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Emotional intelligence and workplace stress of Albanian academic staff

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence is a very important aspect of human life. It has implications at many areas of life including educational and professional ones. On the other side, stress has become an important feature of our day to day lives. Occupational stress occurs when the employees experience aversive or unpleasant emotional states in their work place. Occupational stress among university employees is a global phenomenon and has traditionally been regarded as low. In recent years, the Albanian university sector has undergone large-scale organizational changes. The current study investigate the overall level of emotional intelligence and work stress among the academic staff of Higher Education Institutions in Albania, and the relationship between these two variables. The data are collected during September 2019, through an on-line questionnaire, including Schutte Scale of Emotional Intelligence and Workplace Stress Scale. A total of 183 academic staff of Albanian Higher Education Institutions participated in this study. The study findings indicate that almost half of academic staff experience a moderate level of workplaces stress and the other half a low level of workplace stress. The majority of academic staff have a high level of emotional intelligence. There is a significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace stress of academic staff. Implications, limitations and recommendations of this study are discussed.

Keywords: *Intelligence; emotion; emotional intelligence; stress; workplace stress; academic staff.*

1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence has implications at many areas of life including educational and professional ones. On the other side, stress has become an important feature of our day to day lives and also the occupational stress. The higher education sector in Albania continues to experience significant change. On the focus of this study are academic staff working at the higher educational institutions in Albania.

The policies of higher education ask for high performance in teaching, research, innovation and creativity. Almost all higher institutions in Albania, during the recent years

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has undergone to the institutional accreditation process, and also programs accreditation process.

Higher education institutions are also among the organizations that are moving forward in dealing with issues of globalization. Therefore, to produce the workers who can display high performance in any situations, emotional intelligence is one of the factors that should be emphasized by the higher education institution. This is because individual performance has become an important issue to the higher education institutions in their preparations for the realization of the mission towards world-class university. In order to be successful in implementing this mission, higher education institutions must have employees who are well both physically and mentally (Al Kahtani 2013: p. 80).

The aim is to examine the level of emotional intelligence and the level of workplace stress of academic staff working at the higher educational Institutions in Albania. This study is designed to investigate the possible relationship between the level of emotional intelligence and workplace stress. One of the objectives of the study is exploring the possible differences on workplace stress and on emotional intelligence among academic staff according different demographic variables like: gender, age, work experience, academic title or scientific degrees etc.

2. Literature review

Emotional intelligence

The term “emotional intelligence” implies something to do with the intersection of emotions and intelligence. Intelligence is a set of abilities to adapt better to the environment through experience (Matsumoto 2009: p. 259). It is the ability to derive information, learn from experience, adapt to the environment, understand, and correctly utilize thought and reason (American Psychological Association 2015: p. 548). Emotion is a transient, neurophysiological response to a stimulus that excites a coordinated system of bodily and mental responses that inform us about our relationship to the stimulus and prepare us to deal with it in some way (Matsumoto 2009: p. 179). It is a complex reaction pattern, involving experiential, behavioral, and physiological elements, by which an individual attempts to deal with a personally significant matter or event (American Psychological Association 2015: p. 362)

The term emotional intelligence” was used on an occasional basis at least from the 1960s forward. An incidental use of the term can be found in some literary criticism describing the character of Jane Austen. A few additional mentions arose in the psychological literature. The term was employed, however, as a rhetorical device—a mere suggestion that such an intelligence might exist—more so than in any serious, formally defined, sense (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso 2008: p. 268). The term emotional intelligence was introduced to the scientific literature in two articles published in 1990. The first article, by Peter Salovey at Yale University and John (Jack) D. Mayer at the University of New Hampshire, formally defined emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor one’s own and other’s feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use emotion-laden information to guide one’s thinking and actions. The second articles presented an empirical demonstration of how emotional intelligence could be tested as a mental ability. This study demonstrate that emotion and cognition could be combined to perform sophisticated information processing (Baumeister and Vohs 2007: p. 293).

The public and academia were mostly unaware of emotional intelligence until 1995, when Daniel Goleman, psychologist and science writer for the *New York Times*, popularized the construct in his book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More*

Than IQ. Emotional intelligence quickly captured the attention of the media, general public, educators, and researchers (Matsumoto 2009: pp. 179-180). Since being popularised by Goleman's (1995) best-seller by the same name, emotional intelligence as a construct, has permeated circles in both lay and academic psychological communities. This construct has been broadly applied to address health, education, and business concerns (Geher 2004).

Some theorists believe that a person's ability to recognize and manage emotions represents a form of intelligent behavior, called emotional intelligence (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso 2008). A problem with emotional intelligence (like general intelligence) is that there is no clear definition of what emotional intelligence is (Armour 2012: p. 4). Emotional intelligence is a type of intelligence that involves the ability to process emotional information and use it in reasoning and other cognitive activities (American Psychological Association 2015: p. 364). It refers to the processes involved in perceiving, using, understanding, and managing emotions to solve emotion-laden problems and to regulate behavior (Matsumoto 2009: p. 179). Emotional intelligence involves the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought (Mayer, Roberts and Barsades 2008: p. 511). Intelligence quotient and emotional intelligence are not opposing competencies, but rather separate ones. We all mix intellect and emotional acuity; people with high intelligence quotient but low emotional intelligence (or low intelligence quotient and high emotional intelligence) are, despite the stereotypes, relatively rare. Indeed, there is a slight correlation between intelligence quotient and some aspects of emotional intelligence-though small enough to make clear these are largely independent entities (Goleman 1995: p. 44).

Since the introduction of the Bologna Process, the goal of education has been not only to acquire technical skills but also to master other skills, such as teamwork, effective communication skills, time optimization, and the ability to manage one's emotions (Gilar-Corbi et. al. 2018). Despite these criticisms, there has been a growing interest in the application of emotional intelligence to higher education (Armour 2012: p. 5). Emotional intelligence serves as a significant tool that helps the teachers to adjust their emotions and meet the societal challenges that disturbs the balance of their emotions (Asrar-ul-Haq, Anwar and Hassan 2017). In the classroom, a professor high in emotional intelligence might be more likely to adopt a humanitarian (as opposed to a more controlling or dictatorial) teaching style, which nurtures the development of their self-esteem and encourages students to take a more active approach to learning (e.g., ask more questions, develop a personal stance on controversial issues rather than automatically adopt the professor's position, apply relevant concepts to everyday life). Active learning has been shown to facilitate the learning process and enhance student achievement (Public Education Network 2004).

Four-branch ability model of emotional intelligence

There are two general approaches to emotional intelligence in the literature: ability models and mixed model. Ability models view emotional intelligence as a standard intelligence and argue that emotional intelligence meets traditional criteria for an intelligence. Mixed model, which arose mostly after initial popularization of the construct, are so-called because they combine the ability conception of emotional intelligence with numerous self-reported attributes including optimism, self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-actualizations (Brackett et. al. 2004: p. 177). The mainstream model of Emotional Intelligence as an ability is the four-branch model introduced by Mayer and Salovey (1997), which has received wide acknowledgment and use and has been foundation in the

development of other emotional intelligence models and measures (Fiori and Vesely-Maillefer 2018: p. 25).

According to Mayer and Salovey's 1997 model, emotional intelligence comprises four abilities: to perceive and appraise emotions accurately; to access and evoke emotions when they facilitate cognition; to comprehend emotional language and make use of emotional information; and to regulate one's own and others' emotions to promote growth and well-being. Their ideas were popularized in a best-selling book by U.S. psychologist and science journalist Daniel J. Goleman, who also altered the definition to include many personality variables (American Psychological Association 2015: p. 364). Emotionally intelligent people (a) perceive emotions accurately, (b) use emotions to accurately facilitate thought, (c) understand emotions and emotional meanings, and (d) manage emotions in themselves and others (Mayer and Salovey 1997). Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004) developed the four-branch ability model of emotional intelligence. They suggest that the abilities and skills of emotional intelligence can be divided into 4 areas – the ability to: Perceive emotion; Use emotion to facilitate thought; Understand emotions; and Manage emotion (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso 2004). Each branch represents a group of skills that proceeds developmentally from basic tasks to more challenging ones. The Perceiving Emotions branch leads off with the “ability to identify emotions in one's physical states, feelings, and thoughts,” and proceeds to such developmentally advanced tasks (as we saw them then) as the ability to discriminate between truthful and dishonest expressions of feeling. The parallel developmental progression in the Understanding branch begins with the ability to label emotions and progressed to more challenging tasks such as understanding “likely transitions among emotions,” such as from anger to satisfaction (Mayer, Caruso and Salovey 2016: p. 293).

Perceiving emotion refers to the ability to identify emotions in oneself and others, as well as in other stimuli, including voices, stories, music, and works of art. Using emotion refers to the ability to harness feelings to assist in certain cognitive activities such as problem solving, decision making, creative thinking, and interpersonal communication. Understanding emotions involves knowledge of both emotion-related terms and the manner in which emotions combine, progress, and transition from one to the other. Managing emotions includes the ability to employ strategies that alter feelings, and the assessment of the effectiveness of these regulation strategies (Matsumoto 2009: p. 179)

Workplace stress

Stress is the physiological or psychological response to internal or external stressors. It involves changes affecting nearly every system of the body, influencing how people feel and behave (American Psychological Association 2015: p. 1036). It is a prolonged state of psychological and physiological arousal leading to negative effects on mood, cognitive capacity, immune function, and physical health (Matsumoto 2009: p. 524). Occupational stress is a physiological and psychological response to events or conditions in the workplace that is detrimental to health and well-being. It is influenced by such factors as autonomy and independence, decision latitude, workload, level of responsibility, job security, physical environment and safety, the nature and pace of work, and relationships with coworkers and supervisors (American Psychological Association 2015: p. 727). Occupational stress is a prolonged state of physical and mental arousal resulting from demands from one's job, which can lead to prolonged fatigue, loss of motivation, burnout, stress disorders, and the general adaptation syndrome (Matsumoto 2009: p. 346). Occupational stress is defined as the interaction of work conditions with

characteristics of the worker such that the demands of the work exceed the ability of the worker to cope with them (Ross and Altmaier 1994: p. 12).

Job stress in academia is due to imbalance between job demands and their ability to respond. Academic staff involved in research and teaching may give rise to a conflicting situation as both need energy and concentration. The symptoms found among lecturers are tiredness, sleeping problem and concentration. These are more visible when more workload is expected to attract external research funds (Winefield et. al. 2003). Traditionally university teaching has been perceived as a stress-free profession, particularly by those who are not related to this profession (Fisher 1994). But, now research on stress among academic and general staff of universities from across the globe indicates that the phenomenon of occupational stress in universities is alarmingly widespread and increasing. Academics are increasingly vulnerable to "burnout," that quality of teaching and research may decline, and that academics may become increasingly unattractive to able young people (Winefield 2000). Work stress in any profession is likely to be experienced by the employees employed there and university teachers are no exceptions in this regard (Usman et. al. 2011).

In the research on "occupational stress among university teachers", authors found out that two third of the university faculty reported that they perceived job stress at least half of the scheduled time. Faculty also expressed burnout, health problems caused by job stress (Blix et. al. 1994). Five major sources of stress were identified for academic staff including: insufficient funding and resources; work overload; poor management practice; job insecurity; and insufficient recognition and reward. The majority of groups reported that job-related stress was having a deleterious impact on their professional work and personal welfare (Gillespie et. al. 2001). According to the study of Tytherleigh (2005) most significant source of stress for all higher education staff (irrespective of category of employee) was job insecurity. In comparison to the normative data, staff also reported significantly higher levels of stress relating to work relationships, control, and resources and communication, and significantly lower levels of commitment both from and to their organization (Tytherleigh et. al. 2005). Academics reported higher levels of stress relating to pay and benefits, overload and work-life balance (Barkhuizen and Rothmann 2008). Stress in general and work stress in particular is said to cause people and employees in all types of businesses and industries the fatigue, depression and tension which is of psychological and physiological in nature. This is a universal problem almost every employee encounters with (Usman et. al. 2011). In recent years, a number of substantial changes in the Albanian higher education sector have significantly impacted the organizational structure of higher educational institutions and the work of academic staff.

3. Method

The study used a descriptive correlational design. The data of the study were collected from different public and private Higher Educational Institutions in Albania. 182 academic staff working at higher educational institutions in Albania during the academic year 2019-2020 participated at this study. From which 136 working at public higher educational institutions and 45 at private ones. The data are collected during September 2019, through an on-line questionnaire. Three tools were used in this study: Questionnaire about demographic data, Emotional Intelligence Scale, and Workplace stress scale.

The questionnaire about demographic data was intended to collect data about personal characteristics of participants. These included gender, age, scientific degree or

academic title, years of experience in teaching, marital status, scientific field of qualification, institution.

Emotional Intelligence Scale was developed at 1998 by Schutte and his colleagues (Schutte et. al. 1998). The Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale, is based on Salovey and Mayer's original model of emotional intelligence (Salovey and Mayer 1990). This model proposed that emotional intelligence consists of appraisal of emotion in the self and others, expression of emotion, regulation of emotion in the self and others, and utilization of emotion in solving problems. The Assessing Emotions Scale is a 33-item self-report inventory focusing on typical emotional intelligence. Respondents rate themselves on the items using a five-point scale. Scores can range from 33 to 165, with higher scores indicating more characteristic emotional intelligence (Schutte, Malouff and Bhullar 2009). All 33 items are included in one of four subscales: Perception of Emotion, Managing Own Emotions, Managing Others' Emotions and Utilization of Emotion. The scale was translated in Albania language. Internal consistency of the scale, as measured by Cronbach's alpha was .884. Internal consistency for subscales were: Perception of Emotion .756; Managing Own Emotions, .772; Managing Others' Emotions, .674 and Utilization of Emotion, .676.

Workplace Stress Scale. Work stress was assessed using the Workplace Stress Scale developed by the Marlin Company, North Haven, CT, USA, and the American Institute of Stress, Yonkers, NY, USA (2001). The workplace stress scale consists of eight items describing how often a respondent feels an aspect of his or her job. The scale is in the five-point Likert response format, ranging from never (scored 1) to very often (scored 5). High scores are indicative of higher levels of job stress. Respondents' total scores are interpreted as follows: Scores of 15 and below are interpreted as relatively calm, 16–20 is interpreted as fairly low in work stress, 21–25 is interpreted as experiencing moderate levels of work stress, 26–30 is interpreted as experiencing severe levels of work stress and 31–40 is interpreted as experiencing a potentially dangerous level of work stress. We assessed the validity of the scale by seeking opinions of nurses as experts. Internal consistency of the scale, as measured by Cronbach's alpha was .762.

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, standard deviations). They were analyzed by SPSS statistical package version 24. Some variables were compared using t-test or analysis of the variance (ANOVA) test, and for assessment of the relationships between variables is used Pearson correlation analysis.

4. Results

Table 1 displays the characteristics of the participants. A total of 183 academic staff of Albanian Higher Education Institutions participated in this study. The majority of participants were female (70.3%). The minimum age of participants was 24 years and the maximum was 70, with a mean age of 40.78 ± 9.46 . Less than half (48.4%) had Phd degree. Majority of participants were married (70.3%) and had the educational qualification on social science (69.2%) The average years of experience teaching was 12.13 ± 7.72 years.

Table 1. Characteristics of Participants (No = 183)

Items	No	%
Gender		
Female	128	70.3
Male	54	29.7
Age in years:		
>29	15	8.2
30-34	36	19.8
35-39	37	20.3
40-44	42	23.1
45-49	16	8.8
50-54	19	10.4
55+	17	9.3
Scientific degree/academic title		
Master of science	46	25.3
PHD	88	48.4
Associate professor	40	22
Professor	8	4.4
Experience in teaching (years)		
>4	25	13.9
5-9	40	22.2
10 -14	56	31.1
15-19	32	17.8
20+	27	15
Civil status		
Married	128	70.3
Single	32	17.6
Divorced	4	2.2
Widow	2	1.1
Cohabitation	16	8.8
Scientific field of qualification		
Natural science (Physic, chemistry, biology, engineer, agricultural sciences etc.)	29	15.9
Social science (Economics, political science, sociology, psychology, jurisprudence, pedagogy etc.)	126	69.2
Formal science (Mathematics; computer science etc.)	21	11.5
Sports science	6	3.3

Table 2 represents components of overall level of emotional intelligence of participants. The highest percentage of the participants (80.8%) obtained high level of emotional intelligence, while few of them (19.2%) obtained a moderate level of emotional

intelligence. The highest percent is for managing own emotions, (81.9%), and the lowest percent is for perception of emotions (67.6%).

Table 2. Components and overall level of emotional intelligence of participants (No 182)

Components of emotional intelligence	Low level		Moderate level		High level	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Perception of emotions	1	0.5	58	31.9	123	67.6
Managing own emotions	1	0.5	32	17.6	149	81.9
Managing others emotions	1	0.5	50	27.5	131	72
Utilization of emotions	1	0.5	46	25.3	135	74.2
Total emotional intelligence	0	0	35	19.2	147	80.8

Table 3 indicates that almost half 45.6 % (n = 83) of the academic staff reported experiencing low levels of workplace stress. 24.7% (n = 45) were experiencing a moderate workplace stress, 9.9% (n = 18) were experiencing severe level of stress and only 1 teacher reported experiencing high levels of workplace stress.

Table 3. Level of workplace stress (No 182)

Workplace stress	Stress isn't much of an issues		Fairly low level		Moderate stress		Severe		Stress level is potentially dangerous	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
	35	19.2	83	45.6	45	24.7	18	9.9	1	0.5

There are examined the relationships between the two study variables (workplace stress & emotional intelligence) and demographic characteristics of participants. Table 4 shows these statistics.

Table 4. Correlations between the two study variables (emotional intelligence & workplace stress) and age and professional experience

		Emotional Intelligence	Workplace stress	Age	Professional experience
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	-.210**	.158*	.153*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004	.033	.040
	N	182	182	182	180
Workplace stress	Pearson Correlation		1	-.087	.049
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.244	.512

	N	182	180
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	.717**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N		180

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Statistically significant negative correlation was detected between emotional intelligence and workplace stress ($r = - .210$; $p = .004$). There was no significant correlation between workplace stress and personal characteristics of participants related to age ($p = .244$) and years of experience in teaching ($p = .512$). But there was a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and personal characteristics of participants related to age ($r = .158$; $p = .033$) and years of experience in teaching ($r = .153$; $p = .040$).

Table 5. Correlations between the two study variables (emotional intelligence & workplace stress) after controlling the effect of age and professional experience

Control Variables		Emotional Intelligence	Workplace stress
Age & Professional experience	Emotional Intelligence	1.000	-.222
	Correlation		
	Significance (2-tailed)	.	.003
	df	0	176

Even after controlling the variables like age and years of professional experience, there was again a significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace stress ($r = - .222$; $p = .003$).

Table 6 shows the frequency, percentage and stress levels of respondents across gender. Among 183 respondents, 64.1% of female respondents and 66.7% of male respondents reported a low and very low level of workplace stress. While 24.2% of female respondents and 25.9% of male respondents reported a moderate level of workplace stress. Severe level of workplace stress was reported by 10.9% of female respondents and 7.4% of male respondents.

Table 6. Frequency, percentage and stress levels of respondents across gender

Gender	Level of workplace stress									
	Stress isn't much of an issues		Fairly low		Moderate stress		Severe		Stress level is potentially dangerous	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Female	27	21.1	55	43	31	24.2	14	10.9	1	0.8
Male	8	14.8	28	51.0	14	25.9	4	7.4	0	0

T-test is applied to test the statistical difference among the respondents with different gender. There was no statistically significant difference on workplace stress across the gender of participants ($p > .05$).

Table 7. Relation between workplace stress and gender of participants.

Independent Sample Test						
	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Workplace stress	Female	128	19.03	4.89	-.131	.896
	Male	54	19.12	3.89		

Table 8 shows the frequency, percentage and emotional intelligence levels of respondents across gender. Among 183 respondents, 17.2% of female respondents and 24.1% of male respondents reported moderate level of emotional intelligence. While 82.8% of female respondents and 75.9% of male respondents reported a high level of emotional intelligence.

Table 8. Frequency, percentage and emotional intelligence levels of respondents across the gender

Gender	Level of emotional intelligence					
	Low level		Moderate level		High level	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Female	0	0	22	17.2	106	82.8
Male	0	0	13	24.1	41	75.9

T-test is applied to test the statistical difference among the respondents with different gender. There was statistically significant difference on emotional intelligence across the gender of participants ($p = .002 < .05$). Female teachers had a tendency to have a higher emotional intelligence than male teachers.

Table 9. Relation between emotional intelligence and gender of participants.

Independent Sample Test						
	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Emotional Intelligence	Female	128	131.43	12.01	3.226	.002
	Male	54	126.20	9.01		

Table 10 shows the frequency, percentage and stress levels of respondents across the civil status. Among 183 respondents, 67.2% of married respondents, 62.5% of single respondents, 75% of divorced respondents, 100% of widow respondents, and 43.8% of cohabitations respondents reported a low and very low level of workplace stress. While

25% of married, 28.1% of single, 25% of cohabitation respondents reported a moderate level of workplace stress.

Table 10. Frequency, percentage and stress levels of respondents across the civil status

Civil status	Level of workplace stress									
	Stress isn't much of an issues		Fairly low		Moderate stress		Severe		Stress level is potentially dangerous	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Married	21	16.4	65	50.8	32	25	9	7	1	0.8
Single	8	25	12	37.5	9	28.1	3	9.4	0	0
Divorced	1	25	2	50	0	0	1	25	0	0
Widow	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cohabitation	4	25	3	18.8	4	25	5	31.3	0	0

The One-way analysis of variance is applied to test the statistical difference among the respondents with different civil status. The hypothesis is formulated as no significant difference in the means score of faculty member having different civil status regarding their stress levels and One Way ANOVA is used. Table 11 shows the relation between workplace stress and civil status of participants. There was no statistically significant difference on workplaces stress across the different marital status of participants ($p > .05$).

Table 11. Relation between workplace stress and civil status of participants.

Civil status	Workplace stress	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	ANOVA	
					F	Sig.
	Married	128	18.99	4.17	1.554	.189
	Single	32	19.00	4.74		
	Divorced	4	18.50	6.13		
	Widow	2	12.50	4.94		
	Cohabitation	16	20.68	6.64		
	Total	182	19.06	4.60		

Table 12 shows the frequency, percentage and emotional intelligence levels of respondents across the civil status. Among 183 respondents, 19.5% of married, 18.8% of single, and 25% of cohabitation respondents reported a moderate level of emotional intelligence. While 80.5% of married, 81.3% of single, 100% of divorced, 100% of widow and 75% of cohabitation respondents reported a high level of emotional intelligence.

Table 12. Frequency, percentage and emotional intelligence levels of respondents across the civil status

Civil status	Level of emotional intelligence					
	Low level		Moderate level		High level	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Married	0	0	25	19.5	103	80.5

Single	0	0	6	18.8	26	81.3
Divorced	0	0	0	0	4	100
Widow	0	0	0	0	2	100
Cohabitation	0	0	4	25	12	75

The One-way analysis of variance is applied to test the statistical difference among the respondents with different civil status. The hypothesis is formulated as no significant difference in the means score of faculty member having different civil status regarding their emotional intelligence levels and One Way ANOVA is used. Table 13 shows the relation between emotional intelligence and civil status of participants. There was no statistically significant difference on emotional intelligence across the different marital status of participants ($p > .05$).

Table 13. Relation between emotional intelligence and civil status of participants.

Marital status		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	ANOVA	
					F	Sig.
Emotional Intelligence	Married	128	129.92	10.36	1.704	.151
	Single	32	127.31	12.97		
	Divorced	4	138.25	11.58		
	Widow	2	143.50	27.57		
	Cohabitation	16	130.87	13.60		
	Total	182	129.88	11.43		

Table 14 shows the frequency, percentage and stress levels of respondents across the educational qualification. Among 183 respondents, 71.7% of staff with Msc, 60.2% of staff with Phd, 60% of associate professors and 100% of professors reported a low and very low level of workplace stress. While 10.9% of staff with Msc, 30.7% of staff with Phd, and 32.5% of associate professors reported a moderate level of workplace stress.

Table 14. Frequency, percentage and stress levels of respondents across the educational qualification

Scientific degree/academic title	Level of workplace stress								Stress level is potentially dangerous	
	Stress isn't much of an issues		Fairly low		Moderate stress		Severe			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
Master of science	15	32.6	18	39.1	5	10.9	8	17.4	0	0
Phd	13	14.8	40	45.5	27	30.7	7	8	1	1.1
Associate professor	6	15	18	45	13	32.5	3	7.5	0	0
Professor	1	12.5	7	87.5	0	0	0	0	0	0

The One-way analysis of variance is applied to test the statistical difference among the respondents with different educational qualification. The hypothesis is formulated as no significant difference in the means score of faculty member having different educational qualification regarding their stress levels and One Way ANOVA is used. Table 15 shows

the relation between the workplace stress and educational qualification of participants. There was no statistically significant difference on workplaces stress across the different educational qualification of participants ($p > .05$).

Table 15. Relation between the workplace stress and educational qualification of participants.

Workplace stress		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	ANOVA	
					F	Sig.
Workplace stress	Master of Science	46	18.45	5.32	.765	.515
	Phd	88	19.37	4.64		
	Associate professor	40	19.37	3.95		
	Professor	8	17.50	2.13		
	Total	182	19.06	4.60		

Table 16 shows the frequency, percentage and emotional intelligence levels of respondents across the educational qualification. Among 183 respondents, 23.9% of staff with Msc, 19.3% of staff with Phd, 17.7% of associate professors reported a moderate level of emotional intelligence. While 76.1% of staff with Msc, 80.7% of staff with Phd, 82.5% of associate professors, and 100% of professors reported a high level of emotional intelligence.

Table 16. Frequency, percentage and emotional intelligence levels of respondents across the educational qualification

Scientific degree/academic title	Level of emotional intelligence					
	Low level		Moderate level		High level	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Master of science	0	0	11	23.9	35	76.1
Phd	0	0	17	19.3	71	80.7
Associate professor	0	0	7	17.5	33	82.5
Professor	0	0	0	0	8	100

The One-way analysis of variance is applied to test the statistical difference among the respondents with different educational qualification. The hypothesis is formulated as no significant difference in the means score of faculty member having different educational qualification regarding their emotional intelligence levels, and One Way ANOVA is used. Table 17 shows the relation between emotional intelligence and educational qualification of participants. There was no statistically significant difference on emotional intelligence across the different educational qualification of participants ($p > .05$).

Table 17. Relation between emotional intelligence and educational qualification of participants.

Emotional Intelligence		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	ANOVA	
					F	Sig.
Emotional Intelligence	Master of Science	46	127.28	13.29	1.478	.222
	Phd	88	130.00	10.55		

Associate professor	40	132.40	11.26
Professor	8	131.00	8.55
Total	182	129.88	11.43

Table 18 shows the frequency, percentage and stress levels of respondents across the scientific field of qualification. Among 183 respondents, 62.1% of staff with the qualification on natural science, 64.3% of staff with the qualification on social science, 66.7% of staff with qualification on formal science, 83.3% of staff with qualification on sports science reported a low and very low level of workplace stress. While 24.1% of staff with qualification on natural science, 25.4% of staff with qualification on social science, 23.8% of staff with qualification on formal science and 16.7% of staff with qualification on sports science reported a moderate level of workplace stress.

Table 18. Frequency, percentage and stress levels of respondents across the scientific field of qualification

Scientific field of qualification	Level of workplace stress									
	Stress isn't much of an issues		Fairly low		Moderate stress		Severe		Stress level is potentially dangerous	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Natural science	4	13.8	14	48.3	7	24.1	4	13.8	0	0
Social science	22	17.5	59	46.8	32	25.4	12	9.5	1	0.8
Formal science	5	23.8	9	42.9	5	23.8	2	9.5	0	0
Sports science	4	66.7	1	16.7	1	16.7	0	0	0	0

The One-way analysis of variance is applied to test the statistical difference among the respondents with different scientific field of qualification. The hypothesis is formulated as no significant difference in the means score of faculty member having different scientific field of qualification regarding their stress levels and One Way ANOVA is used. Table 19 shows the relation between workplace stress and scientific field of qualification of participants. There was no statistically significant difference on workplaces stress across the different scientific fields of qualification of the teachers ($p > .05$).

Table 19. Relation between workplace stress and scientific field of qualification of participants.

Workplace stress		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	ANOVA	
					F	Sig.
Workplace stress	Natural science	29	19.58	4.77	2.282	.081
	Social science	126	19.27	4.53		
	Formal science	21	18.28	4.65		
	Sports science	6	14.66	3.55		
	Total	182	19.06	4.60		

Table 20 shows the frequency, percentage and emotional intelligence levels of respondents across the scientific field of qualification. Among 183 respondents, 17.2% of staff with qualification on natural science, 17.5% of staff with qualification on social science, 38.1% of staff with qualification on formal science reported a moderate level of emotional intelligence. While 82.81% of staff with qualification on natural science, 82.5% of staff with qualification on social science, 61.9% of staff with qualification on formal science and 100% of staff with qualification on sport science reported a high level of emotional intelligence.

Table 20. Frequency, percentage and emotional intelligence levels of respondents across the scientific field of qualification

Scientific field of qualification	Level of emotional intelligence					
	Low level		Moderate level		High level	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Natural science	0	0	5	17.2	24	82.8
Social science	0	0	22	17.5	104	82.5
Formal science	0	0	8	38.1	13	61.9
Sports science	0	0	0	0	6	100

The One-way analysis of variance is applied to test the statistical difference among the respondents with different scientific field of qualification. The hypothesis is formulated as no significant difference in the means score of faculty member having different scientific field of qualification regarding their emotional intelligence levels and One Way ANOVA is used. Table 21 shows the relation between emotional intelligence and scientific field of qualification of participants. There was no statistically significant difference on emotional intelligence across the different scientific fields of qualification of participants ($p > .05$).

Table 21. Relation between emotional intelligence and scientific field of qualification of participants.

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	ANOVA F	Sig.
Emotional Intelligence	Natural science	29	128.86	10.37	2.221	.087
	Social science	126	130.97	11.43		
	Formal science	21	124.28	11.74		
	Sports science	6	131.50	11.84		
	Total	182	129.88	11.43		

5. Conclusion

The main finding of this study was the fact that between emotional intelligence and workplace stress exist a significant negative relationship. Teacher with higher emotional intelligence, report less workplace stress and teacher with higher workplace stress report a lower emotional intelligence.

The majority of academic staff (80.8%) participated on this study had a high level of emotional intelligence. From the all components of emotional intelligence, the component “managing own emotions” has the higher percentage. Majority of academic staff (45.6%) experience fairly low level of workplace stress. There was relatively low percentage (9.9%) of participants that experience severe workplace stress.

There was no significant correlation between workplace stress and the age and years of experience of teachers. There were not statistically significant difference on workplace stress across the gender, different marital status, different educational qualification, and different scientific fields of qualification of the teachers.

There was no statistically significant difference on emotional intelligence across the different marital status, different educational qualification, and different scientific fields of qualification of participants. Female academic staff, older academic staff, and more experienced academic staff, had higher emotional intelligence than male, younger and less experienced academic staff.

Higher education institutions have to manage and protect their staff from increasing levels of stress and also they have to take measure to enhance the emotional intelligence of the academic staff.

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Attitude towards persons with disabilities and their satisfaction in work

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Abstract

Social help contributes not exclusively to helping individuals with disabilities to incorporate into work, yet additionally to keeping up a good atmosphere and a fitting environment at work, which are key components of the representative's expert fulfillment. The examination loaned 28 individuals with handicaps who had an employment for in any event a half year. The subjects were asked a poll worked out of 6 inquiries that concerned associations with partners, managers, work fulfillment, and the longing to change their work environment. The outcomes acquired show that work fulfillment is basic to remaining at work for a more extended time. This fulfillment is straightforwardly affected by the disposition of partners and managers towards the individual with incapacities who is being helped.

Keywords: *Attitudes; workplace; people; social; disabilities.*

1. Theoretical frame

Through the mediation and intercession of social help, individuals in trouble are upheld and assisted with acquiring the essential conditions for a good life, and to build up their own abilities and aptitudes for legitimate social working.

Help generally takes a restricted time until individuals with uncommon necessities discover social, mental, monetary assets to lead a typical, independent life. Social help, as a significant piece of social insurance, is a target method of actualizing programs, social assurance measures for the accompanying social classes, which are viewed as a component of the populace with extraordinary requirements: helpless families; kids living in an unfavorable family or social climate; relinquished kids; adolescent deadbeats; youthful socially unintegrated; medication or liquor addicts; individuals truly and explicitly mishandled; truly and intellectually crippled; individuals with constant sickness without lawful allies; defenseless elderly folks individuals; individuals who have experienced characteristic, social, abuse and segregation of any sort (Miftode 2010).

Social help tends to issues at various levels:

At the individual level - financial, mental, moral help to those out of luck, for example, the jobless, medication or liquor addicts, those with issues of reconciliation into work, casualties of maltreatment of any sort;

At relational and bunch level - family treatments, couple, gatherings of minimized individuals;

At people group level - comprehending ethnic, bunch clashes, assembling individual and aggregate energies to reestablish the assets required for their ordinary incorporation (Buzducea 2005).

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Frequently, social security is characterized as a bunch of approaches, measures, foundations, bodies that offer help to individuals and gatherings in trouble and who cannot accomplish typical day to day environments through their own endeavors. The social assurance framework looks to reallocate the material and HR of the network to those people and gatherings in trouble to dispose of the huge hole among them and the greater part populace. Social assurance points not to make a persistent reliance condition of those out of luck, however to reintegrate them into typical life by invigorating dynamic powers, expanding their abilities to manage these issues, diminishing times independently. By and large terms, social assurance is a bunch of measures equipped towards guaranteeing a specific degree of government assistance and federal retirement aide for the whole populace and, specifically, for certain social gatherings. Social security may likewise address the fulfillment of aggregate requirements that cannot be sufficiently accomplished through its own endeavors through the unregulated economy (eg uphold for schooling and preparing for all, advancement of culture, satisfactory general wellbeing, ecological assurance, and so forth) (Bucur and Mociovan 2003). The response policies and procedures should focus on reducing the social inequalities generated by discriminated access to education and on providing the proper social and economic level of education for the younger generation, thus avoiding the intergenerational transmission of poverty and of the resulting deprivation (Toderici 2018).

Social protection can be placed at distinct levels:

- *at the level of the whole community* (eg, protecting the income of the population from inflation, ensuring a minimum level of consumption, minimum income per family, protecting the population in cases of natural or social calamities, protection against crime, violence, ethnic conflicts, mass illnesses, protection at work, protection of property rights, protection against corruption, political alienation, drugs and abuse, etc.);
- *at different categories level* (children, elderly, disabled, unemployed, etc.);
- *at personal level* (solving some personal problems related to the individual's state at a certain moment) (Miftode 2002).

Occupational health and safety legislation is a component of the national regulatory system, which establishes the responsibilities of the institutions involved, the framework for the establishment and organization of the activity in the field and ensures the observance of the principles of prevention of occupational accidents and diseases. Its fundamental characteristic is that it is in a process of harmonization with the provisions of the European directives in the field.

The Romanian Constitution, stating the right to social protection, also refers to the measures of safety and hygiene of labor, and the Labor Code (Law no. 53/2003) contains legal provisions that, by their application, contribute to the protection of the life and health of the employees. The legislative system in the field of occupational safety and health is a component of the social protection legislation system, which aims at ensuring the protection of workers from the risks of injury and occupational disease generated by work processes (Miftode 2010).

Legislation in the field of health and safety at work is harmonized with European legislation in the field and is in a continuous process of transformation. By transposing the Framework Directive (89/391/ EEC) into Law 319/2006, the principles of prevention mentioned above, which, due to the global approach to occupational safety and health, determine the change in the attitude of employers and workers through their involvement in the prevention of accidents at work and occupational diseases. The law and the methodological norms for its application define the organizational framework of safety and

health at work as well as the powers of the state institutions regarding the coordination and control of this activity. The provisions of Law 319/2006 apply to all sectors of activity, both public and private, to employers, workers and workers' representatives, except for armed forces, the police and other cases that contradict the provisions of the law.

In order to provide the necessary framework for the participation and information of workers on safety and health at work, Law no. 319/2006 provides for the creation of health and safety committees at the level of the economic units with more than 50 employees, obliging the employers to ensure the conditions of their activity. The field of assistance for people with special needs takes on terms, concepts from other disciplines whose significance is used in a distinct interdisciplinary manner, depending on the variety of forms of deficiency and inadequacy following the type of deficiency (Străchinaru 1994).

The investigation of expert combination is done by finishing a perplexing course that incorporates avoidance, identification, determination, treatment, recuperation, training, school and expert direction of the individual, social joining and checking of the resulting advancement of the individual in trouble. Stages in work with individuals with handicaps can be remembered for an equation explicit to this region that generally legitimizes its sober minded, actional nature - psycho-instructive and social help. The psycho-instructive and social help of people with extraordinary requirements establishes a bunch of mental, academic and social measures for the location, analysis, recuperation, schooling, preparing, professionalization, transformation and social coordination of people with an uncommon need a progression of scholarly, tactile, physical, mental, conduct or language inadequacies just as individuals in danger because of the climate they live in, deficient means assets or the presence of constant illnesses or degenerative marvels that influence honesty their natural, physiological or mental (Watts, Law and Killeen 1996).

The social assistance of people with special needs is a fundamental component of the general assistance provided to these persons, and from the point of view of the effectiveness of the intervention it must be correlated with the psychological, pedagogical, medical intervention, etc. at the level of an interdisciplinary team.

In accordance with Law no. 292/2011 The Law on Social Assistance, these terms and expressions have the following meaning:

- deficiency is the consequence of loss or an abnormality of the body structure or of a physiological function;
- disability is the generic term for impairments, limitations of activity and participation restrictions, in the context of the interaction between the individual with a health problem and the contextual factors in which he / she finds, respectively the environmental and personal factors;
- incapacity is the partial or total reduction of the possibility of performing a motor, cognitive or behavioral activity;
- invalidity is a forensic law that expresses the particular status of a person who has limited work capacity and is insured in the public pension system and enjoys rights under the law;
- special need is the set of indispensable requirements for ensuring the social integration of people who, due to health, genetic or life-long illnesses, present a disability, as well as persons who, for various social reasons, are disadvantaged in personal development;
- people with disabilities are those persons with long-lasting physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, which, in interaction with various barriers, can limit

the full and effective participation of people in society on an equal basis with others (Law No 292/2011).

As maturing advances, it starts to consider the different orders of schooling that lead to the crystallization of the field and the substance of crafted by numerous callings. It is a time of investigation, vocation desires, when the kid fantasies about turning into a cosmonaut, footballer or entertainer. Upon passage into the center school, there is a requirement for self-information and aptitude testing, and toward the finish of this period, the primary significant alternative for the future vocation will be: picking the fitting method to keep examining (in optional instruction). The significance of this second for the kid's future needs earlier preparing so the choice isn't taken aimlessly (Tomsa 1999).

There is than a time of collection of new information and explanation of territories of interest. Notwithstanding the hypothetical preparing, the youngster now needs self-information, practicing the aptitudes to confront the work market, to settle on a second significant choice with respect to his vocation: proceeding with schooling (in advanced education) or embeddings (employing in the working environment and rehearsing an art). It is essential to know and investigate the points of interest and detriments of the two variations all together for the alternative to be made as per the potential outcomes (ability, aptitudes), yet additionally with the socio-social and monetary real factors of the climate in which the individual lives (Botnariuc 2001).

Present day ideas on profession advising stress that picking and forming vocations is subsequently a cycle that proceeds after school years. The grown-up might be powerless against social or monetary real factors and, thus, needs direction, data and backing. The cycle of grown-up vocation advising shows up as a social and individual need, requiring experts with explicit information and working techniques.

The mix strategies utilized differ contingent upon the motivation behind the commitment. Accordingly an individual can be employed for an execution post or for his/her capability of information and experience or scholarly characteristics, inventiveness, abilities, dynamism in a place of administration. In the primary case, it is conceivable to utilize direct joining techniques and direct direction, and in the second the disclosure of the association and the task of a mission (Porlier 2001).

2. Hypothesis and objectives

In our research we have assumed that the degree of job satisfaction of people with disabilities is influenced by the nature of the relationships they have with their colleagues and direct bosses.

The formulation of this hypothesis required the establishment of the following research objectives:

- selecting the group of subjects on which to conduct the research;
- building a questionnaire that reflects job satisfaction;
- the statistical processing of the results and their qualitative interpretation in the context of the theoretical aspects presented in the previous chapters;
- establishing the design of the research.

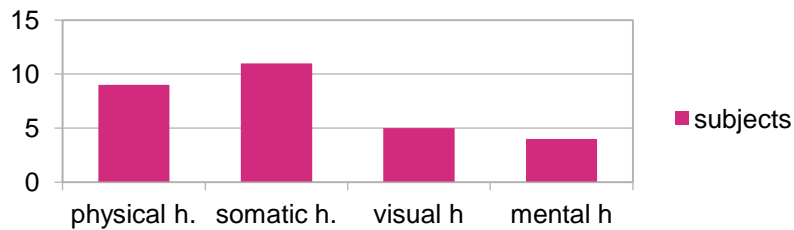
3. Lot studied

A lot of 28 people with disabilities who have already had a job for at least 6 months has been studied. The disability they suffered was different and the distribution of our lot according to the forms of disability is presented in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1. Lot distribution by type of disability

Type of disability	Subjects
Physical handicap	9
Somatic Handicap	10
Visual handicap	5
Mental handicap	4

Figure 1. Lot distribution by type of disability



4. Methodology

A questionnaire of 6 questions has been built that reflects the satisfaction of the subjects in their work, the attitude of their colleagues and their attitude towards them, the desire to change the place of the mucus and the motivation of this change. The questionnaire was applied to all subjects by the examiner who actively participated in the discussion.

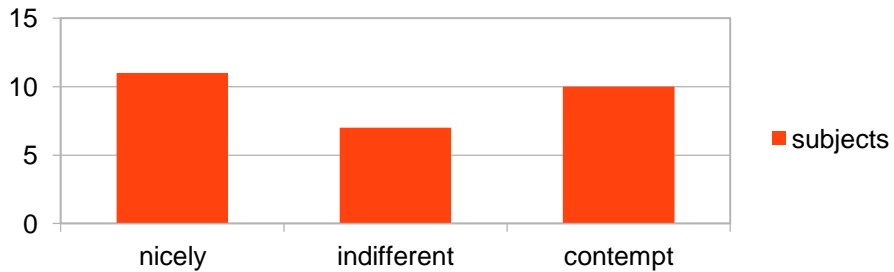
5. Results and discussions

To the question of the attitudes of colleagues at their new job towards them, the answers we have obtained from our subjects are grouped in Table 2 and Figure 2

Table 2. Colleagues' attitude towards the subject

Colleagues' attitude	Subjects
they behaved nicely	11
were indifferent	7
they treated me with contempt	10

Figure 2. Colleagues' attitude towards the subject



For a number of 11 subjects, colleagues at the new job had a good attitude towards them, collegially, trying to help them with advice and make them integrate more quickly into the workforce.

A number of 7 subjects benefited from an attitude of indifference from their colleagues. This indifference is often more damaging, having worse effects than positive or negative attitudes. Subjects did not feel at ease with their workforce, often with the impetus that they did not even exist for their colleagues. A constant attitude of this kind from colleagues will inevitably lead to a decrease in the self-esteem of the subject and implicitly a diminution of self-confidence.

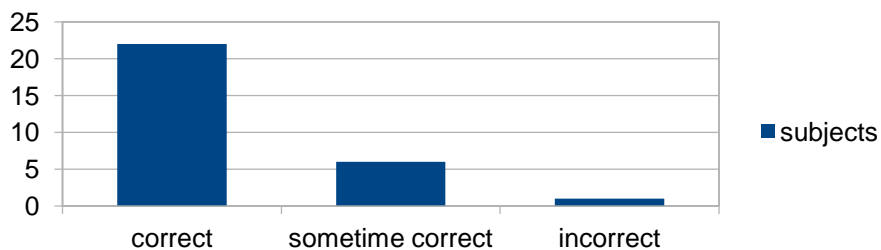
A total of 10 subjects had a despicable attitude from colleagues at the new job. Unfortunately, one of the great problems of our current society is the prejudices and the lack of openness to any aspect that does not fit into the so-called limits of normal. In the context of these prejudices and the associated mentality, people tend to treat with disdain and pity those who have a disability, regardless of its nature. It is one of the major challenges that current social assistance has to deal with, namely changing the mentality of people and their prejudices.

For the question regarding the attitude of the bosses towards the subject, we received the answers we received in Table 3 and Figure 3

Table 3. Bosses' attitude towards the subject

Atitudinea șefilor	Nr.subiecți
correct	22
sometimes correct	6
have not behaved correctly	1

Figure 3. Bosses' attitude towards the subject



It is, in our opinion, a gratifying aspect that no boss has had an inappropriate attitude towards our subjects. This demonstrates that at least at the level of management of companies or firms, we are dealing with a real understanding of subjects with different forms of disability and a fair attitude towards them.

However, in 7 cases the subjects considered that their bosses were behaving incorrectly against them. Here, however, we must not lose sight of the fact that this appreciation is subjective and is influenced by the perspective of the topic related to that attitude. If the subject is credited with the value of a box of horns because he forgot to let them know that they will soon expire, the subject felt ill-treated, but in reality the boss's attitude was correct, announcing the expiry date of the product as part of the job's job which the employee occupies, that is, our subject.

That is why we are convinced that corporate governance shows a wide openness and understanding for employees, without discrimination between normal and disabled employees. Subjects' answers to the question of the consistency between the tasks and the capabilities of the subject are illustrated in Table 4 and Figure 4.

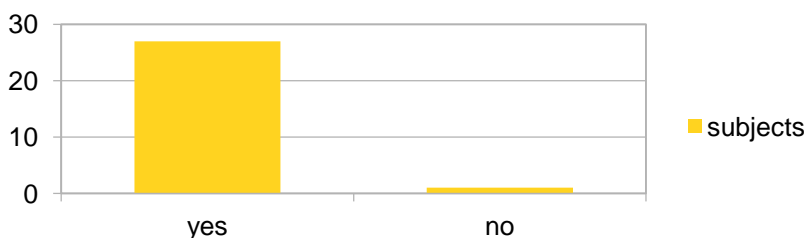
Tabel 4. Concordance between job tasks and subject capabilities

Concordance	Subjects
yes	27
no	1

Most of the subjects (27 out of 28) consider that the job they occupy corresponds to the capabilities they have. The situation is positive for the subjects, because in this context, for the fulfillment of current tasks, it is not necessary to put additional volunteer and physical effort.

The additional effort to carry out the tasks could lead to dissatisfaction with job conditions, increased mental and physical fatigue and more quickly installed in the subjects, and, last but not least, increased stress over their obligations under the occupied post.

Figure 4. Concordance between job tasks and subject capabilities



Just one subject believes the occupation's responsibility to be conflicting with its abilities. This is a point for the work and a commitment to check the recordings of the store's reconnaissance cameras. On account of his slight inability, the subject thinks about that any such necessities could bother his eye infection and thusly the level of incapacity. Under these conditions, he is discontent with these occupation necessities, and yet he is satisfied with the employment he is in on the grounds that he is paid quite well. Therefore, there is an inward battle for the reasons and, eventually, it will be chosen whether the compensation it gets or the conceivable (questionable) plausibility of irritating the

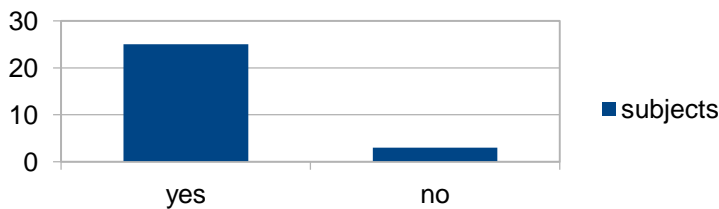
handicap is more significant. The subject knows that he will never improve work and he would not like to surrender the work.

For the question regarding the wage appreciation by the subjects, the answers are included in Table 5. and Figure 5

Table 5. Satisfaction with salary received

satisfaction	subjects
yes	25
no	3

Figure 5. Satisfaction with salary received



Almost all of our subjects are satisfied with the salary they receive at the new job. If we are to think, the salary, even if it is minimal in the economy, is more than the unemployment benefit they have received so far. Many employers also pay salary with meal vouchers or various bonuses on holidays. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that most of the artists are content with the way they are paid. They now earn much better and can support their family, or they can maintain themselves without worrying anymore.

Three subjects say they are not satisfied with the salary they received. They consider the training they deserve a higher salary, without taking into account that their job does not need their training. In addition, we can include these three subjects in the category of discontented elders who, however they receive, are never pleased with the principle that there is always room for the better.

This type of subject would always be displeased, no matter how much you would pay, and no matter how small the task would be for that payment. Unfortunately, we still do not associate the nature of the tasks in the job with the payment they receive. The more post office tasks are more difficult the higher the payout. Subjects would like to have a job with minimal tasks but with the maximum pay if it can, which can not be found in a market economy.

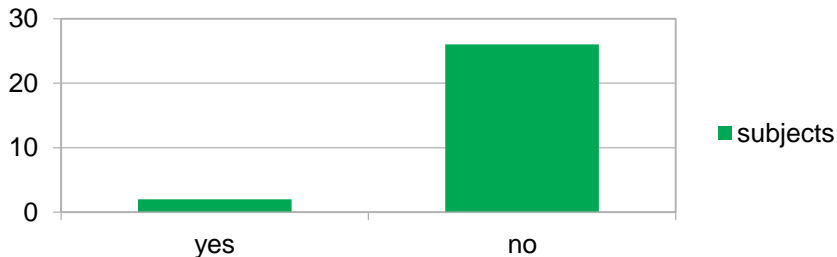
The fact that most people are satisfied with the payment urges us to believe that they will keep their jobs and will not try to look for new, better paid ones to get between two jobs again in the unemployed situation.

For the question of whether to change the job, we tried to illustrate the answers of our subjects in Table 6 and Figure 6.

Table 6. Changing the job

change	subjects
yes	2
no	26

Figure 6. Changing the job



The satisfaction that the subjects feel about the new job, as well as the satisfaction of being with people and winning to support their family or them is also reflected in the fact that 26 out of 28 subjects do not want to change the work they have.

These subjects know that they have now made an extremely huge advance in their reality: they have gotten away from joblessness and gotten a new line of work that meets their ordinary requirements. Moreover, it is additionally added that the larger part, as we have seen from the examination of past answers, are as a rule appropriately treated by associates and heads. On the off chance that, until recruiting, they were in a circumstance of segregation, not realizing what to do and how to do to address the circumstance, they are currently in a network where they are esteemed as laborers and where they have set up university connections and companionship with certain associates. Along these lines, the material advantages of work likewise appreciate the mental advantages of making a field of university and social connections, expanding fearlessness and confidence, in view of the demeanor of people around them.

The attitude of the team and the appreciation of the products of their work makes them feel useful and determines the disappearance of the sense of futility and inferiority that dominated them during the unemployment. This not only improves working-class relationships, but also improves family relationships. If, during the period of unemployment, many of our family relationships were damaged by continuous quarrels and the feeling of guilt that they can not contribute to family maintenance, now that they have a decent and steady salary, family relationships have become calmer and more affectionate, under threat of poverty.

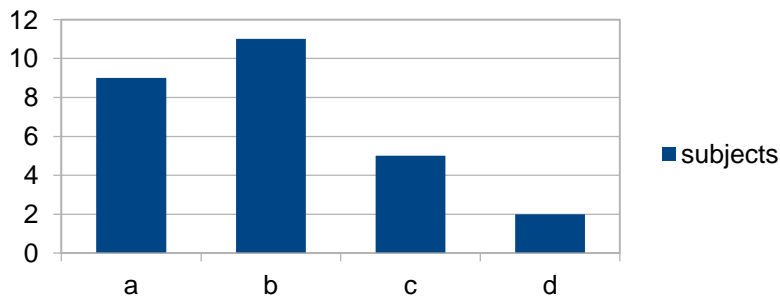
The responses of the subjects that would change the job with another are motivated by better pay, closeness to the home, more flexible timetable, or even lighter working conditions. (See Table 7 and Figure 7)

Table 7. Motivation of changing the workplace

	motivation	subjects
a	paid better	9
b	more flexible hours	4
c	near the house	5
d	lighter conditions	2

We find it interesting that although only 2 subjects want to change their jobs, 20 respondents are motivated to change. This can be explained on the one hand by the fact that the answers of the subjects to the questions were influenced by the social desirability, and on the other hand, because there is always a better hope, which satisfies and satisfies a greater number of conditions on the part of the subjects. That is why the analysis of these answers is done in a conditional way, if one wanted the change then he would want it for the following reasons.

Figure 7. Motivation of changing the workplace



We can not say that there is a large majority for one or the other of the reasons that would plead for the change of the job. However, most subjects (9) would change the current job for a better paid one. It is in the nature of people that when they reach a goal they will not be content with what they have achieved and raise the bar. From this perspective, we are not surprised that the subjects would want better paid jobs. Probably they think the next step in their career is not only to ensure the decent living of the family, but also to give them the joy of a holiday spent somewhere and small surprises on the occasion of anniversaries or celebrations.

A second motivation behind why the subjects would change their working environment is the closeness to the house (5 subjects). Numerous subjects accept that being nearer to home with the administration is a bit of leeway. Obviously, this is valid in the event that we take a gander at the way that the time you lose making progress toward or from work could go through it with your family. A few subjects have youngsters who need oversight or even assistance in playing out the topics, and afterward the division of these assignments between the two mates gets essential. In the event that one of them isn't accessible in light of the fact that he's doing a lot out and about at home and when he gets drained, at that point the entire duty falls on different's shoulders. Also, the time you spend out and about causes you to lose a progression of fundamental minutes in the advancement of kids that are not rehased and that bring happiness and sensations of pride and satisfaction to the well-rounded schooling your youngster has.

The third place as the frequency of the reasons invoked for the change of the work place is the more flexible schedule. Here comes the same problem of the family and child-raising tasks of each parent. If the timetable is rigid from 7 to 15 for example, then there may not be any available parent to take the children to school, and then the subjects would prefer at least one of them to have a more flexible timetable from 8 to 16 for example, in order to be able to lead their children to school. This requirement is a must for most contemporary families who do not have grandparents or other caregivers to supervise

children and who have a real problem in securing the supervision and support of children in learning.

The last motivation of changing the job, in terms of its frequency of occurrence, is a job with easier working conditions. Under heavy working conditions, our subjects understand the state standing for a long time or the carriage of heavy objects. Naturally, nobody desires hard physical work, but when you have no qualifications, it is difficult to find a job that is easy and well paid. This inconvenience can change, we support, if the subjects will follow further training courses and continuing vocational training, which would certainly ensure that they can take jobs that are lighter.

6. Conclusions

The research carried out reveals that the hypothesis formulated at the beginning of the approach is validated and practiced. Relationships with colleagues and bosses directly influence the work satisfaction of people under study. An atmosphere of collegiality, fairness, appreciation of the results of the work has a positive effect on the satisfaction felt by each individual.

Of our group of subjects, only 2 wanted to change their current mucosa place due to some motivations such as: family proximity, flexible schedule, higher salary. We consider that these two subjects would also give up their desire to leave if there was a social worker who would negotiate with the leadership of the enterprise and with colleagues the tensions and demands that employees have. It is another proof of the need existetei the organizational scheme of any company, a social worker post that deal with improving relations in team work and to negotiate with management agajatilor intrepriderii desires.

Acknowledgement

We hereby state that the subjects involved in our research were informed about the voluntary character of participation in this research, about the understanding of information and of that fact that withdrawal from research is possible at any time without negative consequences upon the participant. The research complied with all ethical research standards, the research participants/participants' guardians giving their consent to participate in the research.

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Disability and poverty: from EU Regulations to National statistics.

A comparative analysis: Romania-Bulgaria

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Abstract

Despite the EU social policy documents and strategies which and also adopted by the EU Member States, many persons with disabilities do not have equal access to health services, education services and/or employment opportunities; they do not receive the specific services they need, being, thus, excluded from the activities of everyday life. In some European societies, people with disabilities are unable to find a job, their difficulties varying from the accessibilities that the community and employers have to provide to them, to the employers mentalities related to their employment. However, for a person with disabilities, having a limited access to employment may put her/him in a high risk of social exclusion and poverty. The secondary data that we will analyse in this article will highlight the fact that in Romania and Bulgaria, the quality of life of persons with disabilities, is much lower than the European average, the activity limitation, conditioned by a state of health or difficulty in carrying out the daily activity is high, the access to medical and social services is limited, and, thus, the quality of life is low, which can lead us to the conclusion of an existing vicious circle (disability and poverty).

Keywords: *EU social policy; disability; poverty; material deprivation; activity limitation.*

1. Disability – a conceptual framework

Deficiency is a reality that lies at the border between the biological and the social dimension, a reality that has appeared in the forefront of the social sciences, in which over the last five decades an attempt has been made to clearly define this concept, using, alternatively, concepts such as: disability, limitation, deficiency, etc.

The need for conceptual delimitation of disability was so great that it led to the emergence of a field of study for this issue (Bodin 2018; Boucher 2003: pp. 147-148; Oliver 1983, 1996). Disability is an “umbrella term for impairment, activity limitations and participation restrictions, which denotes the negative aspects of the interaction between an individual (with a certain health condition) and the contextual factors of that individual - personal and environmental factors” (WHO/WB 2012: p. 321). According to the *Dictionary of Social Policies*, disability refers to “any reduction, lack or loss (resulting from a disability or deficiency) of the ability to carry out an activity under conditions considered normal for a human being” (Pop 2002: p.277). Disability can be defined as “a disadvantage that a certain person suffers from, as a result of a disability that prevents

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them from totally or partially satisfying the tasks considered normal for them (in relation to age, gender and different social and cultural factors)” (Pop 2002: p. 357).

In scientific literature, disability represents a “restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organization which takes no or little account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities” (Oliver 1996: p. 22). The term disability in Romanian legislation denotes the negative aspects of the interaction between the individual, a child or an adult who has a health problem and the contextual factors in which it is found, respectively environmental factors and personal factors. The assessment of disability is made by applying the bio-psycho-social criteria for inclusion in the degree of disability. The term disability is equivalent to the term handicap, but not all children with disabilities are classified as disabled, the latter being granted only at the request of parents / legal representative.

Disability represents a physical, mental or mental state that restricts and limits a person's daily activities. Romanian legislation has replaced the term “handicap” with “disability”, although the former continues to be used. There is no synonymous relationship between the two terms, but a cause-and-effect relationship. Disability is a concept that covers a wide range of deficiencies, limitations, restrictions on certain activities. This is related to the proper functioning of the body, but also to the inadequate physical and social environment of people with disabilities. An impairment of a person's health or the existence of a deficiency can lead to disability, but it is not mandatory that this will happen. The medical diagnosis is no longer enough to substantiate the determination of the state of disability: “it must be correlated with the results of a psychosocial assessment that highlights the functioning of the activity and social participation, the way in which environmental factors, including family, are constituted as facilitators or barriers, and the influence of personal factors on the evolution and development of the person” (Gherguț 2013: pp. 21-22).

There are two models used in analysing the disability: the individual (medical) model and the social model (Haegele and Hodge 2016; Dirth and Branscombe 2017). The individual model, taken from medicine and psychoanalysis, implies that a disability will diminish the quality of life of the individual, and medical intervention will reduce this disability (Marks 1997: p.85). Also, the medical model aims to cure the disease or reduce its effects. The medical model, also known as the ‘model of personal tragedy’ (Manea 2006: p. 42), affects the way people with disabilities look at themselves, which strongly affects their self-esteem.

Many people have come to believe that their problems are due to the body which is not “normal”. There has also been the use of labels that have legitimized this medical model, the formation of negative opinions about disability and even the neglect of the perspectives of people with disabilities, which can lead to self-exclusion (Beaudry, 2016). In fact, in sociology, there are numerous studies that focus on the idea of stigma as an effect of disability (Ilie Goga and Niță 2018: pp. 49-50) or studies that have addressed the issue of disability, analyzing this concept by referring to the theory of labeling or the analysis of the difference between stereotypes and prejudices (Ilie 2012: p. 19). Moreover, in American sociology, Goffman viewed disability as a stigma, as the relationship between an attribute and an injury it triggers at the level of the person (see Goffman 1990).

The social model of disability considers disability as a socially created problem and an issue related, first of all, to the full integration of the individual in society (Oliver 1996). Disability is not an attribute of an individual, but “a complex mixture of conditions,

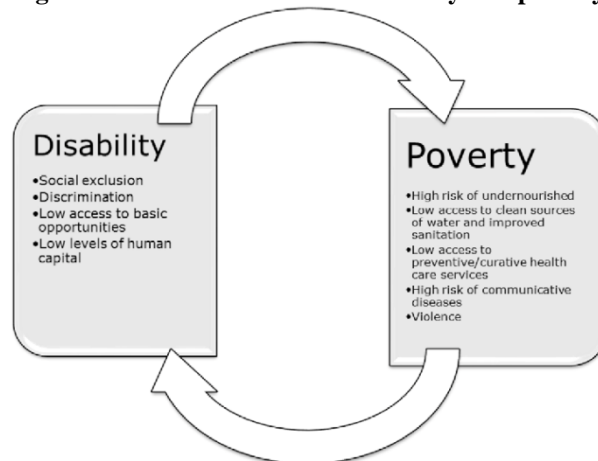
many of which are created by the social environment” (WHO 2007: p.19), ultimately constituting a risk factor (Manea 2006) for social exclusion.

The objective of this model is to eliminate restrictions, barriers and negative attitudes that prevent certain categories of people from participating in different areas of social life. This argument involves a model with two poles: *impairment* and *disability*, and a separation between these two poles. Impairment is a personal specificity, it designates the physical description of the body, while disability is a collective reality, it designates the social exclusion suffered by people with disabilities because of the multiple barriers set up by society to their participation. Impairment is, thus, a medical issue; on the other hand, disability is a political issue (Barnes 1996: pp. 44-45). According to this model, in this sense, even different forms of physical disabilities appear as types of social oppression (Pop 2002: p. 278)

The social model has often been criticized for its insistence that disability can only be addressed in terms of changing society and does not recognize the real impact that deficiencies have on their lives. However, the social model of disability has been recognized in numerous specialized studies; moreover, there have been studies that have highlighted the need to integrate the social model of disability in medical practice (see Evans 2004).

Disability strikes all types of families, but in an accentuated way families already affected by poverty. Poverty and disability are reciprocal causes and consequences. Together they form a vicious circle, as shown in the figure below (Figure 1). Poverty can lead to disability because it is associated with malnutrition, limited access to health services, poor hygiene, and risky living and working conditions. Conversely, disability can condemn a person to poverty as it limits access to education, employment, public services and even marriage. Disability affects not only people with disabilities, but also often their family members.

Figure 1: The vicious circle of disability and poverty



Source: Pinilla-Roncancio, M. (2015). “Disability and poverty: two related conditions. A review of the literature”, *Revista de la Facultad de Medicina*, 63, 113-123.

The status of people with disabilities “derives from society's attitude towards disability and deficiencies, because it is the one that builds a certain social image of man, which is fully invested in society” (Enăchescu 1996: p. 188). According to this image, persons with disabilities are often socially excluded, and the factors that contribute to this exclusion mainly lack of education or low level of education, low income, unemployment, limited access to transport and other facilities and, of course, discrimination. Moreover, inadequate housing in which people with disabilities live accentuates their condition and can also lead to social exclusion. In the following paragraphs we will exemplify these arguments, in the form of a comparative analysis (for Romanian society and Bulgarian society).

2. An overview of EU regulations on disability

At European and national level, programs have been adopted in recent years in which states make a moral and political commitment to act in order to equalize the opportunities of people with disabilities, to set up a European benchmark, based on the non-discrimination of people with disabilities (Mohanu 2008: pp. 15-16). They include principles of responsibility, action and cooperation, areas of decisive importance for quality of life, as well as the achievement of full and equal participation. The purpose of these measures is to fight against discrimination and exclusion of people with disabilities (Arpinte et al. 2008: p. 344), and thus to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities.

This principle of social inclusion recognizes that “the solution to inequality is not simply to offer the excluded the same formal rights (...). Instead of waiting for the marginalized to conform to the prevailing norms and practices of those at the center, social inclusion involves a reconfiguration of the center to encompass the practices of the marginalized”(Luxton 2002)

The first document which aims to outline the contours of a future European strategy reflects this diversity by identifying five “spheres of exclusion”: education, employment, mobility, housing and poverty (Commission Européenne 1996: pp.2-3)

At the European Congress held in Madrid on March 20-23, 2002, a conceptual framework for action was adopted at national, regional and local level, on the occasion of the 2003 European Year of People with Disabilities, an event designed to raise awareness of their rights.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted on 13 December 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and was opened for signature on 30 March 2007. It is the first global human rights treaty of the 21st century, the first human rights convention to enter in force on 3 May 2008 and follows the decades-long work of the United Nations to change attitudes and approaches towards people with disabilities. The Convention is conceived as an instrument for human rights, with an explicit dimension and social development.

On November 15, 2010, the European Commission adopted a new strategy to remove the obstacles that prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in the life of the City on the same basis as the rest of the community members – this document is the *European Strategy for People with Disabilities 2010-2020*. This strategy highlights eight areas for joint action between European Union (EU) and EU countries: accessibility; participation; equality; employment; education and training; social protection; health; external actions.

The European Strategy 2010-2020 for People with Disabilities is the main document on EU disability policy. It sets objectives and actions for the implementation of EU disability policy, with a view to promoting a barrier-free Europe, and is the instrument used for the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) at EU level.

3. How is linked poverty and material deprivation to disability? A comparative statistical analysis: Romania-Bulgaria

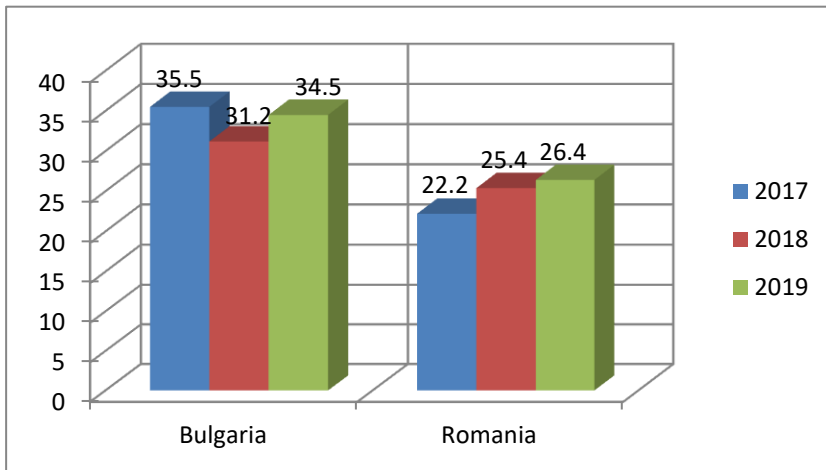
At the level of Romanian society, the *Strategy on social inclusion of people with disabilities 2014-2020* through social policies (from “rehabilitation” of the individual to reforming society) continues and develops the approach initiated by the previous national strategy, based on evaluating the results of its implementation and obligations assumed through the documents of the international and European organizations to which Romania is a member.

In Bulgaria, as legislation in force for the social protection of persons with disabilities, the most important are: Law on the Integration of Persons with Disabilities Regulation on the Law on the Integration of Persons with Disabilities. Also in force is Ordinance H-19 of December 2, 2008 on the conditions regarding the exemption of persons with incapacity for work of 50 and over 50 percent or type and degree of disabilities, and of persons or families, who raise children with disabilities lasting up to the age of 18 and until the completion of secondary education, but not later than 20 years, from the payment of vignette fees.

In this article we have chosen to present, in a comparative manner, starting from the analysis of secondary data provided by the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat), the situation of people with disabilities and the level of risk they present to fall into the category of vulnerable groups, affected by material deprivation and therefore prone to poverty. It should be noted that the statistical data we used do not refer directly to people with disabilities, but to people who have “some or severe” difficulties in daily activities.

Regarding the exposure to poverty in the period 2017-2019, it can be seen from the figure below (Figure 2) that the share of people exposed to this type of risk is higher in Bulgaria than in Romania, by about 8.1%. What is interesting to note is that for the analyzed period (2017-2019), the situation of people with disabilities in Bulgaria has not deteriorated, there are very small variations in the percentage of people at risk of poverty. Regarding the situation in Romania, it can be seen that the living standard of people with disabilities has deteriorated, the share of those exposed to poverty increasing from 22.2% in 2017 to 26.4% in 2019 (which means an increase by 18.9%).

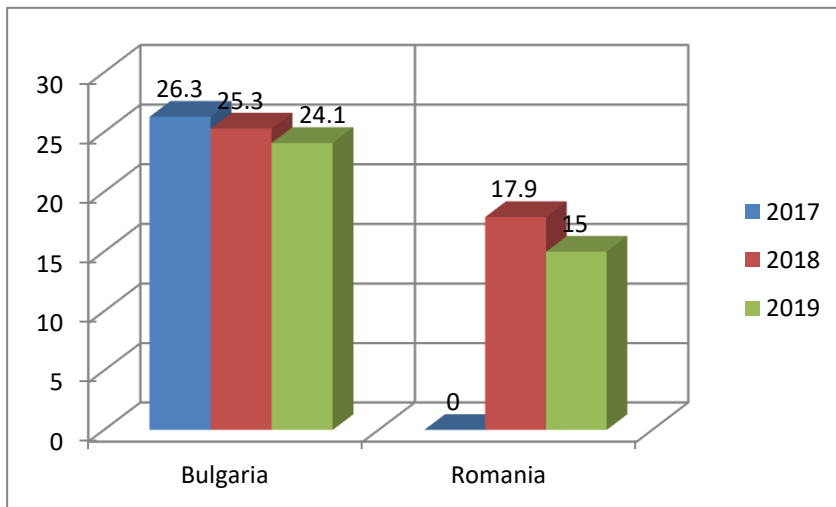
Figure 2: People at risk of poverty by level of activity limitation – “some or severe”
Comparative analysis: Romania –Bulgaria (2017-2019) %



Source: Data calculated by Eurostat DataBase, code hlth_dpe020, november 2020

At the level of 2019, in Bulgaria, 24.1% of people with disabilities lived in households with very low work intensity, their share decreasing compared to 26.3%, which represents at the level of 2017. The same decrease is found in the case of Romania, where at the level of the same year, 2019, 15% of people with severe limitations in daily activity lived in households with very low work intensity.

Figure 3: People living in households with very low work intensity by level of activity limitation, – “some or severe”
Comparative analysis: Romania –Bulgaria (2017-2019) - %

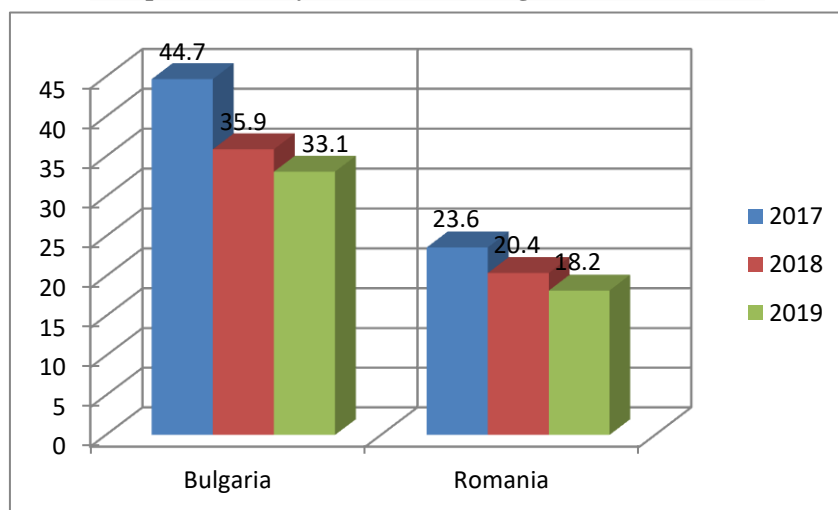


Material deprivation is one of the first signs of exposure to the risk of poverty, being often the most important criterion for determining the degree of marginalization of a

person or a community, deprivation that can be moderate or severe (Chelcea 2001) . Material deprivation covers indicators related to economic pressure and durable goods. People who face severe material deprivation have extremely limited living conditions due to lack of resources. At the level of 2017, the beginning year for our statistical analysis, in Romania, 4.5% of the population (over 900 thousand people) lived in marginalized communities (Teșliuc Grigoraș and Stănculescu 2015). In the case of those two countries we analyze, it can be seen that the share of people facing severe material deprivation decreased in the period 2017-2019, from 44.7% to 33.1% in Bulgaria and from 23.6% to 18.2% in Romania. This may be an indicator of the effectiveness of social policy measures and projects implemented, both in Romania and in Bulgaria, and intended for vulnerable populations (Kaleynska, 2014, p. 124), including people with disabilities. During the 2007-2013 financial year, Bulgaria benefited from European funds for human resources development, poverty alleviation and the promotion of social inclusion (Kaleynska, 2013). Funds were also allocated to EU member states through Erasmus + programs, which aimed to exchange experience and transfer good practices (Sorescu and Iacobescu 2019) about successful techniques in order to diminish the difficulties that children with disabilities are facing in school (Brez and Goian 2019; Brez 2020).

In Romania, in the financial year 2014-2020 of the European Social Fund, funds were allocated to marginalized communities, to projects that offered integrated support measures for people from such communities, including people with disabilities. In fact, one of the criteria that a community had to meet in order to benefit from such funds was that the proportion of people with disabilities, chronic diseases or other conditions that limit their daily activities, in the total population of the community concerned be at least 8% (Motoi and Popescu 2017: pp. 112-113). These projects had a particularly important role for the Romanian society, the specialized studies highlighting the fact that in Romania the number of marginalized communities is significant, communities in which “all vulnerabilities cumulate, making the termination of the exclusion cycle impossible in the absence of outside help” (Pârnu and Niță 2020: p. 61).

**Figure 4: People with severe material deprivation,
by level of activity limitation – “some or severe”
Comparative analysis: Romania –Bulgaria (2017-2019) - %**

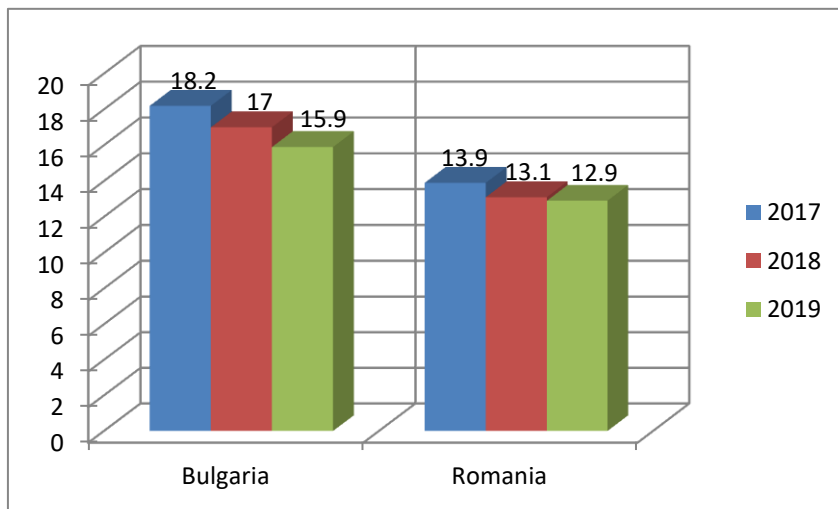


Source: Data calculated by Eurostat DataBase, code hlth_dm010, november 2020

Another indicator that can be analyzed in relation to the situation of people who face severe limitations in daily activities, also correlated with material deprivation, is access to goods that are considered goods of strict necessity, such as a washing machine, laundry, TV or your own car. Regarding owning a personal computer, the situation can be much more complicated with several possible explanations for its lack:

There are people who do not have a computer because they cannot afford to buy a computer, and their situation is shown in Figure 5. Thus, the share of people with disabilities who could not afford to buy a computer decreased, both in Bulgaria and in Romania, during 2017-2019. Although the decrease is not significant (if we analyze the statistical indicators) it is still a signal of the improvement of the quality of life, of the standard of living, of the increase of the purchasing power of this category of population. At the level of 2019, the share of people who faced a severe limitation of daily activity and who could not buy a computer was 15.9% in Bulgaria and 12.9% in Romania, fairly high weights compared to other European Union countries.

Figure 5: Share of persons who cannot afford a computer by level of activity limitation, by level of activity limitation – “some or severe”
Comparative analysis: Romania –Bulgaria (2017-2019) - %



Source: Data calculated by Eurostat DataBase, code hlth_dm090, november 2020

There are, as we have already mentioned, other possible explanations for not owning a personal computer, and one of those explanations is the low level of digital literacy of this category of population. Digital literacy has a very important role in the quality of life of people with disabilities, promoting their participation in society and having the effect of reducing their social isolation in the communities they belong to. Moreover, digital literacy can contribute to increasing social inclusion, and social inclusion through e-inclusion and digital literacy is a matter of national interest, both in Romania and in Bulgaria (Motoi and Bourgatte 2020: p. 95, p. 59). Last but not least, digital literacy can create facilities for them to help them develop independent living in their own homes

(for example, using technology to provide online shopping services, or remote care and medical services).

Conclusions

Despite the existence of many social policy measures for people with disabilities, they regularly face discrimination and are often excluded from access to water and sanitation, health, education, work and community life.

Not infrequently, social policy measures exist, but they are not effective, because they do not represent integrated measures, which would represent a “convergence between passive, legislative and active measures of integration on the labor market, through the real application of the legislation measures” (Guttman 2011: p. 255). Not a few times, people with disabilities face additional disability-related costs such as personal assistance, healthcare or assistive devices. These additional costs increase their risk of being poorer than others. Disability is both a cause and a consequence of poverty: the poor are more likely to become disabled, and people with disabilities are among the poorest of the poor.

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Working with involuntary clients, an analysis from the probation counsellors professional competencies perspective

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Abstract

The persons under supervision of the probation services represent, together with those with custodial sentences, the perfect illustration of the concept of involuntary client, i.e. the one who ends up benefiting from the help/assistance of a specialist not as a result of his own decision, and/or awareness of the necessity of such help, but as a result of a legal mandate. This aspect determines and explains the specific profile of this category of beneficiaries of the intervention activities and programs in the correctional space. In accordance with this reality, the specifics of professional relationship and of the work carried out by the probation counselors with the supervised persons are also configured.

This text aims to present on one hand the obvious and less obvious implications of non-volunteering and on the other hand, some of the dimensions of the professional competencies of probation counselors required in such a type of professional interaction. A series of aspects are followed that describe the adequacy of the competencies of probation counselors to the contents of the professional role, for creating awareness opportunities of their own problems by the offenders under supervision, and developing individual resources through which the development of motivation for change and the dynamics of the transition from the state of involuntary client to that of a motivated and involved beneficiary in the helping process, take place in order to make a prosocial change of behavior.

Keywords: *Probation; involuntary clients; professional competencies; correctional interventions; probation counselors; rehabilitation.*

1. Probation

In the field of justice, the punishment is a coercive measure applied by a court, as a formal expression of the social reaction to the violation of the law. Its functions (deterrence, incapacitation, reintegration, restoration) establish, in combinations and with different accents that depend on the criminal philosophy specific to each jurisdiction, the values and intentionality of the act of justice. In return, they are transposed into the mission of the institutions and operationalized through the role of practitioners who manage in the interaction with offenders, the application of the punishment.

Probation is part of the broader category of Community sanctions and measures, which have the role, according to Council Recommendation (92) 16 of the Council of Europe, to keep the offender in the community, involving certain restrictions on his

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freedom by imposing the conditions and/or obligations that are implemented for this purpose by bodies designated by law. Compared to imprisonment, community sanctions and measures are a form of social response to crime that requires more responsibility on the part of the offender, self-determination and decision-making. The sanctioned person in many cases has to complete different programs, look for and maintain a job and face the daily challenges of real life, compared to the artificial environment of the penitentiary where others make (almost) all decisions, reducing significantly the fulfillment of social roles and opportunities to assume their responsibilities. The value of community sanctions lies in the fact that they contribute to the reintegration of offenders in the community (their accountability, improvement of social skills, confrontation with the consequences of their behaviour, carrying out resocializing activities).

The specialized literature often employs the term of probation interchangeable with the one of community supervision of offenders, hence a series of inaccuracies, aspect in connection with which Groza shows that “although it is frequently found in the international recommendations on sanctions and Community measures of the last half century, the term of probation was for the first time assigned a definition only in 2010 in Part I - entitled Purpose, application, definitions and basic principles - of the Council of Europe Recommendation (2011) 1, on the rules of probation”(2011: p.318).According to this definition, probation refers to the implementation in the community of sanctions and measures defined by law and imposed on an offender. It includes a series of activities and interventions that involve supervision, guidance, and assistance in order to ensure the social inclusion of the offender but also to contribute to the safety of the community. This “European” definition given to probation clearly highlights the mission of this institution, namely the values that are specific to it, the main dimensions that structure its content and last but not least, the subjects concerned, people who have violated criminal law. Regarding their profile, a clearer definition is given by Cartledge: ”A method of punishment with a socio-pedagogic basis characterised by a combination of supervision and assistance. It is applied under a free system (no fee) to offenders selected according to their criminal personality, the type of crime, and their receptiveness, in relation to a system whose aim is to give the offender the change to modify his/her approach to life in society and to take a place in the social environment of choice without the risk of violating a social penal norm gain” (Harris 1995, apud Kalmthout and Derks 2000: p. 13).

This definition allows us to emphasize the role of the two key dimensions (supervision and assistance) around which probation activities and interventions are organized, i.e. to facilitate offenders behavioural change that makes possible social reintegration and reduced risk of relapse. This sanctioning modality offers possibilities for prosocial change within the community of some offenders selected through specific evaluations, in the conditions of respecting their right to self-determination.

In Romania, the activity of the probation system is carried out in the interest of the community, in order to socially rehabilitate offenders, reduce the risk of new crimes and maintain community safety, and reduce social costs of enforcement of sanctions and criminal measures, by the decrease of the population in the penitentiary units and the capitalization of the social-economic potential of the offenders (Government Decision 1079/2013, art. 1 paragraph 3).

According to the criminal legislation in force in Romania, the subjects of probation are persons for whom the prosecutor ordered the waiver of criminal prosecution (art. 318, Law 153/2010), persons for whom the court ordered the execution of the fine by performing work for the benefit of community (art. 64, paragraph 3, Law no. 286/2009),

persons for whom the court ordered the postponement of the application of the sentence (art. 83-90, Law no. 286/2009), persons for whom the court ordered the suspension under supervision (art. 01 -98, Law no. 286/2009), persons conditional released (art. 99-106, Law no. 286/2009), minors for whom the court ordered one of the non-custodial educational measures - civic training, supervision, obligation to stay at home in weekend, daily assistance (art. 114-123, Law no. 286/2009), minors for whom the court ordered the replacement of hospitalization in an educational centre, with the educational measure of daily assistance, or release from the educational centre (art. 124, Law no. 286/2009), minors for whom the court ordered the replacement of custody in a detention centre with the educational measure of daily assistance or release from the detention centre (art. 125, Law no. 286/2009). These people on probation will have to comply with a series of *measures* (to appear at the probation service on the dates set for him/her, to receive visits from the probation counsellor appointed with his/her supervision, to announce in advance the change of residence, and any travel that exceeds five days, as well as the return, to communicate information and documents that will allow the control of its livelihood) and *obligations* (to attend a course of school training or professional qualification, to perform unpaid work for the benefit of the community, to attend one or more programs of social reintegration carried out by the probation service, or organized in collaboration with community institutions, to submit to control measures, medical treatment or care, not to communicate with the victim, or the victim's family, with persons with whom he/she committed the crime with or with other persons established by the court, or not to approach them, not to be in certain places, or at certain sports, cultural, or public assemblies established by the court, not to drive certain vehicles established by the court, not to possess, not to use and not to carry any category of weapons, not to leave the territory of Romania without the court's consent, not to occupy or not to exercise the function, profession, trade or activity used for the commission of the crime), imposed on them by the court.

As shown in the enumeration above, the persons who come to the attention of the probation services are restricted to a certain extent, the freedom of movement, and to make choices because they are imposed certain restrictions regarding activities, interactions, rights of professional nature, they are subject to checks and are required to accept help/medical assistance or treatment, but also to attend programs aimed at behavioural rehabilitation.

Of the two key probation activities, community supervision of offenders is the most consistent dimension of probation service activity and aims to verify, control and monitor how supervised persons carry out court orders. Assistance is seen according to Law 286/2009 (Criminal Code), simultaneous with supervision, this simultaneity being a guarantee in favour of carrying out the probation mission, reducing the risk of recidivism and offender rehabilitation.

Practitioners in the probation system in Romania, who according to the law and their professional skills, can carry out with the persons under supervision, the activities specific to probation, are called probation counselors. Thus, in the probation services we will have interactions carried out within the professional relationship, between two protagonists, one of whom has the authority conferred by law to fulfil a dual role of control and assistance, and the second, the supervised person, has the obligation imposed by court, to comply with the measures and obligations established for him/her. Therefore, we will consider the latter as an involuntary participant, and the interaction of the two

protagonists, we will call it, taking a formulation of Rooney (2009), an involuntary transaction.

2. Working with involuntary clients in probation

The persons under supervision of the probation services represent, together with those with custodial sentences, the perfect illustration of the concept of involuntary client, i.e. the one who ends up benefiting from the help/assistance of a specialist not as a result of his/her own decision, and/or awareness of the necessity of such help, but as a result of a legal mandate. Rooney proposed definitions of involuntary clients that distinguish categories of motivation including both *legally mandated clients* as well as *nonvoluntary clients*. Examples of legally mandated clients include clients with sexual offenses, clients charged with assault or clients who are involved in a domestic violence situation. Nonvoluntary clients on the other hand, are likely to feel pressure to seek treatment from a significant other, workplace, family member or other source. People in both of these categories are included in the umbrella term “involuntary” (2009: p5).

To accomplish the mission of probation is necessary for practitioners to find the most appropriate strategies to develop in the offender under supervision, the motivation to change and thus the transition from the state of involuntary client to that of a motivated and involved beneficiary in the helping process, in order to make a prosocial change of behaviour. A fundamental contribution to achieving this goal belongs to the quality of the professional relationship between probation counsellor and the person under supervision. Its establishment and development are facilitated by the professional competencies of probation counsellor. By professional competencies we mean the integration of three aspects: knowledge, methods and values.

Knowledge about the complex causality of criminal behaviour, about human development, legislation, correctional interventions. Specific correctional interventions methods, rehabilitation models, effective and empathic communication and relationship skills, cultural sensitivity, non-judgmental attitude etc. Values such as respect for dignity, self-determination, confidentiality, are implemented in probation including in the professional working relationship (Poledna 2008: p. 27). Implementing all of them in practice must take into account on the one hand, the characteristics of involuntary clients, and on the other hand, the specific context of the probation in which involuntary transactions, take place. “An involuntary transaction is a dynamic exchange of resources among clients, practitioners, and agencies occurring in a shifting legal and normative context and power imbalance such that the involuntary client would prefer to be elsewhere” (Rooney 2009: p. 7). The perception of and confrontation with this power imbalance and loss of control, translates into resistance and reluctance on the part of persons under supervision.

Challenges to the process of probation, in terms of supervision and helping intervention, can stem from sources such as clients’ resistance and the pressures that coerce clients into treatment (De Jong and Berg 2001; Yachmenoff 2005; Ritchie 1986, apud Jacobsen and Courtney 2013: p. 8). Resistance and reluctance are two concepts seen as major challenges client engagement in probation. As defined by Ritchie, reluctance is associated with clients preferring to not be around a probation counsellor or talk about their lives with a probation counsellor. Resistance on the other hand is described as hostility towards change. Reluctance and resistance are highly associated with treatment non-compliance and noncompletion. Reluctance and resistance are common concepts when speaking about populations who are coerced into treatment (Clark 1997; Sia et al.,

2000, Smallbone, Crissman and Rayment-McHugh 2009, apud Jacobsen and Courtney 2013: p. 9).

For resistance and reluctance management and decrease, probation counsellor will try to achieve a communication based on respect and empathy, will define the nature of the working relationship, the limits of confidentiality, will assure the person under supervision that he or she, is accepted, by separating the behaviour from the person. It will also seek to develop an interaction framework that provides opportunities for self-determination. So, probation counsellors working with mandated clients seek to blend mandated concerns with client motivations such that they may choose to work on those required concerns for their own reasons (Rooney 2009: p. 149). That's why supervision it has been defined as a good opportunity to build a new life and avoid prison. More specifically, supervision was described as helpful when the process focused on problem-solving or when the clients' welfare was considered important, especially when help was provided around finances, employment and housing (Durnescu, Enengl and Grafl 2013: p. 26).

Referring to social workers, Courtney A. Jacobsen (2013) pointed out that involuntary clients, or clients who are legally mandated or feel pressure to seek treatment, struggle with engagement and are often viewed as being resistant. Engagement is defined by the author as the process through which a client begins to actively participate in their treatment. The engagement process involves developing "agreement on the goals and tasks of treatment" through the collaboration of the therapist and client (Friedlander et al. 2006: p. 72 apud Jacobsen 2013: p. 2). These ideas are also valid in probation, especially if we refer to the dimensions of helping interventions (programs for preventing reoffending and for social reintegration). Probation counsellors apply principles, techniques and skills specific to the cognitive-behavioural approach, as well as the motivational interviewing in order to increase motivation for prosocial change in behaviour. The four dimensions of engagement - receptivity, expectancy, investment and working relationship - are also relevant. Receptivity describes how open clients are to receiving help in their life and also whether or not the clients recognize a problem and a need for change. Expectancy deals with the clients' perceptions of whether they will benefit from treatment. Receptivity and expectancy are closely related in the sense that if clients do not see the need for treatment and deny any problems, they are not likely to have high expectancy or be invested in their treatment. Investment is characterized by clients' active contributions, participation and work in their treatment. The clients who demonstrate the concept of investment will take responsibility for their treatment goals. The working relationship is similar to the therapeutic alliance that exists between therapists and clients. A therapeutic alliance or working relationship is characterized by feelings of fair exchange and open communication between clients and practitioner (Yachmenoff 2005 apud Jacobsen and Courtney 2013: p. 4).

From the consulting some of the probation counsellors from Cluj probation service, several aspects emerged, aspects that I consider relevant in this analysis for what it means to work with supervised persons, involuntary clients of probation services in our country. The perception of practitioners is quite nuanced in relation to the definition/consideration of those on probation as involuntary clients. There are probation counsellors who invariably perceive them as involuntary clients because no one wants or does not appear on their own initiative at the probation service, but as a result of their sanctioning, following the commission of a crime. Other probation counsellors perceive only sometimes and only certain persons under supervision as involuntary, for example persons

who do not assume responsibility for illegal acts and consider that they have been unjustly convicted. At the beginning of the supervision period, they show hostility towards the supervision process, the probation counsellor, the judicial system, etc. Another argument for considering involuntary clients the ones in the attention of the probation services, is the fact that they must be constantly motivated to collaborate, precisely because the tasks to be respected are imposed and they feel that they are imposed. Certain categories are considered by practitioners, closer to the profile of the involuntary probationary client, than others, minors are included here (they are less aware of the alternative to non-custodial sentences and the long-term effects of the custodial environment), prejudices by the justice system, or adults with a higher social status. A special category is represented by people with mental illness, here the hostility / aggression is doubled by unpredictability and, often, by the lack of awareness of the disease or its non-acceptance.

Analysing the activities that raise difficulties for probation counsellors in their work with involuntary clients, the following situations presented by practitioners emerge: "Bringing to a form of respect for the law and the justice system is generally difficult; in particular, coming at the headquarters of the probation service, and as a preamble to supervision and intervention; the supervisory part (complying with the measures and execution of obligations, information about changes in their lives, requesting / submitting evidence, compliance with sentence restrictions); and last but not least, another activity raising difficulties is "the counselling activity (civic training, development of reintegration programs), the execution of the obligation to work for the benefit of the community (especially for adults with high social status)". The specific difficulties of interacting with involuntary probation clients are also related to the fact that there are often divergences between the probation counsellor's perspective on a certain aspect of probation work and that of the supervised person. Such situations, that the probation counsellors I discussed with meet, can be for example "in supervision where the whole beginning moment is more important and from this point of view the compliance with the professional deontology and the professional formalism (lack of familiarity in the beginning of the relationship) proved by the counsellor in the initial relationship is of great importance, the relationship being created at that time and place. Conflicts can also occur along the way and it happens if the supervised person is discovered by the counsellor that he/she does not comply with the sentence "or" in the initial assessment - in the case of supervision, respectively in assistance activities, when people do not consider the problematic issues so great / many or that they can have an impact on their lives in different areas and are not aware of their consequences". Such divergences are managed by probation counsellors based on their professional skills, experience and work style. Thus, some of them appeal to what they call "bringing the person to the legal framework, recalling the instructions presented at the beginning of supervision or along the way explaining the situation on both sides, offering the possibility to argue, demonstrate things, assume a human role not only professionally by the counsellor, sometimes stopping a discussion or situations that risk degenerating into an aggressive one, putting the person in touch with the head of the service, with a professional mission of mediator of any possible conflicts". Others resort to presenting the issues that led them to certain conclusions, asking the persons under supervision "to evaluate in writing the pros / cons, advantages / disadvantages of their perspective, the impact on them and others"; or solutions are sought to overcome the divergences "by informing the person, about the legal provisions, explaining the consequences of the behaviour / attitude manifested, the risks to which he/she is exposed".

The probation counsellors consulted, consider that a role in the achievement of the probation objectives, is played by the professional discretion (decisional / actional) of the practitioner. The arguments in this regard refer to the fact that “the intervention is individualized / adapted to the specifics of each one, there is no single “correct” working method and it is desirable that this independence be complemented by supervising the activity and encouraging the professional and personal development of practitioners (career development plan)”. On the same note, it is considered that autonomy allows the individualization of the intervention process to the person's needs (legal provisions allow the probation counsellor to ask the court to increase or decrease the conditions of execution of the sentence, by eliminating or disposing of new obligations to ensure increased chances directing the person)”.

Along with professional discretion, some key professional qualities and competencies of the probation counsellor in working with involuntary clients were identified, such as: “emotional balance, providing support and guidance”, “empathy and desire to support / accompany the person in the process of supervision (unconditional acceptance of the person provides the support they may need, or the confidence that they can change their course so that they can continue a life 'without crime': at the same time it is important to delimit criminal behaviour, which is not desirable, accepted, tolerated for violating the rights / freedoms of others); clarity in expressing requirements, accurate observations etc. (it ensures the achievement of the person's objectives and progress, respectively the compliance of the sentence provisions and the successful completion of the supervision), the consistency of the practitioner from the point of view of the steps, the counsellor's attitude towards the person in evidence, the legal provision reinforcement, and so on, because it ensures the achievement of the objectives and the progress of the person, the framework for the compliance with the sentence; the counsellor can provide a 'behaviour model' - if we identify a problem, we look for solutions until it is improved/solved”. To which are added “honesty, respect and acceptance, non-punitive attitude, in the sense of offering the right to self-determination to the supervised person (to give him/her the right to certain informed choices, which do not contradict the sentence, regarding the supervision / evaluation procedures etc.). ”

The most important ways identified by the consulted probation counsellors, through which the voluntary involvement of the supervised person can be increased, include in order of their importance, the quality of the professional relationship with the probation counsellor, motivational congruence, help to explore possible consequences of supervised choices or decisions, highlighting alternatives, socializing in the role of a supervised person (clarifying his/her rights and obligations), identifying negotiable options, in the context of applying the court decision, the flexibility of the probation counsellor as a result of professional autonomy (discretion), honest and empathic communication, creating opportunities to voluntary choices /for self-determination, ensuring confidentiality (including clarifying its limits), the authenticity of the probation counsellor, negotiating issues and co-opting the person supervised in decisions, complying with the legal limits. ”Complete and accurate information of the person (regarding the law, alternatives to non-custodial punishments, attributions and role of the probation counsellor, the purpose and mission of probation), combined with a non-punitive attitude on the part of the counsellor are the main strategies / methods to turn an involuntary client into a voluntary client. My goal, as a counsellor, is to make the person aware of the fact that supervision is a benefit (comparing it with an imprisonment sanction, etc.), and compliance or non-compliance with supervision conditions is a personal choice”.

The signs indicating the gradual transition from the status of involuntary client to that of voluntary client, of the supervised person were described by the probation counsellors, as follows: The first sign is the acceptance to collaborate, without motivating efforts, materialized in actions, attendance at the dates set for the meeting, the manifestation of the request, the pleasure of the interaction and the involvement in complying with the law. Other identified markers are "increasing compliance with the requirements of the court decision, providing information, on their own initiative about personal aspects of his/her life with / without relevance to the supervision process, seeking advice or the need for 'advice' with the probation counsellor, decreased hostility, a more benevolent attitude, more careful observance of the obligations / duties of the supervised person."

The community safety depends on the efficiency of the institutions that have attributions in the implementation of custodial punishments or of community sanctions and measures, their mission having as finality the reduction of the risk of recidivism and the behavioural rehabilitation of the sanctioned persons. Each of these desiderata pursued by the activity of probation services can be really achieved, only if the subjects of probation are involved in everything that means the experience of probation. Council of Europe's recommendations places an important emphasis on offender involvement, in other words on fulfillment of two requirements: consent a cooperation; consent can be regarded as related to 'voluntarism' which is seen as a common underlying principle in European probation (Morgenstern and Larrauri 2013: p.125). Seen from this perspective, the dynamics of the transition from the status of involuntary client to that of voluntary client, describes the complex process that the persons under supervision goes through on the way to prosocial behavioural change, which will be reflected in increasing community safety.

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Risk adaptation: A continuous learning process in the context of unrepeatable phenomena

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Abstract

Humanity is periodically affected by natural disasters, medical, environmental or military crises with an impact on large sections of the population. The reality observed by the population and the intervention modalities have influenced the way in which the notion of “risk” is perceived. Many everyday events are not taken into account by people, as the negative consequences are less likely to occur. Therefore, the subjectively perceived gravity of the consequences of certain events increases the attention paid to the presumed risks. Situations in which the causal relationship is directly perceptible, such as natural disasters, are usually appreciated. Suspicion and ignorance of risks increase with the imperceptibility of causal relationships or where understanding requires a high level of expertise. In the case of the current coronavirus pandemic, we are dealing with the situation of feeling effects directly (through personal infection or from someone we know) and indirectly through the information collected through the media, without knowing the generating causes. The explanations are heterogeneous, from various sources, unverifiable, often unsupported and scientifically unfounded. The explanations from the scientific world are complex, resulting from the interpretation of a multitude of scientific aspects, each of which is the subject of complex research, and the explanatory mechanisms are not accessible to the general masses due to lack of medical knowledge. If we add to the complexity of medical explanations the explanations provided by media channels by sensory-oriented public sources, manipulation, representation of foreign interests to some states, we find that the current picture of the structure of astounding and disturbing public information is created for a large part of the population. It becomes suspicious under the influence of destabilizing messages. This article aims to initiate an approach to know how risks drive the creation of protection strategies in the context of unique or rare phenomena.

Keywords: *Coronavirus; risk management; pandemic; public communication; manipulation; risk reduction strategy; medical crisis.*

1. Introduction

The current coronavirus pandemic has put all the governments of today's states in difficulty. The COVID -19 virus has proven to be highly contagious and the suffering it carries has spread around the world. The threat has become global and the pandemic has been felt in all contemporary societies. The response to such a phenomenon was specific to each society, either by adopting strategies specific to each state or by imitation. Depending

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on the responsiveness of each government, major investments have been made in ensuring effective healthcare while imposing numerous restrictions on public spaces.

The prolongation of the pandemic and the fluctuating results proved that there were no infallible strategies, regardless of the administrative capacity and the level of development of the national health systems. The pandemic has spread and affected a large number of people and the asynchronous application of intervention strategies has reduced the potential impact of health control. Thus, we find that a phenomenon that has taken place constantly, depending on the natural conditions that ensure its perpetuation has been contrasted with fragmented and limited measures at the physical borders of each country according to the explanatory paradigms provided by epidemiologists in each state. The consequences are measured in the persistence of coronavirus, health care costs, medicines, medical supplies and, in the most unfortunate cases, in the loss of human lives. At stake in this procedural inconsistency are the very lives of citizens and the public health of the population.

This article comprises concerns about different approaches to the context of the medical crisis, the influence of the pandemic on people and the convergence of views on infection control that should turn into a synchronous cross-border intervention strategy. We also find that the pandemic is a complex phenomenon that has surprised with its high contagion and will probably be unrepeatable in this form, just as knowledge of the history of epidemics or pandemics is not valid today to an extent that helps to develop effective strategies.

2. The characteristic's complexity of the coronavirus pandemic

The rapid spread of the coronavirus pandemic has shown that humanity is not prepared to respond uniformly to such challenges. The surprising and atypical evolution of the pandemic surprised the rulers of all the affected countries. A possible explanation is provided by reference to the complexity theory (Angeli and Montefusco 2020: pp.1-4), in which the geometric progression of multiplication of the number of infections is the main effect of the lack of social distancing.

The confusion generated by the coronavirus pandemic is due to the rapidity of infections and the lack of reaction from the authorities, who did not have effective control procedures. Also, local efforts, principles of action and paradigms underlying intervention strategies have revealed more cultural and political differences without a real impact on the coronavirus pandemic, which is spreading and affecting many people.

The lack of effective standard procedures is perpetuated by the impossibility of accurately measuring the dynamics of infections. Several methods are used that generate different results, and the measurement of COVID-19 reproduction is dependent on the approach preferred by researchers. One of the current references is the one provided by the WHO which indicated the value of 1.95, but which some researchers consider to be affected by a very high margin of error (Liu et. al. 2020: pp. 1-4). Depending on the geographical area, the method of analysis and values were set between 1.4-6.49, with an average of 3.23.

These differences illustrate the need for time and the accumulation of sufficient data to understand the specifics of the coronavirus pandemic (Angeli and Montefusco 2020: pp.1-4). Only after the methods of analysis and estimation have become standardized is an effective intervention strategy with global coverage possible.

Research has shown that the phenomenon is nonlinear, a feature that hinders people's ability to understand (Angeli and Montefusco 2020: pp.1-4). The dynamics of nonlinear phenomena are faster than the procedures that underpin decision-making, as learning is hindered and "mental repetition is distorted." People's decisions are based on

experience and compensation for lack of experience is made by intuition which, in fact, works properly in the conditions of an phenomena with a linear development. People are not used to nonlinear thinking, they often identify phenomena with nonlinear evolution and apply measures specific to linear phenomena, based on their own experiences. Thus, the variation of long-term causes will generate a small variation of short-term effects, but which in the long term have or may have unexpected consequences. For example, school closures have been applied in most countries without knowing the "role of children in the spread of the virus". (Angeli and Montefusco 2020: pp.1-4). Such a measure may have consequences with possible short-term positive effects, but which in the long run may have unpredictable consequences due to the disruption of the education system. Only in the future will it be possible to estimate the effectiveness of the current measures by comparing the costs of the long-term consequences with those targeted at the time of the decision.

The link between linear thinking and learning can be discovered through another approach, related to the interpretation of the specifics of the economic environment. Researchers of business behaviors, such as Gaveti et. al. (2012: pp. 1-40) they emphasized that in the case of causal links we must also analyze the feedback relationship. Thus, if "X is the cause of Y", then "the influence of Y on X" must be considered, from the perspective of feedback. Thus, isolation measures are "complex interventions in complex social systems, dependent on their initial conditions" (Angeli and Montefusco 2020: pp.1-4). Adaptive measures represent a large number of interactions between agents that have their own "behavioral patterns", which change slowly and over a long period of time, which requires a complex effort based on the cultural specifics of each society (Niță and Ilie Goga 2017: p. 9).

The conclusions of the study conducted by Angeli and Montefusco reveal the need to focus the theoretical approach to knowing and understanding the complexity of the crisis generated by the pandemic. The learning process should be permanent and in parallel with measures to control the effects of the pandemic. New data must be collected and analyzed in order to regularly correct public policies, and the acceptance of weaknesses or ineffective measures must be taken into account at every stage of the pandemic.

The effects of a nonlinear phenomenon are due to the activation of some risks revealed by Angeli and Montefusco (2020: pp. 1-4):

- It must be borne in mind that political measures offer a local optimum and are valid for a certain period of time, there are substantial risks through which unexpected consequences or slight changes in the causes will be overturned by the decisions taken at a given time.
- Decision-makers need to be aware of the non-linear nature of immeasurable processes and intermediate situations that can have unpredictable and disproportionate consequences.
- The high dependence of the systems on the initial conditions and the behavior of the agents will make the results obtained in one area not repeatable in the same form in other areas, requiring corrections depending on the local specificity. Also, it should be taken into account the conflict risk between successful local policies with systemic objectives that involves national or international decision-making.
- The inherent complexity of decisions can generate, due to the different amplitude of the pandemic, situations of "guilt or shame". The mentality resulting will mask both the causes and the results. Thus, useful information will be excluded from their integration into pandemic control policies.

Control measures involve the collection of information at the international level, as the level of success of public policies is dependent on international cooperation in developing strategies with simultaneous applicability in several societies, beyond fragmented approaches.

3. Natural reservoirs of pathogens, viruses and bacteria: a continuing threat to the population

In the literature dedicated to knowing the risks of the spread of medical diseases among humans we find that there are many reservoirs of pathogens, viruses and bacteria on the planet (Bruinen de Bruin et. al. 2020: p. 1).

At the declarative level and of the national or international institutional structures, the biological risks that can have multiple causes due to the natural environment were revealed. Thus, some authors have reported the risks posed by climate change caused by melting glaciers. Climate change research shows that ice is one of the main repositories of pathogens (Smith et. al. 2004: pp. 560-566). Bacteria and fungi have been discovered in permafrost and ice, which signals the permanence of the risks of new epidemics or pandemics.

Another permanent threat comes from the practice of intensive and extensive agriculture that reduces the distance between humans and animals carrying dangerous viruses and bacteria, such as SARS, bird and swine flu, etc. (Mills et. al. 2010: pp. 1507-1514).

The permanent existence of natural or man-made threats implies the adoption of prevention and intervention measures if the risks materialize. But the reality revealed that the reaction force is different from state to state. The prioritization of public spending has ignored in many countries the prevention and creation of an infrastructure for epidemiological control. Thus, the response capacity is unequal, depending on the strength of each state or the investments made. The permanence of threats also implies a permanence of prevention measures and investments in infrastructure.

The experience of the coronavirus pandemic that humanity is currently going through shows that there are unforeseen risks. Although epidemiologists know the evolutionary dynamics and can calculate, even with a high margin of error, the dynamics of infections, there were no methods to block the multiplication of cases of coronavirus infection. This dynamic is ongoing in both developed and least developed countries. Differences remain in the quality of health care and the ability of developed countries to treat more patients, so that the rate of deaths and side effects is lower than in poor countries.

This is due to the impossibility of anticipating when natural reservoirs of pathogens and human activities will produce consequences. Also, the immediate severity and magnitude of the consequences cannot be identified. From this perspective we deduce the idea of including in the prevention activities some measures destined to dynamize the learning process simultaneously with the occurrence of the crisis and their development.

An analysis of the current situation summarizes some conclusions that must be taken into account: access to information, measures taken, the effects of the measures implemented is difficult. To this is added the fact that every day more and more research on the coronavirus pandemic appears. It is clear that the world was not prepared for such a challenge, and the response capacity is different in the countries of the world. Scientific activity was ignored and warnings were treated superficially. The effects appeared quickly in accordance with the factual situation (Bruinen de Bruin et. al. 2020: p. 7). We must not

forget that in many cases the lack of trust has been perpetuated and the virus has been considered a "simple cold".

There are also two categories of measures to be implemented: the first refers to restrictions on social distancing and the adoption of measures related to behavior change such as wearing a mask, frequent hand washing, banning public meetings with many participants, avoiding crowded places etc., and on the other hand, there is the second dimension, regarding the performance of the medical system. The onset of COVID-19 and its rapid spread, followed by devastating consequences due to the association with comorbidities and the high death rate, were due to a lack of adequate treatment and a vaccine that could have stopped the spread. Thus, first-class measures should help slow the spread of the infection until a vaccine and effective treatment are available.

The lack of public confidence in the measures taken and in the good intentions of the rulers is due to the confusion, contradictory communications and indecision of the rulers. It is recommended to develop coherent and well-oriented communication strategies to increase public confidence in the measures adopted (Bruinen de Bruin et. al. 2020: p. 7). Also, the intensification of international cooperation will have a beneficial effect on the measures adopted and their effectiveness (Bruinen de Bruin et. al. 2020: p. 7). In the sense of the cited paper, obtaining the involvement of citizens in compliance with the rules is an objective of the measures that will increase the efficiency of risk mitigation strategies.

It is noted that the most appropriate vision at this time is the result of the complementarity of the two categories of measures. The population will have to accept the temporary nature of the restrictions which will not directly contribute to the elimination of COVID-19, but only in combination with medical treatment and a future vaccine. But until the emergence of a vaccine that proves effective, this first category of measures is the one that helps to limit the disastrous effects on each society, public health and the economic system.

The permanence of threats involves public education on the measures that can be taken by accepting the idea by citizens: hand hygiene, wearing masks, social distancing, limiting social contacts to the bare necessities, responsible behavior when suspected of infection, non-dissemination of false information, verification of information received and the rational filtering of information received in terms of mature behavior are just a few examples of a number of factors that make citizens partners in public institutions and the health system in the transition period that will run until the discovery of effective treatment.

4. Can the costs of the coronavirus pandemic be calculated?

The economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic are serious and affect modern societies from a medical and economic point of view. Moreover, discouraging the population fueled insecurity and unleashed fears about the future. A number of economic activities were affected by the measures taken, unemployment increased and the difficulty of obtaining a job. As a result of the support measures, some of the employees received financial support during the period of unemployment imposed by quarantine, but the income obtained was lower, which means a reduction in the quality of life. Individual stress due to the uncertainty of the future and the prolongation of the pandemic for a long period of time also has consequences that in one way or another involve costs.

In the analyzes performed under the aegis of CEPS (Gros 2020: p.11) attention is drawn to the approaches taken in calculating the costs of the health crisis. Most of them are structured by sector and focused on certain areas considered a priority. However, the calculation of the impact on the economy and the need for investment implies a paradigm

shift in the calculation of the costs of treatments for those affected by COVID-19. The quoted source found that the emphasis was on the probable number of deaths that can be caused by the virus, although the calculation must include the medical costs of hospitalization. For the purposes of these statements, it should be noted that the economic balance achieved by the quarantine imposed by the authorities appears to have higher costs from an economic point of view than medical costs. In reality, this inequality is due to the non-inclusion in the calculation of all costs incurred with medical care. The uncontrolled spread of the virus would have increased medical costs to a much higher level than the economic losses generated by the restrictions imposed. Daniel Gros states that stopping the pandemic "is not only a matter of preventable deaths, but also a matter of saving resources".

Another study draws attention to the complication of the international situation by endangering national economies (Barua 2020), where demand and supply in equilibrium in the pre-pandemic period will become unbalanced by focusing on the purchase of essential products at the expense of non-essential ones. This orientation generated by the pandemic will have long-term consequences due to the fact that most international trade is based on non-essential products. As a result, the international markets will be reconfigured and the market shares held by different agents will change. New agreements, new barriers and blockages will most likely appear, national economies will be reconfigured by focusing on the domestic production of essential goods out of a desire to reduce dependence.

Currently, being in a period of pandemic development, we can calculate the costs incurred so far. The anticipation of future costs is based on estimates exposed to unpredictable dynamics of economic phenomena under the influence of the pandemic. The way in which international markets will be reconfigured and the costs of market changes cannot be estimated from now on, given the impossibility of anticipating the duration of the health crisis and the difficulty of including all medical costs in the economic balances. We are therefore on an uncertain ground, of estimates on several levels of costs, which have a strong character of quantifying the costs incurred, without controlling the variables that may generate costs in the future.

The magnitude of the economic consequences affects both the visible and the underground economy, with costs that are difficult to estimate and with a focus on support measures only for enterprises and employees in the official area. (Williams 2020). Especially in the service industry we are dealing with undeclared work, which is based on undeclared work, but which individually supports a category of population that manages to survive. In various ways, the undeclared industry is connected to the official one, it fulfills economic and social functions, and the financial flow is found in the declared economy. The impact of COVID-19 on these activities will exacerbate the negative consequences by increasing poverty and social vulnerability. This category includes activities performed in their own households, which can generate undeclared income such as those obtained from the sale of agricultural products, benefits performed even by people who have jobs, but who provide activities to supplement family income. Thus, people who currently have an income level that ensures their autonomy, will become vulnerable due to the impossibility of maintaining income sources. The future does not guarantee their return to the previous economic context, and this possibility will lead to an increase in the number of economically vulnerable people.

Studies on the economic consequences of the pandemic are currently recording the current situation. But the perpetuation of the pandemic forces the periodic updating of costs and the registration of this dynamic. Anticipating the total costs of the pandemic will really be possible when a time horizon emerges.

5. Conclusions

The scientific literature draws attention to the complexity of the pandemic that humanity is going through. Past experiences are not useful in developing effective strategies to combat COVID-19, which means that biological changes in sources of infection are varied, complex and difficult or even impossible to anticipate which creates the appearance of unique and unrepeatable phenomena, with consequences and treatment methods. The solution involves a learning process simultaneously with control and unrepeatable measures.

In the case of the current pandemic, the measures have been gradually applied and tightened as the population is contaminated, which indicates a reactive and non-reactive vision in relation to the pandemic. The recommendations began with simple ones, such as hand washing, wearing a mask and social distancing, followed by the application of harsher measures. But it was this slow implementation of COVID-19 control and control policies that allowed the pandemic to spread. The transmission of the infection is dependent on the establishment of biological conditions, and a brief review of the strategies and approaches of different states reveals that control measures are determined by political, economic and social, ideological considerations. Electoral cycles have played an important role in addressing the crisis, and in many cases the suffering of the population has been politicized in political interests. Fear, confusion and suspicion of the population have become factors generating public messages subsumed by the interests of different groups. The struggle between interest groups divided the population in many societies, generating an open conflict between the disciplined and the rebellious population, which assumed the risk of disease as a method of "anti-system" struggle. The duration and the feeling that the efforts so far have been in vain have contributed to the distrust of the population in the measures adopted. The undesirable economic effects of the pandemic have increased the level of fear and insecurity of many citizens who have felt unprotected and lack credible institutional benchmarks.

It is found that pandemic control strategies have been developed in society both through their own efforts and through imitation. Moreover, international collaboration has emerged in a much more visible way. The meaning of pandemic control policies tends to unite states in a global effort to limit and eradicate a global phenomenon. On the contrary, we are witnessing opposition to government measures, and the internationalization of control efforts generates protests in the spirit of localism, identity and individual freedom that, paradoxically, have the same specifics of internationalization and globalization of protests and suspicions.

From the above it is observed that a single phenomenon comprises the two perspectives of pandemic reporting: globalization.

Overcoming the paradox represented by the two facets of globalization involves the initiation of a general vision aimed at developing a process of learning to adapt to risks. For example, at present, until the discovery of the appropriate treatment and the vaccine that can stop the pandemic, we have the rules to control the contagion. The time needed for the emergence of medical solutions must be ensured as much as possible through alternative measures, even if they reverberate economically and socially.

The non-linear evolution of the pandemic makes it difficult for decision makers. The experience and knowledge that underlies the decision-making process is based on the linearity of the phenomena or their variability within limits that can be intuited. Instead, the current pandemic exceeds the limits of variability of a linear phenomenon, which involves, first of all, adapting to existing risks by learning the relationships between complex causes

and effects, given the assumption of a continuous learning process that will be models for future threats for humanity, whose specificity is that of uniqueness.

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Education for children and the new pandemic reality

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic impacts most on the well-being of families and children all over the world. The study analyses the main consequences on the Romanian educational system, also mirroring the long-lasting social and economic outcomes. Possible social protection measures are identified at the local, national and civil level, as immediate responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and for long-term recovery. A coordinated approach is needed to implement policies, programs and interventions for the poor and vulnerable, as well as marginalized groups. There is already a wide range of sectoral policies, programs and interventions aimed at reducing poverty and social exclusion, and the experience and tools needed to identify people and areas affected by poverty have been improved in the last years. The societal ideas, concepts, rules, policies have to change because our present and future changed. We now face another major humanitarian crisis: "We the Adults" (paraphrasing Kofi Annan's reference) now face the future of our Children and it will take a joined effort from all of us – from national governments, agencies and NGOs to local communities and caregivers. Promises are not enough, even the world has the necessary resources to back it up, unless the whole society will come together to secure a safe environment through special protection measures for Our Children.

Keywords: COVID-19; pandemic; children; vulnerability; Romanian educational system.

Hope is not enough to ensure peace, to bring a better world, to end starvation and poverty, to provide decent education for all children, or to prevent nuclear holocaust. Hope is not enough to end the pandemic threat. Hope is not enough to... Yet it is a critical starting point for building a better and brighter future. All of us are challenged to connect hope to action until we have created a mighty river that will carve a new path to the future. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's "We the Children", an essential reference for children's rights and future, anticipated in 2001, that "the pressing needs of children affected by the pandemic – who may have lost parents, become destitute or been left without access to school and health services – should be a priority on every agenda" (Annan 2001: p. 47).

The pandemic threat of COVID-19 disturbs the well-being of families and children all over the world. Due to the world-wide pandemic, the virus attacks not only individual's health, but also the economy, communities, social values and democracies. Furthermore, the new context generated by the pandemic also has consequences for family and social relationships. Children's physical health is the least directly affected by the virus. Indirectly, however, the virus leads to serious risks for children, which must be recognized, monitored and addressed.

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David Beasley, the head of the United Nations World Food Program, warns that over 270 million people are "marching to starvation" and that in some countries, famine is "on the horizon." The global effort to minimize the impact of coronavirus pandemic may not be enough as "2021 will be literally catastrophic, based on what we see at this stage of the game. That's because we spent \$ 19 trillion, the money may not be, and most likely won't be available by 2021" (WFP 2020). Meanwhile, UNICEF predicted in May that in 118 low- and middle-income countries, 1.2 million children under the age of five could die in the next six months due to limited access to health care. A study by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health reveals that, "if routine health care is disrupted and access to food is decreased (as a result of unavoidable shocks, health system collapse, or intentional choices made in responding to the pandemic), the increase in child and maternal deaths will be devastating" (Robertson, T., Carter, E. D., Chou, V. B. et al. 2020).

The last century included three influenza viruses that caused major pandemics: the 1918 "Spanish flu" was the most deadly causing the death of up to 50 million people, while the 1957 "Hong Kong" viruses caused, individually, 2 million and 1 million related deaths. The statistics indicate that infants, young children and adolescents are "populations uniquely affected by influenza pandemics" (Griffiths, Maguire, Heggenhougen, et. al. 2010: p. 398), although they seem to be the least directly affected by the 2020's COVID-19 virus.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) provides for an ample directory of rights for children across the range and includes social, economic, cultural, civil and political rights. It also provides that children's best interests are to be a primary consideration for policy and decision maker and that the evolving capacity of children must also be factored into law and policy (Freeman 1996: p. 93).

Romania's children are among the most vulnerable citizens, both because they cannot exercise their rights autonomously, but also because of the social and economic conditions they live in as the social group with the highest rates of absolute risk of poverty.

Children depend on adults who care for them and who are responsible for them. As children growing up in poor households will cope in the future with a higher risk of poverty, to break the circle, the government must adopt programs that target both child poverty and poverty of adults in a household. Especially in the case of children facing persistent poverty and Roma children, the different dimensions of exclusion are generally interconnected and perpetuated from one generation to another. The circle of exclusion is perpetuated when low levels of education and poor health seriously limit the chances of access to the labour market for the next generation of children. Breaking the circle of poverty and exclusion will require targeted interventions to eliminate the multiple causes of inequality (Goian and Breaz 2020).

As the pandemic and economic crises deepen, children are even more at risk: social inequalities and discrimination become stronger, the risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation increases, and so does the risk of separating children from their families due to poverty.

The Romanian rural environment does not offer the security of the future: with the closure of schools, most children do not have access to education due to the lack of devices and favourable study conditions. There are also many families living in one room, without access to a heating system or running water, without hygiene measures and all these elements represent an inappropriate environment for children. In the last year, the reality of many people has changed dramatically. Many of us are adapting to the new reality, but according to Diana Podaru, general manager of SOS Children's Villages Romania, "for

hundreds of thousands of children, the new normal means less warm meals or less wood for the fire, it means to be completely separated from the educational system and more isolated than ever before” (SOS Satele Copiilor România 2020).

Education, as a fundamental component of modern society, is essential for child development and the prosperity of society and, at the individual level, is conceived as a key means for children to advance themselves (UNICEF 2009).

The COVID-19 pandemic increases the risks for Romania’s vulnerable children and their families by limited access to social services, inequalities in access to education, poverty, according to a report by UNICEF in Romania in partnership with Step by Step Center for Education and Professional Development, Terre des Hommes, the Center for Health Policy and Services and the Council for Institutionalized Youth (2020). The categories most affected by COVID-19 prevention measures are:

- children from families living in poverty;
- Roma children (limited circulation reduced the income of Roma families);
- children whose parents have gone to work abroad;
- children living in overcrowded housing;
- children with disabilities and the elderly, affected by the reduction of the activity of family doctors in communities, but also by the decrease of social contacts (UNICEF 2020).

The report also highlights that the COVID-19 crisis affected the provision of medical services in local communities, especially in the component of services provided in family medicine practices. The report recommends better involvement of family medicine staff in the community, in conjunction with the development of complementary telemedicine services; increasing cooperation between medical staff, social workers and other categories of administrative staff. The online teaching increases the inequalities in access to education for children from disadvantaged families, who do not always manage to provide the necessary technological equipment, nor do they have access to the Internet.

The solution could be to implement programs for the distribution of free electronic equipment or to facilitate their purchase at subsidized prices for children from low-income families, as well as to provide this equipment for teachers. Recommendations also include the development of a national distance education plan, including online teaching, and the creation of support networks between parents, children and teachers to support compensating for existing inequalities in the use of electronic means in education (Breaz 2020)

The issues social services confront include reducing or even suspending the activity of day centres and limiting the mobility of workers in the field, especially in view of the lack of adequate protective materials. Possible solutions include the provision of appropriate equipment to existing staff, in particular protective materials; implementing a strategy of detailed procedures for the provision of social services and special protection services (UNICEF 2020).

The essential importance of education on a child’s life outreaches the individual level, playing a significant role in securing sustainable development and contributing to the development of human capital and social foundations (Heymann, Sherr and Kidman 2012: p. 95). Because of COVID-19 related disability, the already stressed Romanian educational system includes a large proportion of unproductive workforce and lacks efficiency and quality (Breaz 2019).

The traumas caused by COVID-19 reflect on the main aspects of life from financial pressures on families, the impact of the closure of services on children’s lives, to

the inequality of online education, with devastating threats and outcomes for every child, adult or senior (Resource Centre 2020: p. 5). The reach of the pandemic in Romania produced cascading consequences on the communities and on individual level, also mirrored by the long-lasting social and economic outcomes:

- **the financial effects on families:** the economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic affects families with children who are already struggling financially, due to temporary or permanently unemployment or reduced work schedule. In Romania, many families have suddenly found themselves in economic crisis; it is estimated that “between March and May 2020, more than 1 million employment contracts were suspended (595.672) or terminated (429.585)” (Resource Centre 2020: p. 5) increasing the risk of poverty or social exclusion among children.

- **the closure of services:** the capacity of healthcare services to support and assist children, including primary health care, have been dramatically reduced since numerous hospitals were closed or “reduced their scheduled admissions by 50-80%” (Resource Centre, 2020, p. 5). Furthermore, the lack of personal protective equipment for the medical personnel, including family doctors, led to a decrease of medical consultations, inability to purchase medicines, or even no access to a physician.

- **the school closure and online education inequality:** no school, no equal ability to participate in online education. A study conducted by the Romanian Institute of Evaluation and Strategy (IRES) in April 2020 indicates that the number of students without access or with limited access to laptop, tablet or desktop is over 900,000, 3.6 times higher than the evaluation of the Romanian Ministry of Education (EduPedu 2020). Furthermore, the research indicates the following conclusions:

- 32% of children attending the pre-university education in Romania do not have individual access to a specific functional device (i.e. laptop, tablet, desktop) for online schooling;

- 12% of children in Romania do not have a powerful enough internet connection to be able to support online courses;

- More than a ¼ parents who do not have a device for every child they can use for online school, would not pay at all to purchase such equipment;

- Only two-thirds of parents said that during the emergency period, online lessons were taught daily;

- Only 50% pupils had contact with teachers for all subjects during the state of emergency;

- More than a 1/4 of Romanian pupils spent at least 4 hours a day doing homework during emergency period;

- Over 1/4 of parents considers their child receives little or no support from teachers during emergency period;

- Almost 4 out of 10 parents spend time with their children in order to support them with learning activities for 3 hours or more during a day.

Furthermore, an additional effect of schools' closure was that poorer children, who had been receiving meals at school, now find themselves without this supply of daily nutrition (Resource Centre, 2020, p. 5).

Thus, initiating and implementing the proper social protection measures by the local and national authorities, as well as the civil society, play a crucial role in facilitating educational adaptation mechanisms for the poor and vulnerable children and their families as immediate response to the COVID-19 pandemic and for long-term recovery, as specified in Table no. 1, based on the studied references:

Table no. 1. Potential instant and long-term response for local and national authorities and civil societies

Instant Response	Long-Term Response
<p>1. for local authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing low-income families with food, based on an assessment of the consequences of COVID-19 on the family situation (disposable income, support network, etc.); - Providing personal protective equipment to prevent COVID-19 infection; - Organizing tutoring classes for children from families who did not have access to online education by teachers in educational institutions; - Prioritizing the enrolment in kindergarten of children from single-parent families and those with many children; - Providing children with equipment (laptop, computer, tablet) to give them access to online education; - Implementation of case management adjusted to the COVID period, in compliance with protection measures; 	<p>1. for local authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of an emergency fund for crisis/emergency situations for emergency control and assistance to the most vulnerable families during exceptional situations; - Mapping and evaluation of families with associated vulnerability factors (number of children, type of family, income level, health status, etc.) in order to distribute material aid as a priority, in conditions of limited resources; - Resuming the process of providing social and educational services access that was limited by the pandemic, e.g. rehabilitation services, day services, educational services;
<p>2. for national authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of financial resources for emergency interventions; - Elaboration of methodological records for the employees of the social, medical and educational assistance system in order to ensure a coherent and effective approach during the pandemic and to avoid loss of time; - Development of an action plan to reduce the negative impact of COVID-19; - Providing teachers with the necessary equipment and internet access in the online training process; 	<p>2. for national authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regulation of the psychological assistance and counselling service for children and adults, affected by the trauma caused by isolation, loss of income and danger to health; - Teacher training for providing quality online educational services; - Providing children from vulnerable families with the necessary equipment for online education and internet access;
<p>3. for civil society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinating efforts (i.e. planning, consultation), ensuring a 	<p>3. for civil society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adjusting intervention plans to integrate COVID-19 prevention

<p>coherent approach and avoiding duplication of effort;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of financial resources for the assistance of families affected by COVID-19 in order to overcome the negative consequences; - Assistance to families in crisis, based on the needs assessment and in terms of available financial resources; 	<p>actions and mitigate the consequences of the pandemic on the most vulnerable children and families with children;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of new programs (i.e. psychological assistance for families and children affected by trauma); - Initiation of the process of collecting financial resources to support families affected by COVID-19.
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Sources: Resource Centre 2020; UNICEF 2020; EduPedu.ro 2020.

Worldwide research on the impact of COVID-19 on children's education is vital today because education is a primary strategy for protecting children and securing their future. Further research are to be conducted with the primary objective of documenting interventions that show some promise of helping children achieve their educational goals. Case studies are to be analysed and possible solutions are to be emphasized to point to future good practice.

A coordinated approach is needed to implement policies, programs and interventions for the poor and vulnerable, as well as marginalized groups. There is already a wide range of sectoral policies, programs and interventions aimed at reducing poverty and social exclusion, and the experience and tools needed to identify people and areas affected by poverty have been improved in the last years.

The key ingredient that is missing is coordinating these policies, programs and interventions. Researchers all over the world already indicate the negative effects of COVID-19 along with the unprecedented actions to contain it, on every individual.

The societal ideas, concepts, rules, policies have to change because our present and future changed. We now face another major humanitarian crisis: "We the Adults" (paraphrasing Kofi Annan's reference) now face the future of our Children and it will take a joined effort from all of us – from national governments, agencies and NGOs to local communities and caregivers. Promises are not enough, even the world has the necessary resources to back it up, unless the whole society will come together to secure a safe environment through special protection measures for Our Children.

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Migration recollections - memory lines at the border

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Abstract

Memory implies both continuity and change, the stable frame of location, but also the process of change and dislocation. Such transition is particularly relevant for approaches in migration memory - they require understanding of context and meaning for identity in bearing the distance between locations (origin and host societies) and in securing purpose of destination in order to achieve continuity, in two dimensions, identity of origin and identity of becoming (or new belonging) which need to be simultaneously accommodated and integrated. By agency of migrants and conditions and regulations of access into receiving societies, these dimensions are markedly connected at the border. Borders are found along the path of displacement, transition and orientation. Whether reception policies include cultural awareness or civic education approaches, strict vetting or a whole range inbetween, the transition needs to be documented and governed also from the perspective of the migrant. A memory which is uprooted from its initial location or migrating to a new environment needs aids to support coherence for identity. The way in which migration and its transition process are realized and managed leaves a defining imprint on the mode the migrants represent and commit the change to memory; both the image of the transition and the idea of a future destination (aspirations, ideals) are mapped into memory next to the embedded initial location. Society of origin and host society are both locations of memory; at the moment of transition, the former lies with self experience, the latter with a projected dimension of self. Borders are sites of memory, but of memories divided: polity memory and migrant memory. The role of any integration policy is to allow and make them meet purposefully, and not to widen the gap between them.

Keywords: *International migration; borders; memory; change of displacement.*

1. Migration and Memory - association in the transition from dislocation to integration

Migration, inasmuch as memory also adjoins such references, is linked to placement, change and displacement. “Memory is where we have arrived rather than where we have left” (Creet 2010: p. 6); memory and migration together bring to the fore borders, cultural values and practices, experiences of sharing and belonging, difference in particularism and universalism, and strategies of resistance in the negotiation and reinterpretation of the past. Memory is in a perpetual dynamic of construction and reconstruction, of past and present, of inclusion and exclusion providing “continuity to the dislocations of individual and social identity” (Creet 2010: p. 3). Collective memories, and especially migrant memory, require milestones and orientation to navigate distances.

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The contents of memory are measured by distance and fixity, its meaning by movement, transition itself, in conditions of the (recent) present rather than distant past. The point of origin is not forgotten, but it is just one end of the time covered by memory and becoming secondary in actuality, due to current orientation. Places can be stable geographies and sites of memory, symbols constancy, but also temporally and spatially relational for the phenomena of memory, generating “one *here*” and “many *there*” in relation (Ricoeur 2004: p. 40). The collective memory body, individuals and communities, bear memory of relation to place. In terms of its mechanisms, memory is triggered by change, by movement across distance between places or between two seemingly stable referential, ‘anchoring’ states, retrospect to actuality, selective to defining.

Social environment (context and structure) can be considered as precondition of collective memory by which the deictics of time-space relationship are governed (Halbwachs 1992). Nevertheless, place and collective memory are co-constitutive and mutually (re-)producing, overlapping imagined and actual, foci with loci and topos, as place imprints community identity, and community, in order to preserve itself, recalls place and bears it with, living in this space of memory and delivering its meaning. Individual memory, in seeking belonging-identity bonds is fed by historical culture which disseminates into consciousness as patterned guidelines for orientation between various milieus which vie for priority in one’s actuality reference (Rüsen 2005). Belonging is implicit at the same time for all dimensions of identity and anchors of memory, yet consciousness operates with all from the present perspective only, which allows to select and deselect as if with options, paths which connect *there-here-there*, past to future, spatially and community-wise. This process of awareness renders a difference between affection-evocation (recollection) and representation-search (recall) dimensions of memory, and change the logical order between memory and location - it is not only location that makes an impact on memory (memory-making/shaping location), but also memory making an impact on location (location-representing/shaping memory), defining relations of *lieux de mémoire* (Nora 1989). This may be an argument for historical consciousness which involves an individual competence to orientate oneself in space and time, by aiming to understand change in order to preserve continuity of identity and by saving the distinctiveness of prior-post states in order not to overwrite memory into a state of incoherence which would remove continuity and the sense of time and space; continuity cannot supersede change either, they should be treated rather as co-constitutive, than mutually exclusive (Rüsen 2004: p. 72). The moral imperative felt to be imposed by the past adds to a meaningful interdependence between past, present, and future which allows individuals to contextualize their identity – a way to translate the past into the present for the future, for the construction of meaning, social reproduction or transformation and negotiation of personal and collective identities, temporal orientation and agency (Seixas 2006). Representing the past and the evaluation of the present commitments justify a normative coordinate for action and indicate a direction of change or a sense of continuity. Perspectives are influenced by context and express social conditions and relationships that exercise moral obligations on the individual in making decisions, in that the values reflect the logic of their situation in the social order. The reciprocity of values and actuality is realized through historical consciousness, in order to understand what contexts are related: the future is connected to the past from the perspective of the present; history causes moral values to be integrated into a past-present-future continuum, and historical consciousness assures their validity over time making it possible for the present realities, ‘what is’, to be meaning-bearing in relation to values, with ‘what ought to be’ and this is how historical

consciousness relates the values to the actuality and situation, and the morality to the action (Rüsen 2004: pp. 64-85).

Connections in interpretations of the past, understanding of the present, and perspective on the future, are thus encoded in historical culture. Historical culture describes how historical meaning is constructed and maintained on a societal level; it is dynamic and it shapes individuals' historical consciousnesses through socialisation of historical knowledge. Historical culture is always a matter of negotiation between competing historical cultures and ways of interpreting history (Bruner 2005). Historical culture tends to steer historical consciousness to function in a rather traditional template, by which there is unquestionable moral obligation toward the institutions of the polity, since identity is derived from their narrative and authority. Memory itself displays a condition of migration, shifting and shaping, since it is institutionalised and thus grounded into a social environment in order to be perpetually passed on and re-enacted. Memories of migration actively build frames for the relation between dislocation and orientation.

Several scenarios may apply depending on the motive that triggers migration (forced, aspirational, asylum) in defining a particular type of relation between migration and orientation. A rather general framework can be briefly described here. The change that is displacement marks a breakaway, in migrant perception and orientation, from the repetitiveness ordered in a recognized and legitimized value system at the origin. Commitment toward it and proof of its actuality undergo a challenge in testing the validity of the meanings of past practices which were permanent benchmarks, as pre-established consent and founding acts for social collectivities and their cohesion in the face of alterity. Historical identity of the individual does not completely fade out with displacement, nor does it remain quite the same afterwards. Historical identity is defined by the assertion of cultural models of self-understanding established previously - the construction of the identity originates in a process of assuming roles and active orientation. The stability and reasons of the order of morality itself and its values are no longer undeniable since the transition to a new social environment has that permanence removed. Guidance by cultural tradition is faced with new rules, while past events and abstract ideas that carried significance and correspondence for behaviour are met with new, different social contexts and instances. Rules may show what needs to happen but only rarely how that can be applied from the point of view of the migrant and for the actual state and situation of the migrant, who is expected to navigate differences and bridge the significance shifts until the morality of a culturally integrated value system in a new social life is revealed, while embodying their entanglement in orderly and principled conduct. Conversely, migrant attitudes toward distant and recent past as well as society of origin may be those of rejection; obligations are no longer recognized, because the relevance of past commitments is no longer present and there is aim for new forms and significances of practice, with focus on alternatives, deviations from the past, in problematizing social relations and present value systems. In this case, linking the past to the present and the future is deconstructed in the sense of a detachment from the past, a disruption of continuity, as it decouples the future orientation from the past environment. There is delimitation to pre-established course and an opposition to it, by taking a distinct historical position, a rejection of predetermined roles and previous referential modes of self-understanding - predefined roles are no longer assumed, but new roles are built together with the identity and in contrast to conventions valid in the past. Different conditions and contexts prompt other types of behaviors and seem to justify cultural relativism when confronted with the particularities of otherness and specificity in social relations; a rationale of intentional

forgetting toward a particular social past may seem convenient for integration, yet its *tabula rasa* approach is arguably as imbalanced in sense-making processes and identity-building as is radicalisation on the foundations of an exclusive past of reference. This is precisely why understanding and interpreting the past are paramount and at the center of change itself, with application for migration as well. Historical narratives are accepted, but transposed into a different framework of interpretation in which commitments to past events may change and also take the form of a new morality, lost validities are replaced with new ones, behaviors change, and change gives meaning to history. The past is not disputed, the historical narrative becomes part of the past, and the future takes another course. Historical memory is centered on the representation of the perception of the past through transformations, changes that generate new forms of social life. The emerging model is that of development, in which all forms of social life change in order to survive, and become dynamic. Different historical positions are mutually acceptable and recognized and can be reconciled, beyond host-origin and citizen-migrant distinctions. The individual represents a crossroads of temporalities, in continuous identity construction and labour in the organization of memory, as a prerequisite for association with collective identities, struggling against ambiguity and relational uncertainty.

2. Borders meet Memory - new sites of orientation

Place is given meaning by memory, memory recollects it and thus place feeds all memories connecting to the meaning of the place. There is a process of sense-making and purpose involved in the memory - place relation. Yet there is no singularity of a memory in relation to a place, but rather multiplicity, diversity. A divisive event marking a place, such as a battlefield in a war, the outcome of which carries different effects for the parties involved and for the memory and identity of their national collectives, bears reference as powerful as fact into the future; also, if the border is such a place, it is feeding two different collective memories, with inward and outward purpose.

As collective representations, borders can play an essential role in the process of creating fixed moral values: they mark the area with a permanent foundation and durable trace, shaping collective memory, deriving sense of belonging as well as substantial identity. For within borders polity members, the border is reminiscent of a protective barrier for shared specific values, protection of an achievement; for migrants, it is an obstacle to their destination, precluding achievement. The memory of the place meets the purpose of remembering the place. The point of origin is a place committed to memory in the migration process and it remains so well after a new place supersedes its priority in actuality by orientation. But the relation between places endures because there is purpose to the transition. Memory is fluid, and history is produced by distance but also existing conditions, events and facts, both indicating attachment to static/stable as well as dynamic frames. Stability of place is resonant with the long memories and histories of nations, especially those replacing integration with assimilation, thus 'freezing' a particular evolution frame of identity. Polity commitment in defining borders lies with the community and its historical culture, which is a self-reflection in the absence of moral ties or obligations outward of it, toward migrants. Historical culture is guided by collective memory, yet it is rarely connected through policy to migration memory - this can be addressed in answering if migration policy is guided by pluralistic narratives of migration. Border enforcing control policies vary, with a level of access which ranges from open to closed entry: unrestricted (free movement); promotional; permissive; selective; and prohibited (Fielding 1993: p. 44). The diversity of approaches reveals multiple logics and

strategies in defining border and entry conditions, which indicates that migration, nowadays, is acknowledged in many forms, yet attention to and recognition of memories and identity of migrants seems to play a lesser part for the historical culture of receiving polities.

Not only the space delineated by borders, but borders themselves and the distance between them are *lieux de mémoire* of symbolic constancy. They correspond to the borders of migration memory and they can be co-created as markers of change in the way of continuity. What is remembered with migration memory? Dislocation, distance itself and the experience of the border. How is it remembered? Cultural memory or new socialisation and political institutionalisation, by shift between origin and destination. By whom is migration remembered? Migrants remember as carriers, but also host community, either through shared practices or through policy, in the way their society changes with migrant incorporation. Should migration memory be accommodated? A simple reason for a positive answer is that it feeds into polity cultural history, memory and institutions. Memory in relation to history is not only the political and institutional framing of the past, organizing referential practices that give meaning to the polity “way of life”, given a fixation to place. Memory is projective/constructive (not limited to retrospect and narratives of commemorative sites) since it carries building blocks of sense-making and orientation. The moving away from an original place of memory does not only produce history, and certainly does not erase the memory of that place. The memory of the individual may be in agency of the place memory, yet it can easily manage distance from it and also autonomy.

The interpretation and institutionalization of the past compete in the discursive nature of the interactions of social groups and in the formation of the political culture of a community. Memory and historical consciousness reveal ways we connect with, commemorate and contest the past (Wertsch 2004; Olick 2003; Halbwachs 1992; Rüsen 2012; Ahonen 2012; Megill 1994). Migration memory plays an important part in the cultural heritage of any polity. In the varied context of ‘politics of incorporation’, memory migration is institutionalised to project the possibility of experienced conjunction of different histories and constitutive realities into a shared social place. The challenge therein lies with the ‘negotiation’ of various identities and ideologies, converging or diverging as they travel along self-referential temporal lines, back to the past and forth into the future of the communities and polity. Cultures and identities are dynamic sets, they change over time and adapt to circumstances. They are also complex wholes, encompassing heterogeneous components, knowledge and information accumulated by collective experience. They have cohesion, adaptability, and evolutionary features, based on internal organization, the identification of members with the whole community, and attitudes that shape or define a community against other communities. As a result, the collective memory of the polity bears an aggregate function since it is continuously informed by additional elements and new experiences - it stabilizes a perspective on polity identity with its temporal linkages and underlying moral structure which guides polity members resort in their orientation and action toward change. The polity is a relational space in which communities develop belonging, adaptability is mutual in processes of representation and reconstruction, by means of the identity - collective memory nexus of orientation and historical consciousness. Migration memory provides resources for the polity to record its own adaptation to change, in relation to other polities, allowing communities to influence it by shaping their own images, perceptions, norms, and attitudes thus creating a sense of belonging (Bitsani 2016). Therefore, migration memory

institutionalisation is a framework for collecting, conveying and reflecting meanings of change, in a significant connection between migration memory and identitarian collective memory of the polity.

At the border, migrants' past and relationship with past is evaluated; the evaluation itself also reflects polity relation to past, commitments, engagement and orientation, a dimension of which are its borders. Migration governance today shall be re-interpreted in the future based on different past frames and informed by developments up to that time when border practices no longer treat migration as a contested process in which it appears to be at odds with identity security. Vetting procedures enstated by immigration laws include testimonials of migration in terms of place and identity; based on one's narrative ability to make these `key` logical connections, border administration determine if a migrant is showing `good faith` or needs to be deported - the accounts deemed credible are evaluated *against* national identity memory wherein borders are embedded and enforced to control mobility and prevent immigration. It can be claimed that the national community is itself redefined in the vetting process since belonging is negotiated between memory and migration, while narrative coherence is established on a particular set of moral and political values which justify the decision. Collective memory, which is highly contested, and historical culture, which is highly institutionalised to serve national ends, in this case, can dictate an outbound course of individual memory. However, exclusion need not be the only outcome - vetting is just one of the processes defining border sites, and a zero-sum game at that; memory making is also at stake, presenting a genuine opportunity that memories partaking of distinct narratives become relational. The process can involve mutual learning and incorporation, reciprocity and accommodation. A variety of strategies of memory sharing can be employed, from access to other testimonials to narrative inclusion in border museums of migration as memory-structured and shaped spaces (especially helpful for those driven into forced migration, refugees who experience disorientation with change). This preliminary step is still located at the site of the border and part of the border experience, and an example of memory making which is not necessarily inclusive and still highly representative of the historical and political memory of the national identity with a defining meta-narrative of normative character. There is a border-produced community of memory and it is polity decision to open it toward migrants and their memory, and choice on what is remembered in this interaction of memories of displacement and solidarity, as an antechamber (rather than void or negative space) for the potential incorporation of migrants. This, in turn, shall define the receiving society as bearing an ethics of caring made up of a two-fold responsibility, to protect/shelter and to record its changes of recent history and its orientation in relation to such changes, an "ethics of memory" (Margalit 2002). Historical consciousness is a process by which distinct narratives connect to make up a larger framework of reference (border purpose meets migration experience to create border memory) - migrant memory is not to be upheld as a mere counter narrative to the border narrative.

The present condition of migration waves is symbolic of a collective memory in progress within which, while distinct and maintaining particularism of experience interpretation, one memory cannot define and fix the process without the others. The border, with its own memory community, acts as a threshold between memories rather than as an obstruction, a gateway state of liminality between communities and identities facilitating learning and orientation rather than forgetting, and a beacon for historical consciousness bridging distances of place, time and narrative. The border can work in a different way than that of conveying a cultural and political device of pre-emptive

memory, disabling others and their meanings - it too can accommodate collective memory creation, outward of its community of origin yet inward of its orientation ethic. This marks the transition from self-reproducing to self-updating memory community, where change is acknowledged and relational considerations are central for its own development. All pasts are present at the border and collectively shape border value, meaning for a shared memory; counter to border memory is forgetting as reason for or consequence of migration. Border memory is also a site of re-construction, not a mere repository, in the sense that recall is an ethical action in developing values - it travels through communities and their temporalities. Shared memory mitigates uncertainty in border communities, polity and migrants.

3. In lieu of conclusions

Memory and identity migrate, glocalize, transform and multiply over temporal and spatial dimensions. Memory and migration form a continuum of flows of people and ideas reshape the sense of belonging. Migration is inextricably linked to the presence or absence of borders and belonging to a community or departing from it. Borders are polity delimitations, contours of community projected identity, constructs emanating from a collective, cultural memory of shared value systems and practices. In this sense, borders are protective of authentic, unique forms of life, an institutionalized and thus political form of memory which encodes key meanings associated to principles in ordering the society, while migration presents a perceived challenge to the preservation of their historical culture. These meanings helped shape borders; nevertheless, borders can be redefined as the polity becomes a memory hub involved in shared meaning-making. Borders are sites of memory where individual, communicative (group) and cultural memories interact, if borders are sites of facilitation through solidarity.

Migrants certainly hold cultural values, carry a memory of social environment as context for their identity, and the experience of a national narrative of institutionalised forms of life, which may or not be characterized as agency in relation to destination deployed practices, and there is awareness of change. However, they may or may not have developed historical consciousness prior to or during dislocation, their values (deriving from collective memory) may or may not be perceived as agency functions since migration may be caused by a breakaway from their legacy, and their identity is subjected to the circumstances of change which are open-ended toward receiving polity decision-making. Borders are already sites of memory, of memories divided. Yet borders can be redefined as milieux, and memories, both of migrants and receiving polity, can be institutionalized in a shared framework, centred on change (while change is memorialized and placed by orientation) a process which is essentially political. Border policies (as policies of control) establish procedural rule and principle of moral reasoning and govern its effects on the relationship between polity and migrants, setting up an environment of obligations and duties to be upheld (the contents of which can be responsible, context-sensitive practice in migration governance). Solidarity borders apply to both moral worth of gaining a new memory dimension for polities within borders and facilitating migrant competence in historical consciousness, with the shared result of a mutually constructed memory out of the exchange of their contingencies.

Migration policies involve interpretations of change and challenges in the environment and at its borders, of actuality in terms of moral obligation validity and social values practice continuation, and are based on interpretations of past experience, present understanding of conditions, and orientation toward purposes. If the historical culture of

the polity is rather closed to change, policies are not converging in the site of memory - borders are a confusing experience for migrants and this is the reason why they should be facility rather than obstruction to memory.

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Mapping integration. Understanding immigration

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Abstract

Each historical period was confronted with population movements across territories, displacements that were not always peaceful. Nowadays, peoples' positioning in a certain area and the movements between territories are related to concepts as nation, country, citizenship, and migration, all performing within a given formal framework. Besides this preestablished setting, a series of soft, cultural aspects, individual abilities, beliefs systems, attitudes, perceptions, values, all together shape such issues regarding both emigration and immigration.

When analyzing migratory flows, Romania can be clearly defined as an emigration country, after the revolution of 1989. Nevertheless, a phenomenon started to gain terrain in the last years, as more people, from diversifying countries are coming to Romania. Immigration could be seen as bringing both advantages and disadvantages, challenges and opportunities to the host country, thus both facets of the coin must be addressed. Therefore, the core concept when discussing immigration is “integration”, as a smooth and successful immigrant integration process brings gains for the receiving country (brain gain, counterbalancing the demographic decline or the lack of workforce, contributions to the national budget, for example) and for the immigrants also.

Considering the above-mentioned issues this paper aims to provide a theoretical framework that fosters immigrants' integration measuring and understanding. Thus, integration levels and dimensions are presented, doubled by an analysis of the factors that can determine or moderate integration.

Keywords: *immigration; integration; integration dimensions; attitudes towards immigrants.*

1. The Context

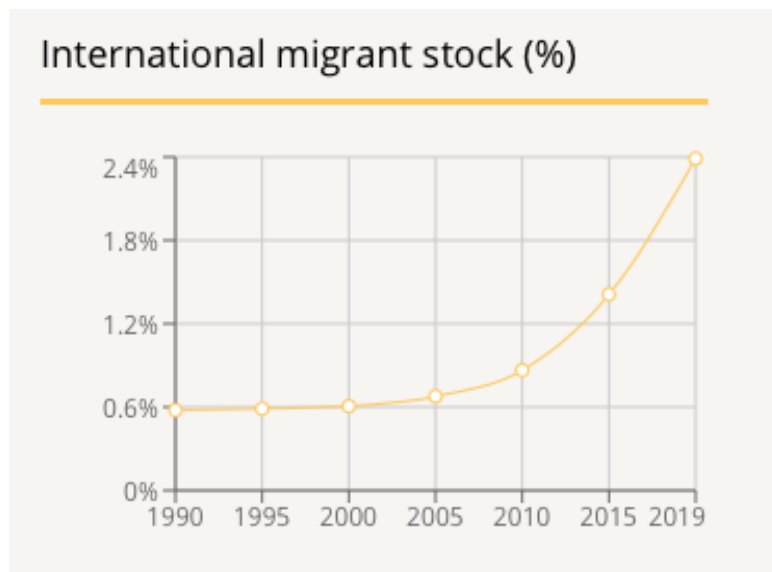
For the last 30 years, Romania was mostly defined as an emigration country. Official data show us that over three and a half million Romanians lived abroad for periods longer than six months (UN DESA 2017). This phenomenon was largely and extensively analyzed in the scholarly literature or debated in press, as it impacts labor market, demography, family life and other important sectors (Ilie Goga 2020; Porumbescu 2019a; Coșciug 2018; Anghel and Coșciug 2017). Brain drain, depopulation of rural areas, population aging, lack

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of qualified labor force, reduced contributions to the national budget, are among the most frequently mentioned consequences of Romanians` emigration.

Nevertheless, migratory flows are permanently changing, and immigration becomes an actual phenomenon for Romania also. Furthermore, it should be noted that “the developments in the field of international human migration, along with the new regulations Romania needed to follow as member of the European Union enrolled this country in the list of states that also receive various types of migrants, including refugees” (Porumbescu 2019b: p. 57). Recent statistics show us that more than two percent of the Romanian population consists of foreign citizens. What is worth to be mentioned here is the accelerated increase of immigrants` proportion in the last five years from 0.6% in 2005, to 2.4% in 2019, as visible in Figure no. 1.

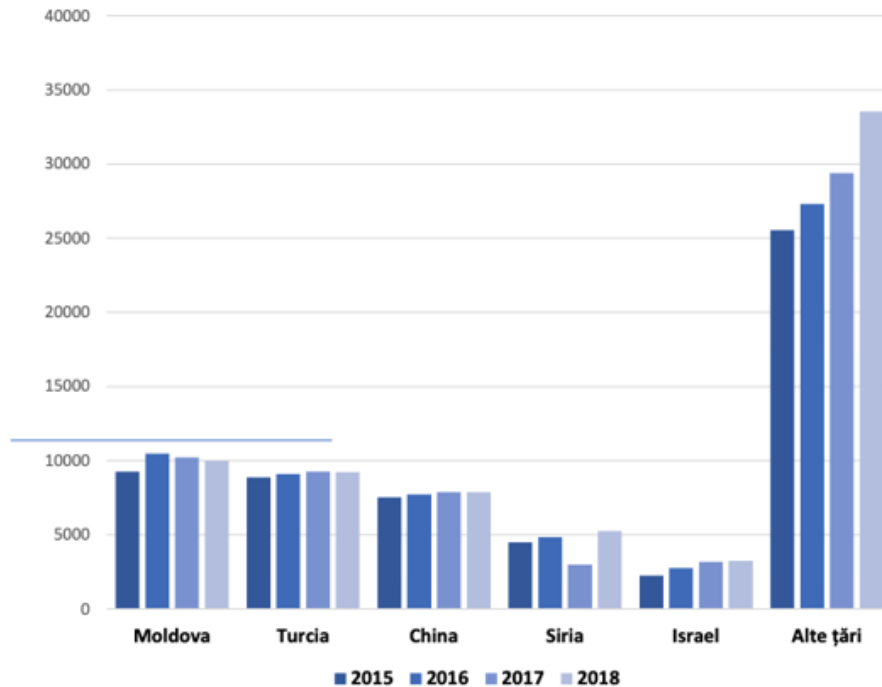
Figure no. 1: International migrant stock as a percentage of the total population at mid-year 2019 for Romania



Source: UN DESA (2019) “International migrant stock as a percentage of the total population at mid-year 2019”

Furthermore, we can see immigration towards Romania as a diversifying process looking at the countries where the immigrants come from or the reasons for choosing Romania. The first three main reasons when asking for permits are, in a descending hierarchy the followings: work, study and family reunification. The next figure presents a comparative longitudinal perspective regarding the main origin countries – Moldova, Turkey, China, Syria, and Israel, together with other countries, whose share is increasing between 2015-2018.

Figure 2: Main countries of origin for immigrants



Source: Romanian Immigrants Integration Index 2019

At the same time, Romania is also considered a country of transit for the illegal immigrants, as asylum seekers may be. Previous works draw attention on the fact that “field data analyses reveal the fact that Romania is being used as a space of transit for illegal immigration towards more developed western European states. A characteristic of the phenomenon of illegal immigration in the Romanian territory is represented by its bipolarity: on the one hand, illegal immigration of third countries nationals coming, mostly, from the countries that also represent the share in legal migration (Moldavia, Turkey, China). This category is characterized by certain continuity and by “conventional” illegal immigration methods, represented by the exceeding of the sitting period granted by the visa or the resident permit (Porumbescu, 2019a: p. 41)”. The same author addresses migratory flows towards Romania that are a result of war context defining the Middle East area: “on the other hand, there are the temporary illegal immigration flows caused by social and economic events in the countries of origin, representing “new waves” of immigration” (Idem).

2. Theoretical framework

Immigrants` integration could be understood as a medium - long term process that is shaped by individual aspects and country level factors. Harder and collaborators (2018: p. 11484) defined integration as “the degree to which immigrants have the knowledge and capacity to build a successful fulfilling life in the host society”. They emphasize later the differences between integration and assimilation, which brings a greater adherence to the

host country culture, to the detriment of the origin country cultural norms (Idem: p.11484). While Harder's view addresses integration from an individual perspective, the country-level aspects also shape integration through culture (attitudes, beliefs, values, cultural norms) and structure (institutional factors, public actors, stake holders, policies).

Therefore, in the following section, trying to understand integration, both individual characteristics and country level factors will be addressed. Thus, the individual level is understood from the perspective of Harder and collaborators regarding the six dimensions of integration, reuniting both knowledge and capacity.

Regarding the country-level factors, the structural aspects are translated into policies regarding immigration and institutional actors involved, while the cultural component is portrayed by the locals' attitudes towards immigration.

Successful immigrant integration is targeted at various levels and in the last few years became a major topic for governments, policymakers, national or regional organizations, frequently present on the research agenda. Studying and understanding integration serves multiple finalities, as a successful process brings benefits for immigrants and host countries also. When assessing the impact of certain policies regarding a specific social issue, as the integration of immigrants, measuring is a core step, that may rise several challenges (Coşciug 2018; Harder et. al. 2018).

3. Integration dimensions – assessing the individual level

Continuing the already briefly defined trajectory, becomes easily to understand that integration is firstly understood as an individual path towards the elements of a host country. Therefore, socio-demographic characteristics and other aspects reflecting the situation of the immigrant are usually analyzed when trying to understand immigrants' integration (Coşciug et al. 2019). The following lines of the present section will therefore sketch a proposal of a multidimensional measure of integration.

The IPL Integration Index built by Harder and collaborators (2018) proposes a six dimensions approach. Thus, the authors distinguish between the psychological dimension, the economic one, the political dimension of integration, the social dimension, the linguistic and navigational dimensions also (Harder et. al. 2018: p. 11484). Computing the scores for each item of the survey a total score is obtained, indicating the level of integration, or intermediate scores, for each dimension, can be calculated.

The psychological dimension of integration examines aspects as the feeling of connection and belonging in relation with the host country, or future plans concerning that territory. Elements as employment status and satisfaction regarding the current situation, income level, are composing the economic dimension of integration.

When investigating the political dimension, the authors propose items regarding the understanding of the major political issues from the host country, discussing political aspects or participating in such political activities. The social dimension of integration is captured through items that assess relations with the locals or involving in locals' organizations. In order to investigate the linguistic dimension, the authors refer to writing, reading, speaking and understanding the language of the host country. The navigational dimension of integration targeted immigrants' skills to address basic, usual issues in the host country, as medical assistance, legal matters, how to find a job or a house, for example.

The authors of the above-described instrument targeted the construction of a measurement tool which can be used in different contexts, investigating each of the six integration dimensions, the possible relations between them and the general level of

integration (Harder et. al.: p. 11487). As the team that elaborated the previously briefly presented tool mentions, the instrument tries to meet in a pragmatic and useful manner the requirements of “construct validity, ease of use and wide applicability. The measure is short but comprehensive and designed such that it can be applied across countries, immigrant groups time and survey models” (Idem).

4. Country – level factors

After studying the individual level characteristics that have an impact on the integration of immigrants, this section is investigating the country level factors. Here, the two interplaying variables are culture and structure. At structural level, the public actors, stakeholders at national level, the institutions which are responsible for immigration related issues, together with the social, economic and legal policies in the field, are among the independent variables that influence the integration of immigrants. Sometimes, a certain delay between the occurrence of a trend that has to be addressed at national or regional level through public regulations and actions and the issue of such regulations or creating the legal frame for action in the field is noticeable. Besides the time required for creating the necessary instruments, the people that are going to implement such policies need to be prepared and institutions also in order to cooperate and engage in an integrated and coordinated process.

Country level characteristics are not translated only into the structural, hard dimension. The soft, cultural dimension plays a same important role and the reciprocal influences and connections between the two levels are worthy to be mentioned here. When addressing the cultural component of the country level factors, the locals` attitudes towards immigration are frequently analyzed (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010; Gorodzeisky 2011; Preston et. al. 2001). Moreover, surveys as European Social Survey, European Values Survey or Word Value Study also investigate such issues and the data they provide allow for comparison between countries, individuals and cohorts, transversal or longitudinal approaches, as they keep a core of key items to which additional questions are added for new waves.

Regarding attitudes towards immigration, the team elaborating the “Round 7 Module on Attitudes towards Immigration and their Antecedents” of the European Social Survey (2015) “distinguish between opposition to or support for immigration by different types of migrant, attitudes towards different criteria for accepting or excluding migrants and attitudes towards policies for integrating migrants into the new country of residence” (European Social Survey 2015: p. 4).

The authors rely on variables as perception of economic threat, symbolic threat, intergroup contact, national attachment, fraternal relative deprivation, racism and ethnicity when explaining attitudes of opposition or support for immigration, differently according to immigrants` characteristics. Their assumptions are based on previous works that link realistic or symbolic threat with opposition to immigration in general or for certain groups (Raijman et. al. 2008; Hainmueller and Hiscox 2007).

The two types of threat perceptions described by scientific literature in relation with immigration are realistic or material ones and symbolic or value ones (European Social Survey 2015: p. 6). Scarcity hypothesis comes in this equation attempting to explain realistic threats that may include areas as jobs, economic prosperity, or welfare services. The symbolic threats refer to the beliefs that the country's cultural life may be undermined by immigrants because of differences concerning beliefs or values, for example.

Additionally, contact theory tries to explain different attitudes regarding immigrants based on the social distance concept. The contact theory assumes that contacts with outgroup members will foster more tolerant perspectives towards them, thus positive interactions with immigrants may contribute to greater support for immigration.

National attachment is divided into nationalism and constructive patriotism (Raijman et.al. 2008), concepts that could be translated to the ethnic - civic distinction. National uncritical attachment together with superiority perceptions of one's nation compared with others, conceptualized as nationalism is expected to be associated with rather negative attitudes regarding immigrants.

In relation with nationality, ethnicity is also taken into consideration as a useful tool for understanding attitudes towards immigration. Therefore, in the European study previously presented, items investigating the respondents' ancestry are used (European Social Survey 2015: p. 29).

Linked to the above explained concepts of symbolic and realistic threat, another complex concept targeted by The European Social Study is fraternal relative deprivation. The authors of the module investigating attitudes toward immigration see fraternal deprivation as the feeling that "the group with which the individual identifies is at risk of losing opportunities or privileges to which they are rightly entitled" (Idem: p.7).

Racism is another concept analyzed when addressing immigrants integration. The authors of the European Social Survey define racism as "a set of negative beliefs and attitudes against ... racialized outgroups" (Idem: p.8), also discussing about the distinction between racism and racial prejudice on one hand, and biological and cultural racism on the other hand.

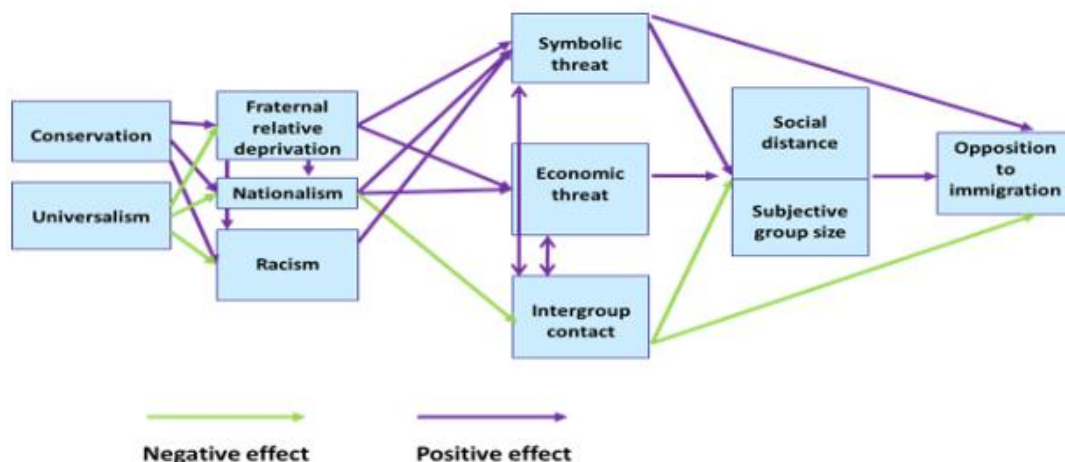
5. Discussions

Migratory flows are undoubtedly changing across time and territories. The contemporary social functioning of groups and individuals living in a certain area is crystallized around concepts as country, nations, nationals, foreigners, or locals. Such interactions between groups and individuals divide the actors in emigrants or immigrants, the territories can be host country, transit country or origin country and given the actual formal setting, such interactions require a legal framework. National and regional policies, institutions, together with other type of organizations and public actors aim to address such migration related issues.

Humanitarian aspects are brought into discussion when dealing with refugees, for example, while the inhabitants of the host country confront with threats, in some cases regarding the public services or the economy, other times the beliefs or axiological systems are threatened. Ethnic minorities also come in this complex equation and defining their attitudes and expectations can be sometimes difficult, depending on each particular context and the relation with the majority population.

As shown in the previous sections, integration should be understood as a multiple layers process, involving immigrants, locals, institutions, governments and other stakeholders. At individual level, immigrant's socio-demographic characteristics, abilities and other personal features can influence the integration process. The country – level aspects are also playing an important role here, through policies regarding immigration, public institutions dealing with immigrants and the capacity to manage such issues at a given time. Attitudes of the local population are the third key element, that may foster or not integration, as seen in the next figure.

Figure no. 3: The relations between the concepts used by the European Social Survey in measuring attitudes towards immigration and their antecedents



Source: European Social Survey (2015)

The figure above captures in a synthetic manner the relations between the variables that impact opposition or acceptance of immigrants, previously discussed. While symbolic and economic threats, social distance or perceptions of fraternal relative deprivation have a negative influence, positive contacts with immigrants and constructive patriotism (as a form of nationalism) foster acceptance attitudes.

Given the actual social, economic, and demographic context, defined by rapid changes, and the fact that migratory flows are influenced by the same transformations, addressing and understanding immigration and immigrant integration are necessary. Considering that measuring is a main challenge for social sciences, a shared conceptual framework and common instruments are needed, for comparable results, across countries, territories, and individuals. As shown above, some steps were already implemented towards the possibility of unitary research tools, which can bring benefits for academia and stakeholders also.

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Institutional policies and strategies on the social reintegration of persons deprived of their liberty

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Abstract

The phenomenon of crime, the method of sanctioning and the effectiveness of the criminal sanctions applied, associated with the vast process of social reintegration of persons deprived of liberty, although are current and represent a constant in the legal and social fields, for both theorists and practitioners, are quite little known by civil society.

The process of resocialisation of persons deprived of liberty is a constant concern for the creators of criminal and social policies who seek to identify the most viable measures by which the state can intervene in preventing and combating criminal recidivism. As a special form of crime, recidivism is one of the most serious social problems facing contemporary societies.

Using a figure of speech, we can appreciate that, just as some vices and unwanted behaviours, such as: "tobacco use and alcohol abuse seriously harm health", we similarly argue that, in the absence of sustainable and predictable public policies, "criminal recidivism seriously harms the community".

The study presents the main public strategies and policies adopted and implemented at national level, in terms of social reintegration, trends of evolution, as well as a number of incidental social dysfunctions. Thus, the efficient functioning of the probation system, the reduction of overcrowding in prisons, the promotion of a viable strategy for the social reintegration of persons deprived of liberty and the financing of predefined programmes through the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021, in areas of interest such as correctional services and the strengthening of the rule of law, are prerequisites for combating criminal recidivism and maintaining community safety.

In conclusion, we say that the social reintegration of criminally sanctioned persons is an area of interest for society that requires increased attention, by developing an effective regulatory framework, with an institutional system appropriate to the needs of this vulnerable category, but also by involving members of the community.

Keywords: *public strategies and policies; crime; recidivism; social reintegration; vulnerable category; community safety.*

1. The concept of "public policy".

The term public policy was first used by Harold Lasswell in the early 50s of the 20th century. Its attempt is part of an effort to professionalise government work by promoting an approach that is based mainly on the analysis of data on the various public issues that appear on the agenda of a public authority. Since this first use of the term, the

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related studies have delineated a new field of research, subsumed to those in the field of social sciences.

The concept of public policy knows a whole range of definitions, starting from the most simplistic – what governments choose to do or not to do (Dye 1992: p. 4), to the instrumentalist one: a course of action with a specific purpose, pursued by an actor or group of actors in addressing a problem (Anderson 1994: p. 5).

In order to better understand the dimensions of the notion of public policy, a number of key concepts are needed that help to construct the concept: a) action on the basis of authority: public policy is an action implemented by power structures, structures that have legislative, political and financial authority to act; b) a reaction to the problems of society ("real world"): public policy tries to respond to a concrete need/problem of society (or a segment of society); c) goal-oriented: public policy is geared towards achieving a set of well-defined objectives in an attempt to solve a particular need/problem of the community (target group).

From the perspective of solving a problem and the policy making process, we can say that this process can be seen as an analytical process. Policy making is the search for solutions to existing problems, calling for rationality to achieve public goals. In this case, the key to the policy-making process is to define the problem correctly, identify and analyze an appropriate set of solutions, select the alternative that best solves the problem. Consistent in this approach is the idea that we agree with solving the problem. Also related to it is the use of analytical techniques to generate the best solutions and to make the best choices. For this purpose, techniques such as cost-benefit analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis, linear programming and other optimisation techniques may be used. Finally, we will know that we have succeeded when the problem has been solved or when we increase the benefits of the public programme.

A public policy is a network of decisions related to each other regarding the choice of objectives, means and resources allocated to achieve them in specific situations (Miroiu 2001: p. 9).

The term "public policy" has penetrated the specialized studies and the current language of Romania quite late (in the late 1990s) and there are still numerous ambiguities at the level of common sense on the scope of this notion. One possible explanation may be that the term was borrowed from The English language – policy – but there is no specific translation into Romanian language other than that of policy.

The notion of public policies was institutionalized in Romania with the advent of Government Decision No. 775/2005 for the approval of the Regulation on procedures for the elaboration, monitoring and evaluation of public policies at central level, establishing a series of rules governing decision-making at the level of ministries and other specialised bodies at central administration level. The process was requested and supported by international organisations (European Commission, World Bank) and was imposed as a top-down (top-down) reform, assuming changes in perspectives in the evaluation of activities carried out within the administration. Under this approach, public policies are the result of the action of public authorities and can be implemented at different administrative levels. It is important that these steps are carried out at the central level that public policies are carried out with the participation and benefit of citizens.

2. The role of criminal policy in strengthening the rule of law.

Ca theory, the rule of law appeared towards the end of the 18th century – the beginning of the 19th century, as a replica given to the despotic state. It was founded in German doctrine, where it was known as the *Rechtsstaat* (Mohl 1832: p. 16).

In characteristic Kantian terms, it is the doctrine of the law-based state (*Rechtsstaat*) and eternal peace. The approach is based on the supremacy of a country's written constitution. This supremacy must create guarantees for the implementation of its central idea: a permanent peaceful life as a basic condition for the happiness of its people and their prosperity. Immanuel Kant proposed that this happiness be guaranteed by a moral constitution agreed by the people and thus, under it, by a moral government (Reiss 1971: pp. 79, 117-118).

In terms of ideology, the rule of law confers a logical system of ideas, through which people represent their society, the state, in all its manifestations and by which legitimacy is given to the state.

The rule of law, pluralism, democracy, civil society are undeniably universal values of contemporary political thought and practice and are expressed normatively in the Romanian Constitution as well as in international documents.

In accordance with Article 1 (1) (b) of Regulation (EEC) No 208 (3) of the Romanian Constitution: Romania is a state of *law*, democratic and social, in which human dignity, the rights and freedoms of citizens, the free development of human personality, justice and political pluralism represent supreme values, in the spirit of the democratic traditions of the Romanian people and the ideals of the Revolution of December 1989, and are guaranteed (Constitution of Romania 1991).

The consecration of the rule of law in the Romanian Constitution is carried out not only by Article 1 (3) of the first sentence, but also by numerous other constitutional provisions expressing the content of this principle of organization and exercise of power in a democratic society. In this respect, the provisions of Article 5 of Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92 should be apart Article 16(1) shall be replaced by the following: (2), which provide that no one is above the law and those of Article 15 (2) of the Treaty. (2) which proclaims the principle of non-retroactivity of the law, essential principles for the whole construction of the rule of law. The content of the rule of law is expressed in particular in the constitutional provisions on the separation and balance of powers in the State, as well as those relating to the organisation, functioning and powers of the state institutions.

The final document of the 1990 Copenhagen Meeting stated that the *rule of law* does not simply mean formal legality, and in the 1990 Paris Charter the rule of *law* is foreshadowed not only in relation to human rights, but also democracy, as the only system of government.

The rule of law is where: the rule of law is obvious, the content of this right takes advantage of the rights and freedoms of citizens to their real dimensions, the balance, collaboration and mutual control of public powers are achieved and free access to justice is achieved.

A rule of law can have no purpose other than to order the life of man, so that every member of the community is supported and encouraged in the direction of exercise and use as free and full as possible of all its capacities, the freedom of the citizen being the supreme principle of the state (Muraru and Tanasescu 2009, pp.77-78).

Criminal policy, as an integral part of the general policy of the State, regulates one of the major areas of social life, namely the field of justice, by promoting public policies

on; justice, crime, the development of the normative base and legislation, and the punishment system.

Criminal policy, in this respect, is the state's reaction to the commission of crimes, expressed by the policy of criminalisation and penalty of acts, the determination of the strategy, forms and legal methods of countering crimes, the policy of criminal investigation and the policy of the execution of criminal penalties and other measures of criminal legal influence.

Criminal policy was originally defined and elaborated in the sociology of criminal law, in the light of the repressive reaction of the State to crime and crime, being a tribute to the era in which it was formulated, in the sense that the specificity of this period is the thinking of measures against crime, having a predominantly repressive character.

The creation of the term "criminal policy" is attributed to the German penalist, an illustrious representative of the classical school of criminal law and the criminology of Anselm von Feuerbach (1775-1833), who used it for the first time in his manual of criminal law (1803), defining criminal policy as "the ensemble of repressive procedures by which the State reacts to crime". According to Feuerbach's definition, criminal policy is synonymous with the theory and practice of the criminal system (Delmas 1992: p. 462).

Criminal policy is considered the activity of the State in the field of combating crime, with the participation and support of civil society institutions as well as citizens, which includes both the reaction of the competent bodies of the State to the commission of crimes and the activities of crime prevention, resocialisation and reintegration of offenders carried out by the State and society. In criminal doctrine Romanian is given an extended meaning to the concept of criminal policy, beyond the purely repressive meaning (Bulai 1992: p. 220).

One of the most important directions of criminal policy in Romania was the drafting and application of the law of "compensatory appeal" (Law No. 169/2017), a topical topic on the agenda of the Romanian Government and the Committee of Ministers' Delegations in Human Rights format in human rights format (CM-DH).

By the Law of Compensatory Appeal, which entered into force on 19.10.2017 and was repealed on 19.12.2019 (by Law No. 240/2019, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, No. 1028 of 20.12.2019), the Romanian State, obliged by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has established a compensatory mechanism for the execution of the sentence under improper conditions (conditions established by the ECHR and not by the Romanian State). Thus, an inmate serving the sentence in a space less than or equal to 4 sqm/inmate, without adequate temperature in the room, without the possibility of using the toilet in private, in a detention room with infiltration or mould, benefited, every 30 days executed, from 6 additional days considered to be executed maximum of 72 days/year (6 days X 12 months = 72 days).

From 19.10.2017 until 18.09.2019 21,049 prisoners were released from prisons as a result of the application of the provisions of Law No. 169/2017 on compensatory appeal. Of these, 634 were convicted of rape and 1,670 were convicted of robbery. During that period, of the total releases, there were 1,877 re-incarcerations. Of these, 47 for rape, 226 for robbery and 36 for murder, according to data from the National Administration of Penitentiaries. At the moment, 21,632 people are incarcerated (National Administration of Penitentiaries 2019).

The adoption and subsequent repeal of the law in the absence of studies and analyses on the impact of the granting of compensatory measures revealed a poor understanding on the part of society of the prison environment and the phenomena that

give rise to the release from detention of convicted persons before the deadline. Studies show that the compensatory appeal, although it solved a systemic problem of the Romanian state by reducing the number of prisoners in Romanian prisons, generated serious problems for Romanian society, which proved incapable and "unprepared", to integrate the convicted persons released from the penitentiaries.

In the same vein, the agglomeration of the courts arronded to the penitentiary units with applications for conditional release, generated by the compensatory appeal, have led to multiple malfunctions in the work of these courts. At the same time, difficulties were recorded in the process of supervising persons in detention, both from probation services which did not have the necessary human and financial resources, and from the police bodies which were often in the situation of the impossibility of detaining convicted persons who had reoffended.

Furthermore, the appeal manifested by the public, constrained by the adoption of the compensatory appeal, also highlighted the intensification of rejection attitudes, generated in particular by the abominable acts committed by convicted persons released from detention on the basis of the compensatory appeal, thus representing a real obstacle to post-detention reintegration. Law No 169/2017 allowed the release of persons who have been convicted of serious offences on time earlier than normal, the provisions on compensatory appeal being a cause of reduction or, where appropriate, extinguishment of the sentence.

In the face of the lack of specific legal provisions and legislative procedures, of an institutional framework appropriate to the criminal policy promoted by the Romanian State, by adopting the compensatory appeal, persons deprived of their liberty were deprived of the control of institutions with the role of preventing and combating crime. Thus, early release was achieved in relation to the desire to reduce the prison population, the prospect of social reintegration being placed second, while the latter process presents an extremely high level of complexity, being taken from the first day of deprivation of liberty.

Moreover, (des)the illusion of post-detention reintegration, under the conditions of early release, led to the interruption of educational interventions and the failure to complete psychological and social assistance programmes aimed at persons deprived of liberty during the execution of the sentence, when the individual plans for the execution of the sentence were adapted to the new perspective, early release. The application of such measures have created the prerequisites for the increase in recidivism and crime, phenomena harmful to both citizens and state institutions and criminals.

Since 2012, Romania has been under the effect of a semi-pilot conviction on the conditions of detention, which obliges our country to improve the conditions in the prison system.

The overcrowding of prisons, the poor conditions of detention, the insufficiency of security and medical personnel, the high frequency of deaths and the lack of newly built detention facilities, are only five of the serious problems observed for more than 15 years and by the Human Rights Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of the Romanian Parliament, which remained only at the reporting stage, the deficiencies in the prison system still being the same. In 2005, 2009 and 2015 the members of the Human Rights Committee of the Chamber of Deputies produced three reports presenting the main problems in the prison system, the same each time. In 2015 and the Ombudsman issued a Special Report on prison detention conditions and detention and preventive detention

centres, factors determined in respect of human dignity and the rights of persons deprived of their liberty (People's Advocate 2015).

The existence of a high level of prison employment has highlighted the acute dimension of social intolerance towards persons deprived of their liberty, together with the low level of political will on the regulation and implementation of criminal policies, which is why the provisions and recommendations of the relevant case-law and criminal doctrine have become devoid of content.

Failure to comply with the material conditions of detention or the treatment of prisoners led to the repeated conviction of the Romanian state at the ECHR (6 rulings in 2008, 9 rulings in 2009, 13 rulings in 2010, 18 rulings in 2011, 10 judgments in 2012, 32 rulings in 2013, 29 rulings in 2014, 75 rulings in 2015, 313 judgments in 2016, 378 judgments in 2017, 968 judgments in 2018), according to the 2018 annual report of the National Administration of Penitentiaries (National Administration of Penitentiaries 2019).

As regards 2019, the Court examined 3263 applications for Romania, of which 3016 were declared inadmissible or the examination was not continued (removed from the role), and delivered 62 judgments.

If in 2008 the ECHR sentenced Romania to compensation of 44,500 euros, in 2018 the amounts paid as a result of the ECHR rulings amounted to 3,232,001 euros. In this context, we highlight the increase of about 160 times, over a 10-year period, in the number of judgments, while increasing the amounts consisting of compensation by the Ministry of Public Finance by about 100 times.

These amounts represent in fact the amounts of money paid annually by the Ministry of Public Finance (MFP) to Romanians who have won lawsuits at the ECHR, according to MFP information for "Economica.net" (Economica.net 2018).

In view of the evolution of Romanian cases concerning the conditions of detention at the ECHR, The European Court of Human Rights (Court) delivered on 6 December 2007 the first judgment condemning Romania for infringement of Article 3 (Prohibition of *Torture*) of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Convention), since, inter alia, the material conditions of detention do not satisfy the European standard, in *Bragadireanu v. Romania* (application No 22088/04) (ECHR case law 2008).

In view of the significant influx of claims against Romania concerning overcrowding and material conditions of detention, the Court considered it necessary, in 2012, to apply to the Romanian authorities under Article 46 of the Convention, without resorting to the pilot procedure.

Thus, by judgment of 24 July 2012 in *Iacov Stanciu v. Romania* (application No 35972/05), the Court found that overcrowding and inadequate conditions of detention were structural problems of the Romanian prison system (Juridice.ro 2012).

In the years following the *Jacob Stanciu* judgment, the number of cases in which the Court concluded that Article 3 of the Convention had been infringed in the light of overpopulation and inadequate material conditions of detention had steadily increased to 150 convictions. Furthermore, in August 2016, 3200 similar applications were registered with the Court.

In this context, and in the light of the evaluations of the Committee of Ministers' Delegations in Human Rights format (CM-DH) on the general measures adopted by the Romanian authorities in response to the ECHR findings, the latest reports of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman Punishment and Treatment (CPT) of the Council of Europe and the recommendations of the Ombudsman, who visited certain

prisons in the country, all this confirming the worrying reality that prisons and detention and detention centres continue to be severely affected by overpopulation and poor material conditions of detention, the ECHR has decided to apply the procedure of the pilot judgment in the related cases *Rezmiveş and Others v. Romania* (No 61467/12, 39516/13, 48231/13 and 68191/13) (Juridice.ro 2017a).

In April 2017, Romania was sentenced to the ECHR in *Rezmiveş and Others v. Romania*, a pilot ruling on prison overcrowding and other inadequate conditions of detention, suspending the trial of the approximately 8,000 complaints concerning the conditions of detention in Romania, for which compensation of almost 5 million euros was paid in the period 2013-2017 to the prisoners who won at the ECHR.

The pilot judgment procedure is governed by Article 61⁴ of the ECHR Regulation and is a form of cooperation between the ECHR and the defendant State. Its role is to provide ways and suggestions of general measures that would be appropriate to address a structural or systemic problem in the State concerned and would be acceptable from the perspective of the ECHR, in relation to its case-law and the significant number of similar applications pending before it. However, the Court confirms in its case-law the freedom of the defendant State to choose measures to fulfil its obligation to comply with echr judgments.

By the pilot judgment of 25 April 2017, the Court requested the Romanian State, within six months of the date of the final stay of the judgment, to provide, in cooperation with the Committee of Ministers' Delegations in Human Rights (CM-DH) an exact timetable for the implementation of appropriate general measures capable of addressing the problem of prison overcrowding and inadequate detention conditions, in accordance with the principles of the Convention as set out in the pilot judgment. The Court also decided to postpone similar cases which have not yet been communicated to the Romanian Government until the necessary measures are taken at national level.

Following this ruling, in March 2018, the Romanian Government communicated to the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers in Human Rights (CM-DH) a plan of measures to address the problems of overcrowding and inadequate conditions of detention, namely the 2018-2024 Calendar of Measures for the Resolution of Prison Overcrowding and Detention Conditions (adopted by the Memorandum adopted by the Romanian Government on 17.01.2018, with amendments according to the Memorandum adopted by the Romanian Government on 07.03.2018).

The plan of measures undertaken by the Romanian Government states that in the period 2018-2024 the Romanian state will modernize 1351 places of accommodation in prisons and build 8095 new places. In the same plan of measures, the Romanian Government has committed to set up 1596 new places in detentions and to modernize 187 of the existing ones. According to the calendar, the Romanian state should have created 316 new prison places in 2018-19 and modernized 500 of the existing ones. Only 43% of this target was achieved by April 2019, according to official data of the Association for the Defence of Human Rights in Romania – Helsinki 2020 Committee (APADOR-CH).

The Romanian government also assumed that it would build two new prisons, namely: Unguriu, in Buzau County, and Berceni County, Ilfov County. With regard to the establishment of the Berceni Penitentiary, the feasibility study was analysed and approved favourably and issued in this respect the opinion No. 29 of 10.08.2020 of the Interministerial Council for the Advising of Public Works of National Interest and Housing of the Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration. With regard to the establishment of the Hungarian Penitentiary, steps have been taken in relation to land

management and the acquisition of the feasibility study, which was analysed and endorsed favourably and was delivered in this respect by opinion No. 30 of 10.08.2020 of the Interministerial Council for the Advancement of Public Works of National Interest and Housing of the Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration. The two penitentiary units should be ready in 2022 and 2024 respectively, bringing together 1,900 new places of detention.

The ECHR has also pointed out that the simplification of the conditions for waiving the application of the penalty and the postponement of the application of the penalty and, in particular, the extension of the possibilities of access to the institution of conditional release, as well as the effective functioning of the probation system, could be sources of inspiration for the government in order to solve the problem of the increase of the prison population and inadequate material conditions in detention (Juridice.ro 2017b).

Even if it left to the Romanian state the identification of concrete steps of criminal reform (under the supervision of the Committee of Ministers), the ECHR judges pointed out that the Romanian Government's strategy to create new places of accommodation is not a sustainable solution, according to Recommendation Rec (99)22 of the Committee of Ministers, and that conditions in existing places of detention are needed.

Romania has fallen behind not only in respecting the timetable agreed with the ECHR, but also in finding a solution for former prisoners, who have not benefited from remedial measures for the improper conditions in prison.

3. Measures and strategies adopted by the Romanian State on the continuation of penal reform.

To date, the Committee of Ministers in the format of Human Rights (CM-DH) has issued five decisions on the execution of the above cases, in the sessions of 13-15 March 2018, 4-6 December 2018, 4-6 June 2019, December 3-5, 2019, March 3-5, 2020.

By the last decision adopted, the omitting delegations of Ministers in human rights format (CM-DH) of the Council of Europe recalled the long-standing structural problems of overcrowding and the inhuman and degrading conditions of detention in prisons and preventive detention centres of the Romanian police (Council of Europe 2020).

Reiterated that, notwithstanding the significant progress already achieved, in particular in reducing overcrowding, further measures underpinned by a strong and enduring commitment at high political level are required to bring about a swift, comprehensive and sustainable resolution of these problems;

Also, regretted in particular, after the abolition of the compensatory mechanism in the form of reduction of sentences without providing alternative Convention-compliant remedies, the absence of any near prospect of setting up an effective system of compensatory remedies to fulfil Romania's obligations under Articles 13 and 46 of the Convention. At the same time, expressed their grave concern at the ensuing risk of a new massive influx of repetitive applications in addition to the over 6,000 applications already pending before the European Court and the threat this poses to the effectiveness of the Convention system;

Further to adopt the necessary national measures capable of addressing the problem of prison overcrowding and inadequate detention conditions, in accordance with the principles of the Convention as set out in the pilot judgment in December 2020, the Romanian State will present to the Committee of Delegations of Ministers in Strasbourg the action plan DH-DD (2020) 1059 23/11/2020 at the chair of the 1390th meeting communicated by the Romanian authorities on the Bragadiranu cases against Romania

(Request No. 22088/04) and Rezmiveş and Others against Romania (application No. 61467/12) (Council of Europe 2020).

As a result of the criminal reform carried out in Romania, it is found, on the one hand, that the deficit in the number of places of detention decreased from approximately 14,000 - required in 2012 to 4300 - estimated in 2017, to 2,051 - minimum calculated on 30 June 2020. This value may vary according to the dynamics of the number of new detainees who have been remanded and released while cases under probation have increased by about five times, from 20,000 cases in 2012 to 104,000 for 2019. Between January 1 and June 30, 2020, probation counselors worked with 85,386 people sanctioned with non-custodial measures and sanctions.

Also, as a result of the criminal justice system reform measures adopted by the Romanian state, the degree of overcrowding in places of detention was considerably reduced, from 164% in January 2015 to 111% in June 2020. The trend in the number of detainees in the custody of the penitentiary system, after 2014 and until now, it was a descending one, which was accentuated by the compensatory mechanism implemented in 2017.

In relation to the objectives envisaged in the 2018 Action Calendar, 70 new places of detention were put into use and 282 detention places were upgraded.

The provision of educational programmes and psychosocial assistance has also diversified and developed, so that in 2019 there were 81 programmes available to prisoners at the ANP level (Council of Europe 2020).

By promoting Government Decision No. 389 of 27 May, 2015 on the approval of the National Strategy for the Social Reintegration of Deprived Persons, 2015 - 2019, a national, interinstitutional, articulated mechanism has been created to support the process of social reintegration of persons deprived of their liberty.

Thus, by implementing Government Decision No. 389/2015, in the strategic cycle 2015-2019, a system was developed for diagnosing the training and professional development needs of specialists at the level of institutions responsible for carrying out social reintegration activities with persons deprived of their liberty (both during detention and post-detention) and seven interinstitutional procedures were developed, five of which were approved and implemented.

Following the evaluation of the activities carried out by the implementation of Government Decision No. 389/2015, through the Monitoring Report of the National Strategy for the Social Reintegration of Deprived Persons 2015-2019, drawn up in the form of a memorandum, approved at the Government meeting on 24 April 2019, the proposal for continuation of activities was validated by a new draft Government Decision, valid for the strategic cycle 2020-2024. In the coordinates presented, the new strategy approved by Government Decision No. 430/2020 on the approval of the National Strategy for the Social Reintegration of Deprived Persons 2020-2024 (Council of Europe 2020).

The new document envisages the measures implemented in the period 2015 -2019 that need to be continued, the development and customization of locally available social support services for people returning to the community at risk of social marginalisation, as well as new measures to be carried out during the reference period. At the same time, it is developing the functional reintegration of persons deprived of their liberty in the family environment, the community and the labour market, by strengthening, optimising and developing the necessary legal and procedural mechanisms.

It is considered that, in order to ensure the translation between the prison environment and the community, it is necessary to have structures in place to take over

persons released, to provide them with specialized services and to monitor them, in order to successfully overcome the critical post-detention period, in which there is a high risk of a relapse into crime.

A priority is to carry out practical activities, which can lead to an increase in the independence of people leaving the prison system, as well as an intervention aimed at identifying and developing individual inclinations and abilities. In order to increase the chances of reintegration into the labour market of persons released from detention, it is necessary to regulate the legislative framework so as to make it possible to conclude individual employment contracts for persons deprived of liberty, in particular those in open regime, given that the work performed at various economic operators requires this form of regulation of employment relations, which would have a real impact also to facilitate socio-professional reintegration.

At the same time, taking into account the results of national analyses and studies, as well as European policies in the field, vocational qualification/retraining is one of the basic conditions contributing to post-detention reintegration, ensuring that former detainees have the opportunity to identify a job, implicitly a source of income, able to support individual independence.

The action plan for the period 2020-2025, drawn up with a view to the implementation of the Rezmiveş and Others pilot judgment against Romania, as well as the judgments given in the Bragadireanu V.V. Romania Group, are foreseen important measures on the continuation of criminal reform in Romania (Council of Europe 2020).

With regard to the Romanian prison system, measures are proposed both to improve the conditions of detention, measures of a legislative nature leading to the improvement of the conditions of detention for persons deprived of liberty, as well as the continuation of the implementation of social reintegration programmes (educational, psychological assistance and social assistance) and recreation of persons from the prison system.

The proposed measures to improve the conditions of detention for persons deprived of their liberty (2020-2025) provide for investments in the physical infrastructure of prisons, namely: the creation of 7,849 new accommodation places and the modernization of 946 accommodation places, the investments being financed from three sources, as follows: 1. The Norwegian Financial Mechanism - 1,400 new accommodation places, in an estimated value of 21,007,300.00 euros and 100 modernized accommodation places, in an estimated cost of 103.115.615,0 euros; 2. The state budget - 4,549 new accommodation places and the modernization of 846 accommodation places in an estimated value of 102,255,576.0 euros; 3. Loan from an International Financial Institution, according to the project approved by the Romanian Government, on 05.12.2017, through the Memorandum on Decision on the opportunity to finance the physical infrastructure of the Romanian penitentiary system, through a project funded from reimbursable external funds, which proposes the concept of the national project - Investments in penitentiary infrastructure - 1,900 new accommodation places through the construction and establishment of two new penitentiaries (Berceni Penitentiary and Unguriu Penitentiary) (Council of Europe 2020).

Investment objectives (new/modernisation/extension of above-ground detention) were also forecast for 31 pre-trial detention centres (out of 51 detention and pre-trial detention centers are organized and operate).

In view of the need to comply with the standards imposed by the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights, as well as the need to update the criminal enforcement

legislation in Romania, it is envisaged to draw up a draft Law for the amendment and completion of Law No. 254/2013 on the execution of sentences and custodial measures ordered by judicial bodies during the criminal trial, leading to improved conditions of detention for persons deprived of liberty.

Action Plan 2020-2025 in the execution of the Rezmiveş and Others pilot judgment against Romania, as well as the judgments handed down in the Bragadireanu group of cases against Romania, also provides for measures to strengthen and streamline the probation system in Romania to facilitate the application of Community sanctions and measures leading to the reduction of the prison population.

On 28 November 2019, at the proposal of the Minister of Justice, the Romanian Government approved a Memorandum on the organization of competitions for filling vacancies in the organizational structure of the National Probation Directorate and Probation Services (Memorandum), which provides for their gradual filling. For the application of those measures, the following shall be taken into account: Stage 1 - the financing in 2019 of 254 positions (150 probation counselors, 84 contract staff, 20 employees in the central structure); Stage 2 - the financing in 2020 of 118 positions (101 counselor positions and 17 employees in the central structure); Stage 3 - financing in 2020 another 239 positions (155 probation counselors and 84 contract staff) (Council of Europe 2019).

In conditions of legislative stability, where the powers of the probation services will not be extended to the current situation, by taking the above measures, it is estimated that they will produce sustainable effects by reducing the number of cases/employees. Thus, at the end of stage 3, it is estimated that 957 probation counselors will be employed throughout the probation system which, if they manage a similar number of cases as at present, approx. 100,000 / year, will reach an average of 104 cases/employee, being registered a significant decrease compared to the current situation in which the average number of cases/employee is 181. Also, improving the regulatory framework of the profession (staff status) will be created the premises for an increase in the stability of employees in the probation system and the attractiveness of the profession for filling vacancies with highly qualified staff.

In addition, measures to improve the infrastructure of probation services by supplementing probation facilities, including the involvement of local authorities, approximately the relocation of 15 premises, including: 9 free on loan with local authorities and 6 rented spaces, as well as the renovation and redevelopment of 28 premises, will aim to create an optimal working environment for both probation staff and persons in the execution of Community measures and sanctions, in accordance with Council of Europe standards in this area.

For the development of the probation system, both from a methodological point of view and in terms of physical infrastructure and IT, two partnership agreements concluded in September 2019 and November 2019, respectively, for the implementation by DNP of two strategic projects for the system. of probation with nonreimbursable financial assistance from the Kingdom of Norway through the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021. "Correctional" - DNP budget 5,511,523 euros and "Improving Correctional Services in Romania by implementing the principle of normality - 4Norm-ality" - DNP budget - 240,175 euros. The projects aim at solving structural issues such as diagnostic tests, research, work procedures, specialized intervention programs for convicted persons under the supervision of probation services, training sessions, equipping the probation system with IT infrastructure, furniture and other necessary equipment. in the current

activity, as well as the accomplishment of repair works of the probation services headquarters. The two projects will be implemented between 2020 and 2024. So far, actions have been taken before the start of public procurement procedures within the two projects.

In conclusion, we can say that by reference to the criminal policies implemented and forecasted by the Romanian State, there are sufficient reasons to impose a number of measures, beyond those written on paper, so that this social category represented by criminally sanctioned persons can enter normality. The efforts made, from a social or financial point of view by the Romanian State in order to improve the conditions of detention, are also not to be disputed, but they are far from solving this problem, the overcrowding of detention facilities.

However, the achievement of the minimum standards laid down by international law in this respect can only be achieved by reallocating, rebuilding or reforming the entire prison system, by concrete actions to modernise the holding premises, to supplement the need for security and medical personnel, to amend the extra-criminal legislation, and not as a last resort, and to create public-private partnerships, a formula that could lead to the construction of new prisons or the improvement of prison logistics.

We also appreciate as a viable criminal policy and alternative solution to detention the strengthening of the probation system in Romania which, through its mission and vision, effectively contributes to society's interests regarding the safety of citizens, reducing the social costs of incarceration, reducing recidivism and empowering persons who have committed crimes to enroll on a pro-social life path.

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The worthy employee: Serious leisure through alternative forms of spirituality

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Abstract

The analyzes undertaken in the present study focus on those who have adopted a new lifestyle, strongly centered around self-development through recreational practices. Also, the interest of the research was directed towards the way in which leisure became a new type of work for some of the employees of large corporations. As recent research shows, a significant portion of employees feel the pressure to outdo themselves and build an impressive career. Precisely to maximize their chances of success, individuals become more flexible, more creative, more autonomous and more motivated to improve their skills. As my fieldwork has shown, in order to be able to survive the increased competition, employees are in a continuous work with their own person, which can lead to frustration, anxiety and insecurity. In this context, individuals seek support and, at least some of them, identify them in recreational practices that resonate with alternative forms of spirituality. In order to understand how alternative forms of spirituality have entered the area of recreational practices and how leisure has become a new type of work, I began to participate in various spiritual development programs existing in Romania.

Keywords: *Employee; neoliberalism; serious leisure; spirituality; self-development.*

Recent ethnographies in the fields of work and organization reveal the increasing importance of so-called 'new-careers', especially among highly educated people. These new careers are pushing individuals to become flexible, autonomous, creative and centered on the perpetual discovery of the facets of their own abilities and interests but often insecure and anxious (Binkley 2017, 2011). At the same time, a new vision about leisure practices began to take shape. In this context alternative forms of spirituality have been rapidly developed and demand a careful analysis of the means in which they are appropriated to the new economic sectors that have emerged in Romania. My argument is that these new forms of spirituality, usually performed as leisure, are taking roots not only in everyday life practices but also into the logic of economic practices focused on competition.

It is certain that alternative forms of spirituality (such as yoga, meditation or Tai Chi) are becoming more common. To understand how strongly these practices managed to penetrate the daily lives of individuals and how they were internalized, I conducted a fieldwork research over a two-year period. During this essential step I have combined semi-structured in-depth interviews and participant observations. More precisely I

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participated in more than 20 workshops, seminars or sessions on the subject of spiritual and personal development. A significant part of my fieldwork focused on the comparative analysis of trainers' discourses (sometimes called 'shamans' or 'spiritual facilitators'), but also on the existing interactions within the participants at these events. A total of 34 interviews have been conducted with individuals involved in the process of spiritual development and 25 of them were corporations' employees.

1. How leisure becomes a new kind of work?

A major change in social perception of leisure has simultaneously occurred with the change in vision of work (Rojek 2009), with the emergence of flexible jobs, and with the implementation of a neoliberal ideology more and more present in everyday life. For several decades it was clearly regulated a gap between productive and non-productive time, but this distinction has begun to dilute, giving way to a new order and vision of what leisure means; its purpose can no longer be seen as an escape route from everyday life (Rojek 1995), but it starts to be more and more understood as time and space for the performance or enhancement of individual abilities.

The split between labor and leisure becomes much harder to be perceived (Rojek 2005) considering the social and political changes that had occurred in labor dynamics: the decline of the manufacturing sector and the rising of the service sector, then the emergence of flexible work, along with the tendency of consumers to differentiate, and with the increasing of niche production (Binkley 2014). In this mix of work and other life plans, providers of spiritual development programs, as well as authors, propose procedures and techniques for the individual to achieve a new 'energy' and a disconnection from activities related to work and a reconnection with the 'authentic self'. In this context, the responsibility for one's own well-being – and in fact for one's own life – becomes strictly an individual one. At the same time, even if it is not very explicit, generally speaking, there is a dismissal of responsibility towards society and also of institutions towards the individuals.

About two decades after the regime was changed, the unproductive, hedonistic forms of leisure, which Stebbins (1982) calls casual leisure were not incriminated by the common sense. Nowadays we can see how the whole world is a huge supermarket of leisure opportunities for which the free will of each person can decide, at least theoretically (Cohen-Gewerc and Stebbins 2013: p. 5), but this 'full freedom' has attached a prerogative specific to neoliberal ideology: that of being productive in as many circumstances as possible. Productivity should not be understood in strictly material terms, but it mainly refers to a change of vision on how free time should be used to maximize all individual characteristics, in a mixture with work to construct a better 'self' much clearer individualized. It is suggested the idea that the individual must become 'a tailor of his own self, to stay away from all fashionable, comfortable or ready-made identities' (Cohen-Gewerc and Stebbins 2013: p. 8).

This change of perspective on how leisure begins to be perceived is the basis for the development of leisure programs focused on the holistic development of the individual: personal, mental, physical and spiritual. In such a way, leisure is no longer legitimate to be understood in terms of pure hedonism, devoid of any concerns (Rojek 2005). Although hedonism remains an important element for many forms and practices of leisure, it is strongly impregnated with the idea of individual's concern for self, and for his personal development (Rojek, 2005: p. 12). Rojek observes how strong arguments are brought in the current neoliberal context to explain the need for active involvement in

recreational practices that require the personal development of subjects. In order to have the appreciation of those around them, individuals must appear as being happy, or indeed to be happy, wealthy, inventive, and ready for new challenges. As a response to these societal challenges, individuals must engage in what Robert A. Stebbins (1982, 1997, 2006) calls serious leisure. The distinction that the sociologist makes between the concepts of serious leisure and casual leisure can clarify the current meaning of leisure and makes it easier to understand the presence of alternative forms of spirituality in the agenda of leisure activities. Stebbins (1982) introduces the concepts of serious leisure and casual leisure to illustrate, by comparison, what the former refers to, and in a later text (Stebbins 2006) the author introduces a third concept: project-based leisure. Of the three, serious leisure is considered to be the most important and the one that gives name to a new perspective in leisure studies.

Casual leisure is fundamentally focused on hedonism and refers to relatively short or spontaneous activities that bring inherent rewards and do not require special training in advance for bringing satisfaction to the individual (Stebbins 1997). Such activities may include, for example, watching TV, going out to the café for socializing, but also practices classified as deviant (Rojek 2010). By comparison to serious leisure, casual leisure is considered to be substantially less valued by individuals. In addition, the project-based leisure occupies an intermediate position between the two previously discussed and is not necessarily of interest for the present study: as Stebbins says, this third concept refers to occasional activities, which involve the mobilization of the individual for performing specific tasks for a relatively limited period of time, such as the creative involvement in organizing an event (Stebbins 2005).

The importance of practicing an activity from the category of serious leisure started to be exposed through neoliberal lens by specialists in leisure studies, psychologists, company managers, trainers or pedagogues. That happened amid the change of vision regarding the way of how it would be desirable that 'respectable' individuals should spend their free time for the purpose of continuous development and for a better definition of the self. As I have said before, activities that do not require effort to obtain knowledge, skills and benefits, which do not have a certain consistency, begin to be strongly devalued, primarily because they do not provide the subject with the necessary development to achieve success. At the same time, new claims arise that require individuals to use their time wisely and conscientiously. The involvement of individuals in inappropriate activities for the 'self' are perceived as a loss, as a waste of time. According to the specialists interviewed during my research, the practice of alternative forms of spirituality is successfully embraced precisely because that can satisfy all these requirements, being focused especially on the holistic development of the self.

2. Always flexible, autonomous and happy

The capitalism continues to survive largely due to its ability to adapt and accept a plenty of cultural differences (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005). Wrenn (2020: p. 503) said that "capitalism has always and will always depend on a compliant workforce" but we already know from Max Weber (2001) that capitalism cannot survive without devoted people motivated by powerful moral reasons. In this regard, in order to create highly involved employees, corporations sustain programs and adopt motivational strategies focused not so much on material tokens of appreciations (bonuses), but also on constructing an internal motivation, giving the individual the support he/she needs to evolve both professionally and personally. Therefore, other mechanisms are called forward

in order to enhance the employees` degree of involvement, motivation and security. Such mechanisms can be derived from alternative forms of spirituality (Joblin 2009; Vasconcelos 2010; Wrenn 2020). These motivation and fidelization mechanisms, that have emerged in the USA in the 1970s, are not so frequently utilised in Romanian corporations, compared to other Western countries, but some ideas, principles and practices are starting to be increasingly felt in the corporate environment after 2008 (Gog 2016). In other words, the corporate vision on the plan by which employees become more productive can be much more easily obtained through encouraging the participation in personal development courses, professional development courses and programs meant to connect one to his/her spiritual being (meditation techniques, yoga, etc.). “The ultimate promise of all these programs is the control of certain individual techniques and practices through which the individual can easily fulfill personal goals, while discovering one`s potential and identifying the areas in which one can become fully performant” (Tobias 2016: p. 132). This can be obtained without sacrificing the well-being of the individual.

The social and economic changes (among which new global policies, the development of technologies) that have taken place in recent decades have contributed to a new perception upon labor and a shift regarding the role of employees in the companies. It is well known the fact that organizations put an enormous pressure on workers of all levels to serve their companies. The individuals, pressured by organization and a highly sense of self-preservation, usually were complaining about the lack of time, lack of energy and a boring existence. But in the last decade, especially since the global crisis of 2008, some changes were produced and the view of work received a new interpretation. The growing interest of organizations in spirituality is being studied by several researchers. As Vasconcelos (2010) said „the spiritual paradigm has gradually become from an apparent fad management to a respectful theme given that it is attracting increasingly intellectual curiosity and personal research for understanding this phenomenon” (p. 607). Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003) also observed the highly interest of the management to introduce short breaks for the employees for their spiritual development. These changes can enact radical transformations on organizations and in the demarcation of work and leisure.

The socio-anthropological literature on the subject matter illustrates that capitalist prosperity is directly bound to the level of involvement of those producing the capital. The involvement of the latter is not determined only by materialistic rewards, but one must find other ways and forms of motivating the staff, morally and affectively (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005). It is certain that organizations make real efforts to increase the employee`s degree of involvement and motivations and my analysis focuses on the ways in which these new forms of spirituality and techniques of subjectification contribute to this plan.

The present study does not aim to produce a thorough analysis of neoliberalism, but it is important to remember that outside this framework practices in the area of spiritual development would have been very difficult to be perceived as leisure forms. These new forms of leisure are very popular these days and help to the development of adaptive mechanisms to the society.

As I mentioned before, a significant part of programs focused on spiritual development have become an important part of daily life and were infiltrated into the leisure practices. For a better understanding of the topic of my research I started to frequent courses centered on prosperity and success, courses that focus on happiness and others which address the individual`s spirituality and I was surprised by the web of options that I found. Almost all the participants (my fellows during these events) were

employees in corporations. Their levels of knowledge were different and also their capability to absorb the information. After few months spent in different programs, I decided to add only one spiritual center, which will henceforth be called T.H. There I started to interact with highly educated persons, keen on developing their careers and anchored in social and economic life that constantly frequent these programs. First of all I was interested to find out what made them get involved in a process of personal and spiritual development. I was also interested to receive an answer to the following questions: What was it that changed on a professional and personal levels?; When did they start acknowledging these changes?; What is the meaning that they attribute to their involvement in these actions?

A few months ago I came to T.H. for the first time out of curiosity and, at the same time, because I felt that I needed to make a change. I met L., P. and C., I saw the happiness in their eyes and I told myself that I want to live with this sense of happiness, especially since I've been through a lot of real hardships in life. I enjoy coming here... not only because it's relaxing and energizing at the same time, it's more than that. [...] Professionally... I actually thought about this, it would be cool to have a team-building with S. It's something else and the benefits are long-term. Professionally... directly... I am more alive, I feel eager to find new challenges in what I do. Not because something changes with the job, but because now I can focus better and I feel more alive. (Anca, 33, employee).

Several common aspects emerged from the interviews and one of the first mentions was 'a generalized sense of well-being'. More concretely, the respondents associated their own 'well-being' with an excellent self-knowledge, plenty of confidence, balance, happiness, contentment and independence. The contribution of the trainers to this state of well-being was strongly valued by all. Although no one has neglected the significant role of the programs, some of the participants have mentioned that the improvement of the 'self' is first of all an individual job.

Therefore, personal or spiritual development programs are often seen as a panacea, as time and space for improving certain aspects strictly related to the individual and his potential. For almost all respondents, the spiritual practices represent an important part of their lives that change the way they look at their time. After the beginning of the process of spiritual development, time began to be valued. A lot of 'casual activities' have been replaced by meditation, spiritual readings, or different kind of exercises. What I want to say is that, for most of the respondents, spiritual practices have come to take place of meaningless recreational activities. In other words, a part of casual leisure activities have been replaced by serious leisure.

One day is still 24 hours. I have to prioritize what is important to me. Time is valuable. Meditation represents for me gained time.... Energizing time [...] I donated my TV. (Marius, 29, employee).

During the fieldwork I took an interview to one of the managers about the way he relates to alternative forms of spirituality. I also asked him about the extent of these practices in the corporation in which he manages. The corporation doesn't propose spiritual development plans, only personal development workshops. More precisely, this company doesn't invite gurus or shamans, but personal trainers are often invited. The

purpose of personal trainers is to guide employees and to offer `intelligent` tools to improve personal abilities. Those employees who succeed in proving that they have improved some abilities during the personal development trainings are the most likely to be the next leaders. As I mentioned, the (team) leaders are chosen taking into account their abilities to discover what motivates each and every employee, encouraging him or her to invest in their potential. Thus, even the charge of motivating the personnel produces changes at an individual level and in order for this to happen one needs a profound knowledge of the key-persons who deserve all the investments beyond the formal office activity.

For some time now, I have been paying close attention to the emotional abilities of those I promote. We are not looking for good professionals only, but also for people with a good vibe. People who are willing to push their limits, to motivate others are my target. This kind of person allows others to grow.” (Manager I)

The manager I have interviewed considers that besides all the professional development trainings (technical trainings), other programs and courses cannot be imposed for every member of the staff, just in case someone will find it interesting or useful. Individual quests are the ones who really contribute to a personal development scheme and, without being intrusive the company serves the purpose of giving support throughout this process. This was also the case of my interviewee, who discovered yoga practices after many job-related travels to India.

At first it was ok. Then I was more and more worn out morally, physically. I knew I wouldn't last long. My lifestyle was too demanding. I wasn't taking a break for years. I was impossible to have a stable relationship. But let's talk about now! Or, I think that I want to present you how I started to love yoga. We all think we know what yoga is. But no! I needed a special moment to discover it. It was during my third visit to India. After that I discovered myself and this is wonderful. (Adi, employee, 34 years).

During the individual conversations with the employees on the topic of the training organized by their companies, I've asked them to talk about what they appreciate most about these experiences, what matters to them and to what extent they consider this knowledge applicable in their day-to-day life, both personally and professionally. Regardless of the courses or programs that I may refer, the common point was creating a state of well-being and the hope that any problems the subjects might have could be overcome through their own means. This new type of fabricated subjectivity allows individuals to bear the `burden` of freedom, creating an unprecedented sense of responsibility for their own destinies. What these experiences yield is a boundless faith in their own strength, a strong feeling of security and a proactive attitude – just the most sought after ingredients in the corporate environment. Although I've always found in each discourse that every individual needs to awaken their own conscience, to detach themselves from what others want and to choose their own path, I've equally observed the fact that one`s path towards their goal is not always easy and each life experience has its own purpose. The examples I've received mostly came from the corporate environment, like the next transcript: *one cannot become a good leader unless they start from the*

bottom, unless they are familiar with the needs of junior employees and with what motivates them (Dan, team leader).

One of the most common ideas that remained from the programs I participated in was the need for self-knowledge, which involves a much stronger focus of the individual to the self, to his/her own feelings and the necessity of maximizing inner abilities. All these aspects can be improved through various procedures, techniques or readings. Another important aspect that remained very clear in my vision was the necessity of living in the present. The spirit of presentism contributes to a better management of all life situations and it is believed that it increases the efficiency. The third retained idea, common in most of the interviews, is the importance of gaining balance. To paraphrase several interviewees, gaining balance depends exclusively on the individual, on the way he wants to arrange all aspects of his life and on the way he decides to relate to society. Other topics discussed during the meetings, retained by the subjects were: gaining happiness, achieving success, holistic development of mind, body and spirit, increasing creativity.

The interviews showed an increased interest of individuals in recreational practices that contribute to the enhancement of certain skills or occupations that are ultimately related to self-government; even if part of their free time is directed towards unproductive activities, the most valued were those to which they can give meaning. The most valuable activities were considered those that had the ability to facilitate the development of certain skills transferable to other levels of life. Despite their great diversity, these programs provide batteries of very similar information to each other, projecting similar lifestyles and primarily requiring self-responsibility of the subject, along with maximizing a long series of characteristics necessary to become more efficient, competitive, entrepreneurial, "successful" people in a given society. The appreciation of programs comes from the fact that they manage to transmit certain information that can be integrated by the individual in everyday life and facilitate adaptation.

As I mentioned before, my focus was also on the discourses of trainers and spiritual facilitator. Without any exception, all of them have discussed about workplace satisfaction, outside the material outline. Also, the presented life-stories of all trainers were similar – professional success, obtaining large financial rewards, but the lack of happiness drove them towards changing their life-view and their perspectives on work. All the aspects highlighted by the speakers/trainer, on one hand, and by the company, on the other hand – autonomy, morals, communication, proactive attitude, motivations and clear purposes – lead towards the uncontested acceptance of exploitation. Thus, not only is the sense of loyalty and belonging to the company's working framework produced, but more importantly, this is the manner through which involvement in high quality working standards is developed.

What I found during my research is that a significant part of workers have a new way to look at work and leisure. The discrepancy between work and leisure has never been so thin. For example, meditation (which can be practiced for few minutes during the work schedule) is seen as a recreational activity, but it provides the energy needed to continue the work.

A strong meritocratic discourse was easily noticed in many discussions, in which the well-being and psychological comfort of the individual have been seen directly dependent on personal actions and the ways in which the person decided to think. Quite often the idea has been circulated that for the state of health (physical and mental) the first

person responsible is the individual. In these circumstances, leisure practices have to support mental and physical comfort and health.

About a half of the respondents took into discussion the concept of success. Although I had not planned to discuss this subject, close connections had been established between leisure practices and success. From the respondents' perspective, the success is largely a consequence of personal leisure options. Being perceived as a time that is not allocated to necessary activities, but rather as a residual one (Roman, 2006; Roberts, 2006), leisure can be consumed as everyone wants, accordingly it can be converted in certain practices that improve specific skills that lead to individual "progress". Success can not only be achieved through leisure practices, but it can be the most favorable environment to show it.

Let's be serious! How many of us were born successful? A few! You make your own success, but first you have to have a passion and cultivate that in your free time! (Cosmin, 37, team leader)

3. Final considerations

In order to be successful and to hope for achievements, employees must develop special skills. It is no longer enough for individuals to be only competent at work, they must constantly focus on the development of three aspects of their life: the professional, the personal and the spiritual. As I tried to show in this study, a possible failure, on one of the three levels is exposed as a personal failure, as the inability to consult and internalize the proper "models". The great diversity of recreational offers and techniques of spiritual development give each individual the possibility to decide what exactly suits him and at the same time makes him responsible if the method does not give the expected results. Presenting the situation this way, the individual is the only one who can take responsibility, both in case of success and in case of failure.

The well-being of others becomes an effect, a derivation of all the individual efforts to evolve personally, spiritually and, of course, professionally. This idea is paramount in the actual working context, because the corporate self is more than frequently invoked in trainers' and corporate leaders' discourses and marked even in the inscriptions that decorate the working environment. The constant aspect in all the trainings I've attended is the idea that personal change (in the sense of personal enhancement) isn't produced in the absence of an individual effort and all the external factors constitute mere tools meant to simplify the individual efforts. During the courses and workshops I've attended as part of the fieldwork I frequently heard that *each and every one of us becomes responsible for the effectiveness of these tools*. The language in which the trainers explain how one can evolve is undressed by all the subtleties and made very clear. Each step is quantified so that every person will know when the personal upgrade is produced. One of my subjects said that the daily discourse in the corporation he is a part of contains the following phrase: *You're the one who delivers value!*, a message addressed by the team-leader. The same message is made visible even during presentations and trainings held by the company, pressing the individuals to truly 'deliver value'. The employees are given a task they need to manage at an individual level, searching for and accessing inner resources in order to perform at the highest level possible. These charges are not necessarily imposed upon the employee by his superiors, but rather the product of a corporate self with an astonishing work ethic. Looking back a few years from now, we can conclude that all institutional politics were centered around the idea of 'control' (Rose and

Miller, 2013). Nowadays `control` succumbs to `self-control` (Binklet 2014; Rojek 2012) and subjectification techniques become increasingly important for the corporate environment. As I strove to outline earlier, there is a pressure on the individual, who needs to perform, to be fully responsible and capable to create his/ her vision and purposes.

Corporations have been manifesting a growing interest for self-managed individuals, both as new employees and as a target for developing the existing workforce. The various development programs being offered, such as courses aimed at developing professional skills, soft-skills, meaning personal and inter-personal skills, as well as those aimed towards spiritual development, they all carry the underlying message that self-improvement is fundamentally an individual endeavor and it is the individual who bears the ultimate responsibility for their own destiny. The benefits of this focus on subjectification are twofold for the corporations in terms of employees: on the one hand they take ownership of their work, they are proactive and act as their own supervisors, and on the other hand they take full responsibility for their own path, including potential failure, blaming their own lack of self-discipline instead of the corporation.

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Gender-based inequalities and discrimination in professional careers: An overview

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Abstract

The unbalanced gender-specific division of labour emerged as early as the end of the nineteenth century, when women work was exploited and underpaid in the wage market. The gendered professional inequalities between women and men continue to persist even today. The present paper aims to provide an outline of the main concepts used for analysing gendered inequalities in professional careers and to delineate the most significant explanations regarding this phenomenon. Besides gender stereotypes and gender roles, other terms which conceptualize the gender-based inequalities and discrimination in professional careers are addressed, such as gender pay gap, horizontal segregation, evaluative discrimination, vertical segregation, glass ceiling, sticky floor, and gender status beliefs. Furthermore, there are discussed both theoretical economic approaches, which emphasize the role of human capital and explain discrimination of women in the labour market by the expectations on their lower productivity, and theoretical sociological approaches, which highlight other aspects, such as differences in power, social and cultural norms and values, and take into consideration the importance of social capital, social interactions and networks, and social closure in professional career and ascension. In the last part of the paper the key aspects of the debate are emphasized and some remarks about the necessity of larger, more integrative and practice-oriented researches in this regard are made.

Keywords: *Gender inequality; gender pay gap; gender-based discrimination in professional careers; human capital; social capital; gendered organizations.*

1. The social division of labor and gender inequality. An analytical and conceptual framework

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, technological developments responsible for overproduction also led to new forms of rationalized work, which eventually materialized in the form of Fordism (Hennessy 2000: p. 103). Heteronormativity has become a historical component of labor, which has amplified both the social division of labor by gender in the family and at work, and the exploitation of women's labor in the wage labor market. Given that heteronormativity involves a hierarchy of genders, it has served to legitimize and naturalize the gender division of labor.

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Although women have always worked, the economic role played by women has focused mainly on “actual work from home, which could be combined with raising children” (Bergmann 1986: p. 7). This situation eventually led to a dominant feature of workforce behavior: working women were usually segregated, practicing a few professions often categorized as “women’s work”, and these professions are among the worst paid in the labor market (McCarthy Snyder 1994: p. 4).

Through various analogies and associations, socially shared “certainties” about the “gendering” of work have begun to become matters of self-evidence over time (Ernst 1999: p. 28). This may include the assumption of mental and physical skills and abilities “given by nature”, the preferences of men and women for certain professions and behaviors, as well as the idea of gender differences and its consequence: the naturalization of social inequality between genders (ibidem).

The allocation of men and women to certain activities and professions has been significantly supported by so-called common-sense knowledge, shared at the social level, with regard to the characteristic features of women and men. This “knowledge” takes often the form of *gender stereotypes*. These are cognitive structures, clichés, through which certain cultural representations are attributed to genders. Gender stereotypes include descriptive components – “traditional” assumptions about how men and women are, what traits they have and how they behave, as well as prescriptive components – assumptions about how men and women should be or how they should behave (Eckes 2004: p. 165).

Socially shared expectations of how individuals should behave according to the gender that has been socially assigned to them have often been conceptualized as *gender roles*. These are social roles encompassing a range of behaviors and attitudes that are generally considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable for a person based on her biological or perceived gender. The internalization of gender roles in values and norms is reproduced in everyday interactions through “*doing gender*” (West and Zimmerman 1987, Busch and Holst 2012, Ruppert and Voigt 2012).

The application of the knowledge based on stereotypes and thought patterns to characterize concrete persons can be called *stereotyping* (Eckes 2004: p. 167). This means that people unconsciously make simplistic assumptions about others, classify and assign individuals they come in contact with in certain groups, only based on these clichés or “cognitive shortcuts” (Seca 2005: p. 628).

However, this stereotypical categorization is not neutral, but involves hierarchy: in the sense of “expectation states theory” (Berger, Conner and Fisek 1974, Berger et al. 1977), women and men are seen different according to environment and situation in terms of competence, and therefore a different status is assigned to them in each action situation (Busch and Holst 2012: p. 83). In this perspective, the masculine gender would be superior to the feminine one (Ruppert and Voigt 2012: p. 140), and from this idea derives the “devaluation hypothesis”, according to which the “feminine work” is underestimated and devaluated, while men (under identical conditions) are attributed higher performance, productiveness and professional skills (ibidem: p. 140-141). In this regard, occupations experiencing a significant inflow of female workers are devalued, both in status and in pay (Busch 2018: p. 1351).

A consequence of these beliefs and practices established over time is that women and men tend to be segregated in certain professions and sectors of the economy. The over- or under-representation of a gender in a field has been conceptualized by the term “*horizontal segregation*”, a phenomenon that plays a key role in explaining income

differences between men and women. Since women's paid labor is devalued, so-called "female professions" (in other words, professions mostly practiced by women) or less socially recognized occupational fields (such as those involving nursing and care work) are also underestimated, and therefore less remunerated. The higher the percentage of women in a given profession, occupation or trade, the lower the gain in that profession, occupation or trade (Busch and Holst 2012: p. 84). This interdependence is referred to in specialized literature by the term "*evaluative discrimination*" (ibidem).

In addition to horizontal segregation, another form of discrimination against women in the labor market is the phenomenon of "*vertical segregation*" (often denominated also by the term "*hierarchical segregation*"). It refers to the fact that women reach the "top" of the professional pyramid much less often than men, in other words, women reach the management and leading positions of organizations, companies and business firms much rarer, both in public and private sectors. This phenomenon is also conceptualized by the expression "*glass ceiling*". This metaphor refers to the obstacles that arise in women's professional careers and to the invisible barriers that stop their path to leadership and decision-making positions in organizations. Research in companies and firms (Hamrick 1994, Wirth 2001, Böing 2009) has often revealed that in many of these women, regardless of education or skills, failed to exceed a certain level in the hierarchy. While women are predominantly present at the lower and middle levels of an organization, they are a minority at the leadership levels.

Another metaphor in the specialized literature used to describe this phenomenon is that of the "*sticky floor*" (Wirth 2001). This refers to the factors and forces that compel women to remain in the lower positions of the organizational pyramids (Bettio and Verashchagina 2008). Factors that hinder women's professional advancement include, on the one hand, "*gender status beliefs*", according to which female gender roles are too incompatible with the demands of a leadership position (Holst and Busch 2009: p. 8), and on the other hand, the so-called "*male power rituals*", in other words, the "verbal and habitual rules and games of an organization" (Ruppert and Voigt 2012: p. 141), which include and amplify scepticism about women in leadership positions. Thus, the term "sticky floor" describes the discriminatory employment pattern that keeps women at the bottom of the job scale.

In this context, the concept of "*gender pay gap*" (or "*gender wage gap*") is used to describe gender-based pay gaps. The disadvantage and discrimination of women in terms of salary has been illustrated and verified by numerous studies and research (Blau, Ferber and Winkler 2006) and amounted to 23% at European level according to Eurostat 2008 (Holst and Busch 2009: p. 18).

Gender pay gap can be found at all levels of the vertical division of labor. This distance has not become smaller in recent decades and is therefore a persistent element of gender inequality. It is also a basic indicator of the unequal social treatment of women in working life, because in this differentiation of remuneration based on gender are condensed all the facets of the problem that women have to struggle in their professional life (Ruppert and Voigt 2012: p. 139).

Subsequently, firms and companies – including modern organizations (Funder, Dörhöfer and Rauch 2006) – are still far from achieving gender equality. Inequality and lower status of women in the labor market can be recognized by numerous indicators, such as: horizontal segregation and concentration of women in underappreciated, devalued professions and occupations, often categorized as "typically female"; ranking in organizations according to gender; underestimation of women's work; differences in

income between women and men in the same positions and consequently the so-called “gender pay gap”, i.e. the average difference between the aggregate wages of a man and a woman, a difference determined only by the different gender; the social, structural, cultural and ideological barriers that women, unlike men, face in their professional ascent to leadership positions. It seems that many organizations still resort to traditional practices (Müller 2013: p. 489) that involve gender role models and stereotyping.

2. Theoretical approaches. Explanations of gender-based professional inequalities and discrimination

Gender inequalities and gender-based discrimination in people’s professional lives have been described and explained through various theoretical perspectives in the socio-human sciences. Especially theoretical approaches in economics and sociology assert interesting theses, arguing diverse viewpoints and discussing a variety of issues involved. The main theoretical approaches and explanations regarding gender inequalities in terms of professional career are outlined below.

2.1 Economic approaches

Economic theories place particular emphasis on human capital. This would be the decisive factor for justifying inequalities between men and women, inequalities that take the form of income disparities and professional gender segregation.

The central element of all the models that can be included in the “*theory of human capital*” is the idea that the productivity and, therefore, the value of the worker in the labor market are determined by his/her knowledge and skills (Hinz and Abraham 2005: p. 33). Education and professional qualifications must be acquired and require capital investment – not only money, but also time and intellectual effort. These models consider social actors to be completely rational. Thus, the different investments in human capital of women and men are interpreted as “the result of rational cost-benefit calculations guided by preferences” (Busch and Holst 2012: p. 82). This also means that people anticipate different chances of using human capital. Because women – more than men – place family-related activities at the center of their lives and take into account the “dead times” caused by “career breaks” (e.g. due to the birth and raising of children), they choose (based on rational calculations) especially professions that involve lower costs, but also lower opportunities, which are better suited to family activities and which do not oppose possible interruptions caused by maternity. Therefore, women invest in advance less in human capital. In this way is gender inequality in the labor market explained and analyzed by the theoretical economic perspectives.

Similarly, the *theoretical model of discrimination* analyzes the wage discrimination of women and places the demand for education at the center of the explanations. According to this model, the existing processes of discrimination in the labor market, as well as the anticipation of some breaks and, therefore, of “dead times” in their careers, are significant factors that influence women to invest less in education, respectively in human capital, contributing, in this way, to perpetuating and intensifying inequality (Hinz and Abraham 2005: p. 35). The first author who spoke about the economic model of discrimination was G. S. Becker (1957/1971). According to Becker, the employers have a “taste for discrimination”, which means that hiring some workers, such as minority workers, has a disadvantageous value. Therefore, these workers “may have to ‘compensate’ employers by being more productive at a given wage or, equivalently, by accepting a lower wage for identical productivity” (Autor 2003: p. 3).

The *statistical discrimination model* deals with the relationship between belonging to a certain group (e.g. women, immigrants, students from certain lower ranked schools, etc.), expectations about their (lower) productivity, and discrimination arising from these expectations. In other words, according to this model, employers make hiring, salary and promotion decisions based on the ‘predicted performance’ of people, and these predictions are based on gender, race, age, disability. From this point of view, an individual is attributed the productivity of the group to which he/she belongs statistically, without taking into consideration his/her real abilities or competencies (Hinz and Abraham 2005: p. 35)

Although statistical discrimination is unlawful (Autor 2003: p. 11), the more so as women, minorities, people over the age of 40 and people with disabilities are “protected groups”, hence employers not being allowed to hire and dismiss them “at will”, in practice this is a phenomenon that occurs frequently (ibidem). Thus, in this case, a vicious circle works: the anticipation of a lower remuneration leads to a lower investment in human capital and hence a lower productivity. This process can be described by the expressions “*self-reinforcement effect*” (Hinz and Abraham 2005: p. 36) or “*self-fulfilling prophecy*” (Veith 1988: p 36).

In this context it can be mentioned that P. Bourdieu (2005) also considers that the androcentric perspective is always legitimized by practices that it itself determines. Due to the fact that the *dispositions* are the product of the incorporation of prejudices against women, and this incorporation is naturalized, women can only constantly confirm these prejudices. This is “the logic of a curse in the strict sense of a pessimistic self-fulfilling prophecy, which leads to what it itself predicts and results in its own truth” (Bourdieu 2005: p. 62).

2.2 Sociological approaches

Theories and approaches from the perspective of the social sciences, on the other hand, take into consideration the mutual relations and dependencies between the labor market and other spheres of society, and emphasize in their explanations these interrelationships and interdependencies. Also, in such approaches, explanatory factors of inequality such as norms, values, evaluations, and social differences in power are highlighted and analyzed. Theoretical conceptualizations target, for example, labor and personnel in the central and marginal areas of the economy, as well as the so-called “*dual economy*”, to which two sectors belong: the core and the periphery (Hinz and Abraham 2005: p. 42). While “core” companies belong to key industries and offer jobs accordingly, with stable employment opportunities and high wages, “periphery” companies have little power and offer lower paid and unstable jobs (ibidem). Minorities and – disproportionately – many women work mainly in this peripheral segment of the labor market.

Power differences in the labor market are explained not only by belonging to a certain social class or by monopoly positions, but also by social attributions and stereotypes, a common example from this point of view being the unfavorable treatment of women. In this regard, the “cultural system of the two genders” or “gendered organizations” are discussed. Gender, as well as belonging to a certain ethnic group, is among the significant factors used in social definition processes, these processes being an essential source for unequal power both in social relations in general and in the labor market (ibidem: p. 44).

At the social level, unpaid household and family work is allocated to women, while men are assigned paid work. This pattern, called *Male-Breadwinner-Modell*, reproduces the gendered division of labor and presents an “ideal of the family” in which men provide, earning a salary for the entire family, while women do domestic labor and care for family members. This results further on in assignments of skills and abilities that act to the detriment of women in the labor market (Busch and Holst 2012: p. 83). These socially established attributions and normative impositions are learned in the process of gender socialization, through which the “masculine” and “feminine” models or ideals are imprinted and internalized (Veith 1988: p 34). In this way, both gender-specific attitudes or gender-based preferences for certain professions (hence the idea of “gendered professions”), and the practices that discriminate women in organizations and in the labor market in general can be explained (Busch and Holst 2012: p. 83).

Another significant sociological approach is the *perspective of social networks*. Social networks are determinant factors that influence interchange relations in the labor market. These social relations of individual social actors and their general structure are also known as *social capital*. Various studies (see Hinz and Abraham 2005: p. 52) have shown empirically that in the search for a job an essential role is played by the informal contacts of a person. There can be “strong ties” and “weak ties” in the social networks (Granovetter 1973). The more the ties of an individual are, especially the more, diverse and numerous “weak” and “distant” ties of a person are, the higher his or her chances of finding a job (Scheidegger and Osterloh 2005: p. 124). In terms of career path and career ascension of a person within an organization, positioning in a network of social relationships is still more important than the quality of the tie (“strong” vs. “weak”) (Hinz and Abraham 2005: p. 52). Networks build the channels through which information is transmitted, and certain positions within the network, such as “bridges” and “structural holes”, play a key role (ibidem). Therefore, relationships within the social network play a central role in the process of professional career development. They “channelize the flow of resources, regulate access to job opportunities, provide guidance and support, enhance influence and reputation and increase the likelihood – as well as the pace – of promotion” (Scheidegger and Osterloh 2005: p. 123-124).

Social networks can play a great role in job markets by providing assorted matching, i.e. employers can find employees with similar characteristics by searching them through networks, information asymmetries, in hiring models with adverse selection, as well as by simple insurance motives, since networks are helping to cope with the uncertainty determined by the turnovers of the labor market (Calvo-Armengol and Jackson 2004: p. 442-443). Because in flexible organizations the interactions and possibilities for choosing interactive relationships are more numerous, in such organizations the relationships in the social network are more important than in bureaucratic organizations, where the freedom to choose contacts at work is less (Scheidegger and Osterloh 2005).

Another aspect of particular relevance underlined by sociological approaches is the quality of information. *Social closure*, a phenomenon encountered in all areas of society, refers to the processes by which members of a group preserve their resources by drawing boundaries, building identities and excluding others or blocking access to others to their own group. The sociological phenomenon of social closure is also described in a structural perspective through social networks (Hinz and Abraham 2005: p. 56). The perspective of networks allows a reconstruction of the advantages and disadvantages of closed or open social systems and groups. With regard to gender differences in

organizations, it has long been recognized (Kanter 1977, apud Scheidegger and Osterloh 2005: p. 123) that women have more limited access to informal networks than men. The question remains, for which further investigations are needed, to what extent the relative lack of power of women in organizations and their lower share in management positions are correlated with their precarious participation and insufficient integration into informal professional networks.

Despite the relevance of all these aspects, the investigation of social networks in the empirical research of the labor market has still remained poorly developed (Hinz and Abraham 2005). Also, in explaining gender differences in organizations, little attention has been paid so far to the role of interaction networks (Scheidegger and Osterloh 2005).

3. Conclusions

The unbalanced gender division of the labor force has made its presence felt since the end of the 19th century, when women's labor in the paid labor market was exploited and inappropriately paid, below men's wage rates. Numerous research and statistics highlight the underestimation of women's work. The "devaluation hypothesis" describes the situation in the labor market in which women's work is underestimated and devalued, while men with the same training and skills as women are assigned superior performance and professional skills. Gender roles, gender stereotypes and stereotyping that are applied to specific people are proving to be the social factors that continue to contribute to the persistence of gender imbalances in the labor market.

Professional gender inequalities can be analyzed from different theoretical perspectives. Economic approaches, such as the theory of human capital, the discrimination model and the statistical discrimination model, are distinguished in their explanations by highlighting human capital and assigned expectations, based only on belonging to a certain gender. On the other hand, approaches in the social sciences emphasize the importance of issues such as social differences in power, but also of the social and cultural norms, values and evaluations at the social level. In this context, terms such as "dual economy", "cultural system of the two genders", "gendered organizations" and "gendered professions" are used in order to explain gender inequalities and differences of power in the labor market. Moreover, through the analyses from the theoretical perspective of social networks, the role of interactive social networks and of social capital is highlighted, both in finding a job and in career and professional advancement. As there is a process of mutual interdependence between the labor market and social networks, examining the process of formation and evolution of social networks can provide an overview of how the labor market works and how the social structures co-evolve, and how they mutually influence each other.

Although much progress has been made recently in harmonizing the opportunities of women and men in the labor market, many gender inequalities in professional careers still persist. Also, in terms of empirical studies, there are still research questions that need further investigation. These refer, on the one hand, to finding more detailed explanations regarding the factors that maintain gender differences in the workplace, given that at legal and 'objective' level gender equality is – or should be – already a fact. On the other hand, more studies are needed to bring practical and applicable results, useful in formulating measures and taking effective action to achieve professional equality between women and men.

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Psychosocial dimensions of school failure

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Abstract

If we start from the premise that the role of school is to train the student in relation to a social ideal, and the school fulfills an obvious socialization function, it follows that school failure is the failure of socialization in the school space. This failure can be interpreted both as a cause and as an effect of school dropout. The inability of the environment to provide the student with a supportive framework that meets his needs and to which he can adapt, causes him to give up attending school. Of course, in this situation, we discuss school dropout as a result of a personal decision of the student, motivated to give up the fact that he cannot adapt to the school environment. In this article, we aim to find out which are the individual and social factors that make school failure possible and how the two categories of factors are correlated. We will critically analyze a series of models in psychology and psycho-sociology, then we will highlight the importance of negative socialization in peer groups, as an important predictor of school failure, and we will finally discuss the issue of school phobia and methods of intervention in this condition.

Keywords: *School failure; school dropout; school absenteeism; negative socialization; school phobia; psychopedagogical intervention.*

1. Introduction. Individual and social premises of school failure

One of the research questions we started from is how much the individual psychological factors matter in adapting or not adapting the student to the conditions assumed by the school environment and to what extent these factors can lead him to the decision (explicit or implicit, consciously assumed or no) to withdraw from the school space. A first answer comes from psychoanalysis, which blames the maladaptation on a weak superego, considering the antisocial act as the expression of a morbid condition, a deficiency of a psychopathological nature (psychosis), which has its origin in a certain type of personality - psychopathic personality - which, regardless of the social environment where it is born and evolves, ends up committing criminal acts." (Banciu, Rădulescu and Voicu 1985: p. 112). School maladaptation would be an indicator of such a personality type.

Another answer to our question comes from the perspective of developmental psychology. According to the theory of moral development, the maladaptation to school norms must be understood in terms of inconsistencies in the succession of individual moral development (from the pre-conventional to the conventional and, finally, to the post-conventional). The school can discourage this evolution in certain situations, the perverse effect being precisely the non-connection to the school norm: "The structure of the school can implicitly encourage a certain type of morality - for example, an

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authoritarian, conventional one. Some teachers' efforts to help students reach the post-conventional stage of moral development are hit by the frustration generated by the school atmosphere, which promotes only the principles specific to previous stages." (Csatary 1980: p. 117). In turn, Erikson blames school deviance on not resolving age-specific internal conflicts: diligence versus inferiority, respectively awareness of one's own identity versus confusion of roles (Swaterman 1988: pp. 147-184).

More recently, Bong and Skaalvik have developed an interesting theory, also in the area of developmental psychology, based on motivational research. This theory, called the theory of the academic self, considers the influence of self-esteem cognitive ability on performance in performing the task that involves intellectual effort (Popoviciu 2013: p. 264). According to the two, the academic self can be understood from the perspective of two analytical frameworks - the external framework and the internal framework. The first of them considers the comparisons made by the individual between his performance and the average performance of others (it is the case of self-assessment of his own position in relation to the positions of others, very obvious after finding the grades obtained at the control papers, when students evaluate their own grade obtained by others). Therefore, if the self is formed by comparison with others, this law of psychology is all the more valid in the case of the academic self. The second framework, the internal one, considers the synchronous comparisons between domains (comparison of grades obtained in history with those obtained in mathematics, for example) or diachronic comparisons between variations within the same field (grades currently obtained in mathematics, compared to notes from the previous year). The internal framework also refers to the discrepancy between the ideal and the real (how the grades should be according to the students' aspirations and how they are in reality).

In the construction of the academic self, individual factors, family factors, collegial factors, school environment factors and community factors intervene, being, in essence, a psychosociocultural construct (Popoviciu 2013: p. 264). A weak academic self, usually correlated with low self-esteem, are important predictors of school failure, requiring therapeutic intervention.

2. Positive socialization and negative socialization in pair groups

Man is formed as a social being in society, through direct contact with his peers. Social interaction is the necessary condition, from the first years of life, for the newborn to become a member of society. The concept of socialization (Hatos 2006; Otovescu 2009) refers, from a psychological point of view, to the process of self-construction and personality structuring, and, from an anthropological point of view, it is the process of acquiring the fundamental cultural elements for living in society. In the first 7 years of life, when primary socialization occurs, the family is almost the only agent of socialization, and during the secondary socialization, the school and peer groups play a decisive role. As each pair group develops a specific culture, it may conform to the dominant culture (positive socialization) or, conversely, may conflict with generally accepted norms and values (negative socialization). Negative socialization in peer groups, which become reference groups, can be considered a major cause of school failure.

Theoretically, but also practically, in order to know how to intervene, the question is: Why do peer groups appear, which encourage a negative socialization and, through this, an antisocial behavior? A. Cohen explains the deviation from the norm by institutionalizing new cultural systems (delinquent subcultures, also called countercultures) that develop and function within the global cultural system (basic cultural system). Cohen

focuses on the research of "neighborhood gangs", demonstrating that the development of a parallel norm comes as a natural reaction to the frustrations and anxieties generated by global culture, as well as to the inconsistencies and contradictions of the system of values and norms. At the base of the establishment of delinquent subcultures are a series of shared motivations (fears, frustrations, conflicts) which, although manifested at the psychological level, result from the structural configuration of society (Bordua 1961: pp. 119-136). The similar psychological condition is the variable-cause of the coagulation of delinquent subcultures, which, once established, in turn generate effects on the social structure that facilitated their crystallization. From this point of view, the theoretical model described by Cohen tends to be included in the category of phenomenological psychosociological approaches (Ciuchi 2011: p. 47).

Cohen criticizes the alienation encouraged by the urban environment and capitalist society, with delinquent subcultures viewed from the perspective of "parallel societies," capable of distributing high status positions to those who would not have had the opportunity to obtain them in the dominant cultural system. anxiety, to provide a value-attitude system not for the purpose of replacing or deconstructing the dominant one, but as a compensatory complement to the latter's shortcomings (Bordua 1961). Inevitably, the delinquent subculture ends up directing its resources against the dominant culture, without this being the motivation for its establishment, but only the form of its manifestation. Members of the subculture do not act rationally-utilitarianly, in terms of ends and means, as in Robert Merton's theory, but unconsciously and irrationally, driven by subconscious desires, only to consolidate status within the group and strengthen the subculture (Bordua 1961).

An important exegete and continuator of Cohen's conception - David Bordua - notes in his synthesis of the theory of delinquent subcultures: "From school and family, some boys are much more inclined to street life." (Bordua 1961: p. 123). Moreover, "when a working-class boy begins to attend school or other middle-class-controlled institutions and hits the evaluation grid of that class, he inevitably faces great disapproval, rejection, and even punishment. In short, in the eyes of the evaluator, it does not matter. Cohen refers to this by the problem of lack of status, which is the fundamental problem of adaptation, to which the delinquent subculture is a solution." (Bordua 1961: p. 124).

Following the line of neo-Marxist conflict, Cohen is surprised by the degenerative evolution of capitalism in the first half of the previous century, seeing in the disadvantaged status of the lower social classes the cause of their non-integration into the school system, which would have thought only for the upper classes. Subsequently, the same factors would make integration into the community and society difficult. The author insists on the psychological mechanisms that determine the exponents of the lower classes to access the subcultural values and norms, without being able to highlight the differentiation criteria. The theory does not explain the situations of social success of many young people in the lower classes, nor the very high frequency of antisocial behaviors committed by solitary individuals, not integrated in delinquent subcultures. Moreover, the explanation of the axiological reversal, according to which delinquent subcultures take over and reverse the meaning of the dominant cultural elements, has never been empirically demonstrated.

In addition, another limitation of Cohen's theory is that it does not clarify the mechanisms by which the deviant culture is internalized and the individual conforms to it. To explain the mechanisms of internalization of deviant culture, A. Bandura, through the theory of social learning, brings to attention a number of generally valid mechanisms. The model developed by the well-known psychologist was designed to explain aggressive,

violent acts, but can easily be applied to understand other forms of deviant behavior, which does not necessarily involve aggression. The theory of social-cognitive learning postulates the existence of two mechanisms underlying the internalization of deviant behaviors: direct learning, through punishment / reward systems, and indirect learning, through models (Neculau 1996: p. 438). Direct learning starts from the following observation: behavior in accordance with the rules of a culture (a subculture or dominant culture) has been punished and / or deviant behavior has been rewarded. This is the case of rural families, who resort to rewarding the student (generally implicit) who chooses to take care of household / agricultural affairs to the detriment of school attendance. Since the family has a monopoly on the system of punishments / rewards within the primary socialization, the nature of the value orientations in the family exerts an overwhelming influence on the learned behaviors, respectively on the behaviors rejected by the child. Also, we may observe that aspects of social origin play an important role "in shaping the initial values of education and work: youth from the rural communities give a less importance to extrinsic rewards than youth from the urban communities" (Motoi 2018: p. 144). In other cases, the reference group (peer group to which the student wishes to access) may condition membership by deviant behavior. The reward - that of being accepted in a group - can exceed the costs of absenteeism or abandonment, especially against a background of poor primary socialization.

The student may notice that the sanction, in the case of colleagues who do not attend classes, is insignificant in relation to the benefits they enjoy (freedom, fun, free time, group prestige, membership) and may in turn resort to this strategy. In this sense, what is needed in the prevention of absenteeism is what the common language has called "discipline": from a sociological point of view, the existence of pre-established negative sanctions, severe enough and firmly implemented to discourage undesirable patterns of conduct. On the other hand, it is important to have a system of positive sanctions (rewards) that encourage prosocial behaviors, turning them into role models. Education policy needs to take all these needs into account. According to A. Bandura, the influence of the models offered by the media falls into the category of "indirect learning" (Neculau 1996: p. 438). Promoting negative models of social success that do not rely on education and personal effort, as well as marginalizing positive examples, are common media practices, especially in today's Romanian society.

At the heart of the two forms of learning is the principle of behavioral consistency, according to which "the target can be achieved either by motivational references to current behavior (effective behavior in the past will be encouraged in the future) or by indicating new patterns of behavior. behavior that "promises", through the so-called model of observational learning" (Gavreliuc 2007: p. 201). This model of observational learning has its roots in the psychology of the sociologist Gabriel Tarde, who, although he pertinently explained the mechanisms and forms of social imitation, did not elucidate the subjective motivation of the imitative act. Why do some children imitate antisocial behaviors and others do not? This was the fundamental research question that guided Bandura's studies. Beyond the "rational choice" type calculation, which we described above and which is specific especially to older school ages, the mechanism of imitation by observation that acts in the first years of life and will exert a major influence over the years of school is called by Bandura "modeling", referring to "the attraction of children to strong models and possessing objects desired by them or other traits. By behaving like these role models, children hope to gain their own valuable resources for the future. Bandura's research

continues to greatly influence studies on children's social development." (Sion 2003: p. 21).

3. School phobia or refusal to attend school. Characteristics and methods of intervention

Cognitive psychology emphasizes the importance of a healthy way of thinking and its influence on appropriate, prosocial behavior, in accordance with the rules established in the community. The "father" of cognitive psychology, Aaron T. Beck, starts from the assumption that behind the lack of school hides a series of irrational maladaptive cognitions: the student considers himself inferior to others, unable to meet school requirements or, conversely, considers that the school can not meet its real needs and, as a result, attending it is useless. These cognitions predate school attendance, usually arising in primary socialization, based on the internalization of cognitive schemes of this type. They can be weakened or, on the contrary, strengthened during school, if the student faces traumas, failures, stigmatizations that come in confirmation of maladaptive cognitions. Also, bad experiences in transition periods, such as puberty, can update irrational cognitions and move them from the latent to the manifest (Hollon and Beck 2010).

A special place in the child's psychopathology belongs to school phobia. Beyond the case-by-case variations, the literature highlights two major classes of causes of social phobia (Last, Hansen and Franco 1998). The first of these refers to anxiety disorders caused by separation. In this case, the phobic student cannot detach himself from the family environment, in order to adapt to the school environment. In general, these disorders are based on a hyperprotective parenting style, an exaggerated responsibility of the child in the family, the disproportionate sanctioning of mistakes in the primary group, etc. The second class of causes concerns anxiety about some elements of the school environment. An inadequate way of the teacher or students to relate to the student, labeling and stigmatization, certain events with traumatic potential can promote the development of social phobia, without in this case, a separation anxiety. Both separation anxiety and phobic disorders of specific stimulus in the school environment, translate into the student's refusal to attend classes.

Once diagnosed, social phobia is treated similarly to other disorders in the field of anxiety and specific phobias, by adapting general methods of intervention to the age and personality of the student. In the literature are recorded two classic studies on the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral interventions in treating social phobia. The first, by Blagg and Yule (1984), measured the effectiveness of three types of treatment - exposure to the situation that generates phobia, the application of cognitive-behavioral intervention in a specialized setting (hospitalization) and the application of cognitive-behavioral intervention at home. Finally, direct exposure to the phobia-generating situation proved to be the most effective. The exposure method, the main method used today in treating school phobia disorders, involves following four distinct steps: identifying irrational interpretations and cognitions that generate the phobic state; cognitive restructuring, by replacing them with rational and adaptive ones; direct and gradual exposure to the phobia situation and strengthening new interpretations of the situation.

If until Last, Hansen and Franco (1998) cognitive-behavioral therapy was the main method of intervention in school phobia, the authors mentioned bring to the fore another model of intervention with at least equal efficiency, namely the psychosocial approach. During the psychosocial intervention, "children are asked to share any specific fears or concerns that arose during the previous week. Subsequently, relevant topics for children

who refuse school are presented, such as fear, anxiety, phobias and maladaptive thinking. Unlike cognitive-behavioral therapy, therapists refrain from providing specific encouragement or instruction for children to deal with dreaded situations, and children are not verbally strengthened to go to school. Moreover, no instructions are given to teach them how to change their maladaptive thoughts.” (Last, Hansen and Franco 1998: p.406). The study concluded that "overall, the results suggest that psychosocial treatments are effective in returning phobic school children to school and that the highly structured cognitive-behavioral approach may not be superior to traditional educational and supportive treatment methods." (Last, Hansen and Franco 1998: p. 404). Traditional methods of psychosocial intervention today fall within the scope of social assistance, which, in turn, has proven effective in preventing and combating difficulties in relating the individual to the school environment (Breaz 2020).

4. Conclusions

School failure is the result of a combination of factors, both individual and social. From the multitude of psychological, sociological and pedagogical approaches, the cognitivist paradigm - either in cognitive-behavioral form or in psychosocial form - offered not only a pertinent explanation to the phenomena of school phobia, but also an exceptional therapeutic system. The contributions of cognitive psychology in the scientific explanation of the individual causes of school failure and in the formulation of well-customized therapeutic solutions are complemented in the field of social psychology, starting from the decisive role that the immediate environment (family, peer group, community, delinquent subcultures, social modeling, class inequalities, labeling phenomena, etc.) play in the dynamics of the student's personality system. Also, school counselling has an important role, but unfortunately in Romania, there is a deficiency of counsellors. Thus, "the inequitable ratio of 1 counselor to 800 students in pre-university education confirm the hypothesis of school dropout and disorientation for students in the decisive stage of self-discovery and crystallization of skills, abilities and preferences" (Niță and Ilie Goga 2014: p. 29).

The solutions proposed by social psychology and psychopedagogy, comparable in efficiency with cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy (Last, Hansen and Franco (1998), do not stand out both for their clinical value and especially for their care and pedagogical purpose, of social psychology provides the teacher, pedagogue, psychologist and social worker with the tools necessary to understand individual school failure by reference to the intersystemic context of the microgroups of which the student belongs, making possible the optimization and harmonization of this context, in partnership with parents and community (Breaz 2019).

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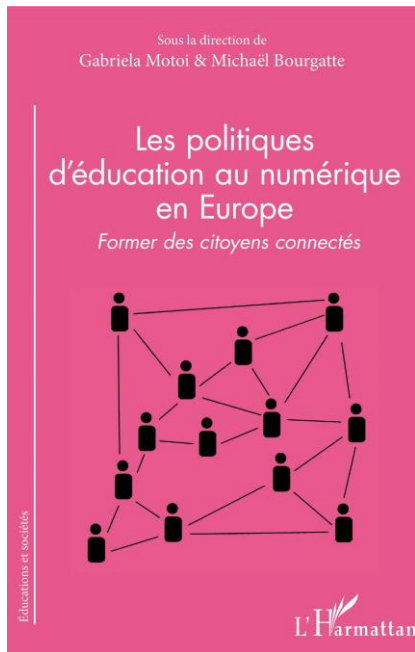
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Book review:
Gabriela Motoi, Michaël Bourgatte (coord.)
Les politiques d'éducation au numérique en Europe.
Former des citoyens connectés,
Paris, L'Harmattan, 2020, 121pp.
ISBN: 978-2-343-19830-9

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Published in 2020, at L'Harmattan Publishing House (Paris, France), in the collection entitled “Education et Sociétés”, the book “*Les Politiques d'éducation au numérique en Europe. Former des citoyens connectés*”, coordinated by Gabriela Motoi & Michaël Bourgatte is presenting the most important EU public policies on digital education, highlighting also the differences between EU societies, in terms of digital infrastructure, digital skills (of teachers, pupils, students, etc.) or digital educational projects. The book has both a theoretical and applied approach, being written in two sections: a first section that presents, from a theoretical point of view, the most important public policy documents existing at European level and focusing on digital education; a second part, in which the authors intended to present (in the form of 6 case studies) how digital education has been developed in 6 European societies.

The introductory part of the paper is presenting the context of the development of digital education. The starting point is that in an increasingly connected world, there is also a need for an increasing connection between individuals (in fact, this argument was transmitted since the subtitle of the paper), and also a need for their adaptation to the new realities of a world in constant and rapid change. Regarding digital education, the same introductory part of the book highlights that in Europe, most public policies in the field of education are focused on 2 components: a) digital literacy and the development of digital skills and b) the use of digital in education (by teachers, pupils, students etc.).

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Moreover, from the paragraph “*Un changement de modèle éducatif*” (pp.16-18) we find out how digital development can contribute to the change of the teaching-learning-assessment paradigms, which can, further, facilitate for education systems the opening to 4 fundamental paths: *know-what*, *know-why*; *know-how*; *know who*.

The first section, entitled “*Economie numérique et politiques européennes sur le numérique*” presents the main European approaches in the field of digital skills development, skills that are considered “the central part of the school curriculum” (p. 24). Also, in this chapter, they are presented the main objectives of the *Digital Agenda for Europe*, of the *Europe 2020 Strategy* or of the *Single Digital Market*. The way in which the authors have chosen to present these documents, focusing only on their main objectives, is, from our point of view, an asset of the book, because it facilitates the reader's access to the essential information they should know about the main documents developed at European level in the field of digital education.

The second section, entitled “*Les politiques numériques en Europe. 6 études de cas*” presents 6 case studies, 6 European societies which, as specified by the authors in the introductory part of the book, each have their own particularity: “Belgium, for its multiculturalism and the conjugation of several regional policies; Spain and France which represent an illustration of the Western European model; Finland, for Northern Europe; Bulgaria and Romania, for Eastern Europe” (p. 25). The case studies presented allow the reader to have a suggestive picture of digital education in Europe. In addition, the fact that the 6 countries are from different areas of the European continent, that they have different education systems, they are characterized by a different level of socio-economic development, is also an asset of this book. Not infrequently, when conducting comparative analyzes, Central and Eastern European countries refer to the Western or Northern European model (especially the Finnish model); thus, the paper can serve as a tool for performing such comparative analyzes. Moreover, we notice that the analysis at the level of each society is articulated around the same 3 axes: the national digital economy (challenges and perspectives); innovation in education with the help of digital and, thirdly, the SWOT analysis. These SWOT analyses are very useful for experts in education, public policy, sociology etc. because they present a clear imagine of the progress registered in each of the 6 countries, of what is still lacking at the level of each educational system, what are the opportunities, what are the threats. Also, these SWOT analyses can represent a starting point for a much more detailed analysis of the education systems in the 6 countries.

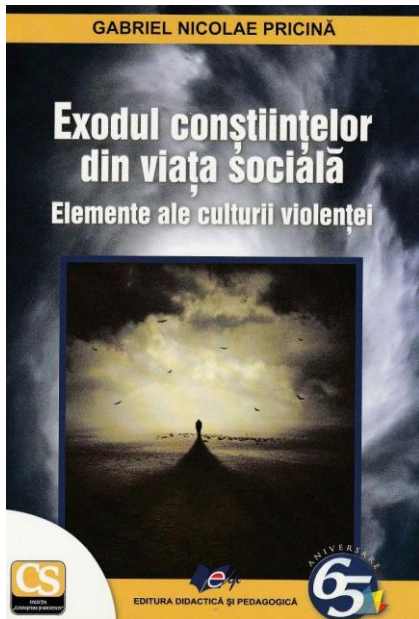
Received 20 September 2020, accepted 11 October 2020

Book review:

Gabriel Nicolae Pricină
**Exodul conștiințelor din viața socială. Elemente ale
culturii violenței [The exodus of consciences in social
life. Elements of the culture of violence], Bucharest,
Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 2017,
255 pp., ISBN: 978-606-31-0348-3**

Cristina Ilie Goga^{*a}

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The book "Exodul conștiințelor din viața socială. Elemente ale culturii violenței" [The exodus of consciences in social life. Elements of the culture of violence] of the professor Gabriel Nicolae Pricină, represents a complex work, which combines theoretical analysis with empirical research and aims to identify elements that contribute to the moral dissolution of people in certain disadvantaged social categories. The final results of the analysis are very well structured, thus they can be used as a guide for community institutions that have levers to influence the factors that favor and inhibit anti-social behaviors, so that they can reach positive results in terms of social integration of institutionalized young people.

The book is structured in ten chapters, designed in a coherent logic, to make the connection between theory and practice.

The first chapter "Theoretical perspectives", makes a presentation of the paradigm of risk factors and a brief analysis of the specifics of depressive diseases. At the same time, the chapter describes explanatory models of depression, suicidal, aggressive and self-destructive behaviors, focusing on the sociological perspective of suicide (Émile Durkheim) and on the elements of knowledge and control of suicidal behaviors.

The second part of the book focuses on the presentation of data collected in a sociological research conducted in social services and prisons in Craiova and is detailed in chapters: two to eleven.

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The second chapter "Individual factors" contains the general presentation of the target group of the empirical research, a comparative study carried out at two important institutions, charged with the integration or social reintegration of two categories of disadvantaged people: social services and penitentiaries. Into the first group (216 respondents) we find minors from poor, disorganized families, abused by their parents or members family, departed from the family, either due to emigration or irresponsibility, while the second category of respondents (148 respondents) is consisting of young people who have committed crimes under the influence of a delinquent social environment, lack of education, entourage or some unhappy social contexts.

The chapter statistically analyzes the answers received and identifies the similarities that represent risks of those who are currently in difficult life situations and for whose solution is in the care of state institutions.

The third chapter "The experience of aggression" emphasizes the presentation of the effects of education achieved through physical sanctions and tries to achieve the correlations and common elements between the two groups of respondents.

The fourth chapter "Value and social principles", makes an analysis of the general aspects that favor the adoption of antisocial values and which, in fact, constitute the border between normal and deviant in the adopted behaviors. These include the principles of life, definitions of social success and failure, and how to justify personal actions.

The fifth chapter "Social factors" begins by highlighting the correlation between individual and social factors. The section, focuses on the analysis of social factors that make up, along with individual factors, as the author says, a certain context that favors an antisocial way of making individual decisions, noting that the study focuses on family and education.

Chapter six "Community", analyzes the communities, the environment from which the respondents come and reveals how the respondents perceive themselves in relation to other people, trying to identify the relationships between self-perception, material desires and how to design the future.

Chapter seven, "Explanatory factors of the expressed opinions", emphasize the analysis of four identified factors, that explain the variance of opinions expressed, namely: criminal experience, relationship with the father, trust in law enforcement and financial plans.

In the eighth chapter, "Similarities of opinions expressed by respondents" the data collected are centralized according to the common percentages obtained for each question applied to the respondents from the two groups. The common opinions made it possible to identify the existing risks for each of these young people and to estimate the risks that may affect in particular the young people in the care of social assistance institutions. Also, common opinions suggesting the internalization of some principles of violence and the adoption of deviant principles provided benchmarks satisfactory in the elaboration of individual life plans.

Chapter nine, "Centralization of factors", analyzes the crime-generating factors specific to each studied dimension, observing a separate analysis of specific factors and multidimensional factors, each having different shares in influencing antisocial behaviors.

The tenth chapter "Projection of the future", is based on the idea that the way respondents perceive the future can influence present and future behavior. Thus the

author mentions that “the opportunities identified, the beliefs and expectations are elements that guide the behavior of present and provide sufficient justifications for individual decisions, beyond the social significance of one's own deeds”.

Chapter eleven "Effects of materializing risks" presents schematically some possible individual routes depending on the type of factors and the effects they can determine, and the solutions, as the author mentions, “involve the analysis of each case and the qualified intervention according to the identified needs and risks”.

The conclusions of this study, present in the form of a summary table the elements that ensure the transition from social to antisocial behavior, followed by the acceptance of violent behaviors and also indicate that it is possible to intervene favorably in the direction of integration of institutionalized youth, by influencing the favorable and inhibitory factors presented in the book.

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Articles with one author

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