Abstract. *This article is aimed at showing that the unsuccessful market segmentation, the consumers' lack of information and the absence of some programs meant to educate consumers with regard to the benefits of adopting renewable energy sources (RES), together with the poor control of the marketing strategies of producers and suppliers, are considered the main causes that slow down the development of the market. We then proceeded with the identification of the factors that influence the activity of the suppliers of microgeneration equipment of energy from renewable sources. This article presents the interpretation of the results of an online questionnaire applied over the period 2010 –2011 to a sample composed of Romanian suppliers of RES equipment, with emphasis on the main characteristics of the suppliers, as well as on the factors that influence their entry on the market and on the problems they face. According to the findings presented in this article, the suppliers' entry on the market is determined to a great extent by the business opportunity they identify; they also consider that the lack of the consumers' education regarding the benefits of adopting RES is the main factor that influences their business. Generally, the products sold by suppliers are presented as being environmental friendly and as contributing to energy bill savings. The article also presents a profile of the consumer, as seen by the suppliers, the two main features identified by the latter being the high financial potential and the inclination towards saving money on the energy bill.*

Keywords: renewable energy sources, microgeneration equipment, Romania.

THE ROMANIAN RENEWABLE ENERGY MICROGENERATION MARKET

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1. Introduction

The position adopted by the Ministry of the Environment through the implementation of the Green House program starting July 1, 2010 boosted the setting up of specialized companies or the inclusion of microgeneration equipment in the portfolio of already existing companies. The program, designed exclusively for natural persons, consisted in the granting of some fixed amounts from the budget of the Environment Fund, depending on the type of installation, as follows: *up to 6,000 lei* (about 1,379 euro) for the installation of sun panels; *up to 8,000 lei* (about 1,839 euro) for the installation of heat pumps; *up to 6,000 lei* for an installation that produces thermal energy, based on pellets, briquettes and on any other type of vegetal, agricultural or wood waste. The Green House Program is part of the strategy of reaching a quota of 24% RES by 2020 based on the Directive 2009/28/EC, which sets individual targets for each member state (EC, 2009). Due to its potential Romania seems to be into *Going with the flow* group (Leon and Nica, 2011) with great chances of reaching the target by 2020.

At the European level, the market value is estimated with the help of reports drawn by different consultancy agencies or regulatory bodies. For example, a recent detailed report drafted by Element Energy concerning the potential of the UK market estimated that in 2007 there were 95,000 to 98,000 microgeneration equipment installed, including about 90,000 solar thermal hot water systems, less than 2.000 ground source heat pumps and 500 to 600 biomass boilers (Element Energy, 2009). Element Energy calculated that the UK market for domestic microgeneration could reach 9 million installations by 2020. According to the Romanian AFM (2010) data, almost 11,100 files (11,100 possible installations) were received as part of the Green House program 2010, with a value of approximately 66.9 million lei (15.4 million euro), but this is not the market value, as there are many households that install this type of system without expecting any financial stimuli (on occasion of the interviews, some managers declared to have sold microgeneration equipment, but not through the Green House program). The biggest numbers of applications for grants were in Bihor and Harghita, followed by Bucharest. After the completion of the Green House 2010 program, the Ministry of Environment and Forests promulgated order decision no. 1741/2010, published in the Official Gazette, which extended the target public of the program by adding administrative and territorial units, as well as public and religious institutions (AFM, 2010).

The potential of the Romanian market of microgeneration equipment is made up primarily of the new constructions and of the total park of thermal power stations that use fossil sources, currently estimated at approximately 1.8 million units. As regards this park of thermal power stations, the purchases made until 2003 amounted to approximately one million units, whereas in the past five or six years, the sales on this market stagnated at a level of approximately 150.000 units/year. The average cost of a standard thermal power station is estimated at 550 euro (Botezatu, 2010). According to Element Energy, approximately 6 percentages of this type of equipment require major interventions in the post-warranty period, such as the replacement of the

product or the replacement of some spare parts, which cost more than a half of the price of a new power station. If we assume that the lifespan of these machines is 15-20 years, this means that between now and 2050 most primary heating systems in buildings will need to be replaced at least twice (Element Energy, 2009). One must also take into account the fact that one cannot install microgeneration equipment on all the buildings in Romania. As for *new buildings*, it is up to the owner to decide whether to use or not microgeneration equipment, although in Barcelona, for example, there are regulations which stipulate that at least 60% of the energy estimated to be necessary for the inhabitants of a new building must come from renewable sources.

The article starts with a short literature review on related subjects and continues with the results of the investigation. The results are structured as follows: first, the article presents the profile of the studied group, then the factors that influenced the entry on the market, the factors that influence the results, a short description of the knowledge, attitudes and behavior of the Romanian supplier, the analysis of the sold products and of the market increase rate and ends with a presentation of the consumer's profile from the perspective of the suppliers and with conclusions related to the topic under discussion.

2. Literature on the renewable energy microgeneration market

According to Devine-Wright (2007), there are three levels at which we can implement technologies that use RES: the micro level (a household or a building), the *meso* level (region, community) and the macro level (energetic farms). The literature written so far follows the same structure of the presented themes, comprising mainly descriptive topics at the *macro* and *meso* level and making use of causal research at the *micro* level. Nowadays, there is a lot of interest in social and economic research with regard to the understanding of the behaviors of the main actors in general and of consumers or households in particular. Table 1 proposes a short classification of the topics related to the subject.

Currently, there is little research that places the supplier in the center of attention. Jennings (2009) is amongst the few researchers that propose a series of factors of success for the suppliers of microgeneration equipment that use RES. The researcher points out that the supplier should have knowledge about the technology used, resources, system configuration, economy, the industry structure and the politics implemented by the regulators, and all of this in an integrated package. The reduction of the barriers to access on this market will lead to a higher level of awareness with regard to the benefits of products that make use of RES and to a change in consumption habits related to fossil fuels. Guardiola et al. (2009), in their article entitled *Renewable Energy; tapping and typing the citizen's mind,* states that the success of a marketing strategy for the producers and suppliers of RES equipment lies in the conviction and education of the prospect over the benefits that this equipment has on reducing the energy bill, their comfort and the diminution of greenhouse gases or in persuading households to become more energy efficient (Faiers and Neame, 2006).

Table 1

Topics related to the subject

Actor\level (Themes)	MICRO	MESO	MACRO
Households	*becoming aware of and understanding the new technology *the use of RES as a method for reaching energy efficiency *factors that influence the buying decision, the level of consumption, the purchasing habits**willingness to buy* *the opening for green products	*the impact of a RES investment on a specific region that influences the social comfort *the causal relations that exist between a RES investment and the development of a region	* *willingness to pay* more for green electricity
Energy Suppliers	* *willingness to pay* more for green electricity	* the presentation of the political economic, technological and legal environment	* the presentation of the political economic, technological and legal environment
Public and regulatory authorities	*the presentation of the instruments needed for financing and promoting the use of RES *the conditions of using RES in the private building and public sector	* the presentation of the political economic, technological and legal environment; * the presentation of the instruments needed for financing and promoting the use of RES	*tariff systems for the promotion of RES (*the fixed prices system* and *the system of compulsory annual quotas*) *the building of scenarios which present the potential of reaching the targets concerning the use of fossil fuels, the energetic dependence and problems related to climate changes
Investors	*the impact of a RES investment on a specific region that influences the social comfort	*the impact of RES development over different locations (advantages and disadvantages) *the study of the potential of a region	*the potential and the capacities related to a country *the market conditions * advantages and disadvantages of *the fixed prices system* and *the system of compulsory annual quotas*

Despite their positive characteristics, solar systems remain unattractive to individual householders as a home improvement (Timilsina et al., 2000) and incompatible with personal priorities (Berger, 2001). Issues such as long simple payback periods, high capital costs and a lack of confidence in the long-term performance of the systems are limiting widespread adoption (Timilsina et al., 2000). Quality service, products and support should help overcome the high initial costs (Faiers and Neame, 2006).

Rundle-Thiele et al. (2008) suggest that the lack of success of the RES sector is determined exclusively by the unsuccessful market segmentation. Due to their research, Faiers and Neame (2006) reach the conclusions that suppliers and manufacturers should work closely with the *early adopters* (after Rogers, 1995) to develop the operational, economic and aesthetic aspects of the products; suppliers should seek to achieve greater understanding of what customers' perceptions actually are, in order for them to develop products that meet their needs.

3. Methodology

The role of this research is to reveal the factors that influence the activity of the suppliers of microgeneration equipment of energy from renewable sources and for these purposes we conducted a series of qualitative and quantitative research studies.

The qualitative research took the form of unstructured interviews with specialists. We enumerate some of them: interviews with specialists in the field during the national seminar entitled *Project ESPON 2013 for the support of the formulation of the territorial development policies and strategies,* interview with Dr. Harma Albering, *Policy Advisor* on environment and sustainable development, with Dr. Paul Levels, the manager of the program SDC2C of the department of the environment and sustainable development from the Limburg province, the Netherlands, and with Dragoş Pîslaru, General Manager of GEA Strategy and Consulting SA with the *Regional Investment Forum North-East* Iaşi, interview with Mr. Arturo Rodriguez, General Manager of Veromar Impex SRL from Bucharest, Romania and Mr. Salvador Orti Ortin, Manager of EPD Solar Systems, Valencia, Spain and other participants at the RENEXPO South-East Europe 2010 fair organized in Bucharest and, last but not least, interview with Ms. Nadina Stanciu, communication expert with the Romanian Energy Regulatory Authority (ANRE), Bucharest.

The quantitative research took the form of an online questionnaire, which was tested on 10 suppliers during the RENEXPO South-East Europe 2010 fair. The questionnaire was implemented via the site www.esurveyspro.com and comprises 23 questions. The panel is made up of 102 Romanian companies, which sell microgeneration equipment. For the purpose of increasing the rate of response, we first contacted them by phone and asked them to activate the link that would be sent to them by mail together with the objectives of the study. After calling them, we were not able to contact 14 companies and 5 of them no longer sold this kind of products. Even if the phone call was supposed to last 2 minutes at most, the passion of many of the suppliers for this topic led to a conversation longer than 35 minutes. The response rate was 55.4% that is a very good one for this kind of research (Baruch and Holtom, 2008).

The data was analyzed using SPSS 13. For the exploratory factor analysis on the factors that influence the activity of the supplier we used the method of Principal Component and Varimax with Kaiser Normalization for the rotation method. The study uses the boxplot method for normalization of the distributions of the variables. We also applied the *One-Way* ANOVA to see whether the sample's turnover growth rate is different for certain geographical areas or for certain categories of enterprises.

4. Profile of the studied group

According to the analyzed data, the selected group had the following characteristics: 41.3% of the companies which filled in the questionnaire are from the area of Muntenia, 28.3% from Transylvania, 17.4% from Moldavia, 6.5% from Maramureş and 2.2% from Banat, 2.2% from Dobrogea and 2.2% from Crişana. As concerns the size of the companies that are part of the studied group, 78.3% are microenterprises (0-9 employees), 17.4% are small enterprises (10-49 employees) and 4.3% are medium enterprises (50-249 employees). Most of these companies were set up between 2000 and 2009 (63%), 34.8% were set up in the '90s and only one such company was set up before 1989 (supply of hydrologic equipment, the only branch of the RES industry with experience acquired before the 90s).

These companies promote their products mainly in the areas in which their headquarters are located, and 24.7% of them would be willing to bear additional transport expenses in case of requests from households or industrial consumers from other regions. According to the obtained figures we may notice a very high opportunity for the setting up of companies, which distribute microgeneration equipment in Bucovina, Oltenia, Dobrogea, Banat or Crişana.

5. Factors that influenced the entry on the market

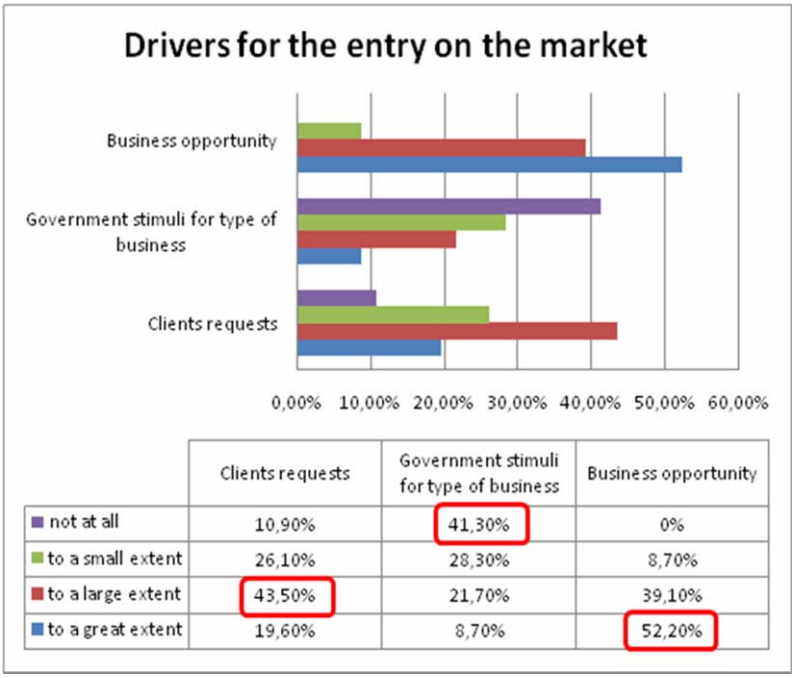
A large part of the studied companies started to trade products that use RES after 2005 (73.9%), at the time of the implemented of government policies concerning the promotion of renewables. In 2007, when the Romanian government liberalized the energy market, under the pressure of the EU accession and established the road map with regard to the use of RES, 23.9% of our companies started to trade microgeneration equipment.

Law no. 220/2008 concerning the promotion of RES in Romania also led to the setting up of new companies or to the rethinking of the portfolio of products (21.7% of the studied group started to trade RES in 2008 and 15.2% in 2009).

The requests from customers or collaborators and the good business opportunity were the main factors, which influenced the decision of entering on the market (Figure 1). In 2008, government stimuli existed only at a theoretical level and there were no motivating factors for starting a business in the field of renewable sources.

6. Factors that influence the activity of Romanian suppliers

As a result of the interpretation of the data collected by using in depth interviews with the suppliers, we reached the conclusion that the main factors that influence the activity are: the economic crisis and the implicit lack of cash, bureaucracy, the lack of fiscal incentives, the lack of market studies concerning the consumption behaviors of potential customers, the poor education of the consumer with regard to the use of RES and the high cost of the equipment.



	Clients requests	Government stimuli for type of business	Business opportunity
not at all	10,90%	41,30%	0%
to a small extent	26,10%	28,30%	8,70%
to a large extent	43,50%	21,70%	39,10%
to a great extent	19,60%	8,70%	52,20%

Figure 1. **Factors which influenced the entry on the market and factors which influence the activity of RES suppliers**

As for the intensity of each variable, the analysis continues with the explanation of the variance of the variables and their classification into main factors.

Table 2

Communalities for the factor analysis results

	Initial	**Extraction**
Crisis	1.000	0.611
Bureaucracy	1.000	0.816
Lack of fiscal incentives	1.000	0.739
Lack of market studies	1.000	0.815
Poor education of the consumer	1.000	0.824
High cost of the equipment	1.000	0.772

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Even if the research deals with a small sample population, the article will present the results obtained after classifying the variables into factors by performing an exploratory factor analysis. The analysis makes use of the principal component analysis for the extraction method and Varimax for the rotation method. According to Table 2, all the values of extraction are big enough to fit well with the factor solution. The factors selected with the saturated variables are the following (see Table 3): factor number one is comprised of the *Poor education of the consumer (0.906)* and *Lack of market studies (0.890)* variables and will be defined as K*nowledge of the consumers' profile,* factor number two is comprised of the *Bureaucracy (0,902)* and *Lack of fiscal incentives (0.825)* variables and will be defined as *Legal influences* and factor number three is comprised of the *High cost of the equipment and Crisis* variables and will be defined as *Financial influences*.

Table 3

Rotated Component Matrix (a)

	Component			New Factor Definition
	1	2	3	
Poor education of the consumer	.906			Knowledge of the consumers' profile
Lack of market studies	.890	.136		
Bureaucracy		.902		Legal influences
Lack of fiscal incentives	.191	.825	.151	
High cost of the equipment	-.150	-.117	.858	Financial influences
Crisis	.201	.302	.693	

1. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
2. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
3. (a) Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

Based on the obtained results, we can confirm the idea of Guardiola et al. (2009) according to which the success of a marketing strategy for the producers and suppliers of RES equipment lies in the conviction and education of the prospects concerning the benefits of this equipment. If information reached potential customers easier and faster, the chances of success on the RES market would increase. This is also the point of view of a German company that we interviewed on the occasion of the RENEXPO fair, which produces small sized sun panels solely for educational purposes and which considers that suppliers should unite themselves and invest more in programs meant to inform the population with regard to the new technological systems and to the benefits of using RES.

Financial aspects have smaller influences because of the impact of the Romanian *Green House* program. Other important problems identified by the Romanian suppliers are bureaucracy and the lack of fiscal incentives. In the suppliers' opinion, fiscal incentives are a good modality of stimulating companies to focus solely on this market. According to the collected data, approximately 17% of the companies are specialized and distribute only microgeneration equipment from RES, the main object of activity of 26.8% of these companies is the provision of services, 23.9 % are specialized in sanitary installations, 8.5% in constructions, 5.6% in electric installations and 18.3% have other objects of activity; non-specialized companies introduced an average of 42.2% microgeneration equipment in their portfolio. The data collected from the in depth interviews show that a company could not survive as a specialized one, given the capacity of the market.

7. Short description of the knowledge, attitudes and behavior of the Romanian supplier

As already mentioned in this article, Jennings (2009) considers that RES suppliers must have: thorough knowledge in fields such as used technology, resources, system configuration, economy, industry structure and structure of the existing promotion policies. The experience acquired in other fields, such as that of sanitary or electric installation is an advantage for a company, which wishes to access this market. ANRE awards an installation license only after the passing of specialized exams, which focus primarily on sanitary and electric installations. Following the answers received in response to the question: *What advantages do you have and the competition does not?* We may state that suppliers fulfill all the requirements expressed by Jennings. This does not mean that all the presented qualities will apply to everybody; however, through their publishing and their sending via e-mail, those companies aware of their competitive edge may use it to their benefit. The publishing of these findings may improve the quality of the services provided by distributors of microgeneration equipment. These findings will be communicated to all the participants to the study in the hope that this will bring an element of novelty in the organization of the marketing policies and will represent the start of a good collaboration between the academic and the business world.

In figure 2 one may notice that the Romanian suppliers' offer meets Jennings' requests with regard to the knowledge needed for their activity. The research reveals that the economic knowledge of the supplier of microgeneration technologies that use RES is a *marketing oriented* one (related to the 4 Ps: small prices, networking capabilities, online sales, complete range of products, solutions adapted to the needs of the consumer). Hence, the results support the literature which stipulates that research in economy, sociology and especially in marketing has been neglected so far, despite its crucial role for understanding the modification of consumer behavior (Guardiola, 2009; Pellion, 2008; Rundle-Thiele et al., 2008).

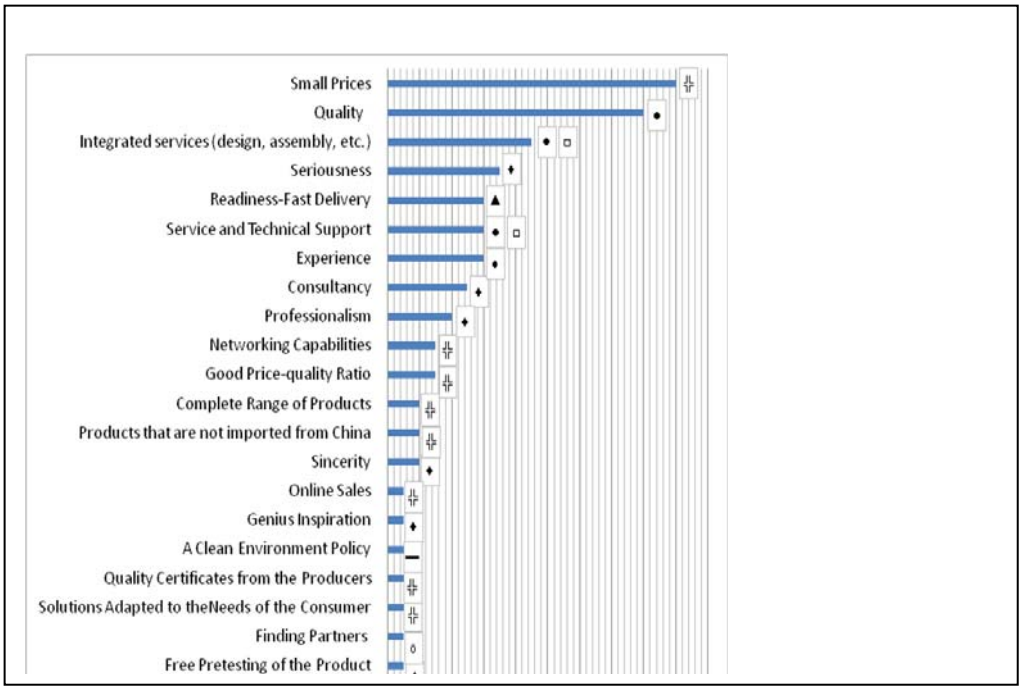


Figure 2. **Competitive advantages of the distributors in relation to Jennings' (2009) knowledge variables–frequency of responses**

The suppliers' knowledge is transferred to their attitudes and behavior. As we can see in Figure 2, the suppliers pride themselves with characteristics such as: seriousness, experience, sincerity, genius, inspiration that could be important variables in studying their attitudes or behavior. Last but not least, the entrepreneurs' passion is another important, although difficult to measure, variable.

8. Analysis of the sold products and of the market increase rate

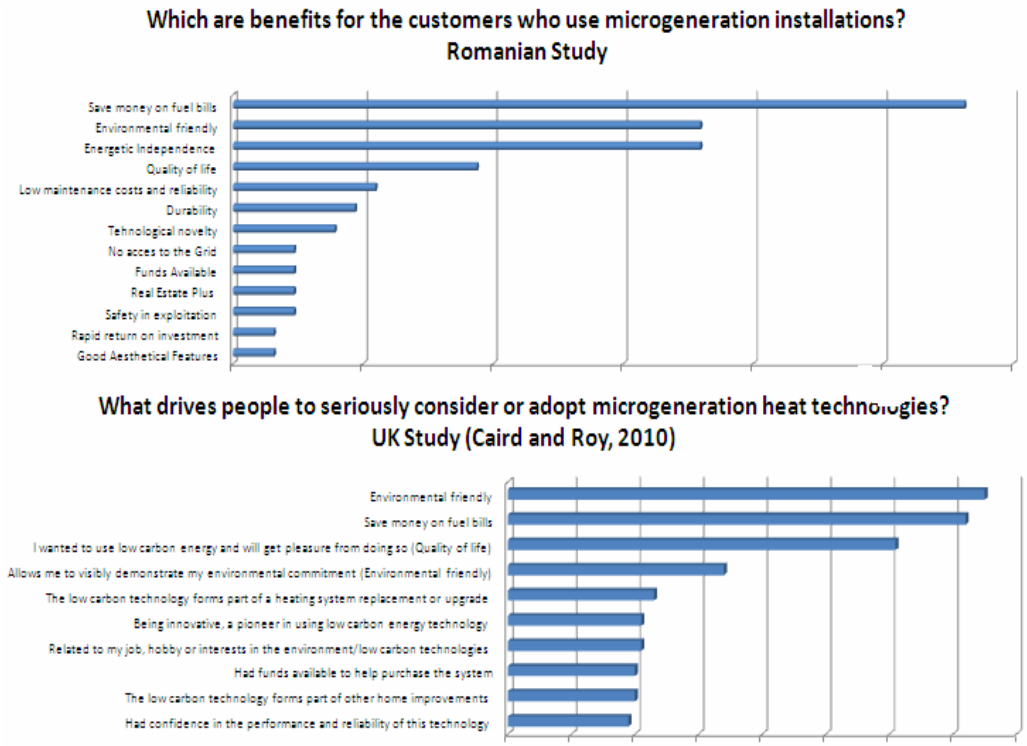
At present, the portfolio of the suppliers of microgeneration equipment comprises the following types of products: *solar thermal heaters* (transform the energy of solar radiation into heat when it falls on the absorption surface), *photovoltaic panels* (elements that produce energy by using light, measured in photons; the photovoltaic cell converts sun light into electrical energy), *small sized wind turbines* (transform the power of the wind into rotating movements that generate power), *heat pumps* (they use the heat from the environment – water, soil, air for heating purposes) and *wood pellet boilers* (they use ecologic fuel such as: pellets, cereals, corn, sunflower, grape and plum seeds, soybean, canola, sawdust, wood scrap, branches or vegetal waste).

The solar energy for the generation of the thermal agent has the highest quota in the portfolio of products that use RES (30.6%), 25% using solar energy for electricity, 17.7% wind energy, 12.9% geothermal energy, 8.1% hydro energy, 4% biomass and 1.6% other types. The products with the highest success rate were: an average of 45.7% of the turnover of companies is represented by solar thermal heaters; an average of 20% of the turnover of the analyzed companies is represented by photovoltaic panels, 11% by wood pellet boilers, 10.8% by heat pumps and 8% by small sized wind turbines. When asked about the most important component of the marketing mix, the respondents' answers were: 43.5% - product, 32.6% - promotion, 17.4% -price and 6.5% - positioning. The benefits of this type of products, from savings at the utilities bills to the meeting of the needs in terms of environment protection, determined the suppliers to focus on the product, trying to sell benefits, and only then on the price. The suppliers grant more importance to product and promotion, this attitude being determined by the status of newcomers on the market of sanitary installations. The most widely used promotion method is website design (24.5%); this is followed by website optimization (20.5%), the production of flyers (13.9%), partnerships (13.9%), mass-media (10.6%), TV (5.3%), radio (4%), other methods (6% - fairs and exhibitions, blogs) and none (1.3%).

The companies that participated to this study were asked, by means of an open question, to enumerate three benefits for the customers who use such installations. Most respondents mentioned those benefits that are generally valid for renewable energy sources: utility bill savings, participation to the decrease of emissions of greenhouse gas and energetic independence (see figure 3). Compared with the results of Caird and Roy (2010) in a study focusing on UK consumers, we will see that the order is almost the same, even if environment protection is the first reason why UK consumers use RES.

The promotion and sales policies of suppliers and producers of microgeneration equipment should not ignore benefits such as the increase of comfort, product reliability, durability, technological novelty, the possibility of supplying energy to areas that have no access to the network, the customers' opportunity of benefiting from grants, plus the value brought to the real estate property, operational safety (the fact that there is no danger of explosion or fire), the possibility of recovering the invested amount relatively fast and, why not, the nice aspect of the products (let us not forget that Apple was the first producer of companies that put emphasis on the nice aspect of the company's products and had a lot to win as a result).

These benefits, known by the companies that answered the questionnaire and transmitted through various channels to the end consumer, will be the main variables of the statistic and probabilistic research targeting households.



Source: (Caird and Roy, 2010).

Figure 3. **Benefits of using microgeneration equipment**

Even though, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there are no concrete data with regard to the market, this research will study whether there is an ascending market trend or not. A percentage of 71.7% respondents answered that the volume of sales registered a growth tendency. In 2010, the growth rate of the turnover registered an average increase of 12%. We obtained these findings as follows: the respondents were asked to estimate the value of the increase of their turnover in 2010, in comparison with 2009. By using the method of building the Boxplot chart, *we eliminated outliers one by one* and then checked the *normality of distribution* by computing the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and creating the distribution histogram. The missing responses were replaced with the average value (*5 missing values* were registered). 36 out of 46 responses were validated. The distribution is normal, with a *Sig.* higher than 0.05 (0.023).

We then wanted to see whether this growth rate is different for certain geographical areas or for certain categories of enterprises in 2009, respectively in 2010. For these purposes, we applied the *One-Way* ANOVA by using SPSS.

For testing homoscedasticity, the Levene test concerning the homogeneity of variances was applied. As the outliers have already been eliminated prior to the testing of the normality, the Sig. values of 0.330, respectively 0.192 suggest that the variances

for the 7 regions (Muntenia, Transilvania, Banat, Moldova, Dobrogea, Crişana and Maramureş) and the 3 categories of enterprises (microenterprise – 0-9 employees, small enterprise – 10-49 employees and medium enterprise – 50-249 employees) present in the validated cases are equal, which means that the ANOVA application can be used further on.

Following the application of *One-Way ANOVA*, we reached a Sig. value bigger than 0.05 and we can state that the hypothesis concerning the equality of the means is not refuted. Consequently, there are no significant differences between regions and categories of enterprises from the perspective of the turnovers registered in 2009, respectively in 2010. We can thus estimate that, in Romania, the market of the microgeneration equipment registered an average growth of 12% in 2010, in comparison with 2009. We followed the same steps for an estimation of the growth rate for 2011 compared to 2010 and we reached the conclusion that the market could increase by an average of 15%.

9. Consumer's profile from the perspective of suppliers

Starting from the hypothesis supported by Rundle-Thiele et al. (2008), according to which the unsuccessful market segmentation is the main cause of the poor development of the RES sector, the suppliers that answered the questionnaire were asked to name at least three characteristics of the customers targeted by their marketing policies.

Although 80.4% target both households and industrial consumers (including the hotel industry) and the question did not make a distinction between these two categories, the profile that will be presented herein is considered to be generally valid (in the case of industrial consumers, the profile can be that of decision makers).

The received responses were grouped into three categories: personal characteristics, psychological characteristics and contextual characteristics (Figure 4). The findings of this exploratory research will then help elaborate the questionnaire that will be applied to households.

Of the 46 respondents, 8 did not answer this question and 4 provided inconclusive answers (such as: complex personalities, low and high level, different customers, no common features, complex characteristics etc.). The approximately 74% respondents who were able to name at least 3 customer characteristics determine us to be reserved as to the confirmation of the Rundle-Thiele et al. (2008) hypothesis, according to which the lack of success of the RES sector is determined exclusively by the unsuccessful market segmentation. We may notice that 74% of the respondents filtered the market one way or another and, consequently, their marketing policies have specific targets. However, it is worth mentioning that if this market filtering is achieved by taking into consideration several criteria, the obtained result can be a bigger success rate with smaller efforts.

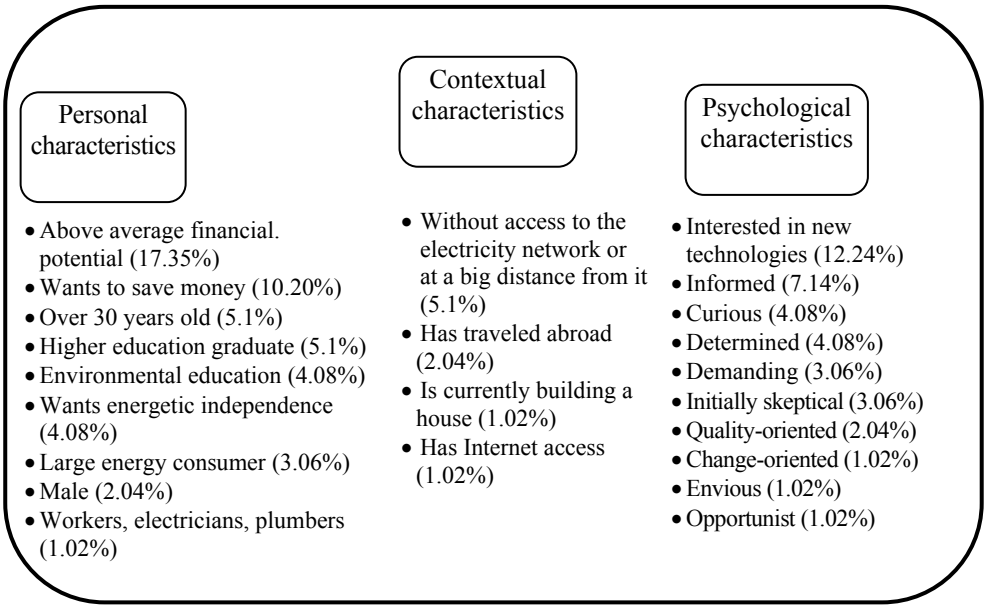


Figure 4. **Variables which shape the consumer's profile, as described by suppliers**

10. Conclusions

The results obtained after following the conducted quantitative research present an informed and aware Romanian supplier of energy microgeneration equipment from renewable sources. The Romanian supplier is aware of the profile of the typical Romanian consumer and adjusts his product policy based on the real benefits of the equipment. The results partially infirm the idea of Rundle-Thiele et al. (2008) who argue that the low development of the market is due to the weak market segmentation and confirm the opinion of Guardiola et al. (2009) who support the need for strategies adapted to different mind-sets segments.

The research identifies useful variables for future studies on consumers or other actors' behavior on the RES market. The qualitative research also revealed new helpful solutions for the Romanian market, such as: the need for market measurement indicators at the macro level, the need for a shift of focus on the creation of production facilities rather than on imports and the setting up of associations of suppliers for the promotion of common interests.

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