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- **Bibliography:** the full list of the references cited in the text must be presented at the end of the paper, below annexes, in alphabetical order of the names of the authors and in a chronological order for a group of references by the same author. The order is the following: name of the author/ authors, year of appearance, title, publisher, city; for example:
  Rea, A., Tripier, M., 2008, Sociologie de l'immigration*, La Decouverte, Paris.*

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THE ANALYZE OF THE DISCRIMINATION PHENOMENON FROM THE APPLICATIVE, LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL POINT OF VIEW

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Abstract: The purpose of this article is to analyze the discrimination and tolerance/intolerance problem comparing with the Romanian work market.. In the first part of the article we underlined the perception of the interviewed institutional representatives about the intolerance and discrimination phenomenon. We were interested both of the attitudes as well as the relation behaviors together with the intervention in the fight against discrimination. As concerning the intolerance phenomenon, we analyzed the longitudinal evolution of the specifically intolerance level of the 90's Romania to present, we underlined starting factors of the intolerance situations and the signs for the tolerance phenomenon. As concerning the discrimination phenomenon, we classified the term depending on: the direct/indirect way of discrimination and the perceived differences, we detailed the professional discrimination forms; we underlined the perception of the experts concerning the definition and the manifestation mobbing situations.

In the second part of the article we analyzed the perception of the experts that refers to the Romanian legislative and institutional situation with the role in fighting the discrimination phenomenon and mobbing. The legislative anti-discrimination field has some inconveniences, such as: the overwhelmingly bureaucratic juridical actions, the non exact framing of the harassment as a discriminatory act, the non defining of the mobbing and the indulgent sanction system for the discriminatory acts. At a legislative and institutional level , all the forms of discrimination and harassment are covered, but the concerned institutions do not have efficient appliance means for the legislation, because, the solving process is overwhelmingly bureaucratic and the complaints' degree is very low because of the low level of knowledge of the population concerning this field.

Key words: discrimination, tolerance, mobbing, legislative and institutional non-discrimination framework.

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1. Types of approach of the organizations in the diagnosis and fight against discrimination

This article has at its basis the gathered data after the interview of seven specialists with complex activities in the discrimination, tolerance/intolerance field and of the chance equality[1]. A large category of organizations were gathered inside the study, such as: a research institute of the Romanian Academy (The Research Institute for he Quality of Life), a firm for the market research (TOTEM Communication) and ONGs with the following types of main activities oriented towards: research and communication (Romania Soros Foundation); advocacy and intervention at the institutions' level (the Partnership Centre for Equality – CPE, Soros Foundation Romania); formation, consultancy and educational intervention (The Education Centre 2000+, CPE); social inhabitance (Habitat for Humanity Romania); communitarian evolution and social inclusion (Soros Foundation Romania, The Agency for Communitarian Evolution "Together").

As concerning the interviewed institutional representatives profile, they come from scientifically organizational fields/and or applied, hold/held positions of research coordinator, experts on the Roma problems, program managers, director of the research department and concentrate over the discrimination and tolerance/intolerance phenomenon in general terms and Roma problems, of gender and of the socially excluded persons in the specifically terms.

An important predictor for the implication level in the discrimination problem is the overspecialization of the organization/expert. So, the organizations with a powerful focusing on research tend to imply themselves directly in the diagnosis of the phenomenon and founds indirectly activities for fighting against discrimination. The researches in the field take into account the underlining of the reasons and the types of manifestation of the phenomenon, of the discrimination consequences in different parts of the social life, of the way of fighting against the phenomenon and the study of the impact produced by anti-discrimination projects/programs in communication.

We may say that the organizations that put a greater accent on communication, advocacy and institutional intervention in punctual cases tend to attribute themselves a direct approach of fighting the discrimination. This type of implication results into activities such as: the informing and the population's awareness concerning the phenomenon, the promoting of the rights, the signaling of the discrimination cases, to offer juridical/and or institutional help to the discriminated persons. On the other hand, the organizations that mainly focus on training, consultancy and educational

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intervention; social inhabitance; communitarian evolving and social inclusion adopt an indirect type of approach in fighting the phenomenon. These kind of actions become attenuation actions of the effects created by discrimination by the empowerment process at an individual level as well as to a communitarian level and in activities such as: a better access to the resources, to value their own potential and the participation support. The difference between the two approaches as concerning the long term effects over the individuals and the communities is in the fact that they are trying to offer them a control over the opportunities to evolve, being a sustainable approach.

Another perspective about the implication is about the idea of strengthening the discriminated categories by motivating extrinsically factors (direct approach) and also intrinsically ones (indirect approach). This perspective defines the direct type of implication as an action with the purpose of reducing the evolution disparities, and the indirect one as a soft method through which there is pursued the deletion of auto-marginalization by "offering alternatives" or "creating models".

"… in the moment when, by example, we enter a school (…), and ask a child: what do you want to become when you will be a grown-up? And he tells me "a priest". Yes, but, says he afterwards, but I don't think I'll become one. Why? Well, have you ever seen a Roma priest? (…) That moment you realize that, as for example, the discrimination that the group suffered of for a long period of time (…) interiorized that much that they got to an auto-marginalization, auto-discrimination. (…) That moment you have to prove, for example to that little child that there is… That there is a Roma priest… and to be able to touch him and cry like Arghezi: there is!" (G. D.)

Comparing with the first perspective, the second one excludes the implication's type that is concentrated over advocacy and institutional intervention that follows the juridical atentioning and support of the discrimination cases. It is started from the idea that these actions are illusory in the attempt of fighting discrimination, as they do not manage to lower the biases and the stereotypes concerning the discriminating categories.

The ONGs focusing as concerning the implication type is facilitated by the participative nature of the non-governmental environment that allows the association with some other organizations that have a high degree of specialization on different fields in the discrimination area. This way there is ensured an as much as possible good implementation of the implementation of the programs/projects.

2. Perceptions of the institutional representatives. ▬▬▬▬
Tolerance – intolerance in the Romanian society

The tolerance is defined by UNESCO through the Declaration of Tolerance's Principles (1995) like a "moral virtue" and "a political and legal need" assumed by

individuals, groups and states concerning: "the appreciation of diversity, the capacity of living and letting the others to live, the capacity to adhere to someone's believes, the capacity to enjoy of his rights and freedoms without stepping over the others'"[1]. To this concept opposes the intolerance one, which supposes a negative attitude against all that is different.

"… They wanted to bring the water pipe in the Roma community and the Romanians came and said that the water is going to damage, if you give water in the Roma community." (M.P.)

Between knowledge and tolerance there is a negative determination relation. So, to a high level of intolerance correspond a low level of knowledge of the group about which there are stereotypes and prejudices? According to the experts' information, some specifically things for the Romanian society are the "*limitations*" determined by the reduced degree of interaction and empathy towards the groups inclined to discrimination acts. "The limitations" are translated by the number of stereotypes and prejudices specifically to a certain category of the population.

We may say that the Romanian society is rather intolerant, but there is also imposed the comparison term. Some of the experts detail the comparison terms taking into account much more levels: the longitudinal evolution, international comparisons on evolution regions and on residence fields. The longitudinal and international evolution of the values of the Romanian society is realized by comparative studies of EVS type, which are realized once in ten years.

" … I have worked to many comparative studies that made comparisons both between Romanian and other European countries. And these studies show us that (…) Romania is amongst the most intolerant countries from Europe. There are studies at a longitudinal level that watched what happened in Romania from the 90s to nowadays. The studies prove that the intolerance lowered a lot comparing with the beginning of the 90s for all the minority groups where the intolerance is usually manifested." (M.V.)

The challenge at the scientific level derives from the underlining of **the shutter factors of the situations of manifesting the society's "limitations"** and of the way they operate. According to the longitudinal level analyze, the specifically intolerance degree of the Romanian society is subscribed to a decreasing trend since the 90s to the present, but comparing with some other countries from the European

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[1] http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/human-rights/fight-against-discrimination/promoting-tolerance/

Union we have some more to catch up from the gap we are confronting with. A few factors are implied in this model:

- The life standards, welfare. In the poor societies, the resources that can be distributed are limited, with a direct impact over the competition for resources;

"There was proved that the rich societies are less intolerant than the poor societies. The people from the poor societies fight for their resources and there appears discrimination in a very strong way because each tries to favor the group they are part of and to disadvantage the ones that are out of the group." (M.V.)

- The population's opening level;
- The formal and informal population's education level;
- The level of knowledge, of informing the discriminated categories;
- The direct interaction with these categories.

"The researches show that the Transylvanian part of the country is generally more tolerant both in the rural and urban field, just because of the ethnical mixture. While the other parts of the country are more intolerant than the others." (D.T.)

"Do you know where the biggest intolerance to Romania towards the Hungarians is? In Oltenia! Apparently it doesn't have any logics. There is actually logic because those people don't know anything about them." (M.V.)

Transylvania is the second historical region in the decreasing order of the Local Social Evolution Index (Sandu 2011: pp.1-30)[1] with a medium level of evolution of 76 points while Oltenia is on the second position of IDSL in an increasing order with a score of 64 points. The scores aggregated on the bases of some indexes comparing with the tolerance/intolerance degree underlines at a regional level a link between the factors: education level, aging level, health estate, material situation of the population and tolerance degree against the alter. So, the tolerance level is influenced positively by the higher education level, the younger population with a bigger hope for life and with a better material situation, translated by the holding of some long use goods, the size of a home and the provenience from a big locality.

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[1] The index of the local social evolution (IDSL) is created by Sandu Dumitru (2010: p.4) as an aggregate index depending on seven indexes: the educational charge at the community level, the medium age of the persons over 14 years old, life expectancy at birth, cars at a number of 1000 inhabitants, the medium surface for living, the gas consumption per inhabitant and the category of residence-shape of the locality. This index is used to analyze the social disparities in the regional evolution from Romania.

Figure 1
The predictors of the tolerance phenomenon (acording to the experts' answers)
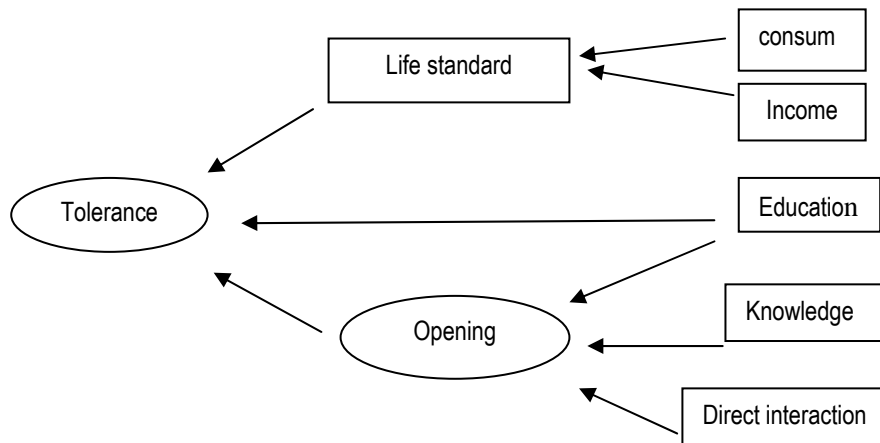
According to the upwards affirmations, the intolerance degree specifically to a society is amplified if the society confronts itself with an economical crisis. The 90s were marked by an economical crisis (redundancies, unemployment, privatization, the drastic lowering of the incomes and the reduction of the life standard) on the basis of the social traumas inherited from the communism. That period was characterized by a big intolerance level, following a visibly descendant trend in the 2000s, at the same time with the growth of the living level and the level of opening and information.

The tendency to judge the social situations that refer to the different groups in comparison with ours just on the basis of some attitudes based on the emotional side, such as some stereotypes goes to a possible discriminating behavior. The individuals appeal to prejudices and stereotypes to fundament the values system against what is labeled as **otherness**. At a general level, we can say that the group against there is a high level of intolerance is those that *"go to alter"*. In most of the cases, takes place the manifestation of hegemony of one of the social categories that takes the shape of a majority. There is about a dominance relation but not in the Marx' terms but Weber's. We refer to the society's stratification on the basis of a market situation; of some consume patterns, life style and political power. The market situation is defined the priority relation, education and abilities (Tufis 2010: p.302-3030). As concerning the groups against which there is manifested the intolerance, the mentioned situations are nuanced in a pejorative way by the criterions on which account is attributed the otherness status.

The majority of the experts rank the groups subject to intolerance positioning the **ethnic**, (Roma) in the first group, **sexual orientation** (homosexuals) in the second

group, **the gender**, referring to women in the third group and the **health state** referring to disabled persons and the HIV/SIDA patients, **the age and the emigration status** in the fourth group.

The intolerance degree concerning the **Roma** in Romania is high. The explanation is about the how to report way to the Roma ethnic on the basis of some generalized stereotypes, by media and inter-generational perpetuation of some negative values that are attributed to them.

"When there is about scandals, of crime, of deviance it is very interesting for the press to let the public know. The positive examples do not matter for anyone so they do not appear anywhere. And this contributes to a vicious circle in which the Roma are in a perpetual way built mentally as being the bad and lazy ones." (A.I.)

"if you are a Roma it doesn't mean that you are like me but a jerk, thief burglar, dirty person.. All those things together." (G.D.)

In intolerance's construction against **homosexuals** is made an appeal to the religious belief. The ones with a different sexual orientation are perceived as persons that have as purpose the degradation of the natural-moral order of the humankind. The religious belief postulates the preferences standardization on sexual complementarity's criterions and underlines the relational desirability from the sexual point of view.

"The gay fest holiday (…) appeared in all the press as what it happened there: people with crosses passing by persons that have another sexual orientation and cried: Go away Satan!" (M.P.)

The gender is a transverse variable that frequently appears in multiple discrimination cases. This is why the majority of the experts situate this category before the limited categories on health estate criterions, age, and immigration status. The discrimination against women has stable forms, but it may also appear in combined situations with some other category: Roma as for example, accentuating the intolerance.

The manifestation forms of the intolerance may be represented by:

- To have violent behaviors against these categories;
- The segregation in schools, hospitals even though this practice is banned – it is more often met in the Roma parties;
- The manifestation of *"second hand citizenship"* (G.D.) – more often met in the Roma parties, of the Romanians from the localities/districts with a population predominantly Hungarian or of the immigrants. It consists of no granting equal rights in similar social situations;

- The limitation of the access in the public spaces – more often met in the Roma parties and at the persons with another sexual orientation;
- The improvement of the public spaces such as to allow the accessibility – met in the case of the persons with moving disabilities;
- The limitation of the access to the resources – more often met in the Roma ethnic minorities and to the disabled persons. This form of manifestation generates the situation of "social enclosure". According to the concept that Frank Parkin elaborated (quoted from Giddens 2000: p.272), the *"social enclosure"* situation is created by the property relation over the production means and because of the social status differences. The process implies an exclusive control over the resources that is exercised by the majority group and the perpetuation of the stereotypes and prejudices referring to category to which there is limited/ interdicted the access to the resources.
- The limitation of engagement on a certain job;
- A wages' differentiation for the same activities and for the same obtained results;
- The rejection of the other one to enter your family, in your group of friends, in your group of colleagues from the place of work, and of being your neighbor;
- To hide the valuable goods in the presence of the Roma ethnical minorities;
- Improper jokes /offenses addressed to the persons that are perceived as being different.

The manifestation forms of the intolerance are gathered in discriminatory acts of different intensity. This way there is felt the necessity to define the behavioral spectrum that influences the intolerance degree perceived at the population's level. According to the Sociology Dictionary, at an attitude level the intolerance is formed by two components: an emotional one defined as a stereotype[1] represented by the person's beliefs and a cognitive one defined as prejudice[2], consisting of detrimental value prejudices and which haven't been researched. The intolerance is a latent variable predicted by stereotypes and prejudices, while the discrimination is in its conceptual structure a form of intolerance manifestation. So the intolerance facilitates the transposing from the attitude area in the behavioral one.

3. Perceptions of the institutional representatives. Discrimination, harassment, mobbing

The **discrimination** concept may be defined as *"the differentiated treatment applied to a certain group or the differentiated treatment applied to a person on the basis of*

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[1] According to the Sociology Dictionary available to http://www.dictsociologie.netfirms.com/S/ Termeni/stereotip.htm

[2] According to the Sociology Dictionary available to http://www.dictsociologie.netfirms.com/P/ Termeni/prejudecata.htm

his or her membership to a certain social category" (M.V.) The discrimination is analyzed from the point of view of the majority. The majority is seen in Shills' terms as an *"institutional order"* (Zhou 2005: p.94) of ordering the values and beliefs. So, the social logic is invisibly changed by mechanisms of domination acts of the majority against the ones labeled as being different and more than sure form a minority. At the legislative level, in Romania, by G.O. 137/2000 on preventing and sanctioning all forms of discrimination, disadvantaged category is defined as "that class of persons who either are on an unequal position compared to most citizens due to the majority identitydifferences or face a behavior of rejection and marginalization" (art. 4). (Popescu, R., 2011, p. 12)

The discrimination affects persons' dignity and has influences over what is defined as auto-discrimination. **Auto-discrimination** implies the lack of hope, of a strategically vision as a response to the applied differentiated treatment, to the diminution of the perceived prestige level associated with the social category of membership and to the resignation to the situation.

"One of the definitions of the term of Roma is for example an epithet given to a dark-haired person. Another epithet is given to a person with bad behaviors. (…) But, as concerning my membership to the minority, the moment when you define me from the beginning as an unsocial person, that moment you discriminate me because you affect my dignity. It means that, my child, according to your definition is a dark-haired person with bad habits. From the beginning. Just because… But I, as a legal tutorial give him the Roma identity." (G.D.)

As concerning the **discrimination methods** exercised at the level of the Romanian society, there were identified two classifications by the interviewed institutional representatives.

A first classification is made on the basis of the way that discrimination is done over a person or a group. It holds the direct and the indirect categories. **The direct discrimination** is a form of discrimination acted obviously in the detriment of a person or a group perceived as being different from a majority. On the other hand, the **indirect** one is a kind of discrimination that manifests against a person using superficial criterions. As for example: *"posters on a club's door through which they are told there are not allowed to enter the persons that wear a golden chain around their necks. But it is clear that it isn't a neutral criterion but one that applies to a certain type of population."* (A.I.)

The second classification is realized on the basis of the discrimination acts, what we define as being different. The classification is made on two levels, the one of the **prescribed differences** and the one of the **perceived ones**. The discrimination depending on the ethnical origin and on the age is manifested on the basis of the prescribed differences, because they are characteristics that can't be adjusted. In

the case of the ethnical discrimination there can be made use by different personal characteristics, just to label a person as belonging to a certain ethnicity. As for example, to the dark-haired woman that wears a long, large, colored dress can be attributed the status of Roma ethnic minority. The second level, the one of the perceived differences has the discrimination on gender criterions, sexual orientation, physical aspect, provenience social field, the preferences for a certain type of music, the preferences for a certain type of foods, etc.

To be able to analyze **the degree of spreading of the discrimination forms**, we will take into account two criterions: the numerical one ant the impact one. The big numerical level takes into account that form of discrimination that is acted over a numerous social category. At this level there is situated also the discrimination on gender criterions because it has an action potential over a social category with a big spreading along the population and because of the fact that the gender is a transverse variable often met in the other forms of manifestation of discrimination: *"if we also talk about multiple discrimination meaning that if you are a woman, Roma, with physical disabilities, gay, you are among the first ones!"* (G.D.)

The significant level or of maximum impact takes into account that form of discrimination that has **social, economical and biological implications of a great effect at the level of the individual or group**. Unanimously, the institutional representatives attributed the maximum impact level to the discrimination form acted on the basis of he ethnical origin. The second position comes to the discrimination form manifested on the basis of a different sexual orientation. In the case of these two forms of manifestation of the discrimination, the persons from the majority group use more superficial criterions such as: the way of dressing, the color of the skin and the physiognomic features.

The ethnical discrimination and the one depending on the disability have economical and social implications which are big enough.

"As concerning the Roma population, The World Bank presented a report at the end of 2010 in which it mentioned that the exclusion of the Roma population from Romania costs annually 900 million euros. Now, maybe this figure doesn't mean that much, but, if you make a summoning of how much the VAT's increasing contributed to the state budget from 19 to 24% and you will notice that the figure is somewhere between 1,2 – 1,4 billions, you will realize that if there were investment in due time, when it should have been done so for the Roma inclusion, we shouldn't increase the VAT with more than 3% or with 2% than 5%. So there is a difference. Well then the VAT increase affected everybody. Any Romanian citizen is affected by the VAT. (…) The fact that we rather chose to keep the disabled persons in an estate of social assistance instead of encouraging all kinds of economical activities with the ones that

can … or because there are very many that can and wish this thing. Protected workshops and all other possible kinds" (G.D.)

Sexual harassment at the work place is a phenomenon that supposes a power report that is exercised most of the times by a superior of a masculine gender over an employee. The aggressor's profile is painted like: a person with decision power, of masculine gender, that has an emotional disorder (B.P.). The level of public highlighting of this phenomenon is smaller because it is difficult to prove. The border between the sexual harassment and flirtation is differently perceived by the individuals.

The mobbing is a psychic harassment phenomenon that occurs at work. In Romania there is no concrete legislation on mobbing phenomenon but there are certain specifications that can be interpreted and used for this purpose (Gheonea, A.; Ilie, S.; Lambru, M.; Mihailescu, A.; Negut, A.; Stanciu, M.; Tomescu, C. 2010). This phenomenon is not realized at the population's level, as very often it adopts soft manifestation forms. We couldn't identify in the interviews a profile of the organizations perceived as being inclined to mobbing.

The mobbing is practiced in two situations. Firstly it is used when there is needed the dismissal of a person, a process that is hardened by the advantages that the employee holds giving to the work contract. Secondly, it is used in the organizational restructuring periods.

The profile of the possible victims of mobbing at the workplace is:

- Rather feminine gender employee;
- Rather of Roma ethnicity;
- Rather with some different sexual orientation or religious beliefs;
- Overweight persons (physical aspect);
- The social field's origin (a rural origin for an urban employer, poverty);
- Some other characteristics that make him be different by the rest of the group.

"…the moment you have in your face somebody that comes from a village where he or she lived for a very long time and wants to come to Bucharest and get a job to a position that supposes his or hers acceptance into the group (…), but the moment you have to work with him, to discuss with him, to communicate with him, that moment you see that he or she is different. Talks differently, has some other values, dresses differently like in the country … then, that moment he is different … he will be looked at differently, he will be less tolerated, he will be … rejected in a way or another … And here the mechanisms, I repeat, are very fine and very mysterious because you can discriminate … just by not giving him attention, not going out with him for a bear, avoiding to discuss with him." (B.P.)

4. The field legislation

The level of knowledge of the legislation concerning professional discrimination, harassment at the population level, it is reduced. Most of the population doesn't know the legislation:

• The lack of some campaigns to help realize these phenomenons or the week target of such campaigns, the lower level of presentation. The campaigns have to orient towards the identification of the discriminatory acts, to promote the right to initiative and to put into light some authorized institutions;

• The low degree of civic involvement in the Romanian society: "*The involvement in Romania is anyway very low. No matter what you ask them to do, more than 15% do not involve.*" (M.V.) There is inoculated in the Romanian mentality the principle according to which it is good for you to be concerned only for the things that involve you and the ones close to you directly, the problems of the vulnerable groups, the discrimination phenomenon around you aren't you obligation but of some others or of the state. We can explain this value orientation by means of the continuous worry for getting resources, on the basis of the low life standard comparing with the evolved EU countries.

"I was hospitalized together with my baby and I saw a lot of things that weren't ok, I mean that I was in a wing of the hospital where one could see clearly the segregation on ethnical criterion. There were saloons for the Romanian women with their babies and saloons with Roma women and their children. So, I could even see differentiated treatment. In my saloon there two young women with their children and one was of Romanian ethnicity that was complaining on the phone that there are only "crows" in this hospital, and, the other one was of Roma ethnicity but didn't declared herself. And only in the moment that I started to argue and say what is it all about all this "crow" complaining as they are people like all of us etc. she actually told me that she is of a Roma ethnicity but she didn't dare to declare herself. There was an incident and I argued strongly and said that it can't be possible, that they do not have the right to do this. I think that, from all the Romanian and Roma women from that floor I was the noisiest. The Roma mother that didn't dare to declare herself was very surprised and said: well, yes.. That's the way we should behave! When a wrong thing happens we should tell, to argue, for the people to know that it isn't good. I made even a complaint after all these things that happened there, I went forward exactly for the idea that I as a representation of the little persons that realize this problem and also know the legal ways, I have a moral duty. That I who know the field, that work in this field also, I don't do nothing, then the one who doesn't even realize the problem and doesn't even know some of the legal ways, it is obvious that he won't do nothing and then when do we change and how. I think the example's force is the most important. Now, from realizing to even take action there is a big step but at least this is an experience that may create effects in time." (A.I.)

● There isn't a debate in the school about the stereotypes and prejudices concerning the discriminated social categories. The concentration on the young generations that should create the change is important. The actual level of education doesn't support the increase of tolerance by creative activities such as: some debates about some documentaries, contests, discussions with discriminated persons, etc.

"it is obvious that the school is the institution that reproduces the social order and then, maybe I am waiting too much from schools, that will tend to reproduce the dominant order, which means the dominant culture. But in the same time the teachers that attend the pedagogical schools have no orientation towards inclusive education and intercultural. And then we create educators and teachers that behave the same way as their teachers and the change between the generations takes place more slowly than it should." (A.I.)

As concerning **addressability degree** of the discrimination victims, of the sexual harassment towards the authorized institutions, it is very low. The addressability is influenced by the victim's capacity to identify the discriminatory acts; by the notoriety of the authorized institutions; by the knowledge of the legal links that they can use and of the necessary steps. More than this, the addressability degree differs depending on the case: discrimination sexual harassment or mobbing. The sexual harassment is a discriminatory act difficult to prove and there are also stereotypes and prejudices concerning the victim such as her, in a way or another gave a start to it. So, the number of the cases of reported sexual harassment is small, being something that is associated with the moral shame. As concerning the mobbing, its manifestation forms are mentioned legislatively in the number of the harassment possible cases, the addressability being also low. Anyway there isn't a too clear perception at the population's level about the manifestation forms of the mobbing.

The legislative support that the victim of discrimination, sexual harassment and mobbing acts may ask support for is the 137/2000 Ordinance. The institutional links are: the hierarchical superior, the police, The National Council for the Discrimination Control (CNCD), The People's Advocate and the Court. There is practiced the reversal of the burden of the proofs in the Court that consists of bringing the proofs from the accused one, to prove his or her innocence.

Analyzing the perceptions referring to addressability and the exampled told by the institutional representatives we may say that **the factors that help for the addressability degree** consist of: to have a higher educational level, the tendency of changing the stereotypes and prejudices that exist inside the social level about the social categories frequently subject to discrimination by informal and creative activities even from the school time and to exercise a high civic level. In exchange, **the factors that block the addressability degree** are: the non-awareness of the discriminatory act and the acceptance of the situation without searching into it, to

realize the incapacity of changing the situation, not to be aware of the legal and institutional links that they may use to solve the discrimination case, the lack of trust in the state administration.

"The Romanian has a word that drives me crazy: What can we do, this is it! And then what to do, we keep our heads lowered because the sword doesn't slay it and we go further the way we were taught to because this is the way the old men do it." (A.I.)

The non-discrimination legislative field from Romania was implemented in accordance with the European Union's regulations, covers all the discrimination forms, defines the direct and the indirect forms of discrimination, but it isn't that clear if the harassment can go to discriminatory acts or in other jurisprudence areas and the mobbing isn't defined. The problems that it confronts with refer to: the low degree of promoting and information of the population about the legislative area; the high degree of difficulty in solving a discrimination situation without any ONG support in the referral and sending into court process; the low monitoring capacity. The suggestions of improvement of the legislative area targeted the terms for giving the charge meaning bigger charges as period of time which presently are seen rather as being symbolical.

The syndicates' status in the fight against discrimination is disputed especially in the countless prosecutions of some syndicate leaders for accepting bribery. At a theoretical level the syndicate has an important part in protecting the employees from different abuses and discriminatory acts at an organizational level and to support the acquisition of some rights. The efficiency of their actions is doubtful because the syndicate leaders do not identify themselves with the employee's interests all the time because of the big sums of money that they get from corrupt acts from inside the system. Moreover, there is still an association between syndicates and the socialist paradigm.

The institutional representatives consider that both the syndicates and the employers do not have any role in defeating discrimination or mobbing unlike the EU countries where the role of the syndicates in supporting the discriminated, harassed persons is more evident.

"…the employers are in the majority of the cases some groups, some entities created to represent the interests of two Gigi persons." (G.D.)

"By chance I have a relative that lives in Belgium for a very long time and was employed for many years to a patron. That patron played her for years under her qualification level but she didn't know this thing. More than this he behaved with her uglier and uglier with time. At a certain moment that person that was paying the fees for the syndicate went and made a complaint to the syndicate. And the syndicates did this way: sued the patron covering all the court costs and asked compensation for

the unpaid wages at the level it should have been paid. And the patron paid the behind money for twenty years, as long as he didn't paid her properly, he paid the difference and a compensation for the psychological harassment of the person. So, this is what the syndicate made, without being done something by the syndicate member, without paying anything from its pocket. He just went to the syndicate, advised with them, they took notice and the inquiry started in the court and they won the process." (M.V.)

In the conditions of changing the Work Code, the role of the syndicates in fighting the discrimination should intensify because the new Work Code offers a bigger flexibility for the employees and a propitious field for abuses and some discriminatory acts that were realized in the old Code also. Theoretically, the role of the work contract was to offer extensive social protection without accepting differentiated payment between the employees for the sake of performance. Although there is needed a Code of Conduct, from the practice point of view the usefulness of this law is doubtful just because it may become a simple document that the employees and the employers sign , but do not apply it but just use it in litigation situations. The state could interfere and ask the employers to make a set of politics to prevent and fight against discrimination and mobbing. Moreover, there should be encouraged the syndicates' and patronages involvement in the prevention and fight process against discrimination and mobbing.

The specifically incongruity **of the relation between the legislative and the institutional field** consists of: holding an *adequate* legislation and some capable institutions for fighting against discrimination, harassment, but of some *inefficient* ways of applying the legislative regulations.

The institutional field specialized in fighting against discrimination, harassment and mobbing is **The National Council for the Discrimination Control (CNCD)**. Its notoriety comes from the fact that it treats all the manifestation forms of the discrimination and is a part of the Parliament's structure. Its efficiency in fighting against discrimination is searched on the basis of the number of complaints, warnings and petitions in comparison with the number of discrimination, harassment and mobbing cases that were identified in the studies. The institutional appliance difficulties for the non-discriminative legislative field consist in excessive bureaucratization of the solving process of the cases and the reduced capacity for self notice. To raise the noticing degree of the discriminatory acts, the concentration on prevention and awareness should be bigger.

The National Agency for Chances Equality between Women and Men (ANES) was till 2010 a governmental structure that didn't deal directly with the fight against discrimination but focused more on awareness and prevention. This institution had complementary activities with the ones of CNCD. The National Agency for the Roma (ANR) is in the same situation.

Other organizations with notable results in fighting, preventing and the awareness of the discrimination acts in the Cehei village, Salaj district. The Cehei community was multiethnic, being formed of Romanians, Hungarians and Roma. Inside this community there was practiced the segregation inside the schools on ethnical criterions and the differences between the Roma and the other groups were visibly manifested. For example, the Romanian and Hungarian children were taught inside the school and had the best teachers and the Roma ones were taught in an annex of the school in miserable conditions. *"The Roma children were taught in an annex of the school that was actually a stable … with the rats at their legs."* (G.D.) The quality of their teachers was lower and they weren't allowed to drink water from the same source from where Romanians and Hungarians did. In the case of this community, the discrimination was punished, but, only this kind of intervention isn't enough, there is needed the change of the majority's conceptions.

A second example is a positive one: it is about a project concerning the health mediators which was started by CRISS Romanians and then undertaken by the Health Ministry. The purpose of the project is to make a link between the Roma population and the institutions that offer health services. The health mediators were usually Roma ethnic women just to be granted the access inside the communities. At this moment, their status is confused because as a result of the decentralization they will be paid by the Maries.

"it is possible to disappear or to be mentioned as social assistants and they will do a totally different work than they did until now: to go into communities, to talk with the people, to advise them, to coordinate them where to go to solve their problems." (M.P.)

5. *Conclusions*

In conclusion, at the national level, the intolerance degree specifically to the Romanian society is subscribing to a decreasing trend since 1990 on till present and at an international level we are amongst the intolerant countries from the European Union. The intolerance is correlated with the resources' rarity and the stereotypes and prejudices strengthened by socialization at the collective conscience level. The intolerance as a process itself facilitates the transposition of the stereotypes and prejudices meaning of the attitudes in manifesting discriminatory acts.

The discriminatory acts represent the field of expression for intolerance and may be classified depending on the criteria on which basis they are discriminated and of the model of their application. The most common form of discrimination in the Romanian society from the point of view of the visible effects is the one on the ethnical criterions, concerning mainly the Roma population because their educational level is very low and their identity is built culturally on the basis of some stereotypes and prejudices that were bore from generation to generation.

As concerning the professional discrimination, the access to employment is limited for the Roma, disabled persons or for the persons that have already a certain age. As concerning the promotion, there is identified the discrimination on gender. Living in a paternalistic society, the women is associated with the role of "maid" and the man with the one of a "leader"; moreover, the employers consider that the professional performance of the woman would be affected by the household responsibilities. The mentality, attitude and stereotype factors which still remain in the community and family mean we are not in a position to protect and encourage women's participation in the labour market (Zamfir, E., 2010, p. 59).

As concerning the layoffs, the affected groups are the Roma, because they provide an unqualified or semi qualified work, the persons that have already a certain age because they are associated with a diminution of their motivation to work in the context of a certain retirement in the near future.

As concerning the addressability of the discrimination, mobbing and harassment victims, this is low enough because the population doesn't realize where she is subject to discrimination acts, doesn't know the no-discrimination legislation, has a negative perception concerning the state group and the persons that should solve the situation, do not involve themselves civically and perceive themselves as being unable to change something and this is why there is such a situation. The addressability of the sexual harassment victims is even lower because the victim is associated with a part of the guilt and that she has to confront herself with a feeling of social shame. The mobbing seen as a form of psychological professional harassment isn't defined in the Romanian legislation as it should and also included in the harassment jurisprudence so, the addressability of its victims is very low.

The non-discrimination legislative field was elaborated in accordance with the regulations of the European Union, gathers all the discrimination and harassment phenomenon but doesn't mention anything about the mobbing. In exchange, the institutional field covers all the discrimination and harassment forms but doesn't have the necessary means of applying the legislation. The solving process is too bureaucratized and implicitly last a long time.

The challenge that the institutions and organizations that have cones actions with the discrimination field, tolerance/intolerance and the chances equality should involve themselves in fighting against the causes of discrimination and harassment and mobbing but they do not only for their effects. Moreover, there is needed an evolution of the institutional capacity for the prevention and awareness of the discrimination and mobbing. To dominate the phenomenon there is needed a focusing on a higher level of education, information, evolution and the support of the cultural diversity.

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SCHOOL IN LOCAL COMMUNITY CONTEXT
– Case study – Puieşti Village, Buzău County –

Camelia STĂICULESCU*

Abstract: This study approaches the relation between the school and the local community, a very important aspect to the contemporary social dynamics.

The first aspect is the analysis of the place that the school occupy in the community.

The premises from which the analysis starts is that the school, although it is a social institution with clearly defined roles, specific objectives, organizational culture is directly influenced by what is happening locally. Schools have a level of development proportional to the level of the local communities in which they operate; it promotes local culture and local history. Thus, school is a community binder that promotes the local and responds to local educational needs.

This is possible by adopting a participatory management both at the school and at other representative institutions for the local community: mayor and city council, church, health units, traders, NGOs, etc.

This paper includes a case study carried out in Puieşti Village, Buzău County, which customizes, in a defined local context, the premises from which we started. The analysis is longitudinal: describes the history of the place and the school, the current context, describes the expected local development. Considering all this information, in the end is made the recommendations on the development of the analyzed school.

Keywords: school, local community, local partnership, local development.

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1. *School and the social context*

The school and the community are two realities that represent an interest for: pedagogues, sociologists, psychologists, philosophers, anthropologists, etc., each trying to capture the issues that contribute to their operating mechanisms, also the involved agents and the degree of involvement in promoting education. Nowadays we are witnessing the development of a true power of ideas and action, centred on the community and its development. The approach of aspects of the school and the community, finds its legitimacy also in the current trends of extending the educational field, from school organization to educational agents.

The school is on the one hand, an institution that provides social service, being directly influenced by what happens in the social environment, transmitting knowledge, develop skills, rules, recognized and accepted social values; and on the other hand, has development logic, reproduces their own norms and values, having its own organizational system. Essential is to identify common values transmitted by school and community agents, of some points of development in order to increase the education of community (pupils, parents, various social categories, etc.).

The school is one of the central institutions of the community, that has specific roles, but cannot work and cannot be developed without taking into account the community specific, consisting of several factors with educational role: family, government, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, businesses, churches, cultural institutions, healthcare institution, etc., each having an explicit or implied educational offer. Thus, the school organization is under the pressure of a number of factors: ideological groups operating at local, political systems, economic conditions and different tendencies in society (Diaconu M., 2004).

Schools depend on the operating environment in terms of: obtaining material resources, human resources, financial resources, information resources, cultural resources, etc.

The approach the relation between the school and the local community can be made in terms of social needs for education that occur both at macro social level, at the education system and the social community in which the education institution works (Voiculescu, F., 2004).

Teachers and school managers, in two ways, feel social needs of education at the specific level of the school:

1. *The official way*: regulated and organized administrative, by requirements and obligations that arise from the position of the school in the educational system (level, profile, form of education).

2. *Informally*: the school operates in a social context, developing social relations directly with the social community in which they operate. The social community has expectations, requirements and obligations about the school as an educational, social and public institution, which has specific responsibilities. In this way (informal) the school representatives, the teachers and the school managers are in contact with the social needs of education, as they act in concrete terms, as needs and concrete expectation of the social community (training requests in relation with the demand of the market, communities traditions and mentality of the community, etc). The expectation of the community from the school is also different, depending on the communities in which they operate, even when the schools are of the same type.

Schools are perceived differently in the social communities, in which they operate (neighbourhood, district, city, state), have acquired a position, addressing to a particular population.

The notion of *community* has a large semantic rage. Synthesizing the various approaches, we can extract the main approaches of the community (Bruna Zani and Augusto Palmonari, 2003):

- The community is a global social entity, in which the relation between the members are very close, and the sense of *in-group* is strong and rooted in deep traditions;

- The community is an entity that takes precedence over the individual, against the isolated individual by the virtue of its ethical and political transcendence;

- The community is the repository of common good; it is a moral reference for the individual, promotes basic values (by laws and traditions) and references values to the individual.

In the social practice in Romania in recent years, we often encounter with the concept of „community".

In the specialized social analysis are indicated as communities: family, school, parishioners of a church, a village, a neighbourhood and even „virtual communities", where the members communicate via the Internet, or „business community", „political community". A common feature found in these cases is the „unit value, the probability of having members with similar value orientations". The community is specific to „ the groups that tend to have a specific culture". (Sandu, D., 2007)

Based on these considerations, in the current social context have to be redefined the role of schools in the community context in which they operate. Can school contribute to the strengthening of community? Who are the community agents involved with the school to train the younger generation? What is their role? We need to answer to these questions. We believe that: making the most of local community

resources, approaching a partnership by promoting a participatory management, awareness of the role of each agent of the community in the education, are not only ways that lead to the development of the local institution, but also to the development of the entire local community. The approaches are not uniform in all communities, but custom, as we attempt to prove in the case study below.

2. *The development of the school from the commune Puieşti,* ▬▬ *Buzău County, in commentary context – case study*

Locally, the communities develop different, having different characteristics that distinguish them. The school, the central institution of the local community, develops itself according to the local directions. We consider that the school is not an institution that operates independently of what happens in the social context in which it operates. Each school operates in a local context different from many perspectives: historical, economic, human resources (demographics, structure, etc), natural resources, development perspectives, cultural, etc. (Stăiculescu, C., 2007). In our research we tried to bring arguments to certify our affirmations.

2.1.The researched conducted in 2007-2008 had the following **objectives**:

1. Identify the roles of the Community Operators in their partnership with the school;

2. The description of the factors that contribute to the cohesion of the partnership between the school and the local community;

3. Identification of possible forms of organization of the partnership between the school and the local community;

4. Identify the issues that may arise in the partnership between the school and the local community;

5. Identification of optimization solution for the partnership between the school and the local community.

2.2. The hypothesis that was at the base of the research are:

Hypothesis no. 1   If the school has the initiative of some partnership forms, important for the community, then it is possible to attract partners to join various activities initiated by the school;

Hypothesis no. 2   If the school has access to the community resources (human, material, informational, technological, cultural), then, the forms of manifestation of the partnership between

the school and the community are more diverse and more focused on community needs.

2.3. The research universe

We have proposed that through our research to extract statistically data significant at the national level. A school, in partnership with the local community, develops differently. Therefore, we believe that a statistical analysis at national level may not be possible without harming the local specifics, the „originality". Depending on this specific, the needs of local institutional development of the school are different. Therefore, based on the analysis of the local specifics, using our own analysis tools, we will sketch some directions for the analysed school local development.

The universe of this research covers several areas:

- **Institutional:** schools, authorities, local institutions (medical units, police, church), local businesses, NGOs active on local;

The school from the commune Puieşti, on which we stopped out, operate over small schools (structures) from the villages. The Puieşti commune, has seven villages and the schools are arranged as follows: Nicoleşti Elementary School (available for Nicoleşti Village and Dăscăleşti Village), Puieşti de Jos elementary school (available for villages: Puieşti de jos, Puieşti de sus, Lunca, Plopi, Măcrina), Măcrina Primary School (available for villages: Măcrina, Plopi, Lunca). It should be noted that in the commune operates five preschool units (in the villages: Măcrina, Puieşti de jos, Puieşti de sus, Nicoleşti and Dăscăleşti).

- **Human:** pupils, parents, teachers, priests, doctors, representatives if businesses, representatives of local government (mayors, deputy mayors, local councillors), police;

- **Information**: statistics, literature, websites, administrative documents, monographs of the school historical documents, etc.

2.4. In the research were used different methods: questionnaire-based survey, observation, monograph, social document analysis, case study, structured interviews and social biography.

2.5. Tools used in the research

1. The main research tool used was **the assessment grind of school according to the partnership between the school and the community and the level of community development, which was analyzed on three temporal levels:**

- *Past* – the historical dimension of the school and the local community that we studied;

- *Present* – the present situation of school and community;

- *Future* – the development of the school in the community context.

The assessment grid of school according to the partnership between the school and the local community and the level of the community development, followed these dimensions:

1. Historical dimension of the school and the community;

2. Current local resources of development;

3. The dimension of the human resources;

4. Leadership and management;

5. Information resources;

6. Communication;

7. Culture;

8. Strategic resources;

9. Material resources;

10. Financial resources;

11. Other resources;

12. Partnership programs;

13. Availability of the representatives of the local community for partnership.

2. In the research, the *Investigation based on the questionnaire* was applied to many community agents from the analyzed communities: pupils, parents, teachers, mayor and deputy mayor, local councillors, doctors, police officers, priests, representatives of businesses.

For each category of agents has been developed and applied a questionnaire, following comparable variables, which aggregate, could give an idea of how the school is perceived, its role in the local community and the opportunities of local development.

3. The research results

3.1 The community context and data about the Puieşti Elementary School

3.1.1 The history of the commune

Although the existing historical documents and the rare archaeological excavations made in the area suggest that the commune Puieşti was inhabited since ancient times (early and middle Neolithic – Boian Culture, Gumelniţa Culture and Cucuteni),

first document dates from the sixteenth century, year 1581, and the document referred to the village Nicoleşti. In the documents from the eighteenth century are mentioned the villages: Puieşti de sus and Plopi (Plopii Vechi). The other villages are mentioned in the documents from the nineteenth century, although it is assumed that are older that these mentioned.

About the ground of the residence of the village does not exist a particular document but its existence in the nineteenth century is attested by a fragment of an ancient document, stored in the church from Puieşti de jos, in which is mentioned the date when the church was built and painted: " this church was founded in 1840 by the owner Anastasie Dedilescu, in the days of the blessed bishop Filoftei, and was painted in 1884, by the pious Christians of this commune together with the present owner, Eduard L. Grecu, at the insistence of the priest Dimitrie Ionescu, with the blessing of the bishop I. F. Inocenţie, mason M. Orăşeanu, October 1884." (Archives of Puieşti School) We can deduce from the shown fragment that the settlement was already cohesive, stable and large in number in the days when the church was built, in the first half of the nineteenth century. The name of the village, as the elders said, comes from the name of the boyar Puiescu, the settlement being on his estate.

3.1.2 Characterization of the nowadays commune

The commune Puieşti is situated in the north of the Bărăgan Plain, in Râmnicului Plain, on the County Road 204 that goes from Râmnicu Sărat to the commune Ciorăşti. The nearest urban area is Râmnicu Sărat, 14 km from the town residence of the commune – village Puieşti de jos. The commune is 45 km from the residence of the county, city Buzău, in the northeastern side of the county Buzău.

Neighbours of the commune are:

- In the North: the commune Băleşti and commune Sihlea (Vrancea County);

- In the North-East: the commune Ciorăşti (Vrancea County);

- In the South: the commune Balta Albă, commune Boldu, commune Ghergheasa (Buzău County);

- In the East: de commune Vâlcele (Buzău County);

- In the West: the commune Râmnicelu (Buzău County).

- The commune has an area of about 10,000 ha, having seven villages: Puieşti de Jos (Răceni) – the commune residence, Puieşti de sus, Nicoleşti, Dăscăleşti, Măcrina, Plopi, Lunca.

The total area of the commune is/ from which:

<div align="center">

Table 1

Distribution of land in the commune Puieşti

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Villages	Total Area	Puieşti de jos	Puieşti de sus	Nicoleşti	Dăscăleşti	Măcrina	Plopi	Lunca (Hoinari)
Habitable area (build-up area)	349 ha	130 ha	36 ha	65 ha	69 ha	36 ha	6 ha	7 ha
Agricultural land (unincorporated area)	8073 ha	2675 ha	894 ha	1600 ha	1700 ha	894 ha	138 ha	172 ha

<div align="center">

Table 2

The distribution of the unincorporated areas
from the commune Puieşti

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Unincorporated area distribution

Destination field	Arable land	Pastures	Forest land	Ponds/ Lakes
Area	7882 ha	737 ha	119 ha	8 ha

The total population of the village is:

<div align="center">

Table 3

The distribution of the population from the villages
belonging to the commune Puieşti

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Villages	Puieşti de jos	Puieşti de sus	Nicoleşti	Dăscăleşti	Măcrina	Plopi	Lunca (Hoinari)
Number of inhabitants/village	1540	520	930	990	520	80	100

Length of access roads / from which:

- asphalt: 39 km

- paved: 150 km

Length of water supply (under construction): 25 km

Total number of economic agents, of which:

Table 4
The distribution of the economic agents
in the villages belonging to the commune Puieşti

Villages	Puieşti de jos	Puieşti de sus	Nicoleşti	Dăscăleşti	Măcrina	Plopi	Lunca (Hoinari)
Number of economic agents/ village	7	3	5	7	5	-	-

The profile of the economic agents: manufacturing and services 10**,** commerce 17

Health units: a dispensary in Puieşti de Jos, where are 2 doctors and 3 nurses

Police station: a post with 4 active members

Churches: Five Orthodox churches in Puieşti de jos, Puieşti de sus, Nicoleşti, Dăscăleşti, Măcrina, with five priests. Most people are Christian Orthodox, in Nicoleşti and Dăscăleşti are people with Adventist religion (in a small proportion compared with the total number of population).

The number of Coty Council members: 13

Birth rate in the last three years (2006 – 2008): 132 children born

The number of single parent families: 50

Additional allowances: 280

Special social situations: families who take care of children with disabilities, families with social assistance: 50

Immigrants: immigration cases are more often found in villages Nicoleşti and Dăscăleşti, however, the percentage of migrant working population in the community is significant.

3.1. The situation of the schools from the commune

The Elementary School from Puieşti was established around 1800, in the early years operating in some local houses.

A statistic from 1891 includes the following data about the school from the current commune:

- "The commune Măcrina (income: 1767 lei). Three hamlets: Hoinari, Măcrina şi Plopi. The school is in Măcrina. It functions since 1889. The place is held by the

commune. It is in inappropriate place, together with the Hall, the place is too small, but it's a healthy place, available for the children. It has only one classroom (3.90 x 3.70 x 2.55), but there is not another room just for the teachers. Has a common courtyard with the Hall. Has no garden. The school has no income. The children from Hoinari and Plopi can attend to the school from Măcrina, where are 131 pupils, so there should be a second teacher. A new place is necessary."

- "The commune Nicolesci (income: 3940 lei). Two hamlets: Dăscălesci and Nicolesci. The school is in Nicolesci. It has a fence covered with reed, it is inappropriate, too small, it is a healthy place, but is hard for children to come to school. It has two classrooms: I (7 x 4.50 x 1.75), II (4 x 4 x 1.75), have not a room just for teachers. There is no yard or garden. The school has no income. The children from Dăscălesci (1 kilometre away) can attend to the school from Nicolesci, but there are 257 school-aged children and should be a second teacher at the existing school, but should also establish another school with two teachers. It would be desirable for the existing school to be transferred to another place, more capacious, away from the cemetery, and the new building should be located further to the village Dăscălesci."

- "The commune Puiesci (income: 3472 lei). Two hamlets: Puiesci de Sus and Puiesci de Jos. The school is in the village Puiesci de Jos. It was built in 1860. The place is the commune's property, built in 1856. The fence is old; the place is inadequate, too small, and healthy but is hard for children to come in this area. There is only one classroom, is not another room only for teachers. There is no yard or garden. The school has no income. The children from Puiesci de Sus (2000 m far from the school) can attend to the school from Puiesci de Jos, where are 179 school-aged children, there should be a second teacher. Is necessary to transfer into a capacious area, an area is reserved since 1864."(Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Directorate of secondary education – *Statistical Data necessary for preparing the budget for the fiscal year 1932, The situation at the beginning of the school year 1931-1932 with staff remuneration which is entitled on January 1, 1932* – Puieşti School's Archive)

After the rebellion of 1907, owner Arthur Greiel donates to the school 5000 m² of his estate purchased from the property owner Ştefănescu Gîlcă. The property owner called the villagers, among the City Hall, to consolidate a new classroom, imposed by the increase of the number of school-aged children. About 350 pupils attended the data recorded in the school documents, the school – during 1939-1943.

The school building was expanded over the time, in 1961 were built two classrooms, and two more in 1964.

In 1973, the school was expanded even more, was built a building with first floor, and in 1976 was built a school workshop.

In the village, Puieşti de sus, documents shown that a culture place was built in 1924. It became too small, and in 1965, a new construction for preschoolers and for primary school was built. After the graduates of the four grades (Primary School) the children go to the school from Puieşti de jos (about 3 km between the villages).

In the village Măcrina, the documents show that there was an instructive-educational process since 1835, the school operated in the houses of natives, in the church, in the old Town Hall's building. In Măcrina the school building was built during 1924-1928, a building with 4 classes.

In the village Dăscăleşti, in the beginning (1917) the school operated in the houses of some natives, in 1927 it was attended by 77 pupils of which 22 repeated the grade. The current school building was built in 1928 on the initiative of Professor Enache Ionescu, Undersecretary of Education.

In the village Nicoleşti the school first operated in the homes of locals, in 1926 was built the first construction. The current local school was built in 1961.

A form of partnership between the school and the local community is in the village Nicoleşti. In the school year 1931-1932 in the village, Nicoleşti operated a school named "The Vocational Elementary School Niculeşti", established on 1 September 1926, consisting of three grades (first grade – 10 pupils, second grade – 12 pupils, third grade – 8 pupils) and there worked a substitute teacher and three masters, all substitutes, they prepared pupils for jobs locally required: ironsmiths and wheelwrights. The school has an ironsmith workshop, operated by a master in an area of 72 m², being attended by 16 pupils. In the school also functions a wheelwrights workshop, where was employed a master, being attended by 14 pupils. Under "special observations" of the quoted document stated that: "The number of scholarships was decreased from 25 to 5, many tools were missing being completely degraded, the fund is insufficient to improve the whole building, was completely reduced the maintenance of animals and vehicles which for the school is an absolute need." The school was funded by the payment of those attending and by the mayor's support, but it served to a greater number that those of the commune settlements. The school has a boarding house; in the school year 1931-1932 were 14 pupils, one administrative person and two service people. The number of the solvent pupils was nine; the annual fee was 2500 lei and other contributions consisting mainly of food. ."(Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Directorate of secondary education – *Statistical Data necessary for preparing the budget for the fiscal year 1932, The situation at the beginning of the school year 1931-1932 with staff remuneration which is entitled on January 1, 1932* – Puieşti School's Archive) In 1948, the existent documents mentioned that in village Nicoleşti operated a Single Gymnasium, founded in 1946.

Other data related to the development of the schools from the commune Puieşti are:

- According to the administrated-territorial division of the time (1894), the mentioned villages belonged to the Râmnicu Sărat County, they were not grouped as current commune, having their separately names;

- A list of "leading villages ready to establish commune schools, from the Slam Râmnic County"(1855) we find the localities: Puieşti de Jos and de Sus with 92 + 46 families, teacher Petrea Violin; Niculeşti and Dăscăleşti with 97 + 70 families, teacher V. Manea; Măcrina and Plopii Vechi with 96 + 46 families, teacher D. Soare;

- Another document relating to "the situation of the rural schools that are going to start operating in 1857" we find the following schools from the villages: Dăscăleşti – no building; Nicoleşti – needs to be repaired; Puieştii de sus – no building, Puieştii de jos – need to be repaired, Măcrina şi Plopii Vechi – no building";

- A statistic from 1854 that includes the number of pupils, shows that, at that time, the schools were attended by: Dăscăleşti – 67 pupils, Nicoleşti, Puieştii de jos – 46 pupils; Măcrina – 105 pupils;

- During 1898-1911, the county's loans helped at the built of school units in the rural places: Nicoleşti (1908), Puieşti (1910), (V. Nicolescu şi I. Cârlan, 2003)

3.1.3 The present situation of the schools from the commune

Material resources

In the Puieşti commune are the following schools:

Pre-school units: Puieşti de jos Kindergarten, Puieşti de sus Kindergarten, Nicoleşti Kindergarten, Măcrina Kindergarten, Dăscăleşti Kindergarten.

In the villages Lunca and Plopi is no school. In Lunca was an elementary school, but because there are no more pupils, now the building is dilapidated.

Schools: Puieşti de Jos elementary school, Nicoleşti Elementary School, Măcrina Primary school.

All schools are subordinated (structures) to Puieşti de Jos elementary school, their leadership being provided by the same unit.

School facilities are:

School constructions:

Schools:

Table 5
The distribution of school units in the commune Puieşti

Locality	Puieşti de jos	Puieşti de sus	Nicoleşti	Dăscă-leşti	Măcri-na	Lunca	Plopi
Number of buildings	2	1	1	-	1	1	-
Number of classrooms	8 in the new building, 6 in the old building	5	8	-	6	4 – local disposed	-
Year of construction	1975 – new building 1916 – old building		1962	-	1973	-	-

Pre-school Units:

Table 6
The distribution of pre-school units in the commune Puieşti

Locality	Puieşti de jos	Puieşti de sus	Nicoleşti	Dăscăleşti	Măcrina	Lunca	Plopi
Number of building	Old building	1	1 renovated building in 1996	1 – built in 1980, renovated in 1996	Old Building	-	-
Number of classrooms	6	2	4	2	1	-	-

Building Utilities: All functional units have electrical installations, toilets, heating with solid fuel, school from Puieşti de jos, Nicoleşti and Dăscăleşti have central heating, and the other rural schools/kindergartens are heated by stoves. The schools from Puieşti de jos and Nicoleşti have wells and house water supply plants (they have sanitary permits for this). This year the village was connected to water supply, yet only in villages Puieşti de jos and Nicoleşti, schools from here are also connected to water supply network.

Areas of study:

Schools have:

- 25 classrooms, 2 offices, 2 laboratories, a workshop, 2 gyms (one in Puieşti de jos School that was built in 2007);

- 8 playgrounds, those for pre-schoolers are equipped with modern properly outdoor furniture;

- Other areas: library, secretarial, teaching material storage facilities, sanitary facilities;

- 14 computers; teaching materials; school is connected to the Internet since 2007, it was possible by extending the services of Romtelecom;

- In summer 2008, the school from Puieşti was refurbished (structure resistance), equipped with double-glazing, education areas renovated and equipped with new furniture.

Human resources:

Table 7

The evolution of the number of pupils/ pre-schoolers in the schools from the commune Puieşti

Children enrolled in a school:

Number of pupils / school year	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008
Pre-school education	154	145
Primary education	178	176
Gymnasium school	136	159

Number of preschoolers/pupils in 2007-2008:

Table 8

The distribution of pupils/ pre-schoolers in the schools from the commune Puieşti

	Pre-school	1st grade	Second grade	Third grade	4th grade	5th grade	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade
Kindergarten/School from Puieşti de jos	57	30	28	20	19	33	21	24	21
Kindergarten/School from Puieşti de sus	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kindergarten/School from Nicoleşti	29	15	15	13	12	21	16	11	12
Kindergarten/School from Măcrina	18	4	7	7	6	-	-	-	-
Kindergarten/School from	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Number of classes in 2007-2009:

Table 8

The distribution of school grades in schools from the commune Puieşti

	Pre-schoolers	1st grade	Second grade	Third grade	4th grade	5th grade	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade
Kindergarten/School from Puieşti de jos	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Kindergarten/School from Puieştde sus	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kindergarten/School from Nicoleşti	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Kindergarten/School from Măcrina	1	1 class with simultaneously teaching for the first and third grade	1 class with simultaneously teaching for the second and 4h grade						
Kindergarten/School from Dăscăleşti	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Dropout rate in the last 5 years: low – 1.3 % in first grades, Roma children.

In the school year 2006-2007 dropped out from school:

- At school from Puieşti: 3 pupils from Primary School, 1 pupil from Gymnasium School;

- At school from Nicoleşti: 2 pupils from Primary School;

- At school from Măcrina: 1 pupil from Primary School.

Rate of school absenteeism: very low, insignificant

Rate of wanting to continue education in 2008: High school: 65 %, School of Arts and Crafts: 35%

Social grants provided by the school – in the school year 2007 – 2008 – 5 scholarships.

Pupils whose parents emigrate: in 2007 - 7 children, pupils at the School from Nicoleşti, the have both parents working aboard.

Teachers

Employment situation for teaching staff in school year 2007-2008

Table 9
The distribution of teachers in the units from the commune Puieşti

Level	Primary School	Gymnasium School	Pre-school education
Number of teachers	11	16	9

Table 10
The origin of teachers from schools from the commune Puieşti

The origin of teachers	Residents	Commuters
Number of teachers	25	10

Table 11
The skill level of teachers from the commune Puieşti

Skill level of teachers	Preschool level	Primary level	Gymnasium level
Skilled	11	16	9
Unskilled	-	-	-
Ongoing skill	-	-	-

Table 12
The distribution of working teachers and
retired teachers from the commune Puieşti

The situation of teachers	Worker	Pensioner
Number of teachers	35	1

Table 12
The distribution of full/deputy professors from the commune Puieşti,

The situation of teachers	Full professor	Deputy professor
Number of teachers	24	12

Table 13
Seniority of teachers from schools the commune Puieşti

The situation of teachers / seniority	Less than 5 years seniority	5-10 years of seniority	10 – 20 years of seniority	Over 20 years of seniority
Number of teachers	18	8	5	5

<u>Table 14</u>
Teaching degrees of teachers from schools
from Puieşti Commune

The situation of teachers/teaching degrees	No degree	Completed	Degree 2	Degree 1
Number of teachers	4	17	12	3

<u>Table 15</u>
The distribution of teachers from schools
from the commune Puieşti, according to gender

The situation of teacher	Female	Male
Number of teachers	27	9

Training courses attended by teachers in the last three years were counselling for teaching mode, counselling and guidance, computer training for getting the highest degree.

Managerial resources

Professor Gheorghe Gheorghe provides the school leadership; a professor specialized in mathematics, didactic degree 1, with 39 years experience in education. In the Board of Directors of the school are 10 persons of which:

<u>Table 16:</u>
The distribution of School Board members from the commune Puieşti

Categories	Teachers	Representatives of parents	Representatives of local authorities	Others
Number of persons	6	1 – Priest Gavrilă Alexe	Mayor 2 teachers in positions of local councillors	-

Information and communication resources:

- The communication with parents is provided directly in the meetings with parents, by a direct contact of parents with teachers at school or at children's homes;

- The school teacher have not mentioned that some parents that work abroad keep the touch with the school by telephone;

- The school has not its own magazine or website.

Curriculum includes the following subjects:

Puieşti Elementary School: years I to III – Health Education, 4th grade – Amusing Mathematics, years V to VIII – Informatics.

Nicoleşti Elementary School: first grade – Children's Literature, second grade – Writing Process, third grade – Health Education, 4th grade – Traffic's Friends, 5th grade – Health Education, 6th grade – Physics Science, 7th – Chemistry, 8th grade – Athletics – Football.

The subjects of curriculum have 1 hour per week, were chosen in consultation with parents and teachers and have been chosen, in some situations, for filling the education standards.

Organizational culture of the school:

The school does not have a proper name, a prestigious name that individualizes it and neither any cultural event for the School Day. The cultural events are organized by the school during the religious or historical festivals, at the end of the school year, etc.

Strategic resources

The school has a development strategy for the period 2006-2010 and annual work plans. The school's development plan during 2006-2010 refers to the current situation of the schools from the commune and to the general situation of the commune, and reports problems as: the decrease of the active people's number, due to aging and migration, lack of serious social problems, children access to school without restrictions and discrimination. In the same document is specified that the school do not have social utilities such as dining room, hostel, and surgery.

The plan includes a SWOT analysis of the school.

The *strengths* mentioned are: trained teachers, local teachers, families of the pupils are solid, good frequency to the courses, sufficient educational facilities, interest for the performance of pupils and teachers (the graduate rate is – 97%, over 90% graduates the Capacity Tests/National Tests), participation on county stages of school competitions, sports competitions awards (school has a male football team, a female handball team, athletics), a good working relationship with the City Hall, local Police, healthcare facilities.

The weaknesses listed are job's instability for the teachers especially at primary school, a very high dropout rate of gypsy ethnicity children, lower results of children whose parents work aboard, children's behavioural deviation, no Kindergarten in village Puieştii de Jos, toilets outside the school building, less sponsorship. From the

outside the school environment, the weaknesses are: wrong mentality of the gypsy families, low birth rates, loss of cultural traditions, dropping out of school by children who completed the eight classes offered by the school.

The strategic plan proposes the composition of the school curriculum – an annual establishment of part time courses for gypsies. This has not happened yet, but for this, the school needs to find resources and to think how to motivate gypsies to attend these courses.

For the school year 2007-2008, the school proposes to establish a specific class of the School Of Arts and Crafts where the pupils are trained for local required jobs: mason, carpenter, ironsmith, tailor, etc. This was not done during the mentioned period. As the previously mentioned direction, in this case the school needs to identify sources of funding, human resources and a logistics. In addition, the school should analyze the local work requirements and the aspiration of pupils and their families.

The school wants to revive the cultural traditions by developing extracurricular activities and by organizing events: Village Dance (it was organized in collaboration with the Mayor), social evenings, group work, holiday greetings, etc. In addition, the school aims to achieve educational history of the commune Puieşti.

In relation with pupil's families, the school aims to a closely collaboration with the parents to harmonize their choice with educational offer and also to diversify the funding sources (not stated how this is going to be achieved), involving the parents by including 1-2 parent representatives in the school's Board of Directors.

The plan also includes the intention to expand partnerships with other schools from the area. The school has a managerial plan of educational work and a schedule of extracurricular activities.

In the discussion with the school directors and with the teachers, they have expressed their opinions that the school would need: to improve the material conditions of Puieşti de jos Kindergarten, to purchase specific equipment for the informatics lab and hire specialized teachers, to equip properly the chemistry lab with supplies and tools, to collaborate more with the parents, to hire a school counsellor because the school has two pupils diagnosed with mental impairment (one in the second grade, the second one in the 5th grade), they should enjoy the support of a pedagogue.

The Puieşti Hall made a "*Local development strategy for the village Puieşti – period 2003-2013".*

Under this strategy are identified, based in the SWOT analysis, a number of characteristics of the commune's education and culture:

- As *strengths* are mentioned: the existence of three schools and five kindergartens, the existence of one library and three cultural centres, adequate facilities, IT equipment and internet, most inhabitants have a high level of education and professional training.

- As *weaknesses* are mentioned: demographic decline of the population, which will lead to the reduction of population that will attend primary and gymnasium school.

- *The opportunities* identified are expressed as lines of action: development a play and recreation centre for children, rehabilitation of schools from the villages Puieştii de jos and Nicoleşti (at this moment the process is started), rehabilitation and modernization of rural cultural centres from the villages Puieştii de jos and Nicoleşti, policies to stimulate the people to come into the vacancies for teachers and maintaining the trained teachers, the existence of community and national programs to ensure the access to education for disadvantaged population.

Financial resources:

Table 17

The distribution of income sources in the schools from Puiești commune

Sources of income	National Budget	Local Budget	Own sources: taxes economic activities, sponsorship, contributions of parents	Other sources (e.g. project financing)
2005-2006	YES	YES	NO	NO
2006-2007	YES	YES	YES	NO
2007-2008	YES	YES	YES	NO

Investment in schools in recent years: playgrounds, gym in the school from Puiești, thermal rehabilitation of buildings: school from Puiești – being built, kindergarten from Dăscăleşti.

School's syllabus/activities in partnership

Local authorities: investment in the material basis of schools, art programs: celebrations, "Village sons", financial support to transport children to schools from other villages from the commune (has a contract with a transport company – mini-buses), City representatives to various activities.

Families of pupils:

- Every class has a Committee of parents, which appointed representatives to the Advisory Board of parents/school (according to Regulation school). Significantly is that in the Board of Directors of the school is only one parent (in our opinion is insufficient);

- Parents are regularly consulted and informed about: school attendance, dropout, the situation of children in school;

- Parents are asked by the school to help with the household activities, they answered every time requests;

- Were held information sessions about: the organization of children's free time, curriculum, educational and vocational guidance, counselling.

- Informing parents about the methodology of the Unique Thesis.

Local police:

- In 2007 was made a movie, 7 minutes and 30 seconds long, related to behaviours that represents a danger for children's life and health, the movie was shown and explained to children by teachers and police officers;

- Were organized contests about the rule of the road, between pupils from Puieşt and Nicoleşti;

- The Police Station provided help for pupils from Roma families, also in school and kindergarten to avoid/prevent abandonment (challenge the family)

- In 2007, when the Police Station was equipped with a car, the team presented its equipment to children.

Church:

- Children are encouraged to attend church weekly;

- When the titular saint was celebrated, the church served a meal to the pupils;

- Support for children with low possibilities;

- Trips to monasteries organized by the church.

Health care facilities:

- Working with family doctors to establish the health of children;

- Early detection of diseases;

- Health professionals were invited to present to the children the risk of disease, but also the ways to prevent them;

- Working with family doctors to establish the state of cleanliness and hygiene of pupils.

Businesses:

- An undertaking maintain the sport in the school from Nicoleşti;

- An undertaking provides the cleaning of health facilities;

- Most businesses have sponsorship schools, especially with food and toys for gift packages, given to children on several occasions (Christmas, Easter, First June)

NGOs – no such of organizations in the commune

Joint activities:

- Organizing and participating in the festival "Village sons" – 3 editions;

- Organizing with the village priest from Nicoleşti, on 10/06/2006, a celebration of 110 years of education in the village;

- Helping poor/sick children, the school and the Town Hall help them with supplies, health and social grants.

Extracurricular activities organized by the school are:

- Dancing evenings at school, the school has 5 bands of folk dances that were awarded by the House of Culture Râmnicu Sărat and Bisoca Festival (2007);

- Organization of actions like "Children ask – adults answer" attended by representatives of both teachers and community representative persons (priest, doctors, consultants, etc.);

- The school organizes additional training courses for children examinations (Tests);

- Children are encouraged to participate to contests: Kangaroo, Winners (they won a camp as award), sports competitions with children from other schools, Olympics, etc.

3.2 The data obtained from the questionnaire-based survey

Table 18

The distribution of questionnaires

Categories of Community Agents	Pupils	Parents	Teachers	Mayors and Deputy Mayors	Local Councillors	Doctors	Officers	Priests	Economic agents
The total number of people	159 (secondary education)	159 families	35	2	13	2	4	4	27
Number of questionnaires	45 (29%)	47 (30%)	14 (40%)	2 (100%)	8 (61.5%)	1 (50%)	3 (75%)	2 (50%)	5 (18.5%)

I. Data from the questionnaire applied to **students** of middle school with classes I – VIII, from Puieşti, Buzău County:

Informations about respondents:

The questionnaire was applied:

- gymnasium pupils (classes V-VIII);

- were surveyed 45 of 159 pupils in the gymnasium;

- the average age of respondents was 13 years old;

- Were surveyed 21 boys and 24 girls.

Informations obtained from the questionnaire

1. From the comparative analysis of responses to the 1st question, we ask students to write down the first three characteristics of: school, family, school and family, we conclude that the school is perceived by pupils as a place were education is characterized by specific activities and a place for socializing, entertainment, a basis for the future. The family is perceived as an entity that provides emotional support, which imposes rules; respect and they attend to some domestic tasks. Families and schools are seen primarily as the most visible common activity (sessions), then as space for collaboration, education which involves certain rules (some called by the surveyed pupils).

2. Interviewed pupils said that **parents are involved in their school** activity (in order of frequency of responses): attend to meetings with parents and teachers, they talk with the form master and school teachers (45 responses), participating in festivals

and rarer shows (37 responses), helped to renovate school – (8 responses), participating in excursions – (6 responses).

No child chose the options: chose electives, chose manuals, participated in teaching classes.

The analysis of these data shows that parents are involved in traditional activities of collaboration (meetings, discussions, celebrations, performances) rather than the actual activity of teaching/learning of their children.

3. Asked if they would like **to become more involved their parents**, questioned pupil said: yes – 18 pupils, no – 18 pupils, do not know – 9 pupils;

19 children, although they chose one answer yes/no/do not know, gave reasons for participation or non-participation of parents in school activities.

Parental involvement is desired by children, they have a clear picture about how they want their parents to get involved: to talk more with teachers (8 answers), to play football with us (5 answers), to learn a trade (4 answers), to help me with homework (3 answers), to be more involved in school activities (3 answers), to spend more time with us (2 answers), meeting with parents (2 answers), to participate in class (2 answers), to give me more help at homework, to supervise and advice me to chose optional subjects, because there are optional subjects chosen by teachers, to teach me new things, to defend me in some things, not allow teachers to curse us, to talk more with the teachers, would like to practice some sports with their parents, to extend the break time and introducing sports classes every day, to think more about my entourage, to play with my family on the computer, to discuss our marks (1 answer).

Children's reasons for *not wanting* to become more involved their parents in school activities are: to hide the bad grades (5 responses), the school is for children not for parents, to not find out before (I will tell them when they are in good spirits), not to chide us, to not beat us after finding out the grades, to take us easy and talk with us (2 responses).

Other answers: do not chide us when we take a bad mark, do not tell us we must learn, not to get involved at all, they forbid me some things – eg. going to play, I get chide, ask me to learn more, don't let me play, to advice me not to pester me, because they have another conception of school and cannot stand to be a nag, the family does not have time to get involved and from that are form teachers who choose appropriate optional but that means that parents are uninterested, because marks they put me to learn a lot, I must to learn a lot, do not see what flapdoodle I do at school, for pestering me, do not know that we take small marks at test papers, they would find out the marks I have not told yet, not to talk about our work school whit the form teacher, we do flapdoodle, not chide me, to continue to take me new

things, to let me out, parents would find out quickly about the flapdoodle we are doing at school and at home we get chide. The analysis of these responses shows that the relation between school and family is perceived by students as a source of stress for them.

4. The activities indicated by students, that school organized outside the classes are: trips (37 responses), karate (28 responses), folk/modern dances (18 responses), shows (15 responses), sports (11 responses), drama (9 responses), football, disco, „sons of the village" celebration (7 responses), party/ entertainment/ dance evenings (6 responses), dances (5 responses), visit the monasteries, the reading groups (4 responses), handball, hours of additional preparation (3 responses), reading 2 responses), contests, tutoring, sports, painting, sports competitions, athletics (1 each answer).

5. **Favourite school activities of the surveyed students**:

- Sport, breaks (14 responses), music, drawing (8 responses), trips (3 responses), recreations (2 responses), technology, disco, festivals, shows, trips, dance classes, religion (1 each answer).

6. Of those surveyed: 38 students also participated in other activities outside of school and 7 states that do not participate.

Activities outside of school that has been indicated by the surveyed students are:

- Olympics – (16 responses), competitions (Winers, sport) (14 responses), tutoring (11 responses), play handball with other classes/ schools/ common, soccer (7 responses), dances, trips, sports activities (5 responses each), sports (2 responses), dances, parties, sports, reading, lessons, "the children of the village", walking, playing, karate (1 answer each).

Analysis of these responses show that students perceive outside school activities, extracurricular activities, all organized by the school.

7. Surveyed students say **they would like to participate more in**: sports (44 responses), recreations activities (trips, hiking, etc..) (43 responses), road safety education and for personal safety (42 responses), intercultural education activities (41 responses), drawing groups, computer science, music, theatre, etc... (40 responses), knowledge of the specific and history of the village in which they live (39 responses), tutoring in subjects that interest them, health education activities, cultural activities (school celebrations, exhibitions, shows, etc...) (32 responses), assessment of academic results, competitions, Olympics (31 responses), school psychologist counselling activities (29 responses), parent meeting (27 responses), choosing optional subjects and textbooks, environmental education activities (25 responses), visits to businesses to know their work (business) (23 responses).

II. Data from the questionnaire applied to parents whose children attend to middle school whit grades I – VIII, Puieşti, Buzău County:

Information about respondents:

The questionnaire was applied to a number of 47 parents whose children attend elementary and middle school;

- The respondents are living in commune, as follows: 26 - Puieşti de Jos, 4 - Măcrina, 2 – Plopi, 6 – Dăscăleşti, 9 - Nicoleşti

- The average age of respondents was 39.73 years;

- 18 male and 29 female were surveyed;

- The level of education of the respondents is: 2 persons with higher education, 1 school/college, 22 high school, 11 trade school, 5 with the first stage of high school (10 classes), 3 with 7-8 classes (of middle school), 1 no less than seven classes, and 2 undetermined.

- Occupations of the respondents are 16 home-keeping, 3 unemployed, 5 farmers, 16 employees, 1 entrepreneur, 1 retiree, 5 undetermined.

- Marital status is: 1 widower, 1 living with someone without being married and 45 married.

Data obtained by applying the questionnaire:

1. Comparative analysis of responses to questions 1, we asked parents to record the first three characteristics of: school, family, school and family, we conclude that school is perceived by parents as a place to make education/learning, which requires discipline and respect, organisation, a place of study, a base for the future. The family is perceived as an entity that is based on respect, providing emotional support (love, understanding, protection, support, etc.) but also a place where the child is educated (urbanity). Both families and school are seen as entities for education but also the most visible joint activities (meetings), then as a space for collaboration, education that involves certain rules.

2. Questioned parents said that **they are satisfied with the following school activities:**

a) *Teaching:* to a small degree (6 responses), to a great degree (22 responses), in a greater degree (9 responses), do not know (5 responses).

b) *The evaluation of children* to a very small degree (1 response), to a small degree (7 responses), to a great degree (16 responses), to a greater degree (9 responses), do not know (8 responses)

c) *The school communication/ consultation with them:* to a very small degree (4 responses), to a small degree (10 responses), to a great degree (9 responses), to a greater degree (8 responses).

d) *Extracurricular activities organized by the school:* to a very small degree (6 responses), to a small degree (4 responses), to a great degree (15 responses), to a greater degree (10 responses), do not know (7 responses).

e) *The alliance between school and parents:* to a very small degree (6 responses), to a small degree (6 responses), to a great degree (13 responses), to a greater degree (12 responses), do not know (4 responses).

f) *The general organization of school:* to a very small degree (no answer), to a small degree (1 response), to a great degree (21 responses), to a greater degree (14 responses), do not know (6 responses).

Analysis of these responses shows that a significant percentage of parents are dissatisfied with the school. School board should consider this condition and improve the collaboration with them. In addition, the school should make their action more visible and to involve more the students parents in these.

3. Regarding the **frequency of coming to school of the parents**, respondents said they come: biannual (26 responses), monthly (10 responses), when we are called to the meeting (9 responses), when I have time, every time I get, daily, I'm employee of the school (1 response each).

4. Questioned parents said that **people who lyses with the school are,** in hierarchy order: elementary teacher/form teacher, with class teacher, the school principal, with others (teacher advisor, educationalist, and school staff).

5. Respondents said they **were involved with the school in**: the election of parents in the Council class and in the school Administrative Board (15 responses), organizing cultural and recreation activities (school celebration, festivities, trips, etc...) (13 responses), evaluation of pupils (10 responses), renovation of the school and equipping schools with teaching materials (8 responses), resolving the conflict situations in school (6 responses), choosing the teaching methods (3 responses), choosing teachers and planning school budget (1 response each). Neither parent has chosen that option: composition of the school development plan.

6. The surveyed ones said that the parents should be more involved in: resolving conflict situations in school, choosing optional subjects and textbooks (8 responses), evaluation of pupils (6 responses), choosing the school teachers, renovation of the school and equipping school with teaching materials (5 responses), the election of parents in the Council class and in the school Administrative Board, composition of the school development plan (4 responses), organizing cultural and recreation

activities (school celebration, festivals, trips, etc..) (3 responses), choosing the teaching methods (2 responses), parent meetings, choosing the electives, school budgeting (1 response each);

7. The benefits of a closer collaboration between family and school, are as it follow in the opinion of the respondents: better communication (3 responses), resolving conflict situation in school (2 responses), collaboration between school principal / form teacher, the child is more active in school, the children preparation would be better,, better school results, better materials for study, I would know more about my kids, avoid drugs and violence in school, better informing on amendments in education system, better education of children, to avoid serious problems.

8. From the surveyed parents, **the ones who would like to be involved in joint activities with the school are:** 18 more than currently, 6 would not, 18 said they do not know.

Those who would like to become more involved indicated that activities: choosing classroom teaching methods, resolving conflict situations in school, communication, classes, extracurricular activities, environmental activities, choosing the optional subjects, joint meetings with parents- teachers – students, measures to eliminate the discrimination against good students – very good ones, organizing cultural activities.

The reasons mentioned by those who said they did not want to be involved are: I don't have time (7 responses), work (3 responses), I must to work for the family (2 responses), I influence the marks received marks by the child, do not think it is necessary to get more involved, the teachers are enough involved.

 9. Activities perceived by parents as being organized by the school especially for parents are: meetings with parents (38 responses), celebrations (29 responses), and individual discussions with teachers of the class (13 responses). No parent has chosen the following: courses for parents, psychological counselling and guidance, school did not organize any of these activities at this time.

10. Questioned parents, ask if they agree to participate in other activities for education responded: 15 yes, 12 no, 12 do not know, 8 did not respond.

11. Barriers who stand in the way of a better cooperation between school and family, identified by parents are: lack of time (10 responses), the distance from the home to school, family problems, parents are very busy with work and cannot cooperate with school, (2 responses), bad attitude about Romanian education, lack of money, lack of job, stress, level of culture, a low level of education,, the conception that you can make money without school (college), parents ignorance, lack of information of parents, ne understanding, different mentality.

12. Solutions for a better collaboration between school and family, in the surveyed parents opinion are: more meetings with parents (9 responses),having contact

through teachers, regular participation of a parent to its child classes, more communication between school and parents, to contact family more often, more parents to go to school, keeping discipline, consulting parents on school plans: renovations, manufacture / purchase of teaching materials, more involvement of parents when teachers are asking, parents should go often to school, inter-school activities, home visits to students, discussions on topic with teachers.

13. On **how the parents are contacted by the school** they indicated: are contacted by the children (29 responses), are contacted directly by the teacher (14 responses), are contacted by phone (3 responses), displaying information on the school boards/school sites (internet) (1 response).

Analysis of these results we suggest that rather school cultivate the impersonal relations, parents and teachers know personally, modern means are very little used.

14. In connection with **advisory practices** surveyed parents were asked to say:

- *Who chose the alternative textbooks:* school teachers (24 responses), form teacher (12 responses), the school principal (8 responses), school teachers with parents and children's (1 response).

- *Who chose the optional subjects for students:* form teacher (13 responses), the school principal (13 responses), school teachers (11 responses), school teachers with parents and children (6 responses).

15. Questioned parents said they **have/have not a representative in class Council/Administrative Board of school**: yes (17 responses), not (8 responses), do not know (19 responses).

Criteria by which they were elected the representatives parents are: depending by the available time (6 responses), elected by other parents/vote (4 responses), do not know (3 responses), child's performance at school (2 responses), to be professionally prepared amorally, capable, competent.

16. Respondents said, in relation to any cash contributions at the fund of class/school: I agree (26 responses), disagree (7 answers), do not know (2 responses), 12 parents did not answer.

17. About **who should deicide school spending,** the questioned parents said that: the school principal and teachers (27 responses), the local council (city hall) (15 responses), the Administration Board of school (9 responses), school inspectorate/Ministry of Education (7 responses), parents (3 responses).

Analysis of these responses show that consultative practices may be improved but not only from the school initiative but also requires an increased awareness of the role that parents have in relation to school, training for parents for that purpose.

18. The hierarchy of that **school should work,** according to respondents parents is as follows:

1. with student's families;

2. With local authorities (city hall/ Local Council);

3. with police;

4. with medical dispensary/clinic;

5. with economic and church;

6. with NGOs.

19. How parents perceive the various community agents collaboration with the school, the respondents indicated:

- *The local authority (city hall, Local Council):* meetings, to help schools, giving funds to equip school (6 responses), facts not words (2 responses), information on all irregularities, with the school development projects, those of the City Hall are invited to come to school.

- *With the Police:* organization of courses, officers participations at the tuition, information about those who are absent from school, training, prevention of juvenile delinquency, to assure protection for the school, intervention in conflicts from school, informing students, take lectures on safety to teach children how to behave in the community, how to speak.

- *The medical dispensary/clinic:* clinic visits – 2 responses, hygiene courses, in case of epidemic the school should notify the medical staff, medical examination of students, to check the health of the child.

- *With the church:* teaching children to attend church/to direct them to the church – 3 responses, religious classes, collecting money to help the church.

- *With economic agents: sponsorship – 2 responses, to give milk, corn, dessert, it is not necessary.*

- *With NGOs: providing funding, it is not necessary.*

III. Data from the questionnaire applied to **elementary school teachers** with classes I-VIII **Puieşti**:

Information about respondents:

The questionnaire was applied:

- 14 of the 36 teachers working in schools and kindergartens from the common.

- Of the surveyed: 5 are male, 9 are female;

- The average age of respondents is 47 years;

- Average length of working in education of the respondents is 18.5 years seniority (3 were between 2 and 5 years seniority, 5 were between 5 and 10 years seniority, 2 were between 30 and 39 years seniority, 2 have 40 years seniority;

- Of those surveyed: 1 has no teaching degree, 6 have tenure, 6 have the second degree, and 1 has the first teaching degree.

- Of those surveyed: 3 as educators, 3 – elementary teachers, others are teaching: biology, Romaine Language and Literature, English, Geography – Biology, Mathematics – 2 (persons), Physics – Chemistry.

Information obtained from the questionnaire:

1. Considering the **educational climate from the school**, teachers said they are satisfied:

- *The school atmosphere* – to a small degree (1 response), to a great degree (12 responses) and to a greater degree (1 response);

- *Material equipment of the school* – to a small degree (2 responses) and to a great degree (10 responses) and to greater degree (2 responses);

- *Communication with management/colleagues* – to a great degree (6 responses) and to a greater degree (8 responses);

- *Communication and collaboration with parents* – to a small degree (1 response), to a great degree (7 responses) and to a greater degree (6 responses);

- *The collaboration of school with you* – to a great degree (7 responses) and to a greater degree (7 responses);

- *The general organization of the school* – to a great degree (8 responses) and to a greater degree (8 responses).

We can see that surveyed teachers have a pretty good opinion about school organization.

2. In the participative management and practices in this school, the surveyed teachers said they were involved in: choice of teaching methods in class (13 responses), evaluation of pupils (12 responses), the election of parents in the Council class and in the school Administrative Board (11 responses), the choice of optional subjects and textbooks, organizing cultural and recreation activities (school celebration, festivals, trips, etc..) (10 responses), resolving the conflict situation in

school (9 responses), counselling and helping in school orientation and professional of students (8 responses), renovating school and equipping school with educational materials, organizing extracurricular activities, attracting sponsors for school (7 responses), organization and support of additional training session for students school projects/programs/activities with community partners (NGOs, local Council, church, police, businesses, etc..), choosing the school administration and teachers, planning the school budget (5 responses), preparing students for contests (4 responses), the composition of the school development plan (3 responses), choosing school teachers (responses), no one is involved in achieving of the school magazine – school don't have one.

The analysis of responses do not reveals that the teachers are involved in activities related to the main responsibilities of the job and in partnership activities and participation. They were involved in extracurricular activities with students and parents but also in organizational development activities: the composition of the school development plan, planning the budget, attracting sponsorship, etc... .

3. The hierarchy of collaboration of school should be, in opinion of the teachers as it follows:

1. with students' families;

2. with local authorities;

3. with medical dispensary/clinic;

4. with police;

5. with church;

6. with economic agents;

7. With non-governmental organizations (NGOs – associations and foundations);

4. As for how school should collaborate with local community representatives, according to surveyed teachers were mentioned:

With students families: parent meeting and meetings with local Council to find solutions for preventions the school dropout, meeting between students – parents – special committee members of the local Council, home visits to students, activities organized in school with students and parents (celebrations, meetings), excursions.

With the local authorities (Town Hall, local Council) money for equipment, discussions with the representatives of Town Hall, meetings with parents and local council to find solution for prevention the school dropout, meeting between students – parents- special committee members of the local Council, organizing activities at school with students, parents (festivals, meetings, trips) inviting local representatives at parent meetings and at the tuitions, support for Roma families by local authorities.

With the police: ensure safety of children, discussions with the police representatives, participation of the Police representatives at the tuitions about road education.

With the economic agents: sponsorships, cultural activities.

With the medical dispensary/clinic: the detection of the serious diseases, hygiene education, and the participation of the hospital representatives at the tuitions about health education.

With Church: promoting moral values, discussions with the church representatives.

With mom-governmental organizations (NGOs – associations and foundations): material aid for under-privileged children.

5. **The benefits of a closer collaboration between community and school** according to surveyed teachers are: children educated parents more responsible, less violence at school, fewer children who drop out of school, a better equipped with studies materials, better school results.

6. 10 of the surveyed teachers **expressed a desire to be more involved** in the relationship between school and community, and 3 said they do not know, 1 does not want, arguing the lack of time.

Those who said they would like to become more involved indicated as activities: debates "democratic Tribune", celebration of "village children", meetings between students – parents – special committee members of the local Council, home visits to students, organizing activities in schools with students, parents: celebrations, parent meetings, school celebration, trips, all Roma education, in activities that create jobs for young people, environment protection, the school monograph achievement, organizing meetings between generations, the establishment a park.

7. The main **barriers** that stand in the way of a better cooperation between school and community respondents indicated: are low interested (below expectations) of parents, poor communication, lack of interest of Roma families for school – 2 responses, the families lack of interest for their children and to school, some outdated mentality.

8. Solution for a better working relationship between school and community respondents indicated are: more seriously, inviting local authorities in parent meetings and at the tuitions, better communication, involving representatives of: police, hospitals at the tuitions about road safety and health education, the minimum conditions for all citizens to lead a decent life, support for Roma families from the authorities, scholarization of all children.

IV. Data from questionnaires applied to the **local government officials: Town Hall and local Council** of the commune Puieşti:

Information about respondents:

The questionnaire was applied:

- Puieşti Mayor, Buzău County;

- Puieşti Deputy Mayor, Buzău County;

- To a number of 4 local councillors from the Local Council of Puieşti, Buzău County.

- All 6 surveyed people were male.

- The level of education of the respondents is as follows: 4 people have graduated from higher schools, 2 high school level;

- The average age of respondents – 51 years.

Information obtained from the questionnaire:

1. Respondents mentioned the following **roles that school should accomplished in community:** training, education, training young generation, physical and mental development of the individuals, comprehensive education of students – 2 responses.

2. The main tasks mentioned by respondents, which mayor/local council has in relation to the school, are: required to ensure school factors to shape the future generation, financial support, material and legal, financing development projects, coordination of school management; supporting educational action in terms of financial and managerial – 2 responses.

3. All respondents considered that are **beneficial for the community o tight collaboration between schools and local authorities** and identified **benefits** are removing the disturbances in communication and avoid problems, professional training for students, increasing the level of culture and civilization, thorough understanding of the educational acts.

4. Respondents consider the **collaboration between the Town Hall and City Council with school is satisfying**:

- Largely – 4 responses;

- In a greater measure – 1 responses.

5. In the present collaboration of municipality/local Council with school, respondents said that the Town Hall involves the following:

Selected variants by all respondents: finance various school activities (festivals, excursions for childrens, helping children from poor families, etc..), pay salaries of teachers and administrative staff, organizes cultural events with local character (celebration of the locality, shows, commemoration of local heroes, open day, etc..), choosing the optional subjects for students (this area of cooperation is unreal), finance rehabilitation and material equipping of school, coordinate and finance the public social service work.

Selected variants by 5 of the respondents by appointing local representatives of the Council of School Board, by including the school development plan in general development plan of village.

The chosen variants by 4 of the respondents: were/is a partner with school projects with external funding (The World Bank, the Romanian governmental programs, etc..) – the school was an investment partner (gym) with Romanian Government finances;

Other mentioned ways: are transporting the teachers and children to school and from school at home.

6. Respondents say that: local authorities should have greater role in: finance rehabilitation and school facilities;

7. The personal involvement of the respondents has declared they were involved in:

The chosen variants by all respondents: voting in the Council the decision about school;

The chosen variants by 4 of the respondents: steps to achieve projects in partnership with external financing, the composition of the school plan developmental points, organizing cultural events in school and community (the celebration of the village, shows, exhibitions, commemorations of local heroes, open day, etc..).

Chosen variants by 3 of the respondents: volunteering in school activities (spatial planning, coordinate of groups of children, activities with parents, etc..), Local Council representatives to the Board of Directors of the school, the proposed measure relating to the school for discussion and approval in the local Council, the organization of cultural and recreational activities (the celebration of the school, festivals, trips, etc..), participation in cultural events of the school.

8. Respondents said they **would like to become more involved in joint activities school – local authorities**: development projects, development of educational plan, education of Roma, project financing – structural funds.

9. **The main barriers that stand in the way of better cooperation between schools and local authorities** mentioned on respondents are: inertia to change, the county school inspectorate, trade union education from school.

10. **Solution** for a better relationship between schools and local authorities identified by respondents are: adoption of a new education law, common interest in preparing of the community members, organizing cultural events.

11. Respondents said they had **appointed a representative to the Board of Directors of the school** and the criteria by which they are designated.

12. School should collaborate, according to representatives of local authorities with the following (in order of importance):

1. Students families and local authorities;

2. Police;

3. Economic agents;

4. with medical dispensary/clinic;

5. The Church;

6. Non-governmental organization (NGOs – association and foundation).

13. As for **how school should work** with them, according to representatives of local authorities were mentioned:

- *The families of students:* a better communication in order to identify problems early, visits to students, parent meetings;

- *The local authorities (Town Hall, Local Council):* report the school needs and finding solution in common; attending Local Council meetings;

- *The police:* monitoring anti-social issues, education, road education, participation in joint activities;

- *Economic agents: funding and sponsorships, visits;*

- *The medical dispensary/clinic: reporting the student health issues, periodic checks, joint action;*

- *The Church:* religious education, volunteer participation of students at the church services;

- *Non-governmental organization (NGOs – association and foundation):* implementation of programs and organizing activities, possible sponsorships;

- *The other mentioned – the library:* book presentation, commemorations.

V. Data obtained from the questionnaires applied to **businesses** from the commune Puieşti:

Data about the respondents:

The questionnaire was applied to the representatives of:

- 5 companies;

- They work in the commune Puieşti, Buzău County, in the localities: Nicoleşti (1), Dăscăleşti (2), Puieşti de jos (1), Nicoleşti (1);

- An economic agent has a profile on production and services, 4 – trade;

- 3 people were male, 2 were female;

- The level of education of the respondents is as follows: one person graduated the vocational school, 4 graduated high school.

The information obtained from the questionnaire:

1. The respondents mentioned the following **roles that school should have in their community**: children and youth education, training competent people for the future.

2. All the respondents considered that **a good relationship between the school and the businesses is beneficial for the community** and the identified **benefits** are better education and professional training, a better-equipped school, pupils would learn how to do a job, training pupils for a social orientation, a permanent collaboration between businesses and schools.

3. The economic agents have said that they currently **work** with the school: providing with sponsorship (money, goods) the school (3 responses), voluntary activity for the school (spatial planning, participation in cultural activities, etc.) (1 response), attending council meetings of the school administration (one response), school and professional orientation of pupils (one response).

4. The respondents consider that the businesses **should have a greater role** in: school and professional orientation of pupils (2 responses), the organization of knowledge activities of economic agencies (visit the businesses, specialist's participation in the economic education classes, etc.) (one response), offering sponsorships(one response), developing the professional orientation of pupils(one response)

3. of those surveyed said that they would like to become more involved in the joint activities (school-businesses), the activities they would like to be involved in, are: training children for the economic environment – training the disciples, bidding for jobs, programme "Roll and Bun", extracurricular activities, cultural activities – educational.

5. The economic agents interviewed identified a number of barriers **that stand in the way of a better collaboration between schools and businesses**: bureaucracy, mentality, interests, lack of financial resources (2 responses).

7. The **solutions for a better working relationship between schools and businesses** mentioned are deeper communication relationships, developing a stronger economic base in the commune.

VI. The data resulted from the questionnaires applied to the **priests** from the commune Puieşti:

Data about the respondents:

The questionnaire is applied:

- To two Orthodox priests;

- They work in the commune Puieşti, Buzău County, in the localities: Dăscăleşti (1), Puieşti de jos (1);

- The level of education of the respondents is as follows: the two surveyed priests have university education;

The information obtained from the questionnaire:

1. The respondents mentioned the following **roles that the school should have in their community**: instructive – educational, to make the pupil to love his family, faith and country; to highlight the qualities of each pupil.

2. The respondents identified **the responsibilities of church in relation to school**: "The church leads to an eternal life in society and aims to holy the man".

3. The interviewed priests considered that **the collaboration between the school and the church is beneficial**, and the identified **benefits** are well-trained people with good Christian morals; good behaviour and Christian morality; respect the principles of divine and human.

4. The respondents said that they are greatly satisfied with the **cooperation with the school**, and the collaborating activities are developing cultural activities (on religious holiday), supporting religious activities in school (blessing the school, opening/closing the school year, etc.), counselling and guidance of parents.

5. The priests surveyed believe that **the church should have a greater role** in advising and guiding parents and children.

6. The respondents said that they **would like to become more involved** in the collaboration between the school and the church to help children with material, in family problems, in the problems related to age.

7. The mentioned **issues** that stand in the way of a better collaboration between the school and the church are the fact that some teachers are atheists who obstructs collaboration between the school and the church; the children cannot come to church on Sundays because are called to school for different activities.

8. The identified solution **for a better working relationship between the school and the church** are: a better communication between the representatives of the two institutions; involved in several joint actions.

VII. The data from the questionnaires applied to the **doctors** from the commune Puieşti:

Data about the respondents:

The questionnaire is applied:

- To one of the two family doctors working at the dispensary from the commune Puieşti, Buzău County;

Information obtained from the questionnaire:

1. The interviewed doctor mentioned the following **roles that the school should have in the community**: education and career guidance.

2. The questioned identified as **attributions** of sanitary units in relation with the school the following: health education, regular health surveillance of children.

3. The questioned doctor considered that until now, he had a good collaboration with the school, and that **the collaboration between the health units and the school is beneficial** for the community, and the **benefits** identified are: raising children in a healthy environment, awareness of the role that has the hygiene.

4. The questioned doctor said that he was **involved** in the relation with the school in the following activities: organizing activities or educational programs for pupils (courses of health education, information about the prevention of disease, etc), controlling periodic the health of the pupils or teachers, informing the teachers and the school directors about the special situation found (children who suffer from diseases such as: TB, HIV-AIDS, hepatitis, childhood diseases, etc.).

5. He also said that would like to involve more in the psychological counselling to stop aggression, and that the healthcare units should have a greater role in participating in the programs/project as a school's partner.

VIII. The data from the questionnaires applied to the **representatives of the police** from the commune Puieşti:

Data about the respondents:

The questionnaire is applied:

- To 4 police officers working in the commune Piety;
- All four people surveyed were male;
- The level of education of the respondents is as follows: 2 people have graduated from higher schools, 2 graduated high school/college;
- The average of the respondents age – 30 years old.

The information obtained from the questionnaire:

1. The respondents mentioned the following **roles that school should have in** their **community**: educating children (4 responses), preparing children for life (3 responses), disciplining children (2 responses), the accumulation of knowledge (one response), and integration of children in society (one response).

2. The **main tasks** mentioned by the respondents, which the police has in relation with the school, are: to ensure the public order and the safety policy in the commune and in the school areas (3 responses), to ensure the pupils and school security (2 responses), to inform children about their behaviour in the school and in the society (one response), to inform pupils about laws and to present how these are helpful for them (one response).

3. All respondents considered that at that moment, the collaboration with the police is satisfactory and that **a good relation between the school and the police is beneficial for the community** and the **benefits** identified are: ensuring an adequate environment for education (2 responses), reducing crime and antisocial acts among children (one response), preparing children for the future to distinguish right from wrong and to not commit illegal acts (one response), pupils can learn about the benefits that can have for being a cop (one response).

4. The questioned police officers said that they were **involved** in the relation with school by: ensuring peace and public order in the community, organizing activities/educational program for pupils (courses: road safety education, to prevent juvenile delinquency, to prevent the consumption of drugs and alcohol, etc.), ensuring the security of pupils, informing pupils/ teachers/parents about the community's problems, organizing a community information service for residents, preventing the dropout/ school absenteeism, organizing ongoing communication activities, preventing child abuse.

5. The respondents believe that **the police should have a greater role** in: organizing educational activities to prevent juvenile delinquency, drugs and alcohol consumption, ensuring security of pupils, preventing violence.

6. The police representatives interviewed said that they **would like to become more involved** in: a partnership between the two institutions, in the meeting with the parents and the teachers.

7. The respondents believe that "although now the relation between the school and the police is satisfactory, it needs more attention" and that "if there is openness, all problems can be solved".

8. The mentioned **solutions** by the respondents, **for a better working relationship between the school and the police** are continuing the collaboration of both institutions, giving more attention to the partnership area, teaching law in force to pupils during class-meetings, informing about the solution to reduce violations of the laws.

1. Conclusions and direction of development of the Puieşti Elementary School

The analysis of data obtained from this research reveals some conclusion about the school's development and the directions of action in terms of partnership.

The collected data, in this case, confirms the research hypotheses. The school has grown and developed along with the development of the community. School's life was and still is influenced by what happens in the commune. *The identified forms of development partnership mainly on those components whose main beneficiary is the pupil.* The analyzed school is well developed, locally recognized as an important institution. This confirms the assumption that *the access to various community resources, led to the existence of a well-developed school and locally recognized.*

The good cooperation with the local authorities made it possible for the school, at least in material terms, to have good equipment. The representatives of the mayor and city council have realized that the investment in the local infrastructure and services is one of the engines of development, that the inhabitants of the commune are more motivated to remain to live, work, invest in local plan, if they have access to services and public utilities. Thus, the commune connected to the water-supply system, have paved access roads, have built a modern gym, and have been rebuilt/strengthened: City Hall, churches, school buildings. The infusion of funds in infrastructures leads to increased motivation for teachers, pupils, their families, community residents.

The community presents itself as a developed one, the community agents understand their role in the partnership with the school, is aware of the benefits of the partnership on the community and its representatives.

The school, although efforts are made permanently for maintenance of the equipment, still has *material needs*:

- Renovation of school facilities (now is consolidated and refurbished the school building from Puieşti de jos). The existence of many places of the school and preschool makes the local effort to be higher. Also, the fact that some areas used by school cannot be held classes due to lack of children, are disabled and

require conservation efforts and a redistribution of these spaces to be used for other purposes;

- Providing schools and preschools with modern teaching equipment and materials and hiring teachers, this being a condition for a good quality education;

- Providing schools from villages Dăscăleşti and Măcrina with heating centrals would add safety and comfort for children and teachers, but would also create the need to allocate additional human resources to take care of these centrals;

- The Hall and the school, in the tests done locally, indicates the need to support activities for preschool education by constructing an adequate kindergarten in Puieşti de jos with extended program. This requires a consistent effort from the local authorities: buildings, equipment, hiring staff to support the extended program and to prepare meals, monitoring sleep program. Considering that many women with preschooler-aged children are housewives and many children are supervised by grandparents, it requires a careful analysis of the needs of medium and long terms;

- Increasing the number of computers and connecting them to the Internet networks gives children new opportunities to learn and gives both to teachers and pupils the opportunity to have easier access to information. A possible solution to this problem would be applying for sponsorship from businesses that provide cable services in the commune. This request can come either from the representatives of the school or the local authorities.

Regarding to **human resources** can draw several conclusions:

- In the developed villages from the commune, the birth rate is relatively constant, which ensures the sustainability function of school on longer terms. The school and authorities have identified as threat that the population of the commune is aging, leading to the decrease of birth rates. A solution would be to educate the Roma children, whose birth rate is increased. The issue is that the families of these children do not give much attention to education, the dropout being high in this case. We also meet cases of marriage of minor children of this ethnicity. In this case, school authorities try to unify their efforts. School, as a possible solution to the illiteracy of Roma population, aims to organize literacy courses for them (most Roma people are illiterate). But there are two major problems: Roma people's motivation to participate in these courses (do not see the utility) and the financial resources for this program. Accessing irredeemable grants, by school or local authorities, or establishing a non-governmental organization, which can access grants (community association, professional association, etc.), can be solution to finance training for adults. We consider that is necessary a consultation with the representatives of Roma ethnicity, to motivate the adults to participate in these courses. In addition, the parents should

be informed about the effects of early school dropout and early marriage of children. The Roma population from the commune is very poor, does not migrate, livelihoods being secured by agriculture, as day labourers, and by social aid from the municipality. Another fact to note is that in this population, especially the men, are alcoholics and this can be combated and prevented by intensive attention of the authorities, hospitals, schools, police, etc.

- Another issue is the small number of children to school from Măcrina, which required the organization of classes with simultaneously teaching. The educational process is slow and the results are low. We identified two possible solutions: either make the necessary arrangements for approving the operation of classes with a small number of pupils, or transporting children to the schools from the villages Puieşti de jos and Nicoleşti;

- We also identified situation in which the parents are away, working abroad. It is necessary to keep an eye on these children, identifying the problematic situation that may arise, but also on the social units, and advising and apprise parents about their rights and obligations that have towards children;

- As regards teachers, the high percentage of commuter teachers (40% of all teachers of the school) increases the risk of their migration. Is doubled this risk by the similar percentage of substitute teachers, which can easily migrate. Unfortunately, the number of hours allocated to some subjects does not ensure standardization of some jobs. Easy access to town, the presence of transport, a short distance between the village and the city (14 km. far from Râmnicu Sărat) make the commute easy for teachers, and the school can be attractive for teachers from outside the village;

 As good points of the school, we can mention that all the teachers are trained, many teachers are young and only one teacher is retired.

- Another problem that we signal is that of teachers' involvement in school and extracurricular activities. Although they are open to involve in this kind of activities, the motivation level may be fluctuating. Activities of this type may influenced by the fact that many teachers are commuters. Valuing those involved, highlighting them in various cultural events, rewarding those with great results are ways of motivation for teachers;

- Looking at the strategic point mentioned in the school documents we meet as a reference point the fact that school given its historical data (that has been another school of this kind in the village Nicoleşti), intends to establish in the school year 2007-2007 a special class of The School of Arts and Crafts, in which pupils are prepared for jobs that the local market requires: mason, carpenter, ironsmith, tailor, etc. This has not been done during that period. If this goal will be maintained, school

and local authorities should identify the legal possibilities for such an approach, also the logistics and the related funding source. It also requires an analysis of the local labour requirements and aspiration of children and their families;

The weakness of the school development strategy is note that some children leave school after the 8th grades offered locally. From the school documents results that all children that graduate all eight grades continue the education (in high schools, in School of Arts and Crafts). In the cases of children that risk abandoning education, the school, the authorities and the families must unify their efforts to advise families to identify sources of material support;

- Although the school violence is not very high, the teachers mention it increase among children (from the questionnaires and the strategic plan). It is a trend reported throughout the country. For example, in Romania, in 2010, of the total number of 11,232 cases of family violence on children reported to the General Directorate for Social Services and Children Protection, 1,218 cases have been of emotional abuse, 1,254 of physical abuse, 623 of sexual abuse and 7,642 of neglect. Some of these data are greater and other are smaller compared to the year 2009, in which 11,686 cases have been recorded, of which: 1,326 of physical abuse, 1,151 of emotional abuse, 572 of sexual abuse, 8,101 of neglect. (Fedor, C.G., 2011, p. 161) Counselling children(by a specialist), informing about the risks and the consequences on such manifestations, police involvement, representatives of health units, representatives of church, etc, in this kind of activities may be ways to reduce violence;

- As manifestation of *organizational culture*, school seeks the revival of cultural traditions by organizing extracurricular school activities and events as: Village dance (it was organized in collaboration with the mayor), social evenings, group work, holiday greetings, etc. As we have seen, these cultural events exists and are visible and appreciated in the local community;

- To strengthen the school image and to mark its specific in the community would be indicate to adopt a name that set it apart from the other schools and to choose a day in which would be organized joint actions with community stakeholders (parents, authorities, police, church, etc.).

Another strategy mentioned by the school is to achieve a complete monograph of the school. Such an approach is beneficial in terms of organizational culture of the school. Also, the approach may involve more people: teacher, children, village elders, representatives of the community, etc.

- If we analyze the informational component we detect that the curriculum offer is less varied, some subjects are required to complete the standard of teachers. Both children and their parents suggest becoming more involved in choosing textbooks and optional subjects. This assumes an appropriate behaviour of teachers, to be open for communication, informing and advising parents, a diversification of school education;

- In the relation with family, school aims to have a better collaboration with parents to harmonize their choices with the educational offer and to diversify the funding sources (is not mention how this is will be done), including 1-2 parents in the School Board. Although formally there is a committee of parents, in the operational plan these are not fully functional. As we have seen in the data provided by the interviewed parents, their relation with the school does not satisfy many of them, especially by the ways of communication. Most parents declared that are open for collaboration. In our opinion, the school should rethink procedures for consultation with parents, to organize meetings with them more often, not to consult them only in matters concerning children's school situation. Analyzing the current situation of the school, in children's opinion, it results that the school carries many extracurricular activities, sports, cultural, highly appreciated by children, but unknown by parents. Analyzing the other data, we can conclude that the school is still an area of expression of teachers and children, family operating traditionally (meetings, discussions with school teachers). Children consider that the school is a place to socialize, learn, but also causes stress and frustration. Regarding the relation between the school and their families, children want a closer cooperation, a concrete involvement of parents (sport, cultural activities), they see the relationship as being stressful. This may be the result of the communication with parents, they are called to school when there are problems, school results and the children's behaviour problems are discussed in meetings. Often, parents consider this relationship as being frustrating. Therefore, a good partnership with the parents involves a collaboration not only in the activities listed, but also in a set of activities, of events to diffuse the relationship, reducing the formal distance between the school and the family and encouraging direct communication, involvement, closer interpersonal relationships;

- Other community agents, although they have a good locally working relationship, this is because of the roles that they represent in the community. It is appreciated, that we meet in the presented communities, many collaborations and partnerships, a suitable climate and open;

- From the analysis of the responses to questionnaires applied to the local councillors' results that they have a vague idea of their roles in relation with the school, most considering that they must finance the school. Therefore, we believe that the school representatives must attract the councillors in the activities;

- The Town Hall made a contract with a company, which provides local transport and finances the children's transport from the villages to school. A better solution could be to purchase its own transportation;

The analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires shows that the respondents identified several barriers that stand in the way of a better cooperation, but also some possible solutions.

In *conclusion,* we believe that although the school partnership with the local community is quite well developed, its improvement efforts must continue.

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SOCIAL ECONOMY: CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Iulian STĂNESCU[1]

Abstract: *This paper looks into the status of social economy organizations in Călăraşi County, one of the least developed counties in Romania. A first issue is what the social economy is. With the term being only recently introduced in Romania, there is a question over which types of organizations would be regarded as being part of the social economy. For a better understanding of context, there is a brief social and economic outlook of Călăraşi County, especially regarding social exclusion issues.*

This study is based on a qualitative approach. Interviews were conducted with representatives of social economy organizations (co-ops, mutual organizations, charities with social services, farming societies etc.) and officials from the main public services with responsibilities in social affairs. The overall picture is mixed. Some, like the handicraft cooperative and farming societies are successful and have a clear potential for the future. Overall, the stories of success and failure for different social economy organizations depend on local context and decisions. This study offers a significant outlook at county level, not a representative one at national level[*].

Keywords: *SE social economy, social enterprise, co-operative, mutual organization, farming society, social exclusion, Călăraşi County*

1. Introduction

As new Member State, Romania felt the impact of the expansion of social and economic innovation represented by the single market Europe (Stănescu, S.M.; Cace,

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[*] Abbreviations: *SE – Social Economy; GDP – Gross Domestic Product; SME – Small Medium Entreprises; AJOFM – County Employment Agency; DGASPC – General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection; ANOFM – National Employment Agency; NGO/ONG – Non-Governmental Organization; UCECOM – National Union of Handicraft and Production Co-operatives; LLC – Limited Liability Companies; CAR – Mutual Aid house; CARP – Mutual Aid Houses of Retired Persons; CCAPC – Council for Support in School Education.*

S., coord., 2011, p. 267). Following the accession of Romania to the European Union in 2007, there has been a marked increase in the interest for the social economy. While the term was all but new, co-operatives and mutual credit organizations have a long history in Romania. The aim of this paper is to present on overview of the present status of these and newer social economy-type organizations in Călăraşi County, one of the most economically underdeveloped in Romania. In this particular social context, while the need to alleviate poverty and social exclusion would call for a strengthening of the social economy, it would be interesting to see how these entities deal with the challenges posed by a difficult economic environment.

2. Social economy, social enterprise and the third sector

The European Union has begun using the term "social economy" in official documents in the late 1980s. The Commission's General Directorate for Employment and Social Affairs included in this category four types of employers by type of organization: (1) co-operatives, (2) mutual organizations, (3) associations, (4) foundations (OECD, 2003).

In 2002-2003, organizations of these four types employed over 11 million persons in the EU, representing 6.7% of employment in the then 15 EU member states and 10 candidate countries, due for accession in 2004. Out of the total 11.2 million persons under paid employment, 3.6 million were in the co-operative sector, some 350.000 were employed by mutual organizations, and 7.1 million were active in associations and foundations. In the EU member states, the social economy sector is heterogeneous by type of organization and functioning, self-identification as being part of the sector and official recognition (CIRIEC, 2007).

In the debate about how to define of the social economy, one could find different and varied points of view, as well as other connected concepts, such as the social enterprise, the third system, the not-for-profit sector, solidarity economy or the alternative economy. Nowdays,it becomes acute need to monitor and evaluate initiatives undertaken in this sector and to reveal the mechanisms which create a healthy ecosystem and vibrant economy that support this innovative and social entrepreneurs (Cace, S.; Arpinte, D.; Cace, C., Cojocaru, ed., 2011, p. 65).

The concept of social economy could be traced to the 19th century, with a basic common view among researches as being an alternative both to market capitalism and a state run economy (Westlund, 2003). Most definitions of the social economy could be divided, according to Westlund, into two categories, based on (1) the juridical form or legal entity type or (2) the aim of the activity.

According to Romanian authors, social economy include all organizations situated between the public and private sector in terms of organization, operation and principles declared (Pîrvu, D.; Ungureanu, E.; Hagiu, A., 2009, p. 53).

Regarding the former, there is, as he have seen, a basic classification provided by the EU Commission. The advantage of the juridical-based description is the avoidance of definition problems due to overlapping with the public or private sector. On the aim of the activity, Levite-Reid and Torjman (2006) identified five broad societal objectives for the social economy: (1) greater social inclusion, (2) enhanced self-sufficiency, (3) greater equity of outcome, (4) improved human health, and (5) wealth generation through social ownership. Due to its link with social inclusion, itself a policy aim of the EU, and the recognition and promotion through the European Social Fund, the social economy could also be itself received as a policy instrument for the EU (Cace, 2010b).

Social enterprise is a relatively new concept, which appeared in the 1990s in the US and Europe (Defourny and Nyssens, 2008). Between the two sides of the Atlantic, there are differences in defining the social enterprise. In the US, the concept is broader, more market-oriented, focused on the revenue side of the enterprise. In Europe, there are two streams of thought. One views social entrepreneurship as in the social impact of the for/profit activities of companies, while for the second the social enterprise belongs to the third sector (Kerlin, 2006). An "ideal type" model for the social enterprise was put forward by Defourny (2001), with the following traits: (1) a continuous activity producing goods and/or selling services, (2) a high degree of autonomy, (3) a significant level of economic risk, (4) a minimum amount of paid work, (5) an explicit aim to benefit the community, (6) an initiative launched by a group of citizens, (7) a decision-making process not based on capital ownership, (8) a participatory nature, which involves the persons affected by the activity, (9) limited profit distribution. In the definition put forward by Noya (2009, 14), social enterprises "are generally understood as an innovative business model that meets both social and economic objectives contributing to labour market integration, social inclusion and economic development".

The difference between the social economy and the social enterprise in blurred. For instance, some authors point to co-operatives in France and Greece as examples of both social economy and social enterprise entities (Rispal and Boncler, 2010, Cace, 2010a, Ziomas, 2008). Peatie and Morley (2008) believe a solution to this issue could be based on Pearce's (2003) comprehensive model of the three sectors. The innovative part of Pearce's model is the way the third sector is structured (see Figure 1). It comprises (1) social enterprises, such as workers' co-ops, mutual's, social businesses, fair trade companies, (2) voluntary organizations, like charities, foundations, clubs, voluntary organizations and unions, and (3) the family economy, including for instance remittances received from the family members working abroad. In this model, the social economy is formed by the first category and part of the second, namely social enterprises and voluntary organizations and charities that are active participants in the community economy, mainly through trading goods and services.

J. Pearce's (2003) model of the three systems in the economy
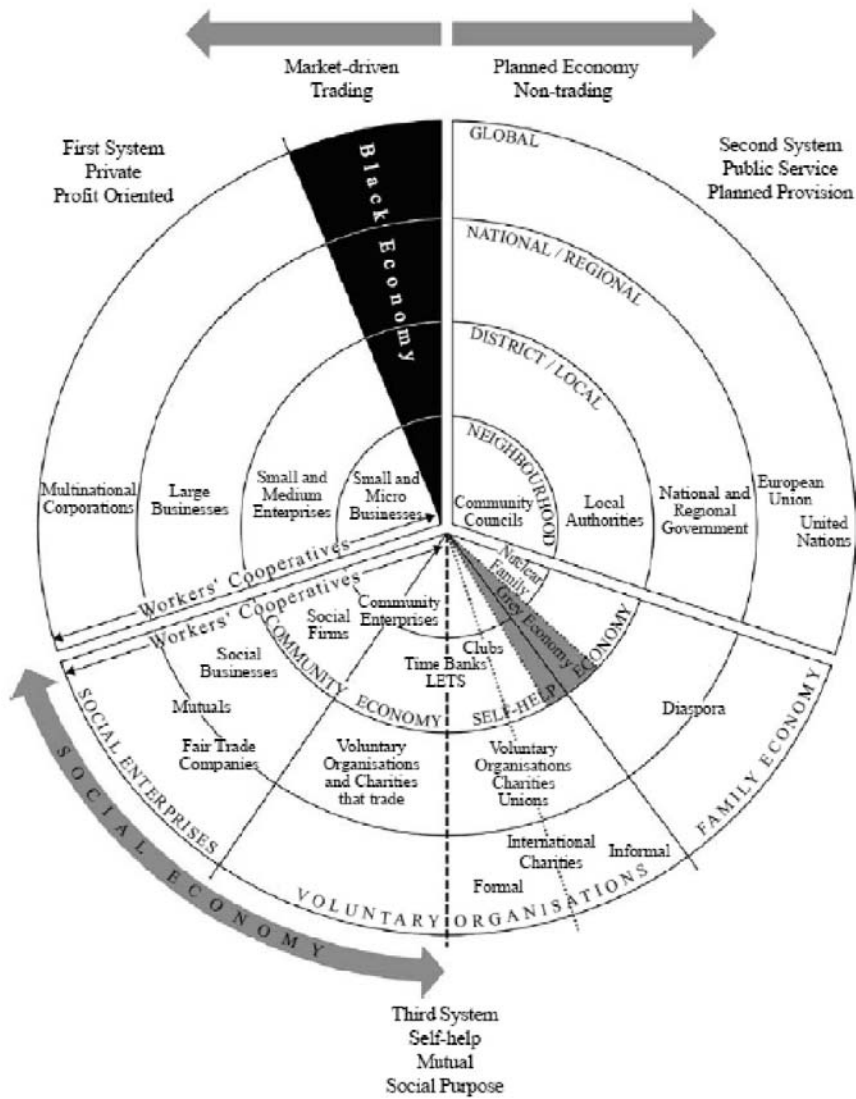
The concept of social economy is relatively new in Romania, being introduced during the EU integration process. One of the axes of the 2007-2013 European Social Fund is focused on the social economy and is faced with its own peculiar challenges (Cace, et

al., 2010). Co-operatives and mutual organizations have a long tradition in Romania. In addition, the number of foundations and associations increased markedly after the 1989 Revolution. Thus, in 2008 there were 27,319 active organizations that refer to various forms of a non-profit associations such as associations, unions, cooperatives (Lambru, M.; Petrescu, C., 2011, p. 104). However, from a national perspective, the involvement of NGOs in specific activities of social economy is positioned in relatively early stages of formation and recognition of this form of economy (Cace, S.; Nicolăescu, V.; Anton, A.N.; Rotaru, S., 2011, p. 98). A recent research on the social economy in Romania identified the following types of entities which could be included in the social economy sector (Arpinte, et al., 2010):

- certain types, but not all, NGOs (associations and foundations), i.e. providers of social services;

- companies with special status, such as protected workshops, which for instance provide jobs for people with disabilities;

- reciprocal aid associations, both of the employees and pensioners types, which are mutual organizations;

- Co-operatives of all kinds (banking co-ops, handicraft, consumer, farming, fishing, transport etc.);

- Pensioners' associations, as service providers.

3. Methodology

In order to provide an overview of the social economy in Călăraşi County, a qualitative approach was regarded as proper due to several reasons. First of all, for most people in Romania social economy as a term is not familiar, being recently introduced in official documents and academia. Secondly and perhaps most importantly, organizations typical for the social economy, such as co-operatives and mutual organizations, have seen their activities severely reduced during the difficult transition years, especially in the early and late 1990s. Even if these organizations are listed as still active from a fiscal viewpoint, it would be better to have a first hand knowledge of their day-to-day activity and issues. Social economy offers solutions to reduce social exclusion by increasing employment rate for vulnerable persons and by creating mechanisms to help these people (Arpinte, D.; Cace, S.; Cojocaru, Ș., 2010, p. 66). Therefore, it was needed to talk to well-informed informants, namely representatives of entities specific to the social economy, as well as officials from the local social services.

Interviews were made with representatives from the following organizations: co-operatives of all kinds, including baking cooperatives, mutual organizations, voluntary

organizations and charities, farming societies, County Employment Agency, General Directorate for Social Work and Child Protection, Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The main themes of the interviews included: the organization and functioning at present and in the past, perspectives and projects for the future, general economic and social situation in the county, knowledge and perceptions about the social economy, support and services for vulnerable groups, views on existing legislation and ways it could be improved. The interviews were conducted in early November 2009. At that time, the economy was in a recession, which started in late 2008 and early 2009, induced by the world banking crisis of 2008. The social effects, mainly caused by the rise in unemployment, were just beginning to be seriously felt.

4. Călăraşi County: economic and social outlook

Călăraşi County was established as an administrative unit in 1981. It is located in South Eastern Romania, on the left bank of the Danube, with a total area of 5,088 km^2. The landscape is entirely flat. Following the overall national demographic trend, the population declined from 324,617 inhabitants at the 2002 census to 315,157, reported as of July 1, 2009. Most of the population (62%) resides in rural areas. There are five urban centres, the most important being the city of Călăraşi with a population of some 73,000 inhabitants. Over 94% of the population declared themselves ethnic Romanian at the 2002 census, with the most significant minority being the Roma (Gypsies) with 5.6%.

One of the least developed counties in Romania, Călăraşi was ranked 39th out of the 41 counties in terms of GDP per capita in 2000, 2003 and 2005. According to officials of the local Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Călăraşi was perceived as one of the most industrialized counties in regard to its area and workforce before 1989. In the 1990s, the local economy suffered significantly during the transition period with the liquidation, mainly through asset stripping, of the two largest employers, the Siderca steelworks in Călăraşi and the Navol shipyard in Olteniţa (the counties second largest urban locality). After 2000, the local economy returned to growth, again following the overall trend of the economy at national level.

According to the President of the County Chamber of Commerce, as of late 2009, most of the employers were severely hit by the recession. Better performers in this environment were Aldis, a ham and sausage producer, Martifer, Portuguese-owned metal sheet bodies manufacturer, and the biodiesel plant based in the town of Lehliu-Gară. The SME sector is underdeveloped and severely affected by lack of demand. The Chamber of Commerce has over 100 registered members, balanced between manufacturing, services, and agriculture. Some 90% of the local businesses are based in the city of Călăraşi. The co-ops and mutual organizations have their own, separate associative organizations.

Social problems and vulnerable groups

The risk of poverty and social exclusion is high in a county with a GDP per capita below EUR 3,000 per inhabitant as of 2008. However, representatives of the Prefects' Office pointed to the fact that at least there was a functional social policy unit at county level. However, the nationwide setting up of anti-poverty and social exclusion county units during 2002-2005 was not carried to completion in Călăraşi. As a result, there has been no co-ordination between different local and central government public services with responsibilities in social affairs, each of them carrying on their functions in parallel within their budgetary means. Of these, the best-informed on the situation of vulnerable groups and most active were the County Employment Agency (AJOFM) and the General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection (DGASPC).

Employment issues and schemes to promote jobs growth

The county unemployment rate at the end of October 2009 was 7.7%, the 23rd highest in Romania. There were 8,236 people officially registered as unemployed, including 3,277 women. Of these, 3,473 are on welfare allowance and 4,763 no longer receive any support. The female unemployment rate was 6.1%. According to officials of the County Employment Agency (AJOFM), the increase in unemployment numbers started in September 2009, as the economic slowdown began. Reported job vacancies were the textile manufacturing, construction, services (especially in the hospitality industry) and commerce. In general, employers were looking for young people, age being regarded as more important than experience.

The County Employment Agency runs apprenticeships courses for the unemployed. In addition, there are job schemes that offer subsidies or incentives to employers for employing people from the following target groups: (1) young people aged 16-25 (young graduates or 18 year-olds leaving orphanages or the child protection system), (2) employment for local community development in rural areas and (3) disadvantaged groups (unemployed aged over 45 or single breadwinners, people with disabilities). Of these, job offers for people with disabilities are particularly scarce. Overall, the job vacancies reported by employers for these categories decreased as public funds for these employment schemes were cut. Labour market mediation services have been carried out for disadvantaged groups. In 2009, one in the four disabled persons, 165 out of the 1,372 Roma (Gypsy) people and 923 out of the 3,581 women that took part in mediation services found a job. Most of the Roma people are in rural areas, with little or no education. The very low success rate of mediation services for the Roma were in line with the nationwide situation, as mentioned in the reports of the National Employment Agency (ANOFM). According to AJOFM officials, the main way to make the employment schemes work would be to

provide the necessary funding and to continue the apprenticeship programs. For instance, in 2009 the employment subsidy funds were at first not budgeted in full, then were entirely cut from the budget.

Social Care Services

According to the officials of the General Directorate for Social Work and Child Protection (DGASPC) Călăraşi, their activity was focused on child protection issues, judging by the level of financial and human resources commitments. The social work of providing specialized services for persons with disabilities was secondary. Social work services provided by City Councils in the county were few in number and offered a limited range of basic services. In addition to welfare benefits payments (heating, emergency allowance, etc.), these services were accredited only for the provision of home care to individuals with disabilities. In total, there were 14 social work providers with official accreditation, 12 of which were in the public sector (Călăraşi, Oleniţa and 10 rural localities) and two were non-governmental organizations (NGOs) specialised in child care services (see table 1).

Regarding child protection, juvenile crime was perceived as the thorniest issue, posing the greatest social risk for the future. A significant percentage of dysfunctional families with children that entered the child protection system were ethnic Roma. On the managerial side, the main problem was the link between resources and service standards. The legislation and Social Inspection Service demand high standards, which mean high labour costs. As a result, the Directorate for Social Work had over 1,000 employees in order to meet the standards for the number of children in care. The managing officials pointed to the Hungarian example, where standards were not as strict and as high as in Romania, which allowed for carrying the same activities in a less cost intensive manner. In an underdeveloped county like Călăraşi, there has been a constant pressure from the County Council to keep spending under control. The chief executive of the Directorate stressed the impact of nationwide economic disparities on social care services with the example of financial situation of the Bucharest First District Social Care Directorate, which had the same overall number of employees and children in care, but with a budget 34 times larger.

Table 1

Accredited Providers of Social Services in Călăraşi County

No.	Name	Type
1	Association for the support of physically disabled children - Romania, Călăraşi Branch	NGO (association)
2	Bethany House Foundation Călăraşi	NGO (foundation)

No.	Name	Type
3	Călăraşi Local Council - Public Social Care Service	public service
4.	Olteniţa Local Council - Public Social Care Service	public service
5	General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection	public service
6	Borcea Mayoralty - Public Social Care Service	public service
7	Budeşti Mayoralty - Public Social Care Service	public service
8	Dichiseni Mayoralty - Public Social Care Service	public service
9	Dragoş Vodă Mayoralty - Public Social Care Service	public service
10	Galbinasi Mayoralty - Public Social Care Service	public service
11	Independenţa Mayoralty - Public Social Care Service	public service
12	Modelu Mayoralty - Public Social Care Service	public service
13.	Roset Mayoralty - Public Social Care Service	public service
14.	Vâlcelele Mayoralty - Public Social Care Service	public service

Charities and NGOs are very poorly represented at county level. Only two organizations secured accreditation, both providing social care services to children. Agora Association was the only one active NGO that provided social care services for adults, and was in the process of accreditation for a day centre for people with disabilities. The most important NGO was the Bethany Foundation, which had been receiving support from the U.S. This is an independent foundation, separate from a Bucharest-based namesake. For the Directorate chief executive, the charities' efforts were regarded as commendable, but their services covered only a very small fraction of the number of children compared to the overall needs at county level, covered by the public services. Given the high labour cost, the chief executive believed that "the future is contracting out", but at that moment there were no NGOs able to take over the services provided by the Social Care Directorate.

In late 2009, the activity of the Social Work Directorate was focused exclusively on the approximately 9,300 disabled adults in the county, most of which are recorded with first and second degree disabilities. Of these, nearly one third are blind. The main categories of disabled persons were as follows: 5,060 persons (of which 4,162 adults) with no income, 196 veterans, widows and orphans of war, 1,049 pensioners on disability benefit, 2,871 old age pensioners, 177 employed. There were partnerships with employers and the two registered protected workshops that employed less than 20 persons with disabilities and were located close to Bucharest. There was no other kind of data concerning other categories at risk of social exclusion in the records the Călăraşi Social Work Directorate. The Directorate's main project was to attract financing from the central government for the modernization of a sanatorium for people with severe mental disabilities. The chief expressed his desire to offer more services, but "we do not have personnel."

The general attitude of people with disabilities concerning work was described by Social Work officials as "demanding rights, money, but not jobs". A co-ordinated action was being carried out at national level to check the status of disability claims. Results of medical diagnosis were found to inexplicably vary. Despite the action taken by the authorities, there were still loopholes for claiming a disability benefit for conditions more serious than in reality.

5. Forms of social economy

The Co-operative System

The starting point of *handicraft co-operatives* was the tradition of "passing on the craft from father to son by people of all shapes and trades", according to the President of ATCOM Călăraşi. In early November 2009, the co-op had over 200 co-op members at county level, compared with to 2,100 in 1990. As an example regarding the turnover of members in the past, between 1982-83 a total of 26 engineers and 180 graduates from schools of arts and crafts joined the handicraft co-operatives based throughout Călăraşi County. This was possible through forms of support for new co-op members, such as the availability of state housing with affordable rent, very accessible loans for buying furniture, while at the same time the co-operative provided the furniture for one room for free. The co-op is affiliated with the National Union of Handicraft and Production Co-operatives (UCECOM).

The president of ATCOM viewed the co-operative "like a larger family", with a strong social dimension. Labour relations are special in handicraft co-operatives, because "in our case, the employee is the employer as well". It is said that in the co-operative system "no craftsman ends up badly" and "those that are able enter". The waiting time before becoming a member is two years, a period in which one works and subscribes capital.

Out of the five existing handicraft co-operatives, two are of type 2 and three of type 1. The former are members of the latter. The territorial distribution is as follows: four in Călăraşi, (1) *ATCOM* (2) *Borcea Călăraşi,* (3) *Danube Călăraşi* (4) *The Builder,* and one in Olteniţa, (5) *Olteniţa Danube*. The ones based in Călăraşi have taken over through ATCOM the former Lehliu Co-operative. The five co-operatives are linked together by common co-operative members, the most important entity being ATCOM, which represents the county co-ops at UCECOM. For the handicraft co-ops, the present form of organization at the county dating back to 1949. During 1956 to 1959 the communist regime dissolved some old co-operatives as legal entities, but their members continued their activity in the co-operative system.

According to the President of ATCOM, handicraft craft co-operatives have lost members and economic status during the transition due to three factors: (1) technology (2) the tax regime and (3) decapitalization.

(1) The technological factor meant that co-operatives were weakened by the switch to another, more industrial-like, manufacturing model, such as lohn in the textile industry. Demand for custom made products with a high degree of attention to the customer's needs has decreased. Nowadays, consumers prefer mass manufactured, cheap goods. An example is the dissolution of the co-op production unit specialized in manufacturing cold weather uniforms for the military, where over 50 persons with disabilities were employed. After the end of mandatory military service, the Army suspended ongoing orders, its representative stating that "after joining NATO, we do not need clothes made by the handicapped". Another example is the disappearance of watchmakers, the customers preferring cheap electronic watches, which are entirely changed when a fault occurs.

(2) The destabilizing of the co-op system occurred around 1995-96 when some craftsmen entered the retail business as limited liability companies (LLC) or retired because of tax regulations. The mandatory use of cash registers and other fiscal regulations incurred costs beyond the cash flow sustainability of many co-ops.

(3) De-capitalization took place usually through bad management. Asset stripping, lack of investment, distributing the profit to co-op members instead of reinvesting are examples of poor management decisions. A consequence was the loss of incentives for young people to join the co-operative system, such as loss of state housing support for co-op members. During difficult periods, co-operatives have generally survived by accumulating capital in the long run. Through good management, some co-operatives have survived, even prospered. Factors contributing to this effect were: securing financing, retention of facilities and other assets, involvement in business ventures, avoiding de-capitalization, sustaining the investments by reinvesting the profit. As a result of such management decision, a co-operative is acknowledged as a competitor on the market.

As of November 2009, the main economic activities of the handicraft co-operatives were: textile manufacturing (even export at the Danube Oltenița Co-op), hair-care services (barbers, hairdressers), auto service, manufacturing of metal frameworks, construction, interior design, craft goods. In recent years, working at home (crafts, cardboard boxes, envelopes) and home appliance maintenance have been declining in terms of turnover and personnel.

On the subject of possible sources of financing, co-operative bonds were designed as a means of financing MIDBANK (the bank for handicraft co-ops). With risks higher than for bank loans due to lack of transparency of who is in their possession and rights in the event of bankruptcy, there was little or no demand for them. The ATCOM co-op tired to secure financing from European Union Funds, such as the Increase in Economic Competitiveness Programme, but there were few successful applications

nationwide. On the other hand, UCECOM's *Foundation for the Arts and Crafts* successfully secured European funding. In Călăraşi, some held the view that the investments made with EU funds could be made with less money.

The ATCOM president viewed actions addressing social needs as possible only if the co-op was doing well in financial terms. Such actions were regarded as more necessary than ever. Within the co-op, the Social Council manages such activities, namely: the running of the schools or apprenticeships for arts and crafts, providing a child benefit for co-op members, organizing activities for pensioners that were former co-op members, organizing festivities and trips. Birthday celebrations and traditional festive meals (at least 3 per year) are on a regular basis. Through the Social Council, at least 15% of the co-op profit is used as funding for funerals, sick leave, meals for kindergarten children (in Lehliu), the Days of Pensioners event (160-170 meals for co-op pensioners). Future social projects include the construction of social housing and day care centres for children. In late 2009, the most important project is the economic and social centre, which would include a club and a canteen for food welfare services. The ATCOM president summarized the co-op's social activities by saying that "We go through life, but it's important what remains as well".

The functioning of the co-operative is based on a specific decision making process. In managing human activity in general, the ATCOM President believes that "he who controls the economic base, controls the vote". In the co-op system, decisions are taken by either "one man, one vote" or either by share vote. The second formula is regarded as more suitable considering management needs, practical considerations and the way social life is. Overall, the atmosphere is quite different than in a company because capital has an indivisible part as well. This functioning mechanism has led to some issues in the relationship with banks and other business partners due to the lengthy and unpredictable decision process structure in the case of the "one man, one vote" formula. ON the other hand, if there are few co-op members with significant shares, which combined form a controlling stake via the share vote formula, then business partners have a clear knowledge of doing business with someone they could trust.

Although Law no. 1 / 2005 clarified co-operatives' members property rights, basic co-operative arrangements remained the same as in 1877. The most important issue was the legal status of property. When taking over state owned companies, the seller demands money and provides assets in return. For co-operatives, only the right of use was offered. So, one could find himself with no assets, which are state owned. Local Councils could claim these assets or they could be the object of property claims, which is discriminatory. Consumer co-operatives suffered the most, resulting in asset litigation. Compared with consumer co-operatives, handicraft co-operatives had a lower and, more important, a more cohesive membership. In addition, handicraft co-operatives had fewer assets than consumer co-operatives, therefore

fewer temptations for bad management and an incentive to make maximum use of available skills. With the Law no. 346 / 2004, co-operatives have gained access to the financial state-run programmes for the SMEs. Some co-operative units in the country have applied for such financing, but there was no need Călăraşi, according to the President ATCOM. Useful support provided by the state included the professional insertion of young graduates, facilitating the relationship with the banks, and employment training for people aged over 46.

The benefits from the membership of the National Union of Handicraft and Production Co-operatives (UCECOM) are mainly personal relationships, business contacts, exchange of information, awareness of business opportunities.

For the next 15 years, the ATCOM president foresees an expansion and strengthening of co-operatives in the Călăraşi County. Key projects which underline this forecast are the construction of a kindergarten, a social day centre for pensioners and housing for co-op members. "One who joins the co-operative, gets a feel, and sees the good parts, remains". It is important to bring up and educate in the spirit of helping others: "Since birth until death, one needs co-operation", said the ATCOM president. An outstanding challenge is the "communist" image of an economic structure from times past, especially with the tax authorities. With the term labelled as "communist", the co-operative has become undesirable, "the image of awkward spaces, squalor, low wages, but reality is to the contrary".

During the transition years in the 1990s, *credit co-operatives* have become *co-operative banks.* The only entity of its kind in the county is *Record Co-operative Bank* in the city of Călăraşi. The history co-operative banking is based on the principle of capital formation through the subscription of co-operative members according to their economic means. The overall goal is to meet their social and economic needs. Regardless of the amount of equity value from the capital subscription, each member has one vote. Once more, it is the one man, one vote decision making process. During the communist period, credit co-operatives facilitated payments to consumer co-operatives and were co-ordinated by a county office, which in turn was in close relationship with the consumer co-operative county office.

The consumer co-operative network was a force in terms of assets and territorial range. The systemic economic collapse came with the decision in 1990 to consolidate the consumer co-operatives' assets (buildings, shops, warehouses, etc.) with the financial side of the business, namely the credit co-operative county offices in a single banking entity named Bankcoop. This was enshrined in law 109/1996 regarding the functioning of both the consumer and credit co-operatives. Following the bankruptcy Bankoop, all those assets were lost. Debt reclaiming activities from that period of time are still going on.

In the late 1990s, the so-called popular banks were founded. These financial entities, which claimed to be credit co-operatives, had nothing in common with the co-operative system. They failed altogether, which led to a tough regulation regime enforced by the central bank, but only after their bankruptcies. Only credit co-operatives turned into co-operative banks. The so-called popular banks had nothing to do with the co-operative banks, but the negative image they have left as a legacy is still associated by some people with co-operative banks.

The new legal framework was established by Government Emergency Ordinance no. 99/2000 regarding the organization of credit co-operatives, which was updated in the period of pre-accession to the European Union by Law 200/2002. The latter entails a banking type of organization.

In terms of organizational structure, the General Assembly is the decision body that comprises all co-op members. Voting is done based the principle of "one man, one vote", regardless of equity share. The Assembly elects a Board of Directors composed of an odd number of members, each with appropriate professional credentials. The Board appoints the Director General and the other executives. Each bank is a legal person in its own right, but for doing business there is a mandatory requirement to join a co-operative banks' network. The only authorized network, although there were other attempts to create one, is Creditcoop. It is the only banking entity with variable capital (this being the specific co-operative trait) and the 7th largest in Romania by asset value. In every two or three counties there is a Creditcoop agency, which co-ordinates the co-operative banks in that area.

Since 2000, when there were about 1,100 credit co-operative entities, 734 remained by 1 January 1, 2004, 129 by April 2004 and only 51 in late 2009. Due to stricter regulations issued by the central bank, mergers or takeovers occurred, resulting in larger entities. The most recent regulation in this respect is the Gov Emergency Ordinance no. 99/2006 on the functioning of credit institutions and capital requirements, approved by Parliament by Law no. 227/2007. Generally, cooperatives, as the organizational structures of social economy based on specific forms of entrepreneurship are turning to increase quality of life of vulnerable people (Zamfir, E.; Fitzek, S., 2010, p. 4).

Record Călăraşi Co-operative Bank has over 16,500 co-operative members, covering the counties of Călăraşi and Ialomița. It has four agencies in Călăraşi, Olenița, Jegălia and Căzăneşti, the latter in Ialomița County. The entity was formed by the absorption of others by Record Jegălia Co-operative Bank. The pyramid-style organization features at the base the basic office units, containing at least one clerk and one retail officer. At the top of the pyramid is the General Assembly, which appoints a Board consisting of five members, and an executive team comprising two executives, a director general and a deputy director general.

The lending activity is focused on short and medium term consumer and personal needs loans (repair work, holidays, and tuition) up to RON 20,000. Basically, the bank covers a niche that large, foreign-owned banks are not interested in: providing services to rural areas or small scale consumer loans.

The personnel amounts to 90 employees, with two units at the headquarters, accounting and loans, the latter including two subunits, credit analysis and administration & monitoring. Other units are the internal audit service, IT, database, the branch network, legal office and administrative office. Record Co-operative Bank is among the top 10 members of Credit co-op.

The co-operative specific traits are to be found in the following: no commission for early repayment, workout plans, attractive interest for deposits, without the requirement to become a co-operative member, accessible interest for loans, lack of exposure to special customers (bank employees, management). Other than that, the bank provides aid to rural schools for festive occasions, such as Christmas tree festival (in partnership with local businesses) and makes charitable donations in goods. The bank's vision is based on the awareness of responsibility to people and having a legacy.

The weak spot of the co-operative banking system, as seen by the bank's director general, is the lack of homogeneity at national level. In Romania, their turnover is not high. Contrary to this, in Austria and Hungary, the co-operative banking system is well regarded and supported by the state, and enjoys a strong tradition. Austria, through Raiffeisen and Volksbank, provides examples of success.

The *Călăraşi County Consumer Co-operatives Union* is not a significant economic entity. The Consumer Co-operative was severely affected by its Bank coop exposure and mismanagement. Assets were sold or are in a state of disrepair. The Union subsists by renting its assets.

Mutual organizations – reciprocal aid associations (CAR)

Law no. 122/1996 defines mutual aid house employees (CAR) as a non-profit association with the aim to offer mutual aid to members by loans with low credit rates (Stanilă, G.; Cace, C.; Preoteasa, A.M., 2011, p. 19).

The County Union of Employees' Reciprocal Aid Associations (CAR) was established in 1949. In 1990, immediately after the Revolution, there were over 100 reciprocal aid associations formed by employees throughout the county. Of these, in late 2009, there were only 33 active. At county level, the value of their assets amounted to over RON 6 million. All are affiliated to the county union, which in turn is a member of the National Union of Reciprocal Aid Associations (CAR), based in Bucharest. In

general, county unions with high membership are to be found in urbanized counties, which have a higher number of employees.

In Călăraşi County, the reciprocal aid associations with the highest number of members are: CAR *Educaţie* (Education), with 1,190 members, employed in the county public education system, CAR *Spital* (Hospital), with 708 members, employed in the county public health service and CAR *Consid*, with 470 members. For comparison, the reciprocal aid organization of the Călăraşi Steelworks employees had over 4,000 members before 1989. According to the county union president, de decline of this particular type of mutual loan organization was caused by job losses.

Loan conditions are favourable for members, with 10-12% interest, and a maximum of 14%. The monthly membership fee is between RON 10-50. 90% are short term loams for solving current personal problems. The average value of a loan was RON 2,000-3,000.

Regarding the future, the county union official believed that "if politics and the banks leave us alone, if we are left in peace, than it would be fine". The weak spot for these mutual organizations would be that "we can not increase our capital because of low interest rates". If more people would be employed, than these organizations might grow. An additional issue is that private employers are apprehensive about the existence of such organizations.

Regarding the legal framework, it would be important not to give bank status, so that the employees' associations would remain non-profit and therefore pay no profit tax. For the county union president, a stimulating measure would be to allow the formations deposits by CAR members. Where employers would not allow the formation of an employees' reciprocal aid association, their formation could be mandatory for companies with over 50 employees. Employers claim that staff turnover is too high, but in fact they are worrying about complicating things, not realizing the social impact of their actions. Some "warm hearted" employers understand the usefulness of employees' mutual organizations.

The Călăraşi County Pensioners' Reciprocal Aid Association (CARP) was created in 1952 with only 36 members. In late 2009, it had 6,562 members, five employees and 15 external collaborators (cashier officers). According to its president, 90% of members have a monthly pension of less than RON 500. Only the pension act is required for joining. The office space is owned by the mutual organization. It is at the first floor of a block, next to which a 40 sq meter annex was under construction with City Council financial support. The organization is affiliated with the CARP National Union and receives grants from the General Union of Pensioners.

The leadership structure consists of a General Assembly and Board of Directors, appointed by it. The Board comprises the President, Vice-President and three

advisors from the Red Cross and other pensioner organizations. The main sources of revenues are monthly subscriptions and deposits to the fund. Subscriptions are worth 1% of the monthly pension. The interest was an 8-10% for deposits and 10% for loans. The profit is redistributed among the members as grants, which are supplemented from General Union of Pensioners funds. The total number of monthly loans varied from 300 to 700, with an average of about RON 1,600. The total amount borrowed as of November 2009 was RON 750,000. The mutual organization had a turnover of RON 3.7 million, making it the most important such organization in the county. On the expenditure side, there are no special problems in the recovery of liabilities due to a contract with the County Pension Insurance House. The organization has other economic activities, such as barbers and hairdressers plus space for rent at Olenița CARP, subscription fees from non-members of CARP for the Pensioners Club and income from renting out the funeral car.

Social activities include financial support in case of death and a subsidy of RON 20 for spa tickets. In addition, it offers to its members free use of the funeral car. Cultural activities include choir, dance, cultural exchange visits across the Danube to the Bulgarian city of Silistra, library, and religious tourism.

The organization has a partnership with the Orthodox Church, which allows the use of its premises for the General Assembly, as an exhibition space or for cultural activities Local authorities provide free use of facilities through the Local Council and funding through the County Council. In addition, members who are retired lawyers offer legal advice for free.

Charities and voluntary organizations

Bethany House Romania is the main charity accredited as a provider of social services in the county. It was founded in 2000 as a family home for 12 children. The charity receives regular visits from Social Inspection officials for maintaining its accredited status. The sole permanent employee is a social worker, aided by six volunteers, mostly women, all aged below 36. The initial intention was to provide care services for the elderly, but the first attempt was not successful. In Ciocanesti commune there is a farm where young people with disabilities that are aged 18 or over, who are required to leave the child protection system, could find a job. In addition to the farm there is a small house received as a donation. The farm has over 600 heads of poultry, calves and pork, with the goal of providing economic support for the charity's social activities.

The charity has no ties with the prominent Bethany Foundation, which is active in Bucharest and Cluj. The namesake comes from the Chicago-based Bethania Church, where the husband of the charity's founder Daniela Pierce, a US citizen, is a

parishioner. The organization receives aid from the U.S., sent by other parishioners of the Bethania Church.

The Foundation has initiated a number of partnerships with other public organizations or NGO. The Child Protection Service refers to it cases of children who require support or families in need for aid. CCAPC – the Council for Support in School Education is an NGO which provides counselling support for school-age children offered by a volunteer psychologist. The Cloud Horizons Association, which is not accredited as a provider of social services yet, offers preschool and kindergarten services for children with disabilities as well. The No. 3 kindergarten, based in Călăraşi, provides gifts for children and the opportunity to participate in artistic events. Agora is another charity which provides support for persons with disabilities in Călăraşi.

According to the social worker, the running of the day to day activity was very difficult because of the dependence on outside sponsorship and the goodwill of volunteers. Given the economic situation in the US, donations have decreased significantly. Financial support comes from the mini-farm, but it was facing staff shortages. In her activity, the largest reward was to see young people aged 18 who go on to university. A particular problem in Călăraşi, as reported by the General Directorate for Social Work, was juvenile delinquency. Most of the troubled youths came from marginalized families.

The several *pensioner organizations* formed the County Council for the Elderly in 2004, which comprises two pensioners' organizations, two war veterans associations, a pensioners' reciprocal aid association, and an association of retired military personnel. The membership of these organizations exceeds 15,000 persons. All are affiliated to national organizations. Their income comes from membership fees, the subsidies from the National Council for Senior Citizens for phone bills, and, before the crisis, RON 400-450 quarterly donations and sponsorships from political parties and businesses. In addition, the City Hall donated some RON 20,000 in the last five years.

The main activities of these organizations include:

(a) setting up retirement homes, followed the initiative of pensioners' organizations, with the support of City Council and other public agencies. The first retirement home for 28 persons was opened in Olteniţa in 2008. A larger home for 85 persons followed, with financial support from the Ministry of Labour.

(b) retirement community and social centre for pensioners; the idea was to use the former military base as a retirement community for the city of Călăraşi, also housing a department of geriatrics, a health and a social unit, with financial support from City Hall and City Council, the Prefecture, and the County Council. The Army has agreed

to donate the land and buildings. Further support would be asked from the Bucharest based Civic Action Foundation to found a small farm as well.

(c) two health and social units in Călăraşi and Oleniţa, with 20 beds each, to relieve the use of hospitals during winter. These were built with funding from the County Council; Social Day Centre;

(d) the social centre was an investment of 23,000 euros by the Civic Action Foundation at premises given by the Municipality for organizing cultural activities, sports, dancing events, etc.

(e) various social events organized by the Călăraşi City Hall, such as the National Day of the Elderly (October 1) or the Golden Wedding.

The main partners for the pensioners' organizations are the public sector (City Council, County Council, County Directorate of Employment and Social Protection), the private sector (SC Brotac Center, Prefab Călăraşi) and the ATCOM Handicraft Co-operative.

Forms of social economy in rural areas

Over 60% of the inhabitants of Călăraşi County reside in rural areas. The landscape and climate conditions favour large scale agriculture and the formation of strong farming societies. One such example could be found in the commune *Independenţa* (Independence)**.** The commune comprises three villages. It is located in the in the Southern part of the county, some 16 km West-north-west from the city of Călăraşi. During the communist period there was a collective farm. After 1989, two farming societies were formed have created two, one with 1,500 hectares and the other with around 600-700 hectares. The former derived from the collective farm, while the latter from the state-owned farming machinery depot.

The commune is not old. According to the mayor, after the Independence War (1877-1878), hence the namesake, allotments of land were granted to population from the Bucharest area, especially to war veterans and their surviving relatives. In community relations, people aide one another based on reciprocity, family ties, and sometimes altruism. After 1990, human relationships have deteriorated, due to the "land discord". In the community, the Church has credibility, but it is not known whether it would still have it one generation in the future.

In the commune there was a consumer co-operative providing several services, such as hairdressing, carpentry, repair shop. Because of bad management, the consumer co-operative has all but dissolved. It survives due renting out their still usable premises. Only the farming type of co-operative has flourished as farming societies.

After the dissolution of the old cooperative farm, new farming societies began to be formed. At the beginning, the level of trust gained from the farm's operation in 1990

was very important. The farm's cows had a much higher milk output than those of individuals from nearby villages. The animals were properly cared for and fed by the then veterinary, who is the current mayor and director of the association. The farming society was founded by some 500 to 600 founding members. As of late 2009, there were about 1,625 members, some of whom were surviving relatives of the founders. The main assets are the administrative premises (the formerly collective farm headquarters), the bakery, warehouses, veterinary premises, storage tracks and farming machinery. In 2009, over 2,105 hectares were used for crops and there were 284 heads of livestock, mostly cows.

The society is managed by a Board of Directors comprising seven persons appointed by the General Assembly. About 60% of the commune population had joined. The profit redistribution was decided by the General Assembly as follows: 22.6% in dividends, 7% bonuses for employees and 70% for future investment.

The general economic situation of the farming society was regarded as good. Investment out of its own capital totalled RON 700,000. In late 2009, market conditions were unfavourable, with low grain prices and delays in state payments. Overall, the society began with 1,700 hectares and after almost 20 years of existence reached 2,100 hectares. A larger area would be more difficult to monitor and farm, resulting in profitability problems. The society has successfully accessed EU funds, such as the pre-accession SAPARD agriculture fund. There was an expectation that it would be easier and faster with the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development because of the previous experience. However, reality was proven otherwise. There were many changes in regulations and cumbersome procedures.

Social activities undertaken by the society include: financing a public feast, funeral aid, support for the local church, and support for members when they need a farming machine and tools for their own needs. The overall perception was that the prosperity achieved by the association provides a framework for the support of social activities.

"At first I thought it will not work, that they would take back their land", said the mayor, who was also director. A farming society remains the best form of farming, providing good management exists. On the other hand, such way of operating was regarded as difficult because it requires co-operation and trust. Therefore, forming a successful farming society now would be much more difficult than 20 years ago.

There were seven *farming co-operatives* in the county as of late 2009. The one with most members is the *Jirlău Fishing Co-operative.* Other agricultural co-operatives have less than 15 members each. Usually, such co-operatives were established in order to receive public financing, domestic or European, in support of agriculture, but there were no notable success stories.

The *Jirlău Fishing Co-operative* was founded in January 2006 with 43 founding members. The leading founder was a 75-year old fisherman, former foreman at the local fishing company before the 1989 Revolution. Each founding member made a

capital subscription worth RON 200. Management is entrusted to a single person on a 2-year term based on the decision of the General Assembly. The co-op has a concession for fishing on Danube from km 345 to km 374.5. A total of 22 boats are being used under license. The fish is sold mainly in Bucharest, but sales are low. The sales results are divided among fishermen according to the amount each of them fishes. The co-op's only asset is the pontoon, from which fish is sold locally. As the fish sales are not lucrative, the only social aid in the co-op was limited to financial assistance in case of death or illness.

6. Perceptions regarding the social economy

During the interviews, there were three types of reactions to the term "social economy", as follows:

(1) "I do not know or have heard about it very vaguely, I could not say what is";

(2) Association made with something else, loosely tied to providing assistance to others in need;

(3) Understanding the term, at least partially.

Most of the reactions were of the first category. Interviewees from the Chamber of Commerce, NGOs, mutual organizations, fishermen's co-op had either not heard at all about the social economy, or wither vey vaguely, but in any case they could not say what it meant.

The second type of answer was encountered at people with higher education, usually with managerial positions. The directors of the County Employment Agency, the General Directorate for Social Work and Child Protection, and the Co-operative Bank made a vague association of the term with the social. For some, the term refers to a social economy as in the German post-war social market economy. Another way of understanding leads to good practices in the public sector and adequate funding for social programs. Sometimes there are confusions, such as between social economy and savings in mutual organizations.

The third type of answer suggests at least a partial understanding of the term. This occurred with persons that were briefed about the term in various institutional contexts. The two such cases were the co-ordinator of the Social Dialogue Committee of the Institution of the Prefect at a seminar on social problems and social economy that took place in Greece, and the ATCOM President, who heard about the social economy at UCECOM meetings.

According to ATCOM President, the term was used at events hosted by UCECOM, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Economic and Social Council. Organizations that would be part of social economy are co-operatives of any kind and mutual

organizations. A social economy type of organizations would be "an alternative to capitalism". The future would reveal whether co-ops in Romania are moving towards a Brazilian model, focused on survival, or on the German and Western European one, which combines the social economy with profit.

Last but not least, there was the critical-lucid statement of the mayor of Independența, who is also the director of the farming society, referring to organizations that fit the social economy type: "These are, essentially, things that have existed before 1989. The change is in terms, not things".

7. Conclusions

As of late 2009, there was a low level of awareness of social exclusion issues in Călăraşi County. Public sector organizations involved in social policy were focused on their own day to day activities. As a result, there is no overall approach to deal with social problems on a county-wide basis. As officials at the Institution of the Prefect pointed out, there was no social map of the county. All of this was despite an effort for institutional development, before and after EU membership, and is particularly more significant for this mainly rural, underdeveloped county. Institutional development projects ran by external partners that would be the main recipients of funding remain an undesirable option.

The existence of very few NGOs and charities is linked with the low level of urbanization and economic development. There are few prerequisites for sustainability of such organizations without an economic activity. In such an underdeveloped county, the outsourcing of social services, followed by dependence on unpredictable and precarious public funding could not provide real solutions for social inclusion.

The continuation social economy type of organization, such as co-ops and mutual organizations, which predated the communist regime, was somewhat surprising, particularly since they managed to survive during a difficult transition period. These entities, particularly the handicraft co-operative and the co-operative bank have a potential for the future, while finding a solution to change the image of "communist", old fashioned organizations. The former provides jobs for skilled workers, while the latter could be a source for micro-financing. Both have a democratic and social vocation, with a decision making process closer to the ideal type of social economy.

The farming societies were a showcase of prosperity in an underdeveloped county, especially in comparison with peasants that have reclaimed their property. Setting up such organizations would be an opportunity for the people residing in rural areas, but with specific challenges. As the director of the farming society pointed out, trust and co-operation are essential for overall success.

Overall, the stories of success and failure for different social economy type of organizations are local. What is the case in Călăraşi County might very well be to the contrary in other counties. This study offers a significant outlook at county level, but not a representative one at national level.

There was a general reluctance concerning EU funds. Reasons related to perceptions of bureaucracy, cumbersome procedures, not being worth the effort were put forward. Structural and Cohesion Funds are fully within their mission in such an underdeveloped and rural county. A failure to make full use here of the opportunity provided by these funds would point to a failure in Romania's overall development in the post-accession period.

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THE SOCIAL ECONOMY OFFER FOR THE DISABLED PERSONS

Gabriela DIMA[1]

Abstract: *In the situation when the social Romanian economy is to a high level of evolution, the disabled persons' needs are partly covered, they still being a disadvantaged category as concerning the education access and on the work market.*

The central axis of the article is the presentation and the analyzing of the offer for social economy for the disabled persons from Romania. The start point of the research consists of the identification of the main parts of social economy but also the analytical approach of the legislative changes concerning this subject. On the basis of the qualitative researcher's results where there were questioned 692 (SE Social Economy) structures from the Bucharest-Ilfov regions and South – East, there were underlined a series of characteristics such as the activity field, the budget's structure and the support forms for he disabled persons. Also, besides the mistakes' identification that the disadvantaged persons are confronted with in Romania, they are exposed to the point recommendation for the situation's solving*.

Keywords: *disabled persons, associations, foundations, the authorized protected units, cooperative societies.*

1. Introduction

In the last years especially on the basis of the economical crisis, there are more and more discussions about the important part that the SE is playing in the international economy, combining the profitability with the social solidarity, promoting a type of economy that gives priority to people, offering good quality work places, strengthening the social and economical cohesion, generating social capital, promoting the active citizenship and the long lasting development.

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* Abbreviations: *SE – Social Economy; CAR – Mutual Aid Houses; GO – Governmental Ordinance; UPA – The protected authorized units; OUG – Emergency Governmental Ordinanace; UCECOM – National Union of Handicraft and Production Co-operatives; MMSSF – Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family; LNOPHCM – The National League of the Organizations that Have Disabled Personnel from the Workshop's Cooperation; CARP – Mutual Aid Houses of Retired Persons; B-IF region – Bucharest-Ilfov region; COOP – Cooperative.*

SE gathers the total of the organizations that are situated from the organizational point of view, functioning and the final purposes' functioning and affirmation in the public and private sector. *"The* SE *organizations are economical, social and active actors in all the sectors that are characterized mainly by their purposes and specifically shape of entrepreneurship. The* SE *includes organizations such as cooperatives, the mutuals, organizations and foundations. These enterprises are very active in certain fields such as the social protection, social services, the health, the bank, the insurance, the agricultural production, the proximity services, education and cultural orientation, sports and recreational activities."*[1]

Social economy offers solutions to reduce social exclusion by increasing employment rate for vulnerable persons and by creating mechanisms to help these people (Arpinte, D.; Cace, S.; Cojocaru, Ș., 2010, p. 66). Thus, developping local, regional or national strategies to promote Social Economy would allow to provide a solution in the current unemployment problem, responding also to assumed responsabilities of Europe 2020 Strategy as an EU member state (Stănescu, S.; Cace, S.; Alexandrescu, F., coord., 2011, p. 361).

At the European level, there were recognized as traditional organizational forms of SE the cooperative societies, the mutual organizations, CARs, the associations and foundations. The only approved status is the one of the cooperatives since 2003 (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/social-economy/co-operatives/index_en.htm). Beginning with the year 2010 there are again made similar tries for the recognizing of the associations status..

At EU level, 2010 was declared the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion and aimed to increase awareness of the difficulties faced by vulnerable groups in society. Within their various categories were included: the elderly, large families and single parent families, children and young people with disabilities, immigrants, people from ethnic minorities (with emphasis on the Roma minority, the largest in the 10-12 million Roma in Europe). Vulnerable groups are defined by comparison to most people as being difficult living conditions: poor housing or lack of housing, unemployment, low educationlevel, lack of income (Popescu, R., 2011, p.12).

When there is mentioned in the public space the phrase *"disabled person"* there are associated automatically a series of needs that these persons are confronting with: isolation, insufficient incomes for satisfying the primary needs, lack or limited access to education, the lack of a place of work, addiction. In the best situation, sometimes, this image is counterbalanced by an exceptional example of a disabled person that managed to go over his or her condition, to succeed in a society that offer countless barriers and to become a sort of a nowadays hero, a good example to follow.

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[1] *http://www.economiesociala.org.ro/ro/economie-sociala*

Besides the promoted sensational especially in the mass media, actually, the

disabled persons need to have access to a big number of social services: recovery and rehabilitation, assistance and support, support and orientation for integration, the rehabilitation and professional retraining, social–medical support, counseling, etc. Also, there is a lack information and counselling services for families who have a child or an adult with disabilities (Bonea, G.V., 2011, p. 84) . Without using the gaps in the national area of these social services, we have also to notice the impossibility of covering all the functioning costs for these social services both by the disabled person and the local budgets. Consequently, even though a specifically need is identified at the national level at the disabled persons, the implementation of the necessary steps is striking with the lack of the financial resources for developing, to diversify and support a social services market destined and adapted to the vulnerable group's needs. In this idea we can anticipate that the SE offer is not enough in its turn to satisfy the above mentioned needs.

This chapter intends to analyze the market services for the disabled persons from the point of view of the SE offer. More exactly, we will identify which are the SE entities; we will analyze a series of characteristics such as the activity field, the budget and their offer for the vulnerable groups – in our case – the disabled persons.

2. Social economy entities

This additional chapter talks about the Romanian SE entities that are significant from the perspective of the studied problem, analyses the main legislative regulations and includes the obtained research data. In Romania, the SE entities, the most representative ones by the offer for the disabled persons are:

- The associations and foundations;

- The authorized protected units.

The associations and foundations are private law judicial persons whose main purpose is non patrimonial, but which can develop subsidiary economical activities too, directly or by creating commercial societies. In the case of creating *commercial societies*, the dividends obtained by associations and foundations have to be reinvested in the same commercial societies or used for the purpose of the organization. According to the law regulatio from GO 26/2000 concerning the associations and foundations, with the after champing and completing, the non profit organizations may offer any *other direct economical activities*, with the condition that they have an accessible character and to be tightly linked with the main purpose of the judicial person.

The protected authorized units (UPA) that employ disabled persons in the conditions imposed by the law no. 448/2006 concerning the protection and the

promoting of the disabled persons' rights. According to the law no. … From the Law no. 448/2006, UPA is defined as *"the righteous public or private with its own papers, where, at least 30% of the employed persons with an individual work contract are disabled persons."* UPA can be:

- With judicial or non judicial personality;

- With its own papers, with sections, workshops or other structures from the economical operators, public institutions or from ONGs, as well as the ones organized by the disabled authorized persons in the law conditions, to perform independent economical activities.

In our country, the first organizing forms similar to UPA from nowadays were the *disabled cooperatives* created in the year 1948 after the Soviet model, which became later *units for the disabled persons[1].*

The first legislative regulation concerning UPA was the law no. 57/1992 concerning the work joining for the disabled persons, with the after modifications and the changes. At the second article no.2 of the concerned law there is mentioned that *"comparing with the employees number formed by the disabled persons, there can be created, with the suggestion of the legally built disabled persons associations, places of work and protected units, especially organized."* For being considered authorized protected units there had that minimum 70% from the employed personnel to be represented by disabled persons, or 50% for the UPA that are especially organized for the blind persons.

The law no. 57/1992 was erased in the year 1999 through OUG 102/1999 concerning the special protection and the work contract for he disabled persons that underlines that UPA are: *"specially organized and restructured units according to the needs of the disabled persons, with the purpose of a proper activity from their part, eliminating any possible problems"* and they may be:

- Economical agents with judicial personality no matter the organizational and property form, that have at least 50% of he employed number that have individual work contract;

- Sections, workshops or other structures without any judicial personality from the economical agents' part or from the ONGs that have their own accountability and at least 50% from the employed number are disabled persons that are employed with an individual work contract;

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[1] *MMSSF, 2010, a Research Report Concerning the Romanian Social Economy from the Compared European Perspective*

- Familiarly associations, associations or foundations with no working purposes that have at least a disabled person, as well as the authorized disabled person according to the law, to develop independent economical activities with the condition of paying the social assurances pays as the law predicts.

The Law no. 519/2002 for the OUG approval 102/1999 concerning the special protection and the work framing of the disabled persons annuls the mentioned article, introducing the following classification:

- Economical agents that have judicial personality no matter the organizational and property form that have at least 30% from the total employed persons disabled ones that are employed with individual work contract;

- Sections, workshops and other no judicial personality structures of the economical agents or from the ONGs, that have their own accountability and at least 30% from the total employed persons are disabled and employed with individual work contract

- Family associations, associations or foundations with no work purposes, having at least a disabled person as member, as well as the disabled person that is authorized according to the law to perform independent economical activities with the condition of paying the social assurance financial contributions asked by the law.

The same normative act shows that by UPA we understand also the integration centers by occupational therapy that is under the coordination of The State Secretary Department for the Disabled Persons. In present, this kind of centers is no longer mentioned in the special regulations, they being gathered in the general definition of the protected authorized units.

OUG 102/1999 concerning the special protection and the work registering of the disabled persons was cancelled by the Law no. 448/2006 concerning the protection and promoting of the disabled persons' rights with the after modifications and changes.

As the creation and functioning of the protected units may create a series of social effects of great importance (the creation of new work places, the diminution of the social exclusion for the disabled persons and the strengthening of the social cohesion), the Romanian state supports all these organizations by art. 81 of the Law no. 448/2006:

- A cancel of the authorization taxes market for the reopening and reauthorizing (by DGPPH);

- A payment avoidance of the profit tax with the condition that at least 75% of the obtained funds by not paying the taxes to be reinvested for the restructuring or

the acquisition of technological equipments, machines, tools, work machines and/or the adding of the protected work places in the conditions that are asked by the Law no. 571/2003 concerning the Fiscal Code with the after modifications and completions. This facility was available till the end of the 2006.

- Other rights granted by the local public administration authorities financially supported by their own funds.

Also, the Romanian state encourages the economical activity realized by the protected units by the stipulation of the authorities' obligations, public institutions and the judicial, public or private persons that have at least 50 employed persons and did not employ disabled persons in a percentage of at least 4% from the total employed persons. (with the exception of the public institutions for the national protection, public order and national safety), to buy products or services that are made by their own disabled persons' activity or to pay for the state budget a sum of money that is equivalent to the value of the concerned products or services (according to the Law 448/2006, ART. 78, modified by OUG 86/2008).

According to the statistical data that are on the site of the General Protection Office, there are registered approximately 460 authorized protected units that have a minimum of employed, very often the employing representing only a formality, the concerned persons not working for what they are paid (MMSSF, A Research Report Concerning the ES in Romania by the Compared European Perspective. The annexes of the research report, p. 91).

Another organizing form specifically to the ES from Romania is the **cooperative** societies. As concerning the work employment of the disabled persons, a long tradition was to be noticed to the cooperative sector, but these kind of work registering disappeared after the communist regime disappeared. In 1980-1989 in the National Union of the Workshops' Cooperatives (UCECOM) there were working about 30.000 disabled persons (MMSSF, 2010, A Research Report Concerning ES in Romania by the European compared perspective). The number of the workers is going down because of the lack of some efficient protection forms and the necessary rights to cover the productivity deficiencies characteristic to this sector.

Going on somehow with this tradition, in the year 1994 there was created **The National League of the Organizations that Have Disabled Personnel from the Workshop's Cooperation** (LNOPHCM) which is functioning actually on the basis of OUG 26/2000 that corrects the functioning rules of the associations and foundations. Although the majority of the members enter in the category of the cooperative societies, there is allowed the affiliation of the organizations with no working purpose but also of the commercial societies (beginning with the year 2008) that employ disabled persons. The league's mission is that to facilitate the work employment of the disabled persons as a protection form of this vulnerable category. According to

the given data on the League's site, along the years, the number of the members varied going to 36 from which 18 protected units that may be cooperative and commercial societies organized especially as SRLs (http:/www.lnophcm.ro/). Inside these units *"there are working about 280 disabled persons from the total of abut 610 employees"* (MMSSF, 2010, A Research Report Concerning the Social Economy in Romania by the Compared European Perspective, p. 76).

CARP represent a different category of nonprofit organizations that functions on the basis of OUG 26/2000 concerning the associations and the foundations with the after modifications and changes and of a special normative act, the Law no. 540/2002 concerning the mutual help houses of the retired old persons. The CARP purpose is the support and the encouraging of the members by offering lawns with a low interest but also by convex activities that have a social, cultural, touristic etc. Character. The CARP beneficiaries are both the retired persons and the members of their families.

CARs are functioning on the basis of OUG 26/2000 concerning the associations and the foundations but also on the basis of a special normative act, the Law no. 122/1996 concerning the judicial regime of he CARs and of their unions. The purpose is the supporting of the members by offering lawns with low interest.

The social enterprises

In the large category of the activities that are under SE, the ones that concern the professional integration services of the disabled persons is just a small part, but a very important one especially in this high unemployment period. The subject raised a special interest in the last years in Europe such as a term appeared and refers especially to the SE structures that concern the work integration – 'social enterprises and work insertion' (WISE – work integration social enterprises) (European Research Network, 2004).

The work insertion enterprises are independent economical entities whose main objective is represented by the professional integration of the persons that are confronting with serious difficulties on the work market. This integration is realized on the free work market in protected workshops or by formation and professional qualification. The personal insertion enterprises are active in different fields but the most common in Europe are: the hand work (building, carpentry) the collecting and recycling of the waste, the maintenance of the green spaces, public cleanliness, the products' wrapping (European Research Network, 2004).

In the Integrate research there were interviewed 692 ES structures, from which 229 were ONGs, 228 CARs and 235 COOPs.

Sample structure on regions
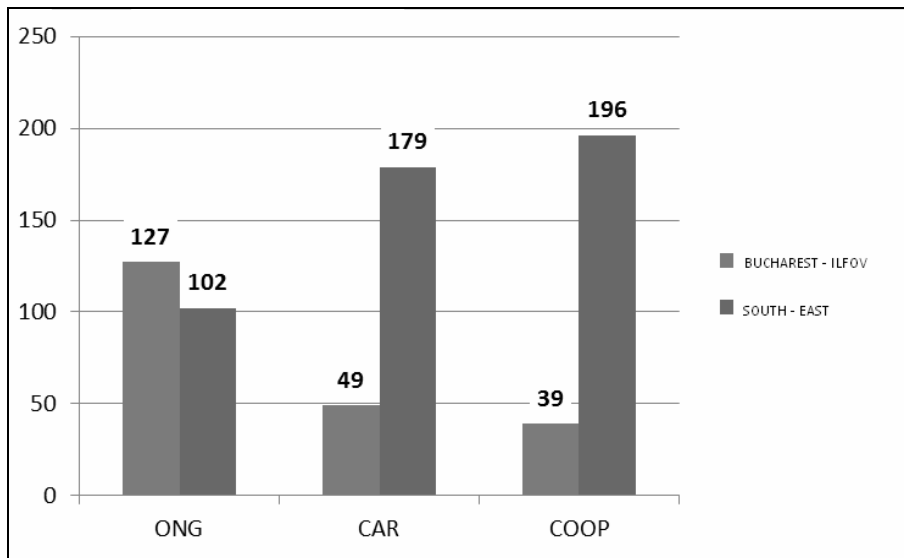
Source: the Integrate data base (ICCV), 2011.

3. *The social economy the activity*

From the ONG respondents' total, for the two analyzed developing regions, the distribution concerning the activity field is: social services (70%-80%), health services (25%0, education and research (20%). Smaller percentages under 10% were registered for: the environment's protection, lobby, religion, philanthropy, culture and media, sports and recreation, international cooperation. Between the two developing regions there is to be noticed:

- A bigger accent of the social services in the SE region (83%) against (76%) in the Bucharest-Ilfov region;

- A bigger presence of philanthropically, religious, cultural activities and of the resources centers in the region Bucharest-Ilfov comparing with the SE region.

CARs have as main activity fields: loans/accreditation/helping members (approximate 60%), social assistance services (25%), but also health, philanthropy and resources centers services. As concerning the CARs we have to mention that there appear big differences between the two regions that are included in the research. So,

the Bucharest-Ilfov region is much more developed than the SE region not only in the specifically field of the CARs – accreditation and lawns, but also concerning the offer for social services, health services etc.

The distribution on the two developing regions depending on the activity field of the ONGs and CARs included in the sample is explained in the graphic no.26.

Graphic 2
The activity field on regions, ONG and CAR
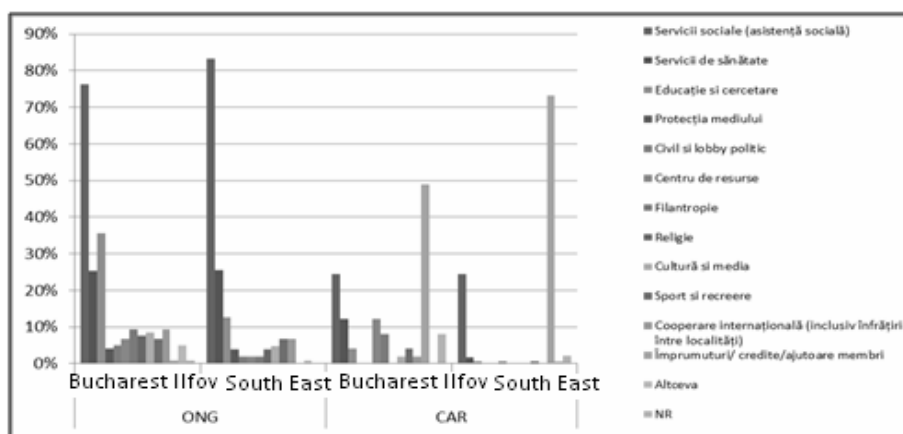
Source: the Integrate data base (ICCV), 2011.

As we were drawing the attention in the article about the se soliciting, the needs of the disabled persons are perceived approximately the same in the two evolution region. As there are registered discrepancies as concerning the activity field of he ONGs and CARs between the two regions, we may appreciate: a better addressability to the needs of social assistance in the developing region from the SE and a better covering of the spiritual needs (religion, culture) in the developing region from Bucharest Ilfov
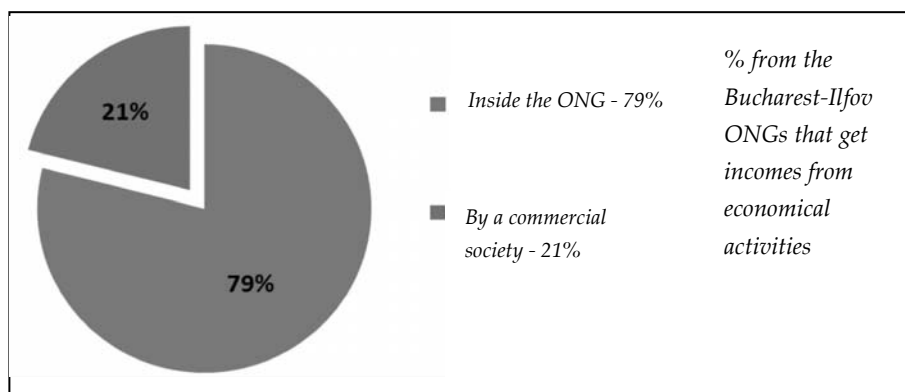
4. The budget's structure

From the economical perspective is interesting to analyze the ONGs budget's structure from the two regions. In the developing region from Bucharest Ilfov the incomes that are from **economical activities** are of 31% comparing with just 19% in the SE developing region which may represent a smaller concern, lesser opportunities, a lower information level in the SE region. As from the economical

differences between the two regions, the differences can find the most probable the explanation in the different economical opportunities.

The incomes that are from economical activities were obtained in 71% of the cases in the ONGs and only 20% by means of some commercial societies in B-IF.

Graphic 3
The incomes from the economical activities were obtain

Inside the ONG - 79%

By a commercial society - 21%

% from the Bucharest-Ilfov ONGs that get incomes from economical activities
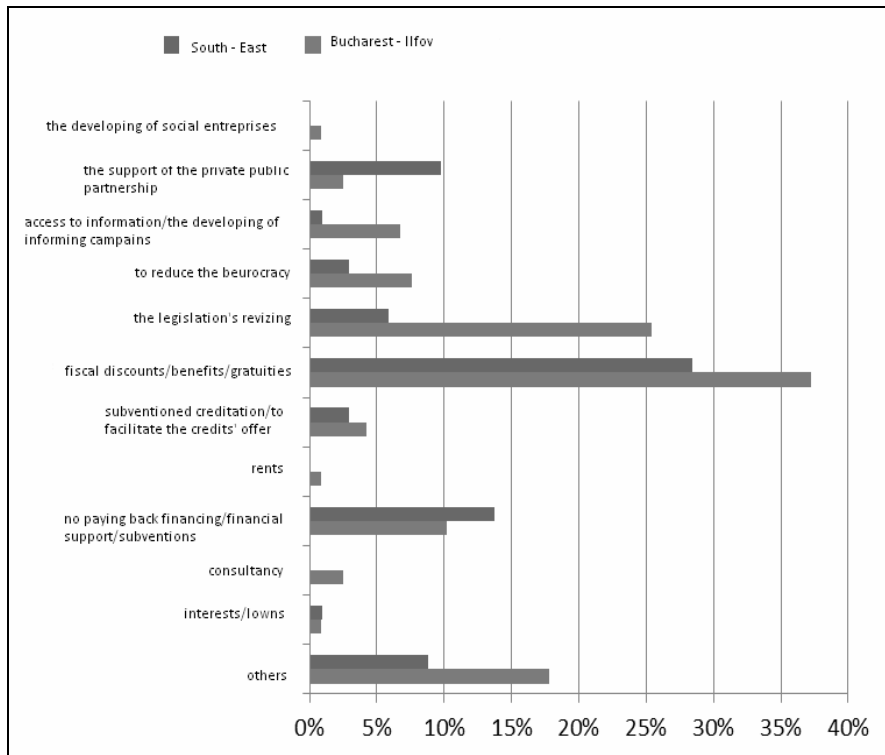
Source: The Integrate data base (ICCV), 2011.

We consider that the small number of the economical activities in the budget's structure is to be explained by the fact that, at the perception level of the representations of the nonprofit sector, 67% from the respondents appreciate the fact that the actual legislation supports in a too little measure the ONGs to develop economical activities.

The main encouragement means of the ONGs to develop economical activities identified by the respondents are:

- Fiscal measures and direct financings: fiscal discounts/ benefits / free things (32%), no pay back financing / financial support / subventions to start economical activities (12%);

- Legislative and administrative measures: the revising of the legislation (15%) and the bureaucracy lowering (5%).

*Which are the most important solutions to encourage
the ONGs to develop economical activities?*

Source: the Integrate data base (ICCV), 2011.

In both developing regions, most of the financing sources come from financial supports (more than 50%) followed by campaigns 2% (with major differences between the two regions), no back payment financing demands, subventions from the local public authorities, fees, members and direct solicitations made to some supporters.

It is to be noticed the fact that, in the structure of the organizations' budget, only approximately 30% represent public local authorities' subventions, not sufficient to assure the sustainability on a long term of the offered services by the sector of the civil society. Comparing with the European countries this percentage may get to 70% (Italy's case).

Graphic 5
The budget's structure ONG and CAR
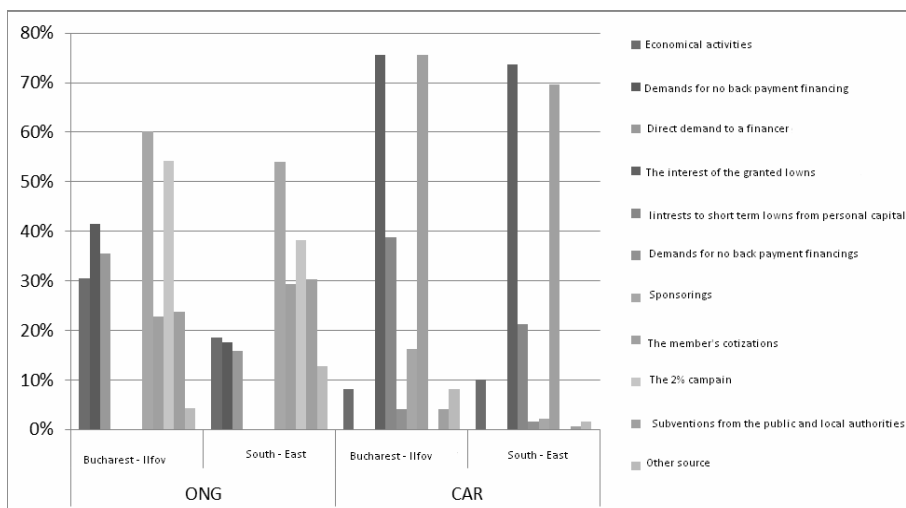
Source: the Integrate data base (ICCV), 2011.

Table 1
Expected evolution for the economical indices

| % WILL DROP IN 2011	TIPORG Organization's type					
	ONG		CAR		COOP	
	REGION		REGION		REGION	
	B-IF	SE	B-IF	SE	B-IF	SE
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
The business figure	-	-	22%	17%	32%	26%
Profit	-	-	24%	17%	35%	26%
Employees' number	8%	3%	12%	8%	19%	21%
Members' number	-	-	31%	18%	-	-
Budget	19%	12%	-	-	-	-
Voluntaries' number	1%	2%	-	-	-	-
Total (N)	**102**	**49**		**179**	**37**	**196**

Source: the Integrate data base (ICCV), 2011

Note: % from the managers that say it will drop.

5. The services' offer for the vulnerable groups

The most representative organizations that offer services to the persons in need, not only to the disabled persons as it results from the Integrate researches are the ONGs. So, 81% of these offer services in present, 4, 5% offered services in the past and only 14, 5% didn't ever offered. As concerning the CARs, 41% offer present services and 51% haven't ever offered. The less representative are the cooperatives, only 25% of them offer in present difficulty personal services, 11% offered in the past and the rest of 61% haven't ever offered.
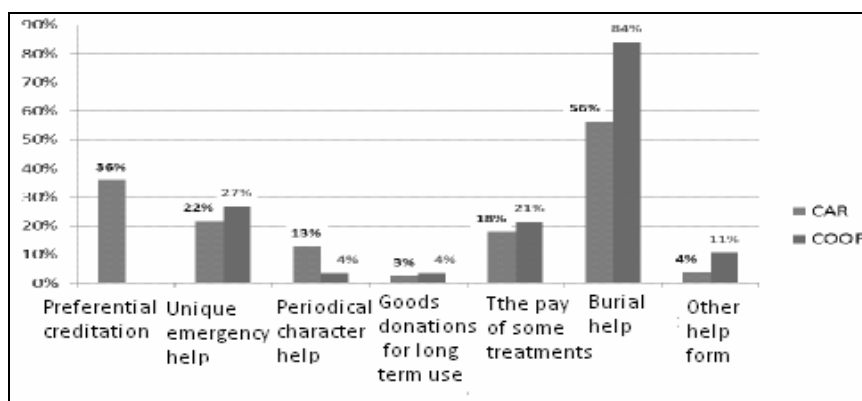
Source: the Integrate data base (ICCV), 2011.

Note: % from the organizations that offer social support.

The support forms for the vulnerable groups offered by the CARs and COOP are graphically represented above. The most frequent are the burial financial support, the unique emergency help, and the payment of some preferential treatments or credits in the case of the CARs.

The ONGs that are mentioned in the sample are crepitated for one or more services, the biggest use being for:

- The social services (including the protected houses) – 93%;

- Training / education / professional orientation – 20% with a bigger use in the Bucharest-Ilfov region (24%) comparing with 16% in the SE REGION;

- Medical services – 14%;

- Sports activities / for recreation, free time – 4%.

In the future, all the SE specifically entities from the sample have the intention to develop new social services, a more accentuated tendency in the case of the ONGs – 46% comparing with 30% for the CARs and COOP. An important percentage of these new initiated social services will take into account the home visit (about 17%) and training classes, work integration and the creation of protected workshops (about 15%). There is to be noticed also the wish to work in partnership with a public institution or an ONG if it is possible (43%) while 35% of the respondents expressed their clear intention to develop partnership projects.

For creating these new services there were identified as financing sources with significant differences between the two developing regions:

- European funds, structural projects: 35% in the developing region Bucharest-Ilfov comparing with 15% in the SE developing region;

- Financial support and donations: 43% in RD B-IF, comparing with 10% in RD South-East;

- Auto financing, fees, interests: 11% in RD B-IF, comparing with 2% in RD SE;

- Subventions from the local and central authorities, public funds: about 13% in both developing regions;

- External financings, international donations: 12% in both developing regions.

Graphic 7
Financing sources for the new social services
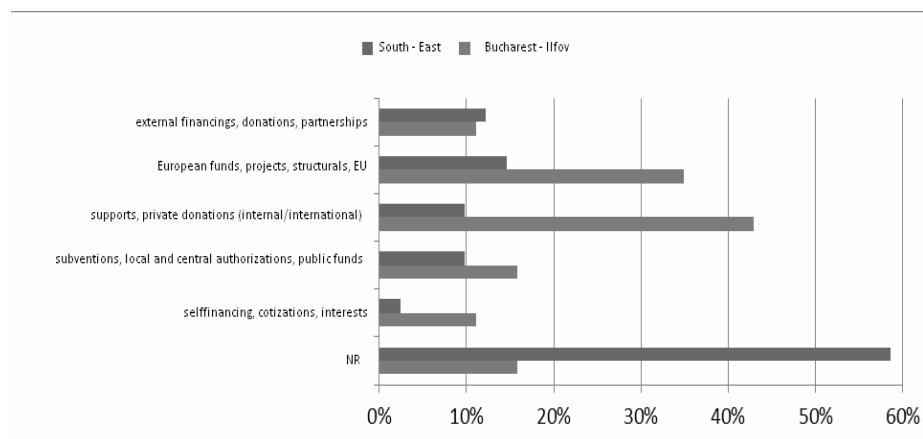
Source: The Integrate data base (ICCV), 2011.

Note: % from the organizations that wish to offer social services.

We have to notice firstly a lowering of the percentage of the public financings from the local or central budget, from 30% in present to 13% predicted for the future. This fact is owed to the lowering of the received subventions by ONGs in the last years. In the SE developing region, in the qualitative research, there were identified localities where these subventions aren't offered any more for 3 years since the economical crisis started.

The significant differences between the two developing regions are to be seen when we refer to the European funds accessing. We notice a lower appeal to the financing European funds in the SE developing region of approximately 20%, a difference that is to be noticed in present too. This may be explained by lack of or low informing concerning the European funds, limited competencies from the point of view of the human resources inside the organizations, insufficient or instable budgets that do not allow them the self financing covering and the support of the projects till the coming of a new deposit, private public partnership insufficiently developed.

The financing sources that come from self financing are anticipated as being higher in the Bucharest-Ilfov region (11%) comparing with the SE developing region (2%), a normal thing when these differences are to be noticed in present too. In the SE developing region the entrepreneurial spirit seems to be less developed.

As concerning the beneficiaries of the new social services type, taking into consideration the vulnerability's type, the disabled persons are into attention with a percentage of 19% in the developing region Bucharest-Ilfov and 27% in the SE developing region.

Pro social behavior

When we talk about the non profit sector, we are used that this one to support an inclusive society where all the persons no matter the ethnic, disability, religion, etc. has equal chances for access to education, culture, information, employment, participation to the social life. We may expect ourselves then that the percentage of the employed persons that belong o the vulnerable groups to be significantly bigger inside these organizations. The reality does not sustain these assumptions.

We will analyze now the level of employment of the disabled persons inside the three specifically ES structures included in the sample: ONGs, CARs and COOP, the motivation for this decision but also the future intentions.

Graphic 8
The organizations percentage that employed disabled persons and of the ones that wish to employ in the future disabled persons
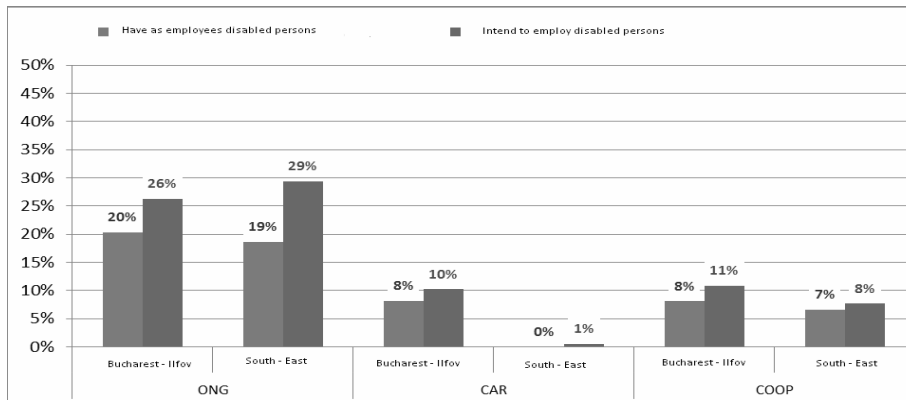
Source: the Integrate data base (ICCV), 2011.

From the 32 graphic we notice that inside the ONGs the percentage of the disabled person who are employed is of approximately 20% comparing with 7% in the Car's and COOP case. There is registered just one exception in the case of the CARs from the SE developing region that do not have any disabled person employed. This fact may be owed also to thievery little number of employees that this kind of unit has generally, maximum two or three persons.

Although the differences between the ONGs and the other specifically organizing SE structures seem to be significant, we may suppose that a big part of these persons are employed in protected authorized units. It is import to add that the protected workshop do not represent mostly a transitory form of work employment where the disabled person is ready for the free work market, but a permanent employment form.

In the study of the future policies from the field, we recommend the rethinking of the potential part that the protected workshops play in the quality of units that train the disabled persons for the free work market offering professional qualification but also social competencies just to integrate correspondingly in the collectivity.

Because of the little positive number of answers received from the CARs and cooperatives, we will analyze the motivations that were at the basis of this decision only in the case of him ONGs.

• The employer's competency (89% of the SE developing region respondents comparing with 76% of the Bucharest-Ilfov developing region respondents);

- The decision of the main office to help the persons that have difficulties (63% of the SE developing region and 50% of the respondents from the Bucharest-Ilfov developing region);

- Legal subventions received from the state (a higher percentage in the SE region – 30% comparing with the Bucharest-Ilfov region – 11%).

<u>Graphic 9</u>
Reasons for employing vulnerable personnel in ONGs
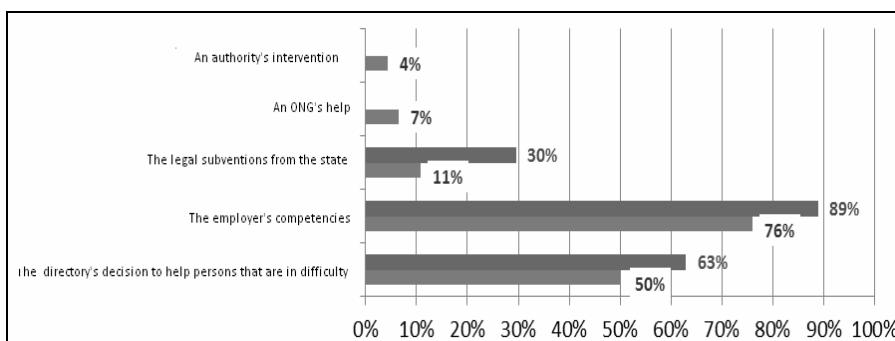
Source: the Integrate data base (ICCV), 2011.

Note: % of the ONGs that employed disabled persons.

For the future, the intention of employing disabled persons rises to 26 – 29% inside the ONGs and 11% for the CARs and coop. Because of the new financed projects by The Social European Fund, The Sector Operational Developing of the Human Resources Program, The 6 Priority Axe. The promoting of the Social Inclusion, this intent can become real because of the professional qualification and requalification programs that will be offered to the persons that belong to the vulnerable persons, but also to the new ES entities that will be created with he purpose of offering new work places for the disabled persons.

6. Conclusions

Romanian SE is well enough developed being formed of a strong non governmental sector (approximately 23.000 active ONGs), CARs that are in growth as number of members and different kinds of cooperative societies, the latter ones registering one more strong decline after 1989.

Anyway, the problem of the disabled persons are not well enough covered, going on to be one of the most problematic social categories from our country, especially as concerning the access to education and on the work market.

From the results of the Integrate research we notice that in ONGs, the main providers of services addressed to the disabled persons, the entrepreneurial spirit is insufficiently developed and valued. So, in 2010 only 31% from the ONGs budget from the developing region Bucharest-Ilfov and 19% from the SE developing region come from economical activities.

In the situation when the national social policy is concentrated mostly on passive social protection actions, the SE developing generally but especially for the vulnerable group that is analyzed in this chapter would be beneficial by:

- To create new work places for the disabled persons;

- To ease the functioning of a work market that is favorable to the active inclusion of the vulnerable groups;

- The raise of the cohesion and social inclusion;

- The lowering of the spending for the social assistance;

- The support of the active involvement of the community's members for the solving of the problems that the disabled persons have.

In the context of the international promoting of the SE, a special organizational form are the social enterprises that supports the integration on the work market of the disabled persons and of other vulnerable groups (*work integration social enterprises*). Because of this reason, in the future, these social enterprises that are concerned especially for finding a temporary occupation and the training for the insertion on the work market should be accorded a special attention being a main opportunity for facilitating the work employment of he disabled persons.

The present protected workshops have to fight against a great challenge meaning the change of the organizational culture from two major perspectives:

- A concentration not only on comp-anion, empathy, social generosity but also on competition , the risk's responsibility, interest for getting the profit;

- The passing from the protected workshop as a final employment form to the one as transitory entity which just prepares the disabled person for the work market.

On the future, just to facilitate the work employment of this target group we have to solve the problem of the physical environment accessibility, informational and communicational but also the problem of the education access.

As it comes out from the Integrate research, one of the main motivations that are at the basis of the decision of employing a disabled person in the work field, is the professional competence. The initial and formal training can't be made just by the ONG sector. This is why there is necessary the partnership with the work force occupation agencies and the teaching institutions.

Just to force the accessibility of the public buildings but also of the physical environment (passers by path ways, sound traffic lights, etc.), there should be applied harsh punishments to he ones that do not observe these regulations.

There are also necessary measures for encouraging the work employment of the disabled persons. In our country, the assisted employment that supposes a personalized help and the adapting of the work places on the free market to answer the specifically needs of the disabled persons, is insufficiently used. The work mediation services should be developed.

The development of the entrepreneurial spirit may be realized by changing the organizational culture that takes into account:

- The rethinking of the relation between stability and change/innovation. The need to assure the stability inside the organizations created a wrong mentality to the try of introducing the change and the innovation, at least in the conditions in which there isn't the sureness of success;

- The change of the mentality concerning the politics of prices establishing that are associated to the goods / the sold services. The orientation doesn't have to be only for the spending' covering but also for obtaining a profit.

Because of the economical crises and the lowering of the state subvention, the non profit organizations should reorient from the strategy of incomes' attraction only from donations/sponsoring and grants towards a strategy of getting incomes from economical activities.

The specifically SE entities from Romania have to transform radically from *"fighters for a cause"* in competitive offers of services and opportunities for the disabled persons.

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CHILDREN, VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING, AS SOCIAL UNIT

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Abstract: The economic and political transition which Romania experienced as of 1990, allowed the appearance of the human trafficking phenomenon, and the children are vulnerable to this crime activity. Children's trafficking requires particular attention and specific responses of prevention and intervention, which presumes that the trafficked children are approached as social unit. This article brings arguments in favour of the recovery of the trafficked children considering the fact that they develop empirical systems of organisation and special social rules just in order to survive. Within this context, the clinical sociology and the clinician sociologist form an adequate working method with the children treated as social unit and social group with particular organisation and surviving rules within a special social and cultural environment.

Keywords: victims, children, recovery, prevention, clinical sociology

Historically, the phenomenon of human trafficking existed permanently, but it grew in scale with the lapse of time. Towards the end of the 19th century and the start of the 20th century, massive migrations of European women were organised towards the American continent or towards North Africa. Two conferences were organised in Paris in 1902 and in 1910 with the attempt to end what was commonly known as "white people trafficking". The works of the two conferences resulted in the International convention on white people trafficking signed in Paris (May, 4, 1910), completed subsequently by the International convention on curbing women and children trafficking (30 September 1921) and by the International convention on curbing the trafficking of adult women (Geneva, 11 October 1993). The Convention for the control of human trafficking and of prostitution was signed in New York on 2 December 1949; this convention cancelled and replaced partially the dispositions of the previous international instruments.

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The above paragraph shows that the human trafficking concept doesn't belong explicitly to the contemporary history; the general term of *traffic* was used for the first time in the 16th century as a synonym for trade, with no negative connotations. However, towards the 17th century the traffic started to be associated to the illicit and/or unlawful sales of goods. Although in the beginning, the term of traffic largely signified to sales of drugs and weapons, towards the 19th century this notion also included the trade in human beings, treated as goods and sold in slavery. This "traditional "trade with slaves was banned towards the end of the 19th century. In early 20th century, the term of traffic referred most times to the "*trade in white slaves*" (van der Linden, Mariska, N.J., 2005, p. 9), which meant the circulation across the international borders of women and children for purposes of prostitution. Only in late 1990 decade was the traffic associated to the prostitution and sexual exploitation of the women and children.

The economic and political transition which Romania experienced starting with 1990, lead to a rapid increase of poverty, particularly in specific areas of the country. The high unemployment rate, the low level of the wages and the high expectations towards the new regime are just a few of the factors which determined the increase of the illegal migration for work in western countries. This made possible the appearance of the human trafficking phenomenon.

Within this context, the geographical position of Romania made the human trafficking an increasing profitable crime activity.

Romania is mainly a country of origin, most victims being trafficked in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Bulgaria. From these Balkan countries, part of the victims is transported towards western countries: Belgium, Italy, Norway, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Ireland, Spain and Austria. Victims have also been discovered in Turkey, Canada, Cambodia, South Africa and Japan.

Romania also is a transit country for the victims from the former soviet countries (Ukraine and Moldova) who are trafficked towards the former Yugoslavia. To a smaller extent, Romania also is a country of destination, the victims being sold to Romanian networks of exploitation (for prostitution).

In Romania, women appear particularly vulnerable situation in relation to the issue ofviolence and employment opportunities in the labor market (Popescu, R., 2011, p. 32). Theoften precarious   financial situation is the   reason   women are victims   of exploitation andtrafficking. From this perspective, the phenomenon identified in other countries (Acharya, A., 2009, 2010).

The children are a vulnerable category to human trafficking because they have a higher probability for fraudulent border crossing, because they are much more

exposed than the adults and therefore much easier to manipulate. On the other way it is better to take in consideration the risks faced by the children at risk of losing parental care and the children's rights which are most often violated and the consequences thereof (Cojocaru, Ș, 2009).

Children's trafficking deserves special attention and specific responses due to the following aspects (Nicolăescu, D., 2004):

- Children vulnerability to trafficking. For instance, the children are perceived by the traffickers as more docile and cheaper than the adults used for work; the young people – girls and boys – are better for the sex industry because it is less probable that they are infected with HIV/AIDS, while the marginalised children are less prepared to resist to trafficking and exploitation and have less opportunities to work in an environment without exploitation than other children from the same community. The psychological, physical and social impact of children trafficking on the victims' perspectives of integration. For instance, a trauma suffered during an early stage of development may have much more serious consequences on the long-term development of the child and in his/her healing.

- The legal responsibility of the states to guarantee and protect the children's rights, as stipulated by the UN Convention on the right of children and other international norms and instruments.

The exploitation and abuses suffered by the trafficked children are a serious breach of the human rights of these children. Many suffer emotional, sexual and physical abuses and are exploited by the traffickers, panderers or clients. Even worse, the trafficked children may be frequently exposed to beating, rape and torture. Some were intently maimed by their so-called "owners", with the purpose to make a profit. Their freedom of movement is often restricted and many children are threatened with physical punishment if they don't make enough money or if they don't give the bulk of their earnings to the people controlling them.

The factors contributing to the higher vulnerability of a child to be victim of sexual exploitation have been identified by the reference studies as economic, cultural and social factors (IASC, 2005). We may also say that the risk factors are different for different types and subtypes of exploitation of the trafficked children. These risk factors also depend on the socio-cultural norms of the community to which the child belongs, and the identification of these norms may be of help in identifying the risks run by the children within a community or group of individuals. These factors can be grouped as follows (Petrovai D., 2006):

Table 1
Protecting and Risk factors

	Exploitation by work	Exploitation for sexual purposes	Exploitation by illicit work (drug smuggling)
Risk factors (most frequent)	- Poverty/low incomes of the parents - Rural environment - Gender - Educational level of the parents - Large families - Parents' attitude toward children's work - Parents' problems of mental health - School dropout by the children	- History of sexual, physical and/or emotional abuse - The child runs away from home because of parents' abuses - Poverty/low incomes of the parents - The child is abandoned by the parents in social institutions or in the street	- The children or parents consume alcohol or drugs - Delinquent behaviour of the child resulting from the abuses in the family - Community with high risk for drug smuggling - Sexual and/or physical abuse of the child
Protecting factors	- Vocational training of the parents - Prevention of school dropout - Development of the abilities for an independent and autonomous life - Career development and training for a career	- Prevent physical, emotional and sexual abuses - Intervention to recover the children who are victims of abuses - Prevention of school dropout - Development of the abilities to cope with risk situations	- Interventions in the community with risk: development of the abilities to recognise and to cope with the risk situations - Counselling the children who consume alcohol or drugs - Prevention of school dropout - Training for a career

Being a social phenomenon, the children who are exploited sexually and commercially must be approached from a two-fold perspective. First, that of the victim, which means a subjective approach. We can speak here of what the victim represents due to its bio-psycho-socio-cultural resources. Second, the victim must be analysed from the angle of human trafficking, i.e. from the angle of its involuntary participation, as means of production, to the illicit economic activity which derives from the imperative of self-imposing, at any cost on the financial market, of those people wanting to recover from their financial and social handicap (no money, no prestige, no acknowledgement, n esteem, therefore nothing to lose), activity which is directed towards making money. Because the victim doesn't participate voluntarily, deliberately, consciously, to the illegal process, we can speak of the victim as of an effect.

The children are victims of the traffickers from much of the same reasons why the adults are. However, the children lack the wisdom and life experience of the adults, thus being more vulnerable.

There is no "pattern" of the victim child, but there are a lot of factors which make the children become vulnerable. One of the typical scenarios is that o the child who accepts to go to another place, without being conscious of the exploitation which he/she is about to bear. The children are tempted by the opportunity to make money and they believe in the stories they are told; many young people falling victims of the traffickers actually believe they will have a real job – in a hotel, bar or private house. Some believe they will actually get married. They may be unhappy with the situation in their homes and they want to escape; many of them didn't have success at school and see themselves having no future in their environment of origin. Some belong to a minority which is discriminated in their country and want to escape from poverty. Other timers, they are simply abducted by the traffickers and sold out.

Among the underlying **causes** of human trafficking, there are several factors characteristic for each single situation:

- Poverty as social phenomenon, as expression of any type of frustration (usually, the victim doesn't adapt his/her ideals of life to the type of psychic resources and to the means he/she is naturally endowed).

- Non-diversification and insufficiency of jobs;

- Lack of specialisation in a specific profession demanded on the labour market;

- The resounding success of another person, known, from the same social environment;

- Mistrust in the public authorities from the country and crediting overtrust the authorities from a foreign country;

- University education in a field of no value on the labour market;

- Financial dissatisfaction with the job – insufficient income;

- Over-motivation for success (I can, I want, I must...now, there and as soon as possible), correlated with a superlative image of the self (misunderstood genius, thinking such as "I can do anything, I can do this too");

- Contracting mortgages, other debts (factor independent of poverty) – may also be favouring condition;

- Multiple failures (can't keep the job, is in family conflicts – divorce, one of the family members is alcoholic, can't make himself/herself understood, serious illness of one of family members, in his/her care);

- Victim of family aggression, which results in leaving the environment of references, as form of self protection;

- Has complexes of inferiority and is convinced that already is the victim of a social "injustice" (often rejected, evaluated negatively), that it can't become any worse, provided he/she changes the social environment;

- No risk analysis, exclusion of the risks from the very beginning, or favourable risk analysis;

- No feeling of own value (is convinced that he/she didn't deserve everything bad that had happened, that faith has to show the bright part of life too);

- The lack of information (an information has value if valorised and used – this makes it different from a rumour) correlated with the total trust in public sources (paper advertisements) or in physical sources';

- Blind faith in providence, being convinced that the practice of religious rituals will protect him/her from the worse;

- Poor affiliation to a social group (no friends, most friends changed domicile, changed social status, have other purposes, don't have time) correlated with the trend of conformism towards other group norms;

- Obedience (submissiveness) towards the recruiter;

- No knowledge of the language of the destination (target) country, no knowledge of any international language;

- Belief that if he/she participated in the "process of selection" with small tokens, gifts, the success is guaranteed;

- The belief that if he/she signs several forms (higher bureaucracy) everything is safer;

- Tendency to sign without reading everything written, more so as it is in a foreign language, insufficiently known;

- No knowledge of the legislation, rights and duties both in the country and abroad;

- Shyness to demand more information or better conditions, fearing not to appear ridiculous (stupid) or fearing not to be rejected;

- The lack of elementary information on the "cost of living" in the destination country, climacteric conditions, working conditions, internal regulations of the employing company, working norms, physical preparation necessary for the job and culture of the destination and/or transit country (there are unknown social practices, rituals, which may affect adversely the health or adaptation of the employee);

- Signing work contracts abroad without the counselling of a specialist (for instance, payment of the wage after three month of employment);

- Inexistence of a protocol between the two countries (target and destination) in the field of workforce;

- The "special bond" of unconditioned trust between the recruiter (who made a choice and by this created the premises of recovering the self trust of the selected person) and the victim;

- Is convinced that this is the big opportunity, correlated with the fact that some have been rejected;

- Acceptance of travel documents procured by transporters/recruiters and the feeling of the moral indebtedness under the pretext of less bureaucracy, saving money or additional travels and the belief in their legal value – derived from the indiscernible trust in people (thinking such as "a gift is a gift");

- Lack of provision regarding some activities, events that might occur during the transit or during the stay in the destination country (lack of contact people, of a phone number);

- Desire to make something completely special, specific to the teenagers;

- Has running law suits of whose outcome is afraid and decides that it might be better to go abroad;

- Most victims are women (for prostitution), children (beggary and traffic of organs) and men (forced work in agriculture, constructions etc.).

The children and young people who were victims of trafficking operations will have suffered physical and/or sexual abuses, most time of extreme nature, such as rape and torture. They experience all this at small ages when they should normally be trustful, healthy and full of life young people. The consequences are devastating and will affect in all the aspects of their life. Following are some effects of the various forms of exploitation suffered by the children victims of human trafficking (Nicolăescu D., Barbu, B., 2004).

Effects on the physical and mental health:

- The victims get various diseases, venereal diseases and AIDS;

- Very often, the victims become alcohol and drug addicts;

- The victims become depressive and often attempt suicide;

- The girls become pregnant;

- The girls may have complications during the pregnancy and have to make abortion;

- The victims are often maimed, beaten, starved;

- The victims suffer post-trauma stress; the memory of the traumatic experiences comes again and again, insistently, they have nightmares and they panic, are irritable and also have other symptoms of stress;

- The victims suffers nervous breakdowns, sometimes with permanent effects;

- The victims may suffer physical diseases, such skin disease, headaches, spine aches etc.

Emotional effects:

- The victims lose trust in the adult people and acquire anti-social behaviour;

- The victims have difficulties in their relations with other people, with their family, or work fellows included;

- The victims lose trust in self and have a bad image of the self, considering themselves useful and of no value;

- The victims may turn aggressive and nervous with the people around;

- The victims may develop relations of dependence on their abusers;

- The victims are fearful and tensed;

- The victims are afraid they will never be able to lead a normal life again;

- The victims are afraid the members of their family and community will find out what has happened to them and this is why they are afraid to return home;

- The victims lose the ability to focus;

All the children who have been exploited sexually will experience some kind of physical or psychical sufferance. Usually, the longer the exploitation, the more numerous will be the health problems. For some children the long-term devastating effects may take a very short time to appear if they get AIDS.

The children involved in trafficking with the purpose of exploitation by work and/or sexual exploitation are confronted with major physical and psychical risks. The physical consequences may be the result of physical abuse (repeated beatings, torture), of inappropriate feeding (malnutrition or unhealthy feeding), of the lack of dwelling, of risky sexual behaviour (higher risk of HIV/AIDS, BTS, hepatitis), of the lack of medical care, repeated illness. Consequently, the traffic is a phenomenon

which affects the physical development of a child both in the shirt-term, such as diseases, and on the long-term, by the development of chronic diseases.

We are speaking of the **trafficked children as of a social unit, because we can say that these children, within the residential system of psycho-social recovery form a special social group, which develop their own systems of organisation and own social rules due to their life history**. Generally, the life of children is organised and determined by the school, group of friends and preferred playgrounds, affiliation to religion, ethnic group, economic situation and social status of the parents etc. The **trafficked children, however, develop atypical systems of organisation and special social rules**, just to be able to survive.

As we well know, according to the sociological rule, the social unit "*designates any human group, collectivity or community, association, organisation or social institutions*" (Zamfir, C.; Vlăsceanu, L., 1998, p. 645). The social unit „*is characterised by a structure of relations between its members and has specific forms of manifestation either at the level of community life, either at the level of the economic, social, political, cultural etc. activity; all these become "object of study for sociology, as elements composing the social life, parts forming the social, investigating their genesis, their structure and way of existence, their influences within the society*" (Zamfir, C.; Vlăsceanu, L., 1998, p. 646).

In turn, the social group is the "assembly of persons characterised by a specific structure and with a specific culture which result from the psycho-social relations developed within it" (Zamfir, C.; Vlăsceanu, L., 1998, p. 269). The children victims of human trafficking are generally deprived of the parental care, they come from families with precarious socio-economic status, their development is not harmonious, most times their interaction with the groups of peers is not positive, which is why they are much more vulnerable to the risk of being victimised and they try to integrate into other social groups where they may not feel discriminated. Child socialisation starts in the early years of life and continues throughout their life; however, even though "it is a global social process, it is accomplished within the framework of groups" (Mihăilescu, I., 2003, p.87) which most times may have a positive form, but in the case of these children we mostly notice a negative form of socialization.

The successful reintegration in society of the child victim of human trafficking may be accomplished only by understanding the characteristics of the childhood and by placing the interventions within a local cultural context. The interventions of rehabilitation, led by the social assistants, are much more efficient if they recognise, strengthen and encourage the natural process of recovery of the child. The restating of individuality and power to be active within the society refer to the development through flexible interventions based on the acknowledgement of child abilities and by asserting the inherent values and of the respect as human beings. The interventions

must be adequate to the cultural situation in which the victim thinks, communicates and looks for meanings of his/her recovery. The integration of the indigenous knowledge and practices in counselling and assistance acknowledges behaviours, social relations, patterns of communication and healing options which are of great value during the process of rehabilitation and social reintegration of the child returned from trafficking.

Most children who were the **victims of repeated experiences of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse, have a high risk of falling again as victims**. The most important factor of maintenance of the risk of re-victimization has been identified as the **dysfunction in the perception of the risk situations**. A child who was victim of trafficking for sexual exploitation run a higher risk to be involved subsequently in illicit working such as drug smuggling also because of underestimating cognitively the risk situations.

Irrespective of the reasons why they get involved in a trafficking chain, the children suffer the same adverse effects like the adult people and, besides this, they lose their childhood. They are beaten, tortured and even killed. They end up getting involved in illegal activities. They are sexually abused, infested with sexually-transmitted diseases, the girls get pregnant, they get infected with HIV/AIDS; all this has long-term adverse effects on their health state and life expectancy. They may lose independence, self-respect and capacity to live a normal life of adult people. They may suffer depressions and may become drug addicts. They may suffer the syndrome of post-trauma stress, becoming withdrawn and less communicative. When returning home, they may be stigmatised by the family and community. If they survive, but are not saved and supported in time, they are likely to become abusers in turn when they become adult people, recruiting more victims for their "bosses" or even establishing their own systems of exploitation. The trafficked child lacks the security of a stable environment. The frequent move from one place to another, the lack of a stable dwelling, of a stable social environment doesn't allow the child to develop a personal network of support (can't make stable friends, for instance) which to give him/her the feeling of control and safety. A child may also be submitted to the negative restrictions of the other people, to marginalization, stigmatisation and labelling ("beggar"). Both the lack of a stable environment, and the reactions of the other people create confusion on the formation of own identity. Understanding the risks is limited by the age and by the level of comprehension. This is problematic because a child may persist in a traumatic situation without being aware of the risks and negative consequences, attempting to "normalize" the event. For instance, the children who were forced to prostitution by their parents perceive the behaviour of their parents as one of "love and care". This increases the vulnerability of the children to the formation of negative perceptions and representations about life, which increase the risk of falling victims again.

All this and several other factors which, in any combination, make the children vulnerable to trafficking, the age category (children aged 10 to 17), are arguments showing another context in which the children are a social unit, a special social group.

An efficient prevention of human trafficking presumes a better understanding of the phenomenon in the countries of origin. The strategies in this field include evaluations in the areas with a higher incidence of the phenomenon, contacts with the nongovernmental organisations and the development of regional plans of action. The process of reintegration presumes unconditional efforts from the doctors, lawyers, social assistants, sociologists and from the members of a network of communities such as the teachers, civil protection organs, hospitals and local clinics, administrative-political leaders.

Another way of improving the prevention of human trafficking is to help the vulnerable populations from the countries of origin understand the situation in which they are in relation with the labour market and with other social and economic factors.

The sexual and commercial exploitation of the children from Romania is not a new subject or a subject foreign from the preoccupations of the nongovernmental organisations and governmental institutions, because it preserves its actuality even if the Romanian state, through the agencies empowered to promote and observe the right of the child, ratified the international instruments, elaborated strategies and plans of action to curb and prevent human trafficking.

The international effort of Romania vary from the small projects of purchase of equipment to the large programs spanning on several years, with costs of million euro for the development of a comprehensive regional and national strategy to control the most serious forms of children exploitation by forced work.

The types of assistance with impact on human trafficking include: alternative economic programs for the vulnerable groups; educational programs; training the governmental officials and the medical staff; anticorruption measures; development or improvement of the anti-trafficking laws; supply the necessary equipment for law enforcement; establishment or restoration of the shelters, of the anti-crisis centres or of the safe houses for victims; support provided by the nongovernmental organisations, international organisations and governments for psychological, legal and medical assistance of the victims.

Other prevention means that can be taken into consideration are the public-private partnerships for the integration of the risk populations within the community and within the labour force. The collaboration with other countries must be intensified with the purpose to gather information reflecting more accurate the reality in terms of the

trends, number of victims, legal suits and convictions. The **measures and mechanisms preventing the reoccurrence of victimization** must be part of a standard strategy for the reduction of the risk factors favouring children trafficking and re-trafficking.

The ideal way to control human trafficking is to prevent the people from becoming victims. The conceptual and methodological delimitations, beyond their theoretical value, offer the opportunity of an adequate understanding of the reality of **human trafficking, of children particularly, in Romania**, of its trends of evolution; they also allow identifying the causes and conditions determining this phenomenon and they also allow prefiguring solutions and measures for gradual prevention and decrease.

The discussion and analysis of these risk situations/contexts and the exercise of the correct estimation of some causes and consequences are objectives and measures that can be analysed by the clinical sociology, focusing on the prevention component in order to identify the protective factors which decrease the risk of getting the child involved in other situations of exploitation. The prevention of risk behaviours at the individual and family level by enforcing quality standards of the social protection will decrease the risk for the reoccurrence of victimization states among the children. The prevention of reoccurrence of victimization states is a considerable challenge within the context of Romania.

The **clinical sociology** and the clinician sociologists have a role to play within this context, forming a working method which is sufficiently adequate for the intervention on the trafficked children seen as social unit and social group having particular systems of organisation and particular rules of surviving within a special social and cultural context. Clinical sociology is a multidisciplinary field of science because the major paradigms (the humanist paradigm, the cognitive-behavioural paradigm, the psycho-dynamic paradigm) fundamenting the strategies and techniques of social recovery of the trafficked children can be found as working method of it. The clinical sociology became a distinct orientation within the sociology of the social problems, proposing three main objectives (Wirth, L., 1931):

a. The „clinical" analysis of a collective stat with critical character, materialized in a „diagnosis" formulated be experts, who consider this state as a problematic aspect of the social life;

b. Investigation of the causes and states which determine this state, evaluation of the public opinions, of the existing social policies and practices for its improvement and eradication;

c. The activity of practical intervention by the development of operational solutions.

The clinical sociology involves the use of an analytical perspective (clinical-operational interpretation) in most problematic areas of the social life, among which the collective incidence of diseases, the state of delinquency, the "third age" (old age), divorces, abortions, abandoned children, and children submitted to bad treatments etc.

What distinguishes the activity of the clinician from that of other professionals working in the field of social assistance of policy is the use, with priority, of the participating observation; the consequence of this approach is the adoption of an intrinsic perspective on the social problematic, identifiable with the point of view of the involved populations or groups.

Overall, the diagnosis evaluations used by the clinical sociology join the theory of systems with the orientations of the phenomenological sociology, considering the social problem as a life situation lived in a dramatic manner by the participants, whose causes can be only identified from the perspective of an integral, systemic and functional approach which associates related problematic aspects. For this reason, the theoretical interpretations in this field have an eclectic character, being result of the conceptual loans and transfers from other theoretical disciplines and orientations: for instance, the theory of the conflict and behaviourism, the symbolic interactionism and the structural functionalism, the ethno-methodology and the theory of systems.

The main contributions of the clinical sociology to solving or improving the social problems are as following (Zamfir, C.; Vlăsceanu, L., 1998, p. 567):

a. Theoretical analysis – elaboration of a complex and integral evaluation of the problem on the basis of synthetizing the main theoretical models existing in the disciplines covering the studied field (psychology, sociology, demography, medicine, criminology etc.);

b. Applied research – acquiring data and information on the studied population, investigation of its opinions and the opinions of the experts regarding the different ways of solving the problem; confronting these opinions with the efficacy of the official social policy measures, inventory of the social assistance measures etc.;

c. Operational intervention by actual support to the individuals or groups to change their life situation.

The main technique used by the clinical sociology is the case study; however, the use of the systemic perspective expands the analysis and practical intervention to the level of entire groups, organisations of local communities.

The basic role of the clinical sociology actually is to start an adequate activity of intervention, before the effects of some social problems affect the entire community, and this action takes place on the basis of a decision elaborated by confronting the objective conditions which generate the problematic social state with its way of perception by the involved population. As Jonathan Freedman said, "the clinician sociologist tries to understand the nature of the societal factors which prevent the individual or the collectivities to activate in an efficient manner"; to this purpose, he "has to be able to go beyond the way in which the client formulates the problem, in order to take into consideration the social trends with a broader character" (Wirth, L., 1931).

The critical analysis of the methods used to evaluate the risks of reoccurrence of victimization using the clinical sociology may lead to the development/elaboration of quality standards for the social protection in the field of human trafficking which to provide actual assistance and social support to the victims; transparent and responsible practices of professional assistance must be developed and maintained, and the social assistants must be aided and supported in their difficult undertaking.

From the multitude of interventions which characterise the cases of human trafficking one can observe that the working instruments used for the social protection of the child prove to be most times maladapted to the situation of the child and unintegrated in the quotidian context of the past trauma. Hence, the necessity to approach the children victims of trafficking as a social unity. Within this context, the scientific analysis by the elaboration and adoption of optimal quality standards to be used as scientific tools adequate to the situation of the trafficked children and of the Romanian population will standardise the interventions and will generate a distinct approach, characteristic to these social groups.

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STRENGTHENING TIES BETWEEN SOCIAL CAPITAL, SOCIAL MOVEMENT AND POLITICAL CULTURE. AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN COUNTRIES WITH RECENT REGIME CHANGE

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Abstract: *This article attempts to analyze the connection between civic engagement and social capital, within the domain of social movements. Often left behind by the majority of key theoreticians of social movements, the notion of social capital brings to light the essential influence of the past, when talking about patterns of social engagement. Taking a certain distance of Diani's (1997) indication that social capital is an outcome of movement activity, this paper argues that different levels of civic engagement in similar societies can be explained by an analysis of the existing stock of social capital in these societies. In order to demonstrate the relationship between social capital, political culture and the activity of social movements, an integrative approach is proposed: by synthesizing these concepts a comprehensive scheme for social movement research will be developed, better adjusted to the environment of movements in countries with recent transition background. Three major aspects of the concept of social capital (networks, norms, generalized trust) appear to be facilitating factors for social mobilization and subsequently for movement activities. Even though cultural aspects are partially included in social movements research – cultural features within the opportunity-structures as well as in the framing school – its influence appears to be slightly underestimated. In the first two parts of the article crucial aspects of conceptions of social movements and social capital are reviewed. They are meant to prepare the path for the third part, in which our integrative approach is developed.*

Key words: social movements, social capital, political culture

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I. Classical theoretical approaches of Social Movements

One of the most quoted definitions of *social movements* describes them as informal networks, based on solidarity and a shared collective identity, that mobilize along social cleavages and that often make use of protest (cf. Della Porta/ Diani 1999: 20ff.). Social movements shouldn't be seen as organizations, but rather as "mobilized network (s) of networks" ["mobilisierte Netzwerke von Netzwerken"] (Neidhardt 1985: 193). As an opening point of our discussion, in this section, we will try to familiarize the reader with three basic concepts in the study of social movements – *opportunity structures, framing* and *resource mobilization* – and emphasize their interrelation.

To underline the importance of the first concept – *the opportunity structures* –, we find it useful to recall Giddens' 'duality of structures', who depicts structures not just as limiting action, but also as enabling it (Giddens 1984: 25ff.). The core idea behind the opportunity structures model is that movements are always acting within the societal environment, setting the general framework of action and influencing possibilities for collective action in a positive or negative manner. Originally, opportunity structures were understood, by the scientific community, in a purely political manner. These 'Political Opportunity Structures' (POS) defined the degree to which groups were able to gain access to power and to influence political decision making (cf. McAdam 1996: 23). Nowadays, a cultural dimension was added to the opportunity structures concept. Therefore we distinguish between the POS relating to the political system, and the 'cultural opportunity structures' (COS) focusing of on the cultural climate. Considering that the major dimensions of the POS are access to political institutions, elite alignments and the capacity and the will of authorities to use repression (tightening/ easing of repression), the COS focuses on the aggravation of a value-practice contradiction, suddenly imposed grievances and the dramatization of a system's vulnerability or illegitimacy (cf. McAdam 1996: 27).

Whereas opportunity structures mainly describe the environment of movements, playing an essential role in the appearance of movements, the second concept – *framing* – focuses on symbolic dimensions of action. Frames, in the sense of Goffman (Goffman 1974), define schemes of perception, localization and interpretation. The process of *framing* underlines the importance of the attribution of meaning as a basis for social action. Seeking to mobilize individuals, social movements construct frames – usually transmitted by (mass) media – therefore it has to be taken into account that the constructed frames are in coherence with the target group. Furthermore, cultural backgrounds provide the tools for the construction of frames. Movements need resources in order to be capable of strategic actions and it is the task of their entrepreneurs to obtain such resources.
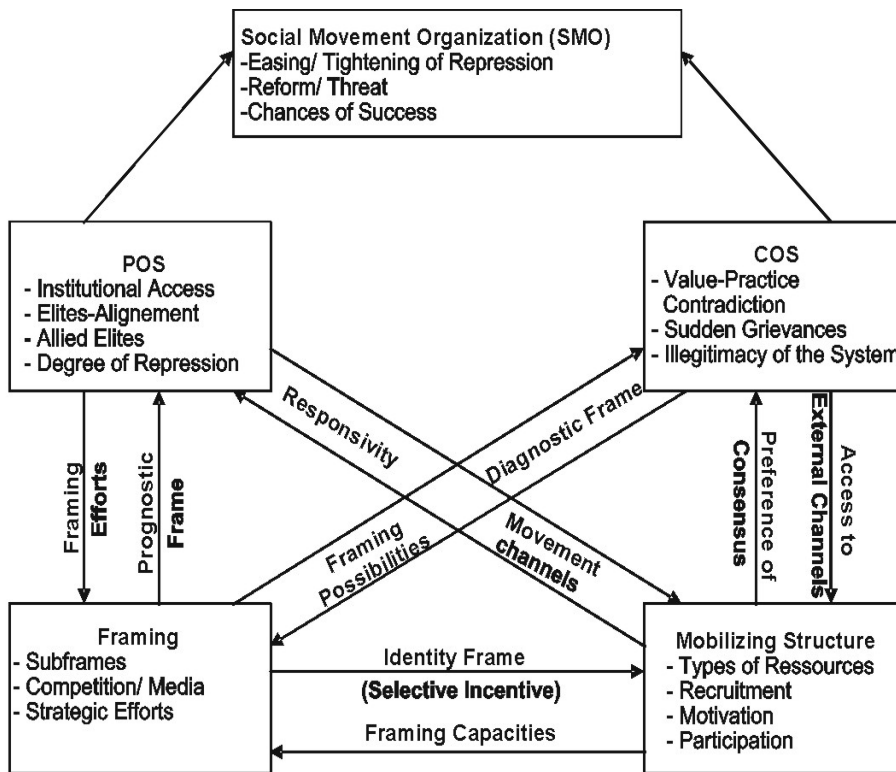
The *resource mobilization* approach underlines the rational components of social

movements and, therefore, the importance of movement entrepreneurs and organizational structures. The most important resources possessed by movements are participants, their time, followed by technology, money, access to information, as well as reputation or authority. Such resources are acquired via *mobilization structures* – collective means through which people are mobilized and participate in collective action (cf. McAdam/ McCarthy/ Zald 1996: 3ff.). In order to attract participants, movements offer collective incentives – the estimation that one's participation contributes to achieve a common goal –, as well as selective incentives, useful for the concerned participant (Klandermans 1997: 77). However, one should take into consideration that, as Pierru notes, everything can be converted into resources, and therefore necessary resources can also be produced during the course of action (Pierru 2010: 36ff.).

Opportunity structures, frames and resource mobilization – interconnectivity and dynamics

If, until now, we presented these three concepts as isolated parts, we will now focus on their interrelation. The distinction between POS and COS appears to be a mere analytical one. While the first one underlines material aspects, the latter one focuses on symbolic features. In our understanding, movements are not acting on the basis of 'objective' opportunity structures, but on the basis of motivational correlates: the couple 'Easening/Tightening of Repression' describes the *estimated* costs of collective action, whereas the couple 'Reform/Threat' describes the *expected* movement-external development without any intervention of the movement itself. However, it is highly plausible that the chances of success are already included in these two calculations (cf. Kriesi/ Koopmans/ Duyvendak/ Giugni 1997: 52). The POS determine the framing efforts, whereas the COS determine the framing possibilities of the movement. They both have to be framed themselves, in order to create a proper environment for their use (cf. Gamson/ Meyer 1996: 283), processes taking place via prognostic frames for the POS and via diagnostic frames for the COS. Additionally, mobilizing structures depend heavily on framing, especially on the identity frame, since they can only mobilize actors who were already informed and in favour of the movement's ends. On the other hand, the framing capacity depends on the resources available and its success on the mobilizing structures. Resource mobilization is influenced by the COS, since they facilitate or hamper the access to external mobilizing channels (cf. McCarthy 1996: 150). Mobilizing structures affect the perception of the COS. At this stage, the POS also impact on intra-movement channels, whereas the latter effects the POS by demands for responsiveness.

A. Interdependence of the SMT's Main Concepts


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                    ┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
                    │ Social Movement Organization (SMO)   │
                    │ -Easing/ Tightening of Repression    │
                    │ -Reform/ Threat                      │
                    │ -Chances of Success                  │
                    └─────────────────────────────────────┘

┌───────────────────────┐                         ┌───────────────────────────┐
│ POS                   │                         │ COS                       │
│ - Institutional Access│                         │ - Value-Practice          │
│ - Elites-Alignement   │                         │   Contradiction           │
│ - Allied Elites       │                         │ - Sudden Grievances       │
│ - Degree of Repression│                         │ - Illegitimacy of the     │
│                       │                         │   System                  │
└───────────────────────┘                         └───────────────────────────┘
     Framing Efforts    Responsivity   Diagnostic Frame   Preference of   Access to
     Prognostic Frame   Framing        Movement           Consensus       External
                        Possibilities  channels                           Channels

┌───────────────────────┐                         ┌───────────────────────────┐
│ Framing               │   Identity Frame        │ Mobilizing Structure      │
│ - Subframes           │  (Selective Incentive)  │ - Types of Ressources     │
│ - Competition/ Media  │                         │ - Recruitment             │
│ - Strategic Efforts   │   Framing Capacities    │ - Motivation              │
│                       │                         │ - Participation           │
└───────────────────────┘                         └───────────────────────────┘
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II. *Networks, Norms and Trust – pillars of the Social Capital approach*

With the notion *social capital* we refer to political, as well as non-political nexus within the society, subsequent to Putnam's conception. It is important to underline the distinction to *civil society* – which refers to an element of the political system (informal political actors) – because of a widespread tendency to use the two concepts indiscriminately, undermining their analytic potential (cf. Howard, 2003, 41f.). Following Putnam, we understand by *social capital* "features of social life – networks, norms and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared goals" (Putnam, 1993, p. 664). Contrary to *civil society*, focussing mainly on organizations, *social capital* concerns participation in general, and, as he

points out, "makes us smarter, healthier, richer and better able to govern a just and stable democracy" (Putnam, 2000, p. 290). Using the core ideas of Putnam's conception seems to offer us the arguments we need to prove the interrelation between mobilization and social capital.

According to Putnam, *Networks*, *Norms* and *Trust* are the three pillars of social capital. By *networks* he comprehends a variety of joint associations – ranging from neighbourhood associations to sports clubs, etc. – which appear to be the essential form of social capital: „The denser such networks in a community, the more likely that its citizens will be able to cooperate for mutual benefit" (Putnam, 1993, p. 173). They raise the costs of non-cooperation, cultivate norms of social reciprocity, facilitate communication and, subsequently, rectify the trustworthiness of individuals and furnish models for future joint action. *Norms*, and especially norms of reciprocity, diminish transaction costs and facilitate cooperation. *Trust,* an emergent feature of social systems as well as a personal attribute, enables agents to achieve aims that would not be reached in the case of its absence. Seen as necessary for a functional democracy, trust is produced in the course of collective action. While social trust, in Putnam's understanding, is a result of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement, it is also a cause for more joint activities and compliance to norms (Ibid, p. 171). If social capital helps to create a "vibrant and virtuous community where people know their neighbours, join together in voluntary associations, give of themselves, and omit themselves to moral codes", as Uslaner emphasizes (Uslaner, 1999, p. 121), the existing stock of social capital should be seen as well, in our understanding, as a result of these activities.

Concurring factors in the manifestation of social capital

These three factors are strongly interrelated and self-reinforcing: „Stocks of social capital such as trust, norms and networks tend to be self-reinforcing and cumulative. Virtuous circles result in social equilibria with high levels of cooperation, trust, reciprocity, civic engagement and collective well-being" (Putnam, 1993, p. 171). All these forms of social capital are multiplied by its use and diminished by its non-use. In its logical conception, Putnam combines structural and cultural components, the first one represented by networks, the latter one by trust and norms (Kunz, 2006: 335).

The high relevance of social capital as a prerequisite for a functioning democracy is underscored by numerous scholars. This notion is substantiated by publications on social capital and recent regime changes. Studies show that countries with a recent transition from authoritarian rule have lower indicators of social capital than longer established, stable and prosperous democracies. Paldam/ Svendsen's statement,

that dictatorships destroys social capital, has become a dictum in the discipline (Paldam/ Svendsen, 2001). In order to explain the significance of social capital for social movements we will direct our interest to two major lines of argumentation in this field of study. The first one points to the effects of the economy of scarcity, leading to black market and grey networks. Those networks will stay functional after regime change and operate according to methods they were familiar with. The effect of these networks is often called 'negative social capital' (Rose, 1999). Another negative effect of the pre-democratic system on the existence of social capital in the post-autocratic period is the lack of time of individuals busy with the humdrum of everyday life, as a consequence of the economic situation (di Palma, 1991). The second argumentation is mainly focussed towards a general mistrust to voluntary association after the experience with communist mass-organizations (Howard, 2003, 105ff.). Of course, this is a mere analytical distinction and the above-mentioned aspects are more or less included in all studies to the topic. The general tendency is to ascribe a lack of generalized trust to post-authoritarian regimes, mainly because networks under authoritarian rule produced a strong *Binnenmoral* and hampered the emergence of an *Aussenmoral,* in the sense of Weber.

III. Social Capital, Political Culture and Social Movements – an integrative model

Although the three major schools on social movements, mentioned above, are well established and hold a significant share of current research, the field is strongly accessible to new ideas and methodological approaches (Klandermans/ Staggenborg, 2002). We argue that social capital impacts particularly strong on aspects summed up under the topic resource mobilization, and it appears to be reasonable to include its variables in an analysis of social movements, especially in countries with recent transition background. The two approaches – social movement theory and social capital – have different temporal localizations: whereas the first one analyzes the actual situation, the latter one takes into account historical developments. In countries with recent transition background the latter one should not be ignored. Social capital appears to have a strong impact on internal organization. Taking into consideration the primary effects of social capital – the facilitation of cooperation for mutual benefits – the next logical step would be to assume that social movements, as mobilized "networks of networks", function more easily as a bigger stock of social capital is existent. Social capital scholars argue that trust is produced in horizontal associations, which is, although we will find movement entrepreneurs and leaders, a basic structural principle of social movements.

B. An integrative approache to social Movements
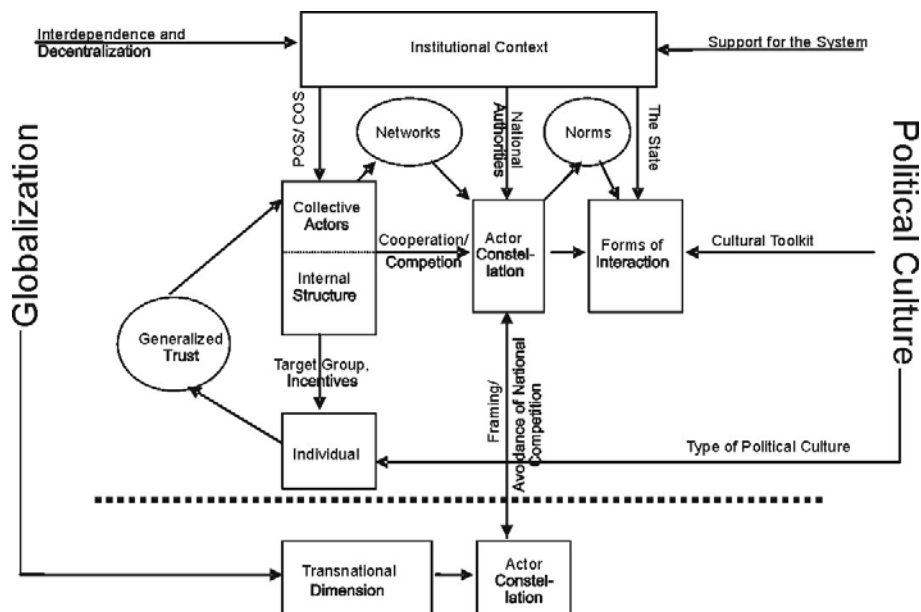
Furthermore, social capital diminishes the transaction costs and facilitates communication not only within the movement, but with its environment as well. The access to movement-external mobilization channels is eased. In times of growing intersection of social circles in the sense of Simmel, individuals oftentimes participate in more than one movement, usually similar ones, sometimes even movements with a different agenda. This does not only produce trust, as we know from the social capital conception, but it also requires trust, to enter new environments. It is less likely to participate in social mobilization, *a fortiori* as the mobilization aims at a common good, if either *little generalized trust* or a strong *binnenmoral* stemming from negative social capital is existent. If we agree that social capital can be a means to overcome the *problem of collective action* in the sense of Olson (cf. Peters 2001: 164), it strongly facilitates internal resource mobilization, and it might reduce the free-rider problem. Norms of reciprocity appear to ease resource mobilization as well, not just within the movement itself but, once more, also in regard to the movement's environment. They also impact on the framing process – since frames must be in coherence with the targeted group – and, finally, on the forms of interaction. Hence, social capital has a strong influence on resource mobilization, especially in easing the access to prospect participants and movement-external channels.

The institutional context, captured best by the opportunity school, shall not be understood as a structuring structure determining practices and manifestations of the concerned actors, but more as an external condition, setting the general framework of action via external conditioning of self-control in the sense of Luhmann. As pointed out earlier, movements are not acting on the basis of existing *objective structures* but rather on *perceptions* and results of *social interaction*. Structures are not rigid but subject to change; they react to demands for responsiveness, whereas powerholders, involved in the alignment process of structures, follow the "rule of anticipated reaction" (Friedrich, 1963: 203ff.). In recent history the national institutional context was deeply influenced by the growing mutual interpenetration of societies and, hence, their interdependence (Keohane/ Nye 1992), reshaping the very forms of the state itself (cf. Castells, 2004: 303ff.). Moreover, the environment in which social movements act is restructured accordingly.

Political culture, as the link between micro- and macro-political structures, has also an influence on the institutional context. The relationship between the political community and the political regime via inputs and outputs and subsequently the emitted support (Easton 1965/ 1975) shape the scope of action of political powerholders as well as the room for manoeuvre of social movements. People's attitudes towards the political system influence social mobilization. So does their assessment of the political systems in terms of efficiency and legitimacy (Lipset, 1959). For mobilization purposes, movement entrepreneurs have to choose symbols and strategies in accordance to their cultural environment (cf. Tarrow, 1998: 109). Consequently, political culture impacts on the framing process as well. On the other hand, long practised forms of contention, types of conflict resolution used in the past, narrow or enrich entrepreneurs repertoire of action and influence the manner in which movements act in their environment, thus the forms of interaction. The psychological orientations of individuals towards the political system in the sense of Almond/ Verba determine individuals' propensity of getting involved in social mobilization.

Hence, political culture has a significant effect on opportunity structures – especially by shaping the institutional context –, on resource mobilization – by influencing citizens' disposition to become participants – and on framing, mainly by shaping the forms of interaction (interactions between movements and their opponents, interactions among movements, and interaction within the movement itself).

IV. Conclusion

This article demonstrated that norms of reciprocity, networks, and generalized trust have an impact on the activities of social movements, which shouldn't be left aside in the scientific work in this field. They are not just creating prosperous societies or just

"making democracy work", as advocates of social capital postulate. Generalized trust influences individual's decision to join associations as well as to participate in social mobilization; networks, especially cross-cutting horizontal ones, strongly influence resource mobilization and movements positioning within the movement field; and norms shape the forms of interaction. We suggested that political culture impacts on the institutional context, *ergo* on movements' opportunity structures; that it influences the propensity of individuals to participate; and that it structures the way conflicts or actions are carried out. As empirical research on political culture has a long history, introducing the analytical dimensions proposed above could be helpful for developing a research scheme that provides us a more comprehensive view on social movements. The newer conceptions of social capital pose bigger problems in regard to its implementation into the proposed integrative approach. By limiting the inquiry to the aforementioned aspects, this model, conceived as a multidimensional research design, could be useful to enrich the scientific discussion on the topic.

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