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Propulsive Welfare for the “risk societies”: a project for solidarity and communication in the social-health system

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Abstract

The present work, the result of a reflection on the idea of a propulsive Welfare, is presented as an ambitious project, but deliberately simplified to alleviate reading, aimed at enhancing the diversity of people and rediscovering the solidarity that each territory expresses through a governance that produces social capital useful for maintaining the health of community members. In this perspective and with the aim of extrapolating useful information on social security, the article presents various theoretical and legislative aspects of “welfare” and “social health”, but also emphasizes a case study, that was implemented through a practice of international cooperation in the Adriatic macro-region.

Keywords: *welfare; risk societies; solidarity; territory; social capital; health; people.*

1. Introduction

The power of the State to change people's life course is evident in dictatorial governments in which there is a closure of fundamental rights and a non-compliance with the rules. In any case, in all societies it is possible to identify the capacity that governments have to influence people's social life through welfare programs aimed at protecting citizens from risks and guaranteeing them resources and opportunities.

In this context, there is no doubt that in European societies governments are very committed for trying to offer to a great number of individuals the possibility of having both access to goods and their full availability. But it is also true that over time, along with the growth of the commitment of governments to guarantee security, the risks to be protected and the needs to be met have increased. Moreover, in these countries, the difficulties have made the institutional attitudes, always considered a safety parachute in the face of the cases of life, so fragile as to justify the establishment of “risk societies” (Beck 2005: p. 25).

Therefore, the most urgent need, given the Welfare crisis due to the scarcity of resources and budget constraints, consists in spreading a new culture rooted in a hypothesis of widespread and inclusive development that generates a social policy to be expressed through forms of regulation different from the distribution of wealth by the State and based on the values of solidarity and international cooperation, as well as being able to change according to the historical, cultural and political context of the

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territory (See Strasbourg Statement -Social Entrepreneurs: have your say- "Europe's economic and social model needs to reinvent itself. We need a development that is fairer, greener and anchored in local communities. A model that values social cohesion as a genuine source of collective well-being"). And, where governments fail to adapt to these cultural changes, is threaten the very security of society.

Thus, the present work, the result of a reflection on the idea of a propulsive Welfare (See the writings of Donati (1998) on corporate welfare and those of Ascoli, Ranci (2003) on the welfare mix, as well as the studies by Ferrera and Maino (2011) on the second Welfare), is presented as an ambitious project, but deliberately simplified to alleviate reading, aimed at enhancing the diversity of people and rediscovering the solidarity that each territory expresses through a governance that produces social capital useful for maintaining the health of community members. In this perspective and with the aim of extrapolating useful information on social security, the case study was outlined and implemented through a practice of international cooperation in the Adriatic macro region.

2.Looking for a propulsive Welfare

The new Welfare needs, "with a view to consistency with the peculiar environmental conditions characterizing each territorial area" (Grignoli 2010), new rules that can both value people in the construction of their daily life and "adapt to new meanings and styles of private and public life" (Paci 2005)

Moreover, this requirement is widely shared both by civil society court, which increasingly manifests a dissatisfaction with the Welfare State and for the (in) effectiveness of the services provided in the social sphere, both by the individual, who "becomes at the same time fragile and demanding, because it is used for safety and is gnawed by the fear of losing it" (Castel 2004), is the fruit of the last forty years (alas, not glorious!) (the Welfare State has through a period known as the "glorious thirty years", dated 1945-1975, in which almost all the population was included in social protection programs) of socio-economic changes.

Precisely these changes have deeply affected the concept of well-being and the rules through which it is possible to pursue its growth, not to assume it as the result of specialized functions of some subjects (State, Market) with utilitarian or institutional rules, but to theorize it as the result of a social policy capable of reforming (Ferrera 2012) in a new way (Maurizio Ferrera speaks of functional, distributive, discursive and institutional political recalibration, while Paul Pierson proposes the implementation of a retrenchment process) (Ferrera 1993; Ferrera 2012; Pierson 1995). Moreover, in the 2012-2013 Welfare Report drawn up by the National Council for Economics and Labor Welfare (CNEL), an ISTAT-CNEL elaborate to innovate Welfare, identifies an indicator of dependence, ie the ratio between the number of active subjects and the number of subjects needing support), as implemented with practices, forms and rules based on the enhancement of people and the community and on the rediscovery of solidarity for those who express a need.

In particular, at European level, as early as 1942, Lord Willam Beveridge (through the so-called Beveridge Report -Social Insurance and Foreigner Services- introduced and defined the concepts of public health and social pension for citizens. The Report was the basis of the universalistic welfare state that developed in the countries of Northern Europe. In the Welfare State the state organization guarantees citizens adequate social assistance for a better quality of life), one of the founding

fathers of the welfare state, was the pioneer of the propulsive Welfare culture, giving value to the practice of voluntary service "for a public purpose, for social advance".

In Italy, Giorgio Ruffolo (Giorgio Ruffolo, among other things, was the author with Jacques Delors, of the Rapporteur of Groupe de reflexion, nouvelles caracteristiques du developement socioeconomique: a project pour l'Europe, CEE, Bruxelles, (1977)) deepens this fundamental intuition, arguing that the third sector, identifiable as that amount of "non-marketable activity" produced "by the need to give expression to new associated life needs, through activities with high solidarity participation" (Ruffolo 1981); it is constituted as the active engine of development capable of responding to emerging needs.

This hypothesis is also present in the essay Volunteer, Welfare State and Third Dimension in which Achille Ardigò (1981) puts emphasis on the ability of volunteering to read social needs and to give valid answers, as well as in the thought of Vincenzo Cesareo, when he identifies in the third sector a necessary practice for the planning and implementation of social policies.

In the framework of a different "diamond of Welfare" (Ferrera 2012), Ivan Illich (1974), just to give some other examples, draws attention to the importance of convivial societies in which each individual has the tools he needs in his daily work to realize himself. And, following this "fil rouge" (red string), Serge Latouche (2011) finds the answer to the needs in the principle of social solidarity (Serge Latouche refers not only to solidarity among men, but to solidarity with the earth and with other living species, trees and animals.), Stefano Zamagni (2004) in the civil economy and the return of relationality in economics, Pierpaolo Donati (2004) in the theory of relational sociology and Alain Caillé (2009) in the principle of reciprocity.

Hence, Welfare finds itself having to identify new actors and rewrite new rules that allow us to overcome the limit of the conception of the selfish man who responds to "homo oeconomicus" and the State as Leviathan (Donati 2007), as well as strictly mercantilistic practices, thus reaching at a concept of welfare based on social, human and cultural solidarity that allows to experiment with a culture of social security (The expression social security act was adopted for the first time in the legislation of the United States of America (August 14, 1935). Social security, according to prevailing thought, must achieve a system of social protection aimed at the entire working population as regards the guarantee of income and to all citizens for the protection of the health of every individual for individual and collective well-being) capable of giving substance to the formal concept of the State-citizen relationship (The contradiction between the territoriality of national social protection systems and the right to free movement of persons has characterized the Community social security regulations, since 1958. Today Regulation 883/2004 applies to all European citizens, provided they are insured under art. 7 Charter of fundamental rights of the European Union).

In fact, these centers of power, if at European level they relate to European citizenship, at the level of macro regions and at sub-national level, while not generating citizenship of the reference places services (Porumbescu 2018: p. 44), can, in any case, fill the concept of citizenship with content, and implement policies relating to social, establishing new rights and becoming new models of relationships that are alternative to the concept of citizenship and based on the principle of solidarity, which in turn, if you think about it, is the very basis of social security (for example, it is discussed in terms of generational or work and social solidarity), despite the fact that legislation on this

subject is increasingly moving away from this principle (Ilie Goga 2014: pp. 196-197), paving the way for an insurance and private system in relation to the possibilities that each person holds.

3. Beyond the State-citizen relationship

The formal concept of citizenship (For the definition of citizenship, see the essay by Marshall T.H (1976), *Citizenship and social class*, Turin, UTET. The status of citizenship, such as support for Marshall "is given to those who are full members of a community. All those who possess this status is equal with respect to the rights and duties that confer this status"), which over time has become a status, which includes, in addition to political law, a decent income, the right to lead a civil life (even when it belongs to a weak social category) and social rights in able to translate freedom, equality, solidarity and social security (This model of welfare, defined as social democratic or universal, is typical of the Scandinavian countries. The prevailing meaning of the expression social security is that of a social protection scheme extended to all citizens aimed at encouraging uniform performance, corresponding to a national minimum and capable of guaranteeing a dignified life, not connected to duties of contribution and focused on concept of citizenship. It is 'a system of protection characterized by coverage for all citizens (universal) and equal benefits for all, non-binding contribution-benefit fruition) into practice, raises questions about the role of national citizenship.

The latter, which was based on an exclusive link between State and citizen, in contemporary societies, is becoming one of the possible forms of relationship between individuals and a political power whose reference, however, is no longer seen only in the State, but in new decision-making centers - at the supranational level and at the sub-national level - to which the substantial content of citizenship has been transferred. In fact, these centers of power, if at European level they relate to European citizenship (See art. 21 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFUE). This article together with the principle of non-discrimination (Article 18 TFUE) could give rise to the formation of a European social citizenship), at the level of macro regions and at sub-national level, while not generating citizenship of the reference places, can, in any case, fill the concept of citizenship with content, and implement policies relating to social services, establishing new rights and becoming new models of relationships that are alternative to the concept of citizenship and based on the principle of solidarity, which in turn, if you think about it, is the very basis of social security (for example, it is discussed in terms of generational or work and social solidarity), despite the fact that legislation on this subject is increasingly moving away from this principle, paving the way for an insurance and private system in relation to the possibilities that each person holds.

4. A participatory territory and a "socializing desire"

The evolution towards new relational models leads to a concept of identifiable territory to be a "place capable of offering a space of mutual recognition and solidarity to its different members, righteous men who live strongly in their consciences the appeal of collective well-being, reached in the framework of an economic welfare post-arrow, in which the expressions such as the "giving to have", of the liberal-individualist type, or the "giving by duty", of a state-centric nature, are no longer practiced"

(Grignoli 2013), but a "socializing desire" is identified, capable of giving life to social realities in which the particular interest is combined with the common good.

In this sense, therefore, the territory is considered as a community (A necessary and sufficient condition for a Community to exist is the existence of a network of mutual social relations, which offers mutual help and transmits a sense of well-being) capable of taking care of people in difficulty, i.e. as a functional place in which each different actor must be the moment of expression of the need and of the government of the response.

"A territory, therefore, participatory based on the recognition of differences as a resource" (Grignoli 2007) according to which "the members of the society interact with each other not by eliminating the differences, but as social individuals who bind with each other in a context of increasing appreciation of the other "(Grignoli 2010). In this perspective, social policies become "a tool for institutionalization and standardization of life courses (...). To different extent and according to the institutional context and local circumstances and cultures, (...)" (Saraceno 2004) that each territory expresses through a governance perspective capable of taking form and substance from the active and autonomous participation of individuals and of the different actors (The active participation of the aforementioned actors is made possible by the successful decentralization and / or the tendency towards the institutional decentralization of the policy itself, in a logic of government no longer hierarchical, but territorially declined which creates the conditions for their action) (Crouch 2001; Pellizzoni 2006).

As this perspective of governance takes place, the propulsive welfare model, valid in every place, must be able to recognize the variegated fragmentation of interests, lifestyles, institutional structures and resources and assume the diversity as a virtuous compromise to support objectives of social solidarity and well-being. Hence, a model of welfare emerges "no longer based on the equality of citizenship, but on individual and group differences, in which the conceptions of good, beliefs, customs, lifestyles" (Pasini 2011) participate to the production and exploitation of resources.

5.Solidarity for a "healthy mind in a healthy body"

We can consider the sociological tradition, the theme of solidarity recurs as a typically sociological factor capable of giving solutions to the problem of social order. The social scientists of the late '80, wanted to find solutions to the situation of chaos that had arisen at the time of the fall of the imperial system and extended their field of research to non-industrialized societies, trusting in the fact that the principles they would extract from the study of the modalities of integration of such simple societies could be extended to the more complex problems of the modern West.

Similarly in contemporary societies marked by a profound economic crisis and obsessed with a strong cultural orientation towards individualism, to the point of being defined as liquefied (Bauman 2003) they can trace back to solidarity, which is born according to a bottom up logic, a force of welfare system in crisis.

A force that can play an important role among the various social actors in its ability to create and strengthen relationships between people, promoting mutual recognition of the value of others and, therefore, the value of the community, facilitating the exchange of goods and services and the success of shared projects. In this way, the value of the associated life of people (See P. Donati and I. Colozzi (edited by), *Third sector and enhancement of social capital in Italy: places and actors*, Franco Angeli, Milan 2006; P. Donati, I. Colozzi (edited by), *Social capital of families*

and socialization processes. A comparison between state and private social schools, FrancoAngeli, Milan, 2006; P. Donati (edited by), *The social capital. The relational approach*, monographic issue "Sociology and Social Policies", vol. 10, n. 1, 2007). For the work on social capital, see also the reflections of Putnam (1993), Fukuyama (1996), Coleman (1998)) contributes for ensuring, through the principle of reciprocity, the common good (Social capital also has a positive impact on the economic aspect Karl Polany (1980) has argued that economic action is rooted in social interactions. Exemplifying, this means that people do business with those they already know, but also that social ties are useful in finding a new job (Granovetter 1995)) and supporting the institutional set-up of civil society and social security.

In this case, the common good, produced naturally by people in the social relationship, "the result of a plurality of contributions" (Vittadini 2004), gives substance to individual and collective well-being.

Hence, the role of the state becomes subsidiary in the moment in which it is able to value the new forms of social solidarity, through which society takes charge of the wellbeing of its own members, to build a Welfare Society (Colozzi 2002). The legal basis of this approach is given by Article 118, paragraph 4, of the Italian Constitution, which states: "State, Regions, Metropolitan Cities, Provinces and Municipalities favor the autonomous initiative of citizens, individuals and associates, for the development of activities of general interest, on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity". A principle, the latter, a generator of a welfare that, as in a virtuous circle, allows people to build their lives and to open up to social relations.

In this social welfare production process (Participation with equity is a goal of health planning in the Alma Ata Declaration (1978), while community action along with empowerment, is a prerequisite for achieving health goals in both the Ottawa Charter (1986) that in the Jakarta Declaration (1998). The other World Health Conferences highlight the role of empowerment in the problem of the sustainability of health systems (Charter of Bangkok 2005); as a fundamental strategy to correctly and effectively implement health promotion (Nairobi 2009); and Health in All Policies (Helsinki 2013)), the network of relationships helps to maintain the health of the people involved (According to the OECD, several European health systems have responded well to the current crisis. These include France, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Holland and the Scandinavian countries.). A state of health which, at the same time, constitutes a necessary condition for the participation of social life (According to the OECD, several European health systems have responded well to the current crisis. These include France, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Holland and the Scandinavian countries).

This hypothesis of reciprocity between social capital and health of the individual has been corroborated by multiple studies. In particular, the sociologists Wolf and Bruhn (1998) conducted a research in the town of Roseto, Pennsylvania, through which they explained, only after having made thorough investigations aimed at excluding different variables, that in Roseto the occurrence of the low mortality rate, compared to that recorded in the other towns around it, was the effect of the variable "community activity". In Roseto, in fact, the community sentiment was strongly developed, by virtue of the fact that the population consisted mainly of Italian-American immigrants from the homonymous Italian town. However, in the years Roseto loosened his community bonds and also lost his health advantage (Alexander and Thompson 2010). From what has been said, it is possible to affirm that the physical well-being of

individuals is in direct correlation with their ability to create social relationships. However, to date, despite the evidence of usefulness concerning the interventions aimed at promoting the sense of belonging to the local community, as well as offering opportunities within the communities for meeting and exchange, social capital is not yet a consolidated practice, for the purposes of health policies or even in the formulation of public choices.

6. Society and Health

In his essay, *Suicide*, Émile Durkheim, in 1897, became interested in the relationship between health and society, explaining it through the relationship between the degree of social integration and the state of health of the individual. When he hypothesized this relationship, Durkheim thought of identifying a strategy capable of achieving social security in nineteenth-century France, but his idea of how individuals can process their insecurities through relationships with others can be successfully applied even in contemporary societies.

Having said this, it is also possible to state that the relationship between the degree of social integration and the state of health of the individual, which is of central importance for sociological studies, acquires significance also in other disciplinary fields.

In fact, for example, the official psychiatric rankings recognize in this report one of the most significant mental health indicators that, moreover, according to the Ministry of Health's National Guidelines for Mental Health, can only be realized if it is the whole collectivity to respond to the request for need (A collectivity involved at a regulatory level by Law 328 of 2000 which, in addition to having marked "the transition to a concept of a person as a whole consisting also of its resources and its family and territorial context", has emphasized the meaning of "protection active social, a place of removal of the causes of hardship, but above all a place of prevention and promotion of the insertion of the person in society through the enhancement of its abilities. "After the Law 328 of 2000, social policies in the welfare societies are orienting towards the Community Care aimed at creating a Caring Society.).

In this context, psychic well-being, following the definition of health promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO) cannot be separated from the physical (See for further considerations see the studies of John Cacioppo, professor of the Department of Psychology at the University of Chicago, author of the study entitled *Rewarding Social Connections Successful Aging* in which confirms that the feeling of being unwanted, unnecessary, ignored it can kill more than diseases) and the "environmental" so that health (Article. 32 of the Italian Constitution states that: The Republic protects health as a fundamental right of the individual and the interest of the community, and guarantees free treatment to the indigent". However, health must be the result of a widespread social policy. No one can be obliged to a specific health treatment except by law. The law cannot under any circumstances violate the limits imposed by respect for the human person) appears to be "a state of complete physical well-being", psychic and social and not only the absence of illness or infirmity" (World Health Organization, WHO Constitution, 1948).

For this reason, when individuals ask for security, they refer to the need to protect their person, their values and their integrity both psychologically and socially. Hence physical well-being is conditioned by a multiplicity of factors whose control is exercised by the health system and by the wider health system (Various interpretations

have been attributed to the concept of health and, to account for its complexity, it is possible to refer to what Costantino Cipolla indicates in his writings: "State of physical and mental well-being. (...) Feeling better inside and out. (...) Psychic and bodily fullness which is the premise of many other fullnesses. (...). Sociology that interprets it as a major or minor reciprocal adaptation between the different systems, as social integration, as a communicational problem. (...)" "understood as the whole of institutions, people, human and material resources and the social system, in its entirety, which contribute to the promotion, recovery and maintenance of health".

Following this "fil rouge", the socio-sanitary system is intended as a "unicum" where the health component and the social component represent two aspects of the same phenomenon.

7. The social-health system. Welfare and Health Cooperation in the Balkans

As part of the Strategic Approach (2008-2013), the European Union (See Commission of the European Communities (2007), White Paper, Brussels. In addition to the aforementioned Declaration by Alma Ata, other documents are recalled such as the Paris Declaration (2005), the Tallin Charter (2008), the United Nations Millennium Goals Campaign (2000-2015)) has noted that there are several health policies and, moreover, has identified the participation of citizens as one of the essential elements for guiding community action in the field of health.

This shared action of common life projects has a very wide range of action. In fact, it may concern territories that are physically distant, but united by a spirit of cooperation capable of sensitizing the participation of local actors around common problems.

The idea of participatory territory and socializing desire, as well as, the logic according to which the health component and the social component represent two aspects of the same phenomenon are traceable in the project of partnership between territories Welfare and Health Cooperation (Udangiu 2017: pp. 35-41) (See the legislation on: General Discipline on International Development Cooperation Law 49 of 1987 and the subsequent Law of 11 August 2014, n. 125) in the Balkans (See the initiative, which leads the Molise region (partners are the regions of Abruzzo, Emilia-Romagna, Friuli-Venezia-Giulia, Liguria, Puglia, Sardinia, and Sicily) (Cifaldi 2018), was built in Albania (Scutari and Valona) and in the Serbian Republic (Novi Sad.) (WHCB) promoted within the Framework Program Supporting the Decentralized Regional Cooperation in the Balkans area (APQ-Balkans).

This project, which involved the social and health system, of the populations involved in the Adriatic macro area, as a fundamental area for the development and protection of human health, has also encouraged the active participation of the various representative components of civil society in the partner countries. And, within this framework, it was proposed to rationalize social services to the person and hospital services, through their integration and their continuity relationship with the territory, both in order to reduce the costs of direct assistance, through the progressive de-hospitalization and deinstitutionalization that to ensure a better quality of life of the sick person and his family through the networks that contribute to it.

Participation, territory, networks and continuity are, precisely, the key words that best describe the implementation of an essential integrated social-health approach, in the logic of the Italian Society for the Quality of Health Care-VRQ, and for the strong

interconnections between the social and the health level and, on the other hand, due to the difficulty of separating them.

That said, the WHCB project must therefore be understood as a "possibility" - for Europe and for the countries that are becoming part of it - to consider the different dimensions of the physical, social and cultural territory in an integrated way, recognizing the differences, also of the different actors in the field, as a value. Actors, these last ones, thesis to the development of that social capital that re-establishing the ancient attention of solidarity facilitates the creation of a shared project in which all the forms of knowledge interacting favor the proposal of always new solutions.

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Sociological institutionalism arguments in explaining EU integration

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Abstract

Ever since the beginning of the integration process in Europe, at the beginning of the 1950s, a series of theories were elaborated and used in the attempt to explain the evolution of the European construction. Among them, the sociological institutionalism theory brings together arguments derived from economic, social, political and institutional studies aiming to create a framework suitable for highlighting the causes and effects associated with European integration. The aim of this paper is to examine the ways in which the arguments used by the theoreticians of sociological institutionalism have the ability to create a comprehensive analysis of the evolution from the initial founding of the European communities to the European Union construction in the current shape.

Keywords: *sociological institutionalism; integration; European Union; theory.*

1. Theoretical approaches of European integration

The evolution of the European Union as a unique actor on the international arena represents the object of study for several fields of science. The attempts to understand the nature of the integration processes involved and to conceptualize efficient theoretical frameworks designed to explain these processes has resulted in several theoretic bodies using different types of approaches and arguments. The explanations provided and the predictions resulting from these attempts require the use of several concepts in order to better organize the acquired knowledge. The theories provide these concepts and notions regarding the dynamic of the relations that occur. The aim of an efficient theory is not only to ensure a better understanding of the evolution of certain events, but also to develop the ability to predict the further evolution of certain events. Political and social sciences have developed specific sets of discourse elements in the studies regarding European integration. Some of these, such as the classic neo-functional theory, developed in the 1950s-1960s, were focused on providing explanations, while the literature dedicated to international integration was also very much concerned with issues regarding the probability and pattern of future possible evolutions. Most of the specialists engaged in study of integration seem to have regarded this process as a desirable course of action, regardless of the explicit or implicit manner in which they referred to it. Generally speaking, European integration is an evolutionary process invested with the ability to produce peace, security, and material benefits for all the entities involved.

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The role of the theories regarding European integration resides in the fact that the highest educational role that the theory of integration can serve is understanding the conditions of human association in a wider political system, the forces that model the magnitude and depth of its evolution, as well as the possibilities to improve the quality of the debate with reflexive questions such as “where are we now, where did we come from and where could we go?” (Chrysochoou 2009: p. 3).

In fact, integration theories fulfil a wide series of functions, aiming at explaining, describing or evaluating the process of European integration, or, in some cases, prescribe future pattern of behavior or serve as an orientation tool in conducting European affairs.

Therefore, the concept of “European integration theory” means the entire range of studies and information regarding the process of European Union construction, including the historical, economic, political, social and judicial themes, often defined as “European studies”. The theories of European integration are only a sector of this field of study. They are, basically, a set of logical and scientific arguments explaining the process of European integration, analyzed through the lenses of various theoretical families that also serve at explaining the functioning of the international system.

As it evolved at various speeds throughout the years, the building of the European Communities, and, later on, the European Union, can be explained using different perspectives, ranging from the deeper federative cooperation to the sovereignty-oriented inter-governmental theories. However, the events and steps taken remain the same, regardless of the theory used to explain them. A general overlook on the history of European integration reveals a continuous and steady process, adaptable to the challenges and changes in the international context, aimed and successful at bringing peace and prosperity in the European space. Regarding the dynamic of European construction, we can distinguish five integration levels: first, the *free trade area* was created: the free circulation of products, regardless of the quantity, without any customs control, was established. Secondly, the *customs union* was created, meaning that the customs taxes between member states were eliminated, doubled by a common commercial policy that includes using common foreign trade towards third countries customs taxes. The third level was represented by the *Single European Market*, founded on the four fundamental freedoms: the free circulation of persons, the free circulation of products, the free circulation of services and the free circulation of capitals.

The fourth level of European integration is represented by the creation of the *economic and currency union*, based on three fundamental principles: the common currency, a common monetary policy and the coordination of national economic policies. The aim of creating this union was, and still is, the accomplishment of the common market by removing the uncertainties and costs involved by the international transactions that require the exchange of different national currencies. Furthermore, prices and costs throughout the entire Eurozone became similar, the degree of integration through the common market was increased, by accelerating the integration of the financial market, increased stability in the Eurozone was achieved, resulting in the increased competing potential in the European space.

The fifth level of integration is still an ongoing process, represented by the creation of the *political union*. This is often regarded as a federative model of integration, resulting in the creation of the “United States of Europe”, bringing along willing limitations of national sovereignty from the member states, in exchange for the

benefits of belonging to an economic, political and military international actor with increased power.

2.The (New) institutionalism theories used in explaining European integration

The Institutionalism theory represents a series of arguments based on political science, legal studies, and economics, acknowledging the importance of institutions and institutional structures, which began to develop in the late XIXth century and early XXth century and evolved considerably during the past three decades. The classic institutionalist arguments and topic were developed later within the new institutionalism. However, it is generally agreed that new institutionalism does not represent a unitary school of thought, but rather brings together at least three different analytical approaches, namely historical institutionalism, rational choice institutionalism and sociological institutionalism. What all these subdivisions of this theory have in common is that they appeared as a reaction to the behavioral perspectives that fuelled most of the theoretic debate regarding European integration during the 1960s and the 1970s and they “all seek to elucidate the role that institutions play in the determination of social and political outcomes” (Hall and Taylor 1996: p. 936).

The scholars involved in the study of institutionalism argue that market economy and capitalism can only evolve in the presence of consolidated and efficient institutions. Scholars concerned with classic institutionalism, whether they are economists, sociologists, or philosophers, such as M. Weber, T. Veblen, J. R. Commons, E. Durkheim, W. Mitchell, K. Polanyi, D. Davidson, R. Rorty, A. Sen, D. McCloskey, W. Samuels, D. Bromley, E.J. Mishan, or Y. Ramstad have often tried to provide an alternative to the neoclassical economic theory, in the attempt to explain their vision on the world, on humans as economic actors, on economic transactions and the costs involved. Unlike the neoclassic economists, the theoreticians of institutionalism regard the world as an imperfect place, where economic actors decide based on limited rationality and often precarious pieces of information and the transactions have their costs.

According to Walter W. Powell, “The core idea that organizations are deeply embedded in social and political environments suggested that organizational practices and structures are often either reflections of or responses to rules, beliefs, and conventions built into the wider environment” (Powell 2007: p. 35). Although the focus of his work was on different types of organizations, not only international intergovernmental ones, this argument can be extrapolated to these unions of states, as the shape in which they are built and the ways in which they conduct their internal affairs are visibly impacted by the regional and global environment in which they are founded.

Among the opinions expressed by the most important representatives of classic institutionalism, such as R. Coase, D. North, O. Williamson, E. Ostrom, all of them awarded with the Nobel Prize for economy, there are fundamental differences consisting in the orientation of their interdisciplinary approach. First of all, the theoreticians of classic institutionalism brought up the approach of institutions through the lens of the economic studies discussed along with legal and political arguments. The new institutionalisms reinforced concepts currently used in the field of economic science, along with legal and political concepts, but focused on the behaviour of

individuals, which can be described by using microeconomic theory and the games theory. Therefore, we can argue that these new approaches, defined as new institutionalism, do not regard only the official institutions, such as the administrative ones, but also include the unofficial ones, the non-formal links and ties created within a societies, that significantly contribute to creating the so called informal institutions ruling and conducting social behavior, expectations and ideals, directly transferred into political decision-making.

The normative role of institutions in society is a highly debated topic in the field of European Studies, but most of these debates agree on the important part that institutions have in the global economic context and upon society (Laursen 2002). Thus, the significant progress in the political, economic, social environment, as well as the new phenomena that occur in the global economy, such as regional integration and globalization, and the confrontation between the free market supporters and the supporters of interventionism, lead to the construction of a theoretical framework divided into several neo-institutional paradigms, that is constructed around the meaning and contribution of institutions within society, and, on a larger scale, regions or organizations.

New institutionalism is, however, not a unitary theoretical current, expressing and explaining social realities in one common framework, but rather a diversified one, concentrated around the main paradigms: these are the rational choice institutionalism, the historical institutionalism, and the sociological or organizational institutionalism, the last one embedding a normative approach to the studies concerning the evolution and behavior of organizations and institutions.

Different institutionalism approaches identified in the study of the European Union and its specific integration process are similar to the classification of institutional theories generally used in the political science. Pollack and Rosamond define, within the European Studies, the three classical subfields, namely the historical institutionalism, rational choice institutionalism and sociological institutionalism, while other scholars, such as G. Peters (1999: p. 19-20) add to these the normative institutionalism, the empiric institutionalism, the institutions aimed at representing the interests, or societal institutionalism and the international institutionalism.

3.Sociological institutionalism and the construction of the European Union

The sociological study of institutions is focused on the symbolic dimensions, both in terms of knowledge and values of the organizations. This can be regarded as a reaction to the rationalist approach in sociology that stated that both structures and organizations can be explained through the tasks they fulfil and by the resources available for them. According to the traditionalist tradition, organizations were regarded merely as tools oriented towards action, although the difficulty of rational actions was revealed in several studies such as those of Simon and March (March, Guetzkow and Simon 1958).

In the study of the European Union, most attention goes to the functioning of institutions and the ways in which they cooperate in order to implement the designed policies. Starting with the 1960s and 1970, creating common functional policies that would contribute to the increase of the living standards of the member states became a priority for the European Communities, "In most states, now members of the European Union, we can talk about the beginning of regional policies since the 50's - 60's when industrialization produces a major economic growth, but also creates disparities

between geographical regions of the same country” (Ilie Goga 2014: p. 195) , The institutional framework that supports the execution of this measures, and the ways in which it evolved in time, during the history of the integration process, argues for the need of a sociological approach on the studies concerning the European Union.

The origin of sociological institutionalism can be reached within the subfield of organization theory, as sociologists began to “challenge the distinction traditionally drawn between those parts of the social world said to reflect a formal means-ends rationality of the sort associated with modern forms of organization and bureaucracy and those parts of the social world said to display a diverse set of practices associated with culture” (Hall and Taylor 1996: p. 946). Sociological institutionalism was developed as a theory in more studies than the other types of institutionalism, as institutions and organization are of major concern within the sociological studies, while the sociologic view upon institutions maintained its ties with the more collectivist traditions.

The sociological institutionalism theory developed as an alternative, being used in the theories of European integration as a tool to explain the contribution of social behavior, cultural inheritance, prescriptive roles and models in influencing the evolution of the organization. The rational choice theory provides a systematic and explicitly comparative methodology for studying the effects of institutions, shaped as constrains upon the action, considering the ways in which they affect the succession of interaction among actors, the options considered by actors, or the structure of the information available to them. In the study of European integration, it can be argued that the rules created and enforced by institutions constrain the individual behavior of maximizing the benefits and allow a stable and rather predictable process of decision making. Other approaches to the role of this theory in European Studies, such as those of Kenneth Shepsle or Barry Weingast, claim that institutions should be explain as means to aggregate individual preferences, seeking to achieve their own goals.

According to the supporters of new institutionalism in sociology, in the study of modern organizations it can be remarked that many of the procedures or institutional forms used are not necessarily the most efficient ones, or the ones that served best to reaching the common goals of the organization, as a rational theory would require. Instead, most of these procedures and forms are rather culturally-specific practices, assimilated as such into organizations, as they were created and developed in various societies, building into an inheritance of cultural practices (Meyer and Rowan 1977: p. 345).

The studies on sociologic institutionalism can be divided in two main categories: a significant part of them focus on the effects caused by the different forms of institutions, while another part is dedicated to study of the process of creating and modifying said institutions. Sociological institutionalism is more appropriate for explaining the institutionalization process, and also the process of creating the institutions, than it is for explaining the institutional characteristics resulting from that process. On the other hand, political science is more appropriate for explain the effects of institutions, such as empirical institutionalism than it can explain the ways in which institutions appear or disappear. The classic theoreticians of sociology such as Weber, Durkheim, or Parsons have been concerned with institutions and the links between the social forces and the nature of institutions. Weber’s work evolved around institutions and the concern for developing new rational institutions able to meet the demands of modernizing societies. His writings reveal his opinion that the rational-law enforced

bureaucratic model is, as an ideal, the highest form of rationality, despite the fact that this model of rationality cannot be achieved in the real world.

However, a close focus on the institutional and organizational model offered by the European Union reveals the fact that most of the functioning of the integration process is subscribed to a precise set of rules, the normativity of the process overlaps the external context influencing the evolution of the organization. In the building and evolution of the European Union, “social reality appears so constructed by definition, and not necessarily by a certain occasion” (Pogan 2015: p. 263).

In Weber’s approach, the legal-rational bureaucratic model is an ideal, representing the highest form of rationality, despite the fact that this model of rationality could not be reached in reality. He is concerned with analyzing the ways in which the cultural values penetrate and influence various types of formal organizations, while his claim is that there can be noted and demonstrated a direct connection between the cultural values in a society and the formal structures. Emil Durkheim also focused some of his studies on the theme of rational organizations, but his area of interest consisted in explaining the role of the objective societal characteristics, mainly the division of labor, in the functioning of the institutions. These social facts were transformed into symbolic systems that became common values. Talcott Parsons was one of the theoreticians who promoted the usage of functionalist arguments in the development of the social sciences. The main thesis was that, in order to survive properly, societies needed to fulfil certain functions, and these functions were directly connected and highly dependent on the existence of institutions that allowed them to be performed. Thus, comparing different societies can be made possible by starting from comparing the different types of relationships that appear between function and structure.

One of the main legal institutions created by the European Union is the European citizenship (introduced by the Treaty of Maastricht, TUE, 1992, Part two, art. 8), meant to complete and not substitute the national citizenships of the citizens of the member states. Despite the fact that “it is often seen as a “thin” institution with little substantive importance” (Diez and Wiener 2018: p. 9), the fact that the existence of this institutional unique creation embodies the existence of the fundamental freedoms that form the pillars of European integration, including the fundamental rights of working citizens, thus becoming essential for the social welfare across the Union. As Diez and Wiener highlight, “The citizenship case demonstrates that the assessment of an institution’s meaning depends on the type of theoretical approach chosen to study the problem” (Diez and Wiener 2018: p. 9), opening the debate about the role and meaning of creating legal institutions in the creation of a supra national entity.

Furthermore, the European Union presents a unique set of institutions and a network of procedures and tools for cooperation that cannot be identified, as a whole, in the functioning of any other international organization (Porumbescu 2018: pp. 8-9). Each of the challenges addressed to the Community can be responded in a series of ways prescribed by the treaties, ways that have, as a common feature, a pattern of cooperation and interdependence among the main institutions in the decision-making and implementing process.

4. Conclusions

Several theoretical approaches have been used to better explain and anticipate the process of European integration. While current developments in the public European space fuel the debate for the intergovernmentalist approach, highlighting the importance of sovereign states in the decision-making process, the unique institutional architecture the European Union was provided with the opportunity for keeping the fragile equilibrium between the will of the citizens, the autonomous will of the member states, and the organization's need for continuous and deeper integration. On this note, some of the theoreticians of European integration argue that "integration should be viewed as a path-dependent process producing a fragmented but discernible multitiered European polity" (Pierson 1996: p. 123), rather than "treating the EC (European Community) as an instrument facilitating collective action among sovereign states" (Pierson 1996: p. 123).

According to Rosamond, the analytic interest of sociological institutionalism and its theoreticians is focused on investigating "the capacity of cultural and organizational practices (namely institutions) to modify the preferences, interests and identities of actors within the social world" (Rosamond 2000: p. 114). However, in the European Studies this type of sociological and institutional approach has not succeeded in being very well argued with the use of its theoretical tools, but rather as part of the social constructivist theory (Ion 2013: p. 62). The scholars concerned with the study of sociological institutionalism seem to disregard the fact that the general acceptance of formal practices among some actors of European integration, despite the difference of opinions among them, may be heading towards the achievement of a series of mutual long-term benefits, not necessarily a result of the constant interaction and communication amongst them. To sum up, they seem to prefer to highlight the influence of the institution on the creation and evolution of interests, preferences, and identities of actors in the detriment of the idea of exploring the exogenous causes of these institutional variations.

The purpose of neo-institutionalism is to bring to the table the role of institutions, be they rules, norms or social practices, or the institutional context in shaping the political behavior and the result of political action. But the social reality brings to light the fact that not only institutions matter in this evolution, but also does history, or the current shape of political practice is also influenced by its evolution, the path it went before getting to its current shape. The actors are also socialized within this complex institutional context, and they model their behavior according to it. Consequently, the neo-institutionalists argue that the political conduct, the ways in which social decisions are adopted are extremely complex, and, therefore, often difficult to predict. Furthermore, once set into place, institutions tend to become rather conventional, routinized, and hard to reform, change or replace. This can also explain why there are periods of stability, regularity, in the political arena or in the political institutions, often followed by eras of intense institutional change.

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School-to-work transition to employed and unemployed students of the second year of Master of Science Degree in the Department of Labor and Social Policies

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Abstract

Switching from education to employment for youth is often associated with a long and difficult phase of transition. This study addresses precisely the problems of school-to-work transition between students of the Master of Science in the Department of Labor and Social Policy, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Tirana. It aims to describe the transition situation in which are currently employed and unemployed students of this department and to identify the differences and similarities in the characteristics of this transition between the two groups. This study is a quantitative study and the research strategy used is a descriptive and comparative study. The entire scope of the study is covered by a comparative dimension that analyzes two groups: employed and unemployed students of this Department. The study shows that most of the students, even those who are employed, are still in a situation of transition. Only 14.3% of students had transitioned to a stable job, 73.5% were in transition and 12.2% had not started their transition. Over 72% of students have worked or continue to work while studying. Most of them worked / still work in a private company. The main motive that drives students to work during their studies is to provide income. As the ideal job, most of them (employed and unemployed) consider opening a personal business. Regarding long-term unemployment, only 17.4% of students are looking for a job for more than a year. The minimum wage under which they would refuse a job is on average 26016.39 lekë. It is interesting that employed students have lower claims on the minimum wage than the unemployed. Among the employed students, most of them work in jobs that fit their level of education. They generally work on a temporary employment contract, have an average working hour per week of 34.95 hours and the average income earned is 37437.5 lek. They are mostly satisfied with their current job but still hope to change it in the future.

Keywords: *school-to-work transition; youth in-transition; transitioned youth; youth who have not yet started the transition.*

1. Introduction

Youth is a crucial period of life where young people begin to realize their aspirations and think about economic independence and how to provide a place in society. The global labor crisis has exacerbated the vulnerability of young people in

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terms of: i) higher unemployment; (ii) lower job quality for job seekers; (iii) greater inequality in the labor market among different youth groups iv) increased labor market detachment, v) longer and more insecure school-to-work transition (Work4Youth 2014). The last issue (school-to-work transition) is the main focus of this study. Young people aged 15-29 are distributed into three stages of transition: pre-transition, transition and post-transition - and in different statuses within these phases. For Albania, LFS (Labor Force Survey in Albania) 2011 (INSTAT 2015) shows a youth unemployment rate of 21.9 percent, suggesting that about 86 thousand people aged 15-29 - 52 thousand young men and 34,000 young women - could not find a job. The percentage for young people is twice as high as that of the remaining adult population (11.1 percent), which is a common finding for many countries. The reduction in the employed percentage between 2011 and 2014 is reflected in a significant increase in unemployment over the same period. This growth is particularly experienced by young people for whom the unemployment rate has risen from 21.9 percent in 2011 to 32.5 percent in 2014 (49 percent increase). For an older age group of 30-64 year-olds, the corresponding increase was lower: from 11.1 to 13.3 percent (an increase of 20 percent). Also LFS shows that only a small percentage (around 9 percent) of the total youth population are employed under decent working conditions. The percentage of employed but in transition to better jobs in 2011 was 34 percent and included people who did not want to work with shorter working hours (temporary employment) or work temporarily, people who work in unprotected employment (independent employees and employees contributing to the family) and employees whose working conditions do not meet their standards or standards of decent work. Also, people in transition for decent work include unemployed people in situations similar to unemployment, for example, job-seekers students and non-encouraged employees (people who are ready for work but do not require work actively because they think they will not find a job), make up about 15 percent of 15-29 year olds. In conclusion, the percentage that was not included (yet) in the transition to work consists of students who are not seeking (yet) jobs and persons who are left inactive for other reasons. In 2011, the percentage of youth not-in-transition was approximately 42 percent. It rose to about 52 percent in 2014, mainly due to the largest percentage in schools. Continuing school or returning to education is a common strategy for young people when job opportunities become little. Regarding the duration of youth unemployment, figures are also worrying. The long-term unemployment rate in the total number of unemployed youth was 63.1 percent in 2011. This percentage is higher than any other EU country in the same year and deserves special attention from policy makers. The percentage of long-term unemployed is higher among young people with secondary education (70.8 percent) and lower - but still very high - in those with higher education.

Even at a global level (ILO 2015), youth face the same transition problems. The youth workforce and labor force participation rate continues to decline, due to higher enrollments in higher education. Between 1991 and 2014, the distribution of active youth (employed and unemployed) to the youth population decreased by 11.6% (from 59% to 47.3%) compared with 1% decrease in the participation rate of the adult workforce. After a period of rapid growth from the 2007-2010 crisis, the global youth unemployment rate stood at 13% for a period of 2012-2014. This rate has not yet reached the 11.7% rate as it was before the crisis in 2007. Globally, the ratio of unemployment rate among young people and adults has hardly changed by staying at 2.9 in 2014. The youth unemployment rate has been consistently about three times

greater than that of adults since 1995 (at a rate between 2.7 and 2.9). Also young people in developing countries continue to be overwhelmed by poverty resulting from irregular work and lack of formal employment and social protection. In 2013, more than 1/3 (37.8%) of young people employed in the developing world lived with less than \$ 2 per day. In most low-income countries, at least three out of four young people fall into the category of irregular employment, engaged in work or work on their own, contributing to family work, irregularly paid employment or temporary work. Nine out of ten young people stay in informal employment.

In all countries young people aspire to formal and productive employment opportunities that provide them with an adequate salary, safety and good working conditions. Unfortunately, very few young people have the chance to turn their aspirations into reality, which means that opportunities to benefit from demographic advantages in countries of great potential, such as Africa or Albania, are not being used or are moving away swiftly.

2. The study

2.1. The purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to describe the situation of school-to-work transition for employed and unemployed master of science students in the Department of Labor and Social Policy (DLSP) and to identify the differences and similarities in the characteristics of this transition between the two groups. The entire scope of the study is covered by a comparative dimension that takes into account two different populations: employed students and unemployed students of DLSP. The descriptive dimension of the study offers a simultaneous picture of the situation of the two groups in terms of their school-work combination, their perceptions and aspirations regarding their employment, as well as job search features. In this part of the study is also presented a presentation of the situation of employed students, to see in what jobs are generally placed and what conditions offer these jobs for them. While the comparative dimension of the study helps to measure and assess whether in all the above issues there are significant differences between the two groups (employed and unemployed students).

2.2. Research questions

1. Do young people work while studying master degree in the Department of Labor and Social Policy (DLSP)? What are their work experiences?
2. What are the perceptions and aspirations of DLSP employed and unemployed students regarding their employment?
3. What are the job search features for DLSP employed and unemployed students?

2.3. Definition and operationalization of terms

Transited – A young person who has “transited” is one who is currently employed in: a decent and satisfactory job; a decent but non-satisfactory job; or a satisfactory but non-decent job. Even in this study, transited will be called those students who work in a sustainable job. Taking into consideration the economic situation of our country, and the high unemployment rate, having a stable job (whether satisfactory or not) can be considered a sufficient criterion to determine a young person as transited or not.

In transition – A young person is still “in transition” if s/he has one of the following statuses: currently unemployed; currently employed in a non-decent and non-

satisfactory job; or currently inactive and not in school, with an aim to look for work later. In this study, in transition will be considered those students who are unemployed or on a temporary paid job.

Transition not yet started – A young person who has “not yet transitioned” is one who is either of the following: still in school or currently inactive and not in school, with no intention of looking for work. In this study, not yet transitioned will be considered those young people who are still in school and inactive (inactive students) (Work4Youth 2013).

2.4. Methodology

The purpose of the study: This is a descriptive and comparative study aimed at presenting a general picture of the situation of school-to-work transition in which are currently employed and unemployed students who have just completed the second cycle of studies in the DLSP and to identify the differences and similarities in the characteristics of this transition between the two groups. To achieve this goal was used the quantitative research method using structured interview research instrument. The study model followed is a representative study, as it aims to give us a clear picture of all the chosen population to be studied at a certain point in time.

The main research instrument for quantitative data collection is a structured interview. Concerning the preparation of the questionnaire for this study: firstly, it is worth mentioning that this is an internationally standardized questionnaire prepared by the ILO for the school-to-work transition of young people. The original questionnaire was very voluminous and its drafters made it clear that different researchers could use certain sessions of this questionnaire and could adapt it based on their study purpose and research questions. So the researchers of this study, based on this standardized questionnaire, have compiled two questionnaires, one for employed and one for unemployed participants.

Population and Sample: The population of this study is all full-time students of the Department of Labor and Social Policy who are at the end of the master of science degree for the academic years 2014-2016 and belonging to the age group 22-29 years. The total population is 148, of whom only 10% (15 people) are males. Another characteristic of this population is that all students were part of the target group of young people (under 29 years of age), unlike professional master students where a significant percentage of them are over 29 years old. Since the total number of the population was relatively small, in order to collect more comprehensive data, the researchers decided that the sample would be the entire population of the study. In this case the sample selection procedure was very simple and there was no need for formulas and mathematical calculations. However, taking into account the voluntary nature of study attendance and student absences during class hours, it was expected that data from 100% of the population would not be collected. Due to both of the above reasons (especially the second reason - the absence of students during class hours), the researchers managed to collect data from 66.2% of the population (concretely 98 individuals).

Data Analysis: To analyze the data of this study, researchers used the SPSS software, version 23. For statistical data analysis, various statistical tests are used. Also in this study have been used a set of indicators, techniques, and statistical tests to describe, evaluate and interpret the available data, as well as the links between different variables. For the numeric variables were reported frequencies, percentages, arithmetic

averages and standard deviations. For the categorical variables, the respective frequencies and ratios were reported. For the evaluation of links between different variables, statistical tests were used in accordance with the nature of the variables participating in a particular link. In the case of numerical variables that had a normal distribution of the population, was used the **t test** to compare the average values of this variable between the two groups in the study (employed and unemployed students). While in the case of numerical variables that did not have a normal distribution, the statistical test **Mann Whitney U** was used. The numerical variables of this study were used to see whether or not a normal population distribution was made through the relevant SPSS command. For assessing the relationship between the two categorical variables was used the **chi square test**.

2.5. Data Analysis and Discussion

Student transition situation

Youth is a crucial period of life when young people begin to realize their aspirations by thinking of economic independence and identifying their place in society. Transition in adulthood and in the world of work often occur at the same time and this is a difficult time for many young people. For young people in developing countries, school-to-work transition has proven to be a much more difficult process. In a study conducted by the ILO (2010) on the school-to-work transition for young people in eight different developing countries, this situation is presented: Azerbaijan had the largest share of young people in transition, concretely 36.8%, 36.7 % in transition not yet started and 26.5 % transited. China's majority of young people (38%) were in transition not yet started, 34.7% in transition and 27.4% transited. Also in Iran, 51.9% in transition not yet started, 30% in transition and 18.1% transited. Kosovo, most of young people (59.2%) are in transition, 24.6% in transition not yet started and 16.2% transited. In Mongolia 45.1% are in transition not yet started, 44.1% in transition and 10.7% transited. Even in Nepal 51.5% in transition not yet started, 36.3% in transition and 12.3% transited. Also Syria 53.7% in transition not yet started, 34.8% in transition and 11.5% transited. Regarding the situation in Albania, INSTAT (the Institute of Statistics) reports that: 9.2% of young people are transited to decent work, 39.1% are in transition and most of them, 51.7% are still in transition not yet started. While in this study it turned out that: 14.3% of participants had transited to a stable job, 73.5 % were in transition and 12.2% were in transition not yet started. This large difference in the 'transition' rate among young people of this study and young people in Albania or young people in the eight above mentioned countries can be explained by the fact that in this study young people were all students (aged 22-29) while the other two studies included young people aged 15-29 years. However, with these figures we can understand that the status of transition is even more evident among young people who are graduating from university. For example, in Europe, are in transition most of the young people between the ages of 20-24. This may possibly come, first because in this period young people aspire to start a good job that matches their level of qualification (the school for which they graduated) and secondly because of the pressure that society can exercise, which generally conceives that when they finish school, young people can not continue to be 'economic burden' for their parents, but they must work and cover their own expenses.

School-work combination

Combining school with work is considered a very important element that ensures a faster and more successful entry of young people into the labor market. In the survey of Shtetiweb.org / CDI (2015), about a quarter of surveyed enterprises claim to hire individuals who work and study at the same time. This number goes up to 55% for the largest employers in the manufacturing sector (for the Finance and Insurance sector is 22%). While in this study it turned out that, in total, 72.4% of students have worked or continue to work while continuing the school. This figure shows that most of the currently unemployed (53.4% of them) are not without any job experience. However, a considerable part of them (46.6% of the unemployed) have never worked during school. For the latter, the transition to sustainable and enjoyable work is expected to be more difficult and slower than for their colleagues who already have a job experience. Of all the students who have at least one job experience during the school attendance, most of them, over 56% have worked or continue to work in a private company, and none of them worked in agriculture sector which, according to INSTAT (2015), remains so far the most important sector of economic activity in Albania in terms of employment. For young people, especially for young women, the agricultural sector is even more important for employment opportunities (by 51.1%), in many cases for contributing family workers. From this data we clearly understand that, for the youth of this study, unlike most young people in Albania, employment in the agricultural sector is not considered as employment opportunity. This can be explained by the fact that these students are highly qualified and the work in the agricultural sector is generally a job done by young people who have not yet completed upper secondary education.

Regarding working conditions, over 89% of subjects in this study have been / are in paid work and almost 11% in unpaid work. As for working hours, over 45% of them work / have worked more than 20 hours a week, and the rest (more than half) work / work under 20 hours a week. These figures show clearly for the part-time character of the jobs that students generally do, not only in Albania, but also in Europe and the world. In Europe, the part-time employment rate of young people aged 15-24 has grown almost everywhere during 2011-2014. In Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Lusburg and Slovakia the growth was more than 30%. The latest Eurostat data for 2014 confirm the growing trend in recent years to the proportion of 15-24 year olds working part-time. In 2014, one in three 15-24 year-old employees worked part-time. However, huge differences exist between countries. Denmark, Ireland, Spain, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden, England, Norway and Iceland have a higher percentage than the EU-28 countries (31.9%) of young people employed in part-time work. Conversely, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Hungary have the lowest part-time employment rate for this group. While for young people aged 25-29, Denmark and the Netherlands record the highest rate of part-time employment, and Bulgaria and Slovakia have the lowest rate. The average part-time employment rate for the 25-29 age group in the EU is two to three times lower than for young people aged 15-24 (respectively 17% and 31.9%). While globally, 1/5 (20.7%) of young people employed in OECD countries worked less than 30 hours a week (part-time) in 2000 compared to 30.1% in 2013, so there is a noticeable increase over time of part-time employment of young people (ILO, 2015). A characteristic of part-time contracts is that they allow young people to combine school with work. This is thought to be the main reason most young people choose to work part-time during school attendance. However, in many cases this is not a free choice of them. Many young people work

part-time because they can not find a full-time job. In Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus and Romania, at least one in two young people work part-time because they have no choice. In these countries, part-time involuntary work has increased by at least 13% between 2011 and 2014 (European Commission, 2015).

The main motive that pushed students to work during the school was 'to provide income', over 59% responded in this form. Both for the employed and the currently unemployed students this was the predominant motive. After this reason, second place (with over 28%) took the motive of 'gaining work experience' and about 10% of students chose the motive 'creating contacts that could lead to future employment'. If we rely again on the INSTAT study (2015), regarding the choice of a particular profession, the most important factor for young people is the income and then the job stability. These data can be explained by the difficult economic situation in which young people and, in particular, Albanian students are found. Being a student nowadays is associated with great expenses (school expenses, daily expenses, etc.), so perhaps many young people are forced to work even during school so they can withstand these spending. Also, globally, in 2013, more than 1/3 (37.8%) of young people employed in the developing world were poor (17.7% in extreme poverty and 20.1% in moderate poverty). In 2015, about 169 million young people were living with less than \$ 2 a day. The number went to 286 million if they included young people who worked and lived less than \$ 4 a day (ILO, 2015).

Student perceptions and aspirations regarding their employment

Based on a recent FES (2015) study on Albanian youth perceptions, backed by some other national studies, public administration continues to be very attractive to young people, as half of them claim that they would choose to be employed in the public sector. Compared to 2011 data, there is a slight increase from 25 to 33 percent of young people who want to be employed in the private sector. Young people have different preferences for their future professions but still like traditional ones as teachers, economists, physicians and architects / engineers. While in this study it turned out that the ideal job for young people, based on their preferences was opening a personal business (34.7%). And for this, the two groups (both employed and unemployed students) were in the same opinion. Work in the public sector resulted second preference for the participants of this study, with 28.6%. The third preference, which also involved a significant percentage of participants (21.4%), was work in an international corporation. International corporations generally offer very good salary and working conditions, so selecting it from a part of students as an ideal job is not a coincidence. While work in a private company and work in a nonprofit organization has not been very popular among participants of this study, each is selected by 4.1% of the participants. Selecting free entrepreneurship as the ideal work for these young people can be considered an interesting finding in this study. We say this based on previous national studies in Albania, in which young people have always expressed that they prefer to work in the public administration. Even if we refer to international studies, free enterprise is a job that is generally not preferred by young people. A recent Eurobarometer (European Commission, 2016) study showed that for many young Europeans, more than half of the respondents (52%) said they did not want to start their own business. Only one in five young people (22%) would like to start a new business but consider it very difficult. Only a quarter of European young people are more proactive in launching a business (5% have a business, 17% intend to open one in the future, and 3% have tried to start a business but were delivered because it was very

difficult). The highest percentage of respondents who expressed their desire to become entrepreneurs were recorded in Lithuania (32%) and Romania (33%), while Germany (11%) and Greece (11%) were the lowest. The country with the lowest percentage of young people who started a business is Ireland (only 2%). Eurostat data for self-employed youth identify similar patterns. The lowest percentage of self-employed youth of the age group 20-24 is occupied by Germany (1.8%) and Ireland (1.7%). On the other hand, Italy (11.8%) and Romania (11.6%) have the highest percentage of self-employment of young people. Therefore, considering these youth trends in Albania and in the world, and comparing with the findings of this study, we can say that the fact that the students of this study (the Master of Science students of the Department of Labor and Social Policy) prefer more working in their own business, may be an indication of the entrepreneurial spirit of these students and this is certainly a positive indicator. Also positive is the fact that these students, unlike the majority of Albanian youth, do not regard public administration as the ideal work. So they are aware that the public sector is not necessarily the best possible option for them, there are many other jobs that can provide much better working conditions than the public administration (in profit, in career development opportunities etc).

Job Search Characteristics

According to ILO (2013), for a person to be called an active job seeker, he must have taken specific steps during job search. These steps are divided into: formal methods and informal methods. Formal methods include: enrollment at work offices; application to future employers; control of work sites, markets, factories, farms etc; placing or responding to advertisements in newspapers; being in search of a land, building, machinery or equipment to open a free enterprise; engages to provide financial resources; apply for for permission or license etc. Informal methods include asking for help to find work from friends and relatives.

Based on the ILO, generally students are a category that even though they may be looking for a job during school, do not seek it with the same intensity as an adult who is not in school relations. This ILO conclusion was also confirmed by our study, which identified some interesting details about the job search process of these students: the majority of young people in this study had 1-2 months looking for work and only 17.7% of them were/had been long-term jobseekers. However, it was noticed that the employed students of this study were generally unemployed for only a short period of time, while unemployed students are mostly long-term unemployed. But this difference is not statistically significant. On average, students have made 3.49 total job applications and 2.47 interviews. Employed students have a lower average than the unemployed in applications (respectively 3.17 and 3.76), but have a higher average of the given interviews (2.6 and 2.35 respectively). But neither these differences are statistically significant. Regarding job enrollment, the majority of young people (66%), both the employed and the unemployed, have never been registered with the employment offices. However, the unemployed have a higher percentage of those enrolled, although this difference is not statistically significant. This figure is also supported by the NES (National Employment Service), which for 2015 reports that, at the country level, only 24% of the total jobseekers in the labor offices were young. This is a very small percentage which also indicates the inactivity of job search by young people in our country. Various studies in the world also indicate the inactivity of young people in job search. Youth workforce and labor force participation rates continue to decline, as enrollment in higher education has increased. Between 1991 and 2014, the

distribution of active young people (employed or unemployed) to the young population decreased by 11.6% (from 59% to 47.3%) compared with a 1% decrease in the participation rate of the adult workforce. The youth employment ratio with the global population - the distribution of the working age population that is employed - has decreased by 2.7% from 2007 to 2014 (from 43.9% to 41.2%). The trends of the fall of this report are closely related to the growth rates of participation in education (ILO, 2015). However, it is also noticed that long-term unemployment (European Commission, 2015) has also been steadily rising among young people. For youth of the age group 20-24, the unemployment rate (EU-28 average) increased from 6.5% in 2011 to 7.7% in 2014 (+18.5%). For the age group 25-29, the increase was from 4.9% in 2011 to 5.9% in 2014 (+20.4). Regarding rejected jobs, 60.5% of respondents reported having rejected previous jobs and 39.5% did not. Among them, it is noted that the employees have rejected more than the unemployed (67.5% and 54.3% respectively), however this difference is not statistically significant. These figures clearly indicate the lack of readiness of young people in this study to accept any type of job. Regarding the readiness of these young people to accept a job, most of them (39.5%) would be willing to accept a job only if it was stable, well-paid and appropriate for their level of qualification, over 31% would accept any kind of job provided it was appropriate for their level of qualification, over 17% provided it was well paid and only 7% were willing to accept any type of job regardless of the conditions. So young people in this study generally have high aspirations and expectations regarding their employment. However, a finding of this study is the fact that although they expressed high expectations for their employment, the minimum wage under which they would not accept a job is a relatively small salary, on average 26016.39 lek. We say a small salary, given the fact that the minimum wage in our country for 2015 was 22000 lek, which is a salary slightly lower than the minimum wage expressed by the participants of this study. From this we realize that although the young people of this study say they have high expectations for their job, these expectations are not so high. Between the two groups of this study (employed and unemployed students), another interesting finding is found, where employed students have defined as a minimum wage a lower wage than unemployed students, respectively, the average of the minimum wage for the employed students was 23344.83 lek while for unemployed 28437.50 lek. So employed youth, although they currently have a job, have lower claims on the minimum wage than unemployed young people. And this difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Taking the trigger from this finding, further studies could be interesting to assess the existence or not of a causal link between the level of youth employment claims and their working status.

Employment Migration: Most young people in this study (41.9%) have not considered migrating to find a job. However, a large percentage of them (around 34%) thought of moving to another country for employment. None of the young people have considered moving to a town or rural area to find a job, although their employment opportunities in the profession may be greater in these areas than in the capital. Interesting in these data is the high percentage of young people currently in work (35%) and again seek to migrate abroad to find a job. This can be explained by the fact that most of employed youth in this study currently work on a temporary job, and do not feel very confident about keeping the job after the end of the contract. Also, another explanation may be the desire expressed by these young employees to change their workplace in the future in order to grow in career. And perhaps they consider hiring

abroad a better opportunity to achieve this career growth. However, this interpretation leads to another problem, even greater in this case, which is related to the limping of our labor market. If Albanian youth do not see our job market as a good opportunity to grow in the career, and aim for overseas departure as a better option, the country's labor force and economically active population risks shrinking. This will bring even greater problems for the Albanian country and society. Therefore, taking this fact into consideration by policy-makers is of great importance.

The benefit of the education obtained in finding a job: 50% of students consider their education to be very useful in finding a job, 46.5% as somewhat useful, 1.4% as useless and 2.8% stated that they did not know if the education received is or not useful in finding a job. So most of the participants consider the education as very important in their employment. Employed students value more the education obtained than unemployed students. Among the employees, 62.5% of them consider it very useful in finding a job, while among the unemployed, 54.3% consider it somewhat useful. However, this difference is not statistically significant. Also, when students were asked if they would continue their schooling in the future, 40.7% of them said they intend to continue school at a later stage, and 40.7% still do not know whether to continue or not. Only 18.6% do not intend to return to school again. The interesting fact here lies in the difference (statistically significant, $p < 0.001$) between employed and unemployed youth. Unlike what could be expected, in the first 40.7%, the employed youth predominate, while in the second the unemployed youth. Respectively, among the employed 62.5% stated that they intend to continue school at a later stage and among the unemployed 54.3% do not know yet what they will do. It seems, therefore, that employed students consider more than unemployed students to continue their education and appreciate more its usefulness in their work. This probably relates to the fact that unemployed students have not yet managed to use their diploma and apply the knowledge learned during school because they do not have a job. While employed students may have understood the value of this diploma during the various work processes. The value of education in youth employment has also been identified in other national and international studies. The latest INSTAT (2015) survey for youth identifies that the category of managers, professionals and technicians (highly qualified professions) is the only group of professions that has grown in absolute and relative terms between 2011 and 2014, while the group of profession involving workers in agriculture has lost most of the employed persons in relative and absolute terms during this period, and this is explained by the increase in the percentage of highly educated young people. Also, global studies show that a young person with higher education has the potential to complete the school-to-work transition to 1/3 of the time it takes for a teenager with only basic education (ILO 2015).

Employed students: the characteristics of their jobs

During the lifecycle, young people usually complete education, but many of them at the same time go to work and create a professional career. However, young people are particularly hit by the consequences of the economic and financial crisis. The 2011 census, and especially the Labor Force Surveys (LFS), repeatedly provide a lot of information to assess the situation of young people in the labor market. Employment of young people in Albania is generally associated with some, unfortunately, not very positive features for them: unprotected employment; part-time employment; work with lower wages than adults, work at work that does not fit their level of education (this especially for young people with higher education) (INSTAT, 2015) etc. However,

these characteristics of youth work are evident not only among the Albanian youth but also among their peers in Europe and the world. In Europe, a growing percentage of young people in 2014 had only temporary, part-time or some other unrelated forms of employment compared to 2011. The part-time employment rate of young people aged 15-24 has grown almost anywhere in Europe during 2011-2014. In Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Lusburg and Slovakia the growth was more than 30%. The latest Eurostat data for 2014 confirm the growing trend in recent years in the proportion of 15-24 year olds working part-time. In 2014, one in three 15-24 year old employees worked part-time (European Commission, 2015). Also globally, 20.7% of young people employed in OECD countries worked less than 30 hours a week (part-time) in 2000 compared to 30.1% in 2013, so there is a significant increase over time of recruiting young people at work with reduced time. Also, the distribution of youth to part-time involuntary work grew from 12.2% in 2007 to 17.1% in 2010 before falling again to 14.8% in 2013. Another characteristic of young people employed in the developing world is poverty. In 2013, more than 1/3 (37.8%) of young people employed in the developing world were poor (17.7% in extreme poverty and 20.1% in moderate poverty). In this year, about 169 million young people were living with less than \$ 2 a day. The number went to 286 million if the calculations included young people who worked and lived under \$ 4 a day. In most low-income countries, two to three (66.3%) younger workers were in vulnerable employment, as well as independent employees or contributing family members (unpaid). Another 4.3% was paid on a casual basis and 2.1% on temporary (non-casual) jobs, creating a total of 72.5% in "irregular employment". This compared with an average 34.5% in irregular employment in the seven countries with an average income and 41.2% in the eight countries with moderately low incomes. As regards informal youth employment (ILO, 2014), on average three out of four young employees (75.4%) aged 15-29 work in informal employment. However, there are significant differences between states and regions. Young employees have larger opportunities to work formally in Eastern Europe and, to some extent, the Middle East (Jordan only) and Latin America and the Caribbean (with the exception of El Salvador and Peru). On the other hand, in sub-Saharan Africa, about 8 to 9.5 of ten young employees are in informal employment. Informality seems to be closely related to the country's economic development: The average distribution of young people in informal employment among low-income countries is much higher than the average high-income countries (respectively 90% and 62%).

While in this study, unlike the situation presented above, the employment situation of young people is a bit more optimistic. Most of the employed students (37.5% of them) work in office jobs, 20% in administrative work, 7.5% in managerial jobs (jobs that generally require a high level of education), 25% in marketing, 2.5 % work on handicrafts and crafts. So here it is noticed that most DLSP students are employed at work that fit their level of education, unlike what was presented in the latest INSTAT study, and this is a positive fact for them. However when asked about how they provided this job, most of them (25%) said they provided it through friends and relatives. This proves once again the important role of informal job search methods in Albania (Shtetiweb.org / CDI, 2015). The average of the hours that the subjects of this study work per week is 34.95 hours. So in general, subjects of this study work full-time (over 30 hours a week) and this is also a positive indicator compared to their peers in Albania, Europe and the world. Regarding the employment contract, most of them (57.5%) have a temporary employment contract, 35% have a permanent contract and

7.5% do not have a contract at all. On this contract, most of the participants (32.5%) stated that they are not happy with their contract because they do not give the security they need at work. Also, when young people were asked about job security, 45% of the subjects said they were likely to keep their jobs for the next 12 months, while 55% have stated that: either is likely but is not safe, or is unlikely or they does not know. So most young people are not sure if they will keep their jobs. Here we note that the problem of temporary work is evident even among young people of this study. This lack of security for employment after the end of the contract made them still in transition for a sustainable job.

The average income earned by the subjects of this study per month from their work is 37437.5 lek. If we compare the average wage and the minimum wage in Albania for 2015 (INSTAT, 2016) (respectively 54,000 lek and 22,000 lek), we note that youth wage is significantly lower than the average wage in our country and also significantly higher than the minimum wage. Thus, the salary of young people is an intermediate between the average wage and the minimum wage of the country. However, let us consider this a positive indicator, given the fact that at the moment they were asked, these young people had not yet completed the school and entered the labor market with a salary of about 40,000 lek in a country with an economic situation like Albania, cannot be considered a negative indicator for them.

Regarding the various benefits at work to which subjects have or have not access, generally, most participants have access to the main benefits at work (contribution to social security, annual leave, old-age insurance, sick leave allowance, maternity leave, coverage of medical insurance, termination of all financial obligations by the employer in case of dismissal) and only a very small percentage (7.5%) work in informal jobs (uninsured). Here we see that the situation is again more positive for these young people than the trend of young people globally, where informal work was considered one of their biggest problems. All of the above elements explain the next finding in this study, which states that 85% of the employed subjects of this study are mostly satisfied with their current work and only 15% are mostly dissatisfied. But even though most of them are satisfied with the job, most (80%) hope to change this job in the future, and 20% do not want or are not sure. However, the main reason why they want to change their work is not dissatisfaction with current work, but the desire to have a better career prospect. This is another positive indicator that shows the high aspirations of these students in terms of their career performance.

2.6. Key Findings, Conclusions

This study points out that most of the students, both unemployed and employed, are currently in a 'transition state'. 73.5% of participants were still in transition, 14.3% had transited into a stable job, and 12.2% were still in transition not yet started. Unemployed students are either part of the 'transition' phase, or in the 'transition not yet started' phase. Over 79% of students who are not employed are really unemployed and looking for a job, so they are considered 'in transition'. The rest of them (about 21%) are inactive students, or non-job-seeking students, so they have not yet entered the transition (not yet transited). While the employees are either 'transiting to a stable job' or 'in transition'. Among the employed, 65% are considered 'in transition' because their work does not provide sustainability (temporary work contract or do not have a

contract at all) and the rest (35%) can be considered 'transited' (with a permanent employment contract)¹.

Regarding the school-to-work combination, in total 72.4% of students have worked or continue to work while continuing the school. Among the students currently unemployed, 53.4% of them have a working experience, while 46.6% have never worked during the school. The main motive that drives students to work during school is "to provide income", over 59% responded in this form. Both for employed and currently unemployed students, this was the predominant motive. The ideal work for young people, based on their preferences, was opening a personal business (34.7%). And for this, the two groups (both employed and unemployed students) have had the same view. Work in the public sector resulted second preference for the participants of this study, with 28.6%. The third preference, which also involved a significant percentage of participants (21.4%), was work in an international corporation.

Job search features: 24.4% of young people have a duration of 1-2 months looking for work, about 20% have 3-6 months and 17.4% over a year. Between the two groups there is a difference, where most of the employed students (30%) have stayed for 1-2 months looking for a job, while the unemployed in most cases (over 26%) are long-term unemployed (over a year looking for work). However, this difference is not statistically significant. On average, students have made 3.49 job applications and 2.47 interviews. Employed students have a lower average than the unemployed ones in applications (respectively 3.17 and 3.76).

Based on the conditions of youth to accept a job, most of them (39.5%) would be willing to accept a job only if it was stable, well-paid and appropriate for their level of qualification, over 31 % would accept any type of job provided it was appropriate for their level of qualification, over 17% provided it was well paid and only 7% were willing to accept any type of job regardless of the conditions. So young people in this study generally have high aspirations and expectations regarding their employment.

Most young people, both the employed and the unemployed, have a minimum wage under which they would refuse a job and this salary is on average 26016.39 lek. Between the two groups there is an interesting finding where the employed students have defined as a minimum wage a lower wage than the unemployed students, respectively 23344.83 lek and 28437.50 lek. So employed youth, although they currently have a job, have lower claims on the minimum wage than unemployed ones. And this difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Employment Migration: Most young people in this study (41.9%) have not considered migrating to find a job. However, a large percentage of them (around 34%) thought of moving to another country for employment. Interestingly in the study is the high percentage of young people currently in work (35%) and again seek to migrate abroad to find a job.

Most students (50%) consider education to be very useful in finding a job, 46.5% as being somewhat useful, 1.4% as useless and 2.8% do not know. Employed students value more the education received than unemployed students. Among the employed, 62.5% of them consider it very useful in finding a job, while among the unemployed, 54.3% consider it somewhat useful. Also, 40.7% of students said they intend to continue school at a later stage and other 40.7% do not know if they will continue or not. Only 18.6% do not intend to return to school again. In the first 40.7%, the

¹ See transition phases according to: ILO (2013), Labour market transition of young women and men in Cambodia, ILO, Geneva.

employed youth predominate, while in the second the unemployed youth. So employed students consider further education more than unemployed students (statistically significant difference, $p < 0.001$).

Most of the currently employed students currently work in jobs that fit their level of education (office jobs, administrative work, managerial jobs). Most of them also provided this job through friends and relatives. Generally, students work on a temporary employment contract, have an average working hour per week of 34.95 hours and the average income earned is 37437.5 lek. Most have access to the main benefits at work and only a very small percentage (7.5%) work in informal jobs (uninsured). They are largely satisfied with their current job but still hope to change it in the future. Regarding job security, most of them are not sure if they will keep their jobs for the next year.

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Sociological research perspectives of urban symbolism

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Abstract

This article is based on a research conducted within an European project aimed at developing a strategy for the promotion and fruition of cultural heritage in Dolj county, Romania and the district of Vidin, Bulgaria.

Urban area research in the conditions of the globalized societies is limited by the alternation between the general phenomena encountered in all cases in cities and the problems affecting the evolution of cities. The general features eliminate the possibility of an identity profile of the cities, and the solutions offered result from the gross comparison of certain development indicators. Differences between them become dimensions of urban development strategies. But reality has shown that imitation of successful models without a minimum of adaptive effort is not enough. Successful recipes do not provide guarantees for multiplication in different contexts from the point of view of the level of urbanism and different historical experiences. In most cases, the measures and investments made do not bring an increase in the life quality and do not favor social cohesion. The adverse effects are perpetuated over time, and the costs of rebuilding cities as communities become considerable.

The study of possible alternatives to understanding the urban environment also brings to the attention of completing the significance of statistical data with meanings resulting from a more complex understanding of the processes specific to the urban environment, as the city represents more than a simple demographic agglomeration.

Keywords: *urbanization; sustainable development; symbols; population; tourism; architecture.*

1. Urban development planning

The main objectives of urban development are related to economic development and poverty reduction. These key objectives include strategies such as (Kaganova 2011): central elements of the urban system, anti-poverty policies, urban economy, urban land and housing market, sustainable urban policies and issues related to the urban area.

Moving from one historical stage to the next, changes and the dynamics of the modern world require constant efforts by the local government to keep the city as a productive, inviting and attractive space for investment. On an administrative level, investments are geared towards acquiring new assets or repairing and replacing existing ones (Kaganova 2011: p. 3). These investments are made through government development programs or local development initiatives. Investments in new assets or

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maintenance of old ones can also be achieved through public-private partnerships (Kaganova 2011: p. 3).

Investments and the correlation with the needs of the cities are circumscribed to aspects that require the attention of the authorities (Kaganova 2011: p. 3):

1. Capital demand for investment is always higher than available, which forces local authorities to take decisions in the interest of the city by prioritizing objectives and carefully planning investments. Early development of a set of criteria that support the need for investment can also add value to the investment, expressed in terms of positive effects on the city;

2. There is an "intrinsic challenge". Certain projects are carried out through annual planning, being dependent on local and government budgets, while other projects involve multi-year investments due to the complexity and scale of investments that can be achieved through activities that last for more than a year. The effective preparation, planning and organization of such a system requires a period of careful and lengthy preparation so as to produce the best financial estimates, to contract additional sources of income either through private investment or through subsidies or loan contracting;

3. There are complex projects whose implementation exceeds the technical capacity of local authorities;

4. There is no standard model of public investment planning. Managers of public institutions are trying different approaches to identify feasible solutions.

These aspects are based on five principles that outline a strategy for the development of the city (Kaganova 2011: p. 4):

1. Public authorities must avoid "frivolous" investments in projects in other spheres of activity such as commercial speculation in the real estate market;

2. All the needs of the city are objectively compared;

3. Adopt a prudent fiscal policy in the long term;

4. Innovative solutions for any project are considered;

5. The population or individuals have effective channels to make their opinions known.

Development indicators include many aspects of social and economic life in a city, generally classified into the following major categories (European Communities 2004: p. 3): demography, social, economic, civic involvement, education, environment, travel and transport, information society, culture and recreation, indicators of perception. These major categories include sets of indicators and sub-indicators of a complex and variable size. It is also noted that each category contributes to the development and maintenance of the life quality in a city. Compared to the general framework described above, a new challenge arises: the hierarchy of investment areas or balanced investment methods in their development. Preferences for a certain area will not lead to an increase in the life quality in the conditions of neglecting the other dimensions. Moreover, exaggerated investments in a given framework will have limited positive effects due to the negative effects generated by the lack of a strategy for other areas of activity. There are several connections between the categories of indicators presented so that the implications of the investments made are complex.

The experience of the communist countries has shown that certain aspects of the urban environment indicators have been treated differently. As a result of the urban audits carried out by the pilot project "Urban Audit" (National Institute of Statistics 2018: pp. 10-19), a series of public policies aiming at increasing the attractiveness of urban areas have been neglected. Thus, urban population continues to decline, as does

the population of urban functional areas (FUAs). Also, the age group ratio indicates a decrease of the young population compared to the elderly population, which reveals the existence of a slow aging process. Consequently, this demographic dynamics will generate a high degree of economic dependency, increasing the economic burden on the working-age population. As for the urban area, the solution would be to increase the attractiveness of cities by investing to attract the young population.

Another indicator used in urban auditing (NIS 2018: pp. 20-25) refers to housing. Their number has risen steadily due to the demand for housing in the urban area, as well as the surface of the dwellings. However, these indicators are not correlated with the correlated expansion of utilities and public infrastructure. Thus, the increase in the number of newly built dwellings as a consequence of city development and population requirements can be understood as a response to the housing needs of the population, but it does not have a significant impact on the life quality. Moreover, there are areas where residential overcrowding has exceeded the capacity of the existing infrastructure: water supply, sewage, electricity, places in hospitals, schools, parking places, etc. In addition, the Romanian cities have grown more horizontally, preferring to invest in individual dwellings. Vertical expansion is slower, and where it has been achieved, a number of issues have remained unresolved.

Education is affected by the demographic decline on the one hand, a visible process with the increase of the educational level, while at the young age, 0-4 years, it is found that the number of children is much higher than the ones in the educational units. This is due to the lower number of nurseries and kindergartens than necessary, as well as other causes, such as those of an economic nature or systems of particular values, by which children of this age are raised and trained in the family.

Demographic trends that have negative values for many years will in lead in the future to a drop in the school population to alarming levels (NIS 2018: pp. 25-32).

Tourism is a profit-making activity for business, population and local authorities. In Romania tourism is focused on the natural landscapes and the possibilities offered by the traditional areas: the Black Sea coast and the mountain area. As a result of urban and other research, it is noticed that Romania's tourism potential is not fully exploited. Tourist importance is evidenced by the approximately 500,000 jobs, which account for about 5.8% of the total number of jobs (NIS 2018: pp. 33-37).

The increase in the number of overnight stays in the last four years shows an increase of 8.61%, which shows both an increase in the number of tourists and a prolongation of the periods of stay.

The current challenges in the tourism area relate to the expansion of tourist offer in all areas of the country as there is a rich natural environment and an attractive history for a larger number of tourists than the current one. All this also implies the development of services offered to tourists, so as to ensure increased attractiveness of the area. Tourism is not just an economic activity in the tertiary sector. The economic benefits generated by tourism are linked to maintaining an ecological social space, as the level of pollution due to tourist activities is very low. Moreover, it provides sources for preserving the cultural and historical heritage of a region.

2. Theoretical perspectives of urban space analysis

Neighborhood organization was the subject of W.M. Rohe and L.B. Gates (1985: pp. 24-29) who studied how the urban environment is developing by planning the development of neighborhoods in American cities such as Atlanta, Cincinnati, Huston

and others. Their research was based on the role of the urban planner and the analysis of relations between administration and neighborhoods, be it citizen associations, committees, tenant associations. From this perspective, the neighborhoods become partners in identifying local issues, attracting citizens to solve community problems of general interest in their free time, developing lobby groups that can get involved in raising funds to improve infrastructure, public services, increase solidarity and social cohesion, increasing confidence in local government, etc.

For Herbert Gans (1976: pp. 153-173), planning must become a social planning. People have to be analyzed from the perspective of their aspirations, desires, life styles, values and specific issues due to age or social status. For example, poverty in certain urban areas should generate economic or job creation in an area. Generational conflicts involve investing in creating institutional spaces where young people can express their opinions and values. Criminality involves the intensification of activities and actions to ensure physical and social security. From this point of view, planning must result from knowing the needs and opinions of citizens, their needs. Investments in the physical organization of the territory must be subordinated to the needs expressed by the citizens, and not for reasons of a different nature. From this perspective, urban conflicts resulting from the overlapping of material investments and the different value systems of the population are avoided. Lack of interest due to value incompatibility renders material investment unnecessary and its objectives unattainable.

The oldest city theories appeared long before the cities were what they are now. The increase in the complexity of the cities has also led to the multiplication of human relationships. The study of urban communities requires orientation to understand changes in human behavior under the impact of urban processes. The emergence of economic opportunities and the emergence of the feeling of freedom through the disappearance of normative rural communities created an analytical balance that individuals do when choosing where to live (Still 1974; Davis 1955: pp. 128-130). But economic opportunities do not mean everything for human individuals. Human nature implies a psychological and social space that favors the expression of one's own personality.

Adaptation to the environment is an approach that analyzes the mechanisms that people develop for adaptation to the environment, resulting in more behavioral patterns (Niță and Ilie Goga 2017: 9). Also, population distribution within cities and criteria that influence population movement between different areas of the city is of interest in analyzing urban planning methods (Reiss 1970: pp. 27-37). But a more complete understanding of the city results from its approach as a community. The focus is on the functionality of society and the way functional differences affect individuals (Berger 1978: p. 9).

These distinctions of sociological and psychological nature bring to attention the way in which the human being is transformed under the influence of specific urban processes. A complete research of an urban space in search of the most effective urban planning measures involves completing statistical analyzes, oriented to the city's material infrastructure, with the analysis of human characteristic value systems, symbols and perspectives through which individuals understand the city. The implementation of urban development policies is dependent on the involvement of the population in their realization. The yield is guaranteed and ensured by the correlation between citizen participation and urban development.

3. Symbolic analysis of the urban environment

The functioning of the city as a community implies the emergence and implementation of some functions specific to the functioning of the urban environment (Berger 1978: pp. 30-31). It is about generating and maintaining rules and solidarity of members, providing goods and services, socializing, behavioral control, locations where community members can interact to maintain mutual support.

By analyzing the symbols of the population between different areas of a city one can identify the main features of the city. Identity is not given by economic, housing, or other dimensions that do not involve human individuals. Even the architecture of a city is the result of a certain attitude towards living and living space. Thus, the differences between urban spaces result from the symbolism specific to those communities to a greater extent than differences that include material aspects.

Urban area research is limited by the tendency of each city to be unique in terms of socio-economic and symbolic characteristics. The power to generalize studies in a particular city is limited in analogy with processes running in other cities.

Choosing research methods becomes difficult given the complexity and diversity of city problems. Moreover, the size of the city is directly proportional to the problems that the administration has to solve. Domestic diversity of cities involves the adoption of different methods for studying and understanding some of their different aspects.

A unique research model and perhaps unused on an extended plan is proposed by Peter Nas (2011) and his colleagues, who believe that addressing the cultural characteristics of cities in terms of symbols and rituals is little used in relation to the potential of knowledge which this approach holds. The perspective of urban symbolic ecology allows identification of the distribution and significance of symbols and rituals in relation to the environment. It is possible to know the social processes of production and consumption of symbols and rituals, which are standard recurrent facts in the process of building the meanings. The symbols specific to the different categories of inhabitants of a city are due to the specific ways of manifesting extrinsic values. Analytical perspectives allow us to understand symbols in terms of identity, structure and meanings of urban elements (Kevin Lynch 1960) or the distinction between real city and Hypercity (Nas et. al, 2011: p. 8). The two dimensions comprise the material and visible characteristics of the city on the one hand and, on the other hand, their meanings, which in most cases can constitute hyperreality, with much more powerful influences than the reality itself. Through such an analysis, the symbolic part of a city breaks out of material reality, allowing the transgression of the space defined by the parts.

The cultural approach of the city as a whole, including symbols and rituals, has been rarely used. At present, one of the contemporary research and analysis trends in urban anthropology is the urban symbolic ecology, which aims at studying the cultural dimension of the city, aimed at establishing the distribution and significance of symbols and rituals in relation to the environment (Nas 1998: pp. 545 -622). This approach is central to the social process of producing and consuming symbols and rituals, which are standardized recurrent facts in meaning-building. A symbol is more than just a sign, as it refers to extrinsic values. Hypercity theory implies that the symbolic part of a city can be seen as detached from reality. The symbolic dimension contributes to the formation of a hyperreality or hypercity that has its own life and allows the transgression of the

space defined by the component parts. This involves marketing and branding cities because they want to be differentiated from each other.

Urban symbolism is expressed by various phenomena such as the appearance of a city, architecture, statues, street names, poems, and rituals, culture (music, poetry, local literature) websites, all of which are considered to be symbols. Cities have multiple symbol bearers, one of which is usually the most dominant. There are four types of symbol bearers: material, discursive, iconic, and behavioral (Nas 2006: pp. 1-9).

4. Research direction of urban symbolism in Craiova

In this study we propose to advance a methodological adaptation of this perspective to the knowledge of the specific hyperreality of the city of Craiova, the most developed in the Oltenia region. For this reason we adapted the theory advanced by Peter Nas to the specific elements of the city of Craiova, or be rolled out in the near future.

Starting from the old architecture of the city and the spatial layout of the institutions, two research objectives were developed:

1. Orthodox religion. The most numerous historical buildings preserved to this day are the places of worship, some of which are of considerable length. Understanding the symbolic factors that have substantiated the investments in the construction and preservation of Orthodox churches for long periods of time, in conditions of utmost hostility and influence of the Ottoman Empire, will reveal the main elements of identity of the people of Craiova. The symbols that have integrated the spiritual and identity of the inhabitants will reveal elements that can be integrated into the urban development strategies.
2. European vocation. Although the historical geopolitical context reveals the pressure of the great powers of departure from the West and the European world, however, the Romanians remained faithful to their beliefs. The cultural and architectural heritage of the city of Craiova testifies to the efforts of the inhabitants to preserve themselves in the Western cultural area. The education of the majority of the elite of Craiova has been perfected in major European schools, regardless of the historical age.

A first chapter of further research into urban features refers to the analysis of material symbolism, spatial distribution of material symbols, and how they are associated with the population with different identities.

The second dimension concerns the analysis of discursive symbolism. Identify elements that generate the city's image of visitors, tourists, or people in transit. Once the characteristic symbols have been identified, a strategy to promote the image of the city beyond its limits can be made.

The analysis of iconic symbolism has an influence on tourism. Images are the ones that will be kept by tourists. Linking some legends and completing the set of tourist services related to them creates the premises for a permanent tourist flow. Religious symbolism also helps to increase the degree of cohesion among community members.

Behavioral symbolism refers to rituals and customs that accompany various holidays. Their knowledge will form the basis for the decisions that the public administration can adopt in urban planning activities.

The analysis of emotional symbolism allows for the creation of mental maps of the city. The similarities and differences reveal the distribution of symbols throughout

the studied area and significant elements for the population. Urban planning can be done according to the symbols that the population gives them importance.

5. Conclusions

Real knowledge of a city results from knowing its symbolic structure. Knowing the symbols will identify the identity and image that their own citizens have about their own city, which is a source of unique information.

The architecture of the city and the significance of certain buildings play an important role in analyzing the urban environment and the importance that certain buildings have for their own citizens. Historical monuments offer more than the possibility of reminding historical events and some material symbols, paving the way for a history in layers, from the first vestiges to the contemporary. Extensions of the meanings symbolized by material vestiges are found in political, economic, social and cultural dimensions. City views may vary considerably, depending on the social category of the respondents. Symbols are emotional, with counter-symbolic meanings. The relationship between symbolic and counter-symbolic is equivalent to the relationship between official opinion and reality. Harmonizing official attitude with reality provides the tools for effective urban planning.

Urban symbols reveal how social class, ethnicity, gender or age contributes to society. Research based on development indicators on infrastructure viewers should be complemented by the perspective of symbolic and cultural analysis of urban space to get a balanced picture of the analyzed community.

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Family and labor force – individual lives, social outcomes

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Abstract

The increasing involvement of women in work, together with the taking over by various external bodies (others than the family) of tasks related to children growth, care and education, assistance of elderly or the sick ones, have led to new concerns regarding social capital research, deterioration of the family relations and deepening of intergenerational cleavages.

Considering these trends and taking into account the fact that the interferences between the profession and the private life are evident, in this paper we propose a secondary statistical analysis materialized in an exploratory desk-research, in which we analyzed the information provided by EUROSTAT, the National Institute of Statistics, the National Commission of Strategy and Prognosis – statistics, reports, studies or other official documents of the national or European forums containing relevant data on changes affecting work and family and the connections between the two.

Keywords: *work; family; demographic change; labor force.*

1. Introduction

The transformations concerning family types, their foundations, dissolution but also the spreading of forms that are currently considered atypical, bring several difficulties for statisticians, the authors of an Eurostat report considering that the differences between the EU Member States make it increasingly difficult to use the concepts in this sphere (European Commission 2015: p. 39). In the preamble of the chapter entitled "Marriages and divorces" of the Eurostat report it is clearly stated that the number of marriages is decreasing and that of divorces increases, the number of children born out of wedlock also increases, while alternative forms of cohabitation are diversified, and new rights are granted to them by the national laws.

While statisticians accuse problems in collecting and analyzing data, making it difficult to compare states, socio-human scientists are trying to explain marital dissolution just when marriage is based on the love of the two spouses, because at this time, more than ever before, family is based on mutual desire, the mutual love between the two partners (Iluț 2015). Almost half of marriages end in divorce, the European Union births outside marriage rate was 40% in 2012, which includes the children born in different alliances or by single mothers (European Commission 2015: p. 39). Age at first marriage has also increased in all countries, even if Romania still has one of the lowest values of 29.7 years for men and 26.3 years for women.

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Another issue that is often set on the table lately in western societies is the culture of unlimited individualism at the expense of an altruistic attitude, although social policies try to promote by different means the civic spirit. Also, as a manifestation of selfishness is sometimes seen the desire for personal affirmation by reaching a successful career, to the detriment of founding a family. In developed countries, people with high professional training postpone or even cancel the decision to start a family and have children in exchange for their professional lives and personal entertainment. It is frequently spoken about the consumer society that pushes us to consume more, with the purpose to produce more, and vice versa, in order to keep functioning a vicious circle.

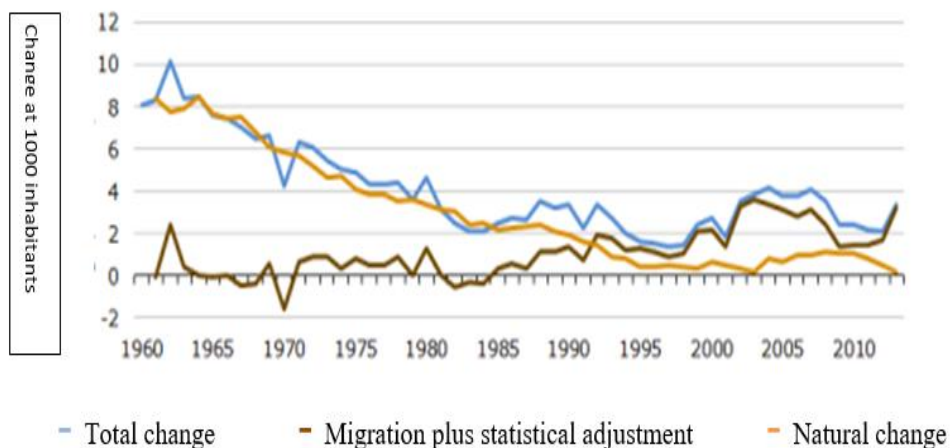
2. Evolution of demographic indicators in Europe

The demographic changes affecting Europe are of particular importance, both from an economic, political, social and even cultural point of view. A Eurostat 2015 report attempts to provide an overview of the current demographic trends of the continent, based on analyzes of national or regional statistical information on births, deaths, marriages and divorces, immigration and emigration rates, asylums and residence permits (European Commission 2015).

The data provided by the statistical authority of the European Union, Eurostat, show that while per consolidated overview, the population of the 28 member states has increased every year over one million people, in 13 of these countries has declined. Four states meet more than half of Europeans (Germany, France, England and Italy - 54%), and while some of them have registered an increase of population (Luxembourg, Italy, Malta, Sweden), others have faced with decreases (Lithuania, Cyprus, Hungary, Romania). The causes of changes in the number of inhabitants, migration and natural causes, have had a varying influence for each state, for example in Ireland the rise was due to natural causes, while in others, Germany, Italy or Austria, only migration has had an impact on this balance. However, there are studies that reveal the fact that migration as a cause of demographic changes “was not only limited to former Western European countries. The fall of the iron curtain and the transition of former Soviet Bloc countries to free market economies led to differential economic developments in these countries, triggering migration flows from the poorer countries to the richer countries” (Porumbescu 2015: p. 168). On the other hand, the decrease in population was caused only by natural causes in Hungary and as a result of the migration in Spain and Cyprus. In terms of this analysis, we see that in Romania the decrease is mainly due to natural causes (European Commission 2015: p. 7), indicating primarily a negative growth, completed by the migration of residents.

The rise of the 28 member states was due to natural increase only 5%, while for the most part this increase (95%) is a result of migration. Since 1992 the contribution of migration exceeded natural increase in the population growth (European Commission 2015: p. 5), as can be more easily seen from the following graph taken from Eurostat Demography Report.

Figure no. 1. Evolution of population by component (gross annual rates), EU-28, 1960-2013



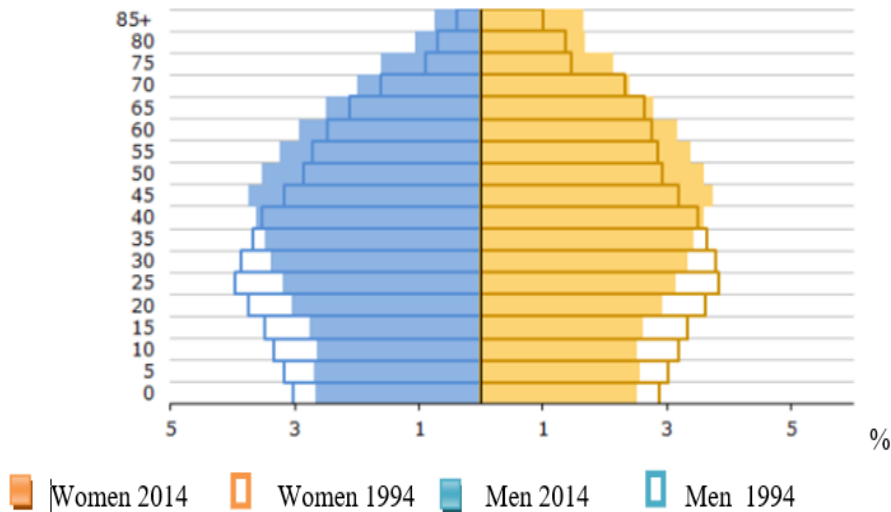
Source: Eurostat 2015: p. 5

This reduced contribution of the natural increase in population growth is attributed by the report's authors to the large number of immigrants in the EU since the mid-1980s, doubled by the dramatic decrease in natural growth (the difference between the number of births and the rate of deaths) since the 1960s. As the baby boom generation ages and the decline in birth rates continues, it is obvious that negative natural growth can only be counterbalanced by this migration, being the only one that will cause the continent to grow or decline.

The aging of Europe's population is already certain, and current demographic trends do not show a change in this phenomenon in the near future, taking into account low fertility rates. In total, at the beginning of 2014, 15.6% of the population was made up of people under 14 years of age, the working population accounted for about 65% (15-64 years), and 18.5% of the population consisted of people over 65 years old.

The average age in the EU was 42.2 years, the lowest in Ireland - 36 years and the highest in Germany, 45.6 years (European Commission 2015: p. 8). In Romania, the average age increased from 33.8 in 1994 to 40.8 in 2014, and the proportion of dependents increased by almost 10 percent in the case of young people and 7 percent in the case of the elderly (European Commission 2015: p. 9). If we analyze the entire continent, the evolution of population distribution by age is illustrated eloquently in Figure 2.

Figure no. 2. Population pyramid, EU-28, 1 January 1994, January 1, 2014
(Percentage of total population)



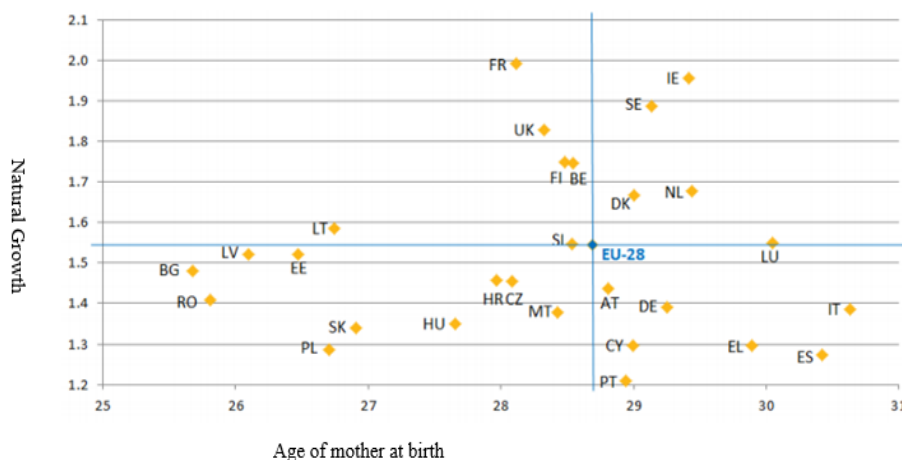
Source: Eurostat 2015: p. 10

Thus, while the base of the pyramid decreased over 10 years (1994-2004), the top of the pyramid, corresponding to older ages, increased. The decrease in fertility, doubled by the prolongation of life expectancy, determined these changes in the population structure. "Economists have long emphasized that there is a link between the high rates of women's involvement in work and the simultaneous decline in fertility since the late 1960s" (Olah and Fratzak 2013: p. 3).

While the population of the continent as a whole has increased, the number of births has declined steadily, from 7.7 million live births in 1964 to about 5 million in 2002, with a slight retreat in 2008 (5, 5 million). The average age at which women have children has also increased, with one year, over a decade, from 29.2 years in 2003 to 30.3 in 2013. In Romania, since 2000, live births for a woman fell below 2.1% (replacement value), ranging from 1.31% to 1.52%, while in countries such as France or Ireland the birth rate was close to 2% (European Commission 2015: p. 14).

However, in Romania, women have their first child at an average age of 25.8 years compared to Italy or Spain, where the threshold is around the age of 30 years. At the Union level, four groups of countries can be distinguished, depending on fertility rates and maternal age at birth, as shown in the following graph.

Figure no. 3. Mother's average age at first birth and natural growth, 2013



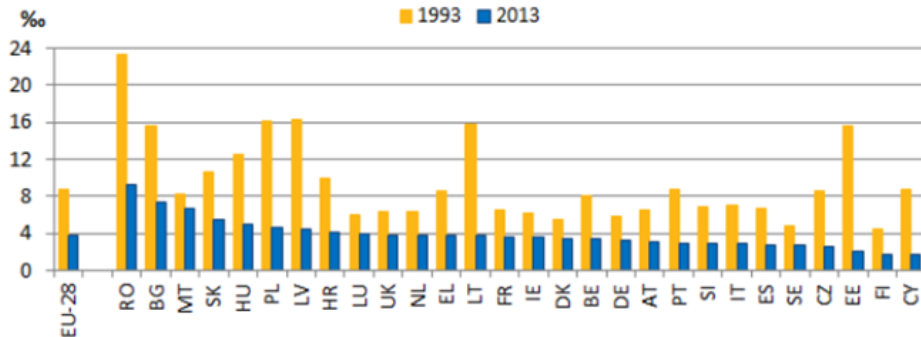
Source: Eurostat 2015: p. 14

Thus, we note how in Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden values of both indicators are high, while in the countries that joined the EU after 2004, the category to which Romania also belongs, these values are below the EU average (maternal age at birth is low, and natural growth is low also). We could put these differences on account of material conditions, because it is possible that in the first group of countries, families postpone the birth of children after providing a material base or establish career paths so that after these are certain women can devote to motherhood, as these countries provide them with a range of childcare facilities and material subsidies. On the other hand, in the former communist states, nurseries, kindergartens and schools have a number of shortcomings, which coupled with labor market insecurity can discourage parents to take the decision to have children.

The third group of countries, Germany, Austria, Italy and Spain, are characterized by low fertility rates and increased maternal age, and on the other hand, in the United Kingdom, Finland, France or Belgium, women are aged lower in the first birth and the natural growth is increased. It should be noted in the case of this last category the high proportion of immigrants, which can explain both characteristics, both the low age of the mother and the increased birth rate, considering, for example, that they are characteristic of Muslim families. The mothers were largely citizens of the country where they gave birth.

Another specific feature outlined by this report is the increase in life expectancy, largely due to socio-economic conditions, the development of medical services, the improvement of living conditions in general and also sustained by the reduction of infant mortality, with the expectation that elderly care will contribute to an increase in the future life expectancy. In all Member States, statistics show that women live longer than men, life expectancy being most prolonged due to the decrease in mortality after 60 years. Regarding child mortality (prior to the age of 1 year), Romania is unfortunately ranked first in the European Union, although its rate has fallen sharply between 1993 and 2013, but it is still very high compared to other Member States, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure no. 4. Infant mortality rate, 1993-2013

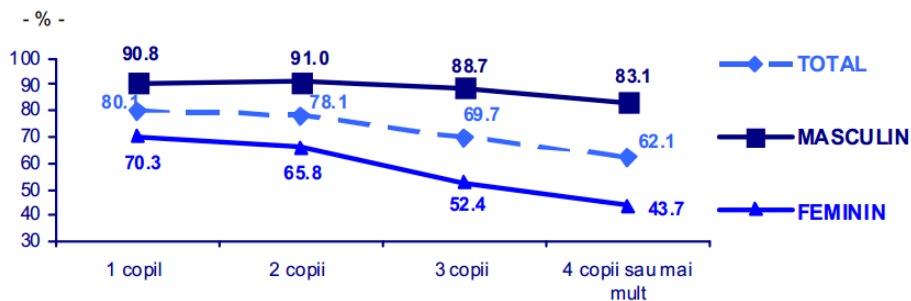


Source: Eurostat 2015: p. 21

Unfortunately, it is clear from this graph, unequivocally, the fact that the infant mortality rate in Romania is still above the average of Europe registered 20 years ago. The precariousness of the health system is an obvious cause of this situation, but the poor education of future parents and especially mothers, who in some cases disregarded doctors' advice, the ban on drinking alcohol or tobacco during pregnancy, some of the mothers do not even go to a doctor at all during pregnancy. On the other hand, in our country disadvantaged families, who have poor living conditions, low education, sometimes Roma, have more children, while in higher educated and higher income families the spouses take later the decision to become parents, and usually have one, maximum two children.

We can justify the infant mortality rate (first-year deaths) in Romania if we take into account the fact that most of the births belong to families who do not afford to provide their children the care they need, do not have adequate living conditions, live in isolated areas, and access to medical facilities is difficult, so not all the children they have manage to survive. Statistical data for our country shows that as the number of children in the family increases, the occupancy rates of parents decreases, as shown in Figure 5, from a press release of the National Institute of Statistics (National Institute of Statistics 2010: p. 2).

Figure no. 5. Employment rate by number of children by sex



Source: National Institute of Statistics 2010: p. 2

Nevertheless, the same press release shows that the occupancy rate of parents is almost 20 percentage points higher than the one of working age population, being 78.6%. Prevalent among single-parent families, with about 85 percent, it is a single mother formula. Research shows that the percentage of people with flexible working hours is about 9.5%, regardless of whether they have family responsibilities or not.

Of the approximately 15,000 people surveyed, about one-third - 34% had dependents in care, 70% of them were also employees, and the inactive accounted for about 20% of those with family responsibilities. Approximately 82% of the dependents are children, most of whom are part of complete families with both parents, just around 4% being included in single-parent families category.

As can be seen in Figure 5, we notice significant differences in the employment rate of mothers with one child and the occupancy rate of those with four children and more, with over 26 percent. This statistical difference is not as significant for men, as can be seen from the figure above mentioned. Here are portrayed the traditionalist attitudes specific to the Romanian people, the father being still the financial family support, and the mother is the one responsible to take care of the children. These aspects can be largely attributable to mentality, conservative orientation, but this perspective must not be exaggerated without recognizing the nature of things, the fact that only women can, by physiological construction, cover certain responsibilities with regard to children - the birth, breastfeeding, for example. In addition, the fact that men generally earn better than their partners may be one more reason for the fact that at a certain age when, let's say, maternal-child physiological dependence is no longer as prominent, women still devote more time to childcare than men.

3. Statistical differences between women and men in the workforce

In the view of the previous observations that women are less concerned with economic activities that generate income than men, the appearance of a child being also seen in many cases as a limitation, at least temporarily, to the professional development of a women, we considered useful to analyze the information provided by the National Prognosis Commission regarding the contribution of women to GDP, based on the statistical data of the National Institute of Statistics (National Commission for Strategy and Prognosis 2015).

Taking into account the fact that the capital and labor contribution can not be separated for the creation of the gross domestic product so as to make a breakdown for each of the two sexes, the National Commission for Strategy and Prognosis tried such a delimitation. In general, to make these statistics, certain conventions are used, such as that women's and men's productivity is the same, GDP is generated exclusively by the employed population, and economic outcomes are not influenced by the combination of wage and non-salary work. According to the same publication, the areas where women account for more than 60 percent of the occupied population are: financial activities, education, health, social work, cultural and recreational activities, as can be seen in the following table.

Table no. 1. Female employment structure by activities of national economy

- % women in the total occupied population		
National economy activities	2013	2014
Total economy	44.0	43.8
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	45.6	45.2
Total industry	39.6	39.3
Constructions	7.2	7.9
Total services	46.3	46.3
Of which:		
Trade, transport and storage, hotels and restaurants	45.5	45.9
Information and communications	38.7	36.5
Financial intermediation and insurance	65.7	66.3
Real estate transactions	45.3	36.1
Professional, scientific, technical and administrative service activities and support activities	39.4	39.9
Public administration and defense, social security in the public system, education and health	62.3	62.7
Performing, cultural and recreational activities and other activities	60.2	60.1

Source: National Commission for Strategy and Prognosis 2015: p. 8.

Women's contribution to Gross Domestic Product was calculated by 3 methods - production method, revenue method, GDP per institutional sector - and was somewhere between 41 and 43 percent. Those who performed these statistical analyzes explain these results on the basis that women have a lower period of activity than men, they retire early, plus the fact that their share is lower in sectors such as industry, agriculture or construction, which make a significant contribution to the gross domestic product.

On the other hand, if we look at a press release of the National Institute of Statistics on the structure of the use of free time, we notice differences between the sexes in terms of time devoted to economic activity and the one spent with family care and household (National Institute of Statistics 2013). Women spend more than an hour less time on their economic activity but spend almost three hours more than their partners with household and family care activities.

We can see from these statistical data the differences between the two sexes, the highest being recorded in household and family care, where women give more time than men, economic activity where the balance is reversed, as in leisure activities. Excepting house care, where women pay more attention than men, the latter spend more time for personal care, study, economic activity, travel or leisure activities.

These data show us, beyond the declarative level, the still traditional structure of Romanian families, and especially the unequal distribution of domestic tasks. The two previously analyzed categories of time and women's contribution to GDP complement each other, and if we take into account the required convention that only wage work contributes to gross domestic product, the information presented above is justified, for that it becomes visible through the corroboration of data that while men do wage work, outside, women spend more time working inside the house unpaid.

4. Connections between demographic change and the workforce

Although, as we can see, our country falls into the category of states with a rather traditionalist view of family and marital roles, as shown above, it seems that the problems affecting the continent are also manifest in Romania: the number of marriages being in decrease while the number of divorces increases, parents have their first child at a higher age, and natural growth is negative. Thus, we face the aging of the population, which makes it difficult to achieve the objectives of the EU 2020 Strategy.

Considering that demographic aging is an obvious reality for the countries of Europe, Eurostat has devoted a section analyzing the potential impact of these changes on employment growth, based on the latest demographic projections of Eurostat and EUROPOP (European Commission 2015). The 2015 Prognosis on the Aging Report issued by the General Directorate for Economic and Financial Affairs of the European Commission shows that while the number of elderly will increase by one percent each year by 2060, the active population will fall by around 0.3%, which will lead to worsening dependency, generating costs of about 2 percentage points of GDP needed for the elderly, to cover the costs of pensions, care and assistance (European Commission 2015). Thus, as projections show that workforce will decline, the solution of economies remains to increase productivity.

5. Conclusions

This overview of the numerical data showing the situation of Romania and the one of Europe has been done to statistically highlight their status and to emphasize the factual conditions underlying the decisions and recommendations of the European officials. Moreover, these statistical data support the opportunity of this approach and justify the need to deepen the studied topic, given its particular importance.

Thus, again, the interconnection of family life-professional life is emphasized, the quality of each of the two being in turn cause for the other but also effect. In particular, family satisfaction, harmony, the possibility to leave the child in a safe place also bring benefits to the professional level, the employee being able to be connected and dedicated to work concerns, but also a pleasant work environment with an appropriate and consistently remuneration provides the employee with professional satisfaction, but also provides him with the material means to fulfill his family needs, which of course contributes to personal satisfaction.

Going forward, financial security, but also a certain well-being and balance from an occupational point of view, also favor personal and family decisions, such as the foundation of a family or the birth of children. The emergence of younger generations, of course, also brings material advantages over the medium and long term, generating a gain in human resources, although in the short term it involves additional expenditure for both family and national budgets.

The two essential life sectors are mutually influencing and are of great importance to each individual, but their impact also affects communities and society as a whole.

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Book review:
**Andreea Mihaela Niță, Valorile populației urbane,
vectori ai fenomenelor și proceselor culturale în
societatea contemporană [The values of urban
population, vectors of cultural phenomena and processes
in contemporary society], Bucharest,
The National Museum of Romanian Literature
Publishing House, 2013,
219 pp., ISBN: 978-973-167-174-1**

Cristina Ilie Goga^{a*}

^a University of Craiova, Craiova, Romania

The work of the author Andreea Mihaela Niță, "Valorile populației urbane, vectori ai fenomenelor și proceselor culturale în societatea contemporană" [The values of urban population, vectors of cultural phenomena and processes in contemporary society], promotes the relationships between culture and the urban area, reveals the specifics of urban values, but also examines the traditional and contemporary cultural values of the urban population. This book presents the results of the postdoctoral research of the author and the purpose of the study, as the writer mentioned, was to identify the values of the current urban population, the place of creation values, of free thinking, expressiveness in contemporary society, in the context of reconfiguration of socio-cultural phenomena and processes.

The book is based on the theoretical analysis of specialized social documents, articles, books, programs, but also includes an empirical research based on the opinion survey and the participatory observation carried out on inhabitants of the urban environment in three Romanian regions and on the Romanian emigrants from the region of Lazio - Italy.

Mrs. Andreea Niță's work is divided into six chapters during which are presented the main themes for the studied topic, using an appropriate bibliography.

The first Chapter, "Urbanization as a socio-economic and cultural process" presents from a socio-demographic and cultural perspective the dynamic of the population in the Romanian urban environment and the cultural industrialization in the contemporary city.

In the second Chapter, "Urban Values in Contemporary Society", are patterned the urban values and is highlighted their specificity in today's society.

The third Chapter "Preferences and value orientations of the urban population" are presented the results of the field investigation based on the survey and the participatory observation carried out on the inhabitants of the urban environment of the three Romanian development regions and of the Romanian emigrants from the Lazio

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region, Italy. The research aimed at identifying the current values of the inhabitants of the urban environment, the level of knowledge of the cultural infrastructure and the desire for cultural consumption of the urban citizens, to learn the interest of the cultural activities by measuring the frequencies of the participation in cultural events and visiting the cultural institutions and also to identify the level of trust in the public institutions provided by the persons included in the sample of the research and last but not least, to emphasize the preservation or the obsolescence of traditions in contemporary society, and identify opportunities for access to cultural assets of cities.

The fourth Chapter "Phenomena and cultural processes specific to the environment social urban" analysis of the phenomenon of rural-urban acculturation, the influence of postmodern culture on social life and are highlighted the specific elements of the new consumer society.

In Chapter five "Cultural institutions – Agents of the cultural processes ", it is analyzed the role of the state in supporting the culture, especially highlighting the role of the Ministry of Culture and National Patrimony and is presented the system of cultural institutions as agents of cultural processes, pointing out their evolution and the social importance.

The sixth Chapter "Public policies for the conservation of cultural values in the urban environment", presents guidelines and state instruments in the preservation of values and some and solutions are identified regarding the improvement of the public policies for preserving the cultural values in the urban environment.

Andreea Mihaela Nita's work also contains four appendices, which aim to outline a clearer picture of the analyzed subject, thus helping the reader to fully understand the phenomenon, as follows: Annex 1 - Cultural programs financed/co-financed by the Romanian Government in 2012 or in the programmatic period 2007-2013; Annex 2 - Map of cultural institutions' activities from Dolj County, 2012; Annex 3 - Map of cultural activities in the city of Craiova; Annex 4 - Activities of Cultural Institutions in Dolj County, 2012.

The author finds, following the analysis of the preferences of the Romanians drawn from cultural consumption, that in Romanian society we can easily find the obsolescence of the values from the urban population. From the perspective of value theory and knowledge theory, it is identified the amplitude of structural and cultural transformation at the societal level. Value reorientation determined by major socio-cultural changes deepened the national identity crisis in culture. Moreover, analyzing cultural values on a wider scale from the perspective of Europeanization, it is noted that the preservation of national cultural identities, value heritage and the promotion of common values at European level are the only ways in which the European community can preserve its ideals for which it was established. Andreea Niță concludes that strengthening the position of education is the main viable solution that can offer to every individual, as to the nation he belongs to, the right to preserve his cultural memory and identity, without which we would be anonymous and irrelevant.

Although the work was published five years ago, we can observe the actuality of the theme and the research, and we can still observe in urban society the values highlighted with so much accuracy by the author.

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Napier, A. (1993a) *Fatal storm*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

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In-text reference: (Napier 1993a: p. 45) and (Napier 1993b: p. 57)

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In-text reference: (Holton 2005: p. 297)

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