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ΕΚΔΟΣΕΙΣ ΔΙΟΝΙΚΟΣ

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31 **Εξαμηνιαία Επιστημονική Επιθεώρηση,**
Άνοιξη 2021, τόμος 16ος, τεύχος 1

ΕΚΔΟΣΕΙΣ
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SOCIAL COHESION AND DEVELOPMENT

Biannual Scientific Review

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Σκοπός του τόμου είναι να εισαγάγει και να εξοικειώσει τους αναγνώστες στις θεωρίες και τις μεθόδους της επιστήμης της οικονομίας που σχετίζονται με την ανάλυση των κοινωνικών προβλημάτων και την Κοινωνική Πολιτική. Ιδιαίτερη έμφαση δίνεται στην παρουσίαση εναλλακτικών θεωρητικών «παραδειγμάτων», πέραν του κυρίαρχου νεοκλασικού παραδείγματος, ενθαρρύνοντας κατ' αυτόν τον τρόπο την κριτική σκέψη, διδασκαλία και έρευνα. Οι επιμέρους θεματικές του τόμου αποτελούν εξειδικευμένα τμήματα της οικονομικής ανάλυσης που συνήθως διδάσκονται σε προχωρημένο επίπεδο με τη χρήση απαιτητικών τεχνικών.

Το ανά χείρας βιβλίο αποφεύγει, όσο είναι δυνατόν, την χρησιμοποίηση υπερβολικά εξειδικευμένων τεχνικών και φορμαλισμών και δίνει έμφαση στην αξιωματική θεμελίωση των βασικών επιχειρημάτων και υποθέσεων. Τα επιμέρους κεφάλαια είναι εύκολα κατανοητά από κοινωνικούς επιστήμονες και φοιτητές που δεν είναι εξοικειωμένοι με τις μεθόδους και τα εργαλεία της επιστήμης της οικονομίας. Στόχος των συγγραφέων είναι η δημιουργία των κατάλληλων ερεθισμάτων στον αναγνώστη για μία κριτική πρόσληψη των πτυχών, προϋποθέσεων και συνεπειών που θέτει η επιστήμη της οικονομίας στην κατανόηση και ερμηνεία των διαφόρων κοινωνικών προβλημάτων αλλά και στον γενικότερο ρόλο της Κοινωνικής Πολιτικής στην προαγωγή της κοινωνικής ευημερίας.

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Κοινωνική Συνοχή και Ανάπτυξη 2021 16 (1), 5-27

The Social Production of Vulnerability: Sub-regional and Class Inequalities in Attica

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Η κοινωνική παραγωγή της ευαλωτότητας: Ενδοπεριφερειακές και ταξικές ανισότητες στην Αττική

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ABSTRACT

Our study aims at a global understanding of social vulnerability focusing on its structural determinants, in social and spatial domains of heightened uncertainty. Vulnerability is approached as a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon contingent both on people's disadvantaged life world and on their agential powers, but also manifested at different scales: the national, the local, and the occupational. Analyzing macro-social data (drawing mostly from 2011 census) and survey data, we examine whether and to which degree vulnerability is patterned along the lines either of class or along other factors, such as geographical location. The geographical focus of the study is placed on the regional units of Piraeus and West Attica, Greece. Our findings suggest that class constitutes a powerful mechanism in the distribution of social risks whose operation interacts with other mechanisms of social differentiation.

KEY WORDS: Vulnerability, social class, inequalities, Piraeus, West Attica.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Η παρούσα μελέτη αποσκοπεί στην κατανόηση της κοινωνικής ευαλωτότητας, εστιάζοντας σε δομικά χαρακτηριστικά, όπως εμφανίζονται σε ένα κοινωνικο-χωρικό πλαίσιο υψηλής αβεβαιότητας. Η ευαλωτότητα προσεγγίζεται ως σύνθετο και πολύπλευρο φαινόμενο που προσδιορίζεται τόσο από τους περιορισμούς που επιβάλουν οι δομές του βιωμένου κόσμου στη δράση των ανθρώπων, όσο και από τις ευκαιρίες που δημιουργεί η ίδια η ανθρώπινη δράση, ενώ μπορεί να εξετασθεί σε διαφορετικές κλίμακες (εθνική, τοπική, επαγγελματική) και επίπεδα. Αναλύοντας μακροσκοπικά στοιχεία, αλλά και μίκρο-δεδομένα, διερευνούμε τον βαθμό στον οποίο η ευαλωτότητα συγκροτείται ως αποτέλεσμα παραγόντων, όπως η ταξική θέση που καταλαμβάνουν τα άτομα μέσα σε ένα πλέγμα κοινωνικών σχέσεων, ή ο τόπος κατοικίας τους. Σύμφωνα με τα ευρήματα που παρουσιάζονται εδώ, η κοινωνική τάξη συνιστά έναν ισχυρό μηχανισμό διαφοροποίησης της έκθεσης σε κοινωνικούς κινδύνους, χωρίς να αποκλείεται ωστόσο η συνέργεια και άλλων μηχανισμών κοινωνικής διαφοροποίησης.

ΛΕΞΕΙΣ-ΚΛΕΙΔΙΑ: Ευαλωτότητα, κοινωνική τάξη, ανισότητες, Πειραιάς, Δυτική Αττική.

1. Introduction

Social vulnerability is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon contingent both on the limitations that people face in their relationship with their life world and on the ways they act, think, or feel in this relationship. Vulnerability and its manifestations can be observed at different scales and levels: the national, the local, and the occupational scale, but also the macro, the meso and the micro-level. At the macro-level, one could examine risk-related factors, and how they vary across time and place, but also across different social locations determined by the relationship of people to income-generating assets of various sorts.

Research literature on vulnerability is organized around the following main axes: A considerable amount of research has been devoted to the conditions that render people or places vulnerable to extreme natural events, an approach which has been called 'the exposure model' (Anderson, 2000). A second stream of research approaches vulnerability as a social condition, a measure of societal resistance or resilience to hazards (Hewitt, 2000). In other research data the emphasis is put on the integration of potential exposures with a specific focus on places or regions (Kasperson, Kasperson, and Turner, 1995). In this paper we examine the social aspects of vulnerability drawing the attention to social class as the condition of possibility for making specific groups of people vulnerable. In that sense, our research intersects the three axes mentioned, inasmuch as we analyze both the physical (geographical location) and the social (class conditions) context of vulnerability. Thus, instead of treating vulnerability as an intrinsic property of the individual, we face it as a relational phenomenon (Moellendorf, 2009) created through class inequalities impacted also from social factors that influence or shape the susceptibility of various groups.

We consider thereby social class to be the most appropriate analytic tool for explaining the social determinants of vulnerability and its connectedness with geographical location. These determinants have mostly been treated within frameworks that are loosely connected with social class. To be more specific, the factors which are usually drawing the attention of the social researchers are as it follows: lack of access to resources (including information, knowledge, and technology); limited access to political power and representation; social capital, including social networks and connections; beliefs and customs; building stock and age; frail and physically limited individuals; and type and density of infrastructure and lifelines (Tierney, Lindell, and Perry, 2001; Putnam, 2000).

The discussion of social risk is also pertinent here. Building on empirical research at the field of risk, Ranci (2010) draws a distinction between old and new social risks. The new social risks emerge at the intersection of job insecurity, income instability, increasing fragility of family support and inertia of welfare institutions (Ranci, 2010: 6). One dimension of those risks is that they cannot be reduced to income, or job losses, as was the case in industrial societies. They are positioned in the gap between labour market, family, and welfare system and their treatment from social actors such as trade unions, and progressive parties is rather problematic (Taylor Gooby, 2004). A second dimension concerns the complexity of these risks. According to the scholarship of the new social risks, the material conditions of people today depend on a number of different social mechanisms, and therefore, there are different possible negative outcomes, which are difficult to correlate with specific causes (Ranci, 2010: 15).

The exposure of the individuals to negative outcomes produced by specific risk factors (such as temporary work, or disability), has different effects, for different groups of individuals, not on the basis of a unique social mechanism such as class, but on the basis of the access to a number of different resource distribution mechanisms, with labour market being just one of them, albeit central. Accordingly, the concept of vulnerability is employed to explain how the effect of the same risk factor can be different for equally exposed individuals. In this line of argument, social stratification does not suffice to predict social vulnerability in contemporary societies. One should also consider other redistributing mechanisms, such as the social welfare protection, the household structure, as well as contextual factors such as the general level of well-being in a region (Ranci et al 2010: 255). In any case, the once privileged ties between the industrial working-class and the regulation of risk, have ceased to exist, and instead mass vulnerability has arisen. As we will see below, at least some of these labour segments can still be located in a working-class position, under an inclusive and relational theorization of class.

Though we share some of these concerns over the complex nature of vulnerability and social risk in advanced capitalism, we argue that none of these mechanisms are detached from class relations. It is against this background that our research objectives have been developed. In particular, we argue that while most of the quantitative studies make sense of social vulnerability through well-defined social factors, a comprehensive explanatory framework in which these factors are treated as a whole is largely absent. The contribution of the present study is to provide quantitative data showing the differential distribution of social vulnerability among different class positions. The research questions which guided data analysis are the following:

1) Given that the geographical focus of the study is placed on Piraeus and West Attica, two units of the largest Region of Greece, we examine which are the social differences between these areas and the rest of Attica. We selected these areas because they both share a rich industrial past; they have been equally subject to de-industrialization and re-industrialization processes; and they have painfully experienced the impact of the recent economic crisis.

2) How class positioning affects the possibility of poverty, unemployment, and deprivation risk?

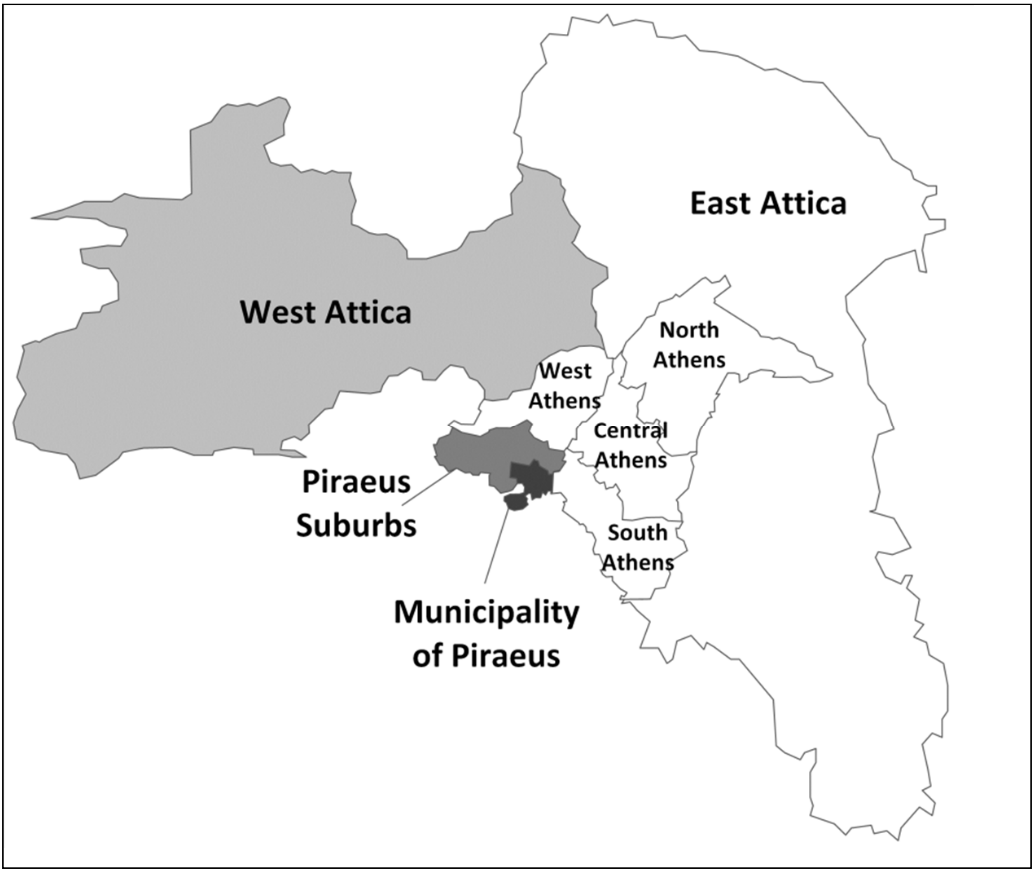
3) How the class-specific geographical location affects social vulnerability?

The first section of the article discusses the concept of social vulnerability, from a perspective of relational class analysis. The second section of the paper examines the social differentiation of the past decade in Attica Region. Attica concentrates almost half of the country's population, and a respectively significant part of the national economic activity. As it has been shown from various studies in different scientific areas, the two sub-regional units of Piraeus and West Attica, demonstrate a historically lower socioeconomic profile in comparison with the rest of the Region. The higher unemployment rates, and the lower levels of mean income, and occupational status, becomes a persisting local trend over time, with the national economic crisis of 2009 aggravating the chronic characteristics of this trend. Finally in the third section the focus shifts from the spatial level to the level of social production. The question we examine here is whether the spatial character of social vulnerability is accompanied with class specificities, or not. The quantitative material draws from a survey among people living in the area, and the operationalization of class relies on EO Wright's second class scheme (2000). The paper ends with the discussion of the findings and some concluding remarks.

2. Social differentiation in Attica

Figure 1 provides an overview of Attica Region along with its division in regional units. As explained below the Regional Unit of Piraeus can also be divided into two sub-units: the municipality of Piraeus (or Central Piraeus) and the Piraeus suburbs. The development of local industrial economy of Piraeus and West Attica has deep historical roots, which go back to the massive installation of refugees from Asia Minor after 1922 in the suburbs of Piraeus, representing 77% of total population as per 1928 Census. The rapid industrialization of West Attica in 1950s-1970s was another factor with similar local effects. These developments had a far-reaching impact on the local socio-economic profile and the local configuration of capital and labour. Thus, despite older significant cultural (ethnic) differentiations between the two areas, both display the lowest socioeconomic profile in the whole Attica region, also given the corresponding east-west residential division in Attica, shown in previous studies (Maloutas, 2016). Indeed, the highest incomes in Attica as well as the lowest unemployment rates are mostly concentrated in the north-eastern and south-eastern suburbs, in the center of the Municipality of Athens and in some areas in East Attica.

Figure 1 Map of Attica Region



In order to evaluate the current socio-economic status of Piraeus and West Attica, we make use of annual household income (as per Minister of Finance 2011 data and unemployment rates as per 2011 Census). A third additional indicator could be the objective real estate value (as per Minister of Finance 2007 data) which significantly determines the cost of housing, but also the cost of living in recent years, due to its use as Taxable Property Value (ENFIA). In several cases this indicator provides additional, and sometimes corrective information on income. For example, areas with relatively low income, but high real estate value, such as Municipality of Piraeus should be analyzed as a separated unit from its suburbs.

As shown in Table 1 Piraeus suburbs and mainly West Attica record essentially lower income (19,125€ and 18,746€ respectively) and real estate value rates (950€/m2 and 750€/m2) compared with the whole Attica region (24,082€ and 1,400€/m2), with unemployment being much higher as well (at least in 2011). On the other hand, the respective figures for Municipality of Piraeus are much closer to Attica average values, while local real estate values are higher than average. Similar conclusions have been drawn from other studies based on the Census data of 2011. A study in the field of poverty and social exclusion that has been conducted under the aegis of the Regional Authority of Attica (Kalogirou, 2015), ordered the 66 municipalities of Attica according to the Human Poverty Index used by the United Nations. Among the 10 Attica's municipalities with the highest record in Human Poverty, 4 municipalities belong to the target areas (the total number of municipalities in the two Regional Units are 10).

Other direct or indirect determinants of socio-economic status, such as education and occupational skill level corroborate the evidence mentioned above. West Attica presents by far the largest deviations from the corresponding average values in Attica, with only 9.7% higher education graduates (in comparison to a total 22.2% in Attica), while in Piraeus suburbs the corresponding percentage is 12.5%. Regarding the occupational skill level, West Attica concentrates the highest percentage (46.6%) of lower skill occupations (Skilled workers, technicians-operators and unskilled workers, based on ISCO classification) and the lowest percentage (14.1%) of high skill occupations (Managers, Professionals, based on ISCO classification). Piraeus suburbs give significant but much more limited deviations from total Attica values (27.6% and 27.8%) and only Municipality of Piraeus is close to Attica's average profile. To summarize, the socio-economic differentiation, though moderated across time, continues to affect the overall social profile of Attica, reproducing inequalities within the Region.

Table 1 Social differentiation of Piraeus - West Attica regional units

		Greece	Attica Region	Municipality of Piraeus	Piraeus Suburbs	West Attica
Unemployment 2011 (%)		18.7	18.0	19.6	21.6	23.2
Avg. Annual Income 2011 (in Euros)		20,202	24,082	22,071	19,125	18,746
Real estate values 2007 (in Euros/ m2)		n/a	1.400	1.450	950	750
Education Level	Up to Primary (%)	42.0	32.3	31.4	38.4	46.9
	Secondary (%)	41.3	45.6	49.7	49.1	43.4
	University or higher (%)	16.7	22.2	18.9	12.5	9.7
Occupational Skill Level	High Skill Level (%)	24.1	27.8	23.3	17.4	14.1
	Middle Skill Level (%)	39.4	44.6	49.9	49.1	39.3
	Low Skill Level (%)	36.5	27.6	26.8	33.4	46.6

Sources: Ministry of Finance, Census 2011.

3. Operationalizing social class through E. O Wright's conceptual scheme

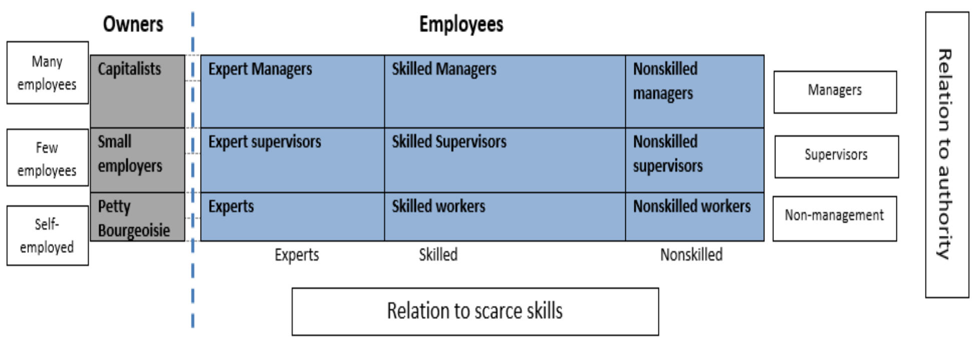
The core analytical category of our survey is class location, as designated by EO Wright in the class scheme presented in his book Classes. According to Wright: 'Class location is a basic determinant of the matrix of objective possibilities faced by individuals, the real alternatives people face in making decisions' (1985: 144).

Class structure, class relations, class locations, class formation, class struggle, and class consciousness are the building blocks of Wright's class analysis (Wright, 2005; 2000). A detailed description of how these elements interact in the macro, meso, and micro-level, falls outside the objectives of this paper. Suffice it to say that class locations are primarily empty places in the social structure, which are filled with individuals. Depending on the scope of the research question, one could limit the analysis of class structure to a model of three class locations: capitalists, workers, and self-employed, or even two (workers and non-workers). Given the complexities of the divisions within the contemporary employee population, it would make more sense to differentiate class locations among wage earners, particularly if we want to explain the variation of the prospects for living a comfortable and secure material existence. The great merit of using the concept of class location, is the avoidance of treating classes as things, either in the form of statistical aggregations, or in the form of social organizations. As Wright has put it 'classes constitute common positions, those positions are relational, those relations are contradictory, and those contradictory relations are located within production' (Wright, 1980: 20). This is precisely why he preferred using the term working-class as an adjective, rather than as noun.

Despite its theoretical elegance, as any taxonomy in quantitative empirical research, Wright's analysis builds on categories that run the risk of being 'fixed' in the sense that a predetermined set of criteria is applied in different countries at different times. As it is shown below, the application of these categories is adjusted properly to fit into the specific social formations under scrutiny. It is important to stress that class locations designate the social positions occupied by individuals within a particular kind of social relation (Wright, 2005: 14). They are distinctive locations within class relations. As every social relation, class relations are structured patterns of human interaction, but their specificity derives from the fact that this interaction is contingent upon the power people have over productive resources, which in turn determines whether they exploit productive resources, or they are exploited. Though in capitalism the central form of exploitation is based on property rights in the means of production, Wright stresses two additional dimensions that differentiate the positioning of individuals within the structure of exploitation: first, their relationship to authority within production, and second, their possession of skills or expertise. The 12 class positions of Wright's scheme (2000: 22) are distinguished according to a combination of three kinds of assets: means of production, skills/credentials, organization assets (Figure 2). Due to limitations on the number of observations in our survey, we concluded with 8 class positions, which are further merged to 4, as depicted in Table 2.

Managers and supervisors are merged into one category (managers/supervisors) with three sub-categories: expert managers/supervisors, skilled managers/supervisors, non-skilled managers/supervisors. In addition, those who are non-managers/supervisors (not managers, nor supervisors) are grouped in three respective categories: Experts, skilled workers, workers. With the exception of the workers, the rest employees occupy a contradictory location within the exploitation structure. Thus, the model presented here differentiates 2 class locations within wage earners/salaried employees (contradictory locations and workers), plus two locations for non-wage earners: Petty bourgeoisie (self-employed) and employers (employers with few employees). As there is no employer with more than 9 employees in the sample, the location of capitalists (big employers) has been omitted. Table 2 illustrates the way that respondents have been allocated to class locations.

Figure 2 Wright's elaborated class typology



Source: Wright, 2000: 22.

Table 2 Class locations and assets in the sample

	Ownership/control over the means of production	Authority/control over organization assets	Skills - Variable 1	Skills - Variable 2
Employers	Employer			
Petty-bourgeois	Self-Employed			
Contradictory Locations	Salaried Employee	High	High	High
		High	High	Low
		High	Low	High
		High	Low	Low
		Low	High	High
		Low	High	Low
		Low	Low	High
Workers		Low	Low	Low

It should be stressed here that in the analysis of deprivation the selected unit is the household. This is not a data driven choice, but a methodological response to the problem of 'cross-class' household composition in contemporary capitalist societies. Once again, we rely on the research question to find a solution, which can hardly be uncontroversial in general. For example, a municipality worker married to a civil engineer, does not share the same class position with a municipality worker married to a receptionist. And yet, to allocate the former worker to a 'middle-class position' (based on whose occupation is the main source of family income) renders his/her own job irrelevant for class analysis. This is at odds with ethnographic and other studies showing that subjectivity is deeply shaped from the micro-experiences on the job (Spyridakis, 2013). On the other hand, as Wright argues 'if one sees the central explanatory power of class as linked to the ways in which class positions shape material interests then household class composition becomes a more salient issue' (Wright, 2000: 127). Wright offers a useful insight, by distinguishing between direct and mediated class locations. The proper metaphor of class location, says Wright, is a node in a network of relations. In such network relations, one can find individuals with direct relations to their class location, in the sense of an unmediated link between the individual's immediate job and personal ownership of productive resources. But there are also individuals related to other family members, whose link with productive resources is indirect, and therefore they occupy a mediated class location.

The distinction between direct and mediated locations has been operationalized through the sample's separation in two clusters, depending on whether the respondent is the main contributor to household's income, or not. In the cluster of the main income contributors, the assignment to a class location depends on the criteria of Table 2. Class location for employers and self-employed is directly determined by their employment status. However, for the salaried employees, we have to check their values in management/control over organization assets variable (given by their authority within production) as well as in two variables determining Skills (education and profession level). In order that an employee is located in working class, it is necessary to have low values in all these three variables. Otherwise, the employee is located to contradictory class locations as per Wright's definition.

Regarding housewives and students, all these variables are determined by the corresponding available data about the reference person in the household or parental home, meaning the spouse or the father respectively. However, due to lack of information on the authority of the spouse/father at the workplace, household income is used as a proxy variable of organization assets. As for retired or unemployed, we have no specific information on their prior employment status. We use instead the information on their authority status when they were economically active, as a proxy variable of ownership/control over the means of production. Former CEOs/Owners of an enterprise are excluded because it is not clear whether they were employers/self-employed or salaried employees.

In the second cluster (those respondents who are not the main income contributors in their household), the assignment to a class position depends on the respective criteria as met by the reference person in the household, either the spouse, or the father, exactly like housewives or students in the first cluster. For example, a married self-employed individual of low income occupies an employer's class location as long as her spouse is employer. All the information regarding the assignment of the respondents to specific class locations is presented in the form of Table 3.

Table 3 Assignment to class location based on Employment Status

		Ownership/ control over the means of production	Authority/ control over organization assets	Skills - Variable 1	Skills - Variable 2
Not Main contributor to Household's Income	Employment Status of Spouse: Other than employed/ retired	Employment Status of father	Income	Education Level of father	
	Employment Status of Spouse: Employed/Retired	Employment Status of Spouse	Income	Education Level of Spouse	Profession Level of Spouse
Main contributor to Household's Income	Retired/Unemployed	Authority	Income	Education Level	
	Student	Employment Status of father	Income	Education Level of father	
	Housewife	Employment Status of Spouse	Income	Education Level of Spouse	Occupation skill Level of Spouse
	Employed	Employment Status	Authority	Education Level	Occupation skill Level

Table 4 shows the corresponding variables' values (high or low) along with their description. Regarding the Occupational level, the value 'high' designates high skill occupations (Managers or Professionals, according to ISCO classification). The 'middle' value corresponds to middle skill professions (such as Technical Assistants, Office Clerks, Employees in Sales & Personal Services), and the 'lower' value designates skilled manual workers, technicians-operators and unskilled workers. Based on the scheme described above, the frequencies for class locations of the sample are shown in Table 5.

Table 4 Variables and Values

Variables	Values	
	High	Low
Income	>1,500€	<1,500€
Occupational Level	Upper	Middle, Lower
Authority/Supervision Level	CEO/Owner, Manager/Supervisor	No Authority
Authority/Supervision Level (for Retired/Unemployed)	Manager/Supervisor	No Authority
Education Level	University or higher	Up to Primary/Secondary

Table 5 Class locations - frequencies

	Class Location Variable		
	n	%	% (Valid)
Employers	26	4.7%	6.4%
Petty-bourgeois	83	15.0%	20.4%
Contradictory/ mediated class Locations	214	38.6%	52.7%
Workers	83	15.0%	20.4%
Total Classified	406	73.3%	100.0%
Unclassified	123	22.2%	
Other	25	4.5%	
Total	554	100.0%	

4. The demographic profile of the sample

Survey data were collected through telephone interviews using a structured questionnaire, consisting of 69 items, organized on five sections: values, inequalities, political attitudes, emotional responses to Covid-19 pandemics, and socio-demographics. For the purposes of this paper, we draw on inequalities and socio-demographics. The survey was conducted by Greek Public Opinion - GPO.

The survey was carried out between 1 and 12 October 2020, on a total sample of 554 respondents, over 16 years old, who reside in the regional units of Piraeus and West Attica, with the method of stratified random sampling. The municipalities of the two regional units constituted the research sampling strata, with the selection of each random sample being proportional to the area's population (aged 16 and over) on the basis of Census 2011. The sampling method ensured the randomness and representativeness of the sample, in terms of some core characteristics of the actual population. The maximum margin of error for the survey results is 4.2% (at 95% confidence level).

The distribution of the study population in Table 6 shows that women, senior citizens, graduates, and occupations of high skill level are over-represented in the sample. Professions such as skilled workers, technicians-operators and unskilled workers represent only 18.5% of the sample (compared to 35.1% of the area's population). 57.1% of the sample have no access to organization assets (authority) at the workplace. 48.4% live in households of a total monthly income lower than 1,500€. Mean income value is 1,221.1€, much lower than the Attica average (2,000€). On the other hand, the respective figures are homogenous within any separate regional unit without significant fluctuations among the municipalities. Regarding geographical distribution, overall sampling fraction in Piraeus is 1 in 815.0 (0.12%) approximately double than West Attica (0.06%).

Table 6 Demographic-socioeconomic characteristics of respondents (n=554) and population

	Sample		Population		Sampling Fraction (1 in X)
	n	n (%)	N	N (%)	
Regions (>16 y.o.)					
Municipality of Piraeus	176	31.8	142,644	27.8	810.5
Piraeus Suburbs	294	53.1	240,423	46.9	817.8
West Attica	84	15.2	129,483	25.3	1,541.5
Gender (>16 y.o.)					
Male	252	45.5	249,406	48.7	989.7
Female	302	54.5	263,143	51.3	871.3
Age, years range (>16 y.o.)					
16-29	60	10.8	107,326	20.9	1,788.8
30-44	125	22.6	147,095	28.7	1,176.8
45-60	258	46.6	124,163	24.2	481.3
>60					
111	20.0	133,966	26.1	1,206.9	
Family status (>16 y.o.)					
Married/cohabitated	347	62.6	286,864	56.0	812.6
Separated	6	1.1			
Single	128	23.1	156,824	30.6	1,225.2
Widowed/Divorced	69	12.5	68,862	13.4	998.0
Unknown/no answer	4	0.7	0	0.0	0.0
Education level (>16 y.o.)					
Up to Primary	31	5.6	145,412	28.4	4,690.7
Secondary/Post-secondary	287	51.8	284,869	55.6	992.6
University or higher	234	42.2	82,269	16.1	351.6
Unknown	2	0.4	0	0.0	0.0

Employment status					
Employed (Employer)	15	2.7	207,892	40.6	704.7
Employed (Self-Employed)	62	11.2			
Employed (Salaried Employee)	218	39.4			
Unemployed	44	7.9	56,230	11.0	1,278.0
Student	36	6.5	40,644	7.9	1,129.0
Retired-Pensionners/household	174	31.4	174,432	34.0	1,002.5
Other/Unknown	5	0.9	33,352	6.5	6,670.5
Income					
Up to 1,500€	268	48.4	n/a	n/a	n/a
1,500€-3,000€	158	28.5	n/a	n/a	n/a
>3,000€	30	5.4	n/a	n/a	n/a
No answer	98	17.7	n/a	n/a	n/a
Authority at the workplace					
No Authority	320	57.8	n/a	n/a	n/a
Manager/Supervisor	43	7.8	n/a	n/a	n/a
CEO/Owner	69	12.5	n/a	n/a	n/a
No answer	122	22.0	n/a	n/a	n/a
ISCO OccupationalLevels					
Lower Skill Level	40	18.3	72,290	35.1	1,807.3
Middle Skill Level	144	65.8	96,148	46.6	667.7
High Skill Level	35	16.0	37,677	18.3	1,076.5

5. Class locations and exposure to vulnerability. The case of poverty risk

The social risks that we have examined concern the exposure of the respondents of the four groups of class locations (employers, self-employed, contradictory locations and workers) to the following risks: the risk of poverty, the risk of unemployment, and the risk of deprivation. As it was shown in previous section, the census data of 2011 indicate a significant social differentiation between the two Regional Units under scrutiny and the rest of Attica Region. It should be noted though that the nature of the administrative, or census data differs substantially from the survey data, for more than one reasons. The temporal dimension is one factor that should be taken into account, insofar as our survey has been conducted almost a decade after the last census. Additionally, one should also consider the inherent constraints of survey data. Despite the satisfactory levels of the representativeness of the survey in regard with some key features of the target population, there is a misrepresentation of lower strata, not least because a substantial number of poor households cannot be accessed through telephone. This specific limitation of random sampling is not unusual in telephone surveys, and on that basis, generalizability needs caution. Most notably, as it is also explained, our final sample, excludes participants that cannot be assigned to one of the four class locations (mostly because they left unanswered some of the demographic questions). This means that by default, the economically active population is over-represented in this sample. This is not a problem per se, considering that our aim is to see what is happening within a specific class structure consisting of direct and mediated class locations. But it would be unwise to compare the data presented here with findings from other surveys pointing to the general population.

Another constraint concerns the questionnaire itself: a telephone survey cannot but entail a limited number of items. In the sensitive field of income, we followed the rule of thumb of income levels. This makes the construction of a standardized and comparable poverty index practically impossible. Instead, we constructed a tailor-made index of poverty risk, combining the level of household's net income, the household's size, the number of children and the poverty thresholds as determined by Greek Statistic Authority (ELSTAT).[3] The first group (high risk) comprises households located between those with incomes below the poverty threshold and incomes up to 30% above this threshold. The second group (low risk) comprises the rest of the households with incomes that are at least 30% above the poverty threshold. Table 7 shows the distribution of the poverty risk within the four different groups of class locations both when the unit of analysis is the household (structure with direct and mediated locations) and the individual (structure with direct locations only). The differences among the four class locations in the distribution of risk, are statistically significant at the $p< .5$ level in both cases.

Table 7 Poverty risk along class locations

		Class structure based on direct and mediated class locations				
		Workers	Contradictory locations	Self-employed	Employers	Total
Poverty risk (2 categories)	Low	36,8%	84,1%	77,5%	94,4%	73,0%
	High	63,2%	15,9%	22,5%	5,6%	27,0%
Total		100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		Class structure based on individual's location				
		Workers	Contradictory locations	Self-employed	Employers	Total
Poverty risk (2 categories)	Low	57,4%	87,4%	75,9%	90,9%	78,7%
	High	42,6%	12,6%	24,1%	9,1%	21,3%
Total		100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Because income is built-in determinant both of poverty risk index and of mediated class locations, we will limit our analysis to the direct class locations. The workers' class location is by far the most exposed to the risk of poverty. 42,6% of those respondents who directly occupy a working-class location live in a household that runs a high poverty risk. This is the most striking evidence of the deep class divide within the Regional Units of Piraeus and West Attica, given that the total share of those falling into the high-risk category, is 21,3%. As expected, employers constitute the class location with the less exposure to poverty risk. What is also worth noted is that the share of the self-employed who are exposed in high poverty risk (24,1%), is considerably higher than the respective share within contradictory class locations (employees with organization or/and skills assets). This finding corroborates with other aspects of the socioeconomic profile of the respondents who occupy the self-employed location: half of them lack university degree (the share of those in contradictory locations without degree is only 34,6%), while 29,3% position themselves to the working class (the respective percentage within contradictory locations is 21,7%). Perhaps a further distinction between traditional (such as craftsmen and technical professionals) and new petty bourgeoisie (such as scientists and professionals) would make sense, but this would require a detailed conceptual discussion that cannot be delivered here.

To test whether other factors, such as contribution to the household's income, age, place of residence, and gender, exert more influence on the possibility of being at high, or low poverty risk, we performed a binary logistic regression (BLR).[4] Binary logistic regression (BLR) aims at modelling the relationship between one or more predictor variables and a binary dependent variable, and its great merit is that it makes no assumptions about distributions of classes in feature space. The dependent variable is poverty risk (category 'low'=the respondent's household income is at least 30% above the poverty threshold, and category 'high'= the respondent's household income is up to 30% above the poverty threshold). Table 8 gives an overview of the independent variables. The results shown in table 9 indicate that the model fits the data significantly better than a null model, $x^2(8)=21.191$, $p<.05$. The overall classification accuracy based on the model is 80,4%. SPSS allows to use Hosmer & Lemeshow test to evaluate global fit. The non-significant test result (as seen in Table 10, $p=.53$) is an indicator of good model fit.

As shown in Table 11, class location is a significant predictor of poverty risk. In fact, it is the only significant predictor, as far as the contribution to household's income, age, gender, and place of residence are non-significant predictors. Those in contradictory locations are less likely to fall into the category of high poverty risk compared with those in Workers' location by a factor of .188. ($b=-1.673$, $s.e.= .444$, $p<.05$). Self-employed are less likely to fall into the category of high poverty risk compared with those in Workers' location by a factor of .410. ($b=-1.673$, $s.e.= .413$, $p<.05$). Employers are less likely to fall into the category of high poverty risk compared with those in Workers' location by a factor of .113. ($b=-2.183$, $s.e.= 1.126$, statistically significant only at the $p<.10$ level). In other words, employees with scarce skills and/or organization assets are subject to the 1/5 of the risk of poverty in comparison with those employees without scarce skills/authority. In addition, self-employed run almost half of the risk of poverty in comparison with workers. This finding elucidates the importance of class differences within wage labour, and hence the pivotal role of organization and skill assets in class relations. The impact of the property relations on the exposure to poverty, is less straightforward, mainly due to the small number of employers in this sample.

Table 8 Categorical Variables Codings

		Frequency	Parameter coding		
			(1)	(2)	(3)
Class location	Workers (Ref. category)	47	.000	.000	.000
	Contradictory locations	119	1.000	.000	.000
	Self-employed	58	.000	1.000	.000
	Employers	11	.000	.000	1.000
1. Region	Municipality of Piraeus	78	1.000	000	.
	Piraeus suburbs	121	.000	1.000	
	West Attica (Ref. category)	36	.000	.000	
31. Gender:	Male	122	1.000		
	Female (Ref. category)	113	.000		
Age group	up to 44	93	1.000		
	45 plus (Ref. category)	142	.000		
Are you the main contributor to the HH's income?	No	110	1.000		
	Yes (Ref. category)	125	.000		

Table 9 Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

		Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	21.191	8	.007
	Block	21.191	8	.007
	Model	21.191	8	.007

Table 10 Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1	7,075	8	,529

Table 11 Variables in the Equation

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1a	Contribution to the HH Income	-.490	.362	1.839	1	.175	.612
	Gender	-.194	.366	.280	1	.597	.824
	Age group	.232	.352	.434	1	.510	1.261
	Region			.726	2	.696	
	Region (1)	-.168	.513	.107	1	.743	.845
	Region (2)	-.379	.483	.615	1	.433	.685
	Class location			17.628	3	.001	
	Class location (1)	-1.673	.413	16.384	1	.000	.188
	Class structure (2)	-.892	.444	4.049	1	.044	.410
	Class structure (3)	-2.183	1.126	3.758	1	.053	.113
	Constant	.207	.572	.131	1	.717	1.230

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Contribution to the HH Income, Gender, Age group, Region, Class location.

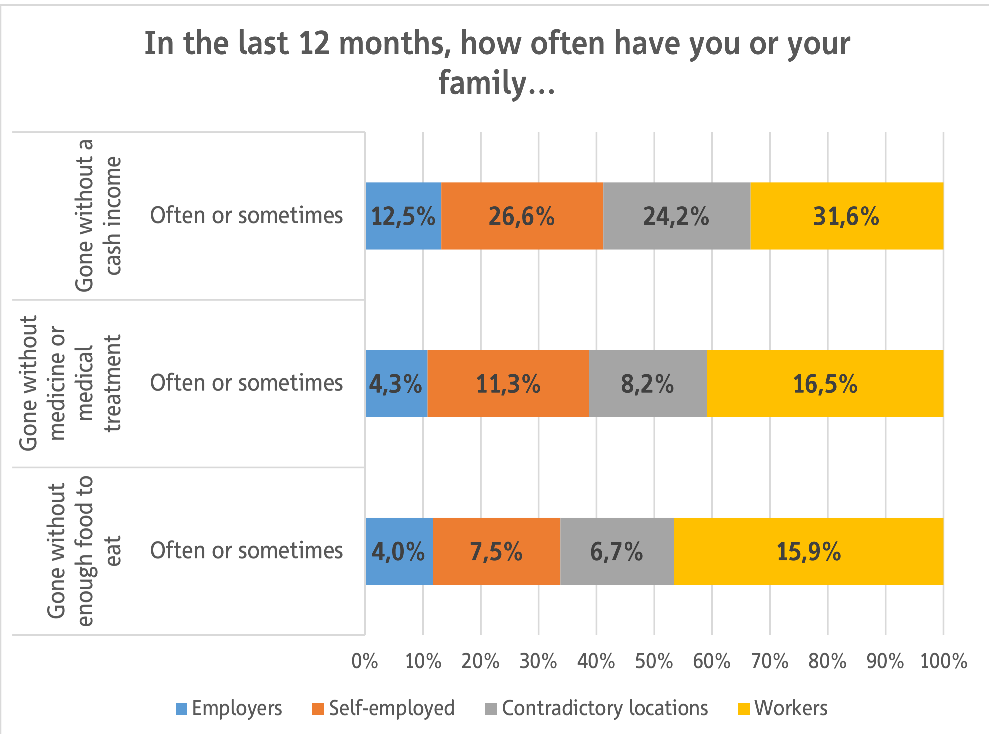
6. Class locations and exposure to vulnerability. The case of deprivation and of unemployment risk

Let us now see the connections between class and individual deprivation. Though associated with the poverty risk, deprivation is not reducible to it. The relation between money income and welfare is rather loose and depends heavily on socio-cultural context therein. To overcome the problems arising from the context-specific nature of poverty and welfare, Amartya Sen (1992; 1996) proposed to measure welfare directly by observing capabilities of individuals and households. He then defines poverty as the failure of some basic capabilities to function–a person lacking the opportunity to achieve some minimally acceptable levels of these functionings (such as the inability to be healthy, well-fed, clothed, sheltered, etc.). Notwithstanding its usefulness this alternative to income-based calculation of poverty leaves room for debate about the most appropriate way to identify, weigh, and measure capabilities (Klasen, 2000: 36). In its most inclusive operationalization individual deprivation can be thought of as a composite index of the following components: income and employment levels, perceived well-being, access to education, housing type, access to water, sanitation and electricity, transport mobility, nutrition, access to health care and safety (Klasen, 2000: 39-40). Narrower approximations of individual deprivation have also been in circulation (Canale et al. 2018). Drawing from the questionnaire of the last wave (2016-2020) of the World Values Survey (WVS) we used the following scale of four questions to approximate deprivation: 'In the last 12 months, how often have you or your family…':

- Gone without enough food to eat.
- Felt unsafe from crime in their home.
- Gone without medicine or medical treatment that they needed.
- Gone without a cash income.
- Gone without a safe shelter over their head.

This battery of questions is similar to many of the scales assessing deprivation (Canale et al. 2018). The differences along class lines, are less sharp compared with the huge differences in regard with poverty, though they are statistically significant with the notable exception of the sense of unsafety at home (there is a strong feeling of unsafety which cuts across class locations, and in that sense, its operation at the micro-level is place-based, rather than class-specific). The following figure, summarizes how individual deprivation (in terms of food, medical treatment, and income cash), is distributed along the four class locations (mediated locations are included here – see Table 2).

Figure 3 Indications of deprivation



In these instances of deprivation, the share of workers is overproportionate. The most frequent indication of deprivation is the lack of cash income, with almost a third of the workers answering that they have run out of money often or at least sometimes in the last 12 months. The differences become more obvious when the workers are compared either with employers, or with employees in contradictory locations. As in the case of poverty risk, the workers are socio-economically closer to the self-employed, rather than to other employees.

Both poverty risk and deprivation, are related to employment status. As already said, only a part of the unemployed of the total sample (32 out of 44) have been assigned to a mediated class location on the basis of their spouses', or their parents' status. This means that unemployed are under-represented here. It is obvious though that unemployment concerns mostly those in the working-class location (half of the sample's unemployed are assigned to the working-class location) and to a lesser extent those in contradictory locations, while there is also a 12,5% of the unemployed assigned to the class location of self-employed. In this sense, it is hardly surprising that more than a half of our sample's unemployed consider themselves working or lower class (compared to a 30,9% in the total sample). The employment intensity for wage earners could potentially be another predictor of employment risk. In regard with the type of employment (contingent, non-contingent), the differences among the four class locations are not statistically significant.

7. Discussion and conclusions

In the advent of the global economic crisis of 2008, social class gained once again traction among a wide range of disciplines in social sciences. According to the forecasting results of a recent article on the evolution, topic landscape, and dynamics of social class and inequality research, the field will continue to attract more attention in the future, with the most significant contribution coming from health and medicine-related studies, educational research, and industrial relations studies, particularly in areas focused on the fourth industrial revolution (Guo et al. 2018: 14).

The binary logic that fuelled the discussion over class in the 1980s and the 1990s, seems to be superseded by a more pragmatic approach, at least among class analysts. Today most of those who persist using class as an analytical tool to explain inequalities, do not feel obliged to renounce the individualistic societal shift of the second half of the previous century. The opposite is less true; the tone against the sociology of class, was (and still is) polemic among key scholars of the new social risks. This should not surprise us: the post-class or anti-class research agenda was built upon an identity that has mainly been constituted as a negative response to an existing body of knowledge, and most importantly, it downplayed its own class biases. The appropriation of a macabre terminology (death of class, dying of class, zombie categories and the like), manifests the defence mechanisms that were (and still are) at work.

The impact of such agendas is more observable at the policy level, where the desocialization and depoliticization of poverty foregrounds drastic cuts and restructuring in social spending by individualizing social risks and privatizing welfare functions (Papanastasiou, 2019; Papanastasiou and Papatheodorou, 2017). The Covid-19 pandemic offers another point of reflection on arguments in favour of the individualization of risk and how they are strategically employed to understate the unfair results of neoliberal arrangements. The case of West Attica is once again telling: the area's exposure to the dynamic spread of the virus, has mainly been associated either with the reduced responsibility of individuals, or with the behaviour of specific ethnic communities. The responsibility of the big firms of the area (industries, warehouses, and logistics infrastructure) passed largely unnoticed from the government and the mainstream media, not to mention the class mechanisms that are at work for decades, limiting the choices from a perspective of inclusive citizenship. In any case, there is ample evidence that accepting both the individualization mega-trends in modern societies and the persistence of class divisions can produce valid explanations on why the distribution of goods (things, practices, and goals) that are currently valued remains so stubbornly inequal.

In the present article we adopted the relational framework of EO Wright to empirically examine in what extent class is linked with social risks, such as the risk of poverty, deprivation, and unemployment. To this end, we performed a two-steps analysis: First, we examined social differentiation at the sub-regional level, comparing two Regional Units of Attica with the rest areas of the Region, relying on various risk-related indicators (unemployment, income, poverty index). The census-based data that we collected from primary and secondary sources, confirmed that Piraeus and West Attica demonstrate a distinct socio-economic profile. Social risks, such as the risk of poverty, or the risk of unemployment, were considerably higher in Piraeus and West Attica in 2011, and there is no evidence that the differences were lessened during the decade of the Greek crisis. The question then, was whether this contextual social differentiation of Piraeus/West Attica, supersedes class differences within these two areas. Drawing from survey data, we concluded that social inequalities, which are deeply grounded on the macro-processes of the division of labour at regional scale, are also contingent upon the current state of class relations at the local level.

The evidence of class-specific vulnerability gives credit to the notion of dynamic asymmetry coined by EO Wright. The possibility of being vulnerable against social risks, changes unevenly along class, geographical, and other socio-cultural lines, depending on the specificity of the risk. For example, the risk of deprivation for workers of the target areas is perhaps mediated from factors other than their class location, particularly when it comes to the feeling of unsafety at home (with gender and age, playing a much more decisive role here). More striking is the class-based mechanism of the distribution of poverty risk, which affects disproportionately those with no control over physical, organization, or skills assets within social production. Needless to say that agentic determinants, such as the subjects' values, political attitudes, and practices, shape (and are shaped from) their life chances and the concomitant risks and opportunities. Qualitative research is better placed in assessing such complexities, and we intend to complement this study with future analyses on interview and ethnographic material. Overall, the findings corroborate the argument that class matters, in the sense that it is a mechanism whose function augments the results of other patterned ways of social differentiation, such as place of living, and in some cases, class matters more.

Reflecting both on the micro and macro-level, it could be said that geographical and class location interact in a way that being a working-class in West Attica may differ from being working-class in more affluent areas of Attica. This seems in line with Milanovic's research (2012) who underlines the role of location in determining to a large extent one's income and the exposure to vulnerability. However, according to the analysis of the poverty risk purported here, the exposure to this specific risk, is over-proportional among workers, with other socio-demographic factors playing practically no role. Other relevant studies (Navarro 2002; Marmot 2005) corroborate this finding, highlighting the way that social inequalities affect well-being in general, for example, in what regards heart disease mortality. According to these studies the mortality gradient cannot be attributed to diet, physical exercise, or cholesterol alone; these risk factors explain only a small part of the gradient. The most important factor was the position that people held within the social structure and the differential control that people had over their own lives.

Pertinent here is the study of Zissi, Stalidis and Benos (2017), on the state of mental health of people living in socioeconomically distinct urban neighbourhoods of Thessaloniki (Greece) within the context of the economic crisis. The authors stress the explicit and non-reducible class dimension of the widening inequalities in mental distress, illustrating how the Greek crisis affected in different ways different social classes. In terms of our study, the exposure to vulnerability can operate asymmetrically, at the structural-limiting level or the contextual-selecting level, depending on the question at hand. Although scholars that have elaborated on Wright's notion of dynamic asymmetry suggest a shift from analysing class as individualized hierarchies to focusing on how class and other forms of social difference are organized in relation to each other (Eidlin and McCarthy, 2020), we contend that a combination of the micro- and macro-level analysis is a valid research strategy in integrating complex and interrelated forms of difference.

The macro-analysis does not necessarily entail national or supra-national scales. The power of class relations in determining vulnerability, can be empirically tested at the sub-national level, insofar as regional and sub-regional disparities are the outcome of variability in the social and institutional fabric that sustains and regulates capitalist employment relations (Peck, 1996). David Harvey has systematically shown how the production of space is linked to the on-going accumulation process, mainly through the creation of 'spatial fixes' (Harvey, 1982). From another point of view, Doreen Massey has illustrated how the changing spatial organization of capital structures the social relations of capitalist accumulation (Massey, 1995). Furthermore, labour's struggles themselves have their own impact on the production of the material landscape and of the geographical relationships between different places (Herod, 2003).

This is not to suggest that spatial inequalities, or family structures, or welfare strategies are overdetermined by capitalist social relations, and class struggle. Nor that every social risk is the causal effect of the class structure of a given society. Potential causal factors other than class differences, such as the strategic positioning of trade unionism, or the role of family, may become salient in the context A, but not in the context B. Echoing EO Wright's relational analysis, we rather argue that most people's lives are fairly well contained within specific class locations, notwithstanding intergenerational mobility and the relative permeability of class boundaries. In addition, social inequalities that are assumed place-bound, may (or may not) be interwoven with the class divide. The answer(s) here can hardly be merely theoretical. One need to empirically examine together macro-processes, their micro-foundations, and the interaction between the two, if it is to assess which vulnerabilities are class-related and at which scale.

Notes:

1. This paper is based on the research project titled "Cultural conditions in the formation of class identities: culture and working class in Piraeus and Thriasio" funded by the Business Plan, Human Resources Development, Training and Lifelong Learning 2014-2020 and monitored by the University of the Peloponnese for the academic period 2020-2021, under the academic guidance of Professor Manos Spyridakis, University of the Peloponnese. Members of the team project: Dr. G. Bithymitris, vice academic advisor, National Center of Social Research, Dr. P. Koustenis, Research Fellow, University of the Peloponnese, Dr. F. Iliopoulou, Research Fellow, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.
2. For 2020 (the year of the survey) ELSTAT determined the poverty threshold at 410 EU for households with one adult, plus 0,5 * 410 EU for each extra adult and 0,3 * 410 EU for each kid. For instance, the poverty threshold for a family with two adults and two kids, is 861 EUR.

3. For 2020 (the year of the survey) ELSTAT determined the poverty threshold at 410 EU for households with one adult, plus 0,5 * 410 EU for each extra adult and 0,3 * 410 EU for each kid. For instance, the poverty threshold for a family with two adults and two kids, is 861 EUR.
4. We could avoid including gender, age, place, and contribution, in the model, but we preferred highlighting that the differences in place, gender and age distribution along classes, had practically no impact on the exposure of an individual to the risk of poverty. Remember though that housewives, pensioners, students, and unemployed are excluded from the analysis of poverty risk.

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Κοινωνική Συνοχή και Ανάπτυξη 2021 16 (1), 29-42

Institutions and Growth: A Social Perspective

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Θεσμοί και Ανάπτυξη: Η κοινωνική διάσταση

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ABSTRACT

The current study aims at analyzing the good governance focal argument through a developmental prism. It also provides a comprehensive analysis of the institutional bottlenecks and pathologies that undermine the long-term perspectives of contemporary economies and societies. In practical terms, the analysis implies that implementing universal policy recommendations to all countries regardless of their economic, social and political background proves to be at least unresponsive. Consequently, initiatives taken to promote good governance should correspond to individual sociopolitical traits of countries. Fighting endemic, deeply rooted institutional weaknesses should involve a deliberate policy mix, targeted reforms and structural adjustments aiming at the root causes of governance failure.

KEY WORDS: Institutions, governance, reforms, public sector, economic growth, social development.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Η παρούσα μελέτη αναλύει την έννοια της διακυβέρνηση υπό το πρίσμα της ανάπτυξης. Επίσης, εξετάζει τις θεσμικές αγκυλώσεις και εκτροπές που υποβαθμίζουν τις μακροχρόνιες προοπτικές των σύγχρονων οικονομιών και κοινωνιών. Σε επίπεδο άσκησης πολιτικής, η εφαρμογή ενιαίων ρυθμιστικών κανόνων σε όλες τις χώρες ανεξάρτητα από το οικονομικό, κοινωνικό και πολιτικό τους περιβάλλον αποδεικνύεται αναποτελεσματική. Συνεπώς, οι πρωτοβουλίες για την προώθηση της καλής διακυβέρνησης θα πρέπει να ανταποκρίνονται στα οικονομικά, κοινωνικοπολιτικά και θεσμικά χαρακτηριστικά των χωρών. Η καταπολέμηση των βαθιά ριζωμένων παθογενειών θα πρέπει να περιλαμβάνει ένα κατάλληλο μείγμα πολιτικών, στοχευμένων παρεμβάσεων και διαρθρωτικών προσαρμογών

ΛΕΞΕΙΣ ΚΛΕΙΔΙΑ: Θεσμοί, διακυβέρνηση, μεταρρυθμίσεις, δημόσιος τομέας, οικονομική μεγέθυνση, κοινωνική ανάπτυξη.

1. Introduction

International differences in economic prosperity are staggering. A handful of countries manage to engineer rapid economic growth after years of stagnation, others stagnate after a period of high growth yet others have never experienced sustained growth. A better understanding of what generates economic growth and what could be done in order to improve the living standards in a society could make a huge contribution to human welfare. Along this line of thought, the good governance prescription is presented as a profound tool supported by existing institutions to generate the confidence needed for economic growth. From a parallel point of view, institutional quality is a key factor in establishing good governance and is central to the relevant policy debate. In particular, after the end of the Cold War global and regional emphasis on democratization and the advancement of human rights have created demands for the protection of the rule of law, secured contracts, control of corruption, transparency of public action, effective administration, low administrative costs, high regulatory quality, among others, which lie at the core of the relevant discourse.

Crises and failed transition experiments in the 1990s brought to light that even the conventional policies for promoting economic growth as described in the Washington Consensus are doomed to fail in terms of desired living standards in the absence of well-functioning institutions. Under this framework, in the policy world the issue of governance has come to the fore after the failure of a long stream of reforms applied to borrowing countries that did not consider the importance of institutions and governance issues (Woods, 2000). More specifically, Africa's development problems and the inefficiency of international aid were attributed to governance crisis, whereas governance refers to the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs (World Bank, 1989). In the same study it is supported that improved governance standards require political renewal, whereas emphasis is given to tackling corruption by strengthening accountability, capacity building, sound policy fundamentals and the institutional framework in order to improve structural weaknesses. This deep insight prevalent in the literature on growth and institutions intensified pressures upon a new development agenda targeting a lengthy list of governance objectives.

Policies to strengthen governance are meaningless without understanding the underlying determinants of the theme. So far much knowledge is not attained, which is recognized as one of the principal obstacles on building and establishing good governance systems. However, difficulties to empirical research concerning governance and institutional quality can be attributed to conceptual and measurement problems. Only by understanding the deeper causes and the range of issues related to the concept it can be addressed and resolved otherwise policies are ineffective and disjointed.

The scientific awareness over the role of governance and institutions can also be broadly viewed as an integral part of the ongoing research for the "deeper" determinants of economic growth and development (Rodrik, Subramanian and Trebbi, 2004). Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson (2001) make the discrimination between the proximate explanations of comparative growth supported by standard economic models of factor accumulation and innovation and the fundamental or deeper causes, which emphasize the importance of factors like economic institutions, geography and culture. North and Thomas (1973) argue that factors like innovation, economies of scale, education and capital accumulation are not causes of growth, they are growth instead.

2. Institutions and growth

Beginning with the work of Douglass North the debate on institutions features high on the economic research agenda. According to North (1990), "Institutions are the rules of the game in a society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction. In consequence they structure incentives in human exchange, whether political, social, or economic". A starting point of this argument is that institutions, either formal or informal, structure incentives and shape the framework for the process of wealth creation (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2008). In particular, North (1990) recognizes direct and indirect influences of the institutional environment on economic growth. Countries with better institutions, secured transactions and less distortionary policies will invest more in physical and human capital and will use these inputs more efficiently in order to achieve a higher level of income. High transaction costs arising from the presence of bribery, bureaucratic obstacles and rent-seeking affect growth indirectly by constraining incentives for investment. In an environment of little confidence with respect to the enforcement of property rights, firms will tend to operate on short-term horizon. According to Temple (1999), countries that secure property rights tend to develop faster. An economy with fragile institutions is more inefficient in the sense that more inputs are needed for the production of the same output quantity (Sala-i-Martin, 2002).

Derived from the perception that institutional arrangements hold the key to prevalent patterns of prosperity around the world there is a developing body of empirical literature linking institutions and economic growth as well as measures of governance and economic performance. The use of cross-country growth regressions was initially coined by Barro (1991) to explore growth divergences across countries. He uses political instability as a proxy for property rights and finds that measures of political instability that can be explained as adverse influences on property rights are negatively related to investment and growth. According to Mauro (1995), efficient bureaucracy is positively correlated with improved rates of investment and growth, whereas corruption is negatively associated with investment. Knack and Keefer (1995), showed that institutions exert a significant impact on investment and economic growth using as indicator of institutional quality the securitization of property rights and contracts. Acemoglu and Johnson (2005), provide empirical support on this hypothesis concluding that institutions that secure property rights affect economic growth significantly.

In a subsequent study Keefer and Knack (1997), proved that poor countries diverge rather than converge with advanced economies due to their institutional backwardness. Furthermore, poor countries fail to capitalize the technological progress of advanced societies due to their inefficient institutional environment. Respectively, according to Papaioannou (2009) institutional improvements increase capital flows between countries in contrast to institutional fragility, like inefficient protection of property rights, legal inefficiency and high risk of expropriation.

Hall and Jones (1999) hold a salient position in the relevant empirical literature. They prove that productivity differences and long-lasting economic performance of countries are determined by social infrastructure, defined as "the institutions and government policies that determine the economic environment within which people accumulate skills and firms accumulate capital and produce output". Olson et al. (2000), indicate that productivity is higher in countries institutionally developed displaying improved governance. On the other hand, Chong and Calderón (2000) found the existence of reverse causality in the sense that economic growth affects institutional quality providing more resources for the improvement of existing institutions and enhancing their efficiency.

Another econometric study used as classic reference on the empirical relationship between institutional conditions and economic growth is that of Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson (2001), which focus on property rights to approach institutional quality. In particular, they recognize that the importance of the institutional framework is so crucial that "once the effect of institutions is controlled for, countries in Africa or those closer to the equator do not have lower incomes". Similarly, Easterly and Levine (2003) claim that once the effect of institutions is controlled, endowments do not have any direct effects and economic policies (openness, terms of trade, inflation) do not affect country income. The study of Rodrik, Subramanian and Trebbi (2004), constitutes one of the founding pillars of the empirical literature on institutions and economic performance. They confirm the positive influence of the institutional environment on long-term economic growth by examining the rule of law and property rights.

3. The concept of governance

Good governance is a useful tool to respond to collective problems and can be defined on the basis of strong institutional structure existence (Quibria, 2006). The quality of the institutional environment designates long-run growth prospects as the institutional framework provides the confidence needed to secure economic transactions. The quality of institutions serves as a yardstick to assess the performance of economic, political and social systems. In a similar vein, good governance constitutes an important developmental tool and a necessary component of the strategies aiming at the reduction of poverty.

While the notion of governance has gained prominence in the literature and is extensively discussed among scholars and policymakers, there is little agreement on the essence of the concept. Due to the elusive nature of governance, there is no universally agreed definition of the concept (Kjaer, 2004). Consistent with its multidimensional character (Bevir 2011), governance can be conceptualized in various ways emphasizing different perspectives with a main focus on its economic aspect. To provide an operational precision governance is examined in a certain economic and institutional context that influences its quality and evolution. Based on this premise, it must be emphasized that the sociopolitical context which frames governance activity and is examined in this paper has not been generally studied and agreed whereas it is contentiously discussed. These mutually reinforcing economic and systemic weaknesses are an impediment to the achievement of "inclusive" growth (Klasen, 2010).

Governance is a multidimensional theme associated with a variety of economic, social and political factors, such as high per capita income, high human development standards and democratic institutions. On the contrary, international agencies and researchers follow their own definitions depending on the conceptual spectrum under which they analyze the phenomenon, with a main focus on the sociopolitical dimension apart from the economic aspect of governance.

In the developmental context governance is defined by the World Bank (1989) as "the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs". At the same study, the concept of good governance was introduced to refer to "an efficient public sector, an independent justice system and public sector accountability", whereas bad governance referred to corruption and clientelistic relationships in the public sector of developing countries. The transition from the concept of governance to the concept of good governance introduced an institutional dimension, which concerned the quality of governance (European Parliament, 2004). As a result, development prescriptions suggested in late '90s were foremost institutional in nature and targeted at securing good governance (Dethier, 1999).

According to the United Nations Development Programme (2008), governance is the system of values, policies and institutions by which a society administers its economic, political and social matters through synergies within and among the state, civil society and private sector. It describes the rules, institutions and practices that set limits and provide incentives for individuals, organizations and firms.

Based on the European Commission (2001), governance refers to the state's ability to serve the citizens. It concerns the rules, processes, and behavior by which interests are shaped, resources are administered, and power is exercised in society. The way public functions are accomplished, public resources are managed and public regulatory affairs are conducted is the major issue to be addressed in that framework. Despite its open and wide character, governance has a practical value related to the core aspects of the functioning of any society and political and social system and in this respect it can be characterized as a basic measure of stability and performance of a society as well as of quality and performance of any political and administrative system. Thus, institutional sustainability and capacity building are the primary elements of the good governance agenda.

The definition of governance according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1995) is in line with the World Bank's definition. It denotes the use of political power and exercise of control in a society in relation to the administration of its resources for economic and social development. This broad definition encompasses the role of public authorities in establishing the framework in which economic agents operate and in determining the allocation of benefits and the nature of the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. Therefore, good governance refers to the rule of law, efficient public sector management and corruption control.

Governance is defined by the World Bank as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development (World Bank, 1991). However, this definition is characterized as somewhat narrow since it does not take into account the political system and civil liberties as well as the role of civil society (Johnston, 1998). According to Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi (2010) this definition is limited in public sector management issues. On the contrary, as discussed by Keefer (2004) more emphasis should be given to causal or more fundamental concepts, which enclose the incentive structure that guides the actions of political actors. The World Bank identifies three distinct aspects of governance: (i) the form of political regime, (ii) the process by which authority is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development, and (iii) the capacity of governments to design, formulate, and implement policies and discharge functions (World Bank, 1994).

According to the World Bank definition (Kaufmann et al., 1999), governance is described as "the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes (a) the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; (b) the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and (c) the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them". Based on this definition six governance dimensions emerge, which are presented below.

1. **Voice and Accountability** – capturing perceptions of the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media.

2. **Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism** – capturing perceptions of the likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including politically-motivated violence and terrorism.
3. **Government Effectiveness** – capturing perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies.
4. **Regulatory Quality** – capturing perceptions of the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development.
5. **Rule of Law** – capturing perceptions of the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence.
6. **Control of Corruption** – capturing perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests.

4. Empirical analysis

Under the aforementioned analytical framework, the scope of the paper is to investigate the determinants of governance for a global sample of 170 countries during the years 2000-2019. The study builds on three strands of the governance literature, namely the economic, political and social (La Porta at al., 1999). The first strand focuses on the level of economic development as measured by gross domestic product per capita in purchasing power parities or current international dollars. The second strand refers to the political determinants of governance approached by the range of political rights and the extent of civil liberties. The third strand analyzes the social aspects of governance proxied by the human development index, which combines measures of life expectancy and educational attainment.

Building on the precedent analysis about the main determinants of governance, the basic model for estimation has the following form:

$$GOV = GDP + PR + CL + HDI$$

To express governance, the relevant Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) dataset is used estimated by the World Ban[1] . It should be acknowledged that it has emerged as a standard point of reference in the relevant empirical literature. It covers a broad spectrum of the six governance dimensions described above, which neatly capture the good governance agenda framework as delineated by the World Bank. The values of the indicators lie between -2.5 and 2.5, where higher values correspond to better governance.

Gross Domestic Product per capita in purchasing power parities or constant international dollars (GDP.pc.ppp) is used to approximate the level of economic development in each country and is provided by the World Bank[2]. GDP.pc.ppp is gross domestic product (GDP) converted to international dollars using purchasing power parity rates. An international dollar has the same purchasing power over GDP as a U.S. dollar has in the United States. GDP.pc,ppp is very useful in empirical research when the objective is to compare broad differences between countries in living standards since purchasing power parities take into account the relative cost of living in various countries, while nominal GDP does not incorporate any such considerations. GDP.pc.ppp is an indicator widely used in international comparisons of economic development.

To approximate the quality of democracy in each country the political rights index (PR) is used estimated by the Freedom House organization. The scale of the PR index ranges between 1 and 7. Countries and territories with a rating of 1 enjoy a wide range of political rights, including free and fair elections, whereas countries and territories with a rating of 7 have few or no political rights because of severe government oppression, sometimes in combination with civil war[3]. To approximate the extent of civil liberties in each country the civil liberties index (CL) is used compiled by the Freedom House organization as well. The scale of the CL index ranges between 1 and 7. Countries and territories with a rating of 1 enjoy a wide range of civil liberties, including freedom of expression, assembly, association, education, and religion. Countries and territories with a rating of 7 have few or no civil liberties.

The human development index (HDI) is used as a summary measure of the level of human development. It measures the average achievements in a given country in three relevant dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living (United Nations Development Programme, 2010). According to this index, countries are classified in four categories: very high human development if the value of the index is higher than 0.900, high human development if the value of the index lies between 0.800 and 0.899, medium human development if the value of the index is between 0.500 and 0.799 and low human development if the value of the index is lower than 0.500[4].

The employed panel data is estimated with the Fixed Effects (FE) method (applying the White diagonal correction of standard errors for heteroscedasticity and autocorrelation). To decide on the estimation method a Hausman test was conducted (Baltagi 2005), which indicated that the Fixed Effects (FE) method is preferred instead of the Random Effects (RE) method. The Fixed Effects (FE) method can be used with panel data to estimate the effect of time-varying independent variables in the presence of time-constant omitted variables (Wooldridge 2013). The unobserved heterogeneity could be treated by assuming that omitted variables do not change over time and as a result by eliminating their effect through the FE method. Therefore, in the presence of omitted variables, which are correlated with the variables included in the model, the fixed effects model may provide a means for controlling for omitted variable bias.

To test the validity of the results, Random Effects (RE) and the Panel Least Squares method (PLS) are also performed, which are presented respectively in columns (2) and (3) of table 3. Therefore, the statistical significance of the variables as well as their interpretive power in terms of their sign remains in alternative estimation methods.

Table 1 presents summary statistics containing some preliminary results. All countries independently of their average real income levels are included in the analysis. This is also evident by the large difference between the minimum and maximum value of the relevant per capita income index, which ranges between \$370.00 and \$111,043.50 respectively. Table 2 presenting the correlation matrix provides a first approximation for the main determinants of governance. The analysis shows that, on average, countries with higher income exhibit improved governance capacities. The relationship between civil liberties (CL) and the mean of all governance dimensions is negative as lower values of the civil liberties indicator correspond to improved levels of the index. An interesting finding is the strong positive relationship between the human development index (HDI) with government effectiveness (GE), which is also reached by the ensuing regression results. The sign of the relationship between PR and CL in positive as expected due to the measurement scale of both indexes. Moreover, the correlation between the PR and the CL index is particularly strong (0,87).

Table 1. Summary statistics

	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum
GOV	0.02	0.95	-2.69	2.39
GDP	14,711.86	1,653.43	370.00	111,043.50
PR	3.38	2.09	1.00	7.00
CL	3.31	1.82	1.00	7.00
HDINI	0.707	0.172	0.310	0.980

Table 2. Correlation table

	CL	GOV	GDP	HDI	PR
CL	1.00				
GOV	-0.73	1.00			
GDP	-0.42	0.76	1.00		
HDI	-0.58	0.85	0.76	1.00	
PR	0.87	-0.58	- 0.53	-0.55	1.00

The results according to the Fixed Effects (FE), Random Effects (RE) and Panel Least Squares (PLS) methods are presented in table 3. In the relevant table, below coefficient estimates, the standard error, the t-statistic and the p-value are given. Moreover, the results of the Hausman test conducted for the choice of the panel regression method appear in last row of Table 3 together with the corresponding p-value (in parenthesis). It must be stressed that results regarding the three estimation methods do not differ significantly as far as their socioeconomic, political and statistical significance is concerned. As a result, estimation results with the preferred Fixed Effects approach are analyzed in the following lines.

According to the Fixed Effects (FE) estimates presented in column (1) of table 3, all independent variables are statistically significant and have the expected signs with the exception of the CL index. The estimated income coefficient (GDP) is positive and statistically significant at the 1% level and retains its sign and statistical significance in all alternative specifications of the basic model presented in columns (2) and (3) of table 3. Based on the estimation results, if for the year 2019 Greece (24,022.3) had the level of income of Luxembourg (111,043.5), which is one of the most rich countries in the world sample, then the level of governance in Greece (0.39) would increase and approximate that of Finland (1.86).

The political rights (PR) index is statistically significant at conventional significance levels (1%). The civil liberties index (CL) is unexpectedly positive but not statistically significant, which may be attributed to the high correlation between CL and the PR index. The variable expressing the level of human development (HDI) is positive and significant at the 1% level.

Table 3. Fixed Effects (FE), Random Effects (RE) and Panel Least Squares (PLS) estimates, 2000-2019

	FE (1)	RE (2)	PLS (3)
Constant	2.103*** 0.358 5.741 0.000	2.019*** 0.437 4.306 0.000	21.648*** 1.868 11.586 0.000
GDP.pc.ppp	0.321*** 0.580 2.435 0.000	0.499*** 0.148 3.006 0.004	0.246*** 0.041 5.234 0.000
PR	-0.287*** 0.030 -2.238 0.000	-0.205*** 0.071 -2.116 0.000	-0.284*** 0.052 -5.462 0.000
CL	0.029 0.005 1.636 0.076	0.352 0.071 1.616 0.068	0.123 0.060 1.167 0.079
HDI	0.326*** 0.470 3.663 0.001	0.122*** 0.054 2.815 0.006	0.442*** 0.096 4.604 0.000
R^2	0.786	0.785	0.803
F-statistic	360.443	358.749	709.401
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Hausman	120.709 (0.000)	136.785 (0.000)	196.842 (0.000)

***, **, * denote statistical significance at the 1%, 5% and 10% level, respectively.

Note: below coefficient estimates are given respectively the standard error, the t-statistic and the p-value.

5. Conclusions

This paper contributes to the growing field of governance by exploring the underlying determinants of the theme based on approaches emerging from the prevailing theory of the good governance and institutions literature. The results emerging from this study give emphasis to the level of economic development as well as to structural factors of social and political nature. It should be also emphasized that governance weaknesses are generally more prevalent in poor developing countries where political and social structures are correspondingly dysfunctional. Therefore, these countries could benefit from policy guidance drawing on the analysis in order to improve their governance frameworks. As expected, improving governance is not a one dimensional process neither exists a unitary link between governance and its determinants. The impact of different combinations of economic, social and political factors on governance varies depending on the specific dimension of governance under consideration. Ignoring these divergences may lead to inappropriate inferences and as a consequence to policy failures towards the aim of implementing and sustaining good governance systems.

The empirical analysis suggests that the quality of governance varies across countries due to differences in countries' levels of economic development, range of political rights and extent of civil liberties as well as the respective levels of human development, which determine the overall level of institutional quality, among others. Poor governance is not exogenously assigned, whereas governance failures largely unveil the existence of economic underdevelopment as well as context specific weaknesses of political and social nature (Baland et al. 2009). The existence of correlation between income and all the governance dimensions verifies the importance of the level of economic development for governance performance. This conclusion could explain the weak governance performance of developing countries plagued by economic backwardness.

The results of the empirical section suggest that governance quality differs among countries due to the variation in countries' level of economic development, extent of political rights and civil liberties as well as their respective level of human development, which determine the overall level of institutional quality. Moreover, the under study factors do not have a symmetric impact on governance structure, but vary depending on the specific dimension of governance under consideration. Insufficient governance capacities and failures largely unveil the existence of economic and political weaknesses as well as institutional and social underdevelopment. An alternative policy interpretation is that government performance is in part determined by economic development, whereas it is also shaped by the systemic variation in the political and social conditions of individual countries.

Generally, governance expresses the level of institutional quality in a country. From the development perspective, governance issues are inseparable from ways and means to promote institutional reforms and induce a profound institutional change (Bonaglia et al. 2001). Therefore, strengthening and maintaining governance is achieved only through the adoption and effective implementation of the appropriate long-run policies. In a similar vein, concrete policy guidelines lie at the core of the good governance agenda. The paper combines theoretical argumentation with empirical exploration and tries to elucidate the links between coherent institutional reforms and economic growth. However, in spite of the existence of context specific governance weaknesses prevalent in each country, there is scope for the emergence of overarching principles that embody economic development, democracy, equitable and sustainable human development.

Countries face considerable challenges regarding the quality of their institutions as well as their governance. However, it must be pointed out that it is not a single structural dimension of governance that produces inefficiencies but rather the interplay of key facets of governance hierarchy. Nevertheless, governance indicators should be used with great caution in policy making. The resulting indicator scores can be instrumental in promoting institutional changes but by themselves they do not indicate the appropriate growth strategy of the country. Major causes of underdevelopment are of domestic origin and are shaped by internal factors. Therefore, when patterns of poor governance systems prevail and become institutionalized their control is extremely difficult whereas the political difficulties of reform become even more challenging (Bräutigam and Knack 2004).

In practical terms, the analysis implies that implementing universal policy recommendations to all countries indiscriminately, regardless of their economic, social and political background proves to be at least unresponsive. To put it differently, in case that governance flaws are endemic, deeply embedded in the political and social dynamics of a country there is unlikely to be a generic blueprint suitable for all reforms in all countries (Grindle 2010). Consequently, initiatives taken to promote good governance must apply to individual sociopolitical traits of countries, whereas they should be supported by a deliberate policy mix, targeted reforms and structural adjustments, which must be driven by internal forces. Accordingly, concrete policy measures lie at the core of the good governance agenda targeting a lengthy list of governance objectives including developing anti-corruption safeguards, reinforcing the rule of law, achieving high standards of legitimacy and accountability, improving the performance of public institutions, among other attributes of effective governance systems.

The above analysis has highlighted that achieving and mainly maintaining good governance is a challenging task as it is associated with a wide variety of economic as well as noneconomic factors of social, cultural and political nature. From a sustainable perspective, these governance requirements are achieved mainly through the adoption and effective implementation of profound social and political reforms. The more unitary, concrete and stable the country is, the harder it becomes for phenomena that can paralyze state structures to prosper. Countries characterized by economic instability and social inequalities and fluid environments in the allocation of political power are those countries in which weak governance capabilities, such as corruption, find fertile ground to infiltrate and materialize. However, the level of economic development should be emphasized as well according to the empirical results. Therefore, the governance challenge is even greater in developing countries as not only the most relevant rules have to be prescribed but these policies have to be supported by appropriate governance structures in order to enforce them especially for the disadvantaged groups (Chaudhary 2015). There is plenty of scope then for good governance objectives enhancing a broad list of comprehensive governance reforms, including tackling corruption, reinforcing the rule of law, increasing the accountability and effectiveness of public institutions. Likewise, concerns of political freedoms and improved social capabilities along with intensified efforts targeting economic development should be fully incorporated into future policy purposes and strategies as effective guides for remedying the root causes of the governance failure.

Notes:

1. http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home.
2. See, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator.
3. https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2012.
4. http://hdr.undp.org/en/data.

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The Impact of the "Social Structures to Tackle Poverty in Greece" through the eyes of its people

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Ο αντίκτυπος των «Κοινωνικών Δομών Άμεσης Αντιμετώπισης της Φτώχειας» στην Ελλάδα μέσα από τα μάτια των εμπλεκομένων

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ABSTRACT

The present article focuses on the implementation of the programme of Social Structures to Tackle Poverty in Greece (hereafter: "SSTPGs") realised throughout the period 2012-2017. In particular, the paper presents the results of evaluation conducted at five (5) different municipalities of Attica. The paper emphasizes on the findings of qualitative research carried out on the basis of sixteen (16) interviews, with employees directly benefiting from the SSTPGs as well as with participant members of the Implementation Bodies, Vice Mayors and officials from the Non-Profit Civil Partnership (AMKE) Scientific Society for Social Cohesion and development (hereafter: "EPEKSA"). It constitutes the second part of assessment which was realised with the purpose to allow the individuals involved in the programme to provide feedback on it, for themselves. Basically, the key point concluded from the interviewees' own responses has been that the programme's mission was fulfilled successfully. Also, another main objective achieved has been the beneficiaries' re-inclusion into society, through guided counselling and psychosocial support.

KEY WORDS: Interventions to tackle poverty, Social Policy at local level, social policy assessment, SSTPG.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Το παρόν άρθρο επικεντρώνεται στην υλοποίηση των Κοινωνικών Δομών Άμεσης Αντιμετώπισης της Φτώχειας (εφεξής ΚΔΑΑΦ) που υλοποιήθηκαν στην Ελλάδα κατά το χρονικό διάστημα 2012 – 2017. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, παρουσιάζει τα αποτελέσματα αξιολόγησης που διενεργήθηκε στις ΚΔΑΑΦ σε πέντε (5) Δήμους της Αττικής. Το άρθρο εστιάζει στα αποτελέσματα της ποιοτικής έρευνας που διενεργήθηκε μέσω δεκαέξι (16) συνεντεύξεων, σε εργαζομένους – έμμεσα ωφελουμένους των ΚΔΑΑΦ και σε συμμετέχοντες από τους Φορείς Υλοποίησης, Αντιδημάρχους και στελέχη από την ΑΜΚΕ Επιστημονική Εταιρεία για την Κοινωνική Συνοχή και Ανάπτυξη (εφεξής ΕΠΕΚΣΑ). Αποτελεί το δεύτερο σκέλος αξιολόγησης που διενεργήθηκε, αποσκοπώντας στο να προβούν οι ίδιοι οι εμπλεκόμενοι στην αξιολόγηση του προγράμματος. Το βασικό συμπέρασμα που συνάγεται από τις απαντήσεις των ερωτηθέντων είναι ότι καλύφθηκε πλήρως η στοχοθεσία του Προγράμματος. Επίσης, ότι επετεύχθη να ενταχθούν και πάλι στο κοινωνικό σύνολο οι ωφελούμενοι, μέσω της συμβουλευτικής καθοδήγησης και της ψυχοκοινωνικής στήριξης.

ΛΕΞΕΙΣ-ΚΛΕΙΔΙΑ: Κοινωνικές Δομές Άμεσης Αντιμετώπισης της Φτώχειας, Ελλάδα, Αξιολόγηση, Αξιολόγηση της Κοινωνικής Πολιτικής, Κοινωνική Πολιτική και Τοπική Αυτοδιοίκηση.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this article is to assess the work of the SSTPGs at local level, so as to reveal the extent to which the programme's objectives have been met, through testimonials of persons involved in its execution. The present study is the accompanying section of the synthetic research, which has intended to provide an evaluation summary of the above-mentioned structures by the beneficiaries themselves and to outline the services they offered as well as their problems (Pantazopoulos, 2020).

The present paper showcases the implementation of the SSTPGs in Greece during 2012-2017. More specifically, it presents the assessment results carried out in the structures of the following municipalities-boroughs; Glyfada-Metamorphosis-Philadelphia, Chalkidona-Irakliou and Lykovrysis-Pefkis. The paper highlights the conclusions of the qualitative survey conducted on the basis of sixteen (16) interviews both with employees-immediate beneficiaries of the SSTPGs and with four (4) participant members of the Implementation Institutions, two (2) Vice Mayors and two (2) representatives of the Non-Profit Civil Partnership EPEKSA responsible for the implementation of the programme.

The four (4) questions posed in the interviews, fall under four (4) thematic categories. The first has been to clarify what social exclusion and poverty mean, according to the interviewees. The second has been for the participants themselves to proceed with the programme assessment. The third one has been to report any issues and deficiencies, which the individuals encountered during their experience at the SSTPGs. Finally, the fourth (4th) and last one has been to facilitate the formulation of suggestions for improvement, which might prove useful for future reference. All these objectives were reflected by the Thematic Axes in the Interview Guide.

2. The European and Greek Social Policy Programmes: A Brief Overview

The first time that social exclusion is officially cited as a term by the European Union dates back to 1989, when the Committee of Ministers for Social Affairs of the EU member-states, at that time, agreed to the decision to build a "charter" to tackle the problem. From this point onwards, the term is being used in official EU documents, while it has also functioned as reference for the commencement of a series of actions to battle the very phenomenon it describes.

The Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers issued in 1989 has been one of the initial political documents of the European Union, which referred to social exclusion as a main component of its unresolved affairs (Sakellaropoulos, 1992; 189). In this EU resolution, there is a correlation to the labour market and poverty, there are references to the necessity of taking action to eliminate the phenomenon of social isolation; ultimately, in the document the planning and implementation of a developmental policy by the member-states is viewed as a persistent imperative, which would finally contribute to eradicating social exclusion (Sakellaropoulos, 1992: 2; Sakellaropoulos, 2003; Sakellaropoulos, 1999a: 112). The following significant step by the EU was the establishment of the 24th of June 1992 Council which oversaw the sufficiency of resources and provisions in social protection systems (Official Journal of the European Community, 1992). Without a doubt, the latter emphasized mostly on poverty rather than on social exclusion, yet it validated the 1989 resolution, commenting on the demand for sufficient income to be coupled with policies for the economic and social integration of the deprived (Sakellaropoulos, 2011).

Since 1993, Jacques Delors, the EU president back then, called upon businesses operating in Europe to actively participate in combating social exclusion, both in groups and across the continent. The immediate result of this was the creation and development of the European networks of businesses (Sakellaropoulos, 2005). As a result, in March 2000, the European Council addressed a message appealing to entrepreneurs' sentiment as well as to their social corporate responsibility, with the purpose to implement optimal practices in sectors, such as life-long learning, work organisation, equal opportunities, social and occupational integration and sustainable development (EU, 2001; 4).

The White Bible for social policies published in July 1994, constituted the next milestone within the context of European politics against social exclusion. In this particular document, there is a detailed analysis of the measures which had to be taken in order to facilitate an alleviation policy via the labour market, while there is also extensive reference to the broader social policy by the European Union as well as to the social welfare of the European citizens, as a whole (European Social Policy, 1994).

Following 1994 and the publishing of the White Bible for the Development, Competitiveness and Employability, workforce adaptability and the creation of jobs featured prominently in the EU social welfare agenda. More specifically, the urge for a solidarity economy and social policy dominated the European Community. Still, the main issue within the EU during that particular period remains that of the distinct interconnection between poverty, destitution and social exclusion of its citizens (EU, 1993). Thus, it should be noted that the European Union has attributed two different aspects to social exclusion, one pertaining to destitution and the other to deprivation of basic rights, which holds a prominent place among the bibliography.

In 1997, Article 13 (later substituted by Article 19 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) is embedded in the Treaty for the foundation of the European Community hence enabling the Council of Europe to bear responsibility to abolish discrimination on the basis of religious beliefs, descent, gender and so forth (Sakellaropoulos, 2006a). In 2003, an amendment to the relevant article took place in accordance with the Nicaea Treaty, providing even further possibilities for action, to fight social exclusion (Sakellaropoulos, 2001: 128).

Passing the second half of the 1990s, when the European Union acquired its essential role, social exclusion made its reappearance only in the year 2000, during which the "Charter of Fundamental Rights" was drafted by the EU, a declaration which was a synopsis of the European citizens' rights (Tzemos, 2009: 23). Besides the basic human rights (i.e., dignity, equality, liberty, solidarity, nativism and justice), it also described the rights of social provision and sheltering assistance, with the purpose to battle social exclusion (Altanis, 2006: 309). From the above, it is clear that the European Union considers tackling social exclusion a priority, aiming to improve its citizens' life. Following the making of the Charter, in 2000 the Treaty of Lisbon was signed, in which it is explicitly stated that the EU places high value on the eradication of social exclusion and discrimination, while social justice, gender equality and the safeguarding of children's rights are also pointed out (Stergiou, 2011: 42).

On the level of social policy, the Treaty of Lisbon has brought about two major developments. On the one hand, it granted legislation which would allow the member-states to design a coordinated policy for poverty and social exclusion while, on the other, it facilitated the application of an Open Method of Coordination (OMC), which basically consists a set of shared guidelines to be utilized by all member-states (Sakellaropoulos, 2004a: 62; Sakellaropoulos, 2004b).

In addition, the European Union has put into practice specific reinforcement measures to promote the elimination of social exclusion among its member-states. In particular, in 2002 the Council of Europe decided to implement a community scheme which would fight social exclusion within the EU. The scheme's timeline covered the period from the 1st of January 2002 until the 31st of December 2006. Through the use of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) the member-states would achieve a better comprehension of social exclusion and develop action plans for the battle against it, too (Sakellaropoulos & Economou, 2006: 233). Furthermore, an exchange of information and of good practices would take place among member-states, while studies drawing on statistical data and quantitative indicators would be put together as well, with the goal to tackle the problem, as fully as possible (EU, 50/2002/E.C.).

From 2007 onwards, a new era for the European programmes begins to unfold, since all the pending activities since then were later incorporated and embedded into the project entitled 'Progress'. This specific Scheme pertained to "the even allocation of costs, to progress and to the dissemination of comparative analytical knowledge of high quality as well as to the facilitation of an effective and unobstructed exchange of information, mutual learning and dialogue"[1].

As an outcome of the latter, the scheme that was realised next was the one for employment and social policy (E.a.S.I), which lasted for seven (7) years (2014-2020)[2]. Its goal was to combat social exclusion on pan-European level[3], while it also aimed at consolidating and expanding both the former project called 'Progress' as well as two additional Community Programmes (that of the European Employment Services – EUR.E.S. and the scheme 'Progress: European Microfinance Support Mechanism').

Similar actions against social exclusion were sponsored and implemented by the European Social Fund (ESF) across the continent. The aim of such activities has been to eliminate discrimination, to support vulnerable social groups and, ultimately, to eradicate social exclusion[4].

Equally important has been the activity of the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD). By passing regulation 223/11-3-2014 of the European Parliament and Council, FEAD was created in order to cater for the underprivileged citizens, by providing food and material means, and with the ultimate purpose to enable their social integration (Official Journal of the European Union, 2014: 8). Its time span was seven (7) years, while its budget was estimated to approximately four (4) billion euros, co-funded to 15% by member-states implementing it (Official Journal of the European Union, 2014: 10).

From 2010 and onwards, with the ratification of law 2010/2039 (INI) "European Strategy for the Disabled 2010-2020: A Renewed Commitment for a Europe without barriers", the EU has laid the foundations for the prevention of poverty and the fostering of social inclusion. Through this particular legislation, the establishment of a minimum guaranteed income among the European member-states was promoted (that is, a minimum of 60% of the average income in each country), not least to mention the setting of the base salary margin, so as to support individuals on insufficient financial resources (EU, 2010: 14).

As a result, these earlier actions gave birth to Strategy "Europe 2020" which emerged as feasible application of the decisions taken back in Lisbon. The Strategy's key objective lies, among other things, in making the EU a viable place for all of its citizens, without limitations (EU, 2010: 8). Also, it should be taken into consideration as significant the fact that for the very first time an EU policy makes provisions for quantitative measures and quantitative objectives towards tackling social exclusion and poverty (Feronas, 2013: 14).

In terms of the Greek reality, social policy in Greece can be divided into two (2) phases. The first one covers the pre-entry to the EU period and the second one follows immediately afterwards. What is more, the latter phase has been sharply marked by the global financial crisis of the past few years, since the Greek state was called upon to proceed to huge changes to its fiscal policy, a fact which did not leave the social sector unaffected (Skamnakis & Pantazopoulos, 2015).

During the pre-entry to the EU era, the type of social policy practiced by the Greek government had been the outcome of national planning and priorities, since at that time the European Union did not have active involvement into designing and exercising politics in Greece (Sakellaropoulos, 1999b: 25). Until the decade of the 1980s, social policy in the country was neglected, lacking central planning and national strategy, in contrast to the developed countries of western Europe mainly, which had already come up with concrete social welfare policies (Sakellaropoulos & Economou, 2006: 7).

A breakthrough point occurred during the 1980s, when critical interventions were made with the aim to modernize the social structures of Greece (Sakellaropoulos & Angelaki, 2007: 54; Sakellaropoulos, 2006b: 26). The National Healthcare System of Greece (ESY) was created, Health Centres were established across the country's rural areas, the pension system in the private sector was organised and, lastly, considerable raise applied to wages and pension salaries (Economou, 2005). Under those circumstances, the public funding intended for the implementation of social policies increased from 15,6% to 22,6%, within the period of five (5) years (1980-1985) (Ministry of Labor and Social Security, 2010). Nevertheless, these amounts were to cover only the fields mentioned above, without being attached to a wider and/or targeted plan for reformation (Matsagganis, 2003: 137-141; Sakellaropoulos, 1993a: 74).

Entering the 1990s, Greece is falling behind in terms of social protection readjustments compared to other countries in Europe (Stergiou & Sakellaropoulos, 2010: 94). However, although the radical changes made were quite enough, they were not aligned with the respective ones in the member-states of the EU, but rather imposed due to national imperatives (Sakellaropoulos, 1993b: 191). During this decade, as in the millennium years (2000), three (3) major reformations took place: the first in the healthcare sector, the second in the insurance system and the third in the area of work relations. All of them focused on normalizing the field of social protection, so as to elevate it to the standards of the corresponding ones in the European countries (Sakellaropoulos & Economou, 2006: 8).

Over the decades preceding the economic crisis, the reformations made were neither targeted nor well-designed, and hence they proved fragmented and ineffective, to a large degree (Kourachanis et al., 2018); ultimately, the structures left to fill the gaps created by the official government were the family networks and the charities (Feronas, 2019: 200-201). Nonetheless, those reformations were of utmost importance to the Greek state, in order for it to be able to enter the EU and to get attuned to the rest of countries in Europe, as much as possible.

According to the European Union's actions and law enactment, Greece as a member-state of the EU is obliged to apply the community guidelines (Manou-Pantazopoulou, E., 1999: 32) and to implement policies for the eradication of social exclusion and poverty. With the validation of the Green Bibles[5], mostly via the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF), Greece was called to put into practice Programmes and policies with the purpose to tackle poverty and to create the appropriate conditions for the social and economic inclusion of socially susceptible groups of people (The Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Welfare, 2014: 39). In this context, several Actions and Programmes were realised throughout the Greek territory (via financial resources deriving from the EU), (Sakellaropoulos & Economou, 2006: 16-17), all of which functioned as basic tools for the exercise of social policy on national scale.

One of the most significant efforts made is that of the Guaranteed Minimum Income (GMI) (presently also referred to as Social Solidarity Income – SSI). It was established by law 4093/2012 to contribute to the family income of deprived families, providing also social inclusion services. Its primary goal was to cater for employment re-inclusion with the ultimate purpose to aid towards the alleviation of poverty and social exclusion. Some of the services offered by the SSI is the distribution of the uninsured persons booklet, social residential tariffs, registering for social programmes and the provision of counselling[6].

The scheme "Sheltering and Re-inclusion" is another Programme implemented by the Ministry of Labour, which has intended to function as a complete guide in dealing with the phenomenon of poverty and the homeless. Its direct aim has been to set the desired prerequisites both for individuals and for families hosted in shelters to be entitled to stable and independent housing. Ultimately, its mission is to cater for the social and occupational re-integration of its beneficiaries[7]. The programme commenced in 2015 and by the year 2017 one thousand two hundred and sixty-nine (1.269) beneficiaries had already enjoyed its benefits (Dimoulas et al., 2017).

Particularly important has also been the contribution of the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD). This specific scheme was addressed to socially susceptible groups, which were at risk of poverty and social exclusion, offering them nutritional aid (EU Regulation, 2014). Food provision has been conducted via a network, comprised of local government units, regional bodies and the Non-Profit Civil Partnership (AMKE) EPEKSA. Until today, fifty-seven (57) Social Partnerships are in operation throughout Greece[8].

By law 4320/issue. A/19-3-2015, the Greek state has taken on action to enforce immediate measures to manage the humanitarian crisis. The so-called "Humanitarian Crisis Management Programme" presupposed (3) three actions, which began to be implemented upon its effect: a) the "free re-installation and provision of electricity to persons and families living under conditions of extreme poverty", b) the granting of rent allowance to thirty thousand (30.000) individuals to secure housing and c) the sponsored supply of food to independent persons and to families. (Greek law 4320/issue. A/19-3-2015: 225).

Complementarily to the schemes and Actions described above, the Greek state also provides privileged allowances[9], the ability for the deprived to access healthcare services, allowances to cover domestic heating[10], social groceries and soup kitchens[11], all of which intend to support persons on the brink of poverty, to fight social exclusion and to promote social inclusion.

3. Research Methodology

Interviews were conducted in order to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the SSTPGs so as to seek solutions with the prospect of their available services continuation. Additionally, there has been an attempt to bridge the gap in the already existing bibliography, which revolves around the insufficiency and lack of empirical data, in the field of social structures evaluation in Greece.

The selected method was that of the qualitative semi-structured interview conducted in real time, at the SSTPGs premises. The objective has been to retrieve spontaneous responses from the participant interviewees, which would not be guided but rather intimate (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003: 141) drawn from the individuals' own life experiences and based on their work at the structures, previously mentioned. Thus, the qualitative characteristics, which the interviewees have accumulatively acquired through experience, would be showcased and the research findings would be interpreted on the basis of analysis and clarification (Mason, 2003: 25).

The process carried out throughout the Qualitative Research survey has been the following. Firstly, initial communication over the telephone took place with the individuals preoccupied in the institutions, which were making use of the Social Structures. On behalf of the Scientific Committee for Social Cohesion and Development (EPEKSA), two (2) persons were asked to be interviewed, that is the ones who were involved in the completion of the present research study. On behalf of the municipalities, two (2) vice Mayors were chosen to participate, those who had been in charge of supervising the Social Services, within the jurisdiction of their municipality.

Chart 1. Participants from the Implementing (Coordinating) Institutions

Structure	Identity
EPEKSA	Person in Charge of the programme's Object of Study
EPEKSA	Person in Charge of the Activities, Publicity and the Call for Sponsorships
Municipality of Metamorphosis	Vice-Mayor
Municipality of Glyfada	Vice-Mayoress

Source: Author's own processing.

As a follow-up to the telephone communication, a letter was sent out to the Non-Profit Civil Partnership and to the respective municipalities. The letter included the reasons for conducting the interviews, the research objectives and a brief summary of the questions to be posed during the interview. Both the Scientific Committee for Social Cohesion and Development and the Municipalities of Metamorphosis and Glyfada replied positively. The average time for each interview was about an hour. Answers were recorded with the participant's consent, and then decoded at later stage.

Next, it was asked by the Scientific Committee for Social Cohesion and Development to hand in the private data of the indirect beneficiaries-employees in the Social Structures, in either of the two (2) Corporate Structures so as to carry out the interviews, accordingly. AMKE replied positively to this request and submitted the employees' contact information.

The initial intention was to conduct interviews with one (1) employee from each Structure, of either Corporate Structure. Following communication over the telephone, the employees that were selected to participate from each Structure were confirmed, as listed below.

Chart 2. Participants in the Municipalities of the Northern Boroughs

	Structure	Specialization
IRAKLIO	Social Grocery	Administrative Assistant
METAMORPHOSIS	Open Day Centre for the Reception of the Homeless	Social Worker
PHILADELPHIA	Kitchen Soup	Administrative Assistant
METAMORPHOSIS	Social Pharmacy	Social Worker
LYKOVRYSI	Public Garden	Agronomist
METAMORPHOSIS	Time Bank	Social Worker
	Intermediation Office	Administrative Assistant

Source: Author's own processing.

In total, (12) interviews were realised with the indirect beneficiaries, one from each Structure. Six (6) out of them were Administrative Assistants, four (4) were Social Workers, one (1) was a Pharmacist and one (1) was an Agronomist. The choice of individuals of such expertise aimed at producing an in-depth analysis, since the particular indirect beneficiaries were the Structures' Supervisors. During the interviews, a corresponding process similar to the previous ones was applied.

The qualitative research was based on an interviewing guide, which was designed according to a very specific methodology. First, the scope of research was explained, taking into account the need to assess the Social Structures, and then the expected results were extracted. Subsequently, an evaluation of the current situation in the Structures was carried out, on the level of staff and of the products and services offered. Then, the thematic axes were defined, on the basis of which the Structures' assessment would take place and, lastly, the interview questions were formulated.

Chart 3. Participants in the Municipality of Glyfada

Structure	Specialization
Social Grocery	Administrative Assistant
Soup Kitchen	Administrative Assistant
Social Pharmacy	Pharmacist
Time Bank	Social Worker
Intermediation Office	Administrative Assistant

Source: Author's own processing.

The questions that were included had four (4) goals. The first was to pinpoint what social exclusion and poverty stand for, as expressed by the interviewees. The second was that the involved individuals would provide feedback on the programme, while the third one to report various problems and deficiencies, which they came across during their work at the Social Structures. Finally, the fourth (4th) and last aim of the questions was to allow for the participant interviewees to make proposals, which could be of use to similar programmes in the future. All these objectives were delineated in the Interview Guide by the Thematic Axes.

The questions that were chosen in the end intended to evaluate the Programme at hand, attempting to shed light to the Social Structures in relation to their operation and the services they provided. On the whole, sixteen (16) questions were posed, falling under the thematic axes mentioned before.

Chart 4. Interview Guide

Thematic Axes	Questions Asked
Social Exclusion and Poverty	1. In your opinion, what does Social Exclusion and Poverty mean?
	2. In your experience, which social groups are affected the most by Social Exclusion in your borough?
	3. Are you aware of other Programmes or Institutions offering Social Services in your area?
	4. Within the local policies framework, how would you rank this programme, in particular?
Programme Evaluation	5. How do you assess the structures as to the fulfilment of the programme's objectives?
	6. How do you assess the structures as to service quality for the beneficiaries of the programme?
	7. How do you evaluate progress on the level of programme implementation (in relation to the available financial and human resources?)
	8. How do you evaluate the Structures as to their accessibility for the beneficiaries?
	9. How do you evaluate response on the part of the beneficiaries?
Programme's Deficiencies	10. Was there an equal and of the same measure distribution of the offered services throughout the borough?
	11. Did any issues arise in the cooperation between the local authorities and the Implementation Body (AMKE)?
	12. Were there any problems in terms of publicity and the transmission of information about the Structures?
	13. Can you report any other problems or deficiencies in the Programme that you might have noticed?
Proposals	14. In your experience, what could contribute to the improvement of the existing structures?
	15. How could the Social Structures be enhanced in order for the provided services to become better?
	16. Is there any sort of policy or programme that you would like to propose for it to be implemented in the future?

Source: Author's own processing.

In their majority, the questions were of open-ended type, giving the interviewees the chance to build their own thoughts. The reason for the open-ended questions' existence was to collect as much information as possible and to carry out an in-depth assessment. Out of them all, one (1) question was hierarchical, in which the interviewees were asked to categorize the examined programme with respect to local policies of the municipality where they used to work. The questions were direct and targeted, since they were addressed to people involved in the programme and hence conscious of all its dimensions. At the same time, there was an effort to avoid any guided or generalized and misleading questions. On the contrary, interview questions were neutral and precise, while it was also possible for the interviewees to develop their thinking in their own way.

4. Research Findings & Results

4.1 Individual Interviews with Members of the Corporate Structure

Starting from the very first question, all four (4) participants asked argued that the terms Poverty and Social Exclusion are distinct yet interrelated with one another, as well. As the Person in Charge of the Object of Study in the Non-Profit Civil Partnership (AMKE) states:

> *"poverty equals to the economic inability that someone faces. Social Exclusion differs, it means a person's isolation either from society at large, or from some of its facets (social and political institutions, the labour market, the healthcare system, the educational system). Nevertheless, both notions are people-centred, something which shows that either of the two issues are inherent to the human nature and constitute society's ailments".*

The above viewpoint is shared also by the other three (3) interviewees, who claim that social exclusion is the process of isolation and alienation of individuals with special social qualities and, whereas poverty means the lack of resources.

As a reply to the question "which social groups are affected the most by Social Exclusion", all participants to the survey said that it was mainly about people who, in terms of income, were below the limit of poverty, the ones who had lost their job and, in general, those struggling financially. A significant factor was the one put forth by the Vice Mayoress of the Glyfada Municipality, who admits that:

> *"unemployment or the lack of a pension salary or other form of income combined to the inexistence of a supportive environment makes these people extremely vulnerable. In cases of drug use or disability, social exclusion is even harsh".*

The Person in Charge of the Object of Study, from the Non-Profit Civil Partnership, added that the individuals who were afflicted the worst were the ones "struck" by the recent economic.

Moving on to the question whether "[they] are aware of other Programmes or Institutions offering Social Services in [their] area", the two (2) Vice Mayors referred to Programmes related to the primary prevention of drug use, the assistance to students with learning difficulties, the Help at Home, the Care Centres and the Open Care Centre for the Elderly. These Programmes are realised within the municipality borders. The participants from the Non-Profit Civil Partnership

AMKE mentioned also the food provision services by the Church and the Diocese as well as food supply projects like the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD).

Upon completion of the first thematic unit of questions, the interviewees were requested to answer how they would rank the researched programme among other policies implemented by the local authorities. Of particular gravity was the opinion of the Vice Mayors in charge, who responded that the social structures were the capstone of all social services within their municipality. The partakers from the Non-Profit Civil Partnership mentioned that although the social structures scheme was supplementary to their municipality's services, it was equally important overall. Originally, it started its operation complementarily, yet its contribution was ultimately greater than that of other programmes within the local framework of social policy.

As far as the theme of the SSTPGs evaluation is concerned, the survey participants were requested to answer the question of "how [they] assess the structures as to the fulfilment of the programme's objectives". The Vice Mayors in charge reported that the structures did meet the purposes for which they had been designed. Whether they are to be examined in numerical terms that is based on the number of beneficiaries who enjoyed services, or in tangible terms that is based on the products and services provided, it is evident that the structures managed to accomplish the programme's mission. The Person in Charge of the Object of Study, on behalf of the Non-Profit Civil Partnership, shared the same view on this, by saying that:

> *"The Structures were designed within a specific context, legislative, economic and social. On the basis of that framework, they developed their operations. Being responsible for the Pragmatic Subject of the programme, I believe that there weren't any deviations from the plan set. On the opposite, there were efforts to carry out the Activities in accordance with the Strategic Plan of Action".*

To the question of "how [they] assess the structures as to service quality for the beneficiaries of the programme", all four (4) interviewees replied that there was a quite satisfactory level of service quality, in general. The two (2) Vice Mayors claimed that the customer service code of conduct towards the beneficiaries was based on criteria set beforehand by the contracting body (i.e., the Ministry). The aim was to assist individuals who were facing economic problems and were socially marginalized. In the end, that was succeeded via the implementation of the examined programme.

To elaborate on the previous, the seventh (7th) question deals with the programme's assessment according to the available financial and human resources. The response which all the interviewees provided was that under the given circumstances (i.e., economic crisis) in which the SSTPGs took place, they achieved in making good use of the available financial and human resources at the furthest extent. In spite of this acknowledgement, however, as the Person in Charge of the Activities, Publicity and the Call for Sponsorships commented:

> *"…in some cases, inadequacy of or belated access to the necessary resources was observed, which, in turn, had an impact on the Structures' functionality. Overall, though, the programme was completed rather satisfactorily. And, to be accurate, it was realised in a better way compared to what happened in other municipalities, something that proves a right management of the available resources".*

With regards to the evaluation of accessibility to the structures' facilities by the survey participants, the two (2) Vice Mayors, whose municipality implemented the SSTPGs, differentiate themselves in answering, accordingly. More specifically, the Vice Mayoress of the Glyfada Municipality argues that, for the particular municipal area, accessibility had been ensured. In fact, the location of the building, which accommodated the structures, had been deliberately designated to be in the centre of the borough (Glyfada) so as to cover both the northern and the southern side of the municipality; also, there was a bus stop just outside the structures' premises. On the other hand, the Vice Mayor of the Municipality of Metamorphosis replied that accessibility was a huge issue which put into trouble not only the beneficiaries but also the employees throughout the implementation of the programmes. As he supports:

> *"The truth is that although it happens for the two municipalities to be adjacent, yet practically they fall quite apart. The allotment of structures was without good planning and that resulted in our beneficiaries' inconvenience, moving between structures".*

Finally, the last question pertaining to the programme's evaluation was that of how the partakers interpreted the beneficiaries' reaction. Both Vice Mayors said that the beneficiaries' response exceeded every expectation. What is more, they also added that the beneficiaries themselves acted in absolute cooperation, a fact which aided in the seamless operation of the structures. Furthermore, they admitted that through the SSTPGs the beneficiaries managed to find solutions to many real-life problems. The Person in Charge of the Activities, Publicity and the Call for Sponsorships, on behalf of the Non-Profit Civil Partnership, reported that:

> *"…certain structures were more preferable, owing to what kind of services each structure had to offer as well as to the fact that the beneficiaries possessed different opinions about the structures due to uneven sharing of information".*

In addition, all interviewees mentioned that, on the one hand, many citizens did benefit indeed, still, on the other, it is regretful to say that such a large portion of people struggles to make ends meet.

Starting off with the set of questions related to the deficiencies and problems which occurred during the programme's implementation, the interviewees answered that there was a fairly equal distribution of the provided services across the municipality area and towards the beneficiaries. On behalf of the Non-Profit Civil Partnership AMKE, it was highlighted that services included all socially susceptible groups at local level, to which the particular products and services were offered.

To the question of whether any issues existed, regarding the collaboration between the Municipalities and the Non-Profit Civil Partnership, all four (4) interviewees supported that nothing was problematic, since everything was based on good planning, in the first place. Only in certain cases were there difficulties in incorporating the Programme's Structures into the already existing Structures or services, as a formula for social welfare provision pre-existed originally, still not so well-organised as with the deployed Programme, nor so welcomed by the public. In detail, the two (2) Vice Mayors commented that the cooperation between the Municipalities and the Non-Profit Civil Partnership was indeed exemplary. Also, they emphasized on the fact that any kind of issue which emerged during the implementation of the social structures programme was handled with immediate reaction.

In terms of promoting and raising public awareness of the structures, the majority of survey participants claimed that things ran smoothly. According to the Person in Charge of the Object of Study for the Programme:

> *"Both via the Non-Profit Civil Partnership AMKE as well as through the partner municipalities there was sharing of information (through events and their respective websites). Also, the volunteers played a key role in spreading the word for the existence and the usefulness of the structures. The employees helped the most to raise public awareness (special thematic events, informative about the structures) yet also the beneficiaries themselves contributed to making them known".*

With respect to the question of whether they could report other issues related to the Programme which they have noticed, the participants referred to an array of deficiencies. For instance, the Vice Mayoress of Glyfada supported that:

> *"their basic problem was that there was no strategy and planning on the part of the central authorities in order to allow the continuation of the social structures operation. Also, another discrepancy observed was the resetting of the prerequisites for the selection of candidates, thus occasionally dismissing candidacies of people who were suffering truly".*

The Vice Mayor of the Metamorphosis Municipality added that the provided services were dispersed among structures in the two bordering municipalities and not concentrated in each area and for either borough, thus creating problems commuting problems. The representatives from the Non-Profit Civil Partnership AMKE mentioned that the SSTPGs were based to a large extent on sponsorships, putting their operation at risk. Furthermore, the fact that sponsorship was assigned to a single person hindered or even prevented the development of a network to seek funding. Lastly, the need to secure additional resources for certain structures (for example, food distribution or the social grocery) was also brought up as well as the delays in employees' payments.

Proceeding to the set of questions referring to the proposals, which the beneficiaries could make for the structures' improvement in their entirety, the involved parties suggested that it would have been important if more available resources and more personnel had been in place. Also, they stressed that vital importance of the structures' further support in terms of equipment, funds and staff.

The previous question is couple with the penultimate one in the Interview Guide, referring to ways of enhancing the offered services by the municipalities, for the beneficiaries' best interest. The partakers noted that central planning and administration on regional level is crucial as much as it is to impose specified, fixed parameters which would pervade these programmes (income and entry criteria). At the same time, they said that the SSTPGs could be boosted mainly by personnel necessary along the running of the programme, and also with an expanded and more effective activation of the volunteers' team, especially of people whose profession is relevant to the provided services.

As a proposal to improve services, the Vice Mayoress of the Glyfada Municipality recommended the existence of an inter-disciplinary scientific team, which would help in the central planning for the structures from the beginning. The Person in Charge of the Activities, Publicity and the Call for Sponsorships, on behalf of the Non-Profit Civil Partnership, stated that:

"there might be a plan which presupposes more active involvement and of its target groups within the context of its activities, with greater participation".

The Vice Mayor of Metamorphosis as well as the Person in Charge of the Object of Study from the Non-Profit Civil Partnership pointed out that there is no good reason for the creation of a new project, either complementary or substitute for the structures. The suggestions for improvement that were expressed above could enhance the structures without altering their nature, since the specific programme has been one of the most successful ones in terms of social policy, over the past few years.

4.2 Individual Interviews with Workers at the Social Structures

To begin with, for the first question, the vast majority of the survey participants answered that the terms "poverty" and "social exclusion" represent two different situations, though interconnected. To add to it, they consider them to be phenomena, which have been exacerbated recently in Greece due to the economic crisis and decadence. Indicative is the response given by the employee in the Mediation Office in the Municipality of Glyfada:

"the term Poverty focuses on income, whereas Social Exclusion also includes the inability to access social institutions, such as the labour market, the healthcare system, the educational system and the community. At least, this is my understanding of those two notions through my preoccupation with the Social Structures for the Immediate Eradication of Poverty".

From the sum of the given answers by the workers at the social structures, it is reasonably safe to argue that, based on common sense, the term Poverty emphasizes on income, whereas the idea of Social Exclusion implies the lack of privilege to social institutions. Thus, it becomes clear that Social Exclusion is a phenomenon structural and institutional, while both concepts are people-centred, something which proves that these two issues are inherent to the human society.

In support of this, one of the interviewees claimed that Social Exclusion:

"…is the society's inability to integrate all of its citizens and the nurturing of the feeling in the socially marginalized people that they cannot change their position".

By this statement the blame is put on society itself, since it fails to create the appropriate conditions for its citizens to adjust to its developments and to the changes of modern times.

As for the social exclusion attributes, quite a few answered that it could be racial, religious or economic and that it is usually linked to verbal or physical violence against these target groups. Accordingly, poverty is characterized by lack of income and the inability to secure funds to cover the bare necessities.

The second question examined which social groups suffer the most from Social Exclusion at local level, that is in the municipal area where each interviewee worked at. From the replies it appears, as in the previous case, that they survey participants had correlated poverty to social exclusion. In particular, twelve (12) out of the sixteen (16) argued that socially excluded are "the poor", "people below the limit of poverty", "the lowest socio-economic layers" and those struggling with "financial hardships". As other categories of socially isolated people are considered to be the disabled, the homeless, the Roma, the immigrants, the children, the elderly, the single-parent families and the drug addicts.

If we were to draw a connecting line between the previous answers and the invitation for the programme published by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in 2012, it is evident that the real beneficiaries of the social structures are "the homeless", "individuals in a state or at risk of poverty". From the above, two main conclusions can be reached; on the one hand, that the given responses reflect the reality and, on the other, that the social structures have managed to integrate groups of people, who were originally described as target groups in the fight against social exclusion. Moreover, it seems that the Ministry of Labour and Social Security had entirely turned its attention to the elimination of income-based discrimination and not to catering for the isolated groups, such as the disabled, the homeless, the Roma, the immigrants, the children, the elderly, the single-parent families and the drug addicts, as mentioned earlier by the interviewees.

Indicative of the latter is the answer of a worker in the Social Grocery of the Metamorphosis municipality, who comments that:

> *"…social exclusion has been intensified due to the long-lasting financial difficulties which the country has fallen in, even though we should distinguish people who had fallen in this situation at an earlier stage. In the past, the main cause was associated with the level of education, while now it is linked to unemployment. Families of the so-called "middle-class" have been found on the brink of social exclusion, not just because of economic hardships but also due to the fact that they were forced to change their lifestyle in various ways. The employed and especially the young people are facing this problem, mostly in cases where family obligations exist. Also, the pensioners category is another social group affected by this phenomenon".*

To the question where they were aware of other Programmes or Institutions providing Social Services in their municipality, most interviewees responded that they knew some of the social services provided by the local authorities, such as the scheme "Help at Home" and the distribution of food organised at various locations by the Church. It is worth noting that besides food provision by the Dioceses, the social services run exclusively by the municipalities, which have also implemented the presently examined programmes, involved activities similar to these of the social structures.

The fourth question, entailing the prioritization of the programme in relation to other programmes realised by the Municipal Social Services, is of particular interest since all interviewees have thought that the Social Structures to Tackle Poverty constitute the most significant programme executed so far. As a worker in the Social Grocery of Metamorphosis argues,

> *"this programme is, in essence, the cornerstone in the application of social policy by the Municipality".*

By the fifth question, the survey participants were invited to enter the circle of questions that intended to investigate and evaluate the Programme. To the question of whether the social structures have accomplished their mission, all twelve (12) interviewees contended that their objectives had been covered, from satisfactorily to excellently. The key finding extracted from their relevant answers was that, apart from the structures' main purpose, that is to be of practical use to the beneficiaries by supplying them with the basic necessities, the beneficiaries' successful re-inclusion into society was also achieved, through guided counselling and psychosocial support.

Especially important was the statement of a worker in the Social Grocery of the Metamorphosis Municipality, who comments on a serious ailment of the social structures:

"the structures despite their insufficient planning (duties and limits of action are vaguely defined) carry out a significant task for the good of our weak fellow-citizens. Still, the intentions of the institution, of the municipality and of the corresponding social services are often conflicting. To make things worse, several interventions are made on the part of the municipal authorities which are not aligned with the objective and scientific task of the workers. In many instances, there are contradicting goals which lead to confusion".

To the question of "how [they] assess the structures as to service quality for the beneficiaries of the programme", ten (10) interviewees replied that, on the whole, there was a fairly satisfactory level of service quality. Two (2) survey participants among the indirect beneficiaries reported that friendly relationships had been developed between the employees and the users of the structures, while one of them mentioned that during the structures' operation the efficiency level would increase. Nevertheless, three (3) partakers claimed that there had been a few issues as to service quality towards the beneficiaries, whereas one (1) person supported that the structures had specified financial and human resources, which lacked the capacity to cater for the needs of the total number of beneficiaries.

"the existing structures have got specified resources in terms of finance and staff, both of which fail to cover the needs of this size of beneficiaries".

Following the previous question, the seventh (7th) refers to the programme's evaluation on the basis of the resources available on the level of funds and personnel. All interviewees answered that the social structures provide the best possible services to the beneficiaries, yet they could be more efficient if there were more available resources and more secure work prospects. It is worth noting that most survey participants comment that the economic crisis had a huge impact on the field of service provision, since the structures were affected on technical level (lack of equipment) as much as on work level (delay in employees' payment, repeated prolongation of activities).

"the pace of improvement in the management of human resources is relative to the time which the particular programme is 'running in'. Indeed, it is a big issue that funding is able to cover only the employees' wages, while no provision is made for financial contribution in support of these structures".

As for the assessment of accessibility to the social structures' facilities, there is differentiation among those who had worked in the Corporate Structure of the Northern Municipalities in comparison to the ones who had worked in the Corporate Structure of the Glyfada municipality. In detail, the interviewees from Glyfada reported that accessibility was at the highest possible level thanks to the existence of a bus stop right outside the structures' premises, with shuttle service by OASA as well as with two zero-fare public transit lines.

On the other side, the partakers from the Northern Municipalities Corporate Structure said that the black mark was probably the great distance which the beneficiaries had to cover in order to reach a structure. Their answers show that there was an inconvenient arrangement with the public means of transport.

As the Pharmacist in the Social Pharmacy of the Glyfada municipality argues:

"I would say that [accessibility] was really satisfactory since public service passed just outside the buildings for the structures. Also, the latter were situated in a central spot of the borough. The buildings were accessible by persons with reduced mobility. Therefore, I find accessibility a "strong asset" of the Social Structures".

On the other hand, the worker in the corresponding Social Pharmacy of the Northern Corporate Structure, supports:

"I think that the premises where the structures conducted their activities were not easily accessible to the beneficiaries, due to failure in public connection".

The final question to evaluate the programme deals with the partakers' assessment of the beneficiaries' response to it. The important element underlined by the interviewees was its breadth, justified by a variety of coincidental factors, such as economic hardships, the fulfilment of basic needs, the workers' nice behaviour and the extended publicity surrounding the programme. Still, reference was made also to negative incidents, for example, cases of abuse or dependency, or of denial to appeal to the structures, for fear of being targeted or pitied by other residents in the borough.

"I should say that the beneficiaries' response has been remarkable, since we would cater for their basic and essential needs, thus making them happy. However, single cases of abusive or dependent behaviour by the beneficiaries existed, as these were individuals who besides their economic and real-life problems were also users of addictive substances".

Starting off with the set of questions pertaining to the deficiencies and problems which occurred during the implementation phase of the programme, the workers in the social structures of the Glyfada municipality reported that there had been an as much as possible even distribution of the provided services across the borough and towards the beneficiaries. In juxtaposition to the previous ones, the workers at the structures of the northern municipalities stated that the allotment of structures had been unequal.

They said that there had been no good planning beforehand, adding that municipalities small in population hosted structures similar to the ones in larger municipalities implementing the programme. As a result, a big number of beneficiaries would move together from one borough to another, so as to receive assistance. According to a worker in the Soup Kitchen of the Northern Corporate Structure:

"I would say no. I reckon that they are disproportionately allotted. There had been no good planning, and municipalities, which are small in size, have accommodated structures similar to the ones of larger municipalities implementing the programme. This has led to many

beneficiaries being forced to move in groups from one area to another in order to seek assistance. In other words, I believe that he structures should have been distributed according to ratio, or to exist within the borders of a single municipality".

As a reply to whether any issues had emerged in the cooperation between the local authorities and the Implementation Body (i.e., the Non-Profit Civil Partnership EPEKSA), the workers referred to matters of trivial nature, which basically had to do with differences in terms of approach. A more serious issue is the local authorities' intention to demonstrate their social policy before the elections. On the other hand, the Non-Profit Civil Partnership wished to make good use of every available resource so as to cover the beneficiaries' needs, disagreeing with the municipal authorities. Indicative is the answer of a worker in the Social Pharmacy of the Glyfada Municipality, who comments:

"Yes, there were [issues], mainly due to the different point of view. The municipal authorities wished to exercise its social policy every now and then (mostly over the pre-elections period), whereas the Non-Profit Civil Partnership wished to exploit any means available to meet the beneficiaries' needs, trying also to sustain the prescribed limits of the structures' economics. At times, the combination of these two things has provoked issues. Other than that, I would describe their collaboration as exceptional. Furthermore, I must stress that it was an ideal cooperation regardless of which elected party prevailed".

In terms of the structures' public promotion, the employees in their majority did not mention any problems. Publicity was monitored by all involved bodies (by the municipalities through one-day events as well as through sports, artistic and cultural happenings, and by the Non-Profit Civil Partnership via website and press releases). Also, the workers themselves contributed towards this direction by organising visits to the boroughs and activities for the public. In the words of a worker at the Social Grocery of the Northern Corporate Structure:

"Publicity and awareness were raised by the structures' personnel with the aid of AMKE. Moreover, the role of the Glyfada municipality was vital in that it organised one-day events as well as sports, artistic and cultural happenings through which the Social Structures' activities were also promoted".

Being asked about other spotted issues in relation to the programme, the survey participants reported numerous deficiencies. The most striking one was the inability of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to ensure the continuation of the Social Structures. Additionally, another major issue was the change in the economic criteria by the Ministry, as a result to alternating beneficiaries in terms of eligibility or illegibility throughout the year. Most interviewees replied that there were other problems equally significant, as well; the lack of financial and human resources, the delays in payments, the entanglement of many parties and services of different aims and interests, and the lack of consistent supervision and monitoring by the relevant Ministry.

Some of the basic problems are mentioned by the worker at the Social Grocery, in the municipality of Glyfada:

"There were no safety nets with regard to the economic criteria set by the Ministry. Some individuals who had been accepted a year before, ended up being rejected the year after, and

vice versa. What is more, there was no way to check the existence of extra revenues potentially obtained by certain beneficiaries through undeclared work".

Proceeding to the set of questions which refer to the beneficiaries' proposals for the structures' enhancement in their entirety, the partakers responded that the most important thing to do would be to increase the number of staff members, and to fortify them both with equipment and funds. Also, another recommendation was the improvement of buildings and facilities as well as the beneficiaries' stimulation for work upon their completion of the programme. According to the agronomist in the Public Garden, of the Northern Corporate Structure:

"Members of staff must always be knowledgeable and, mainly, intervening as to the beneficiaries' psychosocial support, in order to help them develop their own skills on the journey towards social reinclusion. This would, in the long run, bear the essential results of the current programme, meaning that persons, who have forsaken the economic and social life, would be guided in such a way so as to cater not only for their basic needs, such as food and health, but also for their social needs, like work, communication, social involvement and social contribution".

Complementary to the previous is the second-to-last question in the Interview Guide, which refers to ways of enhancing the services offered towards the beneficiaries. The participants mentioned that it is of vital importance for the personnel to stay constantly informed and updated, by attending seminars and training, so as to know how to handle groups of beneficiaries such as the Persons with Special Needs and the addicted.

A recommendation to improve the services was the beneficiaries' creative engagement within the Structures' premises, which would thus function also as a centre for socialization, beyond their role of catering for the basic necessities. Also, a proposed idea was to promote volunteerism and altruistic social contribution.

In addition, the running of a social school and the development of primary healthcare, via the establishment of a clinic at the structures' premises, were also suggested. Last but not least, the opportunity for the beneficiaries themselves to provide feedback on the level of satisfaction with the services offered and to propose ideas for their improvement were also mentioned.

In it worth noting that, in response to this question, the interviewees argued that the Social Structures should operate under the close supervision of the central administration and not by the municipalities', in order to halt their dependency on local government entities, which more often than not exercise social policy in the hunt for votes. Also, reference was made to the creation of a network of social structures across Greece, which would assist a lot in the dissemination of knowledge, in the handling of common problems, in the implementation of good practices, and even in tracking individuals who had been using social structures of other municipal bodies, as well.

Indicative of the above is the reply of workers in the Social Pharmacy of the Glyfada Municipality and in the Time Bank of the Metamorphosis Municipality, as follows:

"The Structures would have more to contribute, if more seminars and training programmes were available for us, the employees. Interacting with special social groups, (such as the Disabled and persons with addictions), in need of personalized care is something which we

as members of staff are not always able to offer. Also, provisions should be made for the beneficiaries' creative engagement at the premises of the Structures which, in this sense, would acquire the role of a centre for socializing, besides their contribution in the supply of the basics".

The final question of the interview asked from the survey participants to delineate a policy framework or a project to be implemented in the future, as follow-up action to the programme of Social Structures. The majority of them answered that there are no good reasons to design additional programmes, but to continue that of the Social Structures, instead. Many advocated for its re-design with interdisciplinary scientific teams in place and with more active involvement on the part of the users and by society, as a whole. Rather enlightening is the comment made by an interviewee, saying that the workers at the Social Structures should not be regarded as indirect beneficiaries, but rather simply as employees. Equally interesting is the proposal made by a worker at the Kitchen Structure in the Municipality of Metamorphosis, cited below:

"…there is room for future programmes, ones that could combine economic and social policy in Greece, like the "Building-up Skills and Employment" scheme, for example. They would give beneficiaries the chance to enjoy services and to learn things, all at once, and to gain expertise, so as to be ultimately in the position to stand in the labour market by their own means".

5. Conclusions

As far as the first thematic axis of research is concerned, the supplied interview answers are fully agreeable to international and domestic secondary sources. [Poverty and Social Exclusion] are both social phenomena which have recently been exacerbated in Greece – mainly due to the financial crisis. In relation to one another, they are interconnected, but not identical. The social groups which are affected the most, according to the interview responses, are the individuals living below the poverty limit, the homeless, the persons with special needs, the Roma, the immigrants, the children, the elderly, the single-parent families and the users of addictive substances.

Furthermore, the interviewees replied that they were aware of the existence of other programmes providing similar services, whose conduct, however, unlike the case of the Social Structures, was fragmented or incomplete. In addition, they consider the Social Structures to be the most significant service of social policy, compared to the respective social services offered by the municipal authorities.

Proceeding to the thematic unit of the Programme Evaluation, the key point resulting from the interviewees' responses is that the scope of the programme has been fulfilled entirely. More predominantly, the beneficiaries' re-integration into the community was also achieved through guided counselling and psychosocial support. At the same time though, the interview data shed light to the main issue which the Social Structures had to deal with, and that was the lack of resources. To be precise, they stated that the social structures were managing to deliver the best possible services to the beneficiaries, despite their considerable shortages in technical equipment and funds.

Indeed, the Social Structures of the Northern Corporate Partnership did face a serious problem. The workers in the Structures of the Northern Boroughs reported that the structures were disproportionately allocated due to mismanagement. As a consequence, a lot of beneficiaries had to move in numbers from one borough to another, in order to seek assistance. To add to it, transfer was problematic, too, since the public transit was inconvenient for the beneficiaries because of the inappropriate geographical dispersion of the Structures.

Completing the assessment part for the Structures, of great value is the conclusion that the beneficiaries welcomed the programme with a huge embrace. According to the interview data, such a warm response was prompted by the poverty and destitution of the times, while the workers' good manners and the extended publicity, which the programme received, also played a role towards its vast acceptance.

Some of the programme's main deficiencies reported have been the change in the potential beneficiaries' income criteria by the Ministry, which caused inconsistencies by accepting some and rejecting others, over the course of a year. Also, basic problems were the lack of financial and human resources and, the delays in payroll, the co-existence of multiple governing entities and agencies with divergent objectives and interests, as well as the lack of seamless supervision and guidance by the Ministry in charge.

Less important issues emerged in the relations between the partner bodies (Municipalities and the EPEKSA), owing to differences in term of approach. In other words, the local authorities wished to exhibit signs of social policy as heading for the elections, whereas the Non-Profit Civil Partnership had the intention to make good use of any available resources so as to cover the beneficiaries' needs, thus putting itself opposite.

The proposals submitted by the participants in the present study are, to a large extent, solutions to the problems mentioned above. The most insightful suggestion of all has been to re-design the Social Structures and re-start their operation with additional staff and improved facilities and equipment. Finally, another useful idea was the establishment of a network among all social structures in Greece, which would very contribute to the transmission of knowledge, the tackling of common issues, the application of good practices, and even to tracing individuals who might have been enjoying social structures' services in other boroughs as well.

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Networks of Solidarity Cities: The Social Dimension of the City Networks within the Europe for Citizens Programme, 2014-2020

Antonios Karvounis, *Hellenic Ministry of Interior*

1. Introduction

The European Union is built on solidarity: solidarity between its citizens, solidarity across borders between its Member States, and solidarity through support actions inside and outside the Union. Solidarity is a shared value which creates cohesion and responds to societal challenges such as the recent refugee and migration crisis. But what does solidarity mean within the European Union, especially in times of crisis? What are the legal, political, economic and even ethical limits of European solidarity? The unprecedented arrivals of migrants and refugees in recent years in particular have put Europe's solidarity to the test. Under the Europe for Citizens programme 2014-2020, citizens were given the opportunity to discuss the topic of solidarity as a multiannual priority during that programming period and to assess existing solidarity mechanisms inside the EU. This article underlines the role of the city networks measure of that European programme in which municipalities and their associations working together had the opportunity to develop partnerships of towns to make and develop the solidarity principle more sustainable in a long-term perspective. In this respect, despite their disparity, city networks share common aspirations: exchanging experiences and knowledge, enhancing the skills of their members' executives, exerting influence, securing international representation and defending their interests (Karvounis, 2020, p.82).

2. The solidarity principle within EU legal framework

The principle of solidarity is often used in the context of social protection. For example, it was applied by the European Court of Justice in a case concerning complaints by self-employed workers that compulsory contributions to the mutual funds established to provide social protection violated the principles of free competition in the common market as laid down in Articles 81-82 EC (now Articles 101-102 TFEU). Chapter IV (Articles 27-38) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union is entitled 'Solidarity.' Articles 27 to 34 bear directly on employment and industrial relations: Workers' right to information and consultation (Article 27), Right to collective bargaining and action (Article 28), Right of access to placement services (Article 29), Protection in the event of unjustified dismissal (Article 30), Fair and just working conditions (Article 31), Prohibition of child labour and protection of young people at work (Article 32), Family and professional life (Article 33), and Social security and social assistance (Article 34).

Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union explicitly refers to the principle of solidarity, an affirmation crucial for the concept of Social Europe. The EU principle of solidarity has implications for the various rights concerned with employment, industrial relations and social protection in the EU Charter.

Implementation of the Solidarity Chapter of the EU Charter aims to build a bridge between programmatic solidarity rights (social and economic rights) and justiciable civil and political rights. Justiciable rights equate to effective and enforceable rights. The challenge is to establish clearly justiciable solidarity rights (e.g. trade union freedom of association, information and consultation, collective bargaining and collective action), and, further, to develop and implement programmatic social and economic solidarity rights: e.g. health, education, etc. The EU Charter, which was enacted with the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon on 1 December 2009, opens a new chapter in the legal enforcement of solidarity rights, both at transnational and national levels.

3. Europe for Citizens, 2014-2020

Under the Europe for Citizens programme 2014-2020, the notion of solidarity was intrinsically linked to the concept of generosity, but also to those of reciprocity and responsibility. European citizens reflected on policy areas where such common mechanisms were already existing or could have been useful while considering other possible channels of European solidarity like volunteering, donations, foundations, civil society organisations, charities, crowdfunding, etc. One aspect of the discussion was to highlight the added value of the EU's intervention in times of crisis, as was demonstrated in the case of the refugee and migration crisis, when national responses seemed insufficient, while underlining the limits of such solidarity mechanisms in terms of responsibility and financial cost. Projects developed under this multi-annual priority contributed to overcoming national perceptions by fostering mutual understanding and by creating fora where common solutions could be discussed in a constructive way. Their aim was to raise awareness of the importance of reinforcing the European integration process based on solidarity and common values.

The Europe for Citizens Programme, adopted for the period 2014-2020, was an important instrument aimed at getting the Union's 500 million inhabitants to play a greater part in the development of the Union. By funding schemes and activities in which citizens could participate, the Programme was promoting Europe's shared history and values, and fostering a sense of ownership for how the Union develops.A budget of EUR 187 718 000for the period 2014-2020 was allocated for the Programme (EACEA, 2020, p.23).

Under the overall aim of bringing the Union closer to citizens, the general objectives of the Europe for Citizens Programme 2014-2020 were as such (EACEA, 2020, p.5):

- to contribute to citizens' understanding of the Union, its history and diversity;
- to foster European citizenship and to improve conditions for civic and democratic participation at Union level.

Specific objectives were pursued on a transnational level or with a European dimension (EACEA, 2020, p.5):

- to raise awareness of remembrance, the common history and values of the Union and the Union's aim, namely to promote peace, the values of the Union and the well-being of its peoples by stimulating debate, reflection and the development of networks;

- to encourage democratic and civic participation of citizens at Union level, by developing citizens' understanding of the Union policy making process and promoting opportunities for societal and intercultural engagement and volunteering at Union level.

The Programme was implemented through two strands and a horizontal action:

- Strand 1: European remembrance: Raise awareness of remembrance, common history and values and the Union's aim.
- Strand 2: Democratic engagement and civic participation: Encourage democratic and civic participation of citizens at Union level. Measures in this strand were:
    - Town Twinning;
    - Networks of Towns;
    - Civil Society Projects.

The two strands were complemented by a horizontal action: Valorisation, analysis, dissemination and use of project results.

4. The City Networks measure

Networking between municipalities on issues of common interest appeared to be an important means for enabling the exchange of good practices. Twinning has been a strong link that binds municipalities; therefore, the potential of the networks created by a series of town twinning links were used for developing thematic and long-lasting cooperation between towns. The European Commission supported the development of such networks, which were important for ensuring structured, intense and multifaceted cooperation, therefore contributing to maximising the impact of the Programme. Networks of Towns were expected to (EACEA, 2020, p.23):

- Integrate a range of activities within at least 4 project events; such Network of Towns' events were expected to have a defined time-frame and include different types of activities around the subject(s) of common interest to be addressed in the context of the Programme's objectives or multiannual priorities.
- Have defined target groups for which the selected themes are particularly relevant and involve community members active in the subject area (i.e. experts, local associations, citizens and citizens' groups directly affected by the theme, etc.);
- Mobilise citizens across the Europe: a project should involve a minimum of 30% of invited participants. "Invited participants" aretravelling delegations from eligiblepartner countries otherthan thecountry hosting an event.
- Serve as a basis for future initiatives and actions between the towns involved, on the issues addressed or possibly on further issues of common interest.

Maximum grant for a Network of Towns projectis was EUR 150 000. Towns/municipalities or their twinning committees or networks, other levels of local/regional authorities, federations/ associations of local authorities, non-profit organisations representing local authorities were potential applicants and partners.The other organisations involved in the project could also be non-profit civil society organisations. A project had to involve municipalities from at least 4 eligible countries of which at least two should have been an EU Member State. The activities had to take place in different eligible programme countries. At least 4 events per project had to be foreseen with maximum project duration set for 24 months (EACEA, 2020, p.23).

5. A review of the networks of solidarity cities, 2014-2020

Following the establishment of the new Commission Juncker, the responsibility for the citizenship portfolio was given to Commissioner Avramopoulos, in charge of Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship. Accordingly, the Europe for Citizens Programme was moved from Directorate-General Communication (COMM) to Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs (HOME) as of 1 January 2015, while the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency remained responsible for the management of the Europe for Citizens Programme. In this context, reflections started on possible synergies between the Europe for Citizens Programme and DG HOME's activities, in full respect of the programme's legal basis, objectives and budget. On this basis, we reflect on the reports on the activites of the Europe for Citizens Programme 2014-2020 and explore the potential of the networks of cities measure within the solidarity domain.

5.1 The rise of populism (2014)

After the European elections of May 2014, which saw a strong rise of eurosceptic parties and populist movements (European Commission, 2014a), as well as a high abstention rate (turnout was only 42,54%, even if it confirmed the level of participation of the 2009 elections), in the two selection rounds that were organized for networks of towns in 2014, out of 224 submitted applications, 35 networking projects had been selected for funding for a total amount of 4.522.000 EUR. The funded projects involved around 19.000 participants. In terms of geographical spread including the partners, all countries participating in the programme were represented within this measure. Italy, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland were the most active countries in organising networks of towns. As all these networks involved at least four towns from different countries, the geographic impact went of course far beyond the host country. Thematically, the future of Europe was targeted by 42% of networking projects while citizens' participation in the democratic life of the EU was chosen by 60% of the projects and the elections to the European Parliament by 13% of the projects (the total of these percentages exceeded 100, as some projects were targeting more than one topic) (European Commission, 2015, p.8).

Example 1: Project "MIGRAIN" (migration and integration) (Poland)

The theme of the project was the mobility of citizens within the EU and the immigration of citizens from third countries towards the EU. The project aimed at investigating issues linked to mobility and immigration in Europe and their social impact, and at giving citizens the opportunity to participate in the formulation of answers to these questions. The towns participating in the network were facing effects of mobility and immigration including difficulties linked to the arrival of irregular immigrants from non-European countries. By exchanging ideas and examining possible solutions to these issues, the project was expected to contribute to the development of local strategies and policies for the social integration of immigrants. Moreover, the project contributed to raising awareness among citizens living in the participating towns on the importance of migration for the society by showing successful models of integration of different groups of migrants and by highlighting the existing potential for changes in local communities.
Project partners: Urzad Miasta i Gminy Cieszanow (Poland), Diosd Varos Önkormanyzata (Hungary), Freundeskreis Partnerschaften Gemeinde Argenbühl (Germany), Municipality of Lokron (Greece), Comune di Forli (Italy), Comune di Fusignano (Italy), Kmetstvo Aheloy (Bulgaria), Comuna Lupeni (Romania).

5.2 The return of terrorism (2015)

In the difficult political situation after the Paris and Copenhagen attacks of January and February 2015 and in the context of a serious economic, financial and political crisis and the increasing number of third-country nationals arriving in the European Union, the Europe for Citizens programme played an important role as one of the EU programmes helping to foster the civic engagement of citizens, to promote values, such as tolerance, solidarity and non-discrimination and to encourage citizens to play a stronger role in the development of the EU through projects and activities, in which citizens who were already active within organisations or institutions as well as citizens who were not yet involved could participate and make their voice heard. In the two selection rounds that were organised for networks of towns in 2015, out of 339 submitted applications, 32 networking projects were selected for funding for a total amount of 4.067.500 EUR which corresponded to a success rate of 9%. In terms of geographical spread including the partners, all countries participating in the programme were represented within this measure. Italy and Hungary remained the most active countries in organising networks of towns. As all these networks involved at least four towns from different countries, the geographic impact went far beyond the host country (European Commission, 2016, pp.6-7).

Example 2: ACTive Communities for Inclusion (Croatia)

The overall aim of the network was to improve societal engagement in implementing Union policies & measures focusing on the inclusion of persons with disabilities and the elderly in local actions. The specific aims were: 1) to demonstrate to citizens how to effectively implement programs promoting social inclusion of disabled persons and the elderly; 2) to increase citizen awareness about daily challenges faced by persons with disabilities and the elderly and how EU policies positively impact citizens' lives. The inclusion of persons with disabilities and the elderly in civic activities was a priority for the Municipality of Cestica. Local non-profits providing services to disabled persons & the elderly found that current programs and individual services needed to be adjusted in order to improve their inclusion in civic activities. Apart from this, it was found that the majority of residents regionally in Croatia were unaware of the issues facing persons with disabilities & the elderly; making it difficult to foster support for new initiatives. In this project, Cestica & its partners exchanged knowledge/best practices to improve current systems designed to enhance inclusion of persons with disabilities & the elderly in civic activities. This was done by demonstrating innovative methods, presentations, public awareness activities & exchanges at 4 events. Citizens became aware of issues facing the disabled and elderly, the advantages of EU policies for social inclusion and of volunteering opportunities. Professionals in public institutions & associations gained know-how required to establish effective civic initiatives for the inclusion of disabled persons and the elderly at the local level, and new proposals were drafted. The partners built on the results of previous actions. A cooperation agreement finalized at the last event, detailing joint future activities relating to the inclusion of persons with disabilities and elderly. Project partners: Municipality of Cestica (Croatia), Municipality of Ruma (Serbia), ACT Čakovec (Croatia), Varazdin County (Croatia), Municipality of Cirkulane (Slovenia), Municipality of Heiningen (Germany).

Example 3: Stimulating new forms of active civic participation through focus on Social and Solidarity Economy (Greece)

20 years after the introduction of the EU citizenship the project "FOCUS" focused on Social and Solidarity Economy issues which have been ignored or inadequately fulfilled and sought to: a) contribute to citizens' understanding of the European Union, of its history and achievements and of the EU policy making-process; b) create the space for a deeper discussion on the future of Europe; c) give responses to the questions for the kind of Europe citizens want, thus, for a strong, sustainable, prosperous, inclusive, democratic and integrated united Europe; d) raise awareness of forms of active civic engagement, reinforce those already existing and stimulate new ones; e) encourage democratic participation of citizens by promoting opportunities for societal and intercultural engagement and volunteering such as the occupation in cooperatives, non-profit organization, charities and generally speaking, in social economy structures. In particular, the project "FOCUS" through 4 distinct events attempted to situate social economy into a broader political context and investigated its relation with the well-known traditional theories and practices concerning the participation in the democratic life of the EU. Thus, the network of partners from 10 countries desired to disseminate as a best practice for the empowerment of civic participation of those citizens who had not been involved till then, or who rejected the Union outright of put in question its achievements, their engagement in Social economy structures. As the Social Economy moves between the government (public sector's economy) and business (private economy) could be seen equal to the civil society's economy, based on interests and wills of citizens and as part of the Solidarity Economy, the economy of vulnerable and disadvantaged people, usually indifferent in civic participation either at local or EU level, due to their poverty and social exclusion. Project partners: Municipality of Agia (Greece), City of Grada Raba (Croatia), Câmara Municipal do Porto (Portugal), Préfecture de la Haute-Corse, Corse region in the island of Corsica (France), Lazio region/city of Rome, Lombardy region/city of Bergamo and the city of Montone/Province of Perugia in Umbria region (Italy), municipality of Naxxar (Malta), cities of Pegeia and Dromolaxia–Meneou (Cyprus), cities of Teruel/Aragon, Ronda, autonomous community of Andalucía (Spain), cities of Anija, Harjumaa and Keila, other urban cities of surrounding rural municipality - Keila Parish/Keila Linnavalitsus, cities of Kernu, Nissi, Padise and Vasalemma (Estonia), cities of Galway and Dublin (Ireland), city of Strumyani (Bulgaria).

5.3 The triumph of Euroscepticism (2016)

In the continuous complex political, social and economic context of the year 2016, the Europe for Citizens programme played an important role as one of the EU programmes helping to foster the civic engagement of citizens, to promote values such as tolerance, solidarity and non-discrimination and to encourage citizens to play a stronger role in the development of the EU through projects and activities, in which citizens participated and made their voice heard. The rise of Euroscepticism – which became highly visible in the result of the UK referendum in June 2016 – highlighted the importance of the Europe for Citizens programme and reinforced the need to foster the development of a shared sense of European identity and to reflect on the causes of the European Union's loss of attractiveness and the disappearance of its credibility as a positive added value to Member States. The Europe for Citizens programme offered a unique forum to ordinary citizens allowing them to express their ideas about the future of Europe through a bottom-up approach. In 2016, out of 328 submitted applications, 30 networking projects were selected for funding for a total amount of 4.120.000 EUR which corresponded to a success rate of 9%. The programme multiannual priorities, particularly the one tackling migration issues, found significant response at local and regional levels of Networks of Towns beneficiaries. Thus, migration and intercultural dialogue was covered by 57%, the debate on the future of Europe by 33%, solidarity in times of crisis by 23% and Euroscepticism by 20% of the selected Networks of Towns projects. The migration theme appeared more as a cross-cutting issue, largely interconnected with other multiannual programme priorities. The greatest number of selected projects came from Italy (23%), France (10%), Hungary (10%) followed by Germany (7%), Spain (7%) and Poland (7%). As all these networks involved at least four towns from different countries, the geographic impact went far beyond the host country. The large partnerships of the selected projects should be underlined: in average around 10 partner organisations were involved per project (European Commission, 2017, p.6).

Example 4:
InteGration and solidarity
European Models for Sustainability
(Austria)

GEMS project established a transnational network between 5 small alpine towns that shared local development strategies (economy based on sustainable tourism), and related challenges, caused by recent EU financial and social turmoil. Over 2 years of activities (2016-2018), under the coordination of the Alpine Pearls Association, GEMS project directly involved a total of 843 citizens in an exercise of civil participation, which aimed to identify solidarity & integration initiatives contributing to boosting local development, while generating too the sense of belonging to a transnational community based on shared EU values (peace, mutual understanding).Citizens, representatives of civil society organisations together with their local authorities worked together in 5 transnational events, each focused on a different thematic, as follows: Sustainable tourism and the future of EU: soft mobility and accessibility; new residents bring new ideas for sustainable tourism; intercultural cooperation and traditional knowledge transfer; new minorities promoting sustainable tourism in traditional communities; future challenges of EU in the Alpine Region: how to build the sustainable future of tomorrow. Moreover, GEMS project stimulated an intensive awareness raising campaign on EU2020 and EU policy-making mechanisms. Within 7 public conferences (i.e. 5 organised during the thematic events, 2 in occasion of the Opening and Final ceremonies of the project) GEMS informed alpine citizens about relevant EU policies on the projects' main topics and financing opportunities, EU framework and tools for participation. All 7 events (i.e. 5 thematic and 2 dissemination events) promoted the EACEA – Europe for Citizens Programme, and its relevance for the promotion of cooperation between local authorities. It is estimated that GEMS activities and information campaigns reached indirectly more than 30.000 citizens within the involved communities, as well as over 1.000.000 citizens across the overall Alpine Region by means of GEMS online and offline communication channels. Concretely, GEMS project activated (http://gemsproject.eu/the-project/the-results/): Debates (workshops) and exchange of best practices (study visits) for the elaboration of a Network Solidarity & Integration Model - a catalogue with local best practices and network recommendations for future initiatives, to be implemented at network level; the signature of a Friendship Agreement between project partners – putting the basis of future cooperation around the identified priorities & strategies of the Network Model; the establishment of a participatory mechanism able to both INFORM a broad number of citizens from involved communities and COLLECT their feedback on the networks' ongoing debates and preliminary results (i.e. the FeedMe Stands – Participation Info-points placed in strategic venues of the project towns); the launching of the Alpine Award for the most innovative Alpine "solidarity & integration initiatives" – during the final Ceremony, to be promoted by the wider Alpine Pearls network (25 Alpine towns, including all project partners). GEMS project contributed to a shift of mind-set on local sustainable development towards a more open, inclusive, EU-oriented one, in which: Citizens are aware of their crucial role in the development of their communities, working side by side with local authorities, as partners, so to realise their common vision for the EU (development) future; citizens perceive themselves as part of a greater European and active community, fostered by institutions (local and EU) in their efforts to achieve common goals; Alpine communities perceive new residents (internal and/or external migrants) as an opportunity to boost their local social and economic contexts through active integration. Project partners: Werfenweng (Austria), Bad Reichenhall (Germany), Bled (Slovenia), Moena (Italy), Forni di Sopra (Italy).

Example 5:
2WILL- 2 Work in Integration of Local Life (PL)

The project 2WILL promoted by 26 Partners from 16 countries, focused on the potential of networks and encouraged new forms of civic and democratic engagement by stimulating debate and reflection on EU related themes, fostering the active involvement of citizens in the policy-making process and avoiding passiveness and misunderstanding of EU actions. The proposal created a path of discussion on three themes: EU solidarity, risks of Euroscepticism and Future of Europe through the linking subject of volunteering. In fact, volunteering is important, especially for young people, and is a vehicle for personal development, social cohesion and active citizenship, fostering the involvement at EU level avoiding oppositions. Youth volunteering is an excellent example of non-formal learning for young people and also strongly contributes to inter-generational solidarity. The target group were citizens from 18 till 40 years old. The project aimed to: foster transnational volunteering and inter-generational solidarity in the Europe of the future;-improve good working conditions for young volunteers, also through the exchange of best practices among them; achieve greater recognition of the value of voluntary activities and the skills it promoted; enhancement of the knowledge of volunteers on the EU policy-making process, through the knowledge of the Programme, EU funds, the Europe 2020 strategy; recognise and promote cross-border voluntary and solidarity activities in the EU, especially in this particular time of crisis; avoid border closure and stereotypes; foster a sense of European citizenship and societal and intercultural engagement, as citizens can be actors not only spectators in the building of the Europe of the future; improve conditions for civic and democratic participation at Union level thanks to citizens' direct involvement in the project activities; gather suggestions and proposals for a better and solidary Future of Europe. Project partners: Municipalities of Wieliszew (Poland), Serock (Poland), Graffignano (Italy), Castiglione in Teverina (Italy), Celleno (Italy), Lubriano (Italy), Civitella d'Agliano (Italy), Herrera del Duque (Spain), Lanškroun (Czech Republic), Dionisos (Greece), Alimos (Greece), Agias (Greece), Siret (Romania), Trittau (Germany), Salaspils (Latvia), Kelme (Lithuania), Strumyani (Bulgaria), Deryneia (Cyprus), Onga (Hungary), Filipstad (Sweden), Habo (Sweden), Santa Lucija (Malta), Swieqi (Malta), and associations of "Aktiviinen Europpalainen Kansalainen Suomi Ry" - Vääksy (Finland), "BALKĀNU ZIEDS" - Aizkraukle (Latvia), "Udruga za očuvanje neretvanske baštine" - Opuzen (Croatia).

5.4 The debate on the future of Europe (2017)

Sixty years after the signing of the Treaties of Rome, it seemed more important than ever to address citizens' concerns and reconnect the European project with its founding values. In challenging times for Europe, the European Commission launched an open debate with the White Paper on the Future of Europe presented by President Juncker on 1 March 2017. Having shown remarkable resilience, when tackling a series of global crises in the past, the European Union (EU) was confronted in 2017 with a set of complex and uprecentented challenges including the fight against terrorism, the response to the most serious migration and refugee crisis in Europe after the Second World War and the outcome of the United Kingdom EU membership Referendum. In

2017 the "Europe for Citizens" programme showed its maturity and stability. Supported activities were implemented successfully in all Member States and corresponded to the priorities set out by the Commission. Almost 40% of projects granted combatted stigmatisation of "immigrants" and helped to build counter narratives showing solidarity in time of crises, i.e.:

- Analysing the migration crisis and new policy approaches for refugees.
- Sharing practices and strengthening social inclusion systems for immigrants.
- Promoting the integration of immigrants and the analysis of its impact on local development.
- Working on media literacy and on the importance of a story-telling approach in combatting the stigmatisation of immigrants.
- Volunteering and developing solidarity mechanisms as a form of civic participation.

Whereas in previous years organisations were active in the urgent management of the migrants and refugees crisis, in 2017 they concentrated rather on democratic participation on the Future of Europe. They proposed to combat the general mistrust in democracy, seeing democratic participation as a tool to face intertwined challenges such as populism and xenophobia.

As for all programme actions in 2017, a decrease in the number of applications was also noted for Network of Towns (NT) projects (around 9%). This decrease was mainly due to the lower participation of Hungary and Italy applicants, the countries which used to have the highest participation rate within this action. This trend contributed to a better geographical distribution as well as to a better action success rate (11% in 2017 against 9 % in 2016). Applicants from 28 countries participated in the 2017 selections. The greatest number of applications came from Italy (23%) and Greece (8%). Applicants from Greece, Austria, Sweden and Bosnia & Herzegovina demonstrated in 2017 their increased interest in the action concerned. The geographical spread of the selected projects was wide with 19 countries represented as (lead) beneficiary. The geographical spread of those projects including the partners was even higher considering that 33 countries (all participating programme countries) were represented within the selected projects. The average amount requested per NT project (€128.500 in 2017), was higher than the "average value of grants" foreseen in the annual work programme 2017 (i.e. € 94.085). Consequently, the number of grants allocated within this action in 2017 was lower than the number foreseen in the annual work programme: 32 against 45. Under this action 32 projects were selected, providing support to municipalities and associations working together on a common theme in a long-term perspective, and wishing to develop networks of towns to make their cooperation sustainable. The projects under "Networks of Towns" action were characterized by large, diversified and strong partnerships (i.e. in average more than 10 partner organisations per selected project), thus maximising programme impact at national/regional and EU levels. Altogether 32 selected projects involved around 335 partner organisations reflecting an important diversity in terms of the partnership (e.g. municipalities, regions, NGOs, twinning committees, foundation, associations, CSOs etc.). Around 200 transnational events were organised by the NT beneficiaries across Europe (in average more than 6 international events will be organised per selected project), which were coupled with local events in project partner countries. The highest interest of NT beneficiaries went to the issues related to the Debate on the Future of Europe and migration challenges. It is worth noting that the discussion on the Future of Europe went beyond big cities. Issues, such as the debate on the Future of Europe, Euroscepticism, migration changes and solidarity were also tackled in small rural communities (European Commission, 2018, pp.19-21).

Example 6: European Network for the Cohesion and Solidarity in Rural areas (Slovenia)

European Network for the Cohesion and Solidarity in Rural Areas (ENSURE) was a cooperative project of 13 local and regional public bodies and Civil Society Organisations from the European Union, Montenegro and Serbia, that was implemented between July 2017 and July 2019. Establishing the network served to increase the relevance of local and European policy makers as actors developing initiatives that address the needs of rural citizens in the context of EU policies, European citizenship and democracy tools. As it was identified by the ENSURE partners, lacking competences when addressing complex realities of rural citizens - especially when the EU is at stake, can cause frustrating consequences, and it may lead to even greater lack of understanding of the EU, and amplification of Euroscepticism. In a time where citizens' confidence in EU decision making is at an all-time low, and especially the support from rural citizens is rapidly declining, the project aimed to understand Euroscepticism, and then to build European approach by making use of available EU democracy tools, as well as by providing new engaging instruments for citizens. The project addressed day-to-day issues which are prevalent for rural citizens: heritage vs. local development, cross-border mobility of agricultural workers, rules and consequences of Common Agricultural Policy, food security, social exclusion. By bringing up issues that acquire great interest among rural citizens, this project could tackle such questions as: the decline of support of the EU, roots of Euroscepticism, democratic participation, and the EU citizenship on rural areas. ENSURE engaged volunteers, policy makers and experts from 13 organisations, 13 countries (11 - EU, Serbia and Montenegro) - 6 local bodies, 4 Federations and bodies representing local authorities, 1 regional body, and 2 CSOs. Many of project participants either represented Local Action Groups, or supported them directly through their work. Their experience was extremely valuable when reflecting on how diverse EU policies are implemented at local level in rural communities in a public-private partnership. Project aims were met through six transnational events, follow-up local actions held in 13 countries, accompanied by dissemination tools, two publications and activities in social media. In total the project results were be delivered to over 1600 participants directly, and to over 50.000 across Europe. The long-term outcome of ENSURE is a lasting partnership, and more initiatives taken up together by project partners - at least six new EU-focused partnerships established thanks to ENSURE. The project managed to mainstream active European citizenship throughout the topics which are rarely linked with it in a direct way, such as the rural development and Common Agricultural Policy. This allowed us to reach citizens who are not primarily interested in exploring EU citizenship. In the course of the project they gained a better understanding of it, as well as the motivation to be more active at Union level. Project partners: Razvojno Informacijski Center Slovenska Bistrica (Slovenia), Municipality Trudovets (Bulgaria), LAG Central Istria (Croatia), Hranicka Rozvojova Agentura (Czech Republic), University of Thessaly (Greece), Kistarcsai Kulturális Egyesület (Hungary), Associazione Alessandro Bartola (Italy), Futuro Digitale (Italy), Ligatne Municipality (Latvia), Municipality of Municipalitie Kolašin (Montenegro), Municipality of Lask (Poland), Alba County Council (Romania), Fond „Evropskiposlovi" Autonomne Pokrajine Vojvodine (Serbia), Razvojno Informacijski Center Slovenska Bistrica (Slovenia), Federación of Municipalities of Madrid (Spain).

Example 7:
Local Solidarity - Global Solidarity Network (Bulgaria)

Local Solidarity - Global Solidarity Network (in short: SOLID) was a cooperative project of 13 local and regional bodies from the European Union, Montenegro and Serbia, implemented between January 2018 and November 2019.The project was initiated with the idea that there was a need to retrieve a new meaning of SOLIDARITY between people in Europe, between the Member States, and with the rest of the world. The issues, such as the humanitarian crises related to migration or the process of Brexit have shaken our societies and made clear that many EU citizens have difficulties to understand social and political mechanisms that shape their everyday life. As a result, many societies have seen growing populism that challenges established politics, political culture and the sense of solidarity. The SOLID Network had as the main aim to empower citizens and local authorities to search and provide answers to such questions as: What is solidarity among Europeans and with the rest of the world?, How can we reverse the process and maintain Europe as a world leader when it comes to protection of fundamental values?, How can we use EU instruments to strengthen solidarity in our local realities? Through the project a long-lasting cooperation between 12 countries was established which allowed to create and implement new political tools for policy makers and local communities. These tools support diverse actors of society to have a bigger impact on the global and European solidarity in time of institutional and humanitarian crisis. Through 5 transnational events, educational and political activities, network-building and local actions, the project partners were: Finding common solutions that develop local, Europe-wide and global solidarity; raising awareness on policies and competences of the EU related to fundamental values, and their impact on local and global environment; promoting opportunities (tools) for societal engagement at personal and institutional level that are encouraged by the EU. SOLID engaged representatives, volunteers, policy makers and experts from 13 organisations, 12 countries (10 EU Member States, and Serbia and North Macedonia), eight of them are local public bodies, and five are Civil Society Organisations. This partnership is geographically balanced, and it represents a real European outreach. Partners come from Northern, Eastern, Western and Southern Europe, and also from EU neighboring countries - Serbia and North Macedonia, which makes the partnership colourful and diverse. The project was meant to find common solutions for solidarity at all levels, as well as to design and disseminate tools for solidarity. Not only did it foster the use of existing means available in EU to citizens, but it moreover provided innovative strategies and political tools, such as the Manual for Solidarity 2020 - adaptable by policy makers and activists to other European areas. Project partners: Bulgarian Centre for LLL (Bulgaria), Male Dvorniky (Slovakia), Municipality of Alimos (Greece), Sz dliget (Hungary), Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa (Italy), Daugavpils City Council (Latvia), Mogila Municipality (North Macedonia), Municipality of Kavadarci (North Macedonia), Gmina D browa (Poland), Cleantech Romania (Romania), EKOLOR Indjija (Serbia), Mancomunidad de la Ribera Alta (Spain), and the Center Culturel de Jette (Belgium).

Example 8: Solidarity 4 Heritage (Bulgaria)

The project created a sustainable Network of towns that developed systematic approaches for volunteering involvement in heritage preservation and management. The most important achievement of the project was the initiated policy reform, which was formulated with the participation of decision-makers, international expert groups, civil society organizations and citizens. Furthermore, a strategy and action plan, as well as an ethical code for volunteering were developed in order to promote, improve the conditions and stimulate volunteering in the participating municipalities. During the project 6 thematic events were organized, each one covering a different topic and involving participants with different expertise, in order to cover all major aspects of the project. The Kick-off meeting was held in Strumyani, Bulgaria, in the period 07 - 09.03.2018, where representatives of the 6 European partners gathered to lay the foundation of the network, the rules and principles for management, coordination, communication, evaluation and dissemination. The partners discussed the possible ways for raising awareness of the importance of the preservation of heritage and tools, policies and instruments for facilitating citizens' involvement through solidarity and voluntary action. The workshop "Challenges and best practices for conservation and management cultural sites and local traditions through volunteering" took place in Novo Mesto, Slovenia, from 13 to 15.06.2018. The partners discussed the challenges which local authorities, cultural organizations, CSOs and volunteering organizations are facing in heritage preservation; to present good practices related to the cultural preservation by each partner. Strategies for facilitating citizens and stakeholders' involvement, as well as volunteering in heritage preservation were drafted. The "Tools for Solidarity" round table was held in Agia, Greece, on 24 - 27.08.2018 and allowed for exploring tools and mechanisms to be implemented both at local and international level in order to facilitate volunteering and solidarity. These included organization, coordination, information and integration actions, all necessary to establish a coherent network of local and international stakeholders providing high quality volunteering and solidarity opportunities and placements. The "Working and living as a volunteer" workshop was organized in Naxxar, Malta, from 30.10 to 02.11.2018. During the event standards of working and living conditions were developed for voluntary workers, addressing one of the main challenges voluntary workers face. The regulation introduced a unified set of criteria of living and working conditions to be satisfied in order to provide placements for volunteering and an ethical code for volunteers and solidarity workers, setting standards of personal qualities and behaviours required for engaging in voluntary work. The "Together for Solidarity" conference took place in Caltanissetta, Italy, from 25 to 28.02.2019, where the challenge of poor formal recognition of voluntary service as a valid working/learning/training experience was addressed. It gathered stakeholders to discuss and drafted a joint proposition for policy reform in this respect. The event included expert panels, discussions and gathering of public opinions among citizens and discussion with decision-makers, NGOs, citizens, educational organizations etc. As a result, a "Solidarity of the Future" white paper was developed and presented to decision-makers in order to initiate change. The Closing conference was organized in Strumyani, Bulgaria, on 04 - 07.03.2019, where the authorized representatives of all partners signed a Memorandum of Understanding, thus the Solidarity4Heritage Network was officially established. Project partners: Municipalities of Strumyani (Bulgaria), Agias (Greece), Naxxar (Malta), Novo Mesto (Slovenia), Caltanissetta (Italy) and Association Euni Partners (Bulgaria).

5.5 The European Year of Cultural Heritage (2018)

By actively supporting major EU initiatives such as the newly launched European Solidarity Corps and the designation of 2018 as the European Year of Cultural Heritage, the Europe for Citizens programme emerged as a point of reference for a shared sense of belonging to the European Union. In 2018 the Europe for Citizens programme continued to stimulate EU citizens' democratic engagement to debate and act on the issues that were at the top of the EU political agenda and EU policies: the future of Europe, migration, security and socio-economic solidarity. Issues related to the migration crisis, stigmatisation of migrants and minority groups remained at the centre of beneficiaries' activities (43%). 28 % of projects tackled issues related to migration, which was addressed from different angles:

- migration and its impact on societies by combatting stigmatisation of migrants, stereotypes and growing Euroscepticism; by stimulating the debate on tolerance and solidarity; by understanding the causes and background of migration);
- migration and solidarity mechanisms/integration of immigrants.

The NT beneficiaries also reflected on solidarity mechanisms and volunteering, presenting concrete policies implemented locally and regionally with regards to the integration of immigrants in the labour market and society. The integration of migrants and its positive impact on local development were also demonstrated by the implemented NT projects. 20% of projects focused their activities on solidarity issues, promoting volunteering and exchange of good practices: EU solidarity models for sustainability; exchange of volunteering practices; integration of minorities and other disadvantaged groups. Moreover, besides exchanges of concrete solidarity mechanisms, these projects also managed to involve citizens in the debate around issues such as humanism, common EU values, and approaching solidarity and tolerance as tools to fight against populism and extremism (European Commission, 2019, pp.19-21).

Example 9:
Working for Innovative Volunteering And Solidarity (Cyprus)

The word WIVAS sounds like "cheers" in the Cypriot language. It focuses on the potential of networks and encourages new forms of civic and democratic engagement by stimulating discussion and study on EU related themes, boosting the active involvement of citizens in the policy-making process and staying off from the passiveness and misunderstanding of EU actions. WIVAS wants to be a sounding board on three main themes (EU solidarity, risks of Euroscepticism and Future of Europe) all linked by the leitmotiv of volunteering that is important for the young generations and is a means for social cohesion active citizenship and for fostering the involvement at EU level, avoiding conflicts as well. Youth volunteering is the best way of non-formal learning and strongly contributes to inter-generational solidarity; that's why the target group is 18-45 year old citizens. The aims of WIVAS were as such: Enhance the knowledge of volunteers on the EU policy-making process, through the knowledge of the Europe 2020 strategy, of the Europe for

Citizens Program and other European funds; recognise and encourage cross-border voluntary and solidarity activities in the EU, especially in this particular time of crisis, contrasting Euroscepticism and keeping distance from border closure and stereotypes; further a sense of societal and intercultural commitment and European citizenship, as the members of the European communities can become actors in building up the Europe of the future; boost transnational volunteering and inter-generational solidarity in these hard times of crisis; improve good working and living conditions for young volunteers, also through the exchange of best practices; achieve greater recognition of the value and skills of voluntary activities; improve conditions for civic and democratic participation at EU level thanks to citizens' direct involvement in the WIVAS activities. Project partners: Municipality of Deryneia (Cyprus), Dobsice Obec (Czech Republic), Kunsill Lokali Birgu(Malta), Mestna Obcina Novo Mesto (Slovenia), Laragne-Monteglin (France), Razlog Municipality (Bulgaria), Comune di Canepina (Italy), Municipality of Agias (Greece), Municipio de Vila Nova de Cerveira (Portugal), Par Institute for Developping LLL (Croatia), Opstina Irig (Serbia), Aktiivinen Euroopapalainen Kansalainen Suomi Ry (Finland), Comune di Gallese (Italy), Comune di Vignanello (Italy), Gmina Jablonna (Poland), Kelmes Rajono Savivaldybes Administracija (Latvia), Concello de San Cristovo de Cea (Spain), Onga Varos Onkormanyzata (Hungary), Bashkia Shijak (Albania), Comune di Soriano Nel Cimino (Italy).

5.6 The Year of the European Elections (2019)

2019 was a decisive year for the future of the Union. In May, the European Elections gave the opportunity to EU citizens to assess with their vote the effectiveness of the European Union on issues ranging from security, border management and migration, job creation, economic growth and social policy to climate change, energy policy, the Digital Single Market and the development of the democratic legitimacy at EU level. In this context, the Europe for Citizens Programme for the period 2014-2020 was an important instrument encouraging EU citizens to take part in the debate and play a stronger role in the development of the EU. In 2019 259 Networks of Towns applications were received. Following the trends of previous years, Italy demonstrated the highest interest in this action, representing around 29% of the submitted applications, followed by Spain (8%) and Hungary (8%). It is positive to outline that almost all eligible programme countries (33 out of 34) took part in the NT 2019 selections as applicants. In terms of geographical spread including partners, it is worth underlining that all eligible countries (34) were represented in 2019 Networks of Towns selections. Under this action 36 projects were selected for funding in 2019 involving 21 programme countries as beneficiaries. A total amount awarded in 2019 under Network of Towns action was € 5.022.720. The average grant awarded per NT project was € 139.520. As TT beneficiaries, projects selected under the NT action also managed to combine different programme priorities looking for synergies and concrete outputs. The programme priority "Debating the Future of Europe and challenging Euroscepticism" was addressed by the highest number of beneficiaries. Debates related to the migration crisis, stigmatisation of migrants and minority groups, and solidarity also remained at the centre of the selected projects. The NT beneficiaries presented concrete policies implemented locally and regionally concerning the integration of migrants in the labour market and society. Tackling the priority related to solidarity, NT beneficiaries put an emphasis on solidarity mechanisms and exchange of good practices, such as EU solidarity models for sustainability or volunteering promotion. Besides, the debates involved issues such as humanism, common EU values approaching solidarity, cultural heritage and tolerance as tools to fight against populism and extremism (European Commission, 2020, pp.26-27).

Example 10:
Strengthening a Europe of solidarity in times of migration (Spain)

"Strengthening a solidarity Europe in times of migration" was a project whose main objective was the search for understanding, integration and the creation of new points of view through dialogue and reflection of European citizens, helping to improve understanding of the European Union, as well as its history and diversity of citizens, promoting European citizenship, increasing citizen and democratic participation, as well as understanding the current situation of the EU in relation to migration policies and, in search of alternatives and new challenges to overcome, framed within the crisis of confidence that was lived. The project foresaw the organization of 5 thematic meetings: in Spain October 2019, in Ireland December 2019, in Lithuania February 2020, in France April 2020 and in Croatia June 2020. In oder to achieve the objectives of the project, in line with the priorities of Europe for Citizens programme, there was provision to create a strong and long term network, proposing activities based on the reinforcement of active participation in European society, such as round tables, interactive workshops, conferences, case studies, cultural visits. The project aimed to find an answer to the migratory crisis currently experienced in Europe, both internally, between their own countries, and externally. Citizens' understanding of the Union's policy process was expected to be strengthened by promoting opportunities for social and intercultural engagement, directly addressing concepts, such as migration, Euroscepticism, solidarity that revolves around their environment or social and cultural integration policies. Therefore, participants were encouraged to exchange opinions and best practices with the aim to formulate new ideas and concrete future proposals. Project partners: Ayuntamiento de laracha (Spain), Holloko Kozseg Onkormanyzata (Hungary), Obec Kalonda (Slovakia), Obshtina Mezdra (Bulgaria), Gmina Andrychow Urzad Miejski w Andrychowie (Poland), Opcina Gornja Rijeka (Croatia), Community Enterprise of Thessaloniki Municipality - Thessaloniki European Youth Capital 2014 (Greece), Tornion Kaupunki (Finland), Asociación Cultural Recreativa Deportiva, Xuvenil e Prestadora de Servicios Sociais Muxema (Spain), Municipio de Pinhel (Portugal), Tukuma Novada Izglitibas Parvalde (Latvia), Kaunas Ausros Upper-secondary School (Lithuania).

Example 11:
Action 4 Europe of Solidarity (Italy)

The project had the main purpose to turn the spotlight and spread another point of view towards a great tragedy that was unfolding at the gates of Europe. The purpose of the project was to spread another narration, another idea of Europe, a Europe that did not feel fear, a Europe that was not xenophobic, a Europe that said NO to the merchants of lies that spread fear and uncertainty for their own electoral self-interest. Europe is the bulwark of peace and hope for many desperate people seeking a better life. To reach the goal the project started from the European solidarity attitude that led the European Union to be the beacon of civilization and democracy in the world. The European solidarity's attitude represents a universal value for us as individuals, communities and societies. It's the basis of the European Cultural Heritage. In this difficult historical moment where it seems that the values have been subverted, and some words, such as "race", "selfishness", "hostility", are increasingly popular it is important to preserve and pass on to future generations the sense of proud to be European and show solidarity. Through cherishing our cultural heritage, we can discover our diversity and start an inter-cultural conversation about what we have in common. Europe was born from solidarity and the desire of peace and these elements are the strength and the engine that have meant harmony and prosperity for 70 years. Starting from this context, the project aimed to analyse and turn the spotlight on the European Union Immigration Policies and wanted to do it precisely from those countries that have shown major internal problems in the management of the immigration flows. For this purpose, a series of activities was organised in 7 countries (Italy, Malta, North Macedonia, Serbia, Greece, Kosovo, Belgium).The project aimed to help identify them and develop a positive sentiment on immigration on the citizens, that too often are manipulated and frightened by complacent of Eurosceptics movements. Project partners: COPPEM - Comitato Permanente per il Partenariato Euro-Mediterraneo (Italy), Roma Youth Center (North Macedonia), Urban Municipality of Tuzi (Montenegro), Asociaciòn Pasos Solidarios (Spain), International Platform for Citizen Participation Sdruzhenie (Bulgaria), Comune di Mazara del Vallo (Italy), FTZ - Community Fundation Valletta (Malta), Culturepolis (Greece), Centar Lokalne Demokratije Udruzenje Lda (Serbia),Peipsi Koostoo Keskus (Estonia), European University College Association (Belgium), Instytut Rozwoju Sportu i Edukacji - Institute for the development of Sport and Education (Poland), Centrum Stosunków Międzynarodowych - Centre for International Relations (Poland), Qendra e Studimit te Politikave Europiane per Zhvillimin Rajon (Albania), Comune di Osilo (Italy), Unione dei Comuni del Gerrei (Italy).

Example 12: Youth for European Solidarity (Italy)

"YES! - Youth for European Solidarity" was a 2-year network, designed for creating spaces for discussion on the meaning of Solidarity in times of crisis in Europe, on the effectiveness of existing European policies and programmes, supporting solidarity projects and on the Future of Solidarity in Europe, with the identification of innovative tools that could guarantee a strengthening of the European integration process. The 15 partners from 13 different nations (IT,PL,BG,LT,UK,RS,RKS,HE,SP,PT,FR,DE,SE) involved about 500 direct and 55,000 indirect participants, thanks to the organization of international events during the Europe Day, World Environment Day, Digital Learning Day, EU Cooperation Day, World Fair Trade Day. The objective of raising citizens' awareness of active citizenship for solidarity was achieved through a structured workplan that included: 4 international events, focused on 5 citizenships (European, Economic, Ecological, Digital and Global), when 26 young people (2 per country) were trained for becoming "ESAs: European Solidarity Animators" and ensuring sustainability and a long-term impact at community level; 2 local events, one for the initial promotion and for the selection of future ESAs and the other as a space for discussion on Solidarity and experimentation of the existing tools of participation in European democratic life, organized by the ESAs in their rural and suburban communities (Community Campaigns); the production of two tangible deliverables: 1/"ESAs Toolkit", with the methodology of the 5 Citizenships in support of Solidarity initiatives in Europe, distributed to other possible stakeholders, thus ensuring replicability; 2/Final Recommendation Paper "5 Citizenship,1 Solidarity", with a collection of all the ideas, suggestions, proposals born during the Community Campaigns and delivered to the relevant decision-makers and policy makers at every level, with the help of Eurodesk offices, existing within the partnership. Project partners: Comune di Miggiano (Italy), Municipality of Suhindol (Bulgaria), Solution (France), Administration of Plunge district municipality (Lithuania), Udruzenje srpsko-jevrejsko pevacko drustvo (Serbia),municipality of Fyli (Greece), Iars international institute (United Kingdom), municipality of Trzemeszno (Poland), Fattoria Pugliese Diffusa (Italy), Direcction general de cooperacio al Desarrello (Spain), Gemeinde Panketal (Germany), Citizens of Europe e.v. (Germany), Ungdomsfronten (Sweden), Junior chamber international prizren (Kosovo), municipio do fundao (Portugal).

5.7 The end of the road (2020)

2020 was the last implementation year of current Europe for Citizens programme. For 2021, the Commission proposed in the context of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, to merge Europe for Citizens with the Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme in the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme. At the same time, 2020 was the first year of the new Commission and European Parliament after the European Elections of May 2019. In this context, the Europe for Citizens programme was flexible enough to reply to new needs and to take on board new priorities. In this sense, the multiannual programme priority 'Promoting solidarity as basic concept' was taken into consideration by a significant number of eligible city networks project proposals (40% at the first round of selection and 48% at the second round of selection). In the two selection rounds that were organised for networks of towns in 2020, out of 320 submitted applications, 41 networking projects were selected which corresponded to a success rate of 13%.

Example 13: Solidarity - key to solving social problems and supporting the evolution of Europe in future (Germany)

The basic question of the project was what role solidarity played in the EU and why solidarity against the background of a common value base across all generations and all cultures interpreted and lived differently. What was particularly investigated was the question of the understanding and role of the younger generation in this context. Scientific investigations show that the solidarity and humanity are important issues of the competitive societies, which need to be managed properly. The project used appropriate methodology for testing the opinion of people involved, and drew conclusions from the common activities of the project. The participating people were prepared for understanding the subject and questions as concerned the solidarity mechanisms in Europe, and as a result of their project work, specific outputs were created which would help to manage this subject in wider public. A joint summary document and a common promotional brochure summarized the findings and made public the results. 12 partners, representing 9 countries (8 EU-member and 1 non-EU-member countries) form the partnership, and nine partner meetings were organized. The majority of the partner organizations represented local governments, but the lead partner Partnership Association of Alsbach-Haehlein was a very committed civil organization, functioning also as the Twinning Committee of the Municipality of Alsbach-Haehlein. The meetings were attended directly by about 450 participants, and the effects reached a wider population of about 12.000 people. Modern tools of the social media were used for intensifying the cooperation and supporting the effective dissemination. Project partners: Alsbach-Haehlein (Germany), Sulmona (Italy), Lubaczów (Poland), Massamagrell (Spain), Lokroi (Greece), Elbasan (Albania), Kozloduy (Bulgaria), Diósd (Hungary) and Prague District 9 (Czech Republic).

Example 14: Solidarity in PRoGress (Bulgaria)

The project wanted to focus on the theme of solidarity, one EU's founding principles, seen from a transnational perspective and settled into a concrete situation of global emergency. Starting from the global experience of the Covid19 epidemiological emergency, the project focused on actions of solidarity and cooperation during this critical period at EU level and at the level of every single Member State participating in the project. For this purpose, the project involved 7 European Towns, three of which were twinned, in 8 international meetings where direct participants were public local administrators and officials and volunteers, who managed emergency situations, and also High School teachers and students, altogether around 330 estimated, and the whole Community as indirect participants around 700 depending on the size of the meeting room. The towns involved work together to: implement a multimedia tool in five languages (English, French, German, Spanish and Italian) which illustrated the EU's solidarity aims and, in particular, the actions carried out during and as a result of the Covid19 emergency in the Towns involved; define a "best practices" document in five languages tool for coping with the emergencies at medium-sized towns level and to be circulated in the EU; lay the basis between the EU towns involved for periodically developing future initiatives on the theme of solidarity. The project activities intended specifically, not only to lead the Communities involved to a greater acknowledgment and awareness of EU emergency interventions, but also to promote the discussion of the experiences of solidarity, cooperation and support to citizens in each partner town with the general aims of a greater knowledge of the UE and its actions; the promotion of European citizenship and of volunteering especially among young people; the creation of networks between partner towns for solidarity actions. Project partners: Obshtina Aksakovo (Bulgaria), Aayuntamiento de quart de Poblet (Spain), Opshtina Stip (North Macedonia), Associazione Nazionale Comuni Italiani Sezione Piemontese (Italy), Stadtverwaltung bad Mergentheim (Germany), Commune de digne-les-bains (France), Gmina Ziebice (Poland).

6. Conclusions

At a time when European solidarity is lacking and public policies on asylum and immigration are becoming more restrictive in some EU Member States, many cities come forward as support forces, demonstrating the importance of the local level. Alone or in networks, how much room to maneuver do municipalities have to act alongside migrant and refugee population? To what extent can they oppose, or attempt to influence, national governments to welcome and integrate newcomers with dignity? Over the last decade, and more intensely from 2015-2016 onwards, the local – mainly municipal – authorities have asserted themselves as major players in migratory and asylum policies, with some of them even expressing their opposition to national policies. The cities sometimes implement their initiatives individually, but given the deadlock faced by national and European asylum policies, municipalities have often chosen to join forces or mobilise their networks in order to promote the reception and integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Although these networks reflect a complex reality, they now have converging goals and face similar difficulties. Both within the European Union (EU), and at national level, the association of urban areas in the field of asylum and migration has been possible thanks to the integration of the issue into the activities of pre-existing networks, or through the setting up of dedicated new ones. In particular, within the framework of the Europe for Citizens Programme 2014-2020, city networks supported projects committed to solidarity, calling for cooperation among European local authorities to create more cohesive and inclusive societies. Networks of solidarity cities generally had similar goals. First of all they sought to create soft law instruments (information guides, collections of good practices etc.) in order to influence the introduction of local reception and integration policies. Second, by the means of this programme, cities also joined forces to lobby national, European or international authorities and to have a greater influence on the decision-making processes, so that the various tiers of authority fulfil their responsibilities and respect the rights of migrant populations. Associations of towns thus supported activities promoting of societal engagement and solidarity: debate/campaigns/actions on themes of common interest in the framework of the rights and responsibilities of the Union citizens and making the link to the European political agenda and policy making process. So, the emergence of networks of solidarity cities at transnational level inevitably helped to bring about an increasing recognition of cities' legitimate right to express themselves, especially, on asylum and migration issues. After long being in the background, will municipalities throught the multilateral cooperation manage to become key players in solidarity domain? In the interests of both policy makers and citizens, the challenge also lies in cooperation between governments, cities and civil society.

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Biographical Note

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Documentation
Τεκμηρίωση

Social Structures to Tackle Poverty in Greece. A holistic overview

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Concluding the examination and evaluation of the Program of "Social Structures to Tackle Poverty in Greece" (hereinafter under the term "SSTPG") that operated in Greece during the period 2012-2017, it should be reported the full number of the SSTPGs that operated.

In total[1], two hundred and sixty-seven (267) Social Structures operated in forty-seven (47) partnerships. Sixty-six (66) Municipalities, forty-eight (48) Non-Governmental Organizations, ten (10) local admininistration legal entities, sixteen (16) Public Sector entities and twenty-two (22) private sector entities participated in them. The number of Social Structures was as follows: forty-nine (49) Social Groceries, forty-two (42) Social Pharmacies, twenty-eight (28) Public Gardens, forty (40) Social Kitchen Services, thirty-eight (38) Time Banks, forty-three (43) Intermediation Offices, fourteen (14) Open Day Centers for the Homeless and six (6) Dormitories. For the years 2012 and 2013 the total budget of the SSTPGs amounted to 28.770.700€, while were benefited approximately 63.000 homeless and people in poverty or at risk of poverty, within the first two (2) years of their operation[2].

The basic and fundamental question that arises is how many Corporate Partnerships operated, under the SSTPG programme. From the processing of the available data[3], it becomes apparent that during the period (2012- 2017) forty-seven (47) Social Corporate Schemes operated. The data from the Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Social Solidarity indicate forty-six (46) Social Corporate Partnerships. The valuation study conducted on behalf of the Service for Special Strategy, Planning and Evaluation, reports forty-seven (47) Social Corporate Schemes, however the data on which the aforementioned report is based, conclude in October 2015 and do not exhaust the full duration of SSTPGs operation.

The forty-seven (47) Social Corporate Partnerships operated in almost all regions of Greece. 55% of them operated in the Attica Region, while the remaining Structures were distributed almost equally in the other regions. It is noteworthy that more than half of the SSTPGs operated in the Attica Region, while the population of this Region was about 35% of the total population of the country[4].

Out of the total of sixty-six (66) Municipalities in the Attica Region, forty-five (45) Municipalities (approximately 68% of the Municipalities[5]) hosted SSTPG structures (either with the cooperation of Municipalities or independently). Their dispersion by regional unit is as follows. Seven (7) Municipalities implemented this Program in the Central Sector of Athens. In the Southern Sector of Athens, seven (7). In the Northern Sector of Athens, seven (7). In the Western Sector of Athens, six (6). In the Piraeus Sector, five (5). In the Sector of West Attica four (4) and in the Sector of East Attica, nine (9). Examining the population of the Municipalities, it is highlighted that the Municipalities of Attica that implemented the SSTPGs, constitute 83.6% of the total population of the Attica Region[6].

Sixty-six (66) Municipalities, forty-eight (48) NGOs, ten (10) local government legal entities, sixteen (16) Public Sector bodies and twenty participated in these forty-seven (47) Social Corporate Partnerships that operated. two (22) private sector entities. Among the NGOs and private sector actors, twenty-two (22) participated in a single Corporate Partnership, seven (7) in two (2), one (1) in three (3), one (1) in four and one (1) in five (5).

From the processing of the available data became obvious that during the first year of the SSTPGs operation, thirty-six (36) Corporate Partnerships operated in forty-nine (49) Municipalities. The total number of SSTPGs' users amounted to seventeen thousand four hundred thirty-four (17,434) beneficiaries. Approximately 4.7% of them were homeless (819 beneficiaries). In this first year of operation, only three (3) Municipalities, these of Heraklion Crete, Ilioupolis and Patras had a four-digit number of beneficiaries. The rest of the SSTPGs allocated proportionally, having a three-digit number. In terms of homelessness, the Municipality of Thessaloniki (269) and the Municipality of Heraklion, Crete (194) had a three-digit number. Several Municipalities follow with double-digit number of homeless beneficiaries[7].

The data also pinpointed that the direct beneficiaries were 101.444 people, single users, who had access to the products and services of the Social Structures. However, many more people have been indirectly served by SSTPGs, if the protected members of the beneficiaries and the close relatives of the users of SSTPGs are taken into account.

Various sources state that when the SSTPGs ceased to operate, the immediate beneficiaries were 100.000[8], while in others the number 118.000[9] has been reported. The research showed that the immediate beneficiaries did exceed 100.000, while the previous number is likely to be even higher, given the fact that the primary data suffer from the shortcomings mentioned above.

Regarding the services' dispersion of the beneficiaries per Municipality, the research showed that the large Municipalities of Greece served the most beneficiaries, as expected, due to their population size. In particular, the Attica Region emerged first having served 57,87% of the immediate beneficiaries (i.e., 58.702 people). It is followed by the region of Central Macedonia with 10,75% and then that of Crete with 7,48%. It is therefore observed that in the Regions where there is a large accumulation of Corporate Partnerships, there is also a correspondingly large number of beneficiaries served.

In conclusion, it could be stated that their dispersion on the map shows that there is a hydrocephalus system, while their headquarters are located in the Capitals of the Municipalities, thus excluding areas of Greek territory, which are socially excluded (mountainous and insular). It should be also noted that the total number of all persons who received products and services from the SSTPGs is unknown, due to the fact that, in addition to the immediate beneficiaries, their protected members were also benefited, as well as other close relatives of them. Consequently, a very large number of beneficiaries have benefited from the services and products provided.

Notes

1. Data from the Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Social Solidarity, Directorate for Combating Poverty, Department of Planning and Institutional Support. Also from Bee Group, administrator of the Information System "Estia", available at http://www.koinoniasos.gr/the-project/structures. Accessed on 21/11/2020.
2. Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Social Solidarity, General Secretariat for the Management of Community and Other Resources, Special Management Service (2012). Annual Implementation Report 2012, Athens, p. 187, (in Greek) and Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Social Solidarity, General Secretariat for the Management of Community and Other Resources, Special Management Service (2013). Annual Implementation Report 2013, Athens, p. 217, (in Greek).

3. Data collected by Bee Group and the Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Social Solidarity.
4. According to the 2011 census, the population of Greece amounted to 10,816,286 permanent residents, while 3,828,434 permanent residents lived in the Attica Region. See Greek Government Gazette no 698 / issue B '/ 20-10-2014, p. 10799, (in Greek).
5. According to the first invitation of the SSTPGs, the Greek Municipalities that were eligible to implement them had to have a population of over 80,000 inhabitants, "according to the 2011 Census 10%). Especially for the Attica Region and the Thessaloniki Regional Unit, proposals could be submitted for neighboring Municipalities, which had a total population of over 80,000 inhabitants (with a deviation of 10%), given that they also have the highest concentration of population that has been affected by the phenomenon of poverty and its consequences ". Announcement of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, online publication number: Β443Λ-6Ρ5, p. 11, (in Greek). With the second announcement, the population of the Municipalities was reduced to 60,000 inhabitants, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, online publication number: Β45ΑΛ-Θ2Δ, p. 11, (in Greek).
6. As above, Greek Government Gazette no 698 / issue B '/ 20-10-2014, p. 10799, (in Greek), own processing.
7. The first two (2) ranked Municipalities regarding homeless beneficiaries (Thessaloniki and Heraklion, Crete) are also the largest in population of those who implemented the SSTPG programme during the first year of their operation. The following municipalities with double-digit number of homeless people are either populous (Patras, Piraeus), or in the past had a strong industrial and manufacturing core of companies, which was hit by the economic crisis (Municipalities of Perama, Aspropyrgos, Keratsini, Elefsina, Mandra-Idilia).
8. This number refers to the question of the MP of Aitoloakarnania and Deputy Head of Labor, Social Security and Social Solidarity of the Party New Democracy, Marios Salmas, which was submitted to the Minister of Labor, Social Security and Social Solidarity (8/3/2017) regarding the future of the SSTPGs. Available at https://www.hellenicparliament.gr/Koinovouleftikos-Elenchos/Mesa-Koinovouleutikou-Elegxou?pcm_id=8c58cf1b-1b67-4023-85f6-a73101548006. Accessed on 11/1/2021.
9. Letter from the, at the time, President of Central Union of Greek Municipalities, Mr. Patoulis to Mrs. Theano Fotiou, Deputy Minister of Labor, Social Security and Social Solidarity, Mr. Alexandros Haritsis, Deputy Minister of Economy and Development and Mr. Georgios Chouliarakis, Minister of Finance on the subject: "Ensuring the operation of the Social Structures for the Immediate Address of Poverty", with Reference number 633 / 10-2-2017. Also, a thank you letter, sent by the Association of people working at Social Structures for Tackling Poverty (S.KOIN.D.A.F.) to the, at the time, President of Central Union of Greek Municipalities, Mr. Patoulis, with Reference number 10 / 31-10-2016.

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Χριστόφορος Σκαμνάκης,
Η Κοινωνική Πολιτική στην Τοπική Αυτοδιοίκηση,
Σειρά: «Κοινωνική Πολιτική και Κοινωνικό Κράτος»,
Αθήνα: Διόνικος, 2020

Η σχέση της κοινωνικής πολιτικής με την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση παρότι απεδείχθη κρίσιμη για την κοινωνική συνοχή της δεκαετίας 2010-2020 που κλονίσθηκε ιδιαίτερα από την οικονομική κρίση, δεν έχει απασχολήσει σε βάθος την κοινωνική έρευνα και θεωρία στη χώρα μας. Η έρευνα για την κοινωνική πολιτική επικεντρώνεται στο κεντρικό (εθνικό) επίπεδο (εκεί άλλωστε σχεδιάζονται τα βασικά μέτρα κοινωνικής προστασίας), ενώ η έρευνα για την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση επικεντρώνεται σε θεσμικά ζητήματα (εκλογικό σύστημα, αυτοτέλεια ως προς την κεντρική διοίκηση, κ. ά), όπως επίσης σε οικονομικά θέματα (ελλείμματα, ανταποδοτικοί πόροι κ.ά). Ελάχιστοι ερευνητές/τριες, με βασικό ανάμεσα τους, τον συγγραφέα του παρόντος τόμου Χριστόφορο Σκαμνάκη, ερευνούν τις άλλες πλευρές των πολιτικών των δήμων, και ιδιαίτερα την δημοτική κοινωνική πολιτική, όρος που δεν έχει καν εισαχθεί στο τρέχον λεξιλόγιο, ούτε των κοινωνικών επιστημόνων, ούτε του τοπικού δημόσιου λόγου.

Η ***sui generis*** κοινωνική πολιτική των δήμων στην Ελλάδα, αποτελεί το αντικείμενο της παρούσας μελέτης στην οποία διερευνάται η εξέλιξη της σχέσης ανάμεσα στην κοινωνική προστασία και την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση στην Ελλάδα και στις μεγάλες ευρωπαϊκές χώρες μετά τη δεκαετία του 1980. Στη μελέτη σκιαγραφούνται τα πρότυπα και οι τάσεις εξέλιξης αυτής της σχέσης, τόσο με οικονομικούς όρους, όσο και ως προς το είδος των παρεχομένων υπηρεσιών, ενώ παράλληλα, διατυπώνονται θεωρητικοί προβληματισμοί για το μέλλον της σχέσης αυτή στις νέες κοινωνικοοικονομικές συνθήκες στην ΕΕ.

Η μελέτη απαρτίζεται από 4 κεφάλαια.

Το πρώτο κεφάλαιο επικεντρώνεται στο υπόβαθρο της οικοδόμησης των τοπικών μηχανισμών κοινωνικής προστασίας. Αναλύονται θεωρητικά οι αρχές ανάπτυξης του μεταπολεμικού κράτους πρόνοιας και δίνεται έμφαση στις, μετά το 1980, γενικές τάσεις. Αυτές διαμορφώνουν σταδιακά ένα «μεικτό» σύστημα που προκύπτει από τις πιέσεις που δέχθηκαν από τις νεοφιλελεύθερες οικονομικές πολιτικές οι κεϋνσυανές καθολικές κοινωνικές πολιτικές, όπως είναι η υγεία, η εκπαίδευση, η κοινωνική ασφάλιση κλπ. Αυτό το σύστημα προσανατολίζεται περισσότερο σε συγκεκριμένες ομάδες ευάλωτων ομάδων του πληθυσμού και σε προνοιακές παροχές.

Σε αυτές τις συνθήκες πραγματοποιείται μια σταδιακή μετάβαση της κοινωνικής πολιτικής από το κεντρικό κράτος προς την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση και αναδύεται το ρεύμα του «προνοιακού πλουραλισμού» κατά το οποίο διευρύνεται η συμμετοχή των φορέων άσκησης της πολιτικής με τον τρίτο τομέα, εθελοντικές οργανώσεις, αλλά και με ιδιωτικές επιχειρήσεις. Δημιουργούνται εκ των πραγμάτων τοπικές αγορές κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών με τους αντίστοιχους ανταγωνισμούς, δηλαδή μια οιονεί αγορά με παραγωγούς και καταναλωτές κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών. Οι ΟΤΑ αποκτούν νέους ρόλους διαχείρισης με προδιαγραφές καλής διακυβέρνησης και εφαρμογής των αρχών της Νέας Δημόσιας Διοίκησης.

Η εξέλιξη αυτή συνοδεύθηκε από αλλαγές στο είδος των υπηρεσιών που προσφέρονται στην κατεύθυνση των «ολοκληρωμένων υπηρεσιών» και της «εξατομικευμένης» παρέμβασης ενώ συνδέθηκε με τις υπηρεσίες κοινωνικής επανένταξης που έγιναν αποτελεσματικότερες προσαρμοζόμενες στις ανάγκες κάθε πολίτη. Παράλληλα, η οικονομική κρίση δημιούργησε νέα άτυπα σχήματα αλληλοβοήθειας και τοπικά δίκτυα αλληλεγγύης που συνδράμουν τους επίσημους φορείς στο έργο τους, το οποίο πολλαπλασιάζεται ραγδαία σε καιρούς οικονομικής κρίσης.

Το δεύτερο κεφάλαιο εξετάζει την οργάνωση και τη λειτουργία των θεσμών τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης στην Ευρώπη και στην Ελλάδα. Διακρίνει και συγκρίνει το θεσμικό περιβάλλον ανάπτυξης της αυτοδιοίκησης σύμφωνα με την κατάταξη σε 4 μεγάλες παραδόσεις: (α) την αγγλοσαξωνική παράδοση, (β) την γερμανική παράδοση, (γ) την γαλλική παράδοση και την (δ) σκανδιναβική παράδοση. Παράλληλα, επισημαίνονται τρεις βασικές τάσεις προτύπων ως προς την σχέση των δήμων με το κεντρικό κράτος, τον βαθμό αυτονομίας και τον τρόπο διαχείρισης και διοίκησης. Η μελέτη αναλύει την τάση συγκέντρωσης περισσότερων λειτουργιών στο τοπικό επίπεδο και την εξ αυτού παραγόμενη ενδυνάμωση της εσωτερικής λειτουργίας τους στα πρότυπα του κεντρικού κράτους. Η οργανωτική διάταξη των ΟΤΑ και το θεσμικό κύρος των τριών βαθμών αυτοδιοίκησης διαφέρει σημαντικά από χώρα σε χώρα. Στην Ελλάδα συγκροτήθηκαν το 2010 δύο βαθμοί (Περιφέρεια, Δήμος) με σχετικά διακριτές αρμοδιότητες. Τα διαφορετικά συστήματα στην Ευρώπη συνοδεύονται και με την αντίστοιχη διάρθρωση της πολιτικής εξουσίας με την Ελλάδα να βρίσκεται στην ομάδα των κρατών με το «δημαρχο-κεντρικό» μοντέλο.

Μεγάλες διαφοροποιήσεις ανάμεσα στις χώρες παρατηρούνται και ως προς το τρόπο κατανομής ανάμεσα στους τρεις βαθμούς αυτοδιοίκησης των κύριων πεδίων δημόσιας παρέμβασης που περιλαμβάνουν την κοινωνική προστασία, την εκπαίδευση, την οικονομία, το περιβάλλον/μεταφορές, τον αθλητισμό, τον πολιτισμό και την ασφάλεια. Στην Ελλάδα, από τα πεδία αυτά, η απασχόληση και η ασφάλεια παραμένουν αποκλειστικά στο κεντρικό κράτος, ενώ η οικονομία είναι αρμοδιότητα του β' βαθμού (Περιφέρεια). Οι δήμοι κρατούν την αρμοδιότητα στους τομείς κοινωνικής προστασίας, εκπαίδευσης, περιβάλλοντος/μεταφορών, αθλητισμού και πολιτισμού, σε ορισμένα μάλιστα από αυτά τα πεδία κατέχουν την αρμοδιότητα μόνον ενός μέρους της αντίστοιχης πολιτικής.

Ακόμα μεγαλύτερες διαφοροποιήσεις ανάμεσα στις χώρες της ΕΕ παρατηρούνται ως προς το ποσοστό του ΑΕΠ που αντιπροσωπεύουν οι «δαπάνες γενικής κυβέρνησης» της αυτοδιοίκησης. Εδώ, οι διαφορές είναι τεράστιες με τις σκανδιναβικές χώρες να βρίσκονται στην κορυφή με ποσοστό άνω του 30% και την Ελλάδα στην τελευταία θέση μαζί με την Κύπρο, με ποσοστό κάτω του 4%. Αντίστοιχη εικόνα παρουσιάζουν και τα ποσοστά των συνολικών εσόδων από φόρους που εισπράττουν οι δήμοι, όπως επίσης και το ποσοστό των κοινωνικών δαπανών των δήμων στο σύνολο των δημοσίων δαπανών. Η Ελλάδα είναι ουραγός σε αυτές τις κατατάξεις και βρίσκεται σταθερά πλήρως εξαρτημένη από την κεντρική διοίκηση και πολιτική εξουσία, με ελάχιστες δυνατότητες παρέμβασης σε τοπικό επίπεδο.

Στο δεύτερο κεφάλαιο επιχειρείται ενδελεχής παρουσίαση της ιστορικής διαδρομής των θεσμικών αλλαγών στην Ελλάδα στην οποία μειώθηκε σταδιακά ο αριθμός των ΟΤΑ από 5.775, την δεκαετία του 1980, σε 347 σήμερα (μετά τις αλλαγές του Ν.4555/2018). Η παρουσίαση περιλαμβάνει τα βασικά όργανα και Επιτροπές που θεσμοθετήθηκαν με το «Πρόγραμμα Καλλικράτης» το 2010 (Ν.3852/2010) στους Δήμους και τις Περιφέρειες και ισχύουν μέχρι σήμερα. Το γενικό συμπέρασμα που μπορούμε να εξάγουμε από την μελέτη συγκρίνοντας την Ελλάδα με τις άλλες χώρες, είναι ότι οι αντιστάσεις μεταφοράς πόρων και αρμοδιοτήτων από το κεντρικό κράτος στους ΟΤΑ «καλά κρατούν»!. Εδώ και 40 χρόνια διεξάγεται ένας άνισος άγονος αγώνας ανάμεσα στο κεντρικό κράτος και τους ΟΤΑ με διακύβευμα την αποκέντρωση πόρων και αρμοδιοτήτων. Στα επίπεδα της διακυβέρνησης της χώρας, το τοπικό παραμένει ο «φτωχός συγγενής». Φαίνεται ότι η ανθεκτικότητα στις πιέσεις κάμπτεται, μόνον, όταν και εφόσον, οι παρεμβάσεις της ΕΕ διαπερνούν τα στεγανά και «επιβάλλουν» με τις χρηματοδοτήσεις την ενίσχυση του τοπικού, ιδιαίτερα όταν πρόκειται για παρεμβάσεις που στοχεύουν στην καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας.

Στο τρίτο κεφάλαιο αναλύεται διεξοδικά ο ρόλος της τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης στη Σουηδία, Γερμανία, Γαλλία, Ιταλία και Βρετανία, ως προς τις πολιτικές σε τρία βασικά πεδία της κοινωνικής προστασίας, την απασχόληση, την κοινωνική φροντίδα και την καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας. Βασικά στοιχεία της διαφοροποίησης ανάμεσα στις χώρες αποτελούν ο τρόπος οργάνωσης (ομοσπονδία, κλπ) και η λειτουργία των διαφορετικών βαθμίδων διακυβέρνησης. Η μελέτη περιλαμβάνει επίσης, συγκεκριμένα παραδείγματα παρεμβάσεων σε τοπικό επίπεδο προσφέροντας χρήσιμα παραδείγματα καλών πρακτικών από τις χώρες αυτές.

Η γνωριμία με τις πρακτικές των άλλων χωρών ανοίγει μια χρήσιμη συζήτηση, για την περίπτωση της Ελλάδας, σχετικά με την δυναμική που μπορεί να προσφέρει ο τρίτος τομέας της οικονομίας και η εξατομικευμένη υποστήριξη για την εύρεση απασχόλησης, όπως επίσης για την συμβολή της αλληλέγγυας οικονομίας και των τοπικών πρωτοβουλιών στους στόχους της κοινωνικής αλληλεγγύης.

Το τέταρτο και τελευταίο κεφάλαιο είναι αφιερωμένο αποκλειστικά στην Ελληνική περίπτωση. Η ανάλυση περιλαμβάνει τις συνθήκες άσκησης της κοινωνικής πολιτικής στο τοπικό επίπεδο, κυρίως μετά την πρόσφατη οικονομική κρίση και με δεδομένο ότι οι οικονομικοί πυλώνες της είναι, αφενός η κρατική χρηματοδότηση και, αφετέρου, οι Κοινοτικοί πόροι.

Στη μελέτη διερευνώνται η εξέλιξη των δαπανών των ΟΤΑ από το 2005 μέχρι το 2018 γεγονός που αποτελεί σημαντική συμβολή στην σχετική βιβλιογραφία αφού αυτή προσανατολίσθηκε ιστορικά περισσότερο στο θεσμικό πλαίσιο παρά στο οικονομικό υπόβαθρο των σχετικών παρεμβάσεων. Η πρωτότυπη επεξεργασία των στατιστικών στοιχείων αναδεικνύει το (οικονομικό) αποτύπωμα τριών πεδίων ανάπτυξης των δήμων στην Ελλάδα, του αθλητισμού, του πολιτισμού και της κοινωνικής προστασίας. Το ποσοστό της κοινωνικής προστασίας επί του συνόλου των δαπανών των ΟΤΑ συρρικνώθηκε από 3,19% (2005) σε 0,59% (2013) και στη συνέχεια αυξήθηκε ξανά μέχρι το 1,88% (2018).

Η εικόνα αυτή συμπληρώνεται με τις δαπάνες που αφορούν προγράμματα που χρηματοδοτούνται από κοινοτικούς πόρους τους οποίους διαχειρίζεται κατευθείαν ο δήμος μέσω των Επιχειρησιακών Προγραμμάτων ή μέσω ενδιάμεσων φορέων, όπως στην περίπτωση των βρεφονηπιακών σταθμών τους οποίους διαχειρίζεται η ΕΕΤΑΑ. Σημαντικές δημοτικές δομές φροντίδας (για ηλικιωμένους, ανάπηρους, ακραία φτωχούς, κλπ) ανήκουν συχνά σε διακριτά ΝΠΔΔ τα οποία όμως, δεν έχουν πλήρη οικονομική αυτονομία και αντλούν, και αυτά, από τον τακτικό προϋπολογισμό των δήμων. Οι δήμοι κλήθηκαν να διαχειριστούν κεντρικούς πόρους πρόνοιας, όπως το Ελάχιστο Εγγυημένο Εισόδημα το οποίο διανέμεται σύμφωνα με κεντρικά κριτήρια επιλεξιμότητας.

Κατά την κρίση, οι δαπάνες για επισιτιστική βοήθεια αυξήθηκαν σημαντικά και στηρίχθηκαν στη συμβολή μη κυβερνητικών και εθελοντικών οργανώσεων, όπως και της Εκκλησίας. Παράλληλα, ώθηση σε συλλογικά αγαθά όπως ο αθλητισμός έδωσε η δυνατότητα ανταποδοτικών τελών από τους/τις χρήστες/τριες, ενώ οι ευρωπαϊκοί πόροι έδωσαν τη δυνατότητα δημιουργίας νέων κοινωνικών δομών, όπως τα Κέντρα Κοινότητας τα οποία εξυπηρετούν τις αυξανόμενες ομάδες ευάλωτων πολιτών που επιζητούν τις προνοιακές παροχές, είτε με την μορφή υπηρεσιών, είτε με την μορφή χρηματικών πληρωμών.

Η μελέτη περιγράφει με ακρίβεια το οικοσύστημα των υποδομών κοινωνικής πρόνοιας και προνοιακών κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών που σταδιακά μεταφέρθηκαν στην αρμοδιότητα των δήμων. Αρετή της μελέτης αποτελεί το φως που ρίχνει ο συγγραφέας στον πολύπλοκο μηχανισμό της κοινωνικής πολιτικής των δήμων που έχει αναπτυχθεί λόγω διαφορετικών πηγών χρηματοδότησης και διαφορετικών κεντρικών σχεδιασμών ανάλογα με τις χρονικές περιόδους.

Η πρόσφατη οικονομική κρίση έκανε την κατάσταση ακόμα πιο πολύπλοκη και η αποσαφήνιση της κατάστασης είναι ακόμα πιο αναγκαία για την κατανόηση, αλλά και κυρίως, για την άσκηση της πολιτικής. Η μελέτη των ορίων και των περιθωρίων που αφήνει ο ασφυκτικός έλεγχος του κράτους είναι απαραίτητη για την σκιαγράφηση των μελλοντικών προοπτικών και την μετάβαση από τα πρότυπα της καθολικότητας προς την κάλυψη των αναγκών των αδύναμων μελών της κοινωνίας. Ας σημειωθεί, ότι οι ευάλωτες ομάδες παρουσιάζουν αυξητική τάση λόγω των νέων συνθηκών, αφενός λόγω των προσφυγικών ροών και αφετέρου, της υγειονομικής κρίσης που σήμερα βρίσκεται σε εξέλιξη. Γιαυτό, άλλωστε, μια τέτοια μελέτη είναι πιο χρήσιμη από ποτέ.

Μαρία Στρατηγάκη,
Πάντειο Πανεπιστήμιο

Μαρία Καραμεσίνη & Μαρία Συμεωνάκη,
Συμφιλίωση εργασίας και οικογένειας στην Ελλάδα: Γένεση, εξέλιξη και αποτίμηση μιας πολιτικής,
Αθήνα: Νήσος, 2019

Το συλλογικό βιβλίο που επιμελούνται η Μαρία Καραμεσίνη,καθηγήτρια στο τμήμα Κοινωνικής Πολιτικής του Παντείου Πανεπιστημίου και η Μαρία Συμεωνάκη, αναπληρώτρια καθηγήτρια στο τμήμα Κοινωνικής Πολιτικής του Παντείου Πανεπιστημίου βασίζεται, εμπλουτίζει και επικαιροποιεί τα στοιχεία που προέκυψαν από την έρευνα που διεξήγαγε το Εργαστήριο Σπουδών Φύλου του τμήματος Κοινωνικής Πολιτικής του Παντείου Πανεπιστημίου στο πλαίσιο ερευνητικού προγράμματος το οποίο υλοποιήθηκε από το Κέντρο Ερευνών για Θέματα Ισότητας (ΚΕΘΙ) σε συνεργασία με τον Σύνδεσμο Βιομηχανιών Αττικής-Πειραιά και το Κέντρο Αριστείας του Πανεπιστημίου Ισλανδίας.

Η συμβολή του τόμου στο ζήτημα των πολιτικών συμφιλίωσης εργασιακής και οικογενειακής ζωής είναι ιδιαίτερα σημαντική. Εξετάζει την ιστορική τους εξέλιξη και τις συνδέει με τις ευρύτερες οικονομικές, κοινωνικές, εργασιακές αλλαγές. Όσον αφορά στην Ελλάδα, προχωρά σε μια συστηματική καταγραφή των συγκεκριμένων πολιτικών, αποτυπώνει τις προόδους, τις ελλείψεις, τις στοχεύσεις και τα αποτελέσματα στο δημογραφικό επίπεδο (γεννητικότητα), στο επίπεδο της έμφυλης ισότητας τόσο εκτός του οικιακού χώρου (αμειβόμενη εργασία) όσο και εντός του οικιακού χώρου (καταμερισμός οικιακών καθηκόντων) και τέλος κάνει συγκεκριμένες προτάσεις για μια ολοκληρωμένη πολιτική συμφιλίωσης εργασίας και οικογένειας.

Στο πρώτο κεφάλαιο (Εισαγωγή), η Μαρία Καραμεσίνη και η Μαρία Συμεωνάκη υποστηρίζουν πως οι πολιτικές συμφιλίωσης συνδέονται με τη μαζική είσοδο των γυναικών στον χώρο της αμειβόμενης εργασίας. Είσοδος που αμφισβήτησε το κυρίαρχο πρότυπο «άνδρας-κουβαλητής» και «γυναίκα-νοικοκυρά» και απείλησε το σύστημα της κοινωνικής αναπαραγωγής το οποίο στηρίζεται στην απλήρωτη γυναικεία εργασία εντός του οικιακού χώρου –φροντίδα του νοικοκυριού και των μελών της οικογένειας. Για τις συγγραφείς, η πολιτική συμφιλίωσης τοποθετείται στο πεδίο που συναντάται η οικογενειακή πολιτική με την πολιτική για την απασχόληση –με το βάρος να είναι στην αύξηση της συμμετοχής των γυναικών στην αμειβόμενη εργασία. Στην Ελλάδα, η εισαγωγή πολιτικών συμφιλίωσης από τα μέσα της δεκαετίας του 1980 συνδέεται με τις στοχεύσεις της

Ε.Ε. Ενώ τα είδη πολιτικής συμφιλίωσης είναι τέσσερα, άδειες φροντίδας, υπηρεσίες φροντίδας, ευέλικτη απασχόληση/διευθετήσεις χρόνου και επιδόματα φροντίδας, στο βιβλίο εξετάζονται τα δύο πρώτα, καθώς τα άλλα δύο δεν έχουν αναπτυχθεί στη χώρα μας.

Στο δεύτερο κεφάλαιο (Μαρία Καραμεσίνη, Μαρία Σκόμπα, Εύη Χατζηβαρνάβα) υπογραμμίζεται πως οι πολιτικές συμφιλίωσης της ΕΕ επηρεάζονται από το σκανδιναβικό μοντέλο και κυρίως από το σουηδικό παράδειγμα. Το σουηδικό κράτος από τη δεκαετία του 1960 προώθησε τη συμμετοχή των γυναικών στην αμειβόμενη εργασία και το οικογενειακό μοντέλο των δύο εργαζόμενων γονέων, προχωρώντας αφενός στη δημιουργία κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών φροντίδας και αφετέρου στην παροχή γονικών αδειών. Στην Ε.Ε. ο στόχος της έμφυλης ισότητας στην αγορά εργασίας τίθεται τη δεκαετία του 1980. Προωθούνται οι γονικές άδειες, οι ποιοτικές και οικονομικά προσιτές υπηρεσίες φροντίδας για τα παιδιά, οι ευέλικτες εργασιακές ρυθμίσεις. Παρά τις διαφοροποιήσεις ανάμεσα στις χώρες, η κυρίαρχη τάση στα κράτη-μέλη της Ε.Ε. είναι η «επαναοικογενοποίηση» για τα πολύ μικρά παιδιά μέσω γονικών αδειών (με σταδιακή αναγνώριση της ανάγκης λήψης τους και από τους άνδρες) και η «αποοικογενοποίηση» για τα μεγαλύτερα παιδιά μέσω της δημιουργίας υπηρεσιών και δομών φροντίδας. Είναι σημαντικό πως σταδιακά η στήριξη από την πλευρά του κράτους γίνεται αντιληπτή ως υποχρέωση της πολιτείας και ως δικαίωμα των εργαζόμενων γονέων. Στην Ελλάδα, το μοντέλο φροντίδας έχει χαρακτηριστεί «οικογενειοκεντρικό» (χαρακτηριστικό του νοτιο-ευρωπαϊκου μοντέλου), με μέχρι πρόσφατα κυρίαρχο το πρότυπο του άνδρα-κουβαλητή και της γυναίκας-νοικοκυράς, με την ευρύτερη οικογένεια να μεριμνά για τα εξαρτημένα μέλη και με το κράτος να δρα επικουρικά. Από το 1984 αρχίζουν να δημιουργούνται δομές φροντίδας βρεφών και νηπίων, επεκτείνονται τα ωράρια λειτουργίας τους, όπως και των νηπιαγωγείων και των δημοτικών σχολείων (ολοήμερα), δημιουργούνται δομές φροντίδας ηλικιωμένων και αναπήρων (ανοιχτές δομές στη λογική της μη ιδρυματοποίησης).

Η Εύη Χατζηβαρνάβα στο τρίτο κεφάλαιο καταγράφει τις γονικές άδειες στην Ελλάδα από τη δεκαετία του 1980 μέχρι σήμερα. Διαπιστώνει πως τις τελευταίες δεκαετίες ακολουθώντας τις διεθνείς εξελίξεις και τις Οδηγίες της Ε.Ε., εισάγονται νέες άδειες, προωθείται μεγαλύτερη ευελιξία στη λήψη τους, θεσπίζονται ειδικές ρυθμίσεις για διαφορετικές κατηγορίες γονέων (π.χ μονογονείς, πολύτεκνοι, θετοί γονείς), προβλέπεται η επέκταση της άδειας φροντίδας και στους άνδρες (δημόσιος τομέας). Παρά την πρόοδο που έχει συντελεστεί, εντοπίζονται προβλήματα, όπως η ανομοιομορφία και η αποσπασματικότητα του συστήματος αδειών, η πολυπλοκότητα της νομοθεσίας, η μη συμπερίληψη κάποιων κατηγοριών εργαζομένων, οι ανισότητες μεταξύ των δημοσίων και των ιδιωτικών υπαλλήλων (με τον δημόσιο τομέα να είναι πιο γενναιόδωρος), μεταξύ των μισθωτών και των αυτοαπασχολούμενων (με τους τελευταίους να είναι λιγότερο ευνοημένοι) ή και ανάλογα με το είδος των συμβάσεων. Εντοπίζεται, επίσης, η ελλιπής προσπάθεια προώθησης της λήψης αδειών από τους άνδρες όπως και της ισότιμης συμμετοχής των τελευταίων στις εντός του οικιακού χώρου υποχρεώσεις.

Η Μαρία Σκόμπα (τέταρτο και πέμπτο κεφάλαιο), εξετάζει τις υπηρεσίες φροντίδας παιδιών προσχολικής και σχολικής ηλικίας στην Ελλάδα, υποστηρίζοντας πως αποτελούν βασικό εργαλείο προώθησης της γυναικείας εργασίας και της συμφιλίωσης οικογενειακής και εργασιακής ζωής. Όσον αφορά στα παιδιά προσχολικής ηλικίας, αυξάνονται οι δομές φροντίδας, διευρύνονται τα ωράρια λειτουργίας τους, αυξάνεται ο αριθμός των επωφελούμενων και τα τελευταία χρόνια το προσωπικό που εργάζεται σε αυτές. Παρόλα αυτά, η προσφυγή στην άτυπη φροντίδα, κυρίως στη βοήθεια παππούδων/γιαγιάδων, παραμένει η πρώτη επιλογή των οικογενειών με πολύ μικρά παιδιά. Κι αυτό γιατί οι εργαζόμενοι γονείς έχουν μεγαλύτερη εμπιστοσύνη στα συγκεκριμένα πρόσωπα και θεωρούν ότι είναι καλύτερο για τα παιδιά, τα ωράρια και οι περίοδοι λειτουργίας των βρεφονηπιακών και παιδικών σταθμών δεν καλύπτουν τα δικά τους εργασιακά ωράρια. Ο κοινωνικός χαρακτήρας των δημόσιων βρεφονηπιακών σταθμών αποτυπώνεται στην προτεραιότητα εγγραφής που δίνεται σε παιδιά ευπαθών και οικονομικά αδύναμων ομάδων. Κατά τη διάρκεια της παρατεταμένης οικονομικής κρίσης που ξεκίνησε το 2008, η χρηματοδότηση από το ΕΣΠΑ και η ενεργοποίηση των vouchers από το 2016-2017 αφενός εξασφάλισαν τη δωρεάν φοίτηση πολλών παιδιών από οικογένειες με χαμηλά και μεσαία εισοδήματα και αφετέρου ενίσχυσαν τη συμμετοχή των γυναικών στην αγορά εργασίας. Στο επίπεδο της πρωτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης, η μεγάλη τομή γίνεται με τη θεσμοθέτηση (1997) των ολοήμερων νηπιαγωγείων και δημοτικών σχολείων χωρίς καμία οικονομική επιβάρυνση –εκτός από τη σίτιση για την οποία μεριμνούν οι γονείς. Αρχικά (1998) προβλεπόταν η ένταξη σε αυτά παιδιών των οποίων οι γονείς εργάζονται, το 2003 επεκτείνεται το δικαίωμα αυτό και σε παιδιά ανέργων και μετά το 2017 και σε μαθητές/τριες των οποίων οι γονείς ανήκουν σε ευπαθείς ομάδες –χωρίς αποκλεισμούς με βάση την εθνικότητα. Όλα αυτά τα χρόνια, τα ολοήμερα σχολεία αυξάνονται διαρκώς και επεκτείνονται πανελλαδικά, συμβάλλοντας στην από-εμπορευματοποίηση της φροντίδας, προωθώντας τη γυναικεία εργασία, αυξάνοντας τον ελεύθερο χρόνο των γυναικών και προσφέροντας στα παιδιά ισότιμη πρόσβαση στην πρόσθετη εκπαίδευση.

Όπως μας δείχνει η Εύη Χατζηβαρνάβα (κεφάλαιο έκτο), το πεδίο στο οποίο δεν έχει υπάρξει μεγάλη πρόοδος είναι αυτό της φροντίδας ηλικιωμένων και ατόμων με αναπηρία, η οποία επιτελείται ακόμη σε μεγάλο βαθμό τόσο από τα μέλη της οικογένειας –και κυρίως από τις γυναίκες– όσο και από αμειβόμενες φροντίστριες, στην πλειονότητά τους μετανάστριες. Οι βασικές δομές και οι υπηρεσίες που δημιουργούνται είναι τη δεκαετία του 1980 τα ΚΑΠΗ (Κέντρα Ανοιχτής Προστασίας Ηλικιωμένων) για ηλικιωμένους που αυτοεξυπηρετούνται, το 1993 τα Κέντρα Διημέρευσης και Ημερήσιας Φροντίδας (ΚΔΗΦ) για τα άτομα με αναπηρία, το 1996 το Πρόγραμμα «Βοήθεια στο Σπίτι» για τα άτομα που δεν μπορούν να αυτοεξυπηρετηθούν και με προτεραιότητα σε όσα ζουν μόνα και έχουν χαμηλό εισόδημα, το 2001 τα ΚΗΦΗ (Κέντρα Ημερήσιας Φροντίδας Ηλικιωμένων), μια δομή ολοήμερης ημι-ιδρυματικής φροντίδας, και το 2013 το πρόγραμμα «Κατ' Οίκον Κοινωνική Φροντίδα» που στηρίζει πολίτες (ηλικιωμένοι, ΑμεΑ) με χαμηλά εισοδήματα, ανασφάλιστους. Η δημιουργία των ανοιχτών δομών φροντίδας συνδέθηκε αρχικά με την κριτική απέναντι στις κλειστές δομές (ιδρυματοποίηση, υψηλό κόστος) και αργότερα με τις πολιτικές συμφιλίωσης. Το σύστημα φροντίδας ηλικιωμένων και ατόμων με αναπηρία, όμως, δεν διασφαλίζει την καθολική και ισότιμη πρόσβαση όλων, οι υπηρεσίες είναι άνισα γεωγραφικά κατανεμημένες, με δυσκολία στην πρόσβαση, διαφορετική ποιότητα, με προβλήματα στη λειτουργία τους που οφείλονται στο ότι δεν αποτελούν μέρος της εθνικής κοινωνικής πολιτικής αλλά στηρίζονται κυρίως σε κοινοτικά προγράμματα. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, οι συγκεκριμένες δομές και υπηρεσίες δεν προώθησαν ούτε τη συμμετοχή των γυναικών στην αμειβόμενη εργασία ούτε οδήγησαν στην υποχώρηση της κυρίαρχης άποψης πως η φροντίδα των ατόμων αυτών αποτελεί μέρος των υποχρεώσεων των μελών της οικογένειας και δη των γυναικών.

Στο έβδομο κεφάλαιο (Μαρία Καραμεσίνη) γίνεται μια αποτίμηση της πορείας των πολιτικών συμφιλίωσης στην Ελλάδα. Εξετάζονται οι επιπτώσεις τους στον μετασχηματισμό του συστήματος φροντίδας, στη συμμετοχή των γυναικών στην αγορά εργασίας, στην αλλαγή του μοντέλου της οικογένειας, στη γεννητικότητα και στην ισότητα των φύλων. Η συγγραφέας υποστηρίζει πως από τη δεκαετία του 1980 μέχρι τα τέλη της δεκαετίας του 1990 οι πολιτικές αυτές είναι ***παθητικές*** και μεροληπτικές υπέρ του δημοσίου τομέα. Δεν προώθησαν επί της ουσίας ούτε την ένταξη των εργαζόμενων γυναικών στην αγορά εργασίας (η ένταξη αυτή συνδέεται περισσότερο με το υψηλό εκπαιδευτικό επίπεδο των γυναικών και τη στήριξη που είχαν από το οικογενειακό τους περιβάλλον) ούτε τον ισότιμο έμφυλο καταμερισμό των οικιακών καθηκόντων. Οι πολιτικές γίνονται ***ενεργητικές*** στα τέλη της δεκαετίες του 1990 με την υιοθέτηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Στρατηγικής για την Απασχόληση (ίσες ευκαιρίες για τα δύο φύλα). Η ενεργητική πολιτική της περιόδου 1998-2008 (γονικές άδειες, δομές φροντίδας παιδιών) επέδρασε θετικά στην επικράτηση του μοντέλου οικογένειας των δύο εργαζόμενων-κουβαλητών, στην αύξηση του ελεύθερου χρόνου των γονιών, στη δυνατότητα των ζευγαριών να αποκτήσουν τον επιθυμητό αριθμό παιδιών, αλλά και αυτές δεν προώθησαν την έμφυλη ισότητα στην εντός του οικιακού χώρου μη αμειβόμενη εργασία. Η μικρότερη πρόοδος καταγράφεται στο πεδίο του συστήματος φροντίδας των ηλικιωμένων και των ατόμων με αναπηρία, με αποτέλεσμα οι ανάγκες τους να συνεχίζουν να καλύπτονται κατά βάση από την οικογένεια –με τις γυναίκες να επωμίζονται το μεγαλύτερο βάρος– ή από αμειβόμενες φροντίστριες.

Και ενώ μέχρι το 2008 η πολιτική συμφιλίωσης ήταν κυρίως ένα εργαλείο προώθησης της εργασίας, κατά τη διάρκεια της οικονομικής κρίσης αποτέλεσε μια ***αμυντική*** οικογενειακή πολιτική. Βασικός στόχος ήταν να αποφευχθούν οι αρνητικές συνέπειες στη φροντίδα των παιδιών, και κυρίως η παιδική φτώχεια, που συνδέονταν με την ανεργία του ενός ή και των δύο γονέων και τη συνεχή μείωση των οικογενειακών εισοδημάτων. Εδώ, εντάσσονται η βελτίωση του θεσμικού πλαισίου για τις γονικές άδειες, η αύξηση του επιδόματος για το παιδί και η διεύρυνση των κριτηρίων χορήγησής του, τα προγράμματα σίτισης παιδιών πρωτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης τα οποία ξεκίνησαν το 2016 και που το 2018-9 κάλυπταν περίπου 1.000 σχολεία. Αυτό που θεωρείται πως διέσωσε το σύστημα φροντίδας των παιδιών προσχολικής ηλικίας ήταν το πρόγραμμα ΕΣΠΑ «Εναρμόνιση Εργασιακής και Οικογενειακής Ζωής». Σε μια περίοδο που οι πόροι των Δήμων είχαν μειωθεί και οι αιτήσεις είχαν αυξηθεί, έκανε δυνατή τη δωρεάν συμμετοχή παιδιών από οικογένειες με χαμηλά και μεσαία εισοδήματα. Επιπλέον, το 2018 πραγματοποιήθηκε πρόγραμμα κρατικής αυτή τη φορά επιχορήγησης των Δήμων για την ίδρυση νέων βρεφονηπιακών σταθμών, για την επέκταση και βελτίωση των υπαρχόντων. Αυτή, όμως, η αμυντική οικογενειακή πολιτική άφησε εκτός το σύστημα φροντίδας ηλικιωμένων και αναπήρων, με αποτέλεσμα, καθώς διαπιστώνεται στασιμότητα ακόμη και οπισθοδρόμηση σε αυτό το πεδίο, οι οικογένειες να επωμίζονται και πάλι τη στήριξη και τη φροντίδα των ατόμων αυτών.

Στο ένατο κεφάλαιο (Μαρία Καραμεσίνη και Μαρία Συμεωνάκη) γίνεται ανάλυση των στοιχείων της πρώτης Έρευνας Χρήσης Χρόνου (ΕΧΧ), που πραγματοποιήθηκε από την ΕΣΤΑΤ το έτος 2013-4, με την εστίαση να είναι στον έμφυλο καταμερισμό των οικιακών εργασιών. Αυτό που αναδείχθηκε είναι πως οι γυναίκες συνεχίζουν να αφιερώνουν περισσότερο χρόνο από ό,τι οι άνδρες στη διεκπεραίωση των οικιακών καθηκόντων κι αυτό ανεξάρτητα από την ύπαρξη παιδιών, από την εργασιακή τους κατάσταση και από το εκπαιδευτικό τους επίπεδο. Στις περιπτώσεις οικογενειών με ανήλικα παιδιά, αυξάνεται ο χρόνος που διαθέτουν και οι δύο γονείς, με τον χρόνο, όμως, που διαθέτουν οι γυναίκες να είναι και πάλι περισσότερος. Κάτι που προφανώς συνδέεται τόσο με τα ελλείμματα των πολιτικών συμφιλίωσης όσο και με τις κυρίαρχες αντιλήψεις που θέλουν τις γυναίκες να είναι λόγω φύλου οι κατεξοχήν υπεύθυνες για τη φροντίδα και την ανατροφή των παιδιών.

Στο ένατο κεφάλαιο (Μαρία Καραμεσίνη και Εύη Χατζηβαρνάβα) καταγράφονται τα προβλήματα και γίνονται προτάσεις για μια ολοκληρωμένη και επιτυχή πολιτική συμφιλίωσης εργασιακής και οικογενειακής ζωής. Διαπιστώνεται πως μέχρι σήμερα, οι πολιτικές συμφιλίωσης δεν οδήγησαν ούτε στην επίτευξη του μοντέλου του ισότιμου διπλού κουβαλητή, καθώς ακόμη εντοπίζονται έμφυλες ανισότητες στο πεδίο της αμειβόμενης εργασίας, ούτε στην επίτευξη του ισότιμου έμφυλου καταμερισμού των οικιακών καθηκόντων. Υποστηρίζεται, λοιπόν, πως μια ολοκληρωμένη πολιτική συμφιλίωσης χρειάζεται να περιλαμβάνει μέτρα που να προωθούν όχι μόνο την ισότιμη συμμετοχή των γυναικών στην αμειβόμενη εργασία αλλά και την ισότιμη συμμετοχή των ανδρών στα οικιακά καθήκοντα. Όσο το τελευταίο δεν επιτυγχάνεται τόσο οι έμφυλες ανισότητες στην αγορά εργασίας θα παραμένουν, με τις γυναίκες όχι μόνο να επιβαρύνονται περισσότερο από το βάρος της διπλής ημέρας αλλά και συχνά να χρειάζεται να επιλέξουν ανάμεσα στην αμειβόμενη εργασία και στη μη αμειβόμενη φροντίδα του νοικοκυριού και των μελών του. Θα πρέπει, επίσης, τα εμπλεκόμενα μέρη να μπορούν να αντιληφθούν τα οφέλη της πολιτικής αυτής σε όλα τα επίπεδα και για όλους/ες. Και για τις μητέρες (συμμετοχή στην αμειβόμενη εργασία) και για τους πατέρες (χρόνος με τα παιδιά τους) και για τους δύο γονείς (μείωση του άγχους που προκαλεί η πίεση του χρόνου) και για τα παιδιά (χρόνο και με τους δύο γονείς τους) και για τις επιχειρήσεις (μη απώλεια έμπειρου εργατικού δυναμικού και καλύτερη απόδοση των εργαζομένων) και για την κοινωνία (κάλυψη αναγκών οικονομίας, διευκόλυνση γονιμότητας). Τέλος, υπογραμμίζεται πως σε μια ολοκληρωμένη πολιτική συμφιλίωσης το σύστημα φροντίδας πρέπει να είναι ενιαίο, συνεκτικό, κατανοητό, υψηλής ποιότητας και οικονομικά προσιτό σε όλους/ες.

Κλείνοντας, θα λέγαμε πως πρόκειται για ένα πολύ χρήσιμο και ενδιαφέρον βιβλίο, προϊόν μακρόχρονης ενασχόλησης των συγγραφέων με το ζήτημα των πολιτικών συμφιλίωσης εργασιακής και οικογενειακής ζωής στον ευρωπαϊκό χώρο και στην Ελλάδα. Συγκεντρώνει, συστηματοποιεί και εμπλουτίζει τις γνώσεις μας πάνω στο συγκεκριμένο θέμα, συμβάλλει τόσο στην κατανόηση των συνθηκών και των στοχεύσεων που σχετίζονται με την ανάπτυξη των πολιτικών αυτών μέσα στις δεκαετίες όσο και στην κριτική αποτίμησή τους, συνεισφέρει, μέσα από συγκεκριμένες προτάσεις, στη δυνατότητα σχεδιασμού και διαμόρφωσης ολοκληρωμένων πολιτικών συμφιλίωσης

Αθανασοπούλου Αγγελική,
Πάντειο Πανεπιστήμιο

Αντώνης Καρβούνης,
Διπλωματία Πόλεων και Εξευρωπαϊσμός της Τοπικής Αυτοδιοίκησης-Ο Διοικητικός Εκσυγχρονισμός και οι Προοπτικές της Ευρωπαϊκής Δικτύωσης των Ελληνικών Δήμων,
Αθήνα: Διόνικος, 2021

Πριν μερικά χρόνια, η Επιτροπή των Περιφερειών (ΕτΠ) είχε υποστηρίξει σε σχετική γνωμοδότησή της ότι «η σύγχρονη διπλωματία δεν εκφράζεται και δεν ασκείται πλέον μόνον από τις εθνικές κυβερνήσεις, αλλά, δεδομένης της ανάγκης για διάλογο, συνεργασία και συντονισμό για την επίτευξη των στόχων της ειρήνης, της δημοκρατίας και του σεβασμού των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων σε όλα τα επίπεδα, η στενότερη συνεργασία μεταξύ εθνικών κυβερνήσεων και τοπικών και περιφερειακών αρχών είναι μια φυσική αλλά και απαραίτητη κατεύθυνση για μια πολυεπίπεδη και αποτελεσματικότερη προσέγγιση και στρατηγική» (2009/C120/01). Πράγματι, η διπλωματία πόλεων ως μια μορφή αποσυγκεντρωμένης διαχείρισης των διεθνών σχέσεων συναντάται σε ανεπίσημα δίκτυα επαφών μεταξύ πόλεων, σε διμερείς συμφωνίες με άλλες πόλεις (π.χ. αδελφοποιήσεις πόλεων), σε διεθνή φόρα, όπως η συμμετοχή αντιπροσωπειών των ΟΤΑ στην ΕτΠ και στο Κογκρέσο των Τοπικών και Περιφερειακών Αρχών του Συμβουλίου της Ευρώπης, καθώς και σε διεθνείς οργανισμούς/δίκτυα που συστήνουν οι ίδιες οι πόλεις, με ή χωρίς την αιγίδα διεθνών και ευρωπαϊκών οργανισμών, εντός ή εκτός χρηματοδοτικών προγραμμάτων, για την επίτευξη κοινών στόχων.

Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, το πρόσφατα εκδοθέν βιβλίο του Αντώνη Καρβούνη με τίτλο Διπλωματία Πόλεων και Εξευρωπαϊσμός Τοπικής Αυτοδιοίκησης-Ο Διοικητικός Εκσυγχρονισμός και οι Προοπτικές της Ευρωπαϊκής Δικτύωσης των Ελληνικών Δήμων (εκδ. ΔΙΟΝΙΚΟΣ), με δεδομένο το περιορισμένο ακαδημαϊκό ενδιαφέρον για τη διεθνή δράση της τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης, καλύπτει χώρο ελλειμματικής ημεδαπής βιβλιογραφίας και το γεγονός αυτό προσαυξάνει την επιστημονική του αξία.

Εν προκειμένω, ο συγγραφέας, στέλεχος του Υπουργείου Εσωτερικών και επί σειρά ετών πρόεδρος της διυπουργικής επιτροπής για τις διεθνείς συνεργασίες των ΟΤΑ της χώρας, εξετάζει τη συμμετοχή των ελληνικών δήμων σε ευρωπαϊκά δίκτυα πόλεων, αξιοποιώντας το θεωρητικό πλαίσιο του εξευρωπαϊσμού και της παραδιπλωματίας. Ειδικότερα, σε αυτό το έργο εξετάζονται αποτελέσματα της συμμετοχής 114 ελληνικών δήμων σε ευρωπαϊκά δίκτυα πόλεων κατά την προγραμματική περίοδο 2007–2013.

Μέσα από την προσέγγιση της πολυπρισματικής έννοιας του εξευρωπαϊσμού, το γενικότερο εμπειρικό συμπέρασμα της μελέτης που παρουσιάζει ο συγγραφέας, είναι ότι η συμμετοχή των ελληνικών δήμων σε ευρωπαϊκά δίκτυα πόλεων συνεπάγεται αλλαγές σε επίπεδο δομών, πολιτικών και διαδικασιών (διοικητικός εξευρωπαϊσμός), προώθησης τοπικών συμφερόντων και ταυτότητας της τοπικής αρχής (πολιτικός εξευρωπαϊσμός), συμμετοχής σε ευρωπαϊκά προγράμματα (χρηματοδοτικός εξευρωπαϊσμός), απόκτησης τεχνογνωσίας και επιμόρφωσης προσωπικού (γνωστικός εξευρωπαϊσμός), ενίσχυσης της ευρωπαϊκής συνείδησης και ταυτότητας (ιδεαλιστικός εξευρωπαϊσμός) και δημιουργίας ενός ευνοϊκού εσωτερικού περιβάλλοντος για οργανωσιακές αλλαγές και μακρόπνοες συνεργασίες (βιώσιμος εξευρωπαϊσμός).

Ωστόσο, τα ανωτέρω αποτελέσματα και οι μορφές εξευρωπαϊσμού επηρεάζονται, όπως σημειώνει ο συγγραφέας, από το ενδογενές πλαίσιο νοοτροπιών, γραφειοκρατικών διαδικασιών, οργανωτικών και πολιτικών ελλειμμάτων και ενός δυσμενούς οικονομικού περιβάλλοντος, μετριάζοντας τη μεταρρυθμιστική δυναμική της ευρωπαϊκής δικτύωσης και θέτοντας σε αμφισβήτηση τις μεταρρυθμιστικές δυνατότητες των ελληνικών δήμων. Τα προβλήματα που προέκυψαν σχετίζονται με πολιτικές επιλογές, την δυσκολία έκφρασης ενός τεχνοκρατικού λόγου σε οργανικές μονάδες των δήμων, τα οργανωτικά ελλείμματα σε επίπεδο δομών και προσωπικού, τους περιορισμούς της γραφειοκρατίας, την απουσία διοικητικής συνέχειας και θεσμικής μνήμης και γενικά ένα πολιτισμικό πλαίσιο που δεν ανέχεται εύκολα τις αλλαγές.

Προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση, τα στελέχη της πρωτοβάθμιας αυτοδιοίκησης, οι μελετητές της δημόσιας διοίκησης της χώρας μας, και όχι μόνον, καλούνται να διαβάσουν την τελευταία ενότητα του βιβλίου, όπου προτείνονται βήματα για μια γόνιμη και μακρόπνοη συμμετοχή της τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης σε ευρωπαϊκές δικτυώσει, όπου εισάγεται μια επιχειρησιακή κουλτούρα και μεταρρυθμιστική δυναμική στο πολιτικο-διοικητικό σύστημά μας και ένας κριτικός εξευρωπαϊσμός νοοτροπιών, δομών και λειτουργιών της ελληνικής τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης.

Χριστόφορος Σκαμνάκης,
Πάντειο Πανεπιστήμιο

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ΟΔΗΓΙΕΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΣΥΓΓΡΑΦΕΙΣ

Τα κείμενα υποβάλλονται στα ελληνικά ή στα αγγλικά. Οι συγγραφείς δεσμεύονται ότι δεν έχουν δημοσιεύσει ή υποβάλει προς κρίση τα άρθρα τους σε άλλο έντυπο. Σε περίπτωση δημοσίευσης παρόμοιου άρθρου, αυτό δηλώνεται από τον συγγραφέα. Υποβάλλονται τέσσερα ταυτόσημα κείμενα και ένα σε ηλεκτρονική μορφή στην επόμενη διεύθυνση του εκδότη.

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Τα άρθρα αξιολογούνται από δύο τουλάχιστον ανώνυμους κριτές. Το όνομα και τα άλλα στοιχεία του συγγραφέα, καθώς και ο τίτλος του άρθρου πρέπει να υποβάλλονται σε ξεχωριστή σελίδα από το κυρίως σώμα (τίτλος, κείμενο, βιβλιογραφικές αναφορές). Τα υποβαλλόμενα άρθρα πρέπει να συνοδεύονται από δύο περιλήψεις, όχι μεγαλύτερες των 100 λέξεων, και πέντε λέξεις-κλειδιά στα ελληνικά και τα αγγλικά. Η έκταση των άρθρων πρέπει να κυμαίνεται μεταξύ 6-8.000 λέξεων, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των περιλήψεων και αναφορών. Τα χειρόγραφα των άρθρων που απορρίπτονται δεν επιστρέφονται.

Για τις αναφορές χρησιμοποιείται το σύστημα Harvard. Οι αναφορές στο κείμενο περιλαμβάνουν το επώνυμο του συγγραφέα και το έτος έκδοσης της δημοσίευσης, π.χ. (Esping-Andersen, 1990, Kleinman and Piachaud, 1993). Οι άμεσες αναφορές πρέπει να δίνουν και τον αριθμό της σελίδας ή των σελίδων, π.χ. Ferrera et al., 2002: 230. Σε περίπτωση περισσότερων αναφορών του ίδιου συγγραφέα για το ίδιο έτος, πρέπει να χρησιμοποιείται η διάκριση με α, β, γ κ.λπ. για το έτος. Οι βιβλιογραφικές αναφορές (όχι βιβλιογραφία) καταχωρούνται αλφαβητικά στο τέλος του κειμένου. Παρακαλούνται οι συγγραφείς να επιμελούνται την ακριβή αντιστοίχηση των αναφορών του κειμένου με τον αλφαβητικό κατάλογο των βιβλιογραφικών αναφορών στο τέλος του κειμένου και το αντίστροφο. Η αναφορά σε βιβλία πρέπει να δίνει το όνομα του συγγραφέα, το έτος έκδοσης, τον τίτλο του βιβλίου, τον τόπο έκδοσης και την επωνυμία του εκδοτικού οίκου. Π.χ. Scharpf F., (1999), *Governing in Europe: Effective and Democratic?* Oxford: Oxford University Press. Η αναφορά άρθρων σε περιοδικά πρέπει να δίνει τόμο, τεύχος, σελίδες, καθώς και τον τίτλο του άρθρου σε απλά εισαγωγικά. Για παράδειγμα: Atkinson A.B., Marlier E. and Nolan B., (2004), "Indicators and Targets for Social Inclusion in the European Union", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 42: 47-75. Αναφορές σε κεφάλαια συλλογικών τόμων καταχωρούνται με τον τίτλο του κεφαλαίου σε απλά εισαγωγικά, ακολουθούμενο από τον συγγραφέα και τον τίτλο του συλλογικού τόμου. Π.χ. Leibfried, S. and Pierson, P. (1995) "Semisovereign Welfare States: Social Policy in a multitiered Europe", in: Leibfried S. and Pierson P., (eds), *European Social Policy: Between Fragmentation and Integration*, p.p. 43-77, Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution. Οι τίτλοι των βιβλίων και περιοδικών γράφονται με πλάγια γράμματα. Συνιστάται οι επεξηγηματικές σημειώσεις να είναι οι ελάχιστες δυνατές. Εάν κρίνονται απαραίτητες, τότε πρέπει να αριθμούνται στο κείμενο και να παρατίθενται στο τέλος του άρθρου. Επίσης, στο τέλος παρατίθενται και οι τυχόν ευχαριστίες. Άρθρα που δεν συμβιβάζονται με τις παραπάνω οδηγίες επιστρέφονται στον συγγραφέα για την ανάλογη προσαρμογή.

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