

SOURCES OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN ROMANIA

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The main topics tackled in this study refers at social groups excluded, mechanism and patterns of exclusion, sources of exclusion as well as institutional (but also mutual) mechanism for promoting social inclusion, a review of measures oriented in this direction, and recommendations for future actions in order to counteract the social exclusion and promote lasting and complex mechanisms for social inclusion. The study it is split in two parts: the first one published in the current issue, and the second one will be published in the next issue of review.

Introduction

The social exclusion and inclusion conundrum in Romania, as a country that is currently undergoing a transition process, presents certain specific issues generated by the communist inheritance as much as by the very process of transition. If a number of similarities with other Western countries exist, as regards the manifestation of certain forms of social exclusion, pregnant differences appear vis-à-vis the exclusion sources, their manifest amplitude and intensity.

In Western countries, the source of social exclusion is largely a secondary expression of a social system whose developmental processes proved to be well structured, coherent and functional up until the present time.

In countries undergoing a period of transition – particularly difficult, as in Romania's case – the sources of social exclusion are placed in the midst of the very process of change and these are: the explosion of poverty, social disorganisation processes, incongruous institutional and legislative changes – all of which took place in a short period of time, under various pressures often contradictory, both internal and external.

The communist society's prolonged crisis – which became acute in the eighties – generated a process of social disintegration that was propagated after the Revolution as a severe inheritance compounded by new noxious effects that were mere by-products of a difficult period of transition.

Hence, any strategy attempting to prevent social exclusion while promoting social inclusion in Romania will inevitably need to focus not just on the institutional building of an inclusive society but on the gradual absorption of