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CONTENT

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONDS
FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

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Abstract: *This article reviews the social inclusion issue and describes a differentiation between the two terms – social inclusion and social integration. Social integration refers to the social network of the individual and his membership within a group, and here the focus is on unemployment as one of more reasons to an impaired social integration. It is the base for the quality of life, health and length of life of the individual. Integration is now and then related to the terms of assimilation and segregation, this approach gives us a better understanding of social inclusion. Inclusion and integration is not the same, and what divides the two concepts is the part dealing with the individual in focus and its ability to participate. By solely focusing on inclusion in the integration process no attention is paid towards how the individual in action could or should participate in order to adjust itself adequately into social society. As the two concepts appear in a dualistic relationship, which makes it important to discuss both inclusion and integration when attention is drawn on how to solve the problems occurring in an integration process.*

Key words: *social inclusion, social integration, quality of life, individual, social network*

In order to clarify our context and our point of departure, we here state how the terms of integration and culture could be understood. Subsequently, some general guidelines as to the integration procedures will be represented. Here the focus will be on points that can promote as well as impede this procedure. It should be added that attention is primarily drawn to the integration and secondary to the term inclusion. Because the process of inclusion is inspired from the ideas founded in integration, the term integration is presented to create awareness about what inclusion contains and captures.

Inclusion and integration is not the same, and what divides the two concepts is the part dealing with the individual in focus and its ability participate. Also the concept of

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participation is of great importance. By solely focusing on inclusion in the integration process no attention is paid towards how the individual in action could or should participate in order to adjust itself adequately into social society. To capture the way in which the individual can participate in the process of integration, attention should be drawn to the concept of integration in order to make awareness of what comes to play when talking about integration. By this we do not say that one should chose either to use the concept of inclusion or the concept of integration – no. The two concepts appear in a dualistic relationship, which makes it important to discuss both inclusion and integration when attention is drawn on how to solve the problems occurring in an integration process.

Definition of the Term Integration

The term of integration is originally derived from Latin (integratio) and means "melting together", "fusion of some parts" or "connection of diversity to one whole, involvement into a greater whole". "In terms of social science, integration includes the social processes connecting individuals and groups in a superior whole". "Cultural integration is a matter of letting in ethnic minorities in the community, regarding habitation, policies and language". "Social integration refers to the social network of the individual and his membership within a group, and here the focus is on unemployment as one of more reasons to an impaired social integration. Studies made in the 1970's 1980's have proved that social integration is the base for the quality of life, health and length of life of the individual". Social integration relates to the network of the individual or inclusion in new networks. However, Mrs. Charlotte Hamburger, who has given her essential contribution to the public debate regarding integration, defines the term of integration as follows: *"The general term of integration refers to a situation, where the aim is to make two or more seeming units work together within the same «space»"*[1].

In order to have a better understanding of the term integration, we will have to observe the contexts, where this term is used and for what purpose it is used. Our context here is when we discuss the policies of integration, and here the basic meaning of this term is that people with another ethnic background than the national majority should give up parts of their own culture in favour of the national country culture[2]. And so we have made the choice to define the term of culture related to opinion formation, through which the behaviour of the individual as well as of other people can be expressed. This means that the term of culture is a pattern of adjustment and expression of the individual's and others' action. From a

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[1] Hamburger, Charlotte (1989), *Etnic minorities and social integration.*
[2] Hamburger, Charlotte (1989), *Assimilation or integration? Danish immigration policy and Turkish women.*

psychological point of view, the term of culture may as well be looked upon as a phenomenon defining how human beings are supposed to solve their problems, learn and adapt social skills. When the term of culture is used as a guideline, the term does not include anything controlling human behaviour. As we understand this term of culture, it includes a procedure that it might change over a certain period. The produce and reproduce of Culture and individual must be understood in a dialectic relationship affecting each other mutually. According to our understanding, we have chosen the following definition of the term of culture. *"Culture is a universal idea and the values, morality and real behaviour – as well as their material and immaterial products – taken over from the previous generation, and which people will try to pass over to the coming generation – maybe in a revised form – and which is different from people living in other cultures"* [1].

However, this term of integration is relative, due to the fact that the result when one culture should give up parts of its culture is not clearly defined; nor do we know the ideology behind such a policy. Here we understand ideology in the way that both the policy of assimilation as well as that of segregation could be included within this way of understanding the policy of integration. So it is very clear that the term of integration has been defined in a pluralistic way.

Integration is now and then related to the terms of assimilation and segregation. It is said that those 3 terms are all situated on the same line with the terms of assimilation and segregation as the two extremities and the term of inclusion almost in the middle of these two terms. The description of how the terms are supposed to be situated on a line mostly shows the attitude of how two or more ethnic minority groups should behave when meeting the culture of majority.

The question of how to define integration can be changed according to the context and to the circumstances existing in a given situation. In some cases integration is very much identical to assimilation, which basically means that a minority culture when meeting the majority culture in the host country should give up completely its own culture in favour of the majority culture. The word assimilation is derived from Latin (assimilare), and translated mean "to make similar".

In other cases, the policy of integration means a segregation which means a total separation from the majority culture, in order to preserve and maintain a development the culture of the minority without any influence of say the national majority culture. Integration or the question hereof will most likely never be quite identical to the policy of either assimilation or segregation. Segregation is also derived from Latin (segregare), and it means to separate".

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[1] Kapatschof, (2001), *Psyke & Logos,* copyrighted by Danish Psychological Publishing Firm, Vol. 22, p. 114.

In brief, it has to be mentioned that the policy of integration or the question as to integration first and foremost should try to balance between the policy of assimilation and segregation. Including the aim that the culture(s) purposing to be included in the culture of the majority are permitted to try to preserve some special features from its/their own culture; maybe they will have to give up other cultural features in order to include cultural features from the majority culture such as language, behaviour and values, in order to create a new culture in common with the existing culture of the majority, so the minority as well as the majority is preserving a lot of fundamental features, and at the same time both of them are developing in order to live in harmony with the surroundings, i.e. the common culture.[1]

Illustration

Integration/inclusion

Assimilation ←——————————————→ Segregation
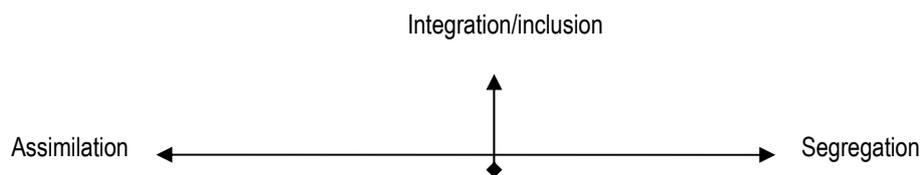
It could be necessary to make an illustration of what aspects are captured in the integration process. Because the terms mentioned above are related, "being situated on the same line", it would be appropriate to examine where and how they are identical and where and how they are not.

When considering the relation between the terms of integration and assimilation, it is essential to define the ideas of the community that are lying behind the improvement of the theories.

The fundamental idea behind the theory of integration is the idea of a multicultural community based on one culture in common. Where the policy is that the newcomers should keep their own cultural features under condition that the basic standards of the community are respected."[2]

As to the theory of assimilation, the aim is "to create a culturally homogeneous community by assimilating (absorbing) the ethnic and cultural minority groups in the culture of the majority"[3].

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[1] Horst, Christian (1988), *Integration and assimiliation*.
[2] Ibid 7.
[3] Ibid 7.

What seems to differentiate the theories is the question, whether the community should be composed culturally homogeneously or should be multiculturalism. Both have in common the fundamental idea that there should be a kind of cultural common features in a community ruled by some different cultures, before this community could be able to work, and both theories are based on a community with two or more cultures represented. Besides, they are founded on a theory of cultural ethnicity – with the main message that the culture is the one, "that constitutes ethnic differences, and conflicts between two or more ethnic groups are due to distinctions of the cultural understanding"[1]). Both theories try to avoid a segregation of the community, which is another common feature. Because for these theories segregation do not match their idea of how a community should consist. Related to the theories of inclusion and assimilation, the theory of segregation is mostly the proponent of a community composed by many groups without any cultural features in common.

What those theories in general have in common – including the theory of segregation – is the fact that they all agree on the principle of equality, which must be present and valid for all groups within the community. But the difference derives from a disagreement on the idea, whether there should be an aim of equality between all individuals and groups within the community.

Apart from the fact that segregation wants to preserve the ethnic groups – just like the policy of integration which should like the minority group try to preserve some of its specific features - "*segregation implies the lowest possible level of interaction between ethnic groups*"[2]. One could say sharply that a characteristic for the theories of segregation and integration is the fact that they are founded on the theory of pluralism, where the focus is on groups as entities within the community, as opposed to the theory of assimilation, where the focus lies on the individuals.

Integration processes

As our focus lies on inclusion, we will have to mention the inclusion processes running or supposed to run, and the starting point when practicing the policy of inclusion. As mentioned above, the starting point for the policy of inclusion is the idea of a community including two or more cultures, and therefore we should like to mention the factors to be worked with in order to promote the inclusion and to make clear the values in the starting point for the inclusion.

From a very simplistic point of view, there are three existing aspects to observe:

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[1] Hamburger, Charlotte (1989), *Assimilation or integration? Danish immigration policy and Turkish women*, p. 42.

[2] Hamburger, Charlotte (1997), *Etnich minorities and social integration*, Copenhagen.

- The ethnic groups of a community should be included within the majority community by means of positive special measures.

- Identities of the ethnic groups are controlled in a way in which a double inclusion might happen.

- There might be a multicultural development when creating the different policies within the community[1].

What the first point means, is the fact that in the policy of integration, the starting point is within a group and not only in individuals. That the newcomer primarily will be looked at as part of an ethnic group, with its own culture, that must be structured in smaller institutions, such as classes and faith.

A double integration means that at the same time when including the ethnic group as a whole from the majority culture, you must observe that the members within the ethnic group should be included in the group. If this does not happen, it might be very difficult for the single newcomer to be included in the majority community.

What is meant by multicultural development, is the idea of integrating officially representatives from the ethnic groups in the community, in order to make sure that within the political decision-making process as to integration, consideration is taken as to the demands and meanings from the ethnic groups, to avoid that the majority culture is the only one to set the political agenda. The fundamental idea is based on equality, acceptance and justice towards the ethnic minorities in the decision-making process within the majority community.

Summary
- Integration is an idea, which has been pluralistically defined.

- Questions concerning integration will mainly be placed between the idea of assimilation and segregation.

- The fundamental idea for the policy of integration is a community with two or more cultures.

- The basic idea in the theory of integration is the idea of a multicultural community based on a common culture.

What should be called attention to?

When defining the term of integration we touched aspects concerning the integration process, as well as knowledge, which is useful when trying to understand the

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[1] Hamburger, Charlotte (1989), *Assimilation or integration? Danish immigration policy and Turkish women*, p. 42.

perspectives one is dealing with as a promoter of initiatives in order to encourage an inclusion.

When an inclusion really has to happen, it is very important to be aware of the game running dialectically when producing and reproducing the individual and the community. Different perspectives are running based on the partners' premises and conditions to act and their intention when acting. The awareness hereof must be present; otherwise the best way of inclusion could be simplified. In order to avoid this simplifying we will have to include the way in which the participating individuals are acting or could act in order to be included. Here, the schools are important. The starting point for all these institutions will be the individuals they are working with – instead of regarding the students as one whole group. And this procedure is important in order to try to understand the procedures and acts that should and could be useful in order to include people with another ethnic background.

If this happens, the interest in premises and conditions for newcomers will increase; when these newcomers are going to be included in say the national community, and how these premises and conditions might match each other. Besides of that, the educational institutions could give their contribution in teaching newcomers the democratic tools and democratic processes in the national community.

Critical point

When discussing inclusion, many conflicts of inclusion might occur as a consequence of non-existing understanding and knowledge for either the minority or the majority, for their ways of acting, which could be viewed upon as cultural diversities.

The subject of inclusion will very fast be a subject of differences between the minority groups and the majority group. Instead of being treated separately, the differences could be looked upon as objective differences, such as a ban on serving Halal meat or scarves etc. This means that the real problem will not be touched, namely the idea of what is culture and what is the original culture. The ideal would be to create a common knowledge hereof, which could be communicated through the educational institutions.

The idea of culture is oriented by a group and not by an individual; however, if social inclusion should be promoted, you must draw more attention to the individual. Because one way of promoting an optimal inclusion is to include the premises and the conditions of the individuals involved. The purpose of the social inclusion must be to train newcomers in the idea of a democracy, in order to make them participate and give them an influence in the community they are supposed to be a part of in the inclusion process. If this happens, the focus will go from culture to politics. The problem is, that if this does not happen, the result could be that "they" will not have an optimal influence on their participation in the community they "now" are going to be a part of. So when teaching it is important not to focus on culture. Instead, you will

have to include the fixed place of the individual, his premises and conditions for acting, in order to understand what can promote the social inclusion.

Relation to practice

What is 'The best practice' within this area cannot be generalized; it relates to the situation in focus, because practice has been made by human interaction, which is determinant and normative for the expression of 'the best practice'. Hereby 'The best practice' is defined in the way of how the involved partners meet with and live out inclusion in the best way. In order to find out what 'The best practice' involves, you will have to draw the attention and raise the consciousness of the operators within the inclusion area; these operators will have to be conscious about the actions, premises and conditions existing within this area, in order to promote the social inclusion through learning efforts. If this does not happen, newcomers in say Denmark, for example, do not know for sure, what they will have to do in order to get included and how they are supposed to act when facing inclusion. In order to establish a successful inclusion, a certain degree of transparency is necessary in the actions used by the community to promote the inclusion of the newcomers in the Danish community. What is very essential is that all the operators in charge with actions needed to promote inclusion are team players and that they agree upon what is inclusion, and upon which actions can be useful to make inclusion happen.

Psychological perspective

Individual acting in practice

Viewed from a psychological perspective when an individual is in the process of integration, integration could be discussed in relation to the dimensions of normality versus marginality. Marginality indicates an unequal relation of power status. Being marginalized means outside normality. In this perspective integration can refer to a command to assimilate and integration means in this connection to become part of majority/within the normality. Idealistically, integration refers to a mutual adjustment between the 'normality' (the majority) and the marginality (the minority). However there is a risk that the endeavours of integration could result in a form of normalizing the individuals being marginalized. The bias of the dominating norms can lead to a bias of normalization in the discussion of integration. So it could mean that integration is being arranged with a bias focusing on the norms of the majority – so to speak.

Integration can also be seen as a process aiming at changing an involuntarily marginalized position into a position of participation and influence on the person's own existence. If this is the case, integration becomes an offer. This presumes however that the process involves and is approved by the one in action. On the other

hand, the endeavours of normalization are in a form of a command containing a compulsory and probably undesirable process, which is conducted under the premises of the majority in the society. This happens without implication or consideration of the individual being integrated. No matter how the process of integration is being described, the individual trying to become integrated is challenged if the majority does not reconfirm the individual's hopes and expectations for the integration. Idealistically - to *be integrated* means that the individual feels and experiences that it is 'being a part of', while at the same time, accepts to be 'different from' the surroundings. Thus the individual constitutes its own personal coherent way of living. The process of integration is risky. The individual can experience a loss of the primary frame of reference like family and friends, which could threaten the person's self-image and thereby influence the individual's social relations. In worst case this indicates that the retaining or constitution of a positive and harmonious self-image of being in a process of integration is being complicated.[1]

The phenomenon of recognition

In the search of recognizable directions the individual is widely challenged in its participation in the new culture, which can influence its self-image. While participating in a new culture the individual gains access to an experience of itself in a qualitatively and new different way compared to before. This can lead the individual to question the new culture as well as the culture of origin. The process is not without complexity. Old norms, values and rituals are expected to undergo/suffer change while new ones arise. This means that the individual by interfering and participating in the society is a co-creator of its own living conditions, where norms and values are expressed in special motives, thoughts and feelings. The individuals' actions are determined by as well subjective as objective conditions, which both can increase and decrease its possibilities to act. In this perspective the context meaning the specific society in which the individual participates, becomes a constitutive factor, which can restrict or facilitate the individual.

Constitution

The society in which the individual participates in is a part of and the individual itself, constitute each another. A dialectic relationship is in action between the constitution of society and of the individual itself. The specific developing way of society influences the way in which the individual participates and develops in society. At the same time the individual influences the way in which the society develops by participating in the society. Theoretically this is how the interaction occurs. However mutual constitution does not always take place between the individual and society.

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[1] Arenas, Julio G. (1997), *Intercultural psychology*, Hans Reitzels Publishing A/S.

Attention on the interests and needs of society tends to push the position and needs of the individual away to the advantage of society. Solely the individual itself cannot implement changes of this premise. Alone the individual can either be assimilated or segregated away from the society, meaning not taking an active part in a way in which the society develops. The way in which the individual is responded to by the society, has a constitutive influence on how the individual experiences it. When the individual meets with other individuals, the individual is confronted with differences - "what it is not" - and hereby constitutes a new self-image. The identification of the individual is being constituted through the meeting with 'external' or this 'the other'. The individual defines and realizes through the identification what it recognizes as familiar. But why is necessary for the individual to identify with a greater context? From an existentialistic stand the individual has a quest for meaning in life and needs a frame of reference to navigate in the society/contexts it is participating in. The culture and the communities in which the individual interacts compose an essential frame of reference. However individuals meeting new cultures can have difficulties finding their way as the new culture can appear strange and impenetrable.

Thus in process of meeting with the new culture the individual can become aware of its frame of reference. But until the individual has gained some awareness of its frame of reference, it can act restrictive or assimilative in relation to the original culture and in the meeting with the new culture of majority. Consequently there is a risk of exclusion if the culture of majority does not respond with a pattern of acceptance but instead reacts with a pattern of rejection due to the way in which the individual acts or should act in order to be integrated. If the last scenario happens, an individual risks to experiencing isolation. An isolation which furthermore could be enhanced if the individual in particular does not obtain insight in and acceptance from its own group or culture which is eventual existing in the culture of majority. Here knowledge of the language of the majority culture becomes important because language tends to become a stepping-stone to obtain insight and understanding for and about new cultures.

Premise for action

For the individual to become integrated it is essential that the premise and the integration procedures are defined in a clear and obvious way. However, the individual can experience a conflict in the integration process if it has interests of action, which are different from the ones held by the society of majority and if the individuals are told to follow those rules of action of the majority. To get through such a conflict the individual must choose: should I 'put up with it' or should I 'make my way out of it'. However it is important that a given conflict is solved, otherwise a mutual understanding and integration by the individuals cannot take place.

Another obstacle to successful integration can stem from the individual's conscious or unconscious pursuit of its own interests in action. In this process the individual risks to experience a clash of interests in relation to other individuals. If the individual is unaware of this connection there can be a risk that the individual cannot understand the actions it takes part in and consequently looses its ability to navigate as it wishes. In order to avoid this lack of transparency the individual needs to acknowledge or to become conscious about the fact that the individual can intervene to change the way in which it should and can act to become successfully integrated - e.g. (but in a way this is another to be institutionalized, because in the process the individual undergoes a manipulated institutionalism – so to speak.)

If the individual does not possess this consciousness then the surroundings, the majority in which it participates, will dictate the way the individual should act. Lack of consciousness makes the integration process unclear. However this lack of transparency in the integration process can be lifted if the individual acknowledges that it can have an impact on its participation in the integration process. But the individual alone cannot affect how it participates. It cannot alone change conditions, this can only happen in inter-subjective relations with other individuals who are in the same situation as the individual it self. To act differently the individual is depending on how other individuals act, individuals having the same opinions and whishes to change the premise under which they participate.

Now what could motivate the individual into action, into participation in a way in which it should or could be integrated?

Consciousness and emotions are closely connected. A motivating factor for developing an enlarged consciousness about the individual's role in the integration process could be a conflict of interests in the settings in which the individual participates.

The conflict could arise because the individual pursues interests that are in contradiction with those of other individuals who are acting in the same setting. These individuals may belong to the same minority group or to the majority group.

A conflict can also arise as a consequence of the way in which the integration procedure is tried and exercised.

A contented individual is not motivated for changes and has no increased awareness of its action potentials. But if the individual experiences conflicts during the process of integration it will proceed to action. In the conflict situation the individual gets awareness of its own ability to act, an action potential that contains restrictive and expanding aspects. The expanding way to act usually appears in a situation of conflict. This is caused by the individual's dissatisfaction with the process of integration, its own actions included. However, in the search for how to change the premise of integration causing the conflict, the individual can fall into a trap. This

happens if the individual looks for answers on how the premise could be different in the surroundings instead of within itself. If this is the case, then the integration process can easily turn out impenetrable to the individual trying to get integrated.

Comments

When trying to promote inclusion by education you will have to draw the attention to the fact that it is critical to use a westernized model – like the one presented above – on people coming from so-called far-cultural countries, when they will have to be included in a western country. One danger in using this method is the risk of not catching all the slight differences and the reasons why people who are not the same ethnicity act as they do when meeting the specific community. A lot of misunderstandings can take place in the inclusion process, only due to the fact that the reflective and theoretical approach of the teacher or the inclusion does not match the experience of the individual who will have to be included. In order to avoid these misunderstandings, there ought to be collected facts from the newcomers' home countries. This would create a better understanding of their cultures and promote the understanding of how people coming from non-western countries could be included in the best way in say the specific community. So, promoting inclusion is a question of accumulating knowledge and facts in order to understand how to intervene.

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THE CONCEPT OF IMMIGRANT'S INTEGRATION
- A multidisciplinary approach -

*Radu MIRCEA**

Abstract: *The integration of immigrants is an increasingly complex problem. It is also increasingly delicate within the context of an enhanced migration within the current European space, which is why it is necessary to identify a valid explanative model. The understanding of the term of immigrant integration presumes understanding several closely interdependent concepts such as those of society, culture, social structure, immigrant, refugee, identity, as well as the relations between them. On the one hand, integration can be seen as ability and responsibility of the society, of the group or of the community to receive new members, while facilitating their adaptation to the new life style, while respecting their own life style. On the other hand, the integration can also be described as ability, individual this time, of the newcomers to adapt to the requirements imposed by the economic, social and cultural context of the host-society, while not being forced to give up their own life style. Thus, two approaches of the concept of integration are required, one sociologic and the other psychological. These two approaches are in a close interdependence, yet they are separate methodologically. Furthermore, adding to these approaches is the juridical perspective on the integration of immigrants, perspective which aims the policy on immigration and integration, which may have a major influence on the individual and group processes within the society.*

Key words: immigration, social integration, host-country, European legislation, society

1. Introduction

In our days, the whole Europe and not only, is confronting with the problem referring to the integration of immigrants, a problem which is becoming more and more important and, at the same time, complex and fragile. It is estimated that in UE live approximately 40 million outsiders, non-UE citizen and even more descendents (the second and third generation) and it is thought that they are not well adapted to the

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host-society, encountering problems such as discrimination and being marginalized from the access to education and work. This high number of immigrants together with the general context of low birth rate and aging of the population makes integration vital for the social cohesion and economical growth in Europe.[1]

Understanding a certain phenomenon or process means having the necessary concepts in order to develop a comprehensive model. The term of immigrant integration is complex, with lots of definitions and it requires the knowledge of several other concepts which are in interrelation, such as society, culture, social structure, immigrant, refugee, identity etc. and the relationship between these concepts. But how did we manage to talk about the integration of immigrants? First, everything starts from the phenomenon of migration which indicates people from different parts of the world who arrive, through various ways, legal or illegal and different reasons (poverty, family reunification, and persecution) in another country where they encounter the locals and the local institutions. These people, during their stay in that country, live in a new environment, different from a social, economic, politic, cultural etc. point of view. Usually, we talk about integration when the abidance is long and we refer to the ways and mechanisms through which these foreigners fit in with their new life, how they cope with the difficulties and challenges and the way they are welcomed and perceived by the locals and if the locals cope with the changes generated by migration. Than, we use the term of integration and not accommodation or social inclusion because it had been chosen by the international community among several other terms, more or less similar, and it is used in international documents which refer to migration, immigrants or protection of refugees. Next, I will present few definitions regarding the integration of immigrants and refugees, which we can consider official because we can also find them in legal norms or documents released by international organizations (ONU or The European Commission) to identify the concepts on which they are based and the vision behind the definitions :

Integration is the ability of the society to engage the population into new means of active participation which guarantees a long term wellness (The European Parliament)[2].

Integration refers to the individual development of an immigrant on behalf of his participation to the economical and social life, with maintaining his own cultural identity (Finnish Law 1999).

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[1] Morehouse, Christal (2007), *Rights and Obligations for Immigrants*, Berlin.
[2] Niessen, Jan; Huddleston, Thomas (2007), *Setting up a system of benchmarking to measure the success of integration policies in Europe*, Directorate General Internal Policies of the Union.

Integration is the ability to participate, regarding your needs and wishes, in all the major parts of a society, without giving up your own cultural identity (ONU – working group on refugee resettlement)[1].

Integration is a mutual process (it implies society members and the new ones), dynamic, multidimensional and continuous (ONU)[2] or the integration is seen as a process in two directions, which implies rights and obligations from the immigrants and the host-society, having as target the whole participation of immigrants in the life of that society (European Commission)[3].

On one hand we have the integration seen as an ability and responsibility of the society, of the group or community to receive new members to whom they must ease their adaption to their own lifestyle and to respect the incomers' lifestyle, in order to eliminate the existing differences. The focus is on the society, on its institutions (first definition). On the other hand, integration is still seen as an ability, but an individual one, an ability of the new ones to adapt to the requires set by the economical, social and cultural context of the host-societies, but without giving up your own lifestyle (definition 2 and 3). There is also a combined option (definition 4), integration been seen as a process in two directions which generates changes in a group, on an individual level and obligations of the society through its members, institutions and immigrants. At a personal level, the integration has a different meaning for each person, judging by its unique characteristics and it implies more than just the social, economical and cultural characteristics of a man (for example, having friends, a job or knowing the language of that state) and feelings, especially those of being a part of that community, feeling "like home", aspects hard to quantify and measure.

In other words, the integration of the immigrants is a process which implies the contact, interaction between the members of the host-society and immigrants and between the immigrants and the institutions of the host-society, interaction which requires a complex variety of social and psychological processes. Integration is a social process which sees the society as a whole, the social cohesion, the wellness in general and it also is a psychological process which takes place in every individual. Even more, it does not imply just the interaction in a group or at an interpersonal level, networks, but also values and ways of thinking (intercultural contact), being a psycho-socio-cultural and economical process. But integration can also be seen not just as a process of interaction, but as an effect of interaction, of

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[2] Ekholm, E.; Magennies, S.; Salmelin, L. (2005), *Shaping our future. A practical guide to the selection, reception and integration of resettled refugees,* Ed. Prima Oy, Helsinki.
[3] Niessen, Jan; Schiebel, Yongmi (2004), *Handbook on Integration for policy-makers and practitioners*.

contact between individuals, groups, institutions, situation in which the concept of integration may de described at the level of a group or individual. This reality is unique but, from methodological, knowledge reasons we embrace different points of view in order to explain this unique and coherent reality. Thus, the need to adopt two ways of approach of the concept of integration, a sociological and a psychological one, both in a strong interdependence, but separated from a methodological point of view, of the need of a better understanding. Even more, a juridical perspective will be added to these two onsets of the integration of immigrants, perspective which reaches to the politics of immigration and integration set in that state, which is a part in the context or social reality in which in integration takes place and which can have a major influence on the individual processes or the group processes.

The target of the article is to analyze the concept of integration of immigrants from these three perspectives: sociological, psychological and juridical. I will start with the sociological perspective, analyzing the concept through other major concepts, such as the society, culture, social structure, socialization, acculturation, social identity. If the sociologists give a vital role to the socio-cultural factors, the psychologists highlight the psychological particularities in adapting to the environment, factors which will be approached in the section referring to the psychological perspective. Although the integration of immigrants and refugees is a process which takes place at the meeting of the two categories of factors, we find helpful the analysis of the politics regarding immigration and integration (juridical perspective), politics created by the society, but it has implications at an individual level.

2. The sociological perspective

Sociologists affirm that the human behaviour is learnt in a high percentage and for understanding the behaviour of individuals we must concentrate on the groups in which they take part. In other words, sociologists are looking towards the group behaviour or the behaviour influenced by taking part in a group and social networks. One classic problem of sociology was explaining the mechanism through which various elements of the society function together; they are complementary or "integrated". Two explanations are most used: integration is a result of sharing and gathering society members to a common system of values and integration is the result of the interdependence created by the process of work division. A related concept, but opposite of integration, is segregation, which is based on social separation of a human category from other categories or from the rest of the society.

According to *Collins' Sociology Dictionary*, integration means:

a) the level of which an individual feels that he is part of a group or community, on behalf of joining the norms, values and believes of the group. For E. Durkheim,

integration is a hey-concept, one of the two variables in explaining the differences in suicide rates;

b) the degree in which the activity or functioning of different institutions or subsystems develop unitary and not in contradiction;

c) the presence of some institutions which promote complementary activity and act as a coordinate for the others subsystems of the society. The development of an institution with integration role is a functional necessity for all the social systems (written language or the legislative system-the supremacy of law-in the democratic societies)[1].

Using the concept of integration at all these 3 aspects is specific to the sociological approach called functionalism. From this point of view, the idea of society implies the tendency towards integrating the components. From a classical and somehow juridical approach, the concept of society refers to a group of people, which lives on well defined territory, marked by boarders, being considered as a different entity which lives independent from other groups, having a certain form of governing (monarchy, republic etc.), and the members share the same language and culture. This definition fits to the boarders of a state-nation which separate groups and describe the level of organization in a group which has some kind of self sufficiency and independence, the nation being the largest social systems to which people identify as members. The society is seen as a structure of relationships, a form of organization which implies cooperation among individuals, in order to obtain the items needed to survive (food, shelter etc.), and a way to control the behaviour of its members so that certain social needs are fulfilled and conflicts are prevented.

Talcott Parsons believes that the main cause of social organization of the human behaviour is the fact that all the societies have to solve four essential problems, the same for every society but which have different solutions, fact which determines the differences occurred in societies. These problems refer to:

- How can essential goods be produced (economical aspect), this drives towards economical organization and relations of production;

- How can order and stability be provided in the society (political aspect), this drives towards system of government and control;

- How must children be raised in order to become full members of the society (family aspect), this drives to the family institution which is specific to every society;

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[1] *Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology*, The Gale Group, 2002.

- How do you determine the members of a society to feel that they have things in common (cultural aspect), this drives to the apparition of a cultural system which includes religion, education, mass-media etc.

Parsons uses the term of social system instead of society in order to strengthen the idea that the human behaviour is organized as a system of relationships. Each social system is made of four interdependent subsystems so that the problems occurred in one affects the rest. These subsystems are: economic, politic, family and cultural. As we can see, the social form of organization are different and they depend on the values embraced by that community, by its culture (believes, common notions about what is good, beautiful, saint etc.)

From a sociological point of view, the lack of integration implies the absence of the integrative mechanisms. For example, for Durkheim, suicidal from selfish reasons is the result of non-integration in a group, *social integration being an effect of the social bonds/relationships of a quantity type between individuals of a society. The more the social bonds, the tighter the social integration.* If functionalism emphasizes values and norms, another sociological orientation focuses on the social conflict, the power relations from the society. Sociologists, as Ralph Dahrendorf, believe that the conflict state between the members of a group or the groups of a society is more likely to exist than the one of social integration of all the parts and that certain societies tend to fall apart, contradiction, rather than harmony and integration [1].

Marc Granovetter believes that the term of integration is a variety of dimensions, and the most important is the one referring to incidence, which includes two characteristics: frequency and intensity. Frequency refers to the number of bonds to the environment owned by a person or a group (the number of contacts with others), while the intensity covers the nature of these contacts and, so, feelings like those of being part in a community and familiarity. Frequency is not necessarily correlated with intensity: For example, many people have more frequent contacts with work colleagues than their own family, but this does not imply the fact that these contacts are more intense and close. This leads to another dimension: identification (the more a person identifies with others, the stronger the social bonds are). A powerful identification does not mean frequent and intense contact. Many immigrants, for example, strongly identify with the host-society, although most of the contacts with the others are suffering. The fact that these two dimensions of the process of integration are not necessarily correlated does not mean that there is no relation between them. In reality, the frequency and intensity of contacts with the others can lead to a better understanding and identification. On the other hand, people who do not identify themselves with other groups, are unlikely to develop frequent and

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[1] *Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology*, The Gale Group, 2002.

intense bonds with those groups. So, for a right understanding of the phenomenon, it is important to know these dimensions interact, a really not easy thing.[1]

Any society has a certain social structure, as a way to assign resources, form groups and institutions and the interaction between them (status, role, power relations), a social structure made of stratification systems and labour division and a certain culture which makes references to the general ways of thinking and behaviour (values, norms believes, language), these two dimensions being interdependent. Culture and social structure are explanatory concepts and social realities. Culture is the base of the social structure in case of compatibility, the incompatibility between these two being driving to social change. The concept of culture refers to a specific way of life, a system of representations shared by members of a group about the world, life, beauty, good etc., lifestyle learned through permanent socialization (because the society is constantly changing). A. Mihu defines the culture as being the lifestyle of a group of people, in the circumstances of a certain environment made by man and through the material and non-material products passed from a generation to another. The same author indicates the following components of culture: knowledge (popular, believes and scientific knowledge), normative and symbolical. Inside the same culture you can identify several subcultures, which are groups that share some norms, values, believes of the culture accepted by the entire society, but have particular features from other points of view.[2]

Culture resemblances a relative autonomy towards the social structure. The concepts and representations shared by the members of a group, cultural elements of the group, they all are institutionalized in norms of behaviour and action, in laws which lead to the birth of institutions, organizations, states etc. which form the social structure of a community. This way, through institutionalizing the shared representations, the social environment becomes relatively stable, predictable and manoeuvrable for the members of the group or community. T Parsons had talked about three relatively independent systems: the social one, the personality system and the cultural system. Culture, which implies sets of symbols for communication and sets of standards for action, is institutionalized in the social system (usually, the main system of values) and it is included in the personality system. Therefore, we can talk about the coexisting of a plurality of cultural subsystems in the same society or personality.

Modern societies are characterized through a high level of structural differentiation and labour division, limited resources, fact which generates competing individuals or

[1] Entzinger, Han; Biezeveld, Renske (2003), *Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration,* Rotterdam, August.
[2] Mihu, Achim (2002), *Antropologia culturală*, Ed. Dacia.

groups. Merton suggests that every society gives its members goal to achieve, but it also shows the desirable means through which you can fulfil them. P. Bourdieu uses the concept of *habitus* (meaning lifestyle, the subculture of a group, included by people through the process of socialization), which refers to the specific ways of thinking, feeling and action shared by the members of the group, as a result of the interference between the social structure's demands and the way individuals respond to them. Not only do the group members tend to think and act similar, but every one of them has the tendency to become similar to the others, judging by lifestyle, the way of life of that group which is different from other groups. In day to day life, people are only half aware of the limitation their own group lifestyle, of the role they play according to the position they occupy in the group (family, institution, social networks). If we want to do research on the way foreigners integrate in a society, first, we have to see through which means citizen gain "success " or which factors determine the success of an individual in that society. Success and failure depend on the degree of power the group has in a certain social situation, on its resources. P. Bourdieu considers that the members of a society have two main types of capital, the economic one (money, financial resources) and cultural (knowledge, education), capital which depends much on the group you take part in (the type of capital matters in a certain situation, not in quantity). At these two types of capital we can add the social one, meaning relationships and knowledge. In conclusion, we can say that the resources of a person are individual, but they are also the resources of the group.

This way, an individual, adding his general abilities (intelligence, health, specific abilities etc.) has three types of resources:

- material and economical resources (money, possessions etc.);

- cultural resources (concepts, ideas, language etc.);

- social resources (relationships/social networks).

The combination between economical, social and cultural factors is obvious in determining success, but the question that pops is if one of them is more important.

Everyone is born in a society and a process of continuous learning starts as a result of interaction with the others, a process names socializing. Through this, the person gains:

- the system of norms and symbols of the target group (group culture);

- language and means of communication (specific abilities);

- knowledge about yourself (your own identity), because we know who we are after we interact with the others. Speaking in general, we have two identities: a *personal identity*, unique (identification with a name, a body, a personal history) and a *social identity* (identification with the social role, with the categories and groups you take

part in-age, sex, occupation, social status etc.), being an identity shared with the others, a multiple identity (set of identities), because it changes according to the context or social situation which leads to the changing of the individuals' role in that situation.[1]

A periodic re-socialization takes place, in relation with the changes in the social reality, it determines the human's capacity to adapt to the environmental changes. **Acculturation** is the social learning process which takes place in the state of migration, with serious socio-psychological implications, determined by the stress of the exile, new problems and the resources the new ones have (economic, social, cultural, individual). In fact, acculturation is the same thing with cultural integration and it implies changes in behaviour, attitude and way of thinking and the concept itself, social identity, cultural or ethnic. **Cultural integration** or acculturation refers to the degree of sharing a commune reference frame in a society, from the perspective of commune ways of understanding and act. It supposes gathering the people with diverse backgrounds so that they can share experience and commune visions about life and they are based on the interdependence of believes, values, tradition, rules and behaviour. Cultural integration is a degree problem because no society is uniform; meaning that people from a culture do not act in the same way or have different opinions, interdependence exists and transfers between the segments of the society (subcultures). The main presupposition regarding cultural integration is the fact that a dominant culture already exists and the other cultures should be included partially or total by it. This could mean that believes, actions and habits would be lost in the main culture or the main culture could adopt believes and habits from the smaller cultures. Historic speaking, personal interactions had created and allowed cultural integration, sharing the same frames of reference, the interaction between various groups, leading to a deal about how to act and how to see life, the world, good, beauty etc. In our days, cultural integration is facilitated by education and mass-media, social institutions in which we take part, we are familiar with them and they influence our way of thinking, of feeling and our behaviour. The advantage is that the interaction between persons is not necessary. Though they are not in the same group or social network, people look at or read the same mass-media products or they receive the same information in schools, about what they should think about, how to act and what to desire in a society. The factors that do not allow integration refer to the resistance of a group to the pressure of assimilation in a wide society, the lack of a coherent communicating system which could be reached by anyone, over-specializing a sort of knowledge or a high degree of diversity or distance between cultures which do not allow the cohesion of the cultural parts. [2]

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[1] Fulcher, J.; Scott, J. (2006), *Sociology,* Oxford University Press.
[2] Gale, Thomson (2002), *World of Sociology*.

Usually, when we refer to the integration of immigrants or refugees in a society, the term of society is used for a wide social group, a population under the authority of a state (a nation, for example, the Romanian society). The immigrants and refugees attend the socialization process in his original society, building his identity according to the place occupied in those structures and they act, feel and think as in their original cultural model. Entering this new world, a society with a different structure and culture, they begin a new social learning process (acculturation). This step by step accommodation depends on the economic, social and cultural capital whom everyone has, and on the host-society's attitude towards them and the power relations already set in that specific social context.

3. The psychological perspective

What are the features of a successful adaptation to a new environment? Is good relationship with the host society's members? Is the psychological wellness? Is job? Is the identification with the locals? The psychologists pay attention to the specific behaviour of individuals, how they are different from the other group members, and not on the common part of the members. Certain features of individual adaptation have been proposed and these features are grouped in three categories:

a. the ability to cope with the psychological stress generated by exile;

b. the ability to communicate efficient;

c. the ability to establish interpersonal relationships[1].

Although, at first sigh, these abilities depend on each individual, they are determined by the target group and represent the result of a co-work between individual and group factors. Adaptation to a new environment can be, generally speaking, of two types: psychological (affective answers, feelings of well, satisfaction) and socio-cultural (the capacity to establish social relationships), being conceptual interdependent, but empirically different. The psychological accommodation is mainly influenced by the changes in life, personality and social support, while the socio-cultural accommodation is more predictable and it depends on the quantity and value of the relationship with locals; cultural distance and how long you stay in the host-state.[2]

The emigrational phenomenon has as effect the contact between individuals and groups from different cultures and societies. The interaction between members of a

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[1] Cf. Hammer, Gudzkunst and Wiseman (1978), în Ward, C.; Bochner, S.; Furnham, A. (1990), *The Psychology of Culture Shock,* Routledge.

[2] Ward şi Searle (1990), în Ward, C.; Bochner, S.; Furnham, A. (1990), *The Psychology of Culture Shock,* Routledge

culture is known as being stressful, and in many situations a cultural shock appears. The results can be seen at the level of the group or individual. These individual results imply changes in the ethnical or cultural identity and they are group in categories:

– similar (individual adopt a new culture and reject the old one);

– separation (they totally reject the new culture);

– marginalization (they do not feel "like home" in none of the cultures);

– integration (they embrace the different cultural identities, building up multicultural personalities, a life strategy which leads to health and wellness)[1].

Cultural learning, acculturation, is the process through which the new comers add, step by step, new knowledge and abilities relevant from a social and cultural point of view, in order to survive in a society. People with a high level of education (diplomats, business men, students), who are doing very well in their society, suddenly find out that they become helpless and do not know how to act in a new culture. To the usual communication problems that appears in the interaction of people from the same culture, we can add the cultural factor in communicating with people from different cultures, and this fact does not imply only not knowing the language, but also the unfamiliar way of life. Culture can be seen as an iceberg: the extreme, visible part (made of behaviours and believes) is explicatively, consciously learnt, it can be easily changed and it is build up from objective knowledge, while the interior part, unseen (made of values and patterns of thinking) is learnt by heart, unwilling, hard to change and made of subjective knowledge. Therefore, culture is the decisive factor in the interpersonal communicating process between members of different cultures, and understanding the concept of culture leads to understanding of the process of personal adaptation to a new environment.

More types if culture had been presented in special writings[2], but we must take in consideration the fact that when we speak about culture we go general because there is no other possible way. So, the classification and types of culture can be seen only as general facts, abstract. Hofstede focuses on the fact that his own classification of the cultural dimension (well known and used) is available only at a national level.

Hofstede believes that values represent the base of culture; they are early included in our life and they determine in a decisive manner our way of thinking, feeling and behaviour; the show of from an individual level and are seen more like 'goals' than

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[1] Berry, 1990, în Ward, C.; Bochner, S.; Furnham, A. (1990), *The Psychology of Culture Shock*, Routledge

[2] Chanchani, Shalin; Theivanathampillai, Paul (2002), *Typologies of Culture*.

means of achieving (a distinction can be made between the instrumental values (means) and the terminal values). Hofstede (1980) defined values as being the general tendency of preferring some moods, phenomenon, objects, and situations. This side of culture, based on values, is criticized by the cognitive approach of culture, which sees culture as being better understood through cognitive terms than appreciating a latent set of values. Cognitive cultural believe that the cognitive processes are the base patterns in measuring culture and they use concepts like "shared cognitive representations "or "consistent patterns of perception, relate and interpretation of information", patterns which affect the individual and group behaviour. In other words, the way cultures are different in terms of categorization, differentiation, abstractization and representation will determine the way through which information is perceived, related and interpreted, how it affects the individual and group behaviour. Hofstede (1988) identifies, after a research based on factorial analysis, five cultural dimensions which are important from the point of view of psychological processes and various behaviours.

1. Individualism or collectivism

Individualism needs the preference of a comfortable social frame which can allow individuals to take care of themselves and of the close members of the family, while in collectivism appears a close/tight social frame in which individuals can expect from relatives, the clan, the group to take care of them in return for unconditional loyalty. The key element is the level of independence that the society gives and it is related to the concept itself: "I" or "US".

2. High distance of power versus the short distance of power

Distance towards power represents the degree of acceptance that the society members show towards the unequal distribution of power and the way a society approaches the fact that people are not equal. This dimension has consequences upon strong and not so strong members. For example, in a society in which the distance to power is high, people accept a hierarchical order which does not have to be justified, fact which influences the birth of institutions and organizations.

3. A strong avoidance of uncertainty versus a weak avoidance of uncertainty

Avoiding uncertainty represents the degree in which members of a society feel comfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity. In societies that have a marked preference for avoiding ambiguity, harsh codes of believes and behaviour maintain, protecting the conformity and promising certainty. Such societies do not tolerate

people and ideas that are not the same. In societies where avoiding uncertainty is week, there is a relax atmosphere. Fundamentally, this dimension appeals to how societies see the linear time line and the wish to control future, opposite with the attitude of letting everything come from itself, fact which influences the way in which institutions and organizations are created.

4. Masculinity versus feminism

Masculine are those societies which tend toward realization, heroism, material success, while in the feminine societies the preference is towards human relationships, modesty, care for the week ones and life quality. The main problem this dimension sees is the fact that society gives roles according to gender.

5. Long term orientation versus short term orientation

Long term orientation highlights virtues like persistence, perdurable, orientating relations according to status, while the second dimension presupposes personal stability, respect for tradition, favors and gifts.

Triandis (1994) – "Cultural syndromes": culture is a set of objective and subjective elements made by man who had shown their utility in the past and so they have become commune and shared by people who have the same language and life in the same space and time. Triandis identifies four dimensions which, in his opinion, can be applied to all cultures: cultural complexity (in complex cultures, people make a large number of distinctions between objects and events from their environment, while in the simple cultures this thing is not available - for example, the number of occupations vary), "tight" and "lax" cultures (in tight cultures people are expected to behave after strict standards and behaviour sheers are punished, while in the lax ones sheers are allowed), individualism and collectivism (those who live in cultures characterized by individualism tend to be more detached emotionally of their own group, they prize self support, independence, pleasure).

Trompenaars (1993) sees culture as a way through which a group of people solve their problems; solutions are wanted for three types of problems: relations with others, attitude towards time and environment. Seven dimensions have been identified:

1. Universalism (strict rules of behaviour which show of a general disbelief in humanity) versus Particularism (the tendency to focus on the exceptional nature of the present circumstances).

2. Individualism (orientation in order to achieve your own interests) versus Collectivism (orientation towards the same goals). Trompenaars, just like Hofstede, sees individualism and collectivism as something continuous (for example, collectivists have fewer features that characterize individualism).

3. Neutral versus Affective - this dimension refers to the degree in which feelings are expressed; rationality and affectivity play important roles in relationships between people, but the question is which one of them dominates, generally speaking: neutral behaviour (you do not show your feelings) and affective behaviour (in a higher degree, you show your feelings).

4. Diffuse (lower context) versus Specific (higher context which implies a higher level of shared knowledge) - dimension which explores the ways in which people are engaged in specific areas of communication.

5. Fulfilment (giving social status based on personal accomplishments) versus Assignment (assigning statuses in the virtue of age, class, gender, education etc.).

6. Attitude towards time - linear, in sequence versus synchronic.

7. Attitude towards environment – two major orientations towards nature: controlling nature versus embracing nature.

It is normal to attend to the community' s values in which you were raised, in which you live and interact with others, but, also, it is important to understand that your way of thinking and acting is not universally available. Ethnocentrism is the belief in the universality of your own culture, through which you judge features belonging to other cultures, in other words, saying that you're culture's vision upon the world is the only one available and true/worthy.

Bennett (1993) proposed a model of stagier development of the perception of intercultural differences (model seeking the development of intercultural sensitivity), which outs light on the stages through which people pass in situations of intercultural contact:

1. denial: not admitting the cultural differences;

2. defence: admitting some differences, but these are thought to be negative;

3. minimization: to not be aware of your own projections which have their origin in the cultural legacy;

4. acceptance: understanding the fact that the same behaviour can have various meanings in different cultures;

5. accommodation: evaluating the other's behaviour from his perspective and adapting his own behaviour to the norms of different cultures;

6. integration: easily handling the cultural norms and solving without a quarrel the eventual identity problems.

Recent research had shown that people who are able to communicate intercultural have the following features: they express widely their attitudes, feelings and emotions and can see them easily in other people (they show empathy), they are opened to the new and have a proper nonverbal behaviour (have abilities of communication)[1]. The prediction factors of a good adaption to a new socio-cultural environment are: specific knowledge about that culture, fluency of the language, wide contexts with the locals, cultural similarity and a long stay in the host-culture. Judging by the changes appeared in time, socio-cultural adaption follows a path of rapidly learning in the first 4-6 months and a moderate growth until the end of the first year and than it maintains in the normal limits. [2]

4. Juridical perspective

The intercultural contact in a group leads to changes in the structure and values of the groups which they met. Bochner (1979, 1982) considers that there are four main categories of results which refer to the accommodation of certain groups to other ones: genocide, assimilation, segregation and integration. To these categories of results corresponds the types of governmental politics chosen in each case. Integration requires the right of the group to maintain its own cultural identity, a pluralist society, liberal, accommodation to the other's specific (the principle of unity in diversity)[3].

There are several theories referring to the process of integration of the immigrants. One of them believes that immigrants are assimilated by the new society, on a period of two or three generations, and at the end of the assimilation process, the differences between the new comers, their children and the host-society are no longer visible and on the other hand, maybe only judging by the name and appearance (skin colour etc.). Some authors believe that the process of assimilation leads to giving up by both sides of some of the elements of their own culture and identity and adopt some from other cultures, so that the result is a variety of elements coming from the immigrant's culture and the host-culture as well. As a consequence, an entire new culture could be born this way. The metaphor "melting pot" is used to

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[1] Ward, C.; Bochner, S.; Furnham, A. (1990), *The Psychology of Culture Shock,* Routledge.
[2] Ward şi Kennedy (1999), în Ward, C.; Bochner, S.; Furnham, A. (1990), *The Psychology of Culture Shock,* Routledge
[3] Ward, C.; Bochner, S.; Furnham, A. (1990), *The Psychology of Culture Shock,* Routledge.

express this process. Other authors see the process of assimilation from a unilateral point of view which implies the conformation of immigrants to the dominant culture, the process developing in stages and at the end the differences between the new comers, their children and the host-society are erased, judging by the social situation and the first one's cultural orientation. The main obstacle in validating this theory was represented by the obvious fact that even after a few generations, the cultural differences between immigrants, their children and the host-society. Also, it is obvious that the communities developed as a result of the phenomenon of migration wish to strengthen their own cultural identity, despite the fact that that their own participate active and full time in the host-society. In other words, this active participation in the host-society does not necessary imply abandoning the specific cultural identity. Therefore, what had initially been labelled as assimilation is proven to have two dimensions that do not necessarily concur, a structural and cultural one. The first one shows the growth of social participation of people and groups in the wide society, especially at an institutional level (labour market, education, health system etc.) while the second one (cultural dimension) represents the processes of reorientation of values and cultural identification of the immigrants. The changes in one dimension do not necessarily imply changes in the other one. Usually, in the specialized analysis, when referrals are made about the growth of institutional participation, the term integration is used, and when we refer to cultural changes, the term acculturation is used. The better we understand the nature of the relationships in between these two dimensions, the successful the politics in this domain would be. Acculturation is a complex term which shows the fact that total assimilation in the main culture is not the only option, and, also, it is not a demand for the process of integration. This term refers to the phenomenon through which immigrants gradually take the some major elements of the cultural environment, without abandoning own cultural identity. Now, many immigrants keep bonds with their countries, cultures, religions and, of course, with the community members. These transnational contacts are facilitated, in our days, by the globalization process. Acculturation is not a unilateral process, in the idea that the host-population can, equally, take certain elements from the immigrant's culture. This thing is visible in multiethnic cultural manifestation (traditional food, music etc.), usually, in multicultural environments like the great cities in Europe. But, most of the time, the population of immigrants adapt more to the environmental changes than the host-population. Usually, when we talk about social politics which imply the integration of immigrants, the accents is on the institutional dimension, ways of promoting the immigrant's participation in the major institutional systems of the society and less the cultural dimension. In the past, it was thought that the two dimensions go hand in hand like the two sides of a coin. Today, it is admitted that the relationship between integration and acculturation is more complex. The governments of the state members are pro a more total integration of the immigrants but, at the same time, they emerge the principle of cultural

heterogeneity, in different degrees of course and in different ways. This is the main reason for which the acculturation process should be analyzed and monitorized separate. But, in this work we will use, from efficiency reasons, the term of integration which includes acculturation. Although the term acculturation is relevant for the cultural dimension, culture plays an important role in all the other dimensions of the society (social, economic, legal, and politic)[1].

Because the term "immigrant's integration "is a complex one and has a lot of meanings, the differences between states which imply the interpretation of this concept leads to different visions about social politics in this domain. Anyway, even if the interpretations would be the same in every state, the social politics implying the integration of immigrants are still different because of the political and social circumstances and the different migration history. In recent analysis [2] the difference between three major dimensions of the integration process is considered to be useful: the socio-economical dimension, the legal and politic dimension and the cultural dimension. Any politics which promotes the integration of immigrants must take into consideration these three dimensions, from an individual point of view and judging by the relationships between them.

Socio-economical dimension: temporary workers versus immigrants

A substantial part of the migration towards Europe was determined by economical reasons and needs and was characterized as being temporary, seasonal. Under these circumstances, it is felt a faint need for developing and deploying politics which would require the integration of these economical migrants, because these temporary residents are citizen in states and it is supposed that they do not need the same level of protection the host-country gives to the citizen. This model is known as "the guest worker model"[3], although it is more adequate to refer to it as the "temporary worker model". Often, casual workers have become residents after a while. This thing has happened in Germany and in other member states like Austria, Belgium and Holland. Apart from them, Germany has had serious problems in recognizing this chance of status of the immigrants, and this thing affected the opportunities immigrants had when integrating in the German society. Until a few years ago, The Federal Government claimed that Germany is not a destination for immigrants, but this thing has changes in the context implying migration in the European Union. More recently, Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal, normal states as

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[1] Entzinger, Han; Biezeveld, Renske (2003), *Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration,* Rotterdam, August.
[2] Entzinger, Han; Biezeveld, Renske (2003), *Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration*, Rotterdam, August.
[3] Guest worker model.

exporters of immigrants, had confronted with a flow of economical migrants. Many of the new workers who have came in the EU space have not received the formal status of immigrant and have worked in the informal economy of these states, especially unqualified labours. This fact allowed authorities from these countries to look at the staying from an exclusively economic point of view and as being temporally. In return, this thing did not help in avoiding the apparition, from time to time, of some social, cultural and political tensions determined by the presence of these illegal immigrants. Often, the method of legalizing these people has been applied, but this fact has attracted more illegal immigrants who were hopping that the procedure would be repeated. This model of the temporary worker is opposite with the permanent immigration model.

Permanent immigration model was spread throughout Europe in the last half century, in a political context: the disappearance of colonies, ethnical migration and refugees. Migration from economical reasons was seldom encouraged in Europe, exception making a small number of professions, which usually required a high level of training (economical migration is characteristic to states like USA, Canada, Austria which use this phenomenon to build their own nation). In reality, the differences between these two present models are smaller than their names suggest. Economic migration has crossed from temporary to permanent after the right of temporary workers who were allowed to bring their families with them. On the other hand, as a paradox, permanent migration has proven to be less permanent than it was thought. Although significant differences exist between communities of immigrants from this point of view, a rate of come back of 40 % in the first 10 years is not something out of the ordinary. These aspects lead to the idea that this distinction between the permanent migration and the temporary one is not very useful in putting the base of social politics which require the integration of immigrants, maybe even the fact that this distinction focuses on the economical reasons of the emigrational phenomenon and looks too little upon what happens after the emigrational moment, in the political and cultural domain.

The legal and political dimension: jus sanguinis versus jus soli

Despite the perception referring to the permanency degree of emigrational settlement, every state is confronting with a growth in the number of residents, many of them coming from the non-European space. Therefore, the states are obliged to meditate upon the legal and political status which they are willing to give to these persons and their descendents. Here we can see two approaches that can give us information about the vision of states, vision which influences the social politics in the domain, the classic distinction between jus sanguinis and jus soli. The jus soli system is based on the territorial principle which says that all the residents on a territory have

the same rights, not matter what origin they are or how long they stay. For the new comers, this thing can be a short period of transition until the gradual obtaining of these rights. In contrast, the jus sanguinis system is driven by the descendent principle. Citizenship and all the rights which derive from this status (vote right or access to public services) are inherited from one generation to another, through birth. This thing implies the fact that not all the residents are treated similar on the same territory. Migrants and their descendents and sometimes the national minorities can have rights and obligations that differ from those of the majority population.

In reality, we find a mixture of these two ideal models, but which show considerable differences between states. Traditionally, Great Britain is the best example for jus soli. The present legislation allows any person born in this country to become a Britannic citizen. Germany is at the other end, representing the jus sanguinis system. Access to citizenship is extremely difficult for someone who does not have at least a German parent, even for the second generation of people who were born and lived in Germany. But, for example, for the ethnical Germans who came back from East Europe, even after a few generations, things are different: they receive German citizenship right when settling in the country. Anyway, in the past years, more of the other's system elements have been introduced in the German legislation. France, from this point of view, straddles between Great Britain and Germany. When the right side is at power, the tendency is to listen to the nationalists, for the jus sanguinis system, while when the left site takes over, the jus soli system has priority.

The distinction between the two principles is fundamental in any analysis of the integration process because it defines the ways through which immigrants can accede to a new citizenship. Some approaches have considered that these distinctions are the result of the differences between cultural traditions. In any case, in practice, this distinction between the principles presented above has implications from a legal and political point of view. The most frequent example is the one referring to the right to vote. The political and legal situation of the immigrants can affect, obviously, their social and economical position and their cultural situation, but these effects are not direct. Therefore, the process of integration and the policy which require integration should be understood in a wider context than offering just access to citizenship and guaranteeing some rights.

The cultural dimension: multiculturalism versus assimilation

Again we can distinguish two different approaches. Usually, Great Britain is considered to be the prototype of the multicultural model. Starting from the presupposition that the immigrants' abidance is permanent, the immigrants are seen like full members of the new society, and in these terms, migration helps the multicultural character of the new society. In this way, facilities are created for each

community of ethnic minority, in order to keep and develop his own cultural identity, because mutual understanding between communities is a condition for the existence of a multicultural society, and if it is necessary, public authorities must take measures to ease this thing. In a period, this model was promoted in other European states, especially North-west Europe, Holland and in Nordic states, Sweden. Recently, it seems that it had started to lose his attractively.

France is the main exponent of the assimilation model, but elements from this can be found in more countries. In this model, the permanent nature or not of this abidance is not discussed, but it is expected that they are going to be assimilated by the host-society. On the other hand, communities made out of immigrants are not recognized by public authorities as self-entities which ask for a high level of adaption. The risk is represented by the fact that those who do not succeed in adapting to the host-culture could be marginalized. In any case, the debate looking at multiculturalism versus assimilation tends to put the accent on the cultural dimension and not the socio-economical aspects.

The power to give a wide explanation is limited for each dimension taken separate. Therefore, some authors have tried to build complex models which should cover the complex process of emigrational integration and to take into account all the three dimensions. For example, Hollifield distinguishes three models of the politics implying integration in Europe:

a) Temporary worker model, for which Germany is the prototype. The emigrational process is determined, mainly, by the needs of the labour market and the presence of immigrants is temporary. Therefore, giving a legal status does not represent a necessity and does not reflect upon the possibility of easening the cultural diversity.

b) Assimilation model, for which France is the prototype. Emigration is seen as being permanent; immigrants are welcomed and receive a legal status with the condition of assimilating the behaviour models of the dominant cultures. Immigrants are seen, firstly, as individual persons, the notion of community of immigrants being inexistent for this model.

c) The ethnical minority model for which Great Britain is a model. Migration is seen as being permanent, but immigrants are defined according to their ethnical and cultural origin. They form their own communities, different from the existing ones, but the great challenge is to make these communities to live in harmony, in a multicultural society.

Castles developed another type which tries to reconciliate the various dimensions:

a) The exclusion on differences model, which includes Germany and the Southern states of Europe.

b) The assimilation model, with examples as Great Britain, France and Holland.

c) The pluralist model which we can find it in the non-European states, classic countries which encourage emigration. Surprising is the inclusion of Great Britain in the assimilation model, besides France and Holland[1].

Of course, all these types and models tend to simplify reality. *They are built starting from the ideologies adopted by different states than from the existing situation.* For example, despite the ideological differences between France and Germany, the existing course of the emigrational integration in these two member states are quite resembling and they apply in most cases, the same measures and strategies in order to ease the integration process. That is why, it is very important to look carefully upon the content of these social politics which require immigrants' integration. Despite the differences of political and ideological nature of the states, in all countries, in the social politics which follow the immigrants' integration, it is followed, after giving the legal residence right on the territory, eased access in equal conditions to the labor market, to homes, education, health care etc. Also, similarities are found in the politics of giving citizenship and in the efforts of combating discrimination, racism and xenophobia. *The access of the immigrants' population, in equal conditions with the other citizens, to state institutions, wellness is considered the main condition by most of the European states in order to ease their integration.* On the other hand, from some points of view, like the one referring to giving citizenship as a central element of these politics, greater differences exist not only in ideology, but also in practice. For example, while in the southern states the tendency is to consider giving citizenship as a major condition for integration, in the northern states they focus on other aspects, like participation in the political and civil life of the society[2].

The integration politics is in close relations with migration in general. The politics regarding emigration is analyzed according to the type, form of migration and to the notion of unitary migration. Immigrants are categorized according to their interests and the state's vision, with the goal of regularizing and controlling the phenomena (for example, high qualified workers are encouraged, while the asylum seekers and illegal immigrants are discouraged). The term "immigrant integration "is used with a wide meaning by the wanted result of these politics and it makes troubles because it pops obvious questions as: integration in what? By whom? the components in which these people ought to integrate in are not clear. Politics regarding emigration is seen different by those who consider that immigrants are a threat (for maintaining a traditional way of reporting to national identity, for jobs, homes or other resources), in

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[1] Entzinger, Han; Biezeveld, Renske (2003), *Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration,* Rotterdam, August.

[2] Entzinger, Han; Biezeveld, Renske (2003), *Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration*, Rotterdam, August

opposition with the opinion that immigrants represent an important resource for the society (they offer labour, abilities and capital).

5. *The integration of foreigners in Romania:* ▆▆▆▆▆
statistics, legal and institutional frame,
assistance regarding integration

At the end of 2006, in the files of Foreigner's Authority were 53.606 foreigners with a right to stay in Romania, of whom 48.177 with temporary abidance (89,88% of the total) and 5.429 with permanent abidance (10,12% of total). Comparing with the existing situation at the end of 2005 (49.485 foreign citizens) we notice a growth of 8%. Reported at the Romanian population – almost 21,7 million persons – the number of foreigners on our territory represents only 0,2%, a low percent comparing with other member states and similar to year 2005[1].

The legal and institutional frame

Compliant with the Government's Ordinance no. 44/2004 implying the social integration of foreigners who have received a form of protection in Romania, with the ulterior add-ins and changes, social integration is the process of active participation of the foreigners in the economical, social and cultural life of the Romanian society, and in order to achieve this, the ongoing of programs of integration are needed (specific activities of cultural orientation, counselling and learning the Romanian language) and to ease the access to a series of economical and social rights: the right to have a job, to education, medical assistance and social assistance and the right to have a home. The Romanian Office for Immigration is responsible for the coordination of integration programs for foreigners, as a specialized structure, responsible for the implementation of the politics of the Romanian Government in the domain of integrating the foreigners, while they practically implement of the programs is realized by this structure along with the central authorities, local authorities and non-governmental organizations. In other words, in Romania, every institutional actor (Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Health etc.) is responsible for the integration of foreigners in his domain of activity/responsibility, the coordination and monitoring of the politics being in the hands of the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform, through the Romanian Office of Immigration which also has the obligation to offer, through its territorial structures, specific services in order to facilitate the integration in the Romanian society of different categories of foreigners. Coordination at an institutional level is

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[1] Source: The study *Imigrația şi azilul în România*, ApS-ONR, May 2006.

made, mainly, through the convergence with the decision factors (organizing strategies which imply migration) and with experts (periodically organized by the Romanian Office of Immigration).

Assistance to integration

The measures taken in the foreigners' integration domain follow, mainly, the engaging in work, access to a system of social insurance and social insurance of health, access to a home, to medical service, education and learning the Romanian language and the ease of cultural integration, maintaining at the same time their cultural identity. The legislation in the foreigners' integration domain (GO no. 44/2004 regarding the social integration of foreigners who have received a form of protection in Romania, changed and completed through GO no. 41/2006) settles the categories of foreigners which beneficiate of programs of integration and the activities of these programs. Delimitation between the categories of foreigners imply foreigners who have received a form of protection in Romania and on the other hand, the ones who have legal stay in Romania and is based on the special situation of the first ones (refugees and foreigners who have subsidiary protection).

Social integration of the foreigners who have received
a form of protection in Romania

Compliant with the annual report given to publicity by the Romanian Office of Immigration[1]: in Romania, from 1991 until July 2007, 15965 foreigners have solicited asylum, of which 2723 have received a form of protection. At the end of July 2007, 810 foreigners were registered as beneficiating of a form of protection in Romania, 549 adults and 261 children. From the point of view of their country, most of them come from Iraq (43, 2%), then Iran (12%) and Palestine (8%). From Africa, most refugees are from Congo (7, 1%).

Other statistic data of interest implying adult foreigners who have a form of protection:

- 72,5% have status of refugee and 27,5% have received subsidiary protection;

- 77% of the adults have under 45 years and only 3.3% more than 60 years;

- The majority are males (75, 6%)

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[1] The annual report regarding the foreigners' situation with a form of protection in Romania, ROE, Octomber 2007.

In order to measure the degree of active participation of the foreigners who have received a form of protection in Romania to the economical, social and cultural life of the Romanian society, a set of indicators was elaborated to cover the three dimensions, according to the law definition (economical, social and cultural[1]). Therefore, for the economical dimension, indicators which point out the access to a home, job, education, health and social services, the success in domains which show the degree of economical autonomy had been chosen. For the social dimension, the chosen indicators cover up the relationships with the other society members and with the institutions of the state and refer to the existence of knowledge, combined marriages and the opinion regarding the existence of discrimination. The main indicator for which it has been voted in the cultural dimension was the level of knowing the Romanian language, the time spent in Romania, as an essential factor in understanding and assimilating the Romanian way of life.
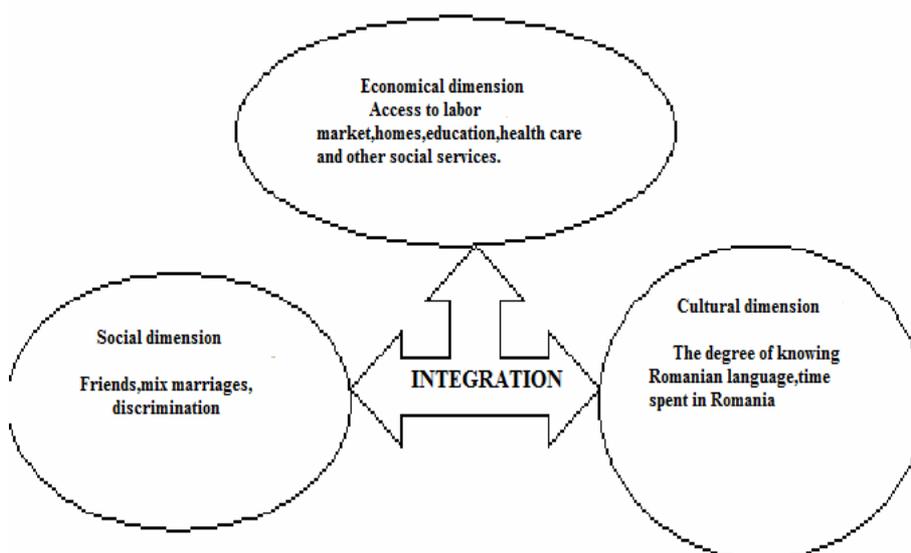
From the statistic data got from the research made by the Asylum and Integration Directorate, we can draw the following conclusions:

Regarding the economical dimension:

- 64, 3% of the adults had a job;

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[1] To these dimensions of the concept of integration, we add the political dimension, but it is excluded in the case of foreigners (now, the legislation does not imply political rights for foreigners).

- 91, 8% had a rented place or private property, the others beneficiating of accommodation in a centre administrated by the Romanian Office of Immigration or by the Jesuit Service for Refugees in Bucharest;

- 25, 3% of the adults finished their studies in Romania;

- 46, 3% of the adults had medical insurance, fact which assures them the access to health services for them and the family members;

- 15,7% of the adults have finished professional training in Romania and 35,5% have beneficiated of social services (the most solicited social service vas the callable help-29,5% of the adults).

Regarding the social dimension:

- 86, 7% of the adults have declared that they have Romanian friends;

- 26, 5% are married with Romanian citizen and from these mix families 165 children were born (children with Romanian citizenship);

- 15,8% of the interviewed ones declared they have felt as discriminated, the most common situation mentioned being the remarks with racial connotations (6,9%) and employment rejection and renting a place (4%);

Regarding the cultural dimension:

- 47, 7% of the adults speak very well the Romanian language and 31, 9 speak well;

- 48, 5% of the adults have been living in Romania for more than 10 years and 31, 9% between 4 and 10 years.

Refugees' integration in the asylum country represents an instrument of protection and one of the long lasting solutions for the refugees' problem adopted by the international community, the other two being voluntary repatriation in the country of origin and relocation from the first asylum country in another one. Although impediments still exist in the process of integration for foreigners who have received a form of protection and there number is a small proportion of the population, in Romania a legal and institutional system exists and it well defined.

6. Conclusions

There is no definition, model or theory of integration accepted generally, integration is a controversial concept. Seen from a macro perspective, integration refers to a

characteristic of the social system, of the society as a whole, to the intensity of the relations settled between the components (groups and individuals). In recent years, the concept of social cohesion was used as an equivalent for integration, seen as a feature of society. In addition, integration can be seen from a group or individual perspective, meaning that all groups and persons show a certain degree of integration in a given society. What does it mean to be integrated in a society? From my own perspective, it is a feeling of good, satisfaction in relationships with the other members of the society - individual dimension, a dimension related to the collective perception, the perception of the others regarding your own integration in the society, fulfilling the criteria or standards believed to be "normal" in that society (for example, respecting the law, job, speaking that language etc.), to be a part of the values, shared believes in that collectivity (to take part in the culture of its members), in other words, to become similar in thinking and behaviour with the other members of the society. From this perspective, the politics regarding integration reflect the collective dimension, the society's expectations and it is different from the actual integration process, a process which is individual.

From analysis, I have selected a work definition of integration [1], which, in my opinion, shows the best what we had presented above, definition which mentioned than an individual or a group are integrated in a society when:

- the get results in domains like the labour market, housing, education, health etc comparable with the ones obtained by the society members;

- have contacts, active relations with their own ethnic or national group members, members of the host-community or public functionaries;

- have a sufficient level of security and linguistic and cultural abilities which allow them to function normal in the society and

- have the feeling of security, stability and confidence in the society and its members.

Taking into account this definition, we can observe four mechanisms of integration in a society, mechanisms related one to another:

1. placing in the host-society structure (on the labour market, educational system, health care, cultural life, politics etc.);

2. second socialization (gathering knowledge and new cultural models);

3. interaction with the members of the host-society (friendship, love, marriage);

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[1] Ager, Alastair; Strang, Alison (2004), *Indicators of Integration*, Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh

4. identification with the values of the host-society (cognitive and emotional), building up a common social identity.

During this work, I tried to develop an explicative model regarding the integration of immigrants, so: these people that come to continue their life in another country bring with them a certain capital, meaning economical, social, cultural resources and their own life experience marked by the exile experience, forced in the case of the refugees and encounter a new social reality, different from the one in their country of origin, a social reality which imposes her own goals to achieve for members through specific means and ways of behaviour in the day to day life. In addition, through the politics of that state, immigrants can access a set of rights and obligations which influence directly the process of integration in that society. Understanding the concept of immigrants and refugees' integration supposes a multidisciplinary approach, the sociological, psychological, juridical perspectives being interdependent and leading together to a better understanding of the phenomenon.

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ACCESS OF THE YOUNG TO HOMES: SOCIAL EFFECTS AND DETERMINER FACTORS

*Iulian STĂNESCU**

Abstract: The problem of dwellings, although accepted as social problem in the 90s, failed to reach that level of centrality required to get sufficient attention from the authorities. The opportunity of the problem of dwellings to become a manifest issue, that is to say an active attitude, a will to act, added to the formal acknowledgement of the problem, is better within the current context. The process of European pre-accession and the economic revival after 1999 sparked expectations for a better life which now seem to be accomplishable. Although it involves much higher costs of transaction, the dwelling is no longer just a traded good. It is perceived as the "ideal" investment, with a minimum of innovating effort and maximum of rewards, it provides the essential opportunity for a normal life, within the society, according to the European social pattern of a society able to confront risks.

Key words: quality of life, social exclusion, household/dwelling, birth rate, public funds

Introduction

This study wants to offer a diagnosis to the housing problem for young, on four coordinates: (1) effects, (2) magnitude, (3) generating factors and (4) prognosis of the future dynamic.

Identifying and estimating the dimension of the effects allows an answer to the question if we can really talk about a social problem. We must see in which degree the phenomenon, through its effects, beyond the level of consciousness regarding the public opinion, is in fact a problem.

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Estimation and magnitude requires developing and using a set of indicators. So, a prime obstacle is, in fact, the construction of these indicators which can offer a precise image of the problem. After this we can move to estimation, on more dimensions, of the magnitude of the problem. First, there is a difference between the component demand and the component offer, because houses are an integrate part of the real estate market. On another dimension, we encounter thing which belong to the amount of financial resources, public ones and from the private sector, especially banking, of a physical number of locative unities built and their classification and, last but not least, of the potential of the demand and of the offer.

The factors and conditions which generate the problem have a high importance because they imply building and the dynamic of the problem. After the factors' identification and listing, an estimation can be made of the presence and magnitude, so that we can reach a dynamic's prognosis. On the base of this prognosis of the factors and problem's dynamic and the way in which it is realized, a prognosis of the problem's dynamic in the future is possible.

A real social problem?

The population's definition of a problem as being real does not mean that the problem is real as a social fact. Phenomenon of manipulation can appear at all times of the public opinion. From this reason, an analysis of the social effects is needed, in which the dimensions and their magnitude can offer as an answer (Zamfir, 2006). The first stage will be listing and discussion of the relevance of the social effects. In the second stage, we will watch the dimensions and dynamic in the transition period.

Indicators of the social effects

Social problems regarding the deficit of homes for young generates is a degradation in life quality (Mărginean and Bălaşa, 2004) and a growth of the risk of social exclusion of a person. Having a home, property or rent, equivalents with entering on the path of some means and opportunities for a normal life and developing the human abilities of a person. Lacking a home is an extreme case of social exclusion (Dan, 2004). On the other hand, assuring the access to decent conditions of habiting is one of the benefits offered by the social state or of the occidental wellness (Cace, 2004).

Operating the component which implies housing in social inclusion and life quality is a difficult intercession. Regarding social inclusion, Romanian Government adopted HG no. 488/2005 regarding the acceptance of the national system of indicators of social inclusion. Annex 2 of the decision contains tertiary indicators, specific for Romania. In section (3) "Living conditions" we encounter subsection (3.5) "Overcrowding ", with the indicator "number of people who live in overcrowded

houses", defined as the rated report between the number of people who live in establishments with more than two people in a room and the total of population.

Regarding wellness and life quality, Eurostat gives in the Annually European statistic (2005) a series of 5 indicators, of which we mention (1) *establishment weight which occupy overcrowded houses,* the latter being defined as more than one person in a room, (2) *the number of rooms/person judging by the means of occupation of the house* (owner, tenant or total) and (3) *weights of establishments which have in property the house in which they live.* Unfortunately, for the latter indicator, known as home ownership rate, there is no mechanism in collecting data in Romania. We know that more than 97% of the house fund is private property. (INS, 2005)

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EurLife) does research on "Life Quality in Europe", the last one being from 2003. Among used indicators there also is the number of persons per room of living (Mărginean, 2004).

Another effect of lacking houses for young is the decrease of wedding rate. Results of sociological research on young people have shown that the main problems in making a family depend on socio-economical factors, the first one being the lack of a home. Other factors, such as not finding a partner or parent's rejection, are secondary (Mărginean, 2004).

The inability to have a home leads to a decrease in birth rate (Ghețău, 2004). This phenomenon has complex causes, but the socio-economical factors are very important, taking into consideration the need of financial resources implied by the increasing number of members in an establishment.

The dimension of effects

Regarding the weight of persons who live in overcrowded places, according to the population and house Census from 2002, the number of persons living in establishments with more than two people per room was of 4.038.942 persons from a total population at that time of 21.345.033. Therefore, the values of this indicator is of 18,9 %. If we compare to the European standard of defining overcrowded houses, which is more than one person per room, the data from the 2002 Census show a total of 13.156.953 persons, meaning 61,63 % of the population (INS, 2003).

Table 1 - Overcrowded houses in Romania (2002 Census)

Standard	No. persons	Weight in total population
Romania: More than 2 persons/room	4.038.942	18,9%
EU: More than 1 person/room	13.156.953	61,63%

Source: INS 2003.

For the number of rooms/person judging by the way of occupying a home(owner, tenant or total) there are no data in the Census, only in what implies the total number of rooms (18.577.189) and the total number of persons (21.345.033). Therefore, the value of this indicator is 0,87 per person. In comparison, The Annually European statistic 2005 indicates an European average of 2 with 1,4 rooms/person, and the highest are in the Holland Kingdom, 2,6 rooms/person.

The value of the indicator regarding the number of people per room of living in Romania was of 1,14, according to data from the 2002 Census. Research in "Life quality in Europe "of EurLife gives a value of 1,1 to this indicator for Romania in 2003. In comparison, the EU average -15 is of 0,7 persons/room, of EU-25 is 0,8 persons/room and AC-13 (plus Turkey) 1,2 persons/room. The lowest value for this indicator is in Great Britain and Belgium, with 0,5 each. The maximum is 1,5 in Poland, and higher levels than Romania are in Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania (Mărginean, 2004).

Wedding rate (the number of weddings at 1000 inhabitants) was decreasing until 2002, when 5,92 weddings were registered at a thousand people. The rebirths of economy and improvement in life quality have stimulated a faint increase in wedding rate until levels comparing with the '90. On the other side, young people postpone the wedding moment, especially due to material restrains, reaching an average wedding age of 28,3 years at men and 25 for women.

Table 2 - Wedding rate in Romania, 1990-2004

Year	Wedding rate	Year	Wedding rate
1990	8,3	1998	6,46
1991	7,9	1999	6,23
1992	7,7	2000	6,05
1993	7,1	2001	5,80
1994	6,8	2002	5,92
1995	6,8	2003	6,16
1996	6,7	2004	6,61
1997	6,5		

Source: INS, 2005

Birth rate has dropped after 1990, Romania having a negative increment since 1991. In this context, the Demographic Research Center "Vladimir Trebici" of the Romanian Academy developed a study, under the coordination of Vasile Ghețău, named *Will the population of Romania reach less than 16 million inhabitants in 2050?* From this hypothesis, three scenarios emerge for Romania at the middle of the XXI century. The increase of addiction rate towards elderly will take place despite the fertility evolution, but on the average variants (juncture index of fertility 2,1 in 2050) and

upper (juncture index 2,1 in 2020); would mean that a total population of 20,2 million, 22,09 million in 2050, means a more sustainable addiction rate to elderly (Ghețău, 2004).

Table 3 - Birth rate in Romania, 1990-2004

Year	Birth rate	Year	Birth rate
1990	13,6	1998	10,5
1991	11,9	1999	10,4
1992	11,4	2000	10,5
1993	11	2001	9,8
1994	10,9	2002	9,7
1995	10,4	2003	9,8
1996	10,2	2004	10
1997	10,5		

Magnitude estimation

Regarding the estimation of the problem's magnitude (lack of) homes for young, we will use a series of indicators which could offer a multidimensional image. The dimensions taken into account are: (1) stock and house construction, (2) financing, (3) prices and credit access and (4) estimation of the deficit of homes. This last item is the troubling one because it supposes gathering up partial indicators in a global indicator, with an approximate value.

Measurable indicators: stock and home construction, financing, access to credit lines, home deficit estimation

(1) The first category opens with stock and home funds, which represent the total number of permanent homes, vacant or occupied, on a determined period of time. Data regarding this indicator are available in the Romanian Statistic Yearbook. Its relevance comes from the dynamic in time and from the structure of property. Homes from state funds can be used as social homes which young people could rent.

Houses finished in a year are those homes which did not exist priory and their elements, plus foundation, had been built for the first time and to which all the categories of projects had been made and received by the beneficiary. This indicator has a special importance regarding the house offer on the market, with the remark that the statistics do not give information on the proportion of the ones in their own overheads or the ones built by entrepreneurs for sale. Statistic Yearbook gives data

regarding the classification on the number of rooms and financial resources, public or private and of the weights of average denizen. Other data can be obtained through public information of the resort ministry, in this case, MTCT, upon the locative unities received on categories of governmental programs.

The absolute number of building authorizations released for buildings allows the estimation of the offer's dynamic on a short and average term, on average denizen. In addition, it gives a quite sure image of the growing or decreasing tendency of building new houses regarding the prior periods. Such data are available in the monthly casts of INS. Still on the short term dynamic, but from the demand's point of view, we have the volume of new orders in construction in millions of lei, current prices. This information also comes from the monthly casts of INS.

Houses in execution depend on the quantity of the new built house offer which will enter the market soon. This information also comes from the monthly casts of INS.

(2) The second category includes financing aspects of house constructions. In the public sector exist statistics referring to public expenses on houses, found in the service and public development and houses category. (Văcărel, 2003). These expenses can be expressed in current prices, weights in PIB, constant prices 1990 (GDP deflator) or convertible quotations, at the average course from that year. A problem would be the fact that the expenses weight on houses besides other public services- drainage, water supply, connection to gas etc. - is not precisely shown in the statistic regarding the execution of city's budget and local budgets from the Statistic Yearbook. Another problem is the opacity of the extra-budgetary funds in general and the imprecise existence of house constructions. State budget law from 2007 gives useful statistic data on the MTCT expenses in 2005, appointments for 2006, 2007 and estimation for 2008. We must remember that all the public expenses are included in the offer of financing.

Regarding private financing, we must distinguish different means-real estate credits or mortgage, real estate leasing, other financial products-and the fact that BNR data do not offer a weight in offer financing, natural person looking for a house, on offer financing, meaning loans for constructors who than sell the finished houses. The total value of the real estate credits can be expressed in lei current prices. Regarding real estate leasing, it is more for office constructors who do not have a well defines juridical frame, which can protect the user in case the leasing company goes in bankruptcy and entering the list of creditors of his debtor, thus appearing the situation in which you can loose the real estate good.

(3) Regarding the third category, house prices and access to credits, we will try to bring some estimations of the dynamic of house prices and bank's credit conditions. The amount of mortgage rates can be compared to the average incomes, in order to

see the degree of access to credits and, as a consequence, to homes opened for all young people.

(4) Estimation of the housing deficit for young is a key-problem in offering an image of the magnitude of the problem and it can be made in two ways, which do not exclude one another. The first one would be starting from the weight of young who live with their parents and they represent, generally speaking, the net demand for houses. Of course, we must take into consideration the fact that some of them live in the same establishment with their parents, but in different houses, or the space and/or conditions of living are an advantage, so they do not have an immediate interest in finding a place. The representative answers and surveys made on the young population by ICCV (1994) and CSCPT (1996-2006) and the data regarding Romanian population on age categories from the Yearbook, we can see an approximate number of young people who are in search for a home. The disadvantage of this action is neglecting other categories which are included in the demand for houses, such as evacuated tenants from nationalized houses or people included in the demands for social homes, over 35-38 years. The second way would be using the indicator for the number of houses built on 1000 inhabitants. The comparison of this value with the west-European states could give us a clear image on the deficit of homes at a national level and, so, of the demand of all categories, including young people.

Estimation of the problem' dimensions

The house fund dynamic in the transition period has two aspects. The first one implies the decisions taken in 1990 regarding the selling toward population, at a medium price (Zamfir, 1999). In 1989, the stock of private properties was of 67%, raising to over 97% in 2001. The liquidation of most of the stock was made between 1990-1991, through the Law - Decree no. 61/1990 (Dan, 1998). The negative effects of this measure were felt to the end of the decade, when extreme social problems appeared regarding houses (The tenants from nationalized houses, social cases, young), and the state did not have supply funds or financial capacity to build houses at least at a quarter of the level in 1989 (Noica, 2003).In parallel, the house crisis was enflamed by the speculation of these distortions and of the incomplete information on the market, meaning that the real estate investments which seek sure incomes from renting and a way of investing "grey" or "black" money which would loose trace in houses' price increase (Dan, 2006).

Table 4 - House fund, regarding the property form
(thousand locative unities, 1991-2006)

Property Type	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
State Majority	1603	867	707	609	565	515	449	412	392	380	212	203	202	199	204	206
Private Majority	6056	6816	7003	7140	7217	7296	7388	7448	7493	7528	7895	7926	7950	7977	8005	8024

Therefore, from 1991-trimester 3 of 2006, the house fund increased with 6,93%, with a different dynamic on property forms. The state fund decreased continuously until 2004, after which it experienced a slight growth. In 2006, the state had only 12,8% of the number of houses from 1991. On the other hand, the majority private house fund increased with 32,49%.

The total number of finished houses in 1990-2005 was of 504.129 locative unities, of which 358.182 (71,04%) from private funds, 141.672 (28,3%) of public funds, and the rest (0,64%) from other resources.

House construction from public funds experienced a high decrease. Only in 1990 the total finished houses was comparable with 1989 (with about 2000 locative unities less), but out of inert considerations. The financial crisis of the sector meant the backing of the state from the house domain. The state built 75% of the houses during 1990-2005 in the first 6 years after revolution. On denizen averages, the urban represented more that 95% of the built houses.

State implication through the construction of individual houses in property would be stopped by the year 2008, according to budget state law on 2007. In 2007, ANL would receive financing only for finishing the current projects. We will come back upon the action directions when we talk about budget financing in 2007-2008. As number of locative unities built by the state, the most important problem is the one with BCE for the construction of 30.000 houses for young in the future years, followed by programs for finishing blocks started under the old regime (GO nr. 19/ 1994) and building social homes (Law nr. 114/1996).

Table 5 - Houses built out of public funds

House Type	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total, of which	42754	21250	13727	10851	10809	8970	4015	3494	2915	1750	1158	1285	2956	6086	4903	5749
In rural	2373	772	472	802	251	190	82	134	60	137	91	42	143	136	119	504

Source: INS, 2005-2006

Starting with 1993, the private sector takes the lead in building houses in Romania. But, starting with 2004, the annual rhythm of completed houses will stay around 25.000 locative unities. Only by 2005 the number has gone over 30.000 unities per year. The average denizen situation shows a predominance of the built houses from population funds in rural. The probable explanation for this fact, tied of the high number of rooms, would be that a large amount of the houses from the "country side " are holiday homes, villas or residential establishments like the "Green Paradise", that are juridical in townships, but the owners come from the urban. In this case, the house is the second or third per establishment, but the general data from the Yearbook does not allow a detailed research of the situation. Many constructors try to avoid enormous prices for lands in big cities in order to get attractive prices for houses, so they choose to build outside the cities. In 2004-2005, a balancing tendency has been noticed of the urban-rural report, because of the explosion of mortgage credit and the entrance on market of some companies dedicated to built residential urban assemblies.

Table 6 - Houses built from private funds

Year	Total	Urban - nr.	Rural - nr.	% Urban	% Rural
1990	5779	1092	4687	18,9	81,1
1991	6438	1301	5137	20,2	79,8
1992	13811	2581	11230	18,7	81,3
1993	19219	4774	14445	24,8	75,2
1994	25896	7430	18466	28,7	71,3
1995	26744	6219	20525	23,3	76,7
1996	25201	5808	19393	23,0	77,0
1997	26149	6896	19253	26,4	73,6
1998	26550	7323	19227	27,6	72,4
1999	27256	8244	19012	30,2	69,8
2000	24703	7697	17006	31,2	68,8
2001	25300	7825	17475	30,9	69,1
2002	24398	8408	15990	34,5	65,5
2003	22910	8415	14495	36,7	63,3
2004	25160	11027	14133	43,8	56,2
2005	32668	16619	16049	50,9	49,1
Total	358182	111659	246103	31,2	68,7

Source: INS, 2005-2006.

Table 7
The relative structure of newly built houses in Romania, according to the number of rooms (1990-2004)

Nr. of rooms/ year	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
1 room (%)	16,6	15,0	11,2	9,7	10,7	9,8	9,1	7,1	6,5	7,3	6,0	6,3	9,4	11,6	10,7
2 rooms (%)	32,0	31,0	27,7	28,4	28,1	29,8	27,0	25,9	27,1	25,9	24,4	24,0	23,5	25,3	24,1
3 rooms* (%)	51,4	54,0	61,1	61,9	61,1	60,4	63,9	67,0	66,5	33,4	33,2	32,0	29,7	25,4	25,1
4 rooms and over (%)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	33,4	36,4	37,7	37,4	37,26	40,1
Average nr. of rooms/house	--	--	--	--	2,90	2,93	3,33	3,07	3,03	3,02	3,10	3,10	3,05	3,0	3,03
Total of new houses	48.599	27.958	27.538	30.071	36.743	35.822	29.460	29.921	29.962	29.517	26.376	27.041	27.772	29.125	30.127

Source : INS, 2005.

Note : -- missing data, until 1999, the category was referring at 3 rooms and more.

Regarding the finished houses after the number of rooms, the ones with 3 rooms or more dominate. Introducing the category of 4 rooms or more in statistic reports starting with the year 1999, changed the data of the problem. Starting with 2000, this becomes the main category of newly built houses, so that it can be inferred on an implicit area if living and on the market domination of the persons with above average incomes, who could and can afford such houses. On the other hand, we must keep in mind the fact that a part of these houses have self government, so a part of the costs imply the average profit of the constructor are put apart ; but such an action supposes financial resources, even for hiring labour force, so a certain position in the frame of social stratification.

The number of authorizations released between the years 2005 and 2006 (until November plus) show an increasing tendency of 4% for residential buildings (exclusively collectivities), 14% for establishments of the residential buildings and 31 % for residential buildings for collectivities. The first category still dominates the rural environment, especially the individual buildings with one establishment. In the second category we notice a tendency towards urban. Naturally, authorized projects for residential buildings in collectivities are almost all of them in the urban environment.

Table 8 - Released construction authorizations for buildings (houses), 2005-2006

Category	2005			2006		
	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
Authorizations for residential buildings(exclusively the ones for collectivities)	17.874	25.668	43.542	19.064	25.884	44.948
- of which for individual buildings with one establishment	17.179	25.520	41.699	16.256	27.490	43.746
Establishments from residential buildings for which authorizations had been released	23.856	25.939	49.795	30.852	26.209	57.461
Authorizations for residential buildings for collectivities	97	6	103	11	138	149

Source: INS, 2005-2006

Note: The 2006 data are until November plus.

There were 100.688 unities in course of construction until the end of November 2006, of which most of them are still in the emerging phase of being finished. In December 2005, the number of unities in course of execution was slightly lower, just 91.240 unities. Over 75% locative unities with subventions or budget funds are going to be finished.

Table 9 - Houses in course of execution, 2005-2006

Year /Category	Total	Of which:			
		Finished and unreceived	In course of finishing	Structure execution	Foundation execution
2005	92240	2369	36584	31387	21650
2006	100668	2983	39615	33116	24954
Din care:					
2005 – budget subventions	14230	2292	4584	4451	2903
2006 – budget funds	11858	2381	3511	3312	2654

Source: INS, 2005-2006.

Note: 2006 data are until November plus.

The volume of new house demands, reported by constructors for residential buildings, reached 3,158 billion lei, the equivalent of more than 900 million euro in 2005. On the first three trimesters of 2006, the volume of demands for residential buildings was of 2,896 billion lei, the equivalent of about 850 million euro, and twice the value registered in the same period of the prior year (INS 2006). In other words, the construction of residential buildings is in a stage of boom.

(2) Financing the construction of houses was provided by private sources. Public financing for constructing buildings was made through state budget, the costs category "state establishment and houses" between 1990-1995 moved, because of changes in construction category of budget costs, towards "services and public development, houses, environment and water". Houses do not have a subcategory of their own and functional classification of public budget expenses, being united with services of public development (Văcărel, 2003). Therefore, the exact weight of budget expenses on houses cannot be determined. In the case of local budgets, house expenses have followed the same course in the general plan of expenses' category.

Table 10 - The GDP (PIB) weight of public expenses - public services, houses, environment, waters (State and local budget), 1991-2004

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
BS	0,03%	0,03%	0,14%	0,26%	0,26%	0,20%	0,16%	0,18%	0,25%	0,24%	0,22%	0,28%	0,33%	0,31%
BL	1,28%	1,94%	1,59%	1,49%	1,76%	1,71%	1,60%	1,48%	1,60%	1,49%	1,54%	1,37%	1,75%	1,32%
Total	1,31%	1,98%	1,73%	1,74%	2,02%	1,91%	1,76%	1,66%	1,85%	1,73%	1,76%	1,65%	2,09%	1,63%

In the case of budget expenses, the GDP weight of expenses in the services and public development, houses category is very close to the one only for houses. The

main coordinator of credits was MLPAT, until January 2001, followed by The Minister of Transports and Constructions (MTCT).

Table 11 - Budget on MTCT programs (sections) on fiscal year 2007- million lei

Program	Made in 2004	Made in 2005	Program 2006	Program 2007	Estima-tions 2008	Estima-tions 2009	Estima-tions 2010	Total
Finishing flats from buildings started before 01.01.1990, according to GO nr. 19/1994								
Total program	30,3	10,05	12	19	14	9,1	2	96,4
State budget	30,3	10,05	12	19	14	9,1	2	96,4
Building individual houses in the property of ANL(mortgage credit)								
Total program	19,1	22,8	20	4,8				66,84
State budget	19,1	22,8	20	4,8				
Building social houses according to Law nr. 114/1996								
Total program	8,4	3,2	10	22,8	10,5	6,1	15,6	76,6
State budget	8,4	3,2	10	22,8	10,5	6,1	15,6	76,6
Building houses for young, for rent								
Total program	400,89	166,5	248,7	314,7	548,4	294,5	383,9	2357,8
State budget	155,2	148,3	173,7	101,4	130,7	148,2	145,2	1002,8
Foreign Loans	245,6	18,2	75	213,3	417,7	146,3	238,7	1355
Houses of necessity								
Total program	3,5	9,9	3,9	2,5				19,8
State budget	3,5	9,9	3,9	2,5				19,8
Giving bonuses according to Law nr. 541/2002 regarding gaining and credits in the collective system for locative domain								
Total program		8,1	23,7	23,7	23,9	24,2	24,4	128,2
State budget		8,1	23,7	23,7	23,9	24,2	24,4	128,2
National program regarding support in building personal property houses according to OUG nr. 51/2006								
Total program				3	5	10	15	33
State budget				3	5	10	15	33

Source: State budget law, 2007.

In local budgets, the weight of local public costs in GDP from above does not reflect the house component, because most of the investments from the functional category mentioned above go to investments on local infrastructure- roads, severage, water. In addition, we notice this through the low number of houses built from public funds in general.

For the period 2005-2008, we should look at the budget on programs regarding house constructions of MTCT, after how it is shown in budget law on the fiscal year 2007, through a series of programs included in multiannul budget planification. The first one implies finishing houses (blocks) remained unfinished until the old regime, according to GO nr. 19/1994. The total on 2007 is of about 5,5 million euro, and the estimated total on 2004-2010 is of 28,35 million euro. The second program will be finished in 2007, implying the direct construction of houses by ANL. According to the program of government, the Executive choosed to not distorsionate the market by building for sale of ANL. The last part of this program on 2007 represented 1,4 million euro and a total on 2004-2007 reaches 19,5 million euro. Building social homes according to Law nr. 114/1996 continues until 2007-2010, having planificated expenses of 6,7 million euro in 2007 and a total of 22,5 million in the years 2004-2010. The house building program is for renting to young and it is the biggest one financed by MTCT regarding houses, beneficiating from an external loan gived by BCE of 140 million euro. In this program the local councils take part, loanning and in supporting a part of the costs. In 2007, 91 million euro are given, the program beeing of, in 2007-2010, 453 million euro. The construction of necessity buildings program stops in 2007, when it has 730000 euro. Giving state bonuses according to Law nr. 541/2002 is of 7 million euro in 2007 and 28,2 million euro on 2007-2010. Finally, giving subvencions according to GUO nr. 51/2006 totalised cost of 9,7 million euro on 2007-2010.

Beyond the support, through budget-fiscal policy regarding financial support of house demands, most of the financial flow from the bank market comes from the bank domain. In November 2006, credit institutions from the Romanian Market were of real estate credits given to various debitors, physical persons or not banking juridical ones, of 3,46 million euro. The weight in which the money is distributed to buy or construct real estate residential values, through supporting the demand by giving credits to those who want to buy a home, in other words through supporting the demand or offer, we cannot know it only on the base of these data.

Table 12 - Giving credits and promises of credit institutions (million lei), 2001-2006

Category \ Year	U.M.	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Nov. 2006
Credits for real estate goods	mil. lei	388	798	2310	4791	7681	12211
	mil. euro	149,2	312,7	615,1	1182	2119,8	3465,6

Source: BNR, 2006

(3) Regarding prices and access to mortgage / real estate credits, a comparison is needed between the costs that involve the market interest and financial resources of the young with average incomes, but who need a home.

Banks offer mortgage credits which cover 75% of the price of the house, and the interest varies according to the circulation medium in which the credit is, and especially, the credit's period. As an example, in case of a 37.000 euro credit, to buy a single room flat comfort I in the capital, monthly rate (on 25 years) is of 255-300 euro (Dan, 2006). According to INS, the average income at a national level reached 908 lei. Supposing a higher level of salary in the capital with 20%, we reach maximum 110 lei, which covers about 75% of the monthly rate, so not enough for current expenses. For a single person, access to a mortgage credit for a single rooms flat equivalents with having the salary at least with 50% higher than the medium one, more than 1500 lei. In case on a couple, the same not favourable report maintains if they want a flat with two rooms, in the conditions in which the European standard of overcrowding is more than one person in a room.

Although credit rates, even in the most suited conditions, are high enough for most of the young who are at the beginning of their career, house prices maintain at a very high level. Even in the conditions of increasing costs indicators regarding constructions, which have reached 107,9 at materials and 109,5 at residential buildings at the end of the third trimester in 2006 than a year ago (INS 2006), therefore above inflation rate, prices do not show signs of dropping.

This means that we can talk about a source of the phenomena of social polarization of the locative criteria, having as base incomes, mostly people's salaries. Unfortunately, there is no indicator that can show the current situation. On the data from the Ministry of Finances and ANAF, plus data regarding taxes on buildings and terrains of fiscal administration and local councils, we can build a correlation indicator with having in property one or more houses.

(4) The explanation for high prices on the real estate market can be only the existence of a structural deficit between demand and offer, with pressures of price increasing because of the imperfect knowledge and opacity of the market. In the above mentioned, we tried to form an image of the offer of houses in the last 16 years. As seen, the house stock has increased only with 6%, the annual growing rhythm stopping at less than 30.000 unities on state. Meanwhile, new generations of young left learning institutions and entering the labor market.

Problem: indicator of the house deficit at a national level

Estimating the house deficit is the most synthetically form of estimating the magnitude of the problem. The first method of building such an indicator would start from the weight of young living with their parents. According to "Barometrului tinerilor"

research of CSCPT from the last years, 77,9 % from the interviewed ones in 2002 and 76 % of the subjects of the survey in 2004 showed that they live with their parents. According to data from Statistic Yearbook of Romania 2005, chapter 3 Population, the absolute number of those between 20-35 years is above 1.980.500. Taking into account the external migration effect of labour force from the last years, estimated at about 12 % of the population, a conservatory estimation of the young who are in the country, live with their parents and are looking for a place of their own would set the total of almost 1.950.000 persons. But, because most of them form couples, the real demand for a house could be estimated at being between 1.200.000 unities and 1.500.000. Such an estimation excludes the demand for social houses of the marginalized category, young who leave child care institutions, tenants from nationalized houses, marginalized persons, gypsies etc.

Another way to estimate the house deficit at a national level, without an estimation on the subcategory of vulnerable groups, would be using the indicator number of houses at 1000 inhabitants. Let us see how Romania is positioned from other EU states, but also from EU-15 and other ex-communist states which integrated in 2004-2007. According to the 2002 Census, in Romania where 8.107 houses at a population of 21.680.974, from which we conclude a value of 373 houses at 1000 inhabitants. In the same year, according to "Bulletin of Housing Statistics for Europe and North America" of The United Nations' Commission for Europe (UNECE), the average EU-15 was of 450 houses at 1000 inhabitants. In conclusion, Romania has a deficit from the European average of 76 houses at 1000 inhabitants, which means a total deficit of 1.647.754 locative unities.

Table 13 - Number of houses at 1000 inhabitants in Romania and other EU states (selection), 2002

Country	Year	Value
Austria	2002	408
Bulgaria	2002	471
Denmark	2002	472
Finland	2002	499
France	2002	503
Hungary	2001	407
Portugal	2002	502
Romania	2002	373
Slovakia	2002	320
Slovenia	2002	393
Spain	2001	510
UE-15	2002	450
Deficit EU - Romania	2002	76

Source: UNECE, 2003

Apart from other ex-communist states, Romania is at the same level with Slovakia (320), but lower than Slovenia (393) and far from Bulgaria (471). From this general deficit of 1,6 million locative unities, the segment of young's demand is the most numerous, raising at 75-90%.

Identifying the factors which generate/facilitate the house deficit

In the following, we will try to identify the factors that stood at the base or which contribute to the house crisis for young. Taking in consideration the short period of time passed by the beginning of the transition -17 years, the presence and influence of certain factors varied in time. Therefore, the first stage would be listing the factors which would be discussed about the way in which it affects this social problem. The second stage would be estimated the presence and variation of the magnitude in the period 1990-2006. Last but not least, we are taking into account the dynamic prognosis of the factors with the highest influence.

Determined factors

Decreasing in power of buying, real income of the population in the transition period is a vital factor which explains why most of the majority cannot afford a house (Dan, 2003; Dan, 2006). Although visible, this factor is not a cause-problem, but an effect of the phenomena/processes which shocked the society in transition. As indicators, we can use the dynamic of the real salary and the dynamic of inflation on the period 1990-2006. Inflation is also a monetary phenomenon, which affects the credit market, meaning that practicing real high positive interests, that draw back the demand and the offer. As a total, the economy drop from the '90 generated a period of national wealth compared, in relative terms, with the two world wars (Belli, 2001).

The drop of the economy lead to severe social problems-the loss of work places, poverty, marginalization –the increase of living costs, which excluded many from the chance of living in normal conditions (Zamfir et al., 2000).Without a functional economy, the development of the house offer is in difficulty. Enterprises do not have access to financing, there is no offer. The evolution of GDP, as a synthetic indicator of the economic evolution, reflects the recession periods and rebirth of economy.

The drop of economy put the state in difficulty, setting pressure on the fiscal incomes (Văcărel, 2001). In the case of the policy of living, the state's draw back from house building has the effect of limiting the offer and excluded wide groups from the chance of having a home. The state's draw back from economy and society can be followed through the weights of social expenses in GDP, and through financial pressures of avoiding not sustained public deficits.

The question if somehow the transition strategy itself, through not trying some options, acted as an obstacle which put the society and state on a single road, with one condition and no other alternative (Zamfir, 2004).

The need of following the transition strategy became the only possible way due to specific national economy restrains, which came from the old regime, external deficit crisis and difficulties in supporting the balance in external payments (Văcărel, 2001). The need to reduce the current cont deficit has been made on cut backs of the demand and not the growth of the internal offer. Therefore, the analysis of the cash flow allows evaluation of the financial stability of national economy, which is vital for an economical growth. The socio-economical problems specific in the '90 has root in the system crisis of command economy and society functioning of a soviet type in Romania (Ionete, 1993).

In the actual context, of relative economical stability, other factors appear which set pressure on the real estate market, generating that deficit of 1,6 million houses. Despite salary growth, inflation decrease and credit availability, the access to houses is easier. As we have seen, the offer barely replies to the rebirth of the demand. Here we can analyze objective factors, such as the cost of building materials, the lack of labor force and the high prices of terrains.

Presence and magnitude

From the house crisis perspective, we can talk about period between 1990-2006 in two separate stages, each with its own system of cause factors.

The first stage, 1990-2004, the most specific one for transition, is characterized through a pressure of drastic reduction of the demand and house offer. In comparison with the next decade, prices are very low, because of finding the market's balance, of which social costs was, as we have seen, overcrowded houses (table 1), so the drop in life quality started with a side of the phenomena of social polarization on the locative criteria. The two cause-problems of transition, at least as an effect on house crisis, were the system crisis of demand economy of soviet type and the crisis of external deficits.

Table 14 - Economical indicators of the external position of Romania 1981-1989, in million USA dollars

Indicator	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Payment of commercial balance	103	1814	1869	2310	1772	1680	2178	3850	2050
Payment of current account	-833	1040	1160	1719	1381	1395	2043	3922	2514
Total general cash flow	-1381	807	10	128	-317	612	1041	-285	1252
External debt	...	....	....	....	6830	6875	6272	2106	174

Source: Văcărel, 2001, BNR, 1991-1995

As other states, Romania loaned very much of the capital markets at the end of the '70, when credits very available because of the abundance of petrodollars. Credits have been made on short and medium term, with the goal of increasing industrial capacities, covering the market and to pay debts from exports. The financial crisis from after the second petrol shock (1979) and dollar appreciation because of the increase of interest of intervention of the Federal Reserve generated a demand reduction at a global economy level, which lead to massive difficulties for all the states which loaned money in the recent decade (LeRoy and Pulsinelli, 1987). Romania entered the situation of not being able to pay in 1982 (Văcărel, 2001). To repay the external debt, the only sources of finance were international trade and state's external claims. Pressure was being put on the commercial balance. In order to get a surplus of it, politicians took decisions regarding drastic reduction in imports, limitation of raw materials, materials and fuels for production, giving up imports for completion (High tech products which cannot be made in the country) and preoccupation for fabrication licenses and modern equipments. Such measures have affected only the competitiveness on medium and long term in industry and life quality.

After the 1989 revolution, the new government had an important cash reserve, but it was finished in less than a year because of import goods consumption (Văcărel, 2001). Therefore, at the end of 1989, payment balance shown, on the convertible division relationship, an active payment of 1,58 billion USA dollars, and on the clearing relationship of socialist states a passive payment of 0,16 billion transferable double. After a year, currency reserves from the whole banking system limited at 230 million dollars, the equivalent of almost a month from the import necessity (BNR, 2001).

Therefore, the Govern interfered and concluded the first agreement with the International Monetary Fund, receiving access to a financing if 772 million dollars. Other sources of finance attracted had raised the debt to 1,1 billion dollars at the end of the year (BNR, 1991-1995).

The agreement with IMF, as well as the ones that followed, took place from the necessity of being able to finance the chronically commercial deficit of Romania. The other option was to enter in incapacity to pay. For this, post-December governments tried to equilibrate the external payment balance through covering the deficit of the current account, meaning the situation in which the value of the goods and services of export is lower than the value of imported goods and services, through a surplus of the capital and financial account, meaning that this net sale of financial actives and materials (terrains) abroad. The foresights of the IMF agreement fixed the transition strategy, characterized by Cătălin Zamfir (2004) through the following elements:

   – taking over the neo-liberalism spirit of the '80;

- state draw back from restructuration and rebirth of economy;
- economy structure through fast and complete introduction of market economy mechanisms and privatization;
- supporting a social minimalist policy, according to neoliberal policy;
- the deficit of assuring rights and security of persons.

The economy has passed through two severe recessions, 1990-1992 and a long period of inflation, with two hyperinflation flares in 1991-1994 and 1997-1998 (Georgescu, 2001). As a result, the public expenses had been reduced drastic, in which the afferent ones to building houses. On the other hand, salary incomes cut down. In 2000, the real average salary was not even of 60% of the force of buying from 1990.

The second stage, which started in 2004, represents the rebirth of house demand. This fact was possible through a set of factors, rebirth of economy, economical growth and so the real increase of salary incomes in 2001-2004, a successful process of deflation and massive enters in foreign west - European capitals, especially banking, because of the European integration. Therefore, we reached the second part of 2004 to a nominal and real appreciation of lei from the main convertible divisions, euro and dollar. This fact was possible because of two factors: external fees of labour force in Romania who migrated to the west of the continent and enters of foreign capitals through direct investments and loans from the mother-society. We reached the situation in which the current account deficit, although increasing, is in surplus by the enters of capital on the financial account, so that we are taking part to net enters of currency on the Romanian market (BNR, 2004-2005). All these factors stimulate the consumption, mostly after a decade of restrains. Therefore, house demand exploded, in conditions in which the offer maintained the same rhythm of 30.000 locative unities per year. From here a strong contradiction and finding an equilibrium of the market at inaccessible prices for most of the young.

Three factors are decisive in house demand evolution, keeping the costs of a house high. To remember is the fact that they did not influence the first part of the transition. Moreover, despite then, it is easier to get finance for constructing houses; the problems have other nature.

(1) *The deficit if labour force*. As a result of the free circulation of people through visas for Shengen, over 3 million Romanians went in the Occident. Most of them occupied the on labour market the offer of labour force in the construction sector, jobs with low salaries and qualification (low skilled, low paid). Practically, the Romanian economy does not generate in an important amount new work places, as they raise the salaries of the already employed persons. This is a very dangerous fact for the construction domain, because labour force is more expensive and they

cannot afford easily, and raising salaries means cutting from the profit rate. Therefore, physic, there are not enough workers for a massive re-launch of house building, although the number of employees in constructions has increased with 13 %, as a result of the training effect given by the current economical growth.

Table 16 - Employed in constructions and in all the economy, 2004-2006 (thousands)

	Dec. 2004	July 2005	Dec. 2005	July 2006	Nov. 2006
Total employees in constructions	315,2	353,8	341,4	354,4	361,3
Total employees in economy	4398,3	4567,5	4501,2	4617,4	4603,4

Source: BNR, 2005-2006.

(2) The price of construction materials, especially the price of cement. In May 2005, The Competitor Council decided to punish the three producers of cement from the Romanian market, Lafarge, Holcim and Carpatcement with a penalty higher than 27 million euros, for concentrated practices if settling together the sale prices for cement. On 26 December 2006, the delegate minister for public works and territory design, Lazlo Borbely, accused the producers of cement from Romania that they have increased prices without justification with 15-20 %, taking advantage of the boom in constructions (Gândul, 2006).

(3) In conclusion, the third factor is related to the lack of terrains for residential constructions. The terrain concentration from around capital raised the prices very much, so that companies which want to build have difficulties in finding the favourable places. Therefore, many offers have appeared for new build constructions in Buftea, Chitila, Otopeni and other outskirt regions.

The prognosis of the actual factors

It was expected that the house problem for young to not know an improvement. The factors which influence the market - macro-economical conditions, the governmental strategy from the domain and the three factors that inhibit the rebirth of house offer (labour force, terrain price, cement price) - to remain on the same coordinates. In 2006, the economy raised over 7% in the context of severe external deficits. Romanian's net passives reached 57 billion Euros in September 2006, an the external debt on medium and long term 27 billion Euros until de end of November, The account's payment of the cash flow reached 8,8 billion, being totally covered by entries of 14,43 billion euro on the capital and financial account (BNR, 2006). So the component demand from the real estate market will continue to maintain high prices. Although the offer is increasing, according to the construction authorizations and

execution work (table 8 and 9), this is not meaningful. A growth of 10-15 % to an offer of 30.000 locative unities is too little in comparison with the deficit of 1, 6 million houses.

Conclusions: Prognosis of the problem's dynamic

The prognosis of the problem's dynamic for young can be made from two points of view, different, cut complementary. The first one is related to the fact that you must realize the problem, and the second in a more objective approach of the facing chances with a deficit of 1, 6 million houses.

More than a generation, access to a house has been a difficulty, although sometimes living conditions presented quality minuses (Zamfir, 1999; Dan, 2006).The two waves of recession and poverty which have marked the socio-economical evolution of Romania in transition, 1990-1992 and 1997-1999, have brought a series of social problems, in which the sudden slowing down of the construction rhythm of houses until an unimportant total.

To the half of the early decade, opinion studies shown that fact that house problem for young is one of the latent social problems of the Romanian society. The social effects of lacking a home, with the wide competition and other factors, made their presence felt- overcrowded constructed blocks in 1960-1980, the decrease in wedding and birth rate. Since then and until now, not being pleased of the government's activity in house domain have become constants of opinion surveys. In the '90, house problem for young did not pass the period of latent. The motive is that, although it is accepted as a social problem, other problems have entered manifest state, being then in the center. That "something", always more serious, without which other solutions could not exist, was in fact economy, but under certain names - transition or reform. With the passing of time resignation has appeared, as for many problems, because no matter what decision, many felt that the situation is following the same path. That is why the debate moved on finding the guilty ones, and not the causes, and the only challenger to the position of central economy was a struggle against corruption, as a form of shocking what was seen as a blocking in the system. Suiting the battle against corruption to real problems of the Romanian society reminds us of the naked king.

The chance of house problem to become a manifest one, meaning that the recognition should be followed by an active attitude, a will to act, is higher than the actual context. European integration and rebirth of economy after the year 2000 gave the start to a process in which aspirations for a better life do not seem real, like in the '90. In a degree, we can say that a continuous series of 8 years of economical growth gave more confidence in their strength. For now, individual solutions are

needed to house problem. The path towards a status of manifest problem consists in eliminating the resign of the society.

Objective approach can be made only by taking into account the new context of the Romanian economy. If, until 2002-2003, house problem was determined by the fundamental weakness of Romanian economy, external deficit, European integration can give a new reality. Paradox, external deficits still exist and are growing, but the Romanian economy has lost a part of the national character- and, through this, some vulnerability – in favour of a regional economy in the frame of the unique European market. The fundamental line of economy was taken over by the west-European capital (banking system, energy sector, telecommunication), and through these, neither supporting the external finances are nor a problem any more. Where does the house problem for young fits in the picture?

The 1,6 million deficit local unities at a national level can be reduced through the present rhythm of constructing houses, somewhere about 40.000 locative unities per year. Even in the conditions of a more sustainable growth of the construction rhythm from year to year of 10-20 %, the premises for a structural solving of the problem are missing. Here bifurcation appears. A possible scenario could show the fact that such a rhythm – in the limits given by the possibilities of construction firms and labor force to work, of the cement price and other materials and terrain speculation – is enough. Banks would give financial products to those worthy of them. So, it is possible to appear in Romania suburbs like the American ones, the calm societies, protected by formal or informal walls by the rest of the world which remained in the communist blocks. Of course, such a scenario encourages migration.

The second scenario implies, if not the centralization of the house problem, then at least placing it as a manifest problem, as close as possible from centrality. Present, the conditions of a dysfunctional market are here, with the lack of transparency and information, which brings transactional costs more higher for almost all the ones involved. The house is no more just an ordinary good subjected to transaction, or it is perceived as the ideal investment, with the minimum of innovative effort and the maximum in reward, but the essential part of the chance to have a normal life, to be included in society, according to the European social model of a society capable to face risks, with a solid social contexture. The meaningful decrease of the 1, 6 million houses deficit does not imply just a governmental policy rigorously conceived, elastic in means, but a living policy from the urban development perspective.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF CHILDREN LEFT HOME AFTER THEIR PARENTS' DEPARTURE ABROAD TO WORK

Cătălin LUCA*

Abstract: Within the context of the transition period in Romania a new phenomenon was noticed, which was generated by the migration in search of a job. This phenomenon is described by the changes in the emotional and social life of the children affected by the migration of their parents. The article shows the adverse effects on child development caused by the absence of one or both parents, as well as their reaction of adaptation to the new situation. The symptoms manifested by the child trying to cope with this situation are varied (anxiety, sleep disturbances, instability, poorer school performance or school failure, depressive manifestations, altered behaviour) and they require specific therapy focused on the active involvement of the child.

Key words: migration, child rights, social coping, psychosocial counselling

General data about the problem of migration through work

The period of transition in Romania gave course to the migration phenomena in search for a place to work. The departure of some family members to other work markets in other countries and living from their gained incomes has become the solution for improving life quality and a lifestyle for many Romanians. Parents who decide to go and work abroad form young families (age between 25-45 years) with two or three children, usually organized, coming from the rural and urban. The desire of a considerable income drives parents to place secondly the children, so the united

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families, organized, in which everybody properly fulfilled his role, become disorganized families, brought apart[1]. Studies show[2] that almost 800.000 children, of a total of 5 million in Romania, had been somehow affected by the migration of their parents. The children's interdiction to see their parents can lead to changes in the emotional and social life.

Neglecting- the situation of children who have their parents departure to work abroad

Studies[3] made on children who have parents' departure to work abroad show that, in the cases of children left home alone, the absence of parents for a long time can have negative effects upon his growth.

The absence of one or both parents can be associated with a series of problems or with not fulfilling a basic need of a child. Thus, children who have their parents' departure to work abroad and are not being cared for by an adult who can answer to his needs of growth and development are neglected children[4].

The forms of neglecting children often met are:

– food neglect (abridgement of food, the absence of one or more categories of aliments essential for growth, unregulated meals etc.);

– clothes neglect (the child is dressed with improper clothes for that season, the clothes are to small or too big, dirty clothes);

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[3] The study Children's situation left without caring after migration, UNICEF Moldova and CIDDC, Moldova Republic, 2006

[4] Child neglect is defined in Law nr.272/2004 as being the voluntary or involuntary omission of a person who is responsable for caring, nursing and educating the child of taking any measure applied to this responsability, fact which is life threatening, threats psyhical, mental, spiritual or socialdevelopment, body integrity, physical or psyhical health of the child.

- medical neglect (the absence of medical caring needed in case of an illness, skipping vaccines and medical inspection, not giving the medical treatment prescribed by the doctor etc.);

- education neglect (intellectual stimulation, the instability of the punish and reward system, the lack of language learning model, of cleaning, of guidance for pupil etc.);

- affectionate neglect (lack of attention, physical contacts, signs of affection and words of appreciation).

Neglecting a child brings upon him negative consequences in the social and emotional plan. Therefore, a neglect child can manifest an attitude of indifference of shyness towards things, situations or people which usually would make him curious, caught his interest and implication [1].He can also show commotion of his self esteem manifested through over-appreciation, under-appreciation, has no long term aspirations (he cannot project himself into the future) or has unrealistic aspirations [2].

Although, some studies[3] have identified positive aspects regarding the material improvement of children (improving living conditions, cell phone, computer etc.). Also, 34% of the children with both parents departure have travelled abroad; despite the 14 % of non-migrated children and 20% of the children with both parents departure have spent their summer holiday in 2006 abroad, at their parents.[4]

Adapting reaction[5] - clinical manifestation

Besides the difficulty in adapting to a new situation, to the situation in which the care, support and parental affection are not present under any certain and immediate form, the child confronts with a new situation, one of acute neglect. Faced with this new situation of general and acute neglect, the child's psychic shows a normal reaction to an event from the normal life, which is his abandon through the parents departure to work abroad, meaning that he is trying to adapt to new stressful life situations. The

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[4] Idem p.26

[5] It is defined in DSM IV as a state of suffering and emotional disorder whch affects the functioning and social performance, apperaring in a period of adapting to an important existential change or a stressful event.

adapting reaction is a clinical manifestation supposed to come after the life event of the departure and the risk factors from the child's proximity.

The symptoms shown by the child who is trying to adapt to this situation are various (anxiety, sleeping disorder, instability, decrease in school performance of a failure, depressive manifestations, behaviour disorders: robbery, flee …)[1].

Work experience with children home alone[2] like psychological theories of development show that, on the base of these forms of neglect, children with departure parents to work abroad can develop the following psycho- behaviour manifestations:

– deterioration of school demeanour (decrease of school performances, absents, the risk of dropping school, conflicts with teachers and colleagues), on the base of lacking parental authority and as a consequence of lacking long term aspirations.

– feelings of abandon, uncertainty, sadness, anxiety, depressive episodes, all due to missing their parents, of the need of parental affection, appreciation from parents and of some cognitive distortions.

– indifference, stubbornness, which can lead to an aggressive behaviour, as a result of frustration and need of attention. In the hard times they face, the child interprets the absence of his parents as a manifestation of their indifference to his needs and him.

– attention disorder (decrease of concentrating capacity in fulfilling tasks and "escape from reality"), the main object of thoughts being the departure parents, their situation, when they will speak, when are they going to receive packages etc.

– lack of long term aspirations (they cannot project themselves in the future) or unrealistic aspirations, determined by cognitive distortions such as: "In order to have money you don't have to learn", "When I will grow up I will ho abroad to work and for this you don't have to learn" etc. The apparition and development of these negative attitudes towards education is favoured by the models the parents show who, although they have upper studies, abroad do unqualified works.

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[1] Marcelli, Daniel, *Tratat de psihopatologia copilului,* Editura Fundației Generația, 2003, p. 450.
[2] From 2006, in Social Alternatines Association exists direct dervices of social and psychological assistance for children whose parents are gone abroad to work.Until december 2007, over 300 children have received services of social and psychological assistance

- disorder of self esteem :over-appreciation towards other children who do not have that much money or the same clothes, accessories they receive from abroad, or under-appreciation regarding the equal ones whose parents are present at all the important activities from their life (fests, school fests, anniversaries, parent meetings etc.).

- a low or high tolerance of frustration in a direct relationship with the adapting capacity of the child, with his self-defense mechanisms.

- lack of motivation, sadness (indifference towards what is around), tiredness (lack of energy, will to do cognitive efforts at school, to get involved in various free time activities proper for his age), or on the base of sadness, depressive episodes, or determined by having too many adult tasks.

- difficulty in adapting. After the parent's departure, children pass through a period of adapting to a new situation, to changes in their life. In the absence of a proper preparation from the parents or by the psychological advisors, children can develop in this period of adapting an acute reaction to stress or adapting reaction.

- delinquent behaviour (taking part in delinquent groups, aggressive behaviour, drug addiction, involvement in crimes, going in bars, game rooms etc.) is a way of supplying the needs of appreciation, attention and affection.

- suicidal demeanour. In 2006-2007 some suicidal cases have been registered[1] among children with parents gone abroad to work. From a psychological point of view, this type of suicide is included in the reactive exogenous suicide type.[2] This type of suicide requires factors and emotional-affective events with a psycho-trauma character, which appear in sudden reactions, linked to circumstantial conflicts of life that the individual neither is nor prepared to face. Children and adolescent suicidal impress through the fragility of the motivation, the fear of death specific to this age and the lack of realizing that this gesture is irreversible. To this category of age, the motivation analysis is hard, suicidal being often an act of imitation and the opposition towards a hard affective moment. Other determinant factors of suicidal [3] of children under 10 years, the puberty or adolescent are: fear or the feeling of abandon, fear of punishment,

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[1] Luca, Cătălin; Gulei, Alexandru-Stelian (coordonatori) (2007), *Metodologie - asistenţă socială, psihologică şi juridică a copiilor rămaşi singuri acasă ca urmare a plecării părinţilor la muncă în străinătate,* Asociaţia Alternative Sociale, Editura Terra Nostra, Iaşi.

[2] Romanian media transmitted in this period seven cases of children who comitted suicide.In the evidence left behind(good bye notes) revealed that the motive of taking his life was the fact that he could not stand animore the affective pain caused by missing the parents

[3] Scripacru, Călin (2007), *Suicidul,* Editura Sedcom Libris, Iaşi, p. 98.

fear of school failure, the impossibility of adapting to a new and difficult life rhythm, disorders in getting attached due to separation from the mother, which have created feeling of uncertainty and anguish, a history of early affective frustrations, an unwanted and abandoned child situation, disunity between the subjective representations and the external ones provided by mass-media which play an imitation role etc.

Risks that home alone children are exposed to

Overhead with tasks: taking the responsibilities of an adult: cooking, cleaning, laundry, payment of monthly fees, caring and nursing younger brothers or sisters etc.

Vulnerability to physical, psychical, sexual abuse, exploitation through work, child traffic and prostitution[1]. Sexual aggressors[2], recruiters or people dealers, persons who exploit children through labour choose their targets from the neglect children, unwatched.

Insufficient development of independent life abilities needed to face future difficulties as an adult: independence in taking a decision, trust in your own power, abilities of time and money management, control and expressing feelings, relations and communication etc.

Hard adoption of the ethical-moral norms: in the absence of a functional family model, of a safe and coherent environment, home alone children can adopt the affective neglect model of the original family and apply it as an adult.

Early start of sexual life: especially in puberty and adolescent they will seek the affection and appreciation they need not only in their group of friends, but also in intimate relationships[3]. The lack if an adequate education regarding the sexual life, the lack of attention, even tally living, high risk behaviour in contracting a sexual transmitted disease or even an unwanted pregnancy at a young age.

Possible psycho-social counselling themes for children who have their parent departure to work abroad

Missing your parents

Children who have their parent departure to work abroad miss them. The degree in which children feel this pain varies because of the age, level of comprehension, the

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[1] Idem p. 236.

[2] Pinheiro, Paulo Sérgio (2006), *World report on violence against women*, United Nation's Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children, p. 12.

[3] Nyman, Anders; Svensson, Borje (1995), *Boys sexual abuse and treatment,* Radda Barnen, Sthockholm, p.13-17.

age when he first left, attachment between child and parent before leaving, learnt and practiced ways of emotional expression[1] etc. Like any other suffering, missing your parents must be comforted and the child must learn proper ways of identifying, controlling and cope with this suffering. The advisor must support the child in expressing his emotions, help him to find ways of diminishing this suffering and communicate about his feelings with his parents. Children can have difficulties in recognizing their affective emotions and the adequate way of expressing them. In counselling home alone children, exercises of self-knowing, emotional expression, playing a role, keeping a diary, can be useful techniques which could help the child to better communicate with his parents. Writing letters, making postcards, drawings, collages and sending them through mail, doing projects that encourage communication between children and parents (example: "Describe the city in which you're parents are"), exchange of photos and films showing images from the child's and parent's life are few ways of alternative communication and maintaining a bond with parents which the advisor must promote by working with the child and his family.

The advisor must encourage the child and the departure parents to maintain a strong bond, trying all the available means of communication: phone, internet (e-mail, chat, webcam, which allows visual contact) written messages, letters etc.

Self-esteem

Home alone children can develop esteem disorders, as over-appreciation or under-appreciation of the person.

Over-appreciation can appear in the cases of children which receive a considerable amount of money and packages from their parents, so that, in comparison with other children of the same age, they have more money to spend, afford different articles of clothing, in style accessories etc. or leave together with the parents in holidays, abroad trips. Some children, in such situations, tend to show off their goods in front of the colleagues, friends of the same age, to manifest attitudes of superiority and bravery which could affect relationships with the others- colleagues, teachers, relatives etc.

Gifts of money or products sent by parents have more meanings: on one hand, gifts have the role of compensating the parent's guilt, being away from his children and, on the other hand, have the role of reassuring children of the parental affection.

In the process of conciliation, discussing pros and cons the children and family has after the parents leave is important.

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[1] The study Children's situation left without caring after migration, UNICEF Moldova and CIDDC, Moldova Republic, 2006.

A better material situation is not a negative thing, but there is the risk of developing some cognitive distortions regarding the value of money, of the role and importance education has and working to earn incomes (ex., "I don't need too many learning to succeed in life", "why learning; mom sends money and I will solve the problem with the passing of exams", "Nowadays, you cannot make it if you don't have money" etc.) The role of the advisor is to support the child in self-knowledge and in the development of a self image realistic and positive.

Under-appreciation can appear in the case of children that do not maintain constant relationships with the parents and a functional communication. These children are missing their parents, feel the need of giving and receiving affection and, in the absence of the parents, of their affection and watch, children feel abandon, inferior towards the other children, anger and disappointment towards parents. In the case of children who came from poor families, their feelings of inferiority are accentuated by the material loss. Children will encounter difficulties in identifying and recognizing these feelings and must be supported in forming a positive self image which would allow them to face the specific obstacles of the developing degree and school life. In working with children with a low level of self-esteem, self-knowledge exercises are very useful, exercises of discovering your own abilities and qualities, negative thoughts, cognitive distortions, which maintain a negative image about themselves. With the help of an advisor, children must understand that such thoughts about their own person influence their behaviour.

Children with a low self-esteem can adopt various behaviours, from excessive shyness, fear of interfering with others, inability to resolve tasks, low school performance, to attitudes of superiority, aggressive behaviours, absences, flee from home, smoking, alcohol, drugs, entering a group of friends with delinquent activities, infractions etc.

In situations in which among the factors that keep the low self-esteem are identified factors that are included in the immediate environment of the child (family, person who cares, school etc.), counsellors are recommended to approach the family members or the person who cares, form master or teacher, in order to explain to them the causes of his behaviour and advice them to adopt simulative attitudes and behaviours.

Pre-delinquent and delinquent behaviours

Developing independent life abilities and doing activities that require playing a role, social norms and positive reactions to certain situations can help children develop self-esteem, interact with others and determine them positive behaviours. Teaching a child how to control his emotions, develop his abilities in imitation, to relax, anger control can help him decrease the interior tensions and anti-social behaviour.

In some cases, leisure activities, like playing in groups, sports, outdoor trips, help the child escape from his situation and have a new and relaxing perspective on life. Sport activities, individual or in group (swimming, football etc) will help the child release the tensions, anger and frustrations through positive ways, which will contribute to the increase of self-esteem, of the feeling of belonging to a group, fulfilling the appreciation needs.

Victim prevention. Prevention of child deals, sexual exploitation and labour exploitation of children

Children who live alone or not protected by an adult regarding the risks of victimization that they are exposed if they neither do nor take certain safety measures against offenders and exploiters. Judging by the level of comprehension of the child, the advisor can use various resources and informative means (plaints, brochures, documentaries, artistic films, games, sites) to help the children understand the risks they are exposed to (theft, robbery, children deal, work exploitation etc), knowing the profile of a possible dealer, exploiter, stages and consequences of child traffic, sexual and labour exploitation, knowing the means he can come to in case of emergency or for information (responsible institutes and emergency calls).

Going on with the studies or school reintegration

In the situation in which you realize that the child's interest for school has decreased after the parents have left, the number of school absences has raised and school performance has dropped, according to schooling level, the child's future plans, his possibilities, actual legislation, the child is advised and encouraged to continue school, settling with the advisor the advantages he can have after finishing his studies.

If the child wants to continue the studies to his parents, abroad, the advisor must analyze with the child and his family the pros and cons of this. Together they will sketch a realistic plan of the child's future.

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THEORETICAL APPROACH
AND EXPERIENCES
OF THE MOSAIC - PROJECT

Felisbelo RAIO*

Abstract: In the opinion of many, integration is seen as being the capacity of minorities to adapt as rapidly and convenient as possible to the habits of the majority. To talk about competences of integration means to look close to the way of society organization and educational systems, to the way in which the media reflects the reality of a society, and the contradictions and difficulties the pro's encounter in education and public services in their daily life. The European Union gives priority in its policies to the problem of social inclusion that consider it to be an important element for successful economical development. In the context of social inclusion policies, the problem of migration in approached, which will continue to grow. The MOSAIC project approaches the problem of social inclusion through education, in the European context. The results of the research proofs that there is a demand for a higher awareness of the diverse situations in which citizen are found in multi-cultural society.

Key words: integration, learning, social inclusion, migration, education.

Competences for integration as a task for society

"Cultural rights are an integral part of human rights, which are universal, indivisible and inter-dependent. The flourishing of creative diversity requires the full implementation of cultural rights as defined in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in Articles 13 and 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. All persons have therefore the right to express themselves and to create and disseminate their work in the language of their choice,

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and particularly in their mother tongue; all persons are entitled to quality education and training that fully respect their cultural identity; and all persons have the right to participate in the cultural life of their choice and conduct their own cultural practices, subject to respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms." Therefore it is necessary to promote „through education an awareness of the positive value of cultural diversity and improving to this end both curriculum design and teacher education." (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, adopted by the General Conference at its 31st session in November 2001).

In spite of the declaration of the UNESCO, governments and also many employees working in the field of education still look at integration as the capacity of minorities to adapt themselves in the fastest and less disturbing way to the habits of the majorities. Correspondingly the work of professionals dealing with minorities is often measured by their success in enabling their clientele to „be as the majority is". Only if they reach this goal they are considered to be able to participate in an adequate way in what society offers and needs. According to the same logic, on the other hand minorities are looked at as so different, that there is no chance at all to change their „different culture" and they are left marginalized. So the adoption of the mainstream culture becomes an important step towards social inclusion. An educational attitude that respects possible differences organizes democratic debate and is committed to direct conversation in „a world of difference" (Anti-Defamation League, New York, *www.adl.org/education*) is often stated but it still has not become a reality in many institutions of the educational system. In contrast - despite of the declarations and legislation of the international bodies – in a lot of European societies xenophobia and negative attitudes towards minorities are on the rise again. It is often overlooked, that institutional and legislative approach of both national and European bodies are rather ambivalent than unambiguous when it comes to the matter of inclusion of minority groups like refugees, immigrants, disabled persons or other so called disadvantaged people. According to human and democratic principles there must be equal rights for all citizens no matter where they come from or how much they can contribute to the economic welfare of the country they live in. This is what European citizens can read in any preamble published of the public institutions. But how society organizes the educational system, the labour market and the social sector is often quite different from what is written in official high gloss magazines. These contradictions of course do not stop at the doors of public institutions dealing with educational matters. And they do not stop in the heads of the professionals dealing with the educational processes.

So to speak about competences for integration means to have a close look on how societies organize their social and education systems, on how the media reflects the reality of a diverse, quickly changing society and on the contradictions and difficulties professionals in the field of education and public services have to deal with in their

daily work life. To enable the public services to find new solutions under the conditions of change is the most important topic rather than to define competences of citizens who are considered as "to be integrated."

This statement reflects the every-day experience of – for example – teachers, who cannot choose only to educate children who have special competences. Either they deal with the children that come, whatever competences they have, or they reject one of the main issues of public democratic education: to offer education to everybody.

General issues related to Social Inclusion

The European Union gives social inclusion a high priority in its policy. Together with the Lisbon Strategy the EU passed the Social Policy Agenda in 2000, which led to a five-year action programme to achieve the goals set up in that Agenda. The EU mainly connects social policy to a successful economic development. So the Union gives great emphasis to the Lisbon goals, which are aiming to transform the EU into the most competitive region in the world. Programmes on social inclusion are rather an accompaniment of the measures taken to become a knowledge-based society with highly skilled labour forces more than being an independent goal. The concept of lifelong learning for example can not only be looked at as a progressive goal to enable employees to continue their personal learning and achieve a higher qualification but also as a need of the market to force employees to always follow up with new technology and new skills. This is not automatically the same interest working people may have concerning their skills or their personal interests to participate in lifelong learning projects. The priority of today's European policy is based on economic thinking and the influence of civil society and trade unions in European strategies is not very high (for more information see: European Trade Union Confederation, www.etuc.org). Economic pressures implemented by the so called globalization are transforming European societies and these transformations are creating various problems which are not so easy solved by programmes implemented by the European Union. Still, the situation in the member states is very different – be it at the economic level or in the way society functions, like for example the educational system. To contribute to the development of adequate methods for social inclusion at an European level is not therefore an easy goal and there is always the danger to neglect regional differences and needs. Especially the situation of the so-called transforming societies in the former socialistic countries is in many aspects different from the western countries. To develop tools which should fit for the needs of all European countries is not always adequate to the unique situation of one special country. And one result of the research done by the MOSAIC-project is, that it is very important that the EU keeps aware that it is necessary to install measures to function more bottom up than top down. But in spite of this there surly are a lot of

important developments that in one way or another influence most European countries and where common solutions are needed.

Migration and integration as important common issues for inclusion policies

Migration will continue from outside Europe into the European Union as well as labour mobility between the European countries will grow (see: www.network-migration.org). Globalization leads and will even more lead to a higher mobility of the international labour market in general. The differences between rich and poor countries, regions or segments of society are rising. At the same time nationalism, xenophobia and tensions between different ethnic or religious groups are rising as one result of economic segregation. The majority of the European people do not yet share the concept of the European Union as an ever-closer union. In most of the European countries there is a big political discussion about the European unification. This issue is a political battlefield. Especially the nationalistic parties, which are also represented in the European Parliament, are strongly opposing the European idea. So the aims, regulations, laws and initiatives of the European Commission cannot be considered common sense among its own citizens. European legislation and guidelines are not the only forces that are influencing the European societies. Discussions at national level mainly forced by the big media have also a great influence on how society looks at actual developments going on.

Especially the issues of labour migration, of immigration in general and of mobility between the European countries are subjects of a political debate in which a lot of social problems are mingled. The EU itself is sending different signs on how to deal with migration, minorities and tolerance. The Union is undergoing a very complex and contradictory process. On one hand it incorporated 10 new member states in 2004 and there are negotiations with more countries from Eastern Europe and with Turkey. But on the other hand the EU-policy is restricting not only people from outside its borders but also from the new member states from the freedom of mobility. The laws which are made as a consequence of the so called „fight on terrorism" and also the ones to restrict migration from non EU countries show a quite rough attitude of most of the member states towards the issue of migration in general. On one hand the EU is enacting antidiscrimination-legislations that should become national law in all member states, on the other hand, in order to protect the labour market of the old members, people from the former eastern countries like for example Poland are excluded from mobility in some of the old EU members like for example Germany. So some people feel as EU-Citizens of second class. On one hand the EU develops standards and programmes for social inclusion, on the other hand the liberalization of the market and the neo-liberal economic policies put strong

pressure on labour-rights and on social policies of the member states. EU policy is not and cannot be coherent as it is always a compromise of different interests and forces. And so its European citizens, who in their great majority are not as enthusiastic about European unification as are their governments, look at it quite critically.

In this situation it is crucial to enable all parts of society to deal with the new reality of a supranational institution that is more and more influencing their day-to-day life. A lot of people who live and work in Europe are not very well informed about the European Union. That makes it easy – for example – for nationalistic parties to misinform their electors about European policy. Of a special importance is the capacity of all EU-Citizens to accept and to deal with the reality of an intercultural society. Besides all the EU- and national programmes for social inclusion there is a strong need for rising the awareness of teachers, of disseminators, of social workers and officials of the public services for the big changes of the society in which they live. To reflect the concepts and needs of modern Europe and to be able to cope with diversity are the key responsibilities for disseminators in the field of education – and for all European people of today. To promote this kind of knowledge is one of the main aims of the MOSAIC-Project.

Methodological aspects

Empirical results of the MOSAIC-Project

The MOSAIC-Project deals with social inclusion by education as a general issue in the European context. But the institutions represented in our project are handling various sections of the educational system in each country.

So our clientele, our work conditions and of course the national educational systems, as well as the parts of society, mainly affected by social exclusion are quite different. Throughout our working process we realized that it is hardly possible to compare with a simple methodology – as we do not have the resources to work at a scientific level – the results of our empirical studies. Just to add the different results from our six represented countries was not our theoretical interest. But neither had we wanted to ignore the different backgrounds, conditions and experiences we all encountered in our daily work or that we learned of during discussions and meetings, by melting them together as if there were no differences. So we tried to focus on those general developments in the European societies which we all realize in our work contexts and which we consider important to be discussed by all employees in the social sector. In all of the six countries of the MOSAIC-Project - although to a different extent – migration and the issue of integration are important social topics. To deal with students, pupils and young adults with different origins, with different linguistic backgrounds and with quite different histories concerning their work life, their

experiences in the educational system and their family background is still a challenge for many teachers and public workers. In all of the six countries we have experienced teachers who are dealing in their different institutions with – partly - similar questions. And we have „experienced students", who the first to be asked to evaluate the work of the teachers, the institutional approaches and the methods used.

The questionnaires

Most of the institutions of the northern MOSAIC-partners Finland, Denmark and Germany are - besides other tasks – engaged in language courses for migrants. In some of the participating countries the schools offer as well vocational training, support in finding jobs and counselling for the personal work aims. In Portugal the partner works with a vocational school, an institution for persons with disabilities and a regional university whereas in France the partner offers a general qualification for disadvantaged –often-migrant - women in difficult work circumstances. In Romania the partner works in the field of antidiscrimination projects for Roma and training skills for long time unemployed people to improve their chances on the labour market. So teaching language skills and counselling to improve the students' chances on the labour market is the common field of the participating institutions.

The participating institutions were the following:

- *Portugal*: Algarve University, Irene Rolo Foundation, D. Francisco Gomes d`Avelar Professional School

- *Romania*: University of Bucharest, ARCA Association, Catalactica Association

- *France*: Socíeté Philomatique de Bordeaux, INFA-Aquitaine

- *Finland*: Harjavallan Kansalaisopisto (Adult Education Center), Eurajoen kristillinen opisto (Eurajoki Christian Folk High School)

- *Denmark*: Sprogcentret Haderslev (Language School), FOF Haderslev (Adult Education Center)

- *Germany*: Project „Ways into profession" of Passage, "Aizan für Mädchen" (Aizan for girls, a support centre for young migrant girls)

The first step of the empirical research carried out by the project was to collect data from the teachers, disseminators and trainers as well as from the students of the institutions that participated in the MOSAIC.

 MOSAIC wanted to learn from the teachers about the methods and materials they use as well as about their personal experiences in teaching. They were also asked about the institutional approach concerning social inclusion of their target group. Students were asked not only to evaluate the teaching methods but also about their

opinion concerning the access to the educational system and about what ideas and wishes they had for making the system to better fit to their needs. Questions concerning their personal problems with the educational system, their access to suitable information for their further career and probable difficulties with the institutional culture of the country they now live in were as well part of the survey.

The evaluation

In a second step we developed a common schedule to make the results of the different countries comparable. Due to the above-mentioned circumstances (big variety of institutions, age, gender and nationality of the students, national legislation concerning migration and differences in the educational systems of the participating countries) a conventional comparison was difficult. So we used a qualitative methodology which allowed us to concentrate on the most important subjects for our purpose: the individual perspective of each student, the personal satisfaction with his or her learning process and the needs and wishes to improve the educational setting.

In spite of the great differences between institutions and among the target group in itself, there were some significant evaluations in common:

Most of the students were quite satisfied with the teaching methods, the material used and the professional approach of their teachers.

They mostly considered the quality of their instruction as quite high. They only wished to have more influence on the curriculum. They felt it necessary to better adapt the curriculum to their personal needs because often the participants in one class represent a big diversity of backgrounds and what fits for one student may not fit for another.

All students were very aware of subtle discrimination and prejudices. Many mentioned that this was what really bothered them. They considered very important to be treated as an individual and not as a member of a group, a minority or part of the so-called disadvantaged people. To be treated with dignity and not to be stigmatized were very important issues for all students.

According to the questionnaires:

The students have more problems with the bureaucracy in accessing the educational system. Many mentioned that the barriers to get into the system are too high (this is different in the Scandinavian countries where schools for adult people in general are easily accessible. In Denmark and Germany immigrants are compelled to attend language courses. Here the students were more aware that, in spite of their personal efforts, their chances to get access to higher education or to the labour market are quite bad).

Students who have had an insecure legal status in their host country often encounter problems with their personal caseworker. For them pursuing their personal education and work goals becomes a rather arbitrary process very much depending on the goodwill of the caseworker in charge.

Most of the students answered that they felt they had influence on their personal education goals but were much less optimistic about the reaching of their work goals.

Most students mentioned that influences not directly connected to their vocational formation like legal status, lack of contact to local people, leaving other family members in their country of origin in bad conditions, children at home without proper care were severely interfering with their integration process in the country they migrated in.

The majority of the students also agreed that active guidance and concrete follow up plans after their language course or their vocational training would be a big help in pursuing their life goals concerning education and career.

Those students who had degrees or completed vocational training in their home country stated that it was very difficult and often impossible for them, to find a job matching their professional background. Very often their professional degree is not recognized in the new country which forces them to either start a new vocation or to work in low paid, poorly recognized jobs.

Specific considerations

Diversity-training for teachers and disseminators

Teachers and disseminators are usually the first to notice sociological changes during the work with their clientele. They are also the ones who can provide information about the functioning of educational programmes. Do the programmes to reach certain aims as – for example social inclusion-serve for the purpose they were implemented? Or should they be adjusted to better reach the desired results? This is especially important as legislation; the educational system and the social programmes they deal with are more and more influenced by the European policies. They have to be able to evaluate their own working aims and methods and to make sure that the European bureaucracy gets to know if their programmes are working or not.

But teachers and disseminators often need better training to cope with the challenges they meet in a quickly changing European society.

The answers of the students in so different institutions and countries show that there is a demand for increasing awareness regarding the diverse situations the citizens of multicultural societies are experiencing. For disseminators the so-called social soft

skills like flexibility, empathy and intercultural competences become more and more important. A high communicational competence, the ability to collect new information and to deal with unknown situations is crucial for teachers and trainers in the quickly changing, diverse European society.

The intercultural dimension becomes even more important in all kind of social and educational work. Teachers have to deal with multilingual children and students. They meet various cultural and religious influences and beliefs. Their way of teaching itself may become a subject of different expectations and customs.

In this situation it is important, that teachers and trainers can benefit from the EU-strategy of lifelong learning themselves. Teachers who learned their profession 20 years ago – for example – did work under very different conditions from the ones they have to cope with today. To promote social inclusion by education, the first important step is to enable all employees in the educational sector to develop new professional skills that match the European societies of today.

The diversity training developed and piloted by the MOSAIC-Project wants to promote these skills for disseminators and teachers throughout Europe.

Intercultural education as an objective

It requires a fundamental change in our perceptions, convictions and actions. We must gradually develop a multi-layered identity, accepting that we are at the same time citizens of our municipalities, our regions, our countries, and citizens of the European Union. Only this attitude will foster our sense of tolerance and our curiosity towards the others, our commitment to respect, preserve and enrich the diversity of cultural features and values that are features of our European model"[57].

Concept of intercultural education was developing by international bodies and civil society groups dealing with educational processes - both at European and worldwide level. The term intercultural proposes processes "to enable the discovery of mutual relationships and the dismantling of barriers. There are close links to other educational philosophies, such as education for human rights, anti-racist education and development education"[58]. But these concepts are far from being mainstreamed into public education institutions. Although the educational sciences have been discussing issues related to intercultural education since more than 20 years, it depends very much on the philosophy of each institution if these concepts find their way into the formation of teachers, social workers and other disseminators. Also the

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[57] Jan Figel*, Member of the European Commission responsible for Education, Trainings and Culture, on the conference "The Changing European Classroom" in Brussels the 10th of March 2005.*
[58] All different – All equal, Education Pack, European Youth Centre, 1995.

level of discussion in Europe is quite different, mainly depending on the history of each country. Countries with a colonial history and therefore a long experience with big migrant communities or countries with a labour migration background have had since years a controversial discussion on intercultural issues. In countries with ethnic minorities the discussions follow others lines than in countries where a lot of people are migrating to find better economic situations etc. So the discussion about intercultural issues is very much depending on the specific situation of the different European countries and a common agreement cannot be taken for granted.

In this situation laws and guidelines either from national governments or from EU-bodies are not enough to create a common debate. Civil society and institutions on local level have to interlink, to exchange experiences, to listen to each other and to develop their own methods to deal with the complexity of the Europe of today. Therefore intercultural competences must be an integral part of the formation for social and educational disseminators.

Integrating diversity

"Will an open dialogue on past and present developments (including the unpleasant ones), ideological tensions and different experiences be possible? Will we strive towards integration on equal footing? Will a "united" Europe finally be an open Europe where difference is valued and which is receptive to cultures all over the world?"[59].

These questions put by the editors of an intercultural learning kit give a hint to the leading questions during the process of developing the MOSAIC curriculum for "training for the trainers". While developing, presenting and piloting the **diversity-training** we learned ourselves how challenging it is, to work together under quite diverse circumstances, with different backgrounds and opinions and furthermore with little time to discuss with each other face to face. The work on the training became an intercultural experience itself. And it became quite clear, that the concept of culture does not fit to explain the individuality of each person participating in the work process. Not to mention other factors that can influence each person's way to be and to think, factors like gender, age and social background. When it comes to decision, it is always the individual being that makes up her or his own mind and it is not very helpful to think about one's personality only as a sum of various influences from outside.

So we decided, not to use the term intercultural training and to call the training **diversity training** instead because we wanted to make clear in the very beginning, that the competences that should be trained are mainly basic human skills. Such

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[59] Intercultural Learning T-Kit, Council of Europe and European Commission, 2003

skills should be the guidelines for every human being getting in contact with somebody else, no matter if the differences which surely occur in dealing with another person can be considered as of a cultural nature, as related to gender or due to different age or whatever else maybe.

Unlike most of the existing intercultural trainings we also decided, not to put our emphasis in defining what we mean by the term culture since this would mean to go deep into a theoretical debate about what culture really is and even if there is such a thing as culture. Neither we considered it helpful to give the type of generalizing advices such as "if you are in France, you have to have a good meal first before you can come to business", "if you are in Romania, you have to drink a palinca before you say goodbye", or "if you are in Germany you always have to be punctual." Fast food is a fast seller in France too, there certainly are Rumanians who hate to drink alcohol every time they have to part and in Germany even the trains are often late…. Going through the existing material we realized that some practices that are meant to overcome cultural barriers rather tend to intensify existing prejudices than to overcome them (*for example: Trainings - und Methodenhandbuch, Arbeitskreis Interkulturelles Lernen, DWW, 2001*). In trying to raise awareness about cultural differences some theories have a tendency to explain certain behaviours as culturally determined without taking into account, that there is not one country, nation or region that is based on a single, unique, fixed culture. So by constructing the diversity training we have chosen an approach that: deconstructs each kind of stigmatization, helps to raise empathy as the main base of understanding, develops the capacity of conflict tolerance to deal with different ways, interests and encourages self-reflection, rises the awareness of political and social conditions for conflicts and problems instead of seeing them as ethnic or cultural determined.

Usually intercultural trainings focus on the competences of the individual to deal with differences or to interact with other cultures. Reflections about the social and political background that, to a big part, are the bases for conflicts that are often centralized afterwards are not foreseen in traditional intercultural trainings. Our diversity training combines political education about the European Union, the countries of Europe or issues like migration and globalization with carefully selected practices developed by international professionals in the field of intercultural education.

The MOSAIC-Project gave the opportunity to develop and discuss the diversity training in six different countries and to pilot it as well at international level. So it can be considered as intent to construct a truly European product.

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