

STATISTICAL STUDY ON THE HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING NEED IN THE REGIONAL OLTENIA

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Abstract: This papers sums up the conclusions of a more developed statistical study, carried out in 2009 on the level of the region Oltenia for the analysis of the main disparities on the regional labor market and for the proposal of some professional training modules in the entrepreneurial field, according to the specific needs of training the regional workforce.

Key words: labor market disparities, regional human development, inter-regional disparities, quality of the workforce.

This present paper presents the conclusions of the study Statistical analysis of the training needs on the level of the region Oltenia, performed in the contract Design, Implementation and Development of an inter-regional and transnational training system for entrepreneurial competences (POSDRU/9/3.1/S/9)

Besides the conclusions formulated in each chapter of the study both under a theoretical aspect explaining critically some theories and concepts and also under a practical aspect, by determining and interpreting some statistical indicators and specific graphical representations – based on objective statistical data, on a county, regional or national level – which allow for structural analysis and provide a comparison in time and space; these conclusions are analyzed again in this paper synthetically and we think that it is compulsory for the opportunity of our regional project, their correlation with other two categories of conclusions: some of them rely on subjective data, which come from statistical specific examinations carried out by specialized bodies on the level of the region Oltenia or nationally, or examination surveys carried out by the specialists of our project for the employed population from the region Oltenia, in the period January-February 2009, in order to point out the needs for training, as a dimension, structure and content; other rely on data which allow the expansion of the comparisons in space for the economic European environment where we integrated as a nation and region.

We think that the correction between the main research field, the labor market and the concept of human sustainable, regional and national growth are equally important because the consolidation of the inclusion on the labor market at a national and subsequently regional level and providing the access to labor in the European space for all of us, are in favor of the human sustainable development both nationally and regionally; the conclusions will include, in our opinion the entire theoretical, methodological and factual support which should prove their truthfulness and increase their value.

A recent report from the European Institute mentions four strongly related factors correlated with the inter-regional economic disparities from Romania (GDP/capita): the structure of the economic activity; the innovation potential; the

physical infrastructure and the accessibility in the region; education and abilities. The human capital integrated in measuring the human development provides the stable and sustained part of the development. The economic growth with so significant investments in education and health does not provide sustainable fulfillments; the long term objectives cannot be achieved only through investments in creating the human and social capital. The determining innovative and solid economic knowledge of the development of the entrepreneurial culture may help a national and moreover a region in overcoming the temporary difficulties if these are coupled solidarity and social cohesion. The health and educated nations are better trained and equipped in the fight against the various and many attempts of the economic environment.

The detailed statistical analysis carried out in each chapter of the study of the main categories and phenomena which have an active role on the labor market in the region Oltenia has delivered a series of quantitative or qualitative arguments, or in other words objectives which were materialized in the formulated conclusions. Without being necessary to mention these again, we will focus on some relevant aspects:

- The negative evolution of the main demographic phenomena in the region Oltenia, from the last years has led to the decrease of the population and to unfavorable structural mutations in relation to the main demographic, socio-economic and socio-cultural characteristics;
- The evolution of the regional economy (is also negative and below the development potential of the region) has influenced unfavorably the level, structure and evolution of the main categories of population employed on the regional labor market: the active population, the employed population and the unemployed;
- The disparities were maintained and increased in the process of employment, and can be seen:
 - In the territory: between the counties of the region, between the region Oltenia and the rest of the development regions or nationally, between the rural and the urban environment;
 - According to the demographic characteristics: sex, age, civil status;
 - According to socio-economic and socio-cultural characteristics.

We consider it is necessary and relevant to complete these conclusions with those referring to human sustainable development, which will point out the fundamental role of consolidating the inclusion of the labor market on a national and regional level for the access on the labor market from the European community space and for the human sustainable, national and regional development. In our opinion, the correlation of these elements is carried out with the help of two major components: the demographic challenges with which our region and country has confronted in the last two decades and the advanced reforms necessary to be implemented on a regional and national level for the full integration in the European space.

Romania joined the group of the countries with a high human development in 2004, when it reached the level of 0,800 for the Human Development Index (HDI); the value of 0,837 of the index in 2007 represents a special accomplishment along with the annual average rates of growth of 0,37% in the period 1990-2007 and of 0,87% in the period 2000-2007.

Although the index of education had the lowest contribution for the growth of HDI, its quality has registered a growing trend from 1995, due to the policies which promote the access to education and the development of human resources. This

tendency is due mainly to the growth with 8% of the gross rate of participation to education, determined in its turn by the substantial improvement of the gross rate of participation in the tertiary education from 20,9% in 1995 to 47,5% in 2005 and less to the growth with only 0,6% of the degree of alphabetization of the adult population in the period 1995-2000.

Along with health, education is an additional way of income for the sustainable development; human development is mediated by education and has to be regarded as a life time process and not limited in the school cycles; the education process starts in childhood, being initiated by parents and continued by school.

In our country the rate of inclusion in the pre-school and primary education has constantly increased, reaching an average of 74,7% in 2005 (and due to the changes in the legal system, the last year of pre-school education has become compulsory). The rate of inclusion in compulsory education, primary and middle school is very high in our country, reaching 106,1% respectively 97,4% in 2005 (the rates above 100% are due to the high averages of population above the official accepted age for this cycle, involved in primary education). The rate of participation in tertiary education has almost doubled in the period 1998-2005.

The differences between the specific rates on sexes of the degree of participation in the secondary and higher education are favorable for females with 4,5%, respectively 1,8% (on a regional level, the rate of participation in the overall education is 1,4% higher for the females than for the males); due to the human capital, the incomes of women in education are very important but they have to lead to equivalent incomes on the labor market: better jobs, higher salaries, increased promotion opportunities.

Because education and implicitly investment in education represents the basis for a real and long term human development, Romania, which holds, the lowest position in the EU hierarchy has to increase substantially the expenses for education. Education is the first step in building a knowledge based economy, by producing valuable human resources which will work in the fields of science, technology, research and development; the National Strategy from Romania for Research, Development and Innovation 2007-2013 underlines the essential role which research will play in the economy of the future and estimated a necessary growth of the GDP average granted for this field up to 1,5% at the end of the period (in this field Romania is presently on the last place in EU)

In what human regional development is concerned, the regional South West Oltenia is situated in the area of the regions with a HDI below the national average, being on the fifth place in the hierarchy of the regions in 2005. According to this index, we can develop and expand the analysis of an element of disparity of the regional labor market: the disparity between the level of education of the population from Oltenia and that of the population from Romania, unfavorable for our region. On a national level, in the period 1997-2005, the educational factor has contributed to a large extent to the favorable evolution of the human development index (from 0,762 in 1997 to 0,808 in 2005), through its specific component –the index of education- which increase from 0,860 in 1997 to 0,893 in 2005. On the level of the region South-West Oltenia, the education index although it has increased from 0,843 in 1997 to 0,875 in 2005 on the entire region, only one county had the same index in 1997 as in 2005, and index of education above the national average (Dolj with 0,865, respectively 0,903); on the level of the region Oltenia, the education index was situated for the entire period below the country average.

The rural-urban balance for the population is a significant index which is correlated with the regional distribution of HDI; therefore, the regions with a high average of rural population have a less favored situation as opposed to those with a majority average of urban population. The region Oltenia with urban population average of only 47,5% is situated on the sixth place in the national hierarchy, way beyond the national average of 54,9% on the level of 2005; a single county has a majority average of urban population: Dolj with 53,4% (level inferior as opposed to the national average). The disparities between the two averages in terms of human sustainable development are quantified through the different levels of HDI: 0,982 in the urban environment and only 0,786 in the rural environment for 2005; they are materialized in discrepancies unfavorable for the rural environment in: living standard, education, access to medical care. From the point of view of the inclusion of the labor market as a factor of favoring the human sustainable development, the most obvious disparities between the two environments is the rate of inclusion in the overall education: 44,5% in the rural environment and 96,7% in the urban environment. A factor which impedes the rural environment to overcome the development disparity is the labor average of the older population: 42% in the rural environment and 66% in the urban environment. One of the most difficult tasks for our country and region in the next period is the growth of the chances for the rural population to have access to education, health and jobs.

The promotion of the access to employment (occupation) is the *millstone* of social inclusion; although workforce employment is not directly included in the calculation of HDI, it is highly important because it creates the economic and social progress and it is the best way of avoiding the vicious circle of the lack of working places and social exclusion; although obtaining a working place is the first step, this thing is not sufficient: the quality of employment, as well as the high professional competences of the employees and the better labor conditions have to be provided for the intensification of the labor productivity and the growth of the real economic growth.

After 1990, Romania's population but also the population from Oltenia received the shock of a deep economic crisis which marked the end of communism and the shock of the transition process which meant: instability, unpredictability, poverty, unemployment, survival strategies built of the subsistence agriculture. The economic and social-political circumstances from our country have led to what specialists call a typical *a spontaneous/chaotic transition from plan to market or a stop and go transition* for the period 1990-2000: the persistence of a high rate of inflation and of a negative growth were the reasons for the unpredictability of the economic and business environment which impeded significantly the investment flows, not only delaying the development through the constant destruction of the labor productivity, but also affecting the human development by maintaining the salaries around the value of 100\$ for the entire 90s decade.

The economic unpredictability and the social and political instability have market in time the fertility behavior of the population, which became *extremely prudent*. The decline of population after 1990 is the result of the constant decrease of the fertility rates, the growth of the mortality rates and the wave of emigration from 1990 (almost 100000 left our country in that year). In this decade, although the migration and mortality rates were situated on a decreasing trend, the extremely low rates of fertility have led to the continuous decrease of the population.

What is more alarming than the continuous decrease of population is the continuous degradation of the population according to age, which announces implications in the sustainability of the social security programmes; in other words, the danger is in the imbalance of the demographic structure of the population with repercussions on the labor market, pensions system, medical services, education, incomes and public expenses.

The older employed population is the most dynamic segment of the population from a region, because it generates the necessary resources for development and for the future generations. As a consequence of the changes suffered in the period of communism and transition, the structure of population according to age is seriously distorted, because we have many generations born in the sixth decade and fewer generations born in the last two decades. Starting with 2007, the rate of replacing the active population went on a descending trend, as the generations born after 1990, started their *active* mission on the labor market.

The demographic tendencies influence the economic and social evolutions, because they have a significant impact on the labor market, the economic growth and the social cohesion. A possible solution to intensify the inclusion on the regional labor market is an active policy on the regional labor market which is the best way of generating a human sustainable development.

The active measures with their main characteristics of redistributing the opportunities of employment and reducing the unemployment risk on a long term, started to gain field in 2000. As the European Employment Strategy recommends,(and due to some national decisions) our region is trying to change the employment policies from passive to active, because the latter are known and acknowledged to produce the most important qualitative and quantitative effects on the labor market. The value of the expenses for active employment measures as a part of the total of expenses for the unemployment insurance has grown 10 time starting with 1998, and the number of unemployed included in requalification programmes has increased by 45% in 2005 as opposed to 2004.

Even if these tendencies were encouraging on a national level they were not reflected yet in the inclusion on the regional labor markets which needs a large range of active social policies: familial reconciliation and labor responsibility, which lead directly to the increase of the employment of female labor force, investments in education, which lead directly to the increase of the chances of getting a job, investments in children and young people, policies of supporting the disadvantaged groups, policies of increasing the duration of keeping the job and prospecting the career for the not fairly paid employees.

Poverty, a direct consequence of the disparities on the labor market in the region Oltenia is a concept which we think we should approach in this context.

The monetary dimension of poverty is defined in relation to the available incomes of the households; these are considered poor (and the persons from these households) with the available incomes assessed per adult are lower than a regional threshold, set on the level of 60% from the median of the total available incomes of the households from the region. The *relative poverty* is calculated according to the average income on economy, so that the threshold varies from a country to another and from a year to another. On a European level, the minimum of this indicator is only 9% and in Poland its maximum registered level is 21%. In Romania the level of absolute poverty has decreased below the level of relative poverty since 2004. The last studies have

taken into consideration levels of 210 lei/adult/month for the absolute poverty and of 300 lei/adult/month for the relative poverty.

The rate of absolute poverty in our country is extremely high, this indicator reaching 22% in the rural environment and 7% in urban environment, registering 35% in Moldavia and Oltenia as opposed to 10% in Bucharest. According to the 1997-2008 Public Opinion Barometer, Romania has managed to register in 2006 three million people in absolute poverty, as opposed to eight million people in 2000; the study points out the evolution of the indicator from 4% in 1989 to 20% in 1993 and to the historical maximum of 35,9% in 2000.

Taking into account the economic growth from 2000-2008, the rate of poverty has reduced in 2006 to 13,8% of the total population of the country; the absolute poverty has decreased in Romania three times since 2000 up to 2008. In the same period, the relative poverty has grown from 17% in 2000 to 19% in 2008.

The incidence and deepness of the poverty may differ according to the territorial, demographic, socio-economic and socio-cultural characteristics of the persons (especially of the head of the household). From a regional point of view, the highest degree of poverty is registered in the regions North-East, South-West Oltenia and South East.

A natural conclusion of the analysis of these aspects is the special attention which has to be granted to the various risks which may add to poverty and inequality as for example social exclusion, which is caused by the school abandon before obtaining a qualification, especially for the children from the rural environment, reduced access to the formal labor market and limited access to infrastructure, utilities and services, especially in the rural environment.

The main objective of the statistical examination carried out by the specialists of our project was to produce detailed statistical data which could be used to the correct assessment of the need of continuous training on the level of the region Oltenia, in order to develop the professional competences, especially the entrepreneurial ones; this is a premise to increase the awareness and the promotion of a positive attitude towards the entrepreneurial culture and to improve the adaptability of the companies and employees to the dynamics of the economic environment and the challenges of the globalization. This objective was attained by gathering, processing and analyzing some objective information; these information were obtained from a survey examination regarding the long life professional training (apart from the classical educational cycles) which were focused on the main interesting elements for the objectives of the study: the will of continuous training, a priority field for the current professional development where the focus is on the entrepreneurial competences necessary to develop an own business, the detailed presentation of the courses (disciplines) in the respective fields.

The examination provided the necessary information to elaborate the needs for continuous professional training on a regional level, to determine the purpose and the priority fields in the region but also different information regarding the tendencies of the entrepreneurial culture in the region Oltenia.

The demographic structure, the socio-economic, socio-cultural and territorial structure of the focus group has provided the statistical representativeness but also its direct correlation with the target groups from the project.

The analysis of the correlation between the two characteristics, profession and occupation revealed negative disparities which were relevant for the quality of the regional employment: only 75,6% of the respondents are working in the major groups

with university education, as opposed to 85,3% who have graduated a university cycle (diploma or master`s degree); the difference of almost 11% is an important argument for the professional training of the employed population with higher studies from the region Oltenia.

The importance granted for the continuous training process, on a regional level is a direct result of the average of 98,7% of those who stated during the examination that they want to improve their professional background. In what the purpose of the continuous training is concerned, almost 60% of the interviewed want to improve their current career and over 40% want to develop a new business; around 12% think it is necessary to continue to professional training for both purposes. The structure on educational fields which are considered to be a priority for the interviewed ones is the following: economic-financial analysis – 42,7%; management – 40,3%; accounting – 33%; informatics – 20%, other fields 14%.

The structure on larger fields of activity of own businesses which are wanted by almost half of the respondents, point out the following classification: 32% - other services, administrative services and support services activities. ; 21% - professional, scientific and technical activities, 21% - trade.

We consider extremely necessary the comparative analysis of the labor market in an inter-regional and national study, and its expansion on a European level; we are going to present briefly the main statistical indicators which reflect the disparities on the labor market where we discovered large disparities between the region and the country, unfavorable for the region:

- The relative indicator which measures the average GDP/capita as opposed to GDP/capita from EU27, placed Romania in 2008 on the last place in the European Union, with a value of just 44,8%; for the same period, the level of the indicator for EU15 was of 110,3%; this aspect is more relevant as the rate of GDP growth in our country has registered in the same year, higher values than those of the European average.
- Although the rates of growth for labor productivity per worked hour registered in Romania, in the period 2006-2008, levels higher than the European averages, the relative indicators which measure the averages of the labor productivity per employee and worked hour as opposed to the corresponding levels from EU27, with levels of 46,1%, respectively 31,3%, placed our country in 2008, one the last but one place in the European Union; the difference between our country and the European economic space is more obvious through the indicator the productivity of the resources (expresses in Euro/kg), which registered in Romania the level of 0,16, that is 8 times lower than the EU 27 average and almost 10 times lower than the average of the indicator in EU 15.
- The public expenses with education and research-development from our country were always situated under the European average, as a absolute and relative level as opposed to GDP; in 2007, the average of the expenses with research-development in the total of GDP from Romania represented only 0,53%, almost four times lower than the European average (1,83% in EU27 and 1,91% in EU 15)
- The employment rate from our country was in 2007 8 % lower than the average European level (58,9% as opposed to 67%), the disparity being more obvious for the less favored categories from the point of view of the level of education (low and average); the employment rate of the population with ages between

55-64 was of 41,4% in our country, as opposed to 44,7% in EU 27, the disparity being for both sexes; the less favorable levels of these indicators cancel the advantage of our country regarding the variation coefficients of the regional employment rates (according to NUTS 2), which registered in 2007, inferior levels of the European average, both for the total of employed population and for the sub-populations according to sex.

- Although the life expectancy of 65 years old from our country in 2008 was 3 years lower than the European average, the average age of coming out of the labor market in Romania was 3 years higher than the EU one (64,3 in Romania and 61,2 in EU 27); the unfavorable disparity for the male population was of 3,6 years and for the feminine population of only 2,7 years.
- The unemployment rate placed our country below the European average in 2008, the unfavorable differences were registered just for the males; in spite of these, the unemployment for young people below 25 years old was 3% higher than that from EU27, and the average of the long term unemployment (more than 12 months) was 0,4% higher than in EU 15.
- The average of those who abandon school before time (persons with ages between 18-24 years old who have a low level of education or were not included in an education program in the last four weeks) was of 19,2% in our country in 2007, 4% higher than the European average.
- The indicator which measures *the lifelong learning* on an European level, through the share of the persons with ages between 25-64 year old who were included in a professional education or training program in the last four weeks, registered the value of 1,3% in our country in 2007, below the European level of 9,5% in EU 27 and 10,9% in EU 15;
- In what the abilities of the students to use the written information in different situations is concerned and according to the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), 53,5% of the 15 years old students from our country were situated below the low reading level; the level of the indicator is more than double as opposed to the European average and it is the highest in Europe.
- The rate of growth of a unit of labor, derived indicator determined as a ratio between the payment of an employee and the labor productivity (calculated as a ration between GDP and employed population), reflects the correlation between the payment of the employees and the productivity of their labor; in our country, the 1,5 level of the indicator from 2008 was three times higher than the European average where the level of the indicator was of 0,5, and this showed an inadequate correlation between the two elements.
- The risk of absolute poverty, on the level of 2007, was of 19% in our country, 3% higher than in EU 27; the unfavorable disparity was more obvious for the 4% level of the indicator of the young population (under 16 years old), and could be found to a lesser degree in the risk of relative poverty (23% in our country and only 22% in EU 27); the disparity of the distribution of the income, measured through a 5,3 coefficient in our country as opposed to 4,8 in EU 27 also placed the Romanian economy in an unfavorable position

The European Union considers that the investment in human capital is a central requirement in order to reach its objectives of employment, in order to become the most knowledge based economy; the growth of the share of the services in economy, the sustained steps towards the change of the technologies, the growth of the average of

knowledge (information) in the value of production and the economic and social restructuring are direct or indirect consequences of the human investments. The dissemination of knowledge is crucial in order to assimilate and use the new technologies of the economy and to impede the segmentation of the labor market among workers with different types of education.

The policies and measures on the labor market from our country have come a long way from a rudimentary system, to an almost sophisticated one; in spite of all these, the system seems stuck in the realities of the transition having significant difficulties in its own adaptation to the realities of the European labor market, where the opportunities are really diverse but also imbalanced, hard to localize and decipher. Being an essential ingredient of the human development in a modern open economy, the policies on the labor market and their active measures will have to pass, in the next decade, through structural rearrangement, which involved going through some specific steps:

- the policies and measures will have to be adjusted and adapted in order to correspond the needs of the different regions, communities and individuals; at the same time the legal frame has to suffer major changes so that it could allow the adaptation both on the level of the community and on the regional or local level; the national standards adjusted for the regional specific types of policies should provide the frame where each region and community will enjoy the space of action and innovation;
- this adaptation of the policies from the labor market can be materialized only through a profound operation of decentralization of the entire process; the regional authorities should share the management of the duties and the rights of the public employment services and should have a point in the design, development and implementation and above all the allocation and use of the financial resources for the policies from the labor market; in other words, they have to have a more important role in taking the decisions which really affect the economic and social life of the regions.
- all the measures and policies have to be headed towards an individual, participant in the labor market to ensure both its security and flexibility in a system which currently lacks both components;
- The key of these aspects is the consistent investment in the development of human resources, especially in education and research-development; both the public and the private sector have to start to invest massively in education-training, research development activities; without these the advantages of the nation cannot be turned into competitive advantages, thus offering different market niche which can be developed and which can represent a stimulus for investment and for the development of human resources.

This last aspect incorporates all the others; *time* and *synchronization* represent the *engine* of the human sustainable development. The stronger the labor market is related to the human resource, the earlier are implemented these reforms and the faster will be the results for a human sustainable development.

We consider that all the activities included in our project are placed on the larger framework of the active measures which have to be implemented on the labor market from the region Oltenia.

The needs of training on the level of our region were identified and quantified through the statistical analysis carried out in this study; the availability of the

participants on the regional labor market was also appreciated, quantitatively and qualitatively, through the wish, the purpose and the content of this need of lifelong learning.

The hottest area of the disparities on the regional labor market is the level of education of all categories of population; of the restructuring of the general learning system cannot be carried out easily and in a short time (being inert as any large system), if the Local Employment Agencies offer professional training courses for a single category of active population (the unemployed), if the lifelong learning offer of the regional enterprises is currently insufficient and not adapted to the market requirements, lifelong learning (the training and evaluation with the help of the informational tools) in the fields from our region (and even from our country), as for example the economic field and the development of the entrepreneurial competences, which we propose through our project, is constituted in an essential component of the education system of all categories of active population and represents an alternative with effects in real time. The flexibility of the learning and testing program adapted to the individual capacity of accumulation makes it accessible for some *less favored categories* on the labor market from the region. There are no long-distance, open courses for the higher education, for the specializations proposed in this project in the region Oltenia (only the long distance or low attendance education).

The continuous education in the field of business management and the development of entrepreneurial competences is useful both for the employees and the leaders of the regional companies, providing them with the competitiveness on the national and European labor market and implicitly a higher professional and occupational mobility of the workforce from the region, which becomes more attractive for investors (foreign or local), and for the creation of the entrepreneurial spirit which lies at the ground of the free initiative, of the regional investments and of the creation of new jobs.

In a wider perspective – in time and space – the system of lifelong training proposed in this project , refers not only to the higher qualification or requalification of the workforce, but also (or especially) to the improvement of the quality of the human factor in the area, through the chain effects, on a long term; this aspect is constituted in an argument sufficient to sustain the development of the project but also its future development.

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