

Social Inclusion in Romania

What's the Reality? - overview

2018. The year of celebrating 100 years of independent existence as a state for Romania, a country with many stories behind that may amaze you. But today is about the other part, that is more than necessary to be mentioned and disseminated, the poor state of the country when it comes to social inclusion, based on real statistics, numbers that will definitely amaze you. Yes, yes, what a paradox...

When we talk about social inclusion, we mostly talk about a huge inequality between the rural area and the urban one. So, the income that 20% of the most rich population has is 7 times bigger than the income of the 20% of the most poor. Even though the economy has increased, we still deal with many issues. Poverty and social exclusion are something that around 18,9% of the people deal with (double compared with the EU media). The ones who are most likely to face those problems are especially the youngsters, the families with children, the romma people, but also people with disabilities and people coming from the country side. (European Comission 2017)

Also, the women are more often exposed to poverty than men because of their not so long lasting careers, the limited contributions for the retiring funds and the earlier age of retirement. The difference between women and men when it comes to the working field increased from 16,7% to 17,6% (in 2014). So, women don't have the equal chances to work as men do. And this happens to the romma people also, that face a low level of health insurance, unelevated material and living conditions and a high level of discrimination. The segregation of departments and the evacuation are facts that hold them back, increasing the level of criminality. Equal chances for people with disabilities? Better ask after a couple of years.. The most of the people having a disability (mental or physical) are most likely to not go further with university studies. Why this happens and what are the consequences? The lack of accessible places or public transportation, the uneducated teachers that don't possess the information to adapt at each pupil or the lack of finances make a person with disability give up at their studies. Moreover, even when the most skilled person with a full studies CV package goes to an interview, the answer can be negative because she or he doesn't fit in.

Being a freelancer in Romania? You should think twice. The risk of poverty is ten times bigger for people who go for an independent activity than for the ones who have a stable income. The employees who work with half norm (more than a half involuntary - 59,4% comparing to the EU media 15,3%) are facing a huge economical risk.

The unemployment founds are under the level of the sea and the covering rata decreased from 2013 to 2016. So now we talk only about 10%. The ratio for replacing a worker with a medium income increased from 45% to 30%.

We live in a century where the life expectancy represents a very happy number. We have a lot of resources that we practically waste: food, water, materials for building homes and commercial places. Why don't we use those resources wisely? I think this is the paradox of human race.

Social Inclusion in Romania

The way of the numbers

Despite being one of the biggest country in the European Union, with a population estimated to 19.64 million in 2017, Romania's is one of the worst-performing countries in the regard of Social Inclusion. With a score of 3.99, it ranks 27th out of 28 EU member states. It's also among second-to last ranked countries in the areas of poverty prevention, equitable education, social cohesion and non-discrimination.

According to Romanian National Institute of Statistics, one in four inhabitants of Romania lives in a household whose income is lower than the threshold settled. The Government have made some efforts to improve these numbers, so in 2017, the poverty rate has decreased significantly from 25.4% to 23.6% (Chart nr 1).

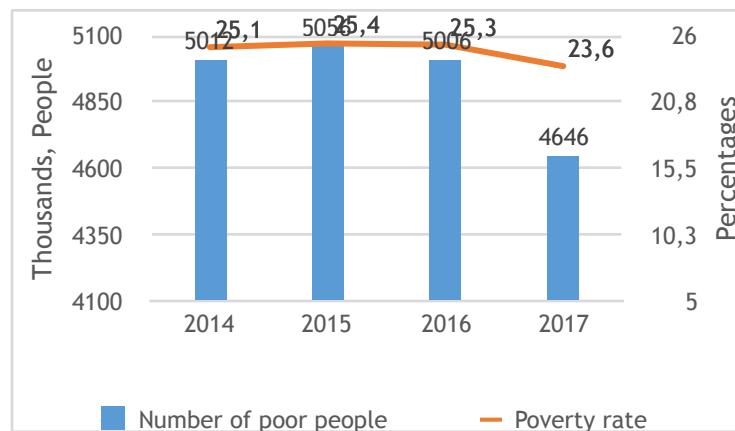


Chart nr 1. „Poverty rate and number of poor people in 2014-2017”

(source: http://www.insse.ro/cms/sites/default/files/field/publicatii/dimensiuni_ale_incluziunii_sociale_in_romania_2017_0.pdf)

Among those at risk of poverty, children fare the worst: with effectively half (49.2%) of all children and youth under 18 at risk of poverty or social exclusion, the highest rate in the EU. Seniors (65 and over) finds themselves similarly worse off than most of their EU counterparts: 34.0% are at risk (rank: 24).

Another major policy challenge confronting Romania is strengthening social cohesion and combating discrimination. From a comparative perspective, Romania's legislation is favourable towards immigrants, but policies are less welcoming with respect to education access and access to citizenship. Foreign workers are not represented by local labor unions, and often fall victim to dubious contracts. More precarious is the condition of minority groups. The government has been ineffective in combating discrimination against the LGBT community, people with disabilities, HIV positive people and the large Roma community. The civil code still prohibits same-sex partnership and marriage, and fails to recognise any such marriages registered abroad.

According to this data, EU Parliament have places Romania among the EU countries most urgently in need of progressive policy reforms.

Sources:

* DOCUMENT DE LUCRU AL SERVICIILOR COMISIEI - Raportul de țară din 2018 privind România care însoțește documentul COMUNICARE A COMISIEI CĂTRE PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN, CONSILIU, BANCA CENTRALĂ EUROPEANĂ ȘI EUROGRUP

Semestrul european 2018: evaluarea progreselor înregistrate în ceea ce privește reformele structurale, prevenirea și corectarea dezechilibrelor macroeconomice, precum și rezultatele bilanțurilor aprofundate efectuate în temeiul Regulamentului (UE) nr. 1176/2011

* Committee's work document of Romania, a communication for The European Parliament, Council, The European Central Bank and Eurogroup

* http://www.insse.ro/cms/sites/default/files/field/publicatii/dimensiuni_ale_incluziunii_sociale_in_romania_2017_0.pdf