

Right or Obligation? Social Citizenship and Workfare in Hungary

Related stream:

6.1. *The Crisis and Social Citizenship and/or*

2. *Poverty and Social Exclusion*

The aim of the lecture is to highlight the effects of “Ways to Work” Program in terms of the full citizenship. The Program launched in 2009 in Hungary with the purpose to socially integrate the active-aged unemployed people by declaring the participation in public employment programs obligatory. I argue that current policies of inclusion – like the above mentioned Program - necessarily exclude. Stigmatization of those needing help and living on social transfers can hardly be avoided. This is especially true in the case of Roma, because in Hungary it is widely accepted that most of the Roma people are unworthy of help. Therefore my paper focuses on the mechanisms of social exclusion both on the symbolic and the active level.

After the clarification of the conceptual frameworks (the content of full membership, exclusion, institutional exclusion, cultural citizenship, struggle for recognition) I’d like to present the results of a case study which was made by qualitative method (structured interviews, document analysis) in one of the most disadvantaged small region – Southern Great Plain – in Hungary. Our research proved that the “Ways to Work” Program has not reduced, rather increased the vulnerability of the unemployed and their permanent personal dependency from the representatives of the local authorities.

In the second part of my lecture comes the presentation of exclusion mechanisms which appearing on the symbolic level in social discourses. The normative discourse analysis from the perspective of full membership is partly based on the parliamentary debate about the bill, which has been accepted under the so-called „Ways to Work” program, and partly on some articles of nationwide available daily papers related to the topic.

Contact details:

Name: Vida Anikó
Phone number: +36-309737226
e-mail: vida@etszk.u-szeged.hu; anikovida@yahoo.com
Postal address: H-6725 Szeged, Veresács street 51.
Workplace: University of Szeged Faculty of Health Sciences and Social Studies
PhD studies: Eötvös Loránd University Faculty of Social Sciences (from 2006)