

**BABEŞ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY
CLUJ-NAPOCA
FACULTY OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF SOCIOLOGY**

**ANALYSIS OF CAREER PATHS
OF SOCIAL WORK GRADUATES
OF THE BABEŞ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY
FROM THE SCHOOL TO THE FIELD OF WORK**

PhD Thesis

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THESIS EXTRACT

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A brief summary of the research topic¹

The PhD thesis examines the professional career of Social Work and Theology – Social Work graduates who have finished their studies between 1997 and 2012 at the different Hungarian-language departments of the Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. For it is the first research in this topic, it was designed to provide a comprehensive image about the career of social work graduates. The study is multidirectional: analyzes the history of Social Work education in Hungarian language in Cluj-Napoca (catchment area, enrollment numbers, drop-out rates, the evolution of the numbers of the graduates), the socio-demographic background of the social workers, the insertion of graduates to the labor market and their professional career, as well as the structure of the host side, the available jobs and employers' expectations.

We have gathered data from institutional documents of the faculties, as well as using online surveys, regarding 1077 enrolled persons from which 732 had graduated. The data inform us about the evolution of social work training, the background of origin, the motivations of choosing the profession, educational paths and results, professional careers, career habitus, current socio-economic situation, labor market status, satisfactions and future plans related their professional career. From the results of pilot studies connected to our main research, we have learned the structure of the social welfare system, which can be considered the primary labor market for the graduates, the available jobs, as well as information about the employers' expectations.

In addition to a description of the current socio-economic situation of the graduates, the results of the research indicate that the vast majority of the social work graduates are women, are coming from families with lower socio-economic status than other university graduates, their career habitus is characterized by a powerful commitment to their helping profession, and a risk-averse / safety seeking behavior.

Graduates working as social workers are working in a significant proportion at non-profit organizations, these organizations are assuming an important role in the Romanian social welfare system. The academic achievements, the active collecting of professional experience during university studies, the continuous self-education, but the background of origin and the career habitus are important determinant factors of the labor market success of the social workers. The graduates are only partially aware of the employers'

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expectations, which are coherent in their own way, the expectations presented in job advertisements are in accordance with the employers' implicit expectations.

Keywords: *social work, young graduates, university graduates, career, professional path, career research, social welfare system, nonprofit organizations, nonprofit social sector, education of social work, educational system, employer expectations, transition from school to work*

In the first part of the thesis, the „Literature review”, we present the theories and models used for the interpretation of the results, as well as those previous researches, which results helped us in the formulation of our research questions, and contextualizing the results of the research.

For the analyses of individual career paths, there are two major paradigms. One of them puts accent on the structural conditions which determine the career paths of young graduates, such as the functioning of labor market, or the structure of the educational system, while the other emphasizes the role of individual choice in shaping the life course (Csata et al. 2009)

During the PhD research, we take into account both approaches, and beside the theories belonging to these major paradigms we chose a theoretical framework, which integrates these approaches. When we approach from the side of the structure, we primarily base on different education policy models, and on Yossi Shavit's and Walter Müller's (1998) theory explaining the transition from school to work, and in the investigation of the individual actions the model of Iellatchich – Mayrhofer – Meyer (2001). Finally we give a theoretical framework which synthetizes these two approach: namely the social theory of Pierre Bourdieu and its basic categories: the social field, and the concepts of capital and habitus (Bourdieu 1978, Bourdieu 1992, Bourdieu 1996, Bourdieu 1999).

The presentation of the theoretical framework starts in subchapter 2.1.1 with the presentation of the different approaches of analyzing the paths of career, as well as the short listing of the chosen theories and models. Hereinafter in subchapter 2.1 we present in detail these theoretical models.

In subchapter 2.1.2 we present the social theory of Pierre Bourdieu. First we locate Bourdieu between the different members of the sociological schools, and then we describe one after another the basic categories of its social theory: the theory of capital of Bourdieu

(2.1.2.2), the concept of social field (2.1.2.3.) and habitus (2.1.2.4). Finally we talk about the sociology of education and sociology of arts of Bourdieu, and on the basis of his findings we introduce to the theoretical framework of the thesis the theory of the reproduction of social inequality (2.1.2.5), which will also use several times in the interpretation of our results.

Bourdieu defines three types of capital (Bourdieu 1999): economic capital, cultural capital, social capital. The cultural capital and social capital in its own way also exists in different states. The three forms of capital, though in different degrees, but are transferable and can be converted into each other. Individuals appear like they each possess different degrees of forms of capital, the amount and composition of the capital determines the individual's position in the social structure. According to Bourdieu the society is made up of social fields and sub-fields. The field is internally divided, organized and hierarchical network and structured system of individual positions. The various social fields are composed of different social actors that have different positions and connect to each other like a network. All social positions assume the possession of different amounts and different composition of forms of capital (Bourdieu 1992).

As the representative of genetic-structuralism (Baers 1998 cit. Péter 2005) Bourdieu attempted to a synthesis of system theory and action theory. He not only stressed the role of social structure, or tried to explain the individual behavior, but also created a link between the structure and practice, the individual behavior and the class behavior. In this process the concept of habitus is the intermediate category (Pokol 1995). The habitus includes the subjective goals, tools, values, norms, motives and behavior patterns, which stands behind the social action, and ultimately appears in the daily decisions and actions of individuals (Bourdieu 1978). According to Bourdieu the structure „governs the practice” through the habitus, in the same time through the concept of social class he links the class-habitus and the individual habitus, thus giving an explanation to the differences that exists in the patterns of social actions of the individuals belonging to (and socialized by) different social groups.

In subchapter 2.1.3. we present those theories and models, that are related to the *structure of the recipient side*: educational policy models, as well as theories regarding the structure of educational systems and their effect on the school to work transition. From the different models of educational policy (Hrubos 1999, Tóth 2001, Báger et al. 2004) we highlight the two variations of the European continental model, the humboldtian and napoleonic model, since the role of the state to regulate the process of transition is

primarily significant in the case of the European continental model. The two models envision in two different ways the process of transition from the education to the labor market: the classic model, based on the humboldtian perception, is an adept of a less regulated, the vocational model, based on the napoleonic perception, is an adept of a stronger regulated transition. The former one is associated with the notion of training the elite, the latter one with the notion of predictability of labor market needs. In the classical model the general education is the dominant, in the vocational model the vocational education, the development of occupation-specific skills dominates (Tóth 2001).

Next we get acquainted with the theory of Yossi Shavit and Walter Müller (1998) about the structure of educational systems and their effect on the transition from school to work, formulated as a result of an international comparative research. The authors studied the structure of the education systems of the countries along four dimensions: the characteristics of the structure of the education system, the content of the education (the ratio of general and vocational type of training), the level of standardization of the quality and content of the education, and the stratification and permeability of educational tracks. The authors distinguish two types of institutional contexts: the qualificational space and the organizational space, and in the terms of the content of the education the general academic education and the vocational education. There is a close relationship between the types of the transferred skills and the types of the institutional contexts, and the organizational models of both types, have their roots in the traditions of the two great European higher education model.

Regarding the phenomenon of the transition we rely on the conclusions of Shavit and Müller, according to which the strength of the relationship between the educational qualification and the occupational status attained is directly proportional to the level of standardization and to the level of stratification of the educational system, and to the vocationality of the education and inversely related to the size of the higher education (Shavit – Müller 1998). Accordingly, in countries where the educational system is highly standardized and stratified, and the educational system tends to give specific vocational skills, the transition to the labor market is more predictable, and the relationship between the educational system and labor market is more stronger, while in countries where educational system gives mainly general skills and is more flexible (less stratified and less standardized), there the connection with the labor market is weaker, the skills and qualifications marks the place of the graduates in the labor market less, so that the transition to the labor market is less predictable. We present the application of the theory in

practice later (in subchapters 2.2.2. and 2.2.3.), when we present our previous researches about the structure of the Romanian educational system, and the transition from school to work of newly graduated young professionals.

In subchapter 2.1.4. we discuss the theories related to the structure of the host side. First we introduce some labor market theories, then based on the bourdieuan concepts we interpret the social welfare system as a social field. Finally we talk about the role of non-profit organizations in the field of social assistance, as well.

From the labor market theories (Polónyi 2002), we present in detail the classification of the institutionalist school. Institutionalists say that the market is not only influenced by the laws of supply and demand, but also by various economic and non-economic institutions. According to their classification the internal labor market is an administrative unit in which the wages and the allocation of labor are controlled by administrative measures and regulations, while the processes in the external labor market are controlled directly by market factors. During our research we have taken into account this model because of our experiences of our previous research. The research showed that in Romania during the transition to the field of work, especially the domains of the public sector (eg. health care, educational system, administration but also the public social welfare sector) are showing the characteristics of the internal labor market (Csata – Dániel – Pop 2006)

In the remaining part of this chapter we analyze the social care system, which is the primary labor market for the social work graduates. Using the concepts of Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1992) we interpret the social care system as a social field, we analyze its structure and we set up a typology about the organizations operating in the field. We consistently apply Bourdieu's definition on social fields, and we examine every element of the definition in the case of the social care system. We define the function of the field of social care, its borders and the special capital present in it, the structure and method of functioning of the field. We also present the possible levels of analyzes of the field and also talk about the field of statements (Bourdieu 1998 cited in Kiss T 2006), because the statements in the case of social organizations are important factors in acquiring recognition and support from the community.

Before presenting a typology of social organizations we describe the theoretical aspects related to non-profit organizations (2.1.4.3). First we talk about the role of non-profit organizations in the field of social care. We describe the theories about the correction function of the nonprofit sector (Kiss 2010), according to which the non-profit

organizations are satisfying needs that, for any reasons, neither the state, nor the actors of the market did not fulfill. Activities related to the social assistance are inherently belonging to these kinds of needs. In addition, we also talk about the establishment of professionalized non-profit organizations. The professional literature says that due to the crisis of the welfare state, the Western European countries, driven by efficiency considerations, largely delegated the provision of certain social services to NGOs (Tvedt 1997, Ágh 1999 cited by Kiss 2006, Kiss 2010). By this way the professionalized NGOs have emerged. Finally we address the question of formal and informal nonprofit organizations. After presenting the definition of formal organizations (Blau-Scott 1966, Aldrich 1999, Csepeli 2003) we present a possible way of classification of the organizations' activities based on the model realized by the researchers of The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (Salamon et al. 2003 cited by Kiss 2010).

At the end of subchapter 2.1.4 summarizing the theories related to the hosting side, we present a typology of the structure of the field of social care. Based on the professional literature, regarding its structure, the field of social care is a complex social field, in which in addition to the regulatory, training and professional advocacy etc. actors, the most important actors are the operators of social services. Among the operators of social services we can find both the state and different nonprofit actors. These can be informal or formal organizations, for which social assistance activities can be their primary or only secondary activities. Some of the formalized organizations can step on the road to professionalization and can become professional operators which work in partnership with the state.

In subchapter 2.1.5 we end the presentation of theories and models with describing a model, which approaches to the phenomenon of professional career from the side of the actors: after describing previous social action theories (like the theory of Weber, Parsons, Habermas based on Weber 1967, Bauer 2000, Staubmann 2000, Preglau 2000), and the definition of the concepts of career and career habitus, we present the career path model of Iellatchich – Mayrhofer – Meyer (2001).

The model of Iellatchich, Mayrhofer and Meyer (2001) builds very strongly on Bourdieu's social theory. Based on Bourdieu, the concept of work is defined as a process in which the social and cultural capital is converted into primarily economic capital, but also into social and cultural capital, and the labor market is ultimately the area of exchange of skills and abilities. The authors, based on the social field concept of Bourdieu, use the concept of career fields to describe the changing field of professional work. Each career

field is occupation-specific, where workers compete for the best fitting jobs for them. In the competition they can rely on their existing volume of capital, which is made up of the three traditional capitals of Bourdieu. In each career field the career capital is considered symbolic capital, which is valued within that specific field. The career capital is the result of the investment of different capitals into the professional activity, and arises from the recognition of these activities. Individuals can move in a given path within a field or between them, which corresponds to the social mobility, and accordingly the career path means the movement within or between career fields (Iellatchich - Mayrhofer - Meyer 2001). The authors, also based on a bourdieuan concept, defined the concept of career habitus, which represents behavioral patterns prevailing in a particular career field. The career field and the career habitus mutually define each other. Integration into a given career field determines the habitus, and the habitus determines those activities that shape the field. In different career fields different habitus is expected and successful during integration (Csata et al 2009)

In the model used by us, Iellatchich, Mayrhofer and Meyer distinguish between four different types of career fields characterized by four different career logic and different combinations of capital (Iellatchich - Mayrhofer - Meyer, 2001). The four distinguished career logic is based on the stability of the job, and on how close the dependence between employer and employee is. The “company world” is characterized by the traditional organizational career path, close dependence between employers and employees and the stability of the jobs, the “free floating professionalism”, “the self-occupation” and the “chronic flexibility” covers less traditional career paths (Iellatchich - Mayrhofer - Meyer, 2001).

To achieve success in the different career fields different career habitus is needed, and this habitus is shaped by both family and adult socialization experiences, with different weight in different groups (Csata et al. 2009)

In the second half of the theoretical chapter, in subchapter 2.2, after the presentation of theoretical models, we present the previous studies that meant a starting point in the formulation of research questions and help us placing in context the results of our research. We begin the presentation of previous researches with a meta-analytic outlook (2.2.1) during which we take into account the empirical researches regarding social care professionals and students studying social care specializations in higher education (Mányai – Bass 2006, Nagy 2008, Baciú - Lazăr 2011), the Transylvanian youth researches (Pillók 2003, Kiss – Barna 2011, Bauer – Pillók – Szabó 2013, Dániel 2013, Bodó 2013, Székely

2013) researches about university students (Magyari – Péter 1997, Veres 1998, Péter 2002, Péter 2003, Pásztor – Péter 2003, Veres 2007), researches about the insertion on the labor market and career paths of Transylvanian graduates (Csata – Dániel 2005, Csata – Dániel – Pop 2006, Csata – Dániel 2007, Csata et al 2009), researches about the Hungarian nonprofit sector in Transylvania (Barna 2004, Kiss 2006, Kiss 2010, Toró – Székely 2012), as well as researches about the Romanian social care system.

At the end of the meta-analytic outlook, we summarize the main conclusions of the cited studies, which serve as a guide in the formulation of our hypotheses. The researches regarding the socio-economic background and the motivations choosing the profession of Hungarian students showed, that in the educational training of helper professionals the proportion of women is much higher than men, and at the same time, students and graduates of social work specializations, both come from families with lower socio-economic status, and a very large part of them are first generation intellectuals. Among the motives of choosing this profession the most prominent are working with people and helping them, the choice of the social work profession is induced by the personal interest and social sensitivity, nor the prestige, or the desire for success or getting rich.

The cited researches related to the hosting side are primarily pragmatic in nature, and they are intended to provide scientific data for the development of the social care system. However, the researches about the Hungarian civil sector in Romania indicate that the ratio of social care organizations among the nonprofit organizations is relatively low, only 7.2 percent of the organizations have social assistance as their main activity. In terms of employment, however, these organizations are the most important, because 46.5 percent of the 677 full-time and 216 part-time employees working in the Hungarian nonprofit sector in Romania have their job at social organizations (Kiss 2010)

After the meta-analytic outlook we present in detail the results of two previous researches, in which we were involved as researches, and the results of which had a great impact on the present research. Both researches had analyzed the insertion to the labor market or the career of young graduates in Romania. We continue the logical threads of the theoretical part. The cited studies include empirical data about both the structural conditions which determine the career paths, and the individual career paths. The research results presented are closely related to theories and models presented in the first half of the chapter, they carry them on, showing specifically how these processes take place in Romania. Using the results, we present the more narrowly defined social context in which

the transition from school to work of the social work graduates takes place; their career paths are being realized.

Subchapter 2.2.2 deals with the Romanian educational system. Despite the educational reforms (Fóris-Ferenczi 2004) after the change of the regime, the structure of the Romanian educational system, in comparison to European countries, is still averagely stratified, highly standardized and characterized by the above average weight of vocational education (Csata – Dániel 2005, Csata – Dániel – Pop 2006, Csata – Dániel 2007). In addition, based on the results of the 2007 research, we present the changes that took place in the Romanian higher education, and we complete these with the processes that took place after the end of the 2007 research (eg. the introduction of the Bologna system). As a conclusion we can say that during the post-communist transition there have taken place continuous transformations in the Romanian higher education system. The key factors that determined the higher education system were the increase in the number of students, the proportion of welfare services, the transformation of the admission system, the appearance and relapsing of career support services, the commercialization of the higher education, changes in the structure of the education, the increasing opportunities for mobility and the increasing flexibility of the education. The growing flexibility of the education, the increased institutional autonomy, as well as the partial decentralization, has created a higher educational system in Romania, which dimensions (in terms of standardization, stratification and vocationality) have a different characteristics either to its state as a few years ago, either to the state of the secondary education (Csata – Dániel – Pop 2006).

In subchapter 2.2.3 according to the thesis of the Shavit – Müller (1998) theory, based on the structure of the secondary educational system is projected a fairly predictable, based on the structure of the higher educational system is projected a less predictable labor market transition. Based on the examination of the graduates of the Babes-Bolyai University (Csata – Dániel – Pop 2006) it is considered that, in the period reviewed by that research, the institutional context (Shavi – Müller 1998) have changed from qualificational space to organizational space. We can conclude that the transition of young graduates to the labor market was becoming less and less predictable. Due to its inertia, the educational system had slower responses to the changes, was unable to adapt to the new demands of the labor market, thus the asynchrony between the educational system and the labor market has increased, it was getting harder for new graduates to find a stable job, and in the domain of their qualification (Csata – Dániel – Pop 2006).

Further on we cite the 2007 research, when, during the examination of the career paths of Hungarian youngsters from Transylvania, we had used also the model of Iellatchich – Mayrhofer and Meyer as a theoretical framework. Then we were seeking answers for two research questions. First we wanted to know if the transition towards a more flexible employment, which we had experienced in a previous research (Csata – Dániel – Pop 2006), is affecting in a different way the career transformations of youngsters with different socio-economic background, secondly that to the formation of which type of career habitus did the structure and functioning of the higher education system did favored in a given period of time, can we notice the effect of the higher education system on the forming of the habitus.

The results of the research showed, that the habitus of youngsters from disadvantaged sections of society are more characterized by a habitus, which is needed for a success in the “company world” field, which operates by the logic of an internal labor market. Furthermore there are major differences in the urban and rural career paths, finally in the differences between the career habitus of different cohorts, we can detect the effects of the changing structure of the higher education (along the factors mentioned above) (Csata et al. 2009)

The third chapter of the thesis presents the “**Research Methodology**”. In the methodology section first we clarify the cognitive interest and the motivation of choosing the topic, and then we specify the target group and the topic of the research. This is followed by the presentation of the hypotheses, based upon previous research findings and our own personal experiences. After the presentation of the hypotheses we describe the methodological choices and the methods used, finally we take a critical look on the data sources. The second part of the methodology section includes three pilot studies, which beside our main research helped in collection of additional data, and provided additional information especially for the analysis of the hosting side. Finally, the methodological part ends with the presentation of the course of the research.

As we clarify the cognitive interest (Habermas 1976 cited by Preglau 2000) and the motivations of the research (subchapter 3.1.), we state that, our research is a mainly applied and practice-oriented one, we focus on the collection and processing of empirical data. The theoretical embedment of the research is only as deep as is necessary for a proper interpretation of the results, and putting them into context. All of this is because, with the knowledge acquired from the research, we would like to help solving of practical problems, such as strengthening the career support and career guidance activities of the

university (with help of support services which develop the resources determining the labor market success), helping the approximation of the university education to the labor market needs (by getting to know the employers' expectations), providing useful information, for young people choosing their future profession, about the labor market needs and about their possible chances of success on the labor market as social workers. Accordingly the enlargement of the theoretical knowledge has only a secondary importance, but is not negligible. With the results of the research we want to contribute to the enlargement of the knowledge base regarding the career of Hungarian graduates of Transylvania.

In subchapter 3.2, we define the target group, and the time dimension of the research. The research period starts with the beginning of the Hungarian language social work education in Cluj-Napoca and ends with the analysis of the class which graduated in June 2012. Thus, our target group consists of 732 graduated people out of 1077 enrolled between 1993 and 2009, who have studied social work, Protestant theology – social work or Roman Catholic theology – social work specializations, in a Hungarian language study program, in full-time or distance learning education at the Babeş-Bolyai University. Although it is a cross-sectional research, beside the presentation of the current status of the graduates, we managed to collect data on the evolution of the social work training, and the career paths of the graduates, so we could grab temporal processes as well.

Subchapter 3.3 contains the aims and hypotheses of the research. Because of the complexity of the cognitive interest, and due to the fact that has not yet been realized any research regarding the professional paths of the social work graduates of the Babes-Bolyai University, the aims of the research are complex as well: we can find exploratory, descriptive and explanatory research aims as well. On the one hand we aim to get a more accurate picture about the insertion to the labor market of the social work graduates as well as about their professional career. We want to know if the graduates live in the country or abroad, how is their labor market status, in what proportion did they find a job or continue their studies, if did they find a job which fits their qualifications, at what types of institutes do they work, with what kind of target groups do they work, what positions do they have, what kind of career paths did they have, how successful they are, and how satisfied with their current status, workplace, and career. On the other hand, in addition to the description, our aim is also the explanation. We want to explore the factors behind labor market success, we want to answer the question whether differences in family origin, academic achievements, professional interest, or volunteering during university studies, does have an effect on professional success of the graduates.

We formulate five hypotheses, and we present them in subchapters 3.3.1 - 3.3.5. The first hypothesis is related to the socio-economic background of the social workers, and the second one to their career habitus. The third hypothesis formulates assumptions about the factors underlying the labor market success. Finally, the fourth and fifth hypothesis is related to the host side. The fourth hypothesis analyzes the role of nonprofit organizations in the operation of the social care system, and the fifth hypothesis the employers' expectations, and the extent to which the graduates are familiar with them. During the presentation of the hypotheses, we perform the necessary steps of conceptualization and operationalization, namely we define what we exactly mean under each concepts present in the hypotheses, and we present through what indicators we will test our hypotheses.

The hypotheses are based on, on the one hand to the theoretical assumptions, on the other hand to previous research results, and thirdly on our own personal and professional experiences.

The first hypothesis says that the social work graduates of the Babeş-Bolyai University have similar characteristics such as different social profession graduates from Hungary, namely around 80 percent of them are women, 60 to 85 percent first generation intellectuals, and among their parents less than 20 percent is the rate of leaders and with intellectual occupations.

In the formulation of the first hypothesis, in the first place, we start from finding of recent Hungarian researches, which are related to persons with helping professions, or students studying to become a helper (Nagy 2008). At the same time, the assumption formulated in the second hypothesis is based on the results of a research on the career analysis of Hungarian graduates of Transylvania (Csata et al. 2009). According to the hypothesis, the career habitus of social workers is characterized by a strong commitment to helping professions, and is close to the logic of the "company world" (Iellatchich – Mayrhofer – Meyer 2001), as they are likely to come from lower socio-economic status families. This career logic is mainly characterized by risk aversion and a strong preference for security.

In the third hypothesis we examine the factors underlying the labor market success, and we assume, that academic achievements, active gaining of professional experiences during university studies, the continuous self-education, as well as the background of origin and the career habitus play an important role in the professional success of the social workers.

The fourth hypothesis is already related to the host side. We assume that non-profit organizations have an important role in the Romanian social care system and they are important employers for the social work graduates. Operationalizing the concepts of the hypothesis, we assume that the organizations with non-profit background give at least 30 to 40 percent of the service providers of the field of social care, there are more Hungarian nonprofit organizations in Transylvania with social care activity than it was found by the research of the Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities (Kiss 2010), finally at least 30 to 40 percent of the graduated social workers are working at social service providers with non-profit background.

The fifth and final hypothesis presumes that in the field of social care, the employers' expectations are clearly defined, and those graduates who are working in the field know more or less these expectations.

In **subchapter 3.4**, we present the methods used in the research. Our greatest methodological dilemma was, that during the investigation of the career paths of the social workers, what extent and depth of research should we achieve. One of the choices was to use only quantitative methods to create a comprehensive picture about the transition of the social workers to the labor market, and their professional career, the other choice was to realize a less comprehensive, but deeper and more detailed analysis, where in addition to quantitative methods, we could apply qualitative methods as well. Finally we have chosen the first possibility. The reason of the decision was, on the one hand, that the objectives of the research requested the implementation of a more comprehensive analysis, which later gives the possibility of formulating more specific research questions, on the other hand, the research population was so numerous and was living in a so wide geographic area, that it would have been too difficult to investigate it with qualitative methods. Thus, for the collection of data and the formulation of the answers for our questions, we have chosen the processing of data available in official documents, and the method of the survey. In addition we have conducted three pilot researches, in order to examine the host side.

In the remainder of this chapter the author describes in detail the chosen research methods and the mentioned pilot studies. For collecting data related of the graduates we have chosen two main methods: the processing of existing institutional data, as well as the online survey method. During the description of the used methods we take into account the assessments found in the literature and we consider the advantages and disadvantages of each method, and at the same time, we present the measures taken in order to eliminate the disadvantages.

The main advantages of the analysis of institutional data are that they are far more accurate than the data that we could gain from personal interview (especially in the case of academic achievements, grades and averages), and they are suitable for longitudinal studies. However the management of data gaps could cause problems, and the source criticism is very important, in order to see the validity range of the data clearly (Magyari 2005). The online survey method incorporates the advantages of the survey method (is suitable for the description of the characteristics of a large population), and furthermore the online version is easy to fill and practically inexpensive solution, and the anonymity of respondents is easy to ensure. Based on the cited literature (Babbie 2003, Horváth et al. 2012) the biggest problem of the online survey method is the unpredictable rate of return. Because of this, we have taken the greatest effort exactly in order to increase the return-ratio. For this purpose we have taken the following measures: we have built a database containing the contact details of the graduates, we have sent letters of encouragement for them (personal mails as well as mails to the mailing list of the different classes), and we have prepared a shorter version of the questionnaire. These measures were successful, because instead of the expected 15 percent return-ratio (Kuráth – Németh 2011) we have achieved a 42.21 percent return-ratio.

In **subchapter 3.5**, we present our data sources and we analyze them with an appropriate source-critique. From the institutional data available we have examined the admission and the license examination results, which could be found at the secretariats of the faculties. These lists contained the name of the students, their average marks at admittance, the form of funding, the place and date of birth, their academic achievements (average grades of the study years), and the license grades. From the lists it also turned out, in which admission period and final exam period did the students participate, and in this way we can calculate in how much time the person did ended his studies. From the problems related with the data sources, we can mention the changes in the structure of the lists, the data gaps, as well as the case of people, who had made their admission more than once (in consecutive years). At the same time, in this subchapter, we also present the procedures we used to correct these problems (estimations, filtering).

For the collection of socio-demographic, labor market- and career-related data on the graduates, we have used two online surveys. The first survey contained 198 questions (including filtered questions), the second – shortened – version 68 questions. The latter version was prepared with the intention to enhance the response rate of the graduates.

The longer survey contains 15 question blocks, which are as follows: questions related to the socio-demographic and family background of the graduates, to their place of residence, to their academic paths, to their professional activities during university education, to their career paths, to their experiences with child-raising period, to their current labor market status, to their past jobs (first job, first job corresponding to their professional qualification, present job), to their second job, to their current income, questions related to their satisfaction with their current job and with their career, and questions related to the professional competences. At the end of the questionnaire we have made a question block for the graduates who are in an executive position. We asked them about the importance of different aspects which have influenced their decision when they employed social workers in the past. This question block was used to assess the employers' expectations.

This chapter also includes the presentation of the course of data collection. This took place between 28 June and 15 August 2013, for more than one and a half month. The length of the period was justified by the slow return of the questionnaires. Furthermore we describe in detail the dates when the reminder letters were sent, and the date of sending the shortened questionnaire, and at the same time we illustrate on a figure the evolution of the return process. By the end of the research period we have received 470 questionnaires, from which, after filtering and cleaning (repeatedly started questionnaires, responses of person outside the target group, etc.) it remained 293 questionnaires. The return-ratio is above 40 percent, which is a very good rate, and gives the possibility that after a weighting procedure the results can be representative. In the next subchapter we present the procedure of weighting and the applied weights. As the result of the process, the database became statistically representative for sex, educational class, form of study (full-time / distance learning) and specialization.

At the end of this subchapter we write about our *ethical dilemma*. Our question was if we may add identification codes (tokens) to the questionnaires, and if we may combine the responses with the data collected from the secretariats. Finally, we decided to use the identification codes. This step had two important advantages for the research: greatly helped the filtration of the inadequate questionnaires and helped to increase the response rate. We have restored the anonymity of the participants after the filtration of the inadequate questionnaires and the combination of the databases, so in the final database no single person can be identified by name among the respondents.

The subchapter 3.6 includes the *three pilot studies* mentioned before. Within the framework of the research it was not possible an in-depth examination of the hosting side, so we have conducted three pilot studies, the results of which helped us the verification of the hypothesis, as well as a better understanding of the Romanian social care field.

In subchapter 3.6.1 we present the pilot study, in which we examined the Hungarian non-profit social organizations of Romania. The goal of the research was, to get an accurate picture about the potential employers of social workers from the group of non-profit social organizations. In our fourth research hypothesis we assumed that non-profit organizations have an important role in the Romanian social care system, and they are important employers of social work graduates. There were available the results of a 2009 research realized by the Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities (RIRNM) about the number and employment potential of the Hungarian non-profit social organizations of Romania, however we were skeptical about them (we think that the researchers have underestimated the size of the Hungarian non-profit social sector of Transylvania and its employment potential), and we thought that is necessary a detailed assessment of the social organizations.

During the presentation of the research first we present the methodology, results and main conclusions of the 2009 research of the RIRNM from Cluj-Napoca. We think that the review of the methodology (the definition of organizations, the method of compilation of the database) is important, because in our research, due to the comparability, we have chosen similar methods. Further on we describe the method of compilation of our own database, and the used data sources (we have completed the public database of the RIRNM with the data of several nonprofit catalogues).

The final database includes 223 organizations with social activity, all with legal personality (almost twice as much as in the database of the RIRNM). We have examined the structure of the Hungarian non-profit social field in Romania, by the legal background and operating background of the organizations, as well as by special distribution. We have also investigated the (primary or secondary) activities of the organizations, different from the social assistance activity. By this we determined the fields which the social organizations are connected with. Finally, we described the evolution of the field over time, we set up an own model to classify the organizations, and examined the employment potential of them. In the classification we identified three groups of the legally registered organizations: organizations operating accredited social services (which correspond to the professionalized nonprofit organizations, Kiss 2010), the organizations primarily engaged

in social activities and organizations, as well as organizations which social activity have only a secondary importance in the activities of the organizations.

The results of the pilot study, on the one hand, are related to the size and internal structure of the field, on the other hand, to its employment potential. In the terms of the hypothesis, the important results were: there are at least twice as many non-profit organizations with social service activities among the Hungarian non-profit organizations in Romania (223 organizations), than the number identified by the 2009 research of the RIRNM, and in the same time the employment potential of these organizations is about 1500 people, which is about three times as large as measured in 2009.

From subchapter 3.6.2 we get to know the other pilot study, which focused on the *analysis of the online communication of the Hungarian non-profit social organizations of Transylvania*. During the pilot study our goal was to examine the statements (Bourdieu 1998) communicated by the organizations. We wanted to know how the statements related to the mission and activities of the organization, as well as their job offers, appear in a segment of the public sphere, in the online communicational space (which we were limited here to the organizations' websites, and to the most popular social networking site, the Facebook).

Behind the research question stood two different motivations. First, the publication of the statements is an important part of the way of operation of the social field, so it is interesting from the point of view of the analysis of the field. Secondly, is more important to explain the phenomenon, why online communication interfaces cannot play an intermediary role (tool) in the job mediation process? The graduates or the organizations did not use these tools during searching for a job or popularization of the job offers? (The results of the online survey showed that websites of the organizations and social networking sites play only a small role in the terms of job ads).

In order to give answers to these questions, we examined the websites of the Hungarian non-profit social organizations of Romania (90 websites), and for two months (April and May 2013) we followed their Facebook activity (in the case of 50 organizations), and recorded their published statements (posts). In this two months period we have built a database of 1250 statements (posts), and we have performed statistical analyzes on it. We have recorded the author and the type of each post, in the case of the links, the address and the type of the landing page, the content of the post, link or image, as well as the reaction of the community to these statements (the number of likes, shares and comments).

At the end of the presentation of the research we present some important results. The results relevant to the research questions show, that there are only 13 organizations out of 226, which during the two months period have published at least 10 statements (posts). This means a very low activity. Regarding the content of the statements the one related to the activity and mission of the organizations are dominant: teasers, reports, event invitations. The job adverts and the volunteer calls composed only a negligible percentage: in two months there were published only 2 job offers and 1 call for volunteers on Facebook by the Hungarian nonprofit social organizations in Romania.

The third pilot study is presented in subchapter 3.6.3, and its topic is the *analysis of the accredited social services in Romania*. Our research goal was to know the characteristics of these actors of the Romanian social care field, the structure and content of the accredited subfield. For this purpose we used the data of the electronic registry of the Ministry of Social, Family and Labour Affairs (downloaded on 5th of August, with the data of 6162 accredited social service), of which we created two databases: one about the organizations which operate these accredited social services, and a second one about the accredited social services.

In the database for each service can be found the name of the operating organization, the location of the institution, and the location of the implementation of the service, the lists of the target group, the targeted social problems, the list of the professional staff employed, the list of specific services, and also the date of the accreditation. About the organizations we have recorded their legal form, operator's background, their location and the number of the accredited social services they operate.

We do not present the results of the pilot studies in this chapter, due to space limitations, but we note that some of these results will be used in the analysis of the host side and presented in a later subchapter (4.5). However we list the type of results the research gave and how they can be used. The results allow us to analyze the role of the public and nonprofit sector, the structure and content of the services, and also the exploration of regional and ethnic differences. In addition, which is even more important from the point of view of the research, we received information about the number of accredited social services in which social workers are employed.

We close the chapter describing the methodology of the research with the presentation of the course of the research (subchapter 3.7). We present the preparation phase of the research, the analysis of the institutional data collected at the secretariats, the pilot studies and also the course of the survey data collection.

The summary of the results of our research and conclusions

The **results of our research** are presented in **Chapter 4**. The results are discussed through four subchapters, each subchapter shows one topic.

In **subchapter 4.1**, based on the results obtained from the analysis of institutional data, *we present the history of the Social Work training in Hungarian language in Cluj-Napoca*, including the evolution of the number of the students, the dropout rate and the regularities behind it, and the evolution of the number of graduates. From the results we also find out the learning motivations of the social work students and the catchment area of the social work specializations of the Babes-Bolyai University.

In **subchapter 4.2**, with the help of our research results, *we present the socio-demographic background of the social work graduates*. In this subchapter we present the basic socio-demographic characteristics of the social work graduates (sex, age, type of place of origin), family origin background, and motivations of choosing social work profession. During the presentation of the background of family origin, we present the results related to the educational level and occupational status of the parents, and at the end of the subchapter we present the results related to high school background and professional choice of the graduates.

Subchapter 4.3 contains the *results related to the professional career of the graduates*. First we present the current socio-economic situation of the graduates, including their marital status, geographical mobility, current labor market situation of the graduates as well as their current job and income. We shall discover in the following the forms of employment of the social work graduates throughout their careers, what kind of career habitus they are characterized by, when they entered the labor market, when they obtained their first job in their field of study, how long have they been unemployed, what kind of difficulties did they encounter when they returned from child care leave. We find also in this subchapter the results related to the future plans of the graduates (intentions of changing jobs, plans for continuing their studies or plans getting employed abroad).

In **subchapter 4.4** we analyze the factors which determine the success graduates have in the labor market. First of all we define what we mean by success in the labor market, presenting the objective and subjective indicators by which we determined this concept. After this we present the objective indicators of the success in the labor market (current status of the labor market, current jobs and income, the speed of getting into the

labor market and finding a job, the speed of getting a job corresponding to their professional qualification) and the related results. At the end of the subchapter we present the results related to the subjective indicators (level of satisfaction with professional career and level of satisfaction with the current job).

Also in this chapter come the presentation and the analysis of the effect of the factors which determine the success of the labor market. In **subchapter 4.4.2** we deal with academic achievements, various indicators of the professional activity during university studies, the obtained qualifications (highest level of education, professional training courses conducted), volunteer experience during university, previous work experience, professional experience, different socio-demographic indicators (parents' educational level, type of the place of origin). Finally in **subchapter 4.4.3** we analyze how these factors influence the labor market success of the graduates.

Subchapter 4.5 contains the results of the doctoral research related to the examining of the host side. But before this, in **subsection 4.5.1** we present the legal regulation of the social field in Romania, thus we offer the frame for understanding our results. The presentation of the host side in **subchapter 4.5.2** starts with the description of the subfield of the Romanian accredited social services, in which description we rely on our results from the pilot studies. Throughout the description we present the structure of the accredited social subfield, the distribution of services and service providers, the ratio of public and non-profit service providers, and various regional differences. Then we deal with the substantive characteristics of accredited services. In this section we learn which socially problematic situations do the Romanian accredited social services address, which target groups do they provide specific services for and in what types of locations and institutions do they implement these services. Finally, we may learn about temporal changes in the subfield as well, since the introduction of the accreditation system. In **subchapter 4.5.3** we analyze the Hungarian nonprofit social subfield of Romania. Relying on pilot studies, we present its structure based on the legal form, operational background, and type of organizations, then we also present the spatial distribution of these organizations. Next we describe the other activities and relations with other fields of the social organizations, finally in the last part of the subchapter (*in subchapter 4.5.3.6*), we present from the Hungarian nonprofit social organizations in Romania those, which operate accredited social services. During the characterization of the organizations we use the same criteria, which we used in the previous subchapter, during the presentation of the Romanian accredited social services, and by these criteria we compare the Hungarian

organizations from Transylvania with the majoritarian Romanian organizations. In **subchapter 4.5.4** we analyze the occupational potential of the Romanian social care field. We do not undertake to present complete data about the number and type of all available jobs for social workers, we only analyze a few dimensions: we present the accredited organizations which employ social workers, we analyze the data about the members of the professional college of social workers, and we look how many persons do the Hungarian nonprofit social organizations in Romania employ, which are the largest employers and what type of organizations they are. In **subchapter 4.5.5**, the latest which presents the result of the research on the host side, we examine the employers' expectations. First, based on 15 job advertisements collected in the first half of 2013, we present the type of available jobs and the expectations present in the job advertisements. Next, based on the results of the online survey, we present the criteria that employers consider important during the selection of the employees, and also the answers of the employees about the importance of the same criteria. At the end of the subchapter, we compare the expectations openly expressed in the job advertisements with the implicit expectations of the employers, which we got to know from the survey results, and also the expectations of the employers with the way employees see these expectations, and we formulate our conclusions.

At the end of each subchapter we summarize the results of each topic. These subchapters contain the partial conclusions of the research and have the same structure: first we briefly summarize the topic of the subchapter, then the results which are important in testing the hypotheses, finally we present some more results, which are not strongly associated with the hypotheses of the research, but are important from the point of view of the examined phenomenon.

In the following, we summarize the main conclusions of the doctoral thesis, along the research hypotheses.

1. The socio-demographic background of social work graduates

Since the beginning of the social worker training, until the summer of 2012, about 732 people graduated on social work specializations in Hungarian language at the Babes-Bolyai University. Among the candidates to the social work specializations the proportion of women is very high (83.7%), which, because of the higher dropout rate of the men, becomes even higher to the end of the university studies. Thus, the proportion of women among the graduated social workers becomes 87.8%, what is to say almost nine out of ten

social workers are women. This proportion is higher than the proportion of women among the Hungarian students in Transylvania in general (Magyari – Péter 1997, Pásztor – Péter 2003, Veres 2007), and is similar to the result of the research related to students who studied (or graduated) helping professions in Hungary (Mányai – Bass 2006, Nagy 2008).

To determine the background of origin of the social workers we collected data about the level of education and occupational status of the parents. To determine the highest level of education we used an extended version of the classical Blau – Duncan scale for educational attainment (Blau – Duncan 1998) and to determine the occupational status a version of the Erikson – Goldthorpe schema, which is adapted to the Transylvanian relations (Veres 2003).

The results related to the *educational level of the parents* showed that, only 16.17% of the fathers, as well as only 13.5% of the mothers of the graduates have higher education qualification. In the case of 78.7% of the graduates neither parents, in the case of 12.9% only one parent, and only in the case of 8.4% of the graduates have both parents higher education qualification. Thus, among the social workers the proportion of first generation intellectuals is much higher than among the Hungarian university students in Transylvania in general (Veres 1997, Magyari – Péter 1997, Pásztor – Péter 2003, Pillók 2003) and almost similar to the proportions found in Hungarian researches (Nagy 2008).

Related to the occupational status of the parents we have realized two different analyzes: in the case of the roman-catholic theology – social work students we examined the occupational status of the parents in the moment of the admission, and in the case of all graduates we asked the current (latest) occupation of the parents. The data obtained this way does not allow to describe the exact occupational structure of the parents (because we could not classify exactly the entrepreneurs, farmers and self-employed craftsmen), but these problems resulting from a lack of information does not influence the analyses of the top of the occupational structure. Both analyzes produced the result that, among the parents of social work students and graduates the proportion of leaders and high-intellectuals is very low: in the case of students of the roman-catholic theology – social work specialization only 2-3% of the parents, while in the case of all social work graduates only 5-10% of the parents were leaders or had an higher-intellectual occupation. Furthermore, in the case of the graduates only 10-12% of the parents had a subordinate intellectual occupation.

All these results confirm our first hypothesis: 87.8% of the graduates are women, 78.7% are first generation intellectuals, and among their parents only 5-10% is the rate of

the persons with leading function or higher intellectual occupation. In the case of all indicators the social work graduates from Cluj-Napoca are similar to the helper profession graduates from Hungary, and they are different from graduates of other professions. Thus, in terms of family backgrounds, the social work graduates are originated from lower socio-economic status families, than other graduates, and women are far more overrepresented in this profession than man.

2. The career habitus of social work graduates

Results about the career paths of the social work graduates showed, that they are characterized primarily by the stable work relations of the “company world”, as the graduates mostly worked as employees (and mainly with indefinite-term contract) (4.29 scale score), while the more flexible employment forms (part-time jobs, project based jobs, student jobs, individual proprietorship etc.) had a very low score (1.20 to 1.52 scale score).

Results about the career habitus of the graduates (Iellatchich – Mayrhofer – Meyer 2001) showed that they prefer to work as employees, and they highly appreciate the security of the job. The highest scoring items were the employee occupational form (3.26 points) and the job security (3.84 points). The independent expert (2.92 points), the self-employment (2.93 points), and the “chronic flexibility” habitus, characterized by changes in profession (2.84 points), received much lower scores.

Examining the career paths, it turned out that the graduates are less mobile in the labor market: they had relatively few jobs and rarely changed them.

Social work graduates, during their professional career had in average 2.20 jobs, where they have worked for at least 3 months. 7.2% of them did not have such a job yet, while the majority also had only one (26.2%), two (30%) or three (20.2%) jobs since now. Only 16.3 percent of the graduates had more than three jobs.

In total more than two third (67.7%) of the graduates changed their job less often than two years, but also in total 42.8% of them had worked in average more than four years, and in total 31.6% of them in average more than five years at the same workplace.

As a conclusion we can declare that social work graduates are indeed characterized by a safety seeking career habitus. This manifests, in the facts that they work mostly in traditional forms of occupation, they prefer this employee position and job security more than a rapid career progress or the more flexible forms of occupation, as well as they are less mobile in the labor market.

Furthermore, in our second hypothesis we presume that the career habitus of the social workers is also characterized by a strong commitment to this helper profession. During the examination of this topic we have found that this commitment manifests in the motivations of choosing a profession, in the level of satisfaction with the current job and with the professional career, in the reasons of job changing, as well as in the phenomenon, that the social workers despite the lower salary they stick to their vocation.

Social work graduates mostly choose this profession because, they wanted to have a profession where they can work with people, and they can help other people. More than two third (67.7%) of the respondents choose this option. Furthermore, slightly more than the half of the graduates (52.77%) chooses the option, that she felt competent for this profession because of her individual competences, as well as they were interested by the courses thought (51.79%). These were the three most typical answers, regarding the motivations of choosing a profession.

During the analysis of the satisfaction with the professional career, we have found that, those graduates are the most satisfied with their professional career by all indicators, which have a job, which corresponds to their qualification as social workers. These graduates have evaluated their professional career on a ten point scale to 7.56 points, while graduates who have a job corresponding to some other qualification they have scored 7.33 points, and the graduates which have a job that does not correspond to any professional qualification they have scored only 5.11 points ($F=23,986$; $p=0,000$). Furthermore, they rather think that their current job is an appropriate stage of their professional career (7.02 points against 6.46 and 2.91 points of the other groups) ($F=47,651$; $p=0,000$), and they are more satisfied with their current job (3.43 points on a five points scale) than graduates working outside of social work profession (3.02 points) ($F=4,873$; $p=0,009$). All three differences are statistically significant.

The intention of job changing is higher among those graduates, who currently have a job that does not correspond to their qualifications. The 38.46% of this group said that they surely will and another 23.08% that they probably will change their jobs in the near future. In contrast among the graduates who work in a position that corresponds to some of their qualifications (except social work) the proportion of the persons who surely will change their job is 17.24%, and in the group of graduates who work as social workers just only 8.65%. The differences are statistically significant ($\chi^2=26,383$; $p=0,001$).

Among those, who want to change their jobs, the majority would like to get a new job which corresponds to their social work qualification, as more than 60% of the

respondents give a 4 or 5 point evaluation to the question, that how strong will be the connection between their planned new job and their social worker qualification.

The most common causes of the intention of a job change is, that the person would like to work in a job that corresponds to her professional qualification (21.10% of the respondents gave this answer), so the primary direction of the job changes is inwards the professional field. Even there are some persons, who work abroad and would return home if they would find a job in their social worker profession.

We think that it shows very clearly the commitment to the helping profession, that the graduates despite the lower wage, still would prefer a job in their professional field, than outside of it, as well as, the amount of their salary does not appear in the level of career satisfaction.

It can be seen already at the motives of choosing the profession, that the good earning opportunity was not an important motivating factor in choosing the social worker profession. Only 1.22% of the graduates thought at the moment of the admission that they are choosing this profession because they expect good salaries in this field. Also our results show, that among the graduates the ones working as social workers have the smallest salary, however the differences are not statistically significant, only indicative.

Among the graduates, the ones who have a job not corresponding to any of their professional qualifications earn in Romania in average 1251 lei (1305 lei with other allowances) a month, the ones who work as social workers 1063 lei (1121 lei), while the ones who have a job corresponding to another qualification than social work earn in average 1278 lei (1495 lei) ($F=1,519$; $p=0,224$, as well as $F=2,446$; $p=0,092$).

However these differences do not appear in a negative way in the subjective assessment of the current job or the professional career. In the case of the graduates who live in Romania, the amount of the salary correlates only with the satisfaction with the current job (specifically with the index of it) ($r=0.237$; $p=0.015$) and does not correlate with the assessment of the current job as a proper stage of the career ($r=0.033$; $p=0.731$) nor with the assessment of the entire professional career ($r=0.009$; $p=0.923$). When we have calculated the correlations with the salary together with other allowances, we received similar results.

As a conclusion we can say, that our second hypothesis was also confirmed: the career habitus of the social work graduates is characterized by a risk-averse (safety searching) attitude, specific for the career habitus of the “company world”, and a strong commitment to their helping profession.

3. Factors influencing the labor market success of the social workers

The most important questions of our research were that: What is the current labor market status of the social work graduates of the Babes-Bolyai University? What kind of professional career they had since graduation? How successful were their careers? And what kind of factors influences the realization of a successful professional career?

During the process of conceptualization we defined the concept of labor market success in the way that we considered successful the person, who after obtaining a university diploma found a job relatively quickly corresponding to his professional qualification, was not pushed out of the labor market against his will, has a good income, is satisfied with his job, and he considers it an appropriate stage of his career. We grouped the indicators of the labor market success into objective and subjective dimensions. In the group of the objective indicators belongs the labor market status, the correspondence between the professional qualification and the profile of the current job, the length of the unemployed periods in relation to the total length of the career, and the salary. Subjective indicators were the level of satisfaction with the current job, the assessment of the current job as the appropriate stage of the career, as well as the level of satisfaction with the entire professional career.

During the presentation of the results first we describe the characteristics of the graduates along these objective and subjective indicators, then we examine the relationship between each of them, finally we examine the impact of the different factors on the different indicators of the labor market success.

The results related to the present labor market status of the graduates show that around 70 to 80 percent of the graduates are active in the labor market (10.7% are learning, 14.2% are on a child care leave, 4.2% are unemployed), and the three-quarters of the employed graduates have a job, which corresponds to one of their professional qualifications. The proportion of those who have a job corresponding to their social work qualification is 56.2%. Furthermore, the graduates of the double specializations (theology – social work) can actually use their double qualification, because in their case there are fewer people, who must work in a position that does not correspond to any of their specializations. While the 30.3% of the graduates of simple specializations work in a position that does not correspond to his qualification, only 25.5% of the graduates of double specializations are in the same situation ($\chi^2=10,168$; $p=0,038$).

The income of the graduates has already been described above. Regarding *the other objective indicators of the labor market success*, we have found that the graduates have spent in average 6.26% of their career path unemployed. A significant proportion of the graduates already started to work before the beginning or during their university studies, however almost half of them still followed the classical career and started to work only after finishing their studies. Those persons who have started working after graduation, could find a job in general in 5 months, and in the same time, more than two third of the graduates could find a job in less than 4 months. By this time 57% of these graduates have found a job which corresponds to their social worker qualification, an additional 8% as could find a job as religion teachers, and another 5% could find a job which corresponds to other qualification of them. In this way 23% were the proportion of those persons, who could not find a job corresponding to their qualifications.

We found a close relationship between the *subjective indicators of the labor market success*. The satisfaction with the current job (which was formulated based on different criteria) positively correlates with the extent to which respondents believed their current job is an appropriate stage of their career ($r=0.566$; $p=0.000$), and also with how satisfied they are with their professional career ($r=0.622$; $p=0.000$). At the same time, those who consider that their current job is an appropriate stage of their career, are also more satisfied with their professional career ($r=0.736$; $p=0.000$).

However, we found no significant relationship between the *objective indicators of labor market success*, only indicative ones. The graduates whose job did not correspond to their qualifications, were unemployed in average of 8.55% of the length of their career, who works as a social worker only 5.69% and who has a job which corresponds to other qualification only 1.64%. This suggests, that it is easier to find a job corresponding to other qualification than as a social worker, and they are likely to choose other kind of jobs the graduates, who could not get a job relevant to their social worker qualifications ($F=2.803$; $p=0.065$).

Examining the relations between the objective and subjective indicators of success, we have found, that the rapidity of which the graduates have found a job at the beginning of their career, does not affect the level of satisfaction with their career, or the level of satisfaction with their current job. However, their current labor market status all the more.

The most satisfied are the persons who are studying (7.75 points out of 10), working (6.88 and 7.57 points), and the persons who are on a child care leave (7.33 points). The least satisfied are the unemployed persons (3.80 points) and those who do odd

jobs (3.00 points), but they are also less satisfied the housewives (6.00 point), those who do odd jobs in addition of studying (5.00 points), the self-employed and the freelancers (6.33 points both groups). We must highlight however, that in case of some groups, the number of cases was quite low, but the differences in the case of the persons living in Romania were statistically significant ($F=1.878$; $p=0.040$).

We also found correlation between the job position and the level of satisfaction. Our results showed that, the leaders are more satisfied with their present situation, than the employees. On the satisfaction index with the current job the leaders scored in average 3.62 points (out of 5), while the employees only 3.10 points ($F=16.122$; $p=0.000$). In the assessment of the current job as an appropriate stage of the career, the leaders scored 6.51 points (out of 10), while the employees only 5.10 points ($F=9.013$; $p=0.003$), as well as in the case of the satisfaction with the whole professional career the leaders scored 7.51 points, while the employees only 6.32 points ($F=11.201$; $p=0.001$).

One important result of us is, that the graduates who work in a position which corresponds to their social work qualification are overall more satisfied with their career, than their peers, who have a job which corresponds to their other qualifications, or those persons, who are forced to work in different position than their qualifications.

Table nr 1: the analysis of the relation between the job profile and the level of satisfaction with the professional career

		corresponding to social worker qualification	corresponding to other qualification	not corresponding to any qualification	Significance
1	The satisfaction index regarding the current job	3.43	3.56	3.02	$F=4.873$ $p=0.009$
2	The current job as an appropriate stage of the career	7.02	6.46	2.91	$F=47.651$ $p=0.000$
3	Level of satisfaction with the professional career	7.56	7.33	5.11	$F=23.986$ $p=0.000$

Finally, as we have already seen at the analysis of the previous hypothesis, the differences in income does not appear negatively in the satisfaction with the career.

Next we examined the possible relations between the different factors and indicators of labor market success, in order to identify those factors that determine the labor market success of the graduates.

The results show, that there is a significant relationship between *the length of the period which is needed to find a job after graduation and the academic results of the graduates*. From the persons which have found their first job after graduation, those who had higher academic averages have found a job faster than their colleagues ($r=-0.380$; $p=0.000$ in the case of the academic average, as well as $r=-0.311$; $p=0.000$ in the case of the thesis grade). Likewise there is a significant relationship in the case of *the length of the period which is needed to find a job corresponding to their qualifications*. From those persons which have found their first job corresponding to their professional qualification, those who had higher academic averages have found a job faster as well than their colleagues ($r=-0.281$; $p=0.010$). The length of the unemployment period is also correlates with the academic results of the graduates. In this case the relationship is even stronger: the length of the unemployment period is in a negative correlation with the academic results ($r=-0.320$; $p=0.001$ with the grade of the license exam; $r=-0.401$; $p=0.000$ with the grade of the thesis; $r=-0.369$; $p=0.000$ with the license average; $r=-0.288$; $p=0.000$ with the academic average; $r=-0.260$; $p=0.006$ with the admission average).

When studying the youngest generation of graduates (cohort), these connections became even more evident. The social workers who were working in their own field after finishing their studies were the ones who had obtained higher grades and better degrees. Although the differences are not significant, *the results highlight the fact that graduates who achieved better grades during their studies are also more likely to find work in their own field*. Graduates who obtained a lower degree and were unable to find work at home usually attempt to gain a living abroad.

Table 2: The connection between work-profile and study achievements

	2005-2009 cohort	Admission average	Average of written exams	Average of dissertation	Degree average	Total studies' average
1	not working in own field	7,89	7,20	8,50	8,37	8,02
2	Working as a social worker	8,25	8,55	9,18	9,04	8,23
3	Working in another field	8,69	8,79	8,95	8,90	8,27
	average	8,22	8,07	8,92	8,79	8,17
	significance	F=1,821 p=0,170	F=2,126 p=0,138	F=1,963 p=0,148	F=2,109 p=0,129	F=0,758 p=0,472

Finally we concluded that those subjects who work and/or study have on overall a higher average than those who gain their living from temporary jobs or those who are unemployed (the average grades of those who work or study is 8.30, for those who are unemployed it is 8.08, and 7.71 for those who live from temporary work; $F=2,829$; $p=0,039$).

Therefore, the study achievements do predict to a certain degree the person's success on the labor market. This can be measured in the amount of time graduates needs to spend before they find employment, i.e. how quickly they are able to settle for a job after getting their degree, but also whether they are able to find a job corresponding to their professional qualification.

However, study-achievements cannot entirely define one's success on the labor market. The results of our research emphasizes the fact that, apart from the connections between the different indicators that measure achievements in and during their studies, the connections between grades on one hand, and professional activities, volunteering, further studies and trainings on the other, are also of significant importance.

Students with better grades on average are more likely to take part in professional and academic activities during their studies (the professional activism-index for full-time students is significantly correlated with the average of their final exams $r=0.148$; $p=0.036$, as well as with their average grades $r=0.203$; $p=0.003$), and students with better grades are also the ones who engage in volunteering during their university years (the average grade of those who volunteered was 8.34, while of those who did not volunteer it was 8.16, $F=3.978$; $p=0.047$; volunteers got an average of 8.84 for their dissertations, while students who did not volunteer obtained an average of 8.60, $F=4.049$; $p=0.045$).

Furthermore, students who achieve higher degrees are also more likely to study further (to get a second degree, master's degree, or PhD) (the comparison between highest form of education and dissertation grade yields to the following results: $r=0.436$; $p=0.000$, while the comparison between highest form of education and the average of all their grades was $r=0.293$; $p=0.000$), and they were more likely to attend more types of vocational trainings on average than their peers (the correlation between the average of grades and the number of types of trainings is: $r=0.156$; $p=0.009$).

Therefore, study-achievements and the active engagement in obtaining professional experience during or after university studies are strongly connected, and therefore students' way of obtaining their degree defines their success on the labour market not only as a

reflection of their actual grades, but of the complexity of their professional competences and experiences.

In researching the *family background* of the students, we concluded that there are no significant correlations between the studies of social workers' parents and their own study-achievements. Students who originated from less favorable socio-economic backgrounds had similarly high achievements as their peers from higher-status families. Another effect of the social background was, however determined in the study.

The social workers in leading positions in the Romanian social welfare system had slightly higher degrees than other social workers, and they were somewhat more active during their years of study and took part in more vocational training courses after finishing their degree. During their career they worked as employees for a less amount of time, they were more often engaged in flexible forms of work (project-based work or part-time employment). Furthermore, those who do not have leading positions value the security of a stable job and are more happy to work as employees, while leaders are more flexible, would rather work as an independent professional or as entrepreneurs, and would be more willing to try other fields than their subalterns. They also believe that if their professional knowledge is outstanding they are able to achieve higher goals. These differences between the career habits of leaders and employees are only indicative and not statistically significant. However, we believe that these differences may be important, and the statistical insignificance is due to the limited number of research subjects. So we think that further studies are needed to elucidate this point.

The social background is significant when studying the differences between career habits. The differences in career habits were not explainable with differences in age or gender, but with differences in social background. The study-achievements of the fathers of subjects in leading positions was on average with 0.6 points higher on the scale than of those in employee positions (in the case of subjects living in Romania, the average grades of the fathers of people in leading positions was of 5.95, while for those of other positions it was 5.32, $F=3.219$; $p=0.075$). The difference is not significant and further research is necessary, however, we consider that *the differences in habits are caused by the differences in social backgrounds*.

The differences between salaries could not be traced back to any success factors in the case of workers living in Romania. The salary for those working in the social sphere is not connected in any way with study-achievements, social background or work experience. The salary differs simply according to whether the person in question occupies a leading or

employee position, as well as according to the type (public or private) of the institution, regardless of the target group and the objectives.

We have already mentioned that workers in different fields have different salaries, and social workers gain the less amount of money if they work in their own field. Therefore, the salary is defined by whether the subject works in their own field or not, however the labor market seems to show less appreciation for those working in their own fields.

The findings of this study show that persons in leading position earn significantly more than those in employee positions. The average income of those in leading positions is 1190 lei (with additional bonuses 1228 lei), while the income of employees is 984 lei (1035 lei with bonuses). Hence, there is a 200 lei difference between the remuneration of leaders and that of the employees ($F=9.088$; $p=0.004$; as well as $F=6.276$; $p=0.015$).

We did not find any significant differences in the remuneration of people working with different target groups; but we did in the differences of the background of the institutions. The smallest salaries are those given in educational institutions (601.13 lei), followed by social workers in local public administrative institution (758.73 lei, 816.76 lei with bonuses), workers in the county social institutions (1014.25 lei, 1046.37 lei with bonuses) and those working for nonprofit organizations (1039.25 lei, 1187.60 lei with bonuses) ($F=6.998$; $p=0.001$, and $F=4.838$; $p=0.009$).

Based on all these results, we can state that the third hypothesis of this thesis has also been confirmed.

4. The role of non-profit organizations in the employment of social workers

The social care field means the primary hosting side of the labor market for the social work graduates. The results that make possible the description of this field originate from our pilot studies. One of the primary questions of the research was that the social organizations with non-profit background are really playing an important role in the functioning of the social care field, and in the employment of social workers.

During the examination of the accredited social services, we found that in Romania in August 2013 there were functioning a number of 6162 accredited services of 2960 service providers. The 36% of the organizations which provide accredited social services are of non-profit background (associations, foundations, unions, etc.), and these organizations are providing around one third of the services. The nonprofit service providers at some parts of the country make up more than 60 percent (in Satu Mare,

Bistrita-Nasaud, Arad, Timis, Hunedoara, Caras-Severin, Sibiu, Dolj counties) or even 80 percent (in Cluj, Alba counties and Bucharest) of the accredited services providers.

In a research on the Hungarian nonprofit organizations in Romania the researchers of the RIRNM (Kiss 2010) estimated the size of the closely defined Hungarian nonprofit sector in Romania between 835 and 1034 organizations, of which the ration of the organizations which primary activities are related to social assistance is 7.2 percent, and an additional 5.7 percent of the organizations have these activities as their secondary ones. This meant 65 and 52 organizations, which are 117 organizations in total. In our pilot study we found much more, 223 organizations, which had some kind of social assistance activity. The majority of the organizations do social assistance activities only as a secondary activity (38.1 percent), but the ratio of the organizations whose primary activity is social assistance is also very important (30.9 percent). The same number of organizations can be considered professional service provider, which provides accredited social services.

The results also showed that the Hungarian nonprofit organizations represent at least 7.34 to 9.4 percent of the nonprofit field which provides accredited social services in Romania. The census of 2011 showed a 6.5 percent of the Hungarian minority in Romania. We know, that our results about the number of the Hungarian accredited service providers is only an estimation, but we think that is safe to say, that the Hungarian nonprofit social sphere represents a higher share from the Romanian nonprofit social sphere (which provides accredited social services), than the ratio of the Hungarian minority would presuppose.

Furthermore, analyzing the employment potential of the Romanian social care field, we found out, that the social worker profession is the leading one, from the different kind of specialists the social workers are employed at the most accredited social services. Almost two third of the services employs social worker(s), which means a number of 4010 different service. Around half of them can be found in the public sector and around 37 percent in the nonprofit sector.

Regarding the Hungarian nonprofit sector in Romania, we started from the results of the 2009 research of the RIRNM, and we correlated our results to those. The results of the RIRNM the questioned organizations have provided a number of 677 full-time jobs in 2009. These persons were employed by the 13.5 percent of the organizations; the large majority of the organizations (86.5 percent) did not have any employee. More than the half (51 percent) of the full-time employees, employed by the Hungarian nonprofit organizations in Romania, were employed by organizations which primary field of activity

was the social assistance. If we also count the part-time jobs, we can say, that these organizations employ the 46.5 percent of the employees (345 full-time and 18 part-time employees).

However, based on the results of our 2013 pilot study, we have proved, that the Hungarian nonprofit organizations in Romania are not only more in number, that it was found in 2009, but also they have a much higher employment potential. Our results show, that the Hungarian nonprofit organizations in Romania have around 1501 full-time and 36 part-time employees. In this way the Hungarian nonprofit sector in Romania can employ around 0.33 percent of the active workforce, which is around twice as high, that the researchers of RIRNM have found.

The list of the highest employers is led by Caritas Alba Iulia, which gives a job for 540 people, followed by Caritas Satu Mare with 200 people, Christian Foundation Diakonia with 165 people, Saint Francis Foundation of Deva with 102 people, but the Alpha Transylvania Foundation has also more than 50 employees. In addition we found four organizations which provides job for 16 to 50 people, and other 23 organizations that have 6 to 15 employees. The 17 percent of the social organizations have less than 5 employees, while 60 percent of them functions without any employee. Furthermore, analyzing the accredited social services, we found that also in the case of the Hungarian nonprofit accredited social service providers in Romania the ratio of the organizations that employ social workers is high, at around 70 percent of the services is hired at least one social worker.

All these results show the importance of nonprofit organizations in sustaining the Romanian social care system. The results found during the analysis of the labor market status of social work graduates also confirm that the nonprofit organizations are important employers for the graduates, namely the graduates who have a job work in the largest proportion at nonprofit organizations (27.04 percent), and among the graduates who work as social workers almost half of them (46.8 percent) are employed by nonprofit organizations.

Summarizing the results above, we may consider the fourth hypothesis also confirmed, the nonprofit organizations really have an important role in the functioning of the Romanian social care system and they are important employers of social work graduates.

5. Employers' expectation towards social workers

We have analyzed the employers' expectations towards social workers based on 15 job announcements gathered in the first half of 2013, as well as the answers of social work graduates to survey questions. Among the graduates we have found 25 persons, who have worked in leading position during their career, and they selected candidates for social worker jobs. We have asked these persons about how much importance they give to certain factors during the selection of the employees. During our research we have analyzed the accordance between the expectations explicitly declared in the job announcements and the implicit expectations of the employers, and also in what matter do the social work graduates (who were only in the role of candidates during their career) estimate the expectations of the employers.

The expectations explicitly formulated in the job announcements almost fully asked general competences like language and computer competency, and different work skills (good organizer skills, ability to work independently, etc.), although, in the race for a job professional experiences are also considered an advantage. In this part of the job announcements ("It means an advantage...") the professional competences and experiences related to the announced job or domain are present in a more pronounced way. In some announcements these are formulated in a more general way ("experience and qualification in the professional domain") in other announcements in a more specific way (experience in working with groups, experiences in working with Romany people, experiences in activities with Romany children, experience with family therapy, pedagogical qualification and routine, knowledge of legislation in the domain, experience in teamwork, experience in proposal writing or openness in learning it, experiences in project management, communication skills with institutions).

Based on the results, we can say that among the implicit expectations of the employers also the general competences were on leading places. According to the employers the six most important competences or selection criteria are the ability to work independently (9.76 points out of the maximum of 10), dedication, commitment (9.72 points), ability to work in team (9.64 points), communication skills (9.52 points), computer skills (9.08 points), and good workload (9.00 points). So, in the first six place of the 28 items criteria list we can find such general competences that could be leading the expectation list of any other profession.

The first competence which is specific to social work profession is only on the seventh place, namely the knowledge about elaborating different plans (intervention plan,

guidance plan, individual case management plan, case study, social survey) (8.80 points), just with a few hundredth points before another general competence, the ability of continuous self-improvement (8.76 points). The methodological knowledge is on 11th place (8.56 points), the knowledge of legislation on the 17th place (7.84 points), and the theoretical knowledge only on place 19 (7.76 points). At the end of the list we can find the obedience (6.84 points), the experiences abroad (5.20 points) and the membership in professional college of social workers (5.16 points) with a significant score gap.

Using factor analysis we could separate 8 factors out of 28 items. The eight factors explained 72.50 percent of the variance of the cases, the value of KMO was 0.841, and the average of the communalities was 0.725.

The results show that on the first place among the employers' expectations were the work competences, followed by the Romanian language skills, as well as the general competences and the professional competences with around the same values. So we can conclude, that the expectations that explicitly appear in the job announcements are in concordance with the implicit expectations of the employers, as they are from the group of general- and work-competences, as well as they emphasize the Romanian language skills. The professional experiences and the affiliation to the professional college of the social workers appeared only in a few job announcement as a mandatory requirement, and also in the list of the employers these criteria were on the last places. At the mandatory requirements we rather find general competences, but it can be also seen, that professional experiences are desirable. Although, we meet them only in the "it is considered as an advantage..." part of the announcements. Here we can also find both the competences and the professional experiences.

During the research, some of the employers confirmed, that in the selection process of the social workers, they really consider important the general competences and the personality of the candidates. The leaders motivated their preferences with the fact that the different subdomains of the social work profession need so specific experiences, that these professional experiences can be hardly transferred from one job to another. In this way, neither the employers expect these from the candidates. This phenomenon is also in concordance with the content of the job advertisements, as we see that in the job advertisements only the professional experience and career capital related to the target group or social problem addressed by the job is considered an advantage.

Furthermore, the results of the research showed that the employees know the expectations of the employers in a relatively accurate way. They estimated very well the

importance of the work competences and the Romanian language skills, as they gave the highest scores for these two factors. On the next two ranks they are the studies and qualifications as well as the employee competences that are highly more overestimated than in the case of the employers. The ranking continues with the general-, the management- as well as with the professional competences, the importance of the latter one is slightly underestimated in score and very underestimated in ranking, as these competences in the evaluation of the graduates became placed only to the penultimate place. At the last place both in the case of the employers and the employees are place the professional experiences and relations, although employees give a much higher score for them than the employers.

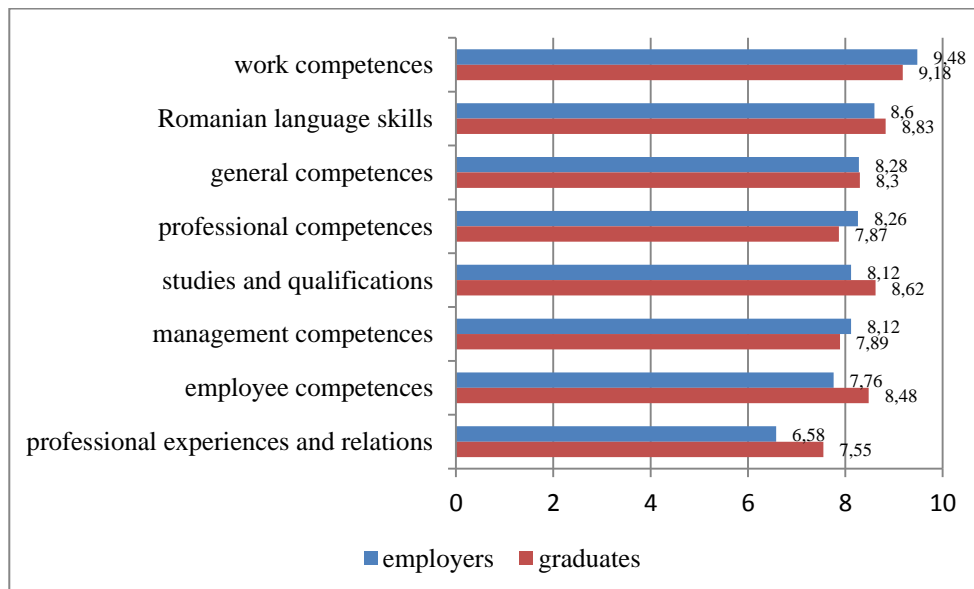


Figure nr. 1. The comparison of employers' expectations and the estimates of the graduates

Interpreting the above results, we can conclude that in the case of the employees we can clearly see a typical employee career-habitus that is characteristic for the “company world”. This shows up by the employees in the overvaluation of the employer competences (good workload, obedience, willingness to work overtime, good appearance, and good employer recommendations) as well as of the university degrees and qualifications. But in the field of social care, the employers value not so much the employee habitus, but much more the good work-competences, the dedication (vocation) and the continuous professional training. The continuous professional training, as we have seen before at the examination of the previous hypothesis, is also important in attaining a success in the labor market.

At the end of the analysis of the hosting side, we interpret our results using the typology of Shavit and Müller (1998). We think that, although, the social care field shows similarities with both the qualificational space and the organizational space, the deeper analysis shows that behind these similarities stands a particular logic.

The social care field looks like a qualificational space because it seems that one of the factors of the integration to the labor market and of realization of a successful career is the academic achievements. The professional literature says that in the case of an institutional context which functions as a qualificational space, the acquired qualifications are functioning as reliable indicators for the employers, who can select their employees trusting the academic achievements and the qualifications issued by the universities (Csata – Dániel – Pop 2006). But we must emphasize, that in the case of the social work graduates, we do not face this exact situation. The employers hardly consider important the university degrees (this criterion was placed only 14th in the list of the criteria), on the other hand, we have seen, that we must not evaluate the academic achievements by their own. This is because, the higher educational achievements are associated with higher educational degree, with an active professional engagement during university studies, with volunteer activities, and also with a more active self-improvement after graduation. So, we can look at the educational achievements more like an indicator that reflects the professional knowledge, interest and commitment and not only just the qualification, but also the human and professional factors that stand behind, are valued by the employers in the social care field.

At the same time, the social care field looks like the organizational space, in the sense that the employers are looking for general competences. Although this does not mean that anybody can apply for a social worker job who possess these general competences (work competences, general competences, etc.). The cause of that during the selection of the employees the employers look for general competences before the professional competences specific for the domain, is that in the field of social work, some subdomains need so specific experiences that professional experiences and career capital gathered in another subdomain, is only useful in a limited way, the work with specific target groups or social problems need specific experiences and routine.

Overall, we can say, that our fifth hypothesis has been only partly confirmed. Analyzing the employers' expectations we have found, that the expectations explicitly present in the job announcements are in accordance with the implicit expectations of the employers. The most important expectations are from the group of general- and work-

competences, as well as they emphasize the Romanian language skills. Although the graduates know less accurate the expectations of the employers: they evaluate well the importance of work competences and the Romanian language skills, but they overvalue the importance of studies and qualifications, the employee competences, and the professional experiences and relationships, and they undervalue in some measure the importance of professional competences.

At the end of the thesis, in **subchapter 5.2**, we summarize the main conclusions of the research and we draw up some suggestions about possible future researches. In this part, first we summarize and repeat the motives and aims of the research, we present the difficulties encountered during the research process. The most important difficulty besides reaching the graduates was the processing of the huge quantity of empirical data, and the constraint that we should leave out some topics because of the limits of the thesis. At the same time we consider this difficulty also an opportunity, as the analysis of these questions (that were left out) could be one of the possible ways of continuing the research. Our most important recommendation is related to institutional development. We suggest the realization of a panel study, and the elaboration of an integrated path-tracking system, as we think that these would be an effective way of path-tracking and career-supporting of the social work graduates.

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