even trust correlations. This shows that both Romanian and French users will rather shop online for the advantages they perceive and they will not as much avoid online shopping because of a series of risks they take into consideration. In other words, motivations and advantages weigh more than risks in the online shopping equation pushing users to buy online. Relating these results to the [Escape concept](#) (Katz and Foulkes, 1962) and the [Uses and Gratifications Model](#) (Blumler and Katz, 1974), they can be explained more clearly. Users

are active, they know what they are looking for, what they enjoy and they are selective, thus following their advantages and benefits when surfing online.

Below, the incentives' results are illustrated in a similar table as the one designed for the risks.

Incentives	Romania						France					
	Spearman's rho			Significance			Spearman's rho			Significance		
	25	26	31	25	26	31	25	26	31	25	26	31
Convenience	0.432	0.342	0.386	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	0.389	0.272	0.292	p < 0.001	p < 0.01	p < 0.001
Price	0.193	0.166	0.210	p < 0.01	p < 0.05	p < 0.01	0.124	0.011	0.137	p=0.160	p=0.903	p=0.118
Pers. Pleasure	0.568	0.449	0.587	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	0.493	0.305	0.318	p < 0.001	p < 0.001	p < 0.001

Table 33 - Incentives and online shopping comparison

The following aspect that was explored was the product involvement and to what extent this plays a role in the online shopping decisions. Lian and Lin (2008) and Szymanski and Hise (2000) considered that product involvement is a positive influence on online shopping. However for the Romanian and French users, this does not seem to be valid. The respondents in both countries do find information very important when online shopping but this is not really a factor of impact, as resulted from the study. In the case of Romania, 95% of the respondents do research information online before shopping and 83% of them consider this more important than price or entertainment. In France, 70% will seek information and 73% prioritise information over price and leisure. However important information is for users, it doesn't seem to be enough to order online. If this is linked to the product risk and to the trust answers, it could convey an explanation of why users still hesitate to purchase online. The necessary information does not guarantee them that the products will satisfy them or will meet the quality promised. Therefore it is indeed important for shops to offer all relevant pieces of information but there are other aspects that influence the buying decision. Information is a necessity, not a motivation. Or maybe the information provided is not qualitative enough. Moreover, the Uncertainty/Avoidance dimension of Hofstede (1989) can also explain why users may prefer not to shop for high-involvement risks.

Concerned items	Romania		France	
Product Involvement	Spearman's rho	Significance	Spearman's rho	Significance
I shop online often	0.069	p = 0.350	0.028	p = 0.755
I shop online more often than offline	0.052	p = 0.458	0.149	p = 0.101
I shop online monthly	0.037	p = 0.627	-0.044	p = 0.631

Table 34- Product involvement and online shopping comparison

The next dimension of the study is the product category. Users in both countries are influenced by the product category and not everyone is open to purchasing online any kind of product. However, it is interesting to notice that Romanian respondents are less likely to buy anything online (77% of them are in this case) than French users (55% are in this case and 14% neutral). This does show a more broad openness on the part of the French respondents. Given that they shop online more often and the country all in all is more open to innovation (as explained in chapter [2.4.](#)), this could explain a higher easiness when ordering online a more various series of products. Nevertheless, comparing the products users do buy online most often, these are not very different from one country to the other (see Table 9 and Table 21). The main 3 things that are bought online in both countries are trip reservations or tickets (68% in Romania and 77% in France), clothes and accessories (50% in Romania and 72% in France) and electronics (66% in Romania and 61% in France). There are considerably more users shopping for clothes online in France than in Romania. This is explained by the item_104 (have you had negative experiences when online shopping?), when Romanian users complain about not seeing the product and not buying this kind of goods because of the uncertainty in size, material, etc. Furthermore, the order of the bought products is almost the same, some differences are only noticeable such as books, movies and music (48% in Romania and only 33% in France), furniture and decoration (19% in Romania and almost 27% in France), cosmetics and beauty (36% in Romania and 24% in France), food (12% in Romania and almost 23% in France) or insurances (20% Romania and 9% in France). These differences may be related to the most used sites, to the trust in shops but also, or mostly, personal preferences.

The last hypothesis is based on the Expectation Confirmation Theory of Oliver (1980). It is indeed interesting to see that for both Romanian and French users what is the most important is that they are satisfied when online shopping. This plays the role of a motivation for future behaviour. However, for both groups of users, being disappointed does not impact them very strongly. 92% of the French users do avoid shops that have disappointed them but they will not stop online shopping altogether and such is the case for Romania as well, also with 92% of the respondents stating this. Hand in hand with the cultural dimension of Hofstede of Uncertainty Avoidance, users know what to avoid in order to have positive experiences. These results follow the same logic as the risk-motivations equation. Negative aspects are taken into consideration but they do not stop online shoppers from their habits, while positive aspects fuels them further. Below another table sums up the results of the two countries. The satisfaction scale will be marked as “Satisf” and the disappointment one with “Disapp”.

Concerned items	Romania				France			
ECT Theory	Spearman's rho		Significance		Spearman's rho		Significance	
	Satisf	Disapp	Satisf	Disapp	Satisf	Disapp	Satisf	Disapp
I shop online often	0.314	-0.071	p< 0.001	p=0.334	0.201	0.030	p<0.05	p=0.742
I shop online more often than offline	0.279	-0.088	p < 0.001	p=0.238	0.127	0.069	p=0.164	p=0.449
I shop online monthly	0.300	-0.031	p < 0.001	p=0.682	0.190	0.190	p < 0.05	p < 0.05

Table 35 - ECT Theory and online shopping comparison

Qualitative Comparison

Item 104 was an open question about the previous online experiences and asked the users whether they have already had problems when online shopping. The experiences encountered by the Romanian and French users are not at all different. Maybe because all in all there are more French online shoppers, they have also had more negative experiences (49% of them said having had at least at inconvenient and only 33% Romanians stated this).

The nature of the problems, however, is always the same. Both countries' users complain firstly about product-related issues (wrong size, broken products, etc.). In France, 20% of the users mention this and in Romania, 18% of them. The second inconvenient is delivery (belated deliveries, no arrival at all, etc.) with 13% of the French users and 8% of the Romanian. Following this there are the uncertainty problems (mostly lack of information on regarding different topics) with 4.8% of the French users having encountered this and 3% of the Romanians. Payment issues were also encountered by both groups of respondents (1.4% in Romania and 4% in France), just as consumer service issues (1.4% in Romania and 3.2% in France).

Summing all up, there are discrepancies but also many similarities between the users of E-commerce in Romania and in France. The background of the country may be more different that the actual attitude of users with an internet connection that allows them to shop online. More details and interpretations are to come in the following chapter, the Discussion.

5. Discussion

The study shows that there is an active E-commerce market in both countries. As the eMarketer Study (2014) shows, the E-commerce market has developed a lot in the last years. This study showed that the mentalities and the perceptions of the users are not radically different. There are indeed certain divergence points but also many similar aspects. The frame of each country all up seems to be more

different. For instance, the fact that in Romania only 49.8% had an internet connection in 2013 (Internetworldstats) whereas 83.3% of the French population had one.

Another discrepancy factor is the instability in Romania, as seen in [Chapter 2](#). This affects its economy or foreign investments which implies a different retailer stage in each country, with very few international operational retailers in Romania. Moreover, basic computer skills and technology openness is also different for each country, with France leading over Romania in this area. Further on, there are also less online shoppers in Romania than in France, probably due to all these factors (such as an internet connection or technology affinity).

Therein lies the aim of the study – finding out which concrete differences exist between the two countries. On the one side, on an external level (the context in each country) and on the other side, on the user level. Are their behaviours different, do they react differently or do they have similar tendencies?

There seem to be more vulnerabilities with the Romanian market. However, this sample of people is not that different to the French one. It is true that less people have had negative experiences in Romania but at the same time, less people shop online regularly. In the case of Romania, 55% of the participants shop online often, 30% not very frequently but they do shop online from time to time and 10% doesn't buy online at all. In France, 8.5% never shop online and 70% do. This partially confirms the statistics quoted beforehand.

However, the data shows that there is remarkable progress in E-commerce. This is a new industry and a new dimension of marketing and communication, a new channel of interaction. It would be interesting to analyse at what speed it continues to evolve and in what direction.

If the background of the countries is relatively different, the mentalities of the people tend not to differ drastically. Summing all up, there are discrepancies but also many similarities between the users of E-commerce in Romania and in France.

A difference worth noting is the sample difference. In France, the sample of users who buy online regularly is more heterogeneous than in Romania where it peaks among people between 18 and 39 years old, so active and rather young people, used to the new media and new technologies. Age seems to be more of an impediment in the case of Romania than in the case of France.

This implies having different typologies of users in France and in Romania. Firstly, in both countries there are problem-solvers and hedonistic shoppers (Babin et. al. as cited in Childers, 2001), who are led by utility of purchase or personal pleasure. However, following the model of Media Matrix and McKinsey (Hamilton, 2000), in France there is a version of the "simplifier" shopper (spends little time

online but shops often), whereas in Romania they do not seem to act this way. There are “surfers”, spending a lot of time online researching, not many bargain shoppers (looking for deals), not many sportsters (buying sports’ articles) but quite a few routine followers (researching information) – 45.5% in Romania and but only 24.5% in France do this as prime activity online. Moreover, French users use the Internet much more for social activities (28%) than the Romanian ones (14.5%) but also for seeking entertainment: 15.4% of the French respondents compared to 7.2% of the Romanian users. Once again, this is their priority online, it is not the only activity online.

When it comes to positive experiences and incentives, respondents are rather similar. Both groups are influenced more strongly by positive experiences and perceptions than by risks or negative events. They all appreciate the convenience of shopping online and they also do it in a great part because of their personal pleasure. The utility of the purchase also impacts the buying decision positively. These three factors are the main motor for all the users, both French and Romanian, convincing them to shop online. Moreover, another factor that influences their online shopping habits positively is the satisfaction with certain shops. If the trust has already been gained and expectations have been met, both Romanian and French users continue to shop online from the respective shops but also online in general. The Uses and Gratification Model of Blumler and Katz (1974) or the Escape concept of Katz and Foulkes (1962) can be applied to this in order to understand the attitudes. Given that the internet is a new means of media, E-commerce is also a new means of interacting and communicating. It is not per say a media medium but it allows research of information, interaction with other users and following trends. Users have look for what interests them, they seek the utility of their purchases and they are fuelled by personal pleasure. However, there seemed to be no extreme shopping behaviour.

Most differences are related to technological issues. Romanian users need to be surer of their self-efficiency and be more open to technology than French users in order to actually shop online. This does not mean that French users are not technology affine, but they do not let this impact their online shopping behaviour. This can be explained through the general level of the country of technology openness. Approaching The Global Competitiveness Report (The World Economic Forum, 2014) once again, it is reminded that the study offered statistics about this aspect. France is rather in the position to innovate (4.8 points out of 7) and has more availability to new technologies (6.1 out of 7), in contrast to Romania that only scores 3.4 for innovation and 4.3 for the availability, also out of 7. These aspects explain a lot of the technology-related attitude of the Romanian consumers. They seem to need more guarantees, more personal affinity to technology, to be more used to the new channels and the sites need to be more user-friendly in order to convince them to shop online.

Another aspect that allows to differentiate the two is the risk one. French users are slightly less influenced by risks in their online shopping habits than the Romanian users. This could be linked to the technological needs of the Romanian users and conclude that they seem more vulnerable and to be taking the possible risks and issues that can occur more seriously into consideration than the French users. Privacy risks, uncertainty ones, payment risks and product risks all impede Romanian users from shopping online to some extent. It is not a great impact, but it is stronger than the impact the perception of these same risks has on the French shopping behaviour. If correlated with trust, neither French nor Romanian users trust online shops much. However, only 52.6% of the French users state not to trust online shops, while 66% of the Romanian users say they don't. This could be an explanatory factor for the need of more guarantee on the side of the Romanian shoppers. When analysed individually, trust doesn't impact online shopping to a great extent but when comparing the trust item of the two countries, it conveys a ration explanation as to why Romanian users are in need of more security and less uncertainty to shop online.

These discrepancies answer the problematic of the paper, which goes like: "What are the differences in the users' perceptions between Romania and France?" The background of the countries offers an initial insight in the situation of each of them, followed by the attitude and perceptions of users of both countries. These two chapters can constantly be linked in order to understand the frame of each state.

E-commerce and online shopping are evolving and integrating the habits of people. Users are aware of their possibility of shopping online, they are rather aware of the risks but also of the benefits. In both countries they seem to know the sector rather well and many shop online, it is only for very few that this sector is unknown. As explained above, there are differences and similarities between the two countries but all in all, these are not drastic and might faze out with time and with the continuous development of the E-commerce markets.

5.1. Limitations

This study concentrated on making a parallel between E-commerce and online shopping in Romania and in France. It must be admitted, however, that there are several limitations to this research starting from the sample, to the method and the results.

First of all, the sample case will be analysed. One possible problem of this paper is the uneven structure of the respondents. There were age groups which were underrepresented, which could have altered the final results of the study by having different habits and behaviours. The most represented ages were between 18 and 39, while people over 60 or under 18 were not numerous to participate,

thus conveying a rather uniform sight on things. Nevertheless, the study handled and analysed all answers and made different approaches when it came to general behaviour (such as frequency of shopping online).

Another issue is the fact that there were almost no participants with no online connection at home, therefore they all have basic computer and media skills and a technology affinity. Since in Romania the population with access to the internet is lower than in France, maybe this factor could have pointed out other visions upon online shopping. Despite this, having an active population as respondents may also constitute an advantage to see what the Romanian users who actually do shop online find attractive in this, in contrast to the French active online shoppers.

Further on, there were no distinctions made between the possible purchase channels. All mediums were considered as one, such as smartphones, tablets or computers. A distinction of these channels could maybe bring a richer insight in the behaviour of users and maybe a more various parallel between the two countries.

When it comes to the content frame, several observations can be made. The issue of social influence on the decision of online shopping was not explored in this study. Moreover, it can be mentioned that users were not asked specific questions about the sites and retailers they prefer. This, once more, could have added value to the results. Linked to this issue, more open questions would have allowed the participants to share more personal information about concrete experiences and their specific thoughts. There were also no concrete questions about why people do not buy online.

Furthermore, technical or methodological limitations will also be noted. First of all, given that it was an online study, it was difficult to avoid the missing data or have a guarantee that all users would finish the questionnaire. Secondly, only one scale was used (the Likert scale) which might have not allowed the users to express themselves fully or accurately enough at all times. Thirdly, some of the scales had a low reliability but many were kept together based on a content logic. Some, however, were not built if the reliability was too low and in that case the items were analysed individually.

The final part of the limitations concerns the results and interpretations. The main issue is the low correlation values between several items and scales, or a low significance for others. For instance, in the case of France, a low significance problem occurred for the PIIT scale, trust, privacy, design, product (among risks), price (motivation) or the disappointment scale of the ECT Theory. In the case of Romania, this also happened for the disappointment scale, and for the design scale. When it comes to correlation coefficients, many were intermediate and the hypothesis were considered confirmed this way but it has to be reminded that in many cases the correlations were moderate if not low in some cases (price and trust for Romania, user friendliness for France).

No correlation was established between the product involvement of users and the online shopping behaviour, even though many of them seek information prior to purchase and find this vital.

Despite all of this, the hypothesis were successfully probed and the research question was amply answered. At the same time, thanks to the limitations, new areas of research are inspired.

5.2. Further research

Cross-cultural analysis offers a unique vision into cultures, political or economic frames and helps understand what impact all of the external factors may have on local industries. In the case of E-commerce, to what extent do these outside aspects influence its growth and stability? Through cross-cultural analysis this can be answered thanks to contrast and comparison. In Europe, however, there is a lack of such studies (between European countries or between Western and Eastern Europe, etc.). Therefore, a first direction of research could be other cross-cultural analysis in the area of E-commerce to understand why it is still distributed unequally around the same continent but same affiliation (in the given case the European Union).

In this study, differences and similarities between the two countries were analysed combined, regardless of the age, occupation, technology affinity or having an internet connection for that matter. Further research could thus concentrate on particular age groups and deepen the motivations and risks that they perceive. It could be possible that each age group has more or less another vision about the E-commerce sector and therefore a different behaviour towards it. By using more open questions, it would allow to gain a more complete profile of the users and a richer insight into their perspectives.

Another research direction could be to compare the motivations behind offline shopping to the ones of online shopping for the two countries in question or through other cross-cultural analysis. Having a clear insight into offline shopping would put the area of online shopping under a new light, allowing a contrast between the two and understanding both habits but also preferences for one or the other.

Further on, it was noticed that trust doesn't impact the online shopping attitude that much. This point could be further deepened to understand what builds trust in the case of the Romanian users and French users. Trust still represents an issue for E-commerce and online shopping because many do not trust online retailers (see [chapter 4](#)). That is why a study in this field could bring valuable insights for the evolution of online shopping and the industry of E-commerce.

When it comes to motivations, these could be explored more thoroughly. First of all, trying to understand what exactly the personal pleasure behind online shopping consists in and secondly,

formulating more open-questions to give the chance to respondents of expressing themselves in a concrete way.

Finally, a comparison between the main online retailers across European countries can be made as well, in order to see if services are different, if the information is the same or not, what the structure and communication of the sites is, what kind of products and what prices they offer, etc. Such a study could build a panorama of E-commerce in Europe. Surely, online shopping is the action of the users, but the promotion and the work of convincing them is done by the retailers so to what extent this is different can help retailers in different countries re-adapt and share knowledge.

5.3. Practical implications

The internet is a new media that involves users all over the globe. It is an information, an entertainment, an exchange and a buying channel. It is becoming omnipresent and that is why its analysis is essential. People can use it for various activities online just as industries, shops, services or media actors make use of it and have translated their activities in the virtual language of the Internet. The E-commerce is a viable example for this. Being used by people, it is vital to understand their behaviours.

This study is one of the only cross-country analysis between France and Romania on the topic of E-commerce and online shopping. Aside from encouraging this direction of research, it should help towards a better understanding of E-commerce.

An important aspect is the fact that it reminds and brings into focus how important the context of a country is (from a political to a cultural level), when analysing this industry. This is the case in marketing in general, but in E-commerce it is a degree higher, given that the users are the ones who are active, the Internet is more of a push than a pull medium. That is why the mentalities and habits of users are essential in understanding how this sector works.

Concretely, the results of this study show what is important for Romanian users as what is for French users when shopping online. It can help online retailers to improve their services and communication-systems. Given that it is not concentrated on one single aspect of online shopping, it conveys a comparative value and allows to see which factors are the most important in the decision behind buying. In this case, it was shown that it is not the risks but rather the motivations that persuade users into buying online. Moreover, it was also concluded that being satisfied with an online shop ensures regular customers. It is thus important for online retailers to meet the expectations of their clients but also know how to regain their trust in the case of a disappointment, which would lead to avoidance.

Having a perspective into the profile of users allows E-business to adapt their offers and ensure that, what the user is looking for.

It can also be a horizon-opener for international retailers in both Romania and France. If interested in investments in the two countries, understanding how the market works and on what grounds is evidentially indispensable. It is also an obvious proof that there are active online shoppers in both countries.

The study also shows that the differences between France and Romania aren't that drastic. This data could encourage new shops to deliver to Romania or integrate the Romanian E-market.

The future of E-commerce depends on adapting to each market, on satisfying its customers and offer them advantages. E-commerce is very likely to evolve and gain more and more weight in comparison to classical commerce and business. This industry has to be active, operational, guarantee security and be connected – to the market and the consumer. Integrating a market now and gaining the trust of users could still be easier than in a few years from now. For Romania this is especially the case because the market is younger and more flexible. At the same time, the services that are in relation with E-commerce (delivery services or internet provider) will also need to adapt and evolve. And because users are more and more emancipated, more and more media literate and more equipped with awareness, E-commerce is very much about the people, it depends on them and this relationship will only deepen with time and the arrival of new technologies, new shops and offers. Thus, understanding the users in their cultural context is a key to proper E-commerce communication and services.

6. Appendix

6.1. Questionnaire

Introduction Page

Thank you for taking part at this survey! It should not take more than 15 10 minutes of your time but the help you are providing is very valuable!

The results of the survey are anonymous and their unique purpose is academic research for my Masters' Thesis.

Please, keep in mind:

1. There are no right or wrong answers, pick what best describes your feelings and experiences
2. Being precise about your answers will be much appreciated
3. In this case, online shopping includes all supports: computers, tablets, smartphones, etc.
4. By thinking of online shopping, think of anything you can purchase online, from online services to home delivery (meaning tickets/holidays booking, electronics, clothing items, food delivery, etc.).
5. Please pay attention to the scales such as "strongly agree" – "strongly disagree", the order of the answers may change!

Thank you once again and enjoy!

Questions and themes

Brief indications: the green-grey fields define the main themes of the questionnaire. Each cell on the left is the equivalent of a group of topic-related questions, which were later transformed into scales. In the right cell, there are the answer-possibilities. The Likert scales that were reversed to avoid reflex-answering by users are indicated each time in the respective cell and is valid for all the answers in that cell.

Theme	Study	Question	Please select the suited answer
Demographical Data			
	Gemius (2014)	Gender	- Female - Male

		Age Country of residence Education (the last institution from which you graduated) Occupation Income (just an approximate according to your country standards)	- Below 18 - 18-29 - 30-39 - 40-49 - 50-59 - 60+ - France - Romania - <= 10 years - High school or secondary school - Professional formation - University - Pupil - Student - Employee / Self-employed - Unemployed - Retired - Other - Big - Medium - Small
Internet Use			
		- Do you have an internet connection at home?	Yes No
Time spent online		- How much time do you actively spend online? (for anything – work/free time, etc.)	- More than 8 hours a day - More than 4 hours a day - Less than 4 hours a day - Every second day - At least Once a week - Less than once a week
Likert Scale		On a scale from 1 to 5, please indicate what best describes your habits and thoughts	A: To what extent do you agree to... Strongly agree... strongly disagree
Activities online		Among the following activities, select in a descending order what you most do online:	
Activities online		- Research information - Seek entertainment (movies, videos etc.) - Fulfil Social needs (E-mail, social networks)	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5

		- Do work-related tasks (or study-related tasks) - Use online services (online banking, cab ordering, etc.) - Buy a product (any type from tickets to books or clothes)	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
PIIT	Agarwal & Prasad (1998) Lian & Lin (2008)	- Among my peers, I am usually the first to try out new information technologies. - I like to experiment with new information technologies. - In general, I am hesitant to try out new information technologies.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
Internet self-efficacy	O'Cass & Fenech (2003) Lian & Lin (2008)	- I could easily use the Web to find product information on a product/service. - I can get to a specific Web site with a browser. - I feel comfortable searching with World Wide Web on my own. - I would be able to use Web on my own to locate retail sites.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
Online Shopping			
	A G. Close, M. Kukar-Kiney (2010)	- I often shop online - I shop online more often than in the store - How often shop online per month? - When did you begin with online shopping? (open)	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
TAM			
Perceived usefulness of purchase	Davis (1989)	- Online shopping addresses my needs - Online shopping saves me time - Shopping online allows me access to products that otherwise I couldn't find - Shopping Websites enable me to search for products faster - Overall, I find online shopping useful	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
Perceived User Friendliness	Davis (1989)	- Online shopping is often frustrating - I frequently make errors when I want to shop online - Online vendors are flexible and easy to interact with - Overall, I find online shopping easy to use	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
Trust in E-commerce			

Trust in online stores and E-commerce	Gefen (2003)	- I feel like online vendors are competent - I feel like online vendors are trustworthy - I believe online vendors fulfil their responsibilities towards clients - If I shop online, I don't feel vulnerable - Overall, I feel confident about online shopping	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 Reversed scale!
Motivations		What do you appreciate about online shopping?	
Convenience (Functional)	Childers et. al (2001)	- Online shopping reduces personal discomfort while shopping - Shopping online brings me benefits - Online shopping is always available - I find it easy to find information about products online	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
Perceived Price (Functional)	Sirdeshmukh, Singh, Sabol (2002)	- Shopping online will help me save money - I find good deals shopping online	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 Reversed scale!
Pleasure (Emotion)	Hirschman & Holbrook (1982)	- I feel satisfied after online shopping - I feel happy after online shopping - I feel annoyed after my online shopping experiences - I feel disappointed after my online shopping experiences - I enjoy shopping online	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
Risks		What discourages you not to buy online?	
Privacy concerns	Smith et al. (1996) Lian & Lin (2008)	- It usually bothers me when companies ask me for personal information. - Companies should not use personal information for any purpose - I'm concerned that companies are collecting too much personal information about me.	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
Uncertainty 1	Cheung & Lee (2001)	- Service failure when online shopping is very possible - Internet shopping involves significant uncertainty	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5

	Gefen & Devine (2001)	- There would be negative outcomes from online shopping	
Uncertainty 2		Please indicate in a descending order what is your main concern about online shopping (from high to low)	
Uncertainty 2	Holloway, Beatty (2003)	When ordering online, do you worry about:	- Delivery - Web design aspects - Payment problems - Security problems - Product quality - Customer service
Payment & Security	Gefen & Devine (2001) Holloway, Beatty (2003)	- My credit card information may not be secure when online shopping - I worry about fraud	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 Reversed scale!
Delivery	Holloway and Beatty (2003)	- I am worried there will be delivery problems (late, not arrive at all) - I worry there can be a product mix-up (product, size, price, etc.) - I do not like delivery costs	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
Web design	Holloway and Beatty (2003)	- It's important that the site works well and quickly - The site design is important to me - It's important that the site clearly states which products are in stock	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
Product Quality	Holloway and Beatty (2003) Alba et al. (1997)	- I worry about the quality of the product - The fact that I cannot see the product prior to purchase bothers me	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 Reversed scale!
Customer Service	Holloway and Beatty (2003)	- I feel like online retailers don't provide all necessary information - I worry about the communication with the customer support service - It's important to have all information about the return policy	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
Experience		Have you ever had a negative experience of online shopping? Please describe in a few words	Open answer
ECT			
Satisfaction	Oliver (1980)	- I shop from the online retailers that have satisfied my demands - I am satisfied if my expectations about the services and product are met	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5

Disappointment	Oliver (1980)	- If disappointed by a certain online retailer, I will not shop there again - I feel unsatisfied, if my service or product-related expectations are not met	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
Types of Products			
Involvement	A G. Close, M. Kukar-Kiney (2010) Kim, Kim, Park (2010)	- I seek a lot of information about the product before shopping online - The more information I find about the product, the more likely I am to buy it online - If the product is important to me, I prefer having information about it - Information is more important than fun when I am shopping online - I buy online products of personal emotional involvement (hobbies, personal gifts) - I don't feel comfortable ordering everything online	1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ... 5
Product Category	Kim, Kim, Park (2010) Gemius (2014)	What do you usually buy online? Select 1 or several of the categories	- clothing & accessories - sportswear - cosmetics and other beauty products - Electronics (TV, washing machine, smartphones, computers, etc.) - computer software (excluding video games) - video games - books, movies, music - movie & theatre tickets - traveling, booking (holidays, hotels, tickets, etc.) - insurance - food - toys - cars and related accessories - furniture & decoration - collectors' items (stamps, figurines, etc.)

			- personalised items
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6.2. Tables

Often buy online * Time online Crosstabulation

			Time online						Total
			Peste 8 ore pe zi	Peste 4 ore pe zi	Mai pu?in de 4 ore pe zi	O dat? la 2 zile	Cel pu?in o dat? pe s?pt?mân?	Mai pu?in de 1 data pe s?pt?mân?	
Often buy online	Complet de acord	Count	22	7	11	0	0	0	40
		% within Often buy online	55.0%	17.5%	27.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Time online	31.9%	11.7%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.2%
		% of Total	10.6%	3.4%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.2%
	Par?ial de acord	Count	29	24	19	2	0	0	74
		% within Often buy online	39.2%	32.4%	25.7%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Time online	42.0%	40.0%	28.8%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	35.6%
		% of Total	13.9%	11.5%	9.1%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	35.6%
	Indiferent	Count	6	14	10	2	0	0	32
		% within Often buy online	18.8%	43.8%	31.2%	6.2%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Time online	8.7%	23.3%	15.2%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%
		% of Total	2.9%	6.7%	4.8%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%
	Par?ial în dezacord	Count	11	13	15	0	1	1	41
		% within Often buy online	26.8%	31.7%	36.6%	0.0%	2.4%	2.4%	100.0%
		% within Time online	15.9%	21.7%	22.7%	0.0%	33.3%	50.0%	19.7%
		% of Total	5.3%	6.2%	7.2%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%	19.7%
	Complet în dezacord	Count	1	2	11	4	2	1	21
		% within Often buy online	4.8%	9.5%	52.4%	19.0%	9.5%	4.8%	100.0%
		% within Time online	1.4%	3.3%	16.7%	50.0%	66.7%	50.0%	10.1%
		% of Total	0.5%	1.0%	5.3%	1.9%	1.0%	0.5%	10.1%
Total	Count		69	60	66	8	3	2	208
	% within Often buy online		33.2%	28.8%	31.7%	3.8%	1.4%	1.0%	100.0%
	% within Time online		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total		33.2%	28.8%	31.7%	3.8%	1.4%	1.0%	100.0%

Table 36 - H1 Romania - Time spent online and shopping online, *Chi-Quadrat $p < 0.001$

Time online * I often buy online Crosstabulation

			I often buy online					Total
			Complètement d'accord	Partiellement d'accord	Indifférent	Partiellement en désaccord	Complètement en désaccord	
Time online	Plus de 8h par jour	Count	7	13	4	1	0	25
		% within Time online	28.0%	52.0%	16.0%	4.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within I often buy online	20.6%	19.7%	18.2%	5.9%	0.0%	17.5%
		% of Total	4.9%	9.1%	2.8%	0.7%	0.0%	17.5%
	Plus de 4h par jour	Count	14	22	7	3	2	48
		% within Time online	29.2%	45.8%	14.6%	6.2%	4.2%	100.0%
		% within I often buy online	41.2%	33.3%	31.8%	17.6%	50.0%	33.6%
		% of Total	9.8%	15.4%	4.9%	2.1%	1.4%	33.6%
	Moins de 4h par jour	Count	12	26	9	13	1	61
		% within Time online	19.7%	42.6%	14.8%	21.3%	1.6%	100.0%
		% within I often buy online	35.3%	39.4%	40.9%	76.5%	25.0%	42.7%
		% of Total	8.4%	18.2%	6.3%	9.1%	0.7%	42.7%
	Tous les 2 jours	Count	1	3	0	0	0	4
		% within Time online	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within I often buy online	2.9%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%
		% of Total	0.7%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%
	Au moins 1 fois par semaine	Count	0	2	2	0	1	5
		% within Time online	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	20.0%	100.0%
		% within I often buy online	0.0%	3.0%	9.1%	0.0%	25.0%	3.5%
		% of Total	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%	0.0%	0.7%	3.5%
Total	Count		34	66	22	17	4	143
	% within Time online		23.8%	46.2%	15.4%	11.9%	2.8%	100.0%
	% within I often buy online		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total		23.8%	46.2%	15.4%	11.9%	2.8%	100.0%

Table 37- H1 France - Time spent online and shopping online, *Chi-Quadrat $p < 0.001$

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8. Abstract

English Abstract

The Internet is omnipresent nowadays. We can talk about online media, information exchange and entertainment or professional-related activities. E-Commerce would belong to the last category. This new trend may be explained by several factors, such as social-economic aspects, demographical elements but also infrastructure and technical characteristics. Finally, E-commerce can be defined through subjective preferences and behavioural aspects, such as trust in the internet and in E-commerce, or perceived risks and motivations. The aim of this study is understanding the behaviour of the online users in relation to online shopping. What determines users to shop online and what pushes them to avoid it? Thanks to an online survey, these questions will be addressed directly to Romanian and French users. The particularity of the study is a parallel between the two countries, Romania and France, trying to analyse if the profiles of the users and the perceived risks and advantages are similar or different, if the degree of development of online shopping is rather due to consumers' habits or maybe infrastructure and the industry itself, which may not offer the same in the two countries. In order to reach answers, the study will go through media using habits, the TAM model of Davis (1989), or the Expectation-Confirmation Theory of Oliver (1980). It was shown that the motivations and risks of the users are not that different between the countries, but the technological easiness and familiarity does influence the behaviour in different ways. Either of the groups of users trust online shops much. All up, however, there are more French online shoppers than Romanian.

German Abstract

Das Internet ist heutzutage omnipräsent. Neu oder online Medien, Informationsaustausch und Entertainment oder Arbeit-bezogene Aktivitäten sind alle zum Internet verbunden. E-commerce gehört eher zur letzten Kategorie. Dieser neue Kanal kann, durch verschiedene Faktoren, erklärt sein. Erstens, gibt es sozio-ökonomische Aspekte, demographische Elemente aber auch Infrastruktur und technische Merkmale, die diese Industrie beeinflussen. Dazu kann E-commerce auch durch subjektive Vorlieben und Verhaltensweisen der Users (wie Vertrauen im Internet und E-business, oder wahrgenommene Risiken und Motivationen) erklärt sein. Das Ziel dieser Studie ist das Verhalten der online Users im Bezug zum online Shopping besser zu verstehen. Was überzeugt Users online einzukaufen, oder warum vermeiden Users online shoppen? Dank einer online Befragung, diese Fragen werden direkt zu rumänischen und französischen Nutzern gestellt. Die Besonderheit dieser Arbeit ist die interkulturelle Analyse zwischen Frankreich und Rumänien. Sind die Profile, die Risiken und die Motivationen der Nutzer verschieden oder ähnlich, und sind online shopping und E-commerce eher von diesen Wahrnehmungen, oder von der Entwicklung der Industrie an sich abhängig? Was spielt eine größere Rolle im E-commerce Feld? Um diese Fragen beantworten zu können, die Studie ist auf Medianutzungstheorien, das TAM Model von Davis (1989), oder die Expectation-Confirmation Theory von Oliver (1980), u.a. aufgebaut. Es wurde gezeigt, dass die Motivationen und die Risiken, die die Nutzer wahrnehmen, nicht so unterschiedlich sind. Trotzdem spielt die technologische Affinität eine größere Rolle darin. Keine der Gruppen vertraut online shopping sehr stark. Dennoch, gibt es mehrere Französische Nutzer als Rumänische, die online einkaufen.

Lebenslauf

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AUSBILDUNG

2012 – 2015	Masterstudium Publizistik und Kommunikationswissenschaft, Universität Wien
2009 – 2012	Bachelor Information et communication, Université Lumière Lyon 2 (Frankreich) Spezialisierung: Organisationskommunikation
2005 – 2009	Matura Colegiul Mihai Eminescu, Iasi (Rumänien) Zweisprachlicher Unterricht: Rumänisch-Französisch Abschlussnote 9,62 von 10
2007	Teilnahme an das Europäische Projekt „Le Prix du Jeune Lecteur Européen“ Besichtigung und Tätigkeiten an das Europäische Parlament
2004	Sprach- und Kulturaustausch, Fougères, Frankreich

BERUFSERFAHRUNG

August 2014 – Februar 2015	CupoNation (Rocket Internet) SEO Marketing SEO Redaktion, Optimierung, Cleansing Online Analyse (Google Analytics, SearchMetrics, AdWords, etc.) SEO KeyWords Update Social Media – Blog, Facebook, Google + Koordination Freelancers
Januar-Juni 2014	Omtec GmbH Administration und Buchhaltung
Januar-Juni 2014	BTM Holding Administration und Buchhaltung, Marketingmaterialien
Juni-Oktober 2013	A Community Events, Lyon, Frankreich (Praktikum) Online marketing Shopping Center (La Part-Dieu, Unibail-Rodamco Gruppe) Update der Site, Arbeit mit CMS Webredaktion (Artikeln, Produktbeschreibungen, Fotos einordnen) Smartphone App (Update von der App des Malls) Redaktion von App Nachrichten (Arbeit mit Capptain) Social Media - Facebook Verantwortlich (Strategien, Beiträge, Fotos, Analyse von Statistiken) Durchführung eines Audits der Site
März 2013	E2 Communications, Wien – Online Marketing SEO, Optimierung, Übersetzung – Deutsch – Französisch
2011-2012	Nachhilfelehrerin in Französisch und English Mitarbeiterin im Sozialzentrum Roger Vailland, Lyon, Frankreich

Juli-August 2011

Michelin, Bukarest, Rumänien (Praktikum)

Kommunikationsabteilung

Individuelles Projekt: Benchmarking, Arbeitsmarktforschung, Vorschlag einer Rekrutierungsmethode, eines externen und internes Kommunikationsplan; Medienbeobachtung

VOLONTARIAT

2009-2012

Mitglied einer Europäischen NGO – Board of European Students of Technology
Branche: Kulturelle und Akademische Austausch

Februar – April 2010

Werbung Verantwortlich

2010-2011

Human Resources Verantwortlich

2011-2012

Koordinatorin der akademischen Veranstaltung Universität Lyon INSA

Kommunikation

Projektmanagement

Erfahrung und

Teamarbeit

Fähigkeiten

Werbung Strategien für Internationale Veranstaltungen

Organisation von Veranstaltungen

Koordination von Aufgaben und Mitgliedern

Vertreterin in Internationale Veranstaltungen

SPRACHKENNTNISSE

Sprache	Mündlich	Schriftlich
Rumänisch	Muttersprachlich	Muttersprachlich
Deutsch	Fließend	Fließend
Englisch	Fließend	Fließend
Französisch	Fließend	Fließend
Spanisch	Grundkenntnisse	Grundkenntnisse

SONSTIGES

Computerkenntnisse

MS Office Fortgeschritten (Word, Excel und PowerPoint)

HTML Grundkenntnisse

Fuehrerschein B

Reisen, Sport, Musik, Literatur
