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**Study on non-State actors of social organizations in Tirgu  
Mures**

**- Abstract of the doctoral thesis -**

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## Table of content

### I. INTRODUCTION

The Research Topic: Why is it important to study social services provided by non - governmental organizations?

### II. The Theoretical Basis of the Paper

1. Analysis of national and international research on the same topic
2. Social needs in modern society
  - 2.1. General human needs
  - 2.2. Classification of needs
  - 2.3. Needs from the point of view of the individual
  - 2.4. Needs in terms of social services
    - 2.4.1. The social perspective
    - 2.4.2. The philosophical perspective
    - 2.4.3. The pragmatic perspective
    - 2.4.4. The economic perspective
    - 2.4.5. The medical perspective
  - 2.5. Needs in terms of human ecology
  - 2.6. Needs and the quality of life
3. The non - profit and civil society
  - 3.1. Definition of terms
  - 3.2. The origin of the non-profit sector
  - 3.3. The main features of not for profit organizations
  - 3.4. The role of not for profit organizations in shaping social policies
  - 3.5. Romanian legislation on non-governmental and non-profit organisations
  - 3.6. Development of social NGOs

3.7. Non-profit organizations and civil society

4. Social Services

4.1. Definition and characteristics of social services

4.2. The system of social assistance and social services in Romania

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Study objectives and research questions

2. Methodology and research process

3. Document analysis results

3.1. Situation of social services in Mures county and Tirgu-Mures

3.2. Demographics of Tirgu-Mures

3.3. The history of charitable activities in Tirgu-Mures

3.4. Situation of social services in Hungary and Győr

3.5. Situation of social services in Germany and Regensburg

4. Analysis of needs among the population in Tirgu-Mures

4.1. The sample of the needs analysis

4.2. The household structure

4.3. Quality of housing

4.4. Daily life and financial situation

4.5. Social problems and their management

4.6. Citizenship in the population

4.7. Factor analysis of social needs

5. Evaluation of social NGOs

5.1. Basic characteristics of social NGOs

5.2. Cooperation between NGOs and social institutions of public authorities

5.3. Employees and volunteers of social NGOs

5.4. Budget of social NGOs

5.5. Capacity of the NGO cases of social

5.6. Cluster analysis of social NGOs in Tirgu Mures

## V. RESEARCH RESULTS

1. Check the research questions
2. Conclusions and recommendations

### References and Bibliography

Laws, ordinances and governmental decisions

Web pages and other resources

## I. Introduction

I first participated in a civil society action in 1992 and I have been participating in many civil actions since then. After coordinating for 11 years a youth organization, I am cooordinating now the programs of a social organization, one of the biggest organizations in Tirgu-Mures. I was always astonished, amazed by civil sphere and I could never give up the activities within in, in spite of its many problems and in spite of the thought that it would have been easier to work at another place, where people do not have to invent and create processes, rules and programs, to provide the needed financial resources, finally, do not have to start always from the very beginning.

I am still devoted, committed to civil sphere because, beyond its problems, civil organizations can adjust far better and easier to the needs of the society and can find the most proper and exhausting solutions. This is where my decision to research the needs of the citizens from Tirgu-Mures and to compare these needs with the solutions given by the existing civil organizations in the town comes from.

Besides my personal experiences gained in this field, choosing this topic is authorized, justified also through the fact that at Tirgu-Mures level does not exist a comprehensive study of the citizens' needs and of the social services of the local civic organizations.

In a society, the development of civil sphere always correlates with the political, democratic functioning of it. The values of the civil sector (volunteerism, donation, helping those in needs, non-profit orientation) contribute to the feeling of the citizens to form, mould their communities' fate, destiny and to influence public decisions.

A well established civil sector within a society increases solidarity and tolerance, contributing to its democratization. The Romanian, Transylvanian organizations have been going through a dynamic progression since their establishment, the '90. At the beginning there were established many civil organizations, which tended to find their place in society and to assume public issues.

The progression of this sector was not easy due to the lack of experiences, legal background, financial resources and organizational structures, but up to now the situation has been changed in better. Many organizations have gained a well defined and stable place in the community, have created their sustainability and multiply income resources and offer unique social services (filling the scarcity) and job places. In spite of these, the civil sphere in Romania is far behind the European and worldwide countries.

The purpose of my research is to survey the situation of social civil organizations in Tirgu-Mures and also the existing social needs of the town. My aim is to gain cross-section information about the fields covered by social civil organizations and citizens needs, a section of the fields with covered or uncovered services of these organizations.

As a result of my survey, it will be presented as well the place and the activity of the social civil organizations within the life of the town. Furthermore, it will be created an inventory of the social needs in Tirgu-Mures.

Through this comparison of organizations and needs, we will gain an image of the actual developmental situation of the organizations and their services and an image of those lacking, missing fields there are no services for.

## **1. The Research Topic: Why is it important to study social services provided by non-governmental organizations?**

The Romanian social assistance is ensured by authorities which operates through their local and central social public institutions. There have been recently established private institutions at the level of pension assurance companies. Besides these, some private institutions with social services offered financial support in the assurance of some, long term caring and maintaining services.

All these activities are completed by the activity of many social civil organizations established in the last 20 years, organizations who try to respond to the needs through services which didn't exist until now, based on, first of all, volunteerism, donations and projects.

Civil organizations have been nowadays through considerable changes. Joining the European Union brought a new structure of the material finances in the shape of public finances of the state and structural funds. The use of these funds assumes new vision, new strategy and special preparation.

The process of service accreditation has progressed due to the conditions and deadlines, terms controled, adjusted by laws. The state can support financially social organizations which undertake the issues of the state. This possibility is prescribed by the law but it is not an obligation. Furthermore, many public social institutions get unconditional state finances and unfortunately ignores the present social needs and tendencies.

This condition does not lead to the consolidation of a qualitative social assistance. Thus, it deserves to be surveyed, first of all, by analyzing the weaknesses and strengths, in order to come to a proposal of solutions which can create the basement of a qualitative and non discriminative social assistance.

This process leads to a selection of civil organizations and public social institutions, because competitiveness, qualitative work and sustainability within the community assume more and more professional knowledge and financial resources.

I believe this selection will take place in the following, for coming years and it is very important to investigate those characteristics of a social organization which will be capable of maintaining its sustainability, ensuring qualitative services and responding to the present needs of the citizens of Tirgu-Mures.

## **II. National and international researches on this topic**

The research studies the intersection of three research fields. The national and international surveys, founded in my survey, come from these fields, as it follows:

1. The civil society, civil organizations (characteristics, their development)
2. Human needs, citizens' needs (characteristics, classification, inventory of the possibilities in a town)
3. Social services (characteristics, system and planning possibilities)

In Tirgu-Mures does not exist a comprehensive survey on social civil organizations. It can be found out some partial information and tendency on the civil organizations' social role assumption in studies, surveys done on the level of Tirgu-Mures, Transylvania and Romania.

At international level, the importance of civil sphere is highlighted by the survey of Johns Hopkins, a rare survey, which contains facts also about Romania.

More and more towns, settlements as well in Europe, as in Hungary, have their own social map containing the social problems of the town, inventorying the needs of its citizens and realizing a proper plan to solve, eliminate and improve these needs.

There are a lot of international studies which research the cooperation among social civil organizations, their funding and volunteering. These studies form the theoretical basement of my research.

Besides social civil organizations, the social needs represent another aspect to study in my research. I studied more, first of all, international surveys linked to this domain. These

surveys can be found as well in the following table, as in my theoretical paragraphs of my research.

	<b>Author</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Aim and method of the research, research population</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
1	Echo Survey Szociológiai Kutatóintézet	2002	<b>Székesfehérvár citizens opinions about civil organizations (750 questioned citizens)</b>	Research presentation
2	Asadi-Lari, M., Packham, C., Gray, D	2003	<b>Need for redefining needs</b>	Study
3	Esping-Andersen, G.	2006	<b>An Equitable Social Model for Mid-Century Europe</b>	Study
4	Bocz János, Corvinus Egyetem	2009	<b>The structural modification of non-profit sector in Hungary. The Hungarian non-profit sector, field from the beginning of 1990 and till the middle of 2000</b>	PhD dissertation
5	Fundația pentru Dezvoltarea Societății Civile	2007	<b>The nongovernmental organizations' place and role on the social services' market in Romania</b>	Study – organization classification, fund analysis, contract possibilities of the services
6	Johns Hopkins University, USA	2003	<b>Global Civil Society. An overview - Comprehensive study on civil society development based on facts from 35 countries</b>	Classification regarding civil society impact
7	Nohria, N., Lawrence, P.	2001	<b>Driven: How Human Nature Shapes Our Choices - A socio-biological theory</b>	Theoretical model



	and Wilson, E.		<b>about needs</b>	
8	Lázár, I	2006	<b>Life quality of unemployed at the milenium in Hungary</b>	Study
9	Adalbert Evers és Jean-Louis Laville	2004	<b>Defining the third sector in Europe</b>	Theoretical model
10	Nárai Márta	2005	<b>The role of the civil organizations in the field of social assistance</b>	Case study – the social services of Győr
11	Burada Valentin	2006	<b>Social watch national report, Romania.</b>	County report
12	Civil Fórum	2004	<b>The development of civil society and self building institutions in Transylvania</b>	Book of readings
13	Nyitrai Imre	2008	<b>The civil slices of our social causes</b>	Study
14	Fundatia pentru Dezvoltarea Societatii Civile	2010	<b>Nongovernmental field – profile, tendencies, challenges.</b>	Study
15	Rory Ridley-Duff	2008	<b>Social enterprise as a socially rational business</b>	Theoretical model
16	Civil Fórum	2005	<b>Cooperation, advocacy and profesionalism in the transylvanian civil sphere</b>	Book of readings
17	Nárai Márta ELTE	2008	<b>The place and role of NGOs in the life of local societies</b>	PhD dissertation

18	Defoury, Nyssens	2010	<b>At the crossroads of market, public policies and third sector</b>	Study
19	Brandesen, T., Karré, P. and Helderman J.K.	2009	<b>The Risks of Hybrid Organisations: Expectations and Evidence</b>	Study
20	Miskolci Egyetem, Szociológiai Intézet	2011	<b>The social map of Miskolc</b>	Study
21	Bányai Borbála, Geambaşu Réka, Légmán Anna, Megyesi Boldizsár	2012	<b>A comparative study on attitudes about the distributive role of the state</b>  <b>Cluster analysis of the EU countries</b>	Study
22	O'Connor, D., & Yballe, L.	2007	<b>Maslow Revisited: Construction of a Road Map of Human Nature</b>	Study
23	Ravasz Katalin	2004	<b>The social diffusion features of the Internet</b>	Study
24	Redmond, B.F.	2010	<b>Need Theories: What Do I Want When I Work?</b>	Study
25	Ryan, R. M. and Deci, E. L.	2000	<b>Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being.</b>	Theoretical model
26	Stepanenko, Victor	2006	<b>Civil Society in Post-Soviet Ukraine: Civic Ethos in the Framework of Corrupted Sociality?</b>	Study

27	Veress Gábor	2004	<b>The quality assurance of the social services</b>	Background information for law renewal
28	Fundația Alpha Transilvană	2009	<b>Social map of Mures county</b>	Research
29	Gyulafehérvári Caritas	2010	<b>The accessibility of socio-medical services for the rural settlements in Mures, Harghita and Covasna county</b>	Research
30	Kuti Éva	2008	<b>The first ten years: the 1% support of the NGOs in the highlights of facts</b>	Study
31	Civitas Alapítvány	2004	<b>The strategy of the social development in Odorheiu Secuiesc</b>	Study
32	A. Aghaeia, Z. Khayyamneko ueib, A. Yousefyc	2013	<b>General Health Prediction Based on Life Orientation, Quality of Life, Life Satisfaction and Age</b>	Study

### III. Research Methodology

#### 1. Study objectives and research questions

Social services in Tîrgu-Mures show a special pattern. In some ways the characteristics coincide with the national trends (most social services are moving towards the protection of children (CSDF, 2005) and most services are concentrated in the center of the county, while in the surrounding villages there are no social services (Alpha and Gallup, 2009), in other respects are very different (NGOs percentage is much higher than the state providers (Alpha and Gallup, 2009).

The Municipality has not conducted a survey (study) about the needs of the population. At the same time, there is no comprehensive social strategy, the County Council and Tîrgu-Mures municipality grants, in a decreasing proportion, small subsidies for services provided by civil organizations.

Choosing the research theme and the dissertation attainment I had a dual purpose: on one hand to contribute to the broadening of the knowledge about non-governmental organizations working in the social sector, on the other hand to introduce in the research service, a territorial conditioning and needs conceptions.

This paper aims to provide an insight of the characteristics and actual state of civic social initiatives, to present how these progress particular in Tîrgu Mures city and at the same time to map the needs of city's people. Correspondingly, the research questions could be divided into two major sections: those relating to the needs of the population and those referring to non-governmental organizations.

The first two research questions placed under the microscope the population needs. The analysis is done by two criteria: the first variable is the age; the second variable is the district where the person resides.

I think it is important to analyze the age criteria because the social needs, the requests for social services, housing and financial situations are in a very close relationship with the age. According to this, the questions and hypotheses are:

1. Research question: regarding the social needs what differences exists in Tirgu Mures by age criteria?
  - a. Hypothesis 1. We assume that housing; daily living ways, financial situation, social issues and civic presence are correlated with age. The older generation lives in more modest conditions than the middle-aged or young persons, also their material situation is weaker.
  - b. Hypothesis 2: We assume that the older generations face more social problems while youngsters or the middle-aged are more active, and therefore their presence is more civically pronounced.

I selected the analysis criteria by the district of residence because during the urbanization of Tîrgu-Mures, huge blocks were erected, districts that became an organic part of the city, just like the districts with private houses belonging to the historic city Centre or the villages around the town, which later merged with the city. In these parts of the city, infrastructure is very different, the population origin (these districts are inhabited by those from the near villages or people displaced from other counties in the 60's, 70's, 80's) it is assumed that social needs are very different. These are contained in the second issue of research.

2. Research Question: What kind of social needs differences shows the Tîrgu Mures population based on the different districts in which they reside?

- a. Hypothesis 3: We assume that living conditions in the center are much better than in the districts of the periphery, also the way of life and financial situation.
- b. Hypothesis 4: We assume that the populations in the districts on the outskirts face more social problems than those in the center.

The second part of the research concerns the social NGOs in Tîrgu Mures, including their main characteristics and their emphasis on cooperation with state institutions. Corresponding to their research, the questions are:

3. Research Question: What are the characteristics of social NGOs in Tîrgu Mures?

4. Research Question: How social NGOs can collaborate with local authority's institutions?

- a. Hypothesis 5: We assume that there it's no sufficient collaboration between NGOs and Tîrgu Mures City Hall because the latter supports on a preferential basis some NGOs; the collaboration cannot be described as a partnership where both parties have rights and obligations. This was the issue that was mostly discussed in the NGO representative's focus group.

- b. Hypothesis 6: We assume that the collaboration with the County Council Mures is well accepted by the organization, although it supports them with very small amounts but treats them as partners.
- c. Hypothesis 7: Department for Child Protection is the only institution that has outsourced various services through contracting NGOs, we assume that organizations have a positive view on the collaboration and attention that has been accorded to them.

Last, but also the research problem that connects the two lines of research, refers to the meeting point of the social needs and the services provided by non-governmental organizations.

5. Research Question: In what extent, the people of Tîrgu Mures connect to the social NGOs life and in what measure is the organizations activity known to the public?

- a. Hypothesis 8: We suppose that residents are open to non-governmental organizations and connect to their work.
- b. Hypothesis 9: We assume that they are known by many people and they have information about the NGOs activities. This explain why, compared to the national level, the number of social services provided by non-governmental organizations are very high in Tîrgu Mures, despite the fact that are not particularly supported by state institutions.

## **2. Methodology and research process**

The research began by examining and documentary analyzing the international and national specialized literature. Because I tried to encompass three broad areas: civil society - in this area of social NGOs, the human needs and social services literature is very rich. First I met the international literature, but I found researches at national level too. What is interesting in

the specialized literature from our country is that it was conducted by non-governmental organizations and therefore it can be assumed that there is some impartiality towards the non-governmental organizations work activity. Also, they have a general character, not a specific subdomain researched in particular. In Hungary the research of nonprofit sector enjoys a wide popularity. The theme is discussed in countless theses, both overall and by area level. In the same time and firstly, many studies and works deal with the details of the problems but there are comprehensive and extensive researches on several countries, such as the one led by Johns Hopkins University which besides that fundamentals the structure concept, presents the nonprofit sector from 35 countries, including Romania (Salamon, 1992, 1993, 2003).

In the research process, the evaluation of non-governmental organizations followed. This was achieved through a focus group and survey questionnaires. Firstly, a focus group was organized in 2012 October and it was attended by seven social non-governmental organizations representatives. All along the discussion, together we tried to give an answer in defining social status and tried to establish through which questions we can get a true image of the organisations. As a result of these meetings, the survey questions were put together, the ones which later I used to evaluate the organizations.

As a second step of the process we have defined the circle of organizations examined, using different databases (municipality of Tirgu Mures, Mures County Council also the Social Inspectorate Mures County has a database, but differs). The online questionnaire was sent to 64 organizations, 43 organizations responded, implying a 67,18% rate of answers. The study referring to the organizations is based on these responses, the data was processed using SPSS, and Excel programs.

The social needs questions from the survey were taken from international researchers questionnaires, primarily those from Hungary. The need survey questionnaire has been drawn in an on-line version, and over a period of nearly a month, 317 responses arrived from the population of Tirgu Mures. These were processed using SPSS program and presented in detail in the thesis. For data weighting and comparability of the results I have used data of the National and Mures county Institute of statistics. The data provided by them on the 2010 and 2011 years, have formed the basis of comparison in the needs assessment.

## IV. Summarizing research results

### 1. Research Questions Verification

First question referred to the differences in the social needs of different age groups. As it was assumed, the housing circumstances, the environment of daily life, material situation, social problems and social presence in relation to age show significant statistical differences according to the age groups. This hypothesis was confirmed, although irregularities were not always presented in the expected direction.

The investigation revealed that, statistically speaking there are significant differences in the extent of the number of family members and age category (Pearson Chi-square  $t = 111,831$  Squar;  $df = 14$ ;  $p = 0,000$ ). Nearly half of the elderly are living alone, which, according to researchers, contributes significantly in the decrease of quality life (Hawton and associations, 2011), so it's a risk factor. Most of the middle generation live in a family consisting of 4 persons, while the young people live in a household of two people.

The differences are important from the point of view of the housing type (Pearson Chi-square  $t = 13,119$ ;  $df = 6$ ;  $p = 0,041$ ): while 80 per cent of the elderly live in block apartments, at middle and

younger generation the percentage is lower by 10%. It is important to note that for the elderly the suburbs house is not characteristic. Middle generation lives at less in the block apartments (65,1%), and most of them are owners of houses in the City perimeter (28%).

There is a statistically significant relationship between the number of rooms in dwellings and age category (Pearson Chi-square  $t = 27,619$ ;  $df = 12$ ;  $p = 0,006$ ). For the elderly generation is characteristic the two-room apartments (50%), while for the young ones the three room apartments (44,4%).

It was assumed that the older generation is faced with many social problems. This hypothesis has not been confirmed, although for 42,1% of elderly the maintenance expenses consists a problem, for 32,9%, the food purchasing, for 28,9% paying the price of medicines and for 37,7%, other payment services, but this does not show a significant deviation in a statistical point of view from the situation of the young or middle-aged.



The explanation of this situation would be that elderly generation enjoys the most support, subsidies and social services. It is a statistically significant relationship between the age category and those benefiting of social aid (Pearson Chi-square  $t = 18,717$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = 0,000$ ). Currently, primarily the elderly benefit of aid (23%) and subsidies from the City Hall. It is a statistically significant relationship between age and category of beneficiaries of social services (Pearson Chi-square  $t = 12,463$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = 0,002$ ).

Primarily the elderly receives social services (23%), followed by young people (11%); to the extent, the middle-aged benefit from the smallest social services (9%).

Out of the 10 questions relating to social problems, in 6 cases the middle-aged are affected, and out of these six, four presents significant statistic deviation. The four problems relate to the growth of children, education, home loans and other loans. Young ones are maximly affected of troubles in two areas, one of which is a significant deviation from the statistical point of view. It relates to the expenses incurred in the purchase of circulation services (Pearson Chi-square  $t = 13,317$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ).

Age category statistically influence significantly the matters considered earnest in a family (Pearson Chi-Square  $t = 69.256$ ,  $df = 16$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). At the elderly, health issues are most important (46.1%), while for the young the lack of money is more important (44.4%), which are followed by the absence of an apartment or house. At the middle-aged, 16.4% say they have problems, but in their circle, the most significant issues relates to the care and supervision of children during daytime and summer.

It is statistically significant the difference, in terms of age, the aid requests (Chi-Square  $t = 46.232$ ,  $df = 16$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), although all three age categories abides on the restricted family in case of need.

While the young and the middle aged considerably are reliant on the help from friends, the elderly live more solitary in this regard and prefer to use non-governmental organizations, asking for help there. The older abides more on using City Hall and neighbor's help than the two previous categories.

We assumed that the young and middle-aged are more active, and therefore their social presence is more pronounced. Neither this hypothesis was confirmed, because there are no

statistically significant relationships between age group and work within NGOs (Pearson Chi-Square  $t = 4.267$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = 0.118$ ). Although we may think that the young and the elderly have more time for this activity, however, the middle-aged are most active in civic participation and social activities.

During the analysis of the districts I sought to answer the question: what kind of social needs differences shows the Tîrgu Mures population based on the different districts in which they reside? We assumed that in the Center housing circumstances are better than in neighborhoods on the outskirts of the city and all that is true if we consider the standards of daily living and material situation. I have also assumed that the inhabitants of the suburbs of the city are facing more severe social problems than the inhabitants of the city Center. Neither this hypothesis was confirmed. The deviations are indeed significant between different districts of the city, but they are not statistically significant, as I conclude below.

Statistically, there are significant differences between city neighborhoods in terms of public interests and establishments providing means of livelihood. Statistically significant relationship between residential neighborhood and proximity to a food (Pearson Chi-Square  $t = 19.597$ ,  $df = 7$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ). The most disadvantaged in this regard is measured by the center, where 42% of residents have not a nearby food.

There are statistic semnificative diferences between the city's district in the mean of public interests and institution that assure living ways. It is statistically significant the relationship between residential neighborhood and the closeness to a food store (Pearson Chi-Square  $t = 19,597$ ,  $df = 7$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ). The most disadvantaged in that point of view is the city Centre where 42% of inhabitants do not have a food store in the neighborhood.

It is statistically significant the relationship between residential neighborhood and proximity to a kindergarten (Pearson Chi-Square  $t = 28.507$ ,  $df = 7$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The most unfavorable situation is in the Center, where close to 71% of the population have not a kindergarten nearby, followed by Liberty Street and side streets (61%). Is statistically significant the relationship between neighborhood and theproximity to the police (Pearson Chi-Square  $t = 35.737$ ,  $df = 7$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). From this point of view the disadvantaged situation is on Liberty Street, side streets and Mureseni neighborhood, best situation is shown in the center.

In terms of lifestyle there are not important deviations between different districts of the city. I found one statistically significant deviation in a single issue; this refers to the schooling of children. For at least half of the residents of the neighborhood of Remetea and the Unirii district is an issue to get the money needed for children's education, while in other locations of the city the share does not exceed 24%.

Out of the 10 questions on lifestyle, residents from Mureseni obtained the highest percentage in five of them, which means that in this district is the lowest standard of living, the highest percentage of residents that are struggling with material problems and daily life difficulties, followed by Unirii and Remetea districts (of 10 questions 3 achieved the highest percentage). Also in terms of daily living and financial situation residents from Centre, Tudor and Belvedere, November 7, Aleea Carpati and Dambul Pietros are less affected.

The second part of the research concerns social NGOs and focuses initially on their general characteristics. The sample included 43 organizations based in Tirgu Mures, most of which operate locally (some organizations operating in Mures county or other places, but primarily in Tirgu Mures), have social, nongovernmental character, that means they are civic organizations. We described their characteristics using a Cluster analysis. Resulted five clusters of social non-governmental organizations in Tirgu Mures as follows:

1. Cluster - from the point of view of the establishments' year is mixed, high-budgeted (1.000.000 RON), with many permanent employees (over 40) and volunteers (50), serving a large number of beneficiaries (ca. 1000) - **organizations with a high degree of institutionalization, ensuring high quality service, high capacity in terms of beneficiaries.**
2. Cluster - from the point of view of the establishments' year is mixed, with medium budget (between 100.000-500.000 RON), an average of 10 employees, a large number of volunteers, serving a large number of beneficiaries - **high capacity organizations which benefit from voluntary work,**

3. Cluster - set between the years 1990 - 2000, so having experience with sustained activity, with high budget (between 500.000-100.000 RON) on average by 10 permanent employees, volunteers featuring a lower number, maintaining a high number beneficiaries - **high capacity organizations that gives odds to quality and continuity,**

4. Cluster - established between 1990 and 2004, so have experience with a budget of approx. RON 100,000 on average 5 permanent staff and over 10 volunteers, serving a smaller number of beneficiaries - **low capacity organizations giving odds to seasonal activity,**

5. Cluster - young organization, established after 2000, with decreased budget by an average of three permanent employees, an average of 9 volunteers deserving a low number of beneficiaries - **young organizations with reduced capacity.**

We assumed that a statistically significant relationship exists between the levels of organizations activities and their appertaining to a cluster. Although the relationship is not statistically significant, it is interesting to note that the young organization with small capacity are the most diverse in terms of their activities, those belonging to the cluster 4 are characterized by a work exchange / flow, while organizations belonging to cluster 1., 2., 3, are characterized by development / growth. This allows us to conclude that some forms are more suitable for organizational development (cluster 1., 2., 3.), Others are more suitable for constant, supported activity (clusters. 4). However it can be said that in the 4. Cluster, characterized by pronounced voluntary work, the highest percentage of work changing / fluctuating is present.

We checked whether the existence of an economic activity in a non-governmental organization is related to the stability of the organization, with its sustainable quality services, because based on prior research I assumed that they are positively affected ( Evers and Laville , 2004 Ready - Duff 2008). Although the relationship is not statistically significant, research has shown that in the organizations' belonging to the first and third cluster, the existence of

economic activity percentage is highest and that confirms our hypothesis, because those two clusters contain organizations with the most supported activity.

The fourth research question referred to the cooperation of NGOs with local social institutions of the authorities. We assumed that the relationship is not good between the city Hall and non-governmental organizations because they are supported on a preferential basis and cooperation can't be described as a partnership where both parties have rights and obligations. This issue was often raised in the focus group discussions. However, on working with the County Council, I assumed that relations are viewed favorably by organizations, although small amounts subsidizes are given but the NGOs are treated as partners. The Child Protection Department is the only institution that has subcontracted NGOs; we assumed that organizations see this collaboration positively. This hypothesis has been confirmed, while only 13.95 % of the organizations considered a good collaboration with the Municipality of Tirgu –Mures, in the case of the County Council that raised to 55.81 %, and for the Child Protection Department at 39.53 %.

The latest research problem and the glue between the two lines of research refer to the meeting point of the social needs and social services provided by social non-governmental organizations. Sought to answer the question: people and how they connects in the social NGOs life's and to what extent they know the NGOs work in Tirgu Mures ?

It was assumed, that the inhabitants are open to non-governmental organizations and are involved in a large number in their work. The sample responded with Yes in a 48,58% rate at the question: would you participate in a civic activity? 39,12% are currently members of non-governmental organizations. It is a very high percentage in comparison to the fact that Romania is on the last place on the extent of the non-governmental organizations from the 35 countries examined by John Hopkins Institute (Salamon, 2003). It is not without significance that over the course of the factorial analysis of the social needs from the point of view of strength, the factor referring to interest and civic involvement of the questioned residents came out in second place.

At the same time, it was assumed that many people know the work of non-governmental organizations. This hypothesis is confirmed, 64,67% of the sample know non-governmental organisations which meet the social tasks. This is the explanation to the fact that at the

national level, in Tîrgu Mureş are a high number of social services provided by non-governmental organizations (CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, 2005), although local institutions do not support them.

## **2. Conclusions and proposals**

The Survey regarding social needs has provided relevant information on the characteristics of the inhabitants of Tîrgu Mureş, both from the point of view of the age and area where they live. Based on this information it could be developed a strategy for solving social problems on age categories and city areas and so it can be improved the quality of life of the citizens of the targeted town.

Non-governmental organisations are concerned with the present needs of their beneficiaries, because they are systematically inform upon them. Nearly three-quarters of organizations undertake analysis of needs and even a quarter of them are carried out systematically. These need analyses are carried out among the beneficiaries who have already established a connection with the Organization, so the information collected is limited to well-defined targeted groups which are already in contact with the organization. This means that organizations have more and more infos about targeted group needs, instead they do not have informations about other needs of the community. This fact leads to uncover other community's needs.

During the analysis of the questionnaire regarding the social needs 5 factors crystallized: the poor, those with interest in organizations, social beneficiars, those who are struggling with loans, those with minor children. We do not stop now over those with interest for organizations, because their existence, their willingness to do their work ensures the existence and functioning of the non-governmental sector, but only the interest is not in itself enough to ensure high-quality social services. The other four factors are interesting from the point of view of services, because social services must be based on real needs, existing in the community.

Among non-governmental organizations with social character inventoried in the paper, most deal with those people that beneficiaries also by state subsidies, such as those with handicaps, orphans, unemployed, elderly, etc. At the same time between non-governmental organizations a small number are dealing with the eradication of poverty, assisting families with minor children and do not deal at all with helping, advising those who struggle with credits.

This allows us to conclude that non-government organizations with a social character do not react flexibly to the present needs of the community and are not constructing services

based on these needs. During the research we found out the reason of this in a focus group discussion, these being the following:

- Complete needs analysis are not compiled at the level of the entire community, thus a whole community social service strategy development can not be done.
- Social service accreditation does not entail any kind of financing
- At the same time there are limited possibilities for financial support (subsidies from the state are reduced, high competition, and for non-governmental organizations are rarely the occasion of non-refundable financing).
- State fundings set directions and priorities that reflects the state tasks and not focus on targeted groups and other social services with preventive character
- There aren't flexible funding opportunities, community-centered, which could create the material basis for the operation of new programs, with local nature which adapts flexibly to local needs.

The originality of the research consists in the fact that at the level of the Tirgu-Mures City Hall, there are no analysis of the social needs. A novelty consists also in grouping these data by categories of age and city neighborhoods. It could ease the planning target of more social services designed to reduce certain social problems.

Although there are researches related to the work of non-governmental organizations from the city of Tîrgu-Mureş, they never had as exclusive target the social non-governmental organisations, and so at this point this research is unique.

A limit of the research in terms of needs analysis is the relatively small sample, we propose to replicate the analysis on a larger sample. At the same time as a characteristic of civic initiatives of a social nature in Tirgu Mures, offers only a snapshot of the moment, it would be necessary to be reviewed at least annually to identify real trends in the conduct of their activity. Longitudinal analysis would create opportunity for both identifying local characteristics (collaboration with authorities, local needs and response to these needs) and the trends of development and comparison to national and European trends.

## **Conclusion**

In this paper a social needs analysis was conducted at the level of the city of Tîrgu-Mureş and an analysis of social non-governmental organisations. The results of the analysis were presented from the perspective of age and from the perspective of city districts. We have found significant statistically relations between age group and social needs referring to residential space, financial situation, social assistance and civic presence. Also we found statistically significant relationships between the social needs and the neighborhood were the citizen resides.

The analysis of social non-governmental organizations has highlighted their characteristics and particularities, and presented the situation of their collaboration with local institutions of state authority, specifics to Tîrgu-Mureş city.

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