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HEALTH POLICY IN PRINT MEDIA OF THE LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY
TWENTIETH CENTURY IN THE CITY OF IAȘI
(Summary)

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The goal of this paper is to analyze how the newspapers and magazines of the last century reported on health and health policy. In this respect, I thoroughly read and analyzed the following newspapers and magazines published and distributed in Iași, available now at Iași Central University Library: “Curierul Balassan”, “Evenimentul” of Iași, “Opinia”, “Viitorul”, “Liberalul”, “Viața Românească” and “Gazeta Moldovei”. My analysis shows that print media was a general source of information on public health, but also a means of educating behaviors and promoting healthier lifestyles. Less affected by political and party interests, health news and reports were more accurate and objective than those on political issues highly influenced by publication's editorial orientation – liberal or conservative.

Romanian media in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century offers important relevant about public health and population dynamics, representing a key historical source. Despite their inherent subjectivity, articles provide a realistic and credible perspective on most prevalent health topics. Subjectivity itself is an important source of knowledge of Romanians mentalities, prejudices, provides color and atmosphere which help us reconstruct and humanize the past. Our analysis of media articles leads to the conclusion that public health was seen as an important part of everyday life. As a result, health issues are often published on the front page – which is a relevant indicator of health problems' importance, severity and frequency.

Like today's media, the newspapers of the 19th-20th century embraced a variety of styles, from short news stories to extensive reporting and commentaries. The high frequency of commercials about health services and remedies shows that public health and access to health services was suffering from severe lack of regulation and was rather seen as trading good, rather than a public good or a human right.

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