

# MANAGEMENT OF CORRELATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS' NEEDS WITH THE LABOUR MARKET. CASE STUDY: MEMBERS OF THE MARGINALIZED COMMUNITY FROM CODLEA

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**Abstract:** *The paper is part of a comprehensive study conducted within the MALIN project (Work, Assumption, Legality for Integration and Non-discrimination project), aimed at integrating the marginalized Roma community from Codlea into the labour market. The MALIN project has as a general objective to increase the quality of life of 556 citizens living in the marginalized community of Mălin neighbourhood in Codlea by reducing the number of Roma people at risk of poverty and social exclusion. One of the specific objectives of the project is to increase the employment rate of 278 people from the Mălin neighbourhood belonging to the Roma community and to combat the participation gaps in the formal labour market compared to the majority population. The case study is an analysis of the community members' needs, conducted in June 2018 on the basis of the questionnaires applied to twenty respondents. The conclusions of this study, although in an incipient form, certainly indicate a low level of education, poverty, and a very low employment rate. Applying the questionnaire on the marginalized community members' needs on the labour market highlights primarily the low income / month / family member. There are households in which the declared income is 40 lei / month / family member, which demonstrates their need for*

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*money, therefore, implicitly, the need for a job generating income. However, this does not determine them to take action, to find and keep a stable job.*

**Key words:** *needs, labour market insertion, employment, social exclusion, vulnerable group*

**JEL Classification:** *I32, J15, R23*

## **1. Introduction**

A growing area of concern for the European community is how best to monitor vulnerable groups, assess their needs and make appropriate policy decisions. It is well known that the measurement and analysis of poverty, inequality, and vulnerability are important in order to know what the situation is, i.e. for cognitive purposes, and to understand the factors determining this situation, that is for analytical purposes. It is also vital for policymaking purposes and for monitoring and evaluating purposes.

The social policies adopted lately at the European Union level predominantly focus on investing in human capital – a new European social model. Thus, the ways of implementation are varied and the methods, procedures and tools used are aimed with priority at social cohesion, the Member States having exclusive competence in adopting their own policies in this field.

Originally developed for a five-year period, the *European Employment Strategy* is a relevant document whose birth date dates back to 1997 with the adoption of the Treaty of Amsterdam. The dynamics of the labour market and, implicitly, the diversification of work both at the level of each Member State and at the EU level are decisive factors behind the strategies and regulations on social policies. In this regard, the Broad Guidelines for the Economic Policies of the Member States and the Union provide that ‘labour market and social system reforms need to be pursued in order to promote growth and employment, while ensuring access for all to high quality, affordable and sustainable social services and benefits’. (Council Recommendation (EU) 2015/1184) The current context is dominated by the Europe 2020 Strategy, which also includes two of the MALIN project’s objectives, namely: to increase the percentage of at least 75 % of the population aged 20-64 who is employed and to have 20 million less people at risk of poverty. (European Commission, Europe 2020) Thus, people at risk are given the opportunity to live a dignified life and to play an active role in society.

Employment is a complex, dynamic process of major interest to all economic agents and social partners for the present and future of society, with economic, psychosocial, educational, cultural, political implications, as well as an essential condition for ensuring macroeconomic equilibrium and social and political stability.

## ***2. Legislative novelties in the field of employment***

The rule of law was constituted by a set of fundamental rights, which are inscribed in texts with higher legal value', (Chevallier, 2012, p. 104) therefore, the identification of optimal solutions in the field can only be achieved through a rigorous regulation. Although adopted quite late, Law no. 192/2018 for amending and completing Law No. 416/2001 on guaranteed income seeks to limit the beneficiaries of social aid by setting imperative criteria. Thus, according to Article 15 'for the maintenance of the right to social assistance, for the persons able to work from the beneficiary families, it is checked monthly if they have concluded an individual labour contract, if they have not refused a job or the participation in the services to stimulate the employment and training provided by the territorial employment agencies. Refusal to work or refusal to take part in the employment and vocational training services provided by the territorial employment agencies entails the termination of the right to social assistance. In the provided situation, the family or the individual can apply for a new right after a period of 12 months from the date of the decision to terminate the right to social assistance.

Certainly, the new regulations will positively and largely influence the degree of insertion on the labour market of people living exclusively from social assistance.

## ***3. Insertion of Roma people on the labour market. Case Study***

This study is an analysis of the marginalized community members' needs on the labour market based on the data obtained from the questionnaires filled in by the 20 beneficiaries assisted in June 2018.

### ***3.1. Purpose of the study***

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of education, household, welfare, income, nationality and ethnicity on the employment needs of the Roma community from Mălin neighbourhood in Codlea.

### 3.2 Objectives of the study

The MALIN project has as a general objective to increase the quality of life of 556 citizens living in the marginalized community of Mălin neighbourhood in Codlea by reducing the number of Roma people at risk of poverty and social exclusion. One of the specific objectives of the project is to increase the employment rate of 278 people from the Mălin neighbourhood belonging to the Roma community and therefore to combat the participation gaps in the formal labour market compared to the majority population.

The main objectives of the study at this point are to find out whether their education, nationality or ethnicity prevents the Roma people from getting a stable job and if their income or welfare determines their employment rate.

### 3.3 Methodology

The subjects of this study are 20 people selected from the subject pool of 278 Roma people from Mălin neighbourhood in Codlea. 14 people are between 16 and 35 years old, 4 are between 36 and 55 years old and 2 are over 55. We used primary data, collected from the field survey with the help of a questionnaire.

### 3.4 Data analysis and interpretation

#### 1. Influence of (lack of) education on employment

Out of the 20 subjects: 2 graduated high school, 4 are general school graduates, 4 are vocational school graduates, 5 attended high school but not graduated, 5 are primary school graduates.

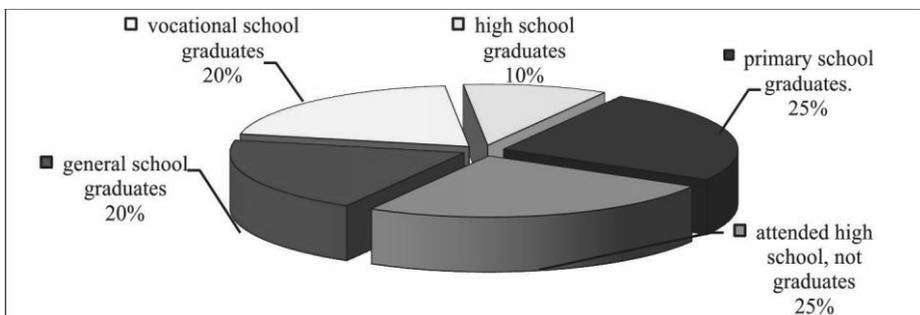
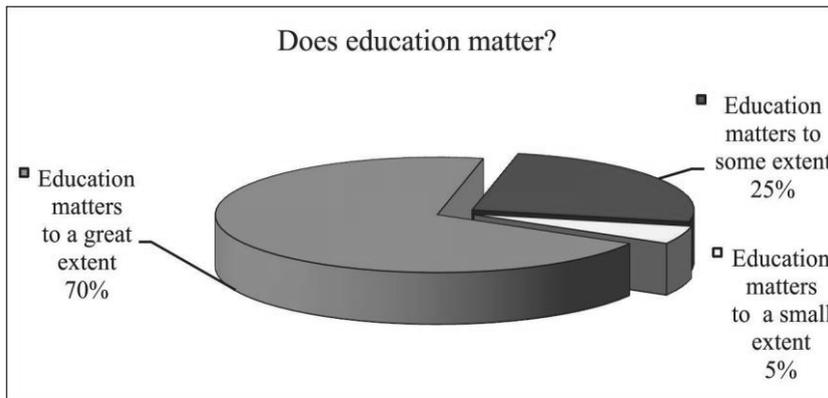


Fig. 1. The respondents' socio-occupational status

The data on the level of education is particularly important given the labour market insertion. The question: To what extent do you consider education (school years) matters? was answered as follows:

- 14 respondents appreciate that education (school years) matters to a great extent,
- 5 subjects believe that education (school years) matters to some extent,
- 1 considers that education (school years) matters to a small extent.



*Fig. 2. To what extent education matters from the respondents' point of view*

The way education is perceived by each member of the target group can be retained from the outcomes, most of them being aware of the importance of education. During the discussions many of them said they were making efforts to take their children to school. Of course, there are children in the community who do not attend school or have not been enrolled in the school programme, but it is important to note that the phenomenon is not expanding.

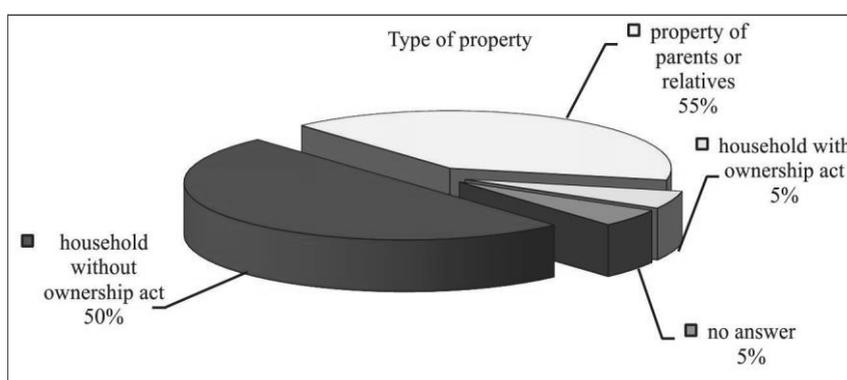
In conclusion, the majority of the respondents feel that education is important while looking for a job.

## **2. Influence of welfare**

As far as the household and its legal status are concerned, it is inhabited without an ownership act of one or more families that administer

their own resources separately. The applied questionnaire highlights the following aspects:

- 10 members of the target group declare that they live without the ownership act of the household;
- 8 declare that it is the property of parents or relatives;
- 1 declares that the household is a personal property, refusing to accept that the lack of legal acts relating to the right of ownership prevents him from exercising his right to be the owner;
- 1 does not know what to answer.



*Fig. 3. The respondents' type of property*

Security of possession is a particularly important element and constitutes the cornerstone of the right to adequate housing. Legal recognition and protection of the security of possession is a particularly important step the project has assumed.

The right to housing and an adequate standard of living is a fundamental right enshrined in fundamental legal documents, so that the basic needs are not compromised.

According to international human rights, adequate housing needs to provide more than some walls and a roof; General Comment nr. 4, adopted by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, drafted seven minimum criteria for a home to be considered adequate and provides the most important interpretation of the right to housing in accordance with international human rights law. The seven basic criteria for adequate housing under international human rights law are: security of possession;

availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure; habitability; accessibility; location; cultural adequacy; financial accessibility.

As regards the accommodation of the members of the target group, the following information was obtained:

- 10 members of the target group live in a household consisting of 1-2 rooms;
- 8 members of the target group live in a 3-5-room household;
- 2 members of the target group live in a household consisting of several rooms and dependencies.

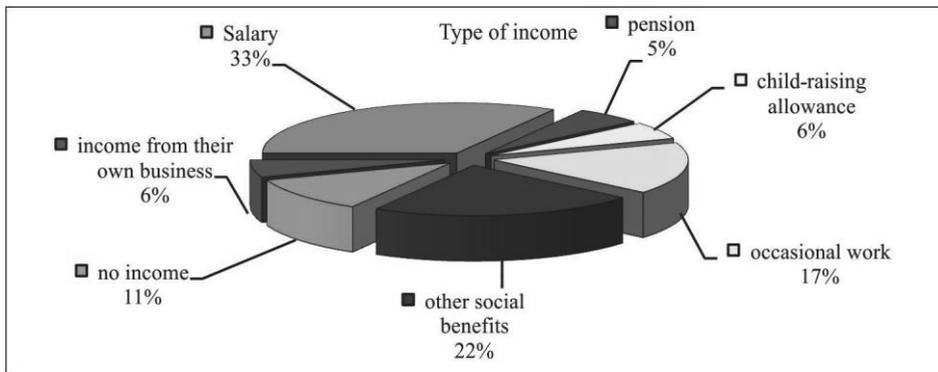
Regarding the civil status of the members of the target group assisted in the current month, we have obtained the following information:

- 8 married with papers;
- 10 unmarried;
- 1 married without papers;
- 1 widow.

The income of the members of the target group assisted in the current month, as they were declared and completed, confirms that a small part of them benefit from a salary, which is determined by the low employment rate among them. Reducing poverty and increasing the quality of the community's life are important goals that can be achieved through qualification courses and then employment.

The data can be summarized as follows:

- 6 of the members of the target group benefit from a salary;
- 3 of the target group members have income from work done occasionally;
- 4 of the target group members receive social benefits – state child allowances;
- 2 of the members of the target group have alimony pensions;
- 1 person declares income from their own business;
- 1 person benefits from a pension;
- 1 person benefits from child-raising allowance;
- 2 people say they have no income.



*Fig. 4 The respondents' type of income*

The question 'How do you estimate your current income within your household?' was answered as followed:

- 11 members of the target group declare that they are insufficient and they are not enough for the bare necessity;
- 4 members of the target group declare that they are sufficient only for the bare necessity;
- 2 of the target group members say they are not enough for a decent living;
- 3 of the target group members declare that income is sufficient only if they do not buy expensive items.

All members of the target group assisted in the current month say that there are no persons with a special situation that require care and supervision in the household.

The questionnaire also asked them whether they have worked abroad. The results obtained show that out of the 20 beneficiaries 19 were not abroad to carry out activities for the purpose of supplementing their income; only one beneficiary declares that he was abroad to obtain additional income, the work done being in the field of agriculture.

### **3. Influence of nationality/ethnicity**

The answers to the question 'In your town, to what extent do you think nationality/ethnicity matters in order to get a job?' could be systematized as follows:

- 9 respondents consider that nationality/ethnicity is important to a great extent;
- 4 respondents consider that nationality/ethnicity is important to some extent;
- 1 respondent considers that nationality/ethnicity is important to a small extent;
- 6 respondents consider that the nationality/ethnicity is important to almost no extent.

The question ‘In your town, to what extent do you think that nationality/ethnicity matters so that it influences the success of children at school?’ was answered as follows:

- 7 respondents believe that nationality/ethnicity influences the success of children in school to a great extent;
- 4 respondents think that nationality/ethnicity influences the success of children in school to some extent;
- 4 respondents think that nationality/ethnicity influences the success of children in school to a small extent;
- 1 respondent considers that nationality/ethnicity influences the success of children in school to almost no extent.

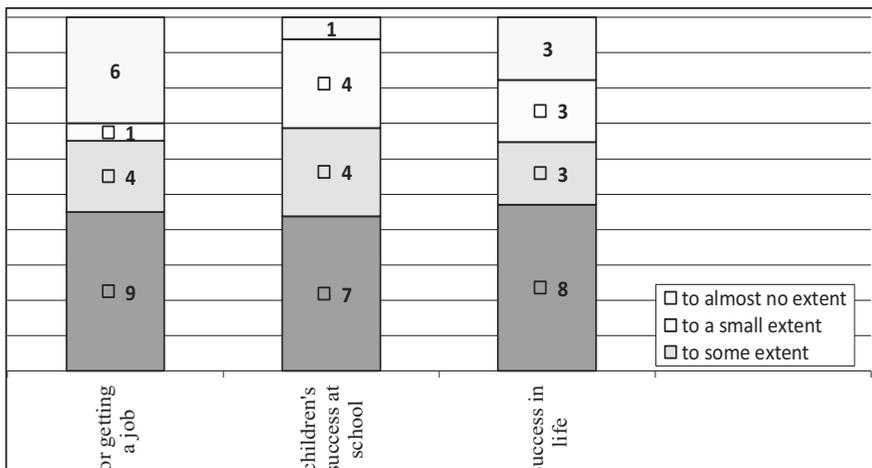


Fig. 5. The extent to which nationality/ethnicity matters from the respondents' point of view

In relation to the influence of nationality/ethnicity on success in life the results were the following:

- 8 subjects think that nationality/ethnicity influences success in life to a great extent;
- 3 subjects believe that nationality/ethnicity influences success in life to some extent;
- 3 subjects believe that nationality/ethnicity influences success in life to a small extent;
- 3 subjects think that nationality/ethnicity influences success in life to almost no extent.

In conclusion, the majority of the respondents feel that nationality/ethnicity plays an important role both for getting a job and for being successful in life and it also influences the success of children at school.

4. The extent to which the lack of employment has negatively influenced the respondents' lives

To the extent to which the lack of a job has negatively influenced the standard of living, the results were as follows:

- 10 respondents believe that the lack of employment has influenced the standard of living to a great extent;
- 4 respondents think that the lack of employment has influenced the standard of living to some extent;
- 3 respondents think that the lack of employment has influenced the standard of living to a small extent;
- 3 respondents believe that the lack of a job has influenced the standard of living to almost no extent.

To the extent to which the lack of employment has negatively influenced family relationships, the results were as follows:

- 6 subjects believe that the lack of employment has negatively influenced the family relations to a great extent;
- 7 subjects believe that the lack of employment influenced negatively and to some extent the family relations;
- 3 subjects believe that lack of employment has negatively influenced family relationships to a small extent;
- 4 subjects believe that the lack of employment has negatively influenced the family relations to almost no extent.

When asked about the extent to which the lack of a job has negatively influenced their self-confidence, the respondents answered:

- 9 believe that the lack of employment has negatively influenced their self-confidence to a great extent;
- 5 believe that the lack of employment has negatively influenced their self-confidence to some extent;
- 3 believe that the lack of employment has negatively influenced their self-confidence to a small extent;
- 3 believe that the lack of employment has negatively influenced their self-confidence to almost no extent.

When asked about the extent to which the lack of employment has a negative impact on their health, the following results were obtained:

- 8 subjects believe that the lack of employment has negatively influenced their health to a great extent;
- 2 subjects believe that the lack of employment has negatively influenced their health to some extent;
- 5 subjects believe that the lack of a job has negatively influenced their health to a small extent;
- 5 subjects believe that the lack of a job has negatively influenced their health to almost no extent.

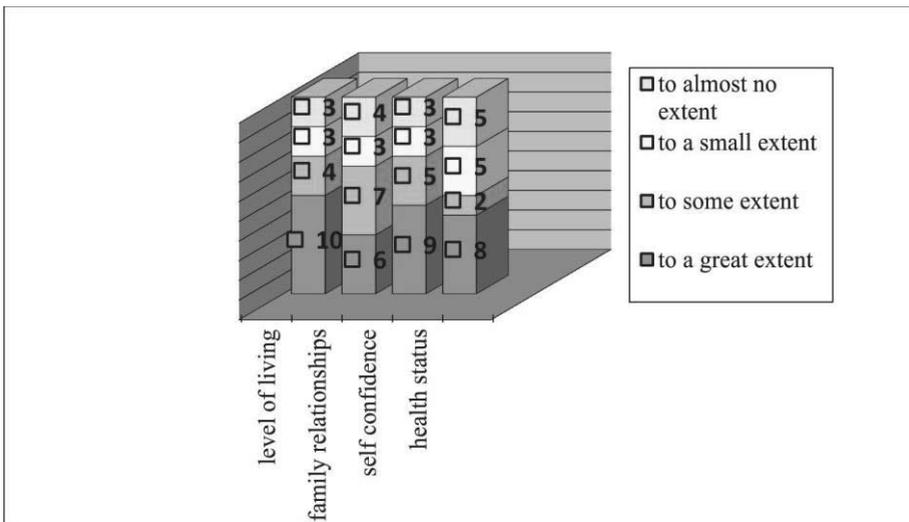


Fig. 6. The extent to which the lack of employment negatively influenced some aspects of the respondents' life

To sum up, more than a half of the respondents consider that the lack of employment negatively influenced several important aspects of their lives and are unsatisfied with their situation.

### ***Conclusions***

In conclusion, the lack of education prevents the Roma people from getting a stable job, but their welfare does not determine them to take action in finding and keeping a stable job. Their low employment rate is presumed to be the outcome of their nationality/ethnicity. The data obtained from the application of the questionnaire highlights:

- the low employment rate and, implicitly, a low standard of living determined by the income earned largely from seasonal work;
- inappropriate housing conditions – both in terms of a person's security and in terms of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure.
- the tendency of the majority to consider themselves as being discriminated on ethnic grounds.

We hope that this study in particular and MALIN project in general will help design interventions best adapted to the addressed issues not only at the local level, but also at the European level. Assessing the effectiveness of current policies and determining whether the situation is changing can help reducing the number of people threatened by poverty or social exclusion.

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