

# Employers' Perspectives on Vulnerable Groups Employment

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## **Abstract:**

The present analysis aims a few perceptions and practices used by employers regarding some vulnerable categories of persons on the labor market, according to the official statistics and to the information gained through a dual approach(qualitative and quantitative) of employment. Finally, we have tried to propose possible ways of reducing discrimination in the case of those exposed to risk (especially women and Roma people).

Our research study has been part of the project "Developing Specific Training Programs for Social Inclusion Increase in view of Employment Improvement on the Labor Market", together with other field researches which aimed the problem of vulnerable group's employment. In order to shape a global perspective on vulnerable groups on the labor market, we will emphasize the employers' important role, as in the end, they are the ones accepting or rejecting the person in seeking for a job.

The research method we have used was the case study, because our information arise mostly from Alba County, with the mention that the project containing this analysis referred to the North-West and Centre Development (12 counties). The research analysis can provide in our opinion, strong hypotheses for further projects with wider margins and relying on specimen statistical procedures.

Discussing for the very beginning the problem of women discrimination on the labor market, we firstly ask if their career involvement is the same as that of men's, or the model of a family caretaker woman is still enough spread so that we can explain an important part of gender differentiation on employment. It is often possible that a simple calculation of costs and benefits, including the psychological ones, to suggest that the woman (mother) should retire from the active life when her children are very young. The same calculation can suggest that, if later on, they find a job; they can likely choose a flexible part time schedule, which allows them to take care of the household and the family itself. It seems that most social policies which support families do this in such a way that the woman career should be the least affected by the raise of their children; in this respect, one can state that it is the mother to be protected, this person being naturally skilled and obliged to take care of her family and the household.

The specialized literature shows that, besides the role of values and attitudes on employment matter, a significant part is played by the organizational culture aiming the gender professional role segregation. The women access to a job and the very strategy concerning the labor market,(in the context of family taking care) imply ideological debates at the level of the whole society, capable to affirm a public opinion(or public opinions)which action strongly upon the women who take personal and professional decisions.

The analysis in the North-West and Centre Development Regions revealed that employment rates of men and women are different from one county to another, but that there is not a direct relation between the economic development and women's access on the labor market. It has been proved that the counties with a higher development degree and with a higher employment demand will rather have lower employment rates in the case of women than in men's. In Alba County, where the unemployment rate is higher and jobs are very few, the employment and activity rates differ insignificantly for men and women. Women can deliberate when their professional involvement comes, or if another salary in the household is needed, but on the contrary, their perceptions on gender roles or their ideological debates become irrelevant.

Regarding the real matters that can discriminate women on the labor market, an important aspect at the employers' level, is represented by the idea that some jobs are more appropriate to women than to men or vice-versa.

An important part in women discrimination is explained through the gender segregation of professional roles (especially for qualified or not qualified workers) combined with strong barriers for those women who should try to get

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a job traditionally designed to men (but which are much weaker in the case of a man seeking a woman's job. Another important aspect of discrimination is the fact that those activities considered as traditionally appropriate to women are clearly lower paid than those "rather appropriate to men".

In the case of Roma people discrimination, one could notice that women have definitely a lower employment rate compared to men, due probably to the cultural pattern or to the numerous families own constraints. We can not estimate the Roma's representation among the employees of the mentioned companies, but we can state that those having a job can hardly find jobs requiring a higher qualification.

We believe that social policies treating poverty, Roma's employment through positive discrimination or providing facilities for mothers who could simultaneously work and take care of their families, all these could not be functional by themselves. The social policies could simultaneously focus on changes concerning values and attitudes in the Romanian society (connected evidently to coherent interventions in fighting discrimination on the labor market).

**Keywords:** women discrimination, employment, segregation, labor market, employers' perspectives.