

Chapter 7

Social Justice in Social Work: Preliminaries

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ABSTRACT

The actuality of the given topic comes from the approach of the concept of social justice in relation with factors of decisions and power of the state. One of the solutions identified by the state organization is the creation of the system of social work, which represents a component of the national system of social protection, within which the state and civil society is engaged to prevent, limit or remove the temporary or permanent effects of some events considered as social risks that could generate the marginalization or exclusion of the persons and families in difficulty. In our vision, the social justice represents the equality of chances of each individual in relation with the equity and equality as fundamental principles of social coexistence. In a “healthy” state, any person, regardless of experience or life circumstances, succeeds to achieve the maximum potential. We believe that there is no human society that is entirely based on social equality or equity, but this is only an additional motive to make efforts in this direction.

INTRODUCTION

In this paper we intend to reflect the social justice as value and principle of the practice of social work. The process of globalization and the enactment of the Codes of professional conduct of the social worker at the international, regional and national level, determined the unification of the human values defended unanimously by the state through the professionals in the social field – social workers. Social justice constitutes a value, as well as a principle according to which social workers perform their job.

The goal of the chapter consists in identifying the role of social work in assuring the equality of chances of all social actors without discrimination, in order to assure the respect of social justice as human value.

The objectives emerged in order to accomplish the given goal, are the following:

- To discuss the concept of *social justice*.
- To analyse the *soft laws* of assuring the respect of social values.
- To expose the European social practice of assuring the equality of chances of people from the European space.

BACKGROUND

In the last decade, as indicator of the social changes are the significant changes of the social norms and values that are insistently imposing themselves as economic values. The values which were unacceptable some decades ago, are today seen as something normal. There is the impression that we are on the verge of birth of a new type of culture based on completely different ideas regarding good and evil, beautiful and ugly. Everything is transferred in monetary value, everything is sold and bought. The strategies for clients inspire the idea that with money, all values could be bought. Or, besides the economic crisis, the contemporary world risks a more serious crisis – that of its values (Buzducea, 2009, p. 3).

Borțun (2010, p.13) states that in the last two decades, there is a current which could be called *the ethical criticism of the capitalism*, that proposes a new vision on the contemporary capitalism accused of suffocating the democracy, changing the citizens into customers, and which is unable to block the wave of greed and egoism in favour of the compassion and solidarity. The author sustains the approach to capitalism from the ethical positions and considers that it is responsible for the present and future societies.

The social position represents a complex factor that contributes to the state of health of people by its components: age, sex, socio-economic statute, educational level, occupation, income (Nemțoi & Ignătescu, 2014). Components of social status are an important factor in determining the health of the population (Business Integrity, 2013, p. 80).

In this context, Jean-Claude Mignon, the President of the Parliamentary Assemble of the Council of Europe (PACE) declares that “Europe is in period of great uncertainty. The citizens don’t believe the policy, they are disoriented, while the unscrupulous leaders take advantage of this weakness in order to obtain political advantages by inciting to hatred and promising miracles that underestimate all social, economic and political achievements of our continent”. Today it is required to work more than ever, in order to consolidate the democratic values, to reaffirm the importance of the basic values of the European Convention of human rights. In a moment of uncertainty, we need more Europe – the Europe of the universal values” (InfoEuropa, 2012).

ARGUMENT OF THE PAPER

An important factor that increases the interest for studying the social justice in the context of social practices is the process of globalization, which influences all societies and domains, inclusively the systems of protection and social work. If until recently we couldn’t speak about the international social work due to the fact that the policies of supporting the people were related to each state apart, than at that moment, people more often began to operate with this phenomenon caused mainly by the process of globalization and trauma, lost and sufferings that don’t take into consideration the geographical placement of states or certain categories of people

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