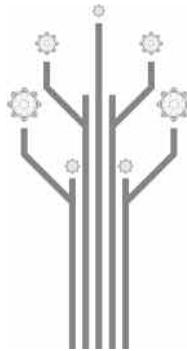


*Labour market perspectives
of young women living in extreme
poverty in closed rural space:
the case of a Hungarian-Romanian
cul-de-sac border village*



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DOI: 10.4422/ager.2017.08

ager

Revista de Estudios sobre Despoblación y Desarrollo Rural
Journal of Depopulation and Rural Development Studies

**Labour market perspectives of young women living in extreme poverty in closed rural space:
the case of a Hungarian-Romanian cul-de-sac border village**

Abstract: This study presents young uneducated women's labour market perspectives in a cul-de-sac village of 350 inhabitants near the Hungarian-Romanian border. On the basis of interviews, we investigate this closed rural space where young people start life and make labour market decisions. We examine the most influential factors, and how these are perpetuating poverty and exclusion onto the next generations. Girls and women living here belong to a community that has been excluded from society. Their poverty is not temporary in nature and not exclusively a problem of making a living, but a status solidified into lifestyle. Women do not only receive more limited material resources compared to men, but they also experience disadvantages in areas as crucial as education, work, leisure and social relationships. This is because of life management strategies that reverse into traditionalism. This unfavourable situation does not allow women to make decisions on their lives. It is the family or the male members of the community who make the decisions instead. This includes decisions on education, starting a family, having children, sexuality, contraception, and the labour market.

Keywords: Social exclusion, young women, spatial inequalities, spatial segregation, small villages.

**Perspectivas laborales de las mujeres jóvenes que viven en pobreza extrema en áreas rurales profundas:
el caso de un pueblo fronterizo húngaro-rumano**

Resumen: Este estudio presenta las perspectivas laborales de las mujeres jóvenes sin educación en un pueblo fronterizo de 350 habitantes próximo a la frontera húngaro-rumana. Sobre la base de entrevistas, investigamos esta zona rural profunda en la que los jóvenes comienzan su vida y efectúan decisiones laborales. Examinamos los factores más influyentes, y cómo estos están perpetuando la pobreza y la exclusión de cara a las generaciones próximas. Las jóvenes y las mujeres que viven aquí pertenecen a una comunidad que ha sido excluida de la sociedad. Su pobreza no es de naturaleza temporal y no es exclusivamente un problema de ganarse la vida, sino un estatus solidificado en estilo de vida. Las mujeres no sólo reciben recursos materiales más limitados que los hombres, sino que también experimentan desventajas en áreas tan cruciales como la educación, el trabajo, el ocio y las relaciones sociales. Esto se debe a estrategias de gestión vital de corte tradicionalista. Esta situación desfavorable no permite a las mujeres tomar decisiones sobre sus vidas. Son la familia o los varones de la comunidad los que toman las decisiones en su lugar. Esto incluye decisiones sobre la educación, la formación de un hogar, la búsqueda de descendencia, la sexualidad, la contracepción y el mercado laboral.

Palabras clave: Exclusión social, mujeres jóvenes, desigualdades espaciales, segregación espacial, pueblos pequeños.

Received: 28 October 2016

Sent back for revision: 13 February 2017

Accepted: 28 April 2017

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Introduction

In Hungary, where regional and social polarization followed the regime change, the situation of settlements in advanced regions or regional centers and near main traffic lines improved, while the situation of settlements further from the centers and more affected by the consequences of structural crisis steadily declined (Kovács, 2013). As a result of social differentiation, greater differences arose within the rural areas as well, and by the end of the 1990s, at least one third of the rural population had to face a hopeless situation for the lack of proper training, employment, and convertible, movable wealth (Csire and Kovách, 1995). The geographical location and size of a settlement are still dominant, that is, typically the settlement slope shows increasingly worsening employment and income situation from city towards villages. Today, the concentration of dramatic life situations and scarce mobility characterize the population of the peripheral, impoverished small settlements, small villages (Kovács and Váradi, 2013).

As a consequence of the Hungarian social modernization processes, small settlements far from towns or industrial centers are lagging behind and cannot join the agricultural production processes that have repeatedly gone through restructuring in the past few decades, and thus these settlements have lost significant economic functions (Juhász, 2006). As a result of this function loss, their infrastructure has also degraded, dived below the national average. Medical offices, schools have been closed down or merged, and access to rail and bus transport has

drastically decreased. Their settlement comfort has fallen below the national average significantly, in terms of housing, institutions and commercial establishments as well.

Those who have had the opportunity have moved from these destitute small settlements, and as a result of selective migration, most of these settlements have become homogenized in terms of both social and ethnic compositions (Váradi and Virág, 2015). While the settlements in this situation "can no longer provide job opportunities and livelihood, they will continue to serve tens of thousands of people for residence" (Feischmidt, 2013: 78). There are more and more rural settlements, where the population lives in deepening and recurrent poverty (Váradi, 2015) due to the lack of job opportunities and quality public services.

Extremely poor zones and ghetto settlements based partly on ethnic grounds have occurred in Hungary's disadvantaged areas and small village regions in terms of bad employment. By the millennium, rural poverty became persistent, strikingly increasing young people's unemployment rate in villages, and keeping it at this high level. Kovách (2012) analyzed the results from the end of the 1990s and concluded that the 40 per cent unemployment rate of the rural youth aged 15-29 may be the cause behind the expanded reproduction of rural poverty. In the early 2010s, Czibere (2014) registered a significantly higher proportion of severe income shortage, indebtedness, unpredictable month to month existence, and deprivation among young people living in villages than among urban youth. As a consequence, they fear the most serious or insurmountable problems as the loss of living security or aimlessness, or the concern that they cannot manage their own life, or the ongoing tensions that they should lose control over their own lives.

Since the millennium, it is the duty of local governments to organize public works, and to participate therein has become a condition for eligibility for social assistance. At the end of the 2000s, the *Pathways to Work* program aimed to improve the beneficiaries' labor market situation and to mitigate the disincentive effect of social benefits, therefore aimed to expand employment (Köll and Scharle, 2011). The program has transformed the social assistance system and tightened eligibility criteria (Csoba, 2010). Social benefits related to unemployment were reduced, as conditions for access tightened up. All of this aimed to force the unemployed to go to work, while public employment was declared to be training for work. As a consequence, a great number of the affected households experienced a drastic drop in income. Since the government wanted to keep the level of benefits at this low level, the only possible direction to increase household income was to expand public employment. As a consequence of this decision, between 2011 and 2014, spendings on public employment nearly tripled (Bakó *et al.*, 2014). Today, the public employment of people

out of work has become a major employment (and social) policy program, although it is the least efficient means as concerns raising job opportunities. Analysts claim that the more people participate in public employment programs, the less chance they have for actual employment, that is, the public employment program actually impairs employment prospects on the open labor market (Bakó *et al.*, 2014).

Gender and ethnicity have a particularly strong impact on the factors influencing employment on the labor market (including public employment as well). Gypsies and women are in an even more disadvantageous position compared to the other groups, as they are entangled in their "socio-cultural" world both in a physical and a symbolical sense (Szabolcska, 2008). Timár *et al.* (2015) studied disadvantaged settlements, and when they examined the well-being deficit, they found that mostly men find job opportunities in public employment. At the same time, there was higher public employment rate than full-time rate among men in the studied peripheral region. "This means that the men who live in the disadvantageous, peripheral settlements can access less 'normal' jobs on the free employment market, or less job opportunities provided by the state and local government sectors, such as public employment." (Timár *et al.*, 2015: 272).

The case of the *cul-de-sac* village depicted in our research is not a unique phenomenon in Central and Eastern Europe. Due to the socio-economic changes that took place in the early nineties, the countries of the region have shown a dramatic increase in inequality, whose main causes are education level and labor market participation (Simonyi, 2015). The unemployment rate is also different in each country, as regions of different settlement structure of the individual settlements (towns and villages) could not equally adapt to the changes (Townsend, 1995). Work is lacking, the better-off families have left these impoverished, economically declining regions, settlements, and poorer families moved into their place due to cheaper housing. As a result of selective migration, the society of the most disadvantaged regions, mostly the villages has become homogenous both in social and ethnic sense.

Methodology and settlement properties

The study presents young women's chances for starting life, especially their relationship opportunities and labor market situation through the detailed results of a

comprehensive sociological research that was carried out in a small village near the Hungarian–Romanian border of eastern Hungary. The analysis employed twenty semi-structured interviews that we prepared with young women raising children and aged 18–35, living in relationship, and without chances in the open labor market, in the autumn of 2015. We reached our interviewees with the help of the staff of a non-governmental organization working in the village. Our comprehensive research aims to explore the impoverished young adults' decision-making mechanisms about family, relationship patterns, values, family and life planning options, relationships and making family, in a closed community of particularly homogeneous population of a disadvantaged, dead-end village. In particular, the present study focuses on the local young women's labor market opportunities. Our basic research issue is, that, in the selected village of a closed, insular and rural social space, and a restricted socio-cultural milieu: what new female relation patterns occur when they leave their parents and make family; what coexistence forms it creates, what new or perhaps reversing, traditional forms; and how all this affects women's long-term labor market exclusion.

Settlement described below lies in the Hungarian–Romanian border region. All over Europe, social and economic relations of the border regions show very different characteristics. In those border areas where both sides are marginalized economically, poverty withholds the possibility of mutual cooperation. Mostly this dimension defines the situation of the Hungarian *cul-de-sac* village presented in this study, that is, although it lies only a few kilometers from the Romanian border, there is no cross-border development policy in the aspect of strategic economic or social connections (Kopint- Tárki, 2010).

The research site is a settlement located in the Northern Alföld region, a few kilometers from the Romanian border. The small, *cul-de-sac* village of 350 people can only be accessed from one direction on road, no other way, no pass through or any other traffic. As usual of dead-end villages, this settlement lies far from more important roads and towns of core functions. Almost the entire population of the village has a tradition of poverty typically for many generations, low educational attainment and long-term exclusion, which keeps trapped both Gypsy and non-Gypsy population. The proportion of Gypsies is difficult to estimate. Based on self-reported data of the 2011 census, 17 per cent of the local population is Roma. The village's *Equal opportunities program* also communicates this information, completed with the following: "Of course, these figures should be taken with reservation. The census data are unreliable because most people of Roma origin do not declare themselves as Roma" (HEP, 2013: 17). Our research did not extend to explore the local population as to what criteria someone should be

considered Roma, but the young women in the research estimated the proportion of the Roma to be between 60-80 per cent in the settlement.

The village also has fallen victim to the last century's Hungarian social processes of modernization, that is, away from the urban-industrial centers, and out of the transforming structure of agricultural production, it has undergone a significant function loss. The local economy is completely eroded, former actors are gone, and the population has had to learn the techniques and tricks to integrate into the world of unstable odd jobs. The formerly also highly inadequate employment capacities have almost completely disappeared, and not yet built up again. However, no new economic opportunities have occurred that could set new directions for the people, and that could have established new life strategies. The situation has been further aggravated because the neighboring settlements' economies have not recovered enough to require the workforce of the population here. Before the regime change, the unskilled population was able to work in the surrounding villages in the agricultural and industrial sectors. Today, the number of such jobs has fallen to a minimum, which results in drastic consequences for the villagers, further aggravated by the poor conditions of public transport that obstructs daily commuting to settlements with ample employment opportunities. The village's conditions, location, size, confinement, lack of institutional supply only allowed limited development opportunities in the past, but the ongoing socio-economic processes in the recent decades have intensified the unfavorable situation. Through the industrial and agricultural processes, the settlement has actually and symbolically closed in and impoverished. The majority of the local residents live on social benefits and seasonal jobs.

Like most of the subregion's settlements, the village has a declining population, but unlike the typical trend, the balance is positive in natural increase. Yet, the outflow rate is so high that the number of live births cannot offset it. In recent decades, the better-off population has moved out, and most of the remaining families lack available resources that could help them move and start a new life in a settlement with better conditions. The poorest immobile families have remained in the village. Their low income creates continuous financial difficulties and vulnerability. Particularly the unexpected expenses should burden the family budget and further weaken their already poor life security feeling. They often attempt to cover such expenditures by loans of very unfavorable repayment. According to the interviewees' accounts, most local households are affected by public utility arrears and the accumulation of problem loans. The families thus have no opportunity to raise money for reserve or long-term planning.

The village is also highly deficient in institutions. A single store works here keeping open for a few hours a day. Low product range and high prices characterize the store. Bread is not available in store, every other day a “bread truck” arrives at a specified time range at the village. As for education, the village has only a kindergarten. Health services are only available locally one day a week. The family doctor works four hours, and the family nurse six hours a week in the village. The mobile pharmacy is only available during medical hours. Village caretaker service operates here and should be expected to carry the population to health institutions free of charge, but due to the lack of resources, this is not always possible. The family caregiver is present 10-hour week in the settlement, which is nearly sufficient to carry out the compulsory administrative tasks. This short time does not allow the provision of such important and necessary services as individual case management, family care or psycho-social counseling. Here people living in need are left alone with their problems, and receive no mental assistance. A foundation's programs that appeared a few years ago in the settlement cover organized recreational programs, but to spend free time in communal spaces (for the absence of communal spaces and programs) is impossible.

Educational and labor market exclusions among young women

The social space also acts as a kind of force field says Bourdieu (1998), which can function as a space of lifestyles, and which does not allow that the individuals could separate their own self-interpretation from the social space they occupy. Their position in this space affects their goals, intentions, expectations, and determines their actions, and ultimately the combination of these determine their individual strategies.

This social force field determines the actions, expectations, and consequently the individual strategies of the women living here, which works around them as a lifestyle space influenced by the regional endowments of the village. Girls and women living here belong to such an excluded community, whose poverty is not temporary in nature and not exclusively a problem of making a living. The interviewees primarily defined unemployment as the cause for village people to live in poverty. The

geographical isolation, the state of the local economy and the low level of education significantly reduces the employability of the local population. Practically, the only local who has a job is the mayor, people living in other settlements (bread vendors, etc.) provide the locally available, few and modest services.

There were some jobs in those days, some daily jobs like pepper harvest, horseradish and stuff, I always went to work and stuff, because I had four smaller brothers, and I was the eldest, so that I was the breadwinner with Dad ... now nothing's like before. (27 year old female)

Reorganization and mechanization of agricultural activities have also significantly reduced labor requirements of agriculture in the region, and because men in the village find hardly any work here, they would not typically support women in the competition for jobs. Residents forced out of the world of work lastingly make their livelihood for generations on social transfers, very difficult seasonal jobs hard to rely on, and incomes from public employment. Such emergencies create a survivalist environment where people always try to capture the actual, seemingly preferable instantly income-earning opportunities (Kotics, 2013). The fieldwork experience proves that, the better off families living here have at least one family member who goes to work in a geographically distant settlement. The main commuting targets are the towns of Dunántúl (Transdanubia). Therefore the workers can only go home once a week. The "weekers" are all men, workers who are manual, unskilled workers, mostly in the construction industry. Since traditional gender roles strongly prevail in the village, it is impossible for residents to have women like men focus on labor market activity, and neglect their tasks of family care, so they cannot participate in jobs far from their homes, they have no opportunity to join in work that is not available locally. The local community standards do not encourage women to participate in the labor market, and consider it less important.

Well, I have not worked yet...because when I went to school, when I had the first child, and then came more. The fact, we live on the dole we get for the children, and my husband's public employment. Not until the small one is a suckling, I cannot think about going to work, and also who would take care of the rest of them. I gave birth to them, so that, then, I will be able to care for them. (woman aged 26)

Also better off are those households that have a family member working in public employment. The duration of public employment contracts typically varies from a few months to one-year contracts. Within the framework of traditional public

employment, the local government organizes and they carry out municipal cleaning, public land maintaining tasks. We have already mentioned that public employment has become a major job opportunity for people without work in the Hungarian society. As it happens in this village as well. The village people are excluded from labor market opportunities, to the extent that being a public worker is a 'privilege' among them, however it is true similarly to the previously mentioned Timár et al.'s (2015) results, that, it is primarily an earning opportunity for men. The public employment has become a perfect alternative to the open labor market opportunity for the locals. The interviewed young women regarding their own possibilities considered the local public employment program very positively. Since their settlement provides absolutely no opportunity to enter the open labor market, and hardly do the surrounding settlements any chance of a successful job search, and for the lack of other options, the public employment status has become the most desired (though currently unavailable, because of their gender, age and marital status) career objective. All interviewed women on maternity leave would like to be in public employment when the child gets bigger, regardless of the national trends, that it will remain opportunity for men in the future. At present, the lack of work not only deprives them of an income, but also of the possibility to break the confinement of their homes. They believe that working in public employment provides the only opportunity for them to work, belong to a community, and gain the additional benefits of a job.

Good ... more that money is, than nothing. When the kids will be bigger, I say, at least of school age, I'd go into public employment. They get along there all day. I can see when I walk with the kids, it's not that bad what they work. They're cleanin' the street, the cemetery like that. When and what they need to. I also could do those. And I see that the people're talking while. Sometimes I would be glad if I could speak to someone during the day. (22 year old female)

When we examine the interviewed women's work socialization and aspirations, we find that they did not even have a desirable occupation image in their childhood. Their parents only performed work as an immediate opportunity, thus it is little surprise that they could not inspire their children, especially the girls to choose a profession. As a consequence of the village's confinement, lack of labor market and segregation, no local institutions and services exist that could relay employment patterns (also). The elder female generations are uneducated, and there is a lack of helping contacts and positive examples, which prevents young women from gaining self-awareness, future-orientation, information and motivations to access further educational opportunities. Especially the women are expected to comply with the

traditional gender roles, therefore the girls are typically not motivated to learn or try exploring a variety of professions, occupations, and there is no daydreaming about career plans with the girls.

I was not interested in learning and that stuff. I always played with dolls. I did not think that I would learn till blind, or study after work. I was like, well, I would have to look after my children. (22 year old female)

Those who have successfully completed their primary studies are considered to be well educated in the village. Due to the early dropout, most of them do not acquire any profession or maturation exam. Two-thirds of the population have only primary school attainment. The young village women recognize that their low educational attainment hinders their employment, however, in this socio-cultural milieu where meeting the most basic daily needs is a challenge, school success is not a priority, neither for them nor for their environment. Professionals working in the village claim that local children are especially susceptible to poor school achievement, grade retention and school drop-outs. It is the third generation in the village who will grow up so that they have never had a chance for a job or to gain work experience, and while the school career of these families' children is haunted by failures anyway, and it gets devaluated, and ultimately leads to the reproduction of the lack of education, unemployment, poverty and to the closure of the exclusion trap (Váradi, 2007: 77).

The settlement's educational institutions are not sufficient for successful school careers. Only a kindergarten operates locally, the primary school pupils do have to commute to other settlements. The interviewees said that children still "like" primary school; here they cannot altogether sense the social differences and their destitution compared to middle-class children. Some lucky, local young people continue to learn in secondary school in a small town of the region. They could go to another secondary school in another town in the subregion, but it is difficult to get there by bus, so commuting on a daily basis is impossible, and the parents cannot finance student boarding for their children. This leaves the other town's secondary school, its vocational classes that offer a variety of trainings, but most village youngsters can only learn the profession of ornamental horticulture. They do not voluntarily choose this hardly marketable profession, somehow the youngsters believe that their performance only allows entrance to this class. Their motivation to acquire a profession is further weakened as the "weedy" class (common expression among young people in vocational classes) usually starts with a much smaller number compared to the rest of the school classes, and most of the pupils in the class are Roma.

Well, I didn't like it very much. Until eighth grade it was all right, but then I moved to secondary school, and there it was no good. The community wasn't like that. The Gypsies, the Hungarians were differentiated. I did feel that I was a Gypsy and always had to sit at the back. They were always in front, the Hungarians, and we Gypsies were at the back. (21 year old female)

The interviewees said that 60-80 per cent of the local population is Roma. Being Gypsy poses no problem when they are not different but a majority in the closed world of the village, as they see no conflict in their ethnicity, they experience no conflict situations with local non-Roma people. In secondary school however, they have clearly faced Roma and non-Roma differentiation (or segregation) of the pupils and all the consequences thereof. Roma children in the village have not experienced the disadvantages due to their ethnicity, in secondary school however, they enter an inter-ethnic environment, and they are forced to live in these new situations. When young people become targets of prejudices, apparently, they can no longer be motivated by traditional pedagogical tools, and kept in the school.

Well, to tell you ... the teachers were not able to tolerate the Gypsies ... favoritism ... Well, not just me, there were several classmates of mine who felt so. They dealt better with the Hungarian children than with the Gypsies, there was favoritism, and when there was trouble or something happened we were always in the wrong. And that's why I did not like to go to school, I rather played truancy. Because I went from home, so Mom and Dad's thought that I went to school, but then I did not go to school, but next to the school. (26 year old female)

As for motivation, young people do not have acquaintances who could provide positive examples, therefore they are without personal experience which would show that the higher level of education enhances their labor market opportunities and thereby positively affects their life chances. The small minority who can obtain a professional vocation and find a good job, will move out of the village and will not provide good examples.

Both boys and girls may become early dropouts, but girls' chances to graduate from secondary school are even lower than that of boys. Pregnancy and having a child clearly means the disruption of studies for the girls, while the boys may retain the chance to finish school. According to the interviewees, the formation of relationships erodes interest in school for both sexes. In case of child-bearing, usually the boys will leave school as well, even when they have little chance for a long-term job in the

open labor market. Having a child clearly indicates the end of childhood for them, from this time on, the student status is no longer compatible with the adult existence.

The interviewed young mothers can only continue their studies until their pregnancy is not yet apparent in their physical features. They have always feared being stigmatized in the school and village for different reasons. In school, because the girls who were better off did not typically have teenage motherhood, while at their home place they were afraid of being thought as bad parents because of their studies. The interviewed women did not plan their first pregnancy at such a young age, having children was not a conscious decision for them. In this emergency life situation they could only expect minimal help, therefore finishing school was an impossible task.

I wanted to go to flower arrangement, but I couldn't, because I could not finish school, because three classes, I say, in class 6, I completed as a private student. I would have finished all eight grades, but then I got pregnant with the first child, well, I didn't go to school because I was ashamed of myself because I was only 15 years old, yeah, ashamed to go to school. I said I'd rather not go I did not know that I got pregnant, but I was 5 months pregnant when it was discovered with the first kid, that I got pregnant, but if sooner we had known then there'd have been an abortion, , but then it was 5 months old, there was no abortion. (26-year-old woman)

Some of the young mothers would now like to go back to school and learn a trade. The geographical distances cannot be bridged however, as symbolized by the fact that the necessary training is only available in the county seat. The village has only access to one town by bus service four times a day. Travelers to the county seat have to wait 40-90 minutes for the bus connections, and it takes about 3,5 and 4,5 hours to get there with a minimum of three changes.

Unlike women local men have a lot lower learning motivation, they consider getting a job as an absolute priority, on the basis that, they believe themselves responsible to maintain their families. They do not support their wives, spouses' learning ambitions. Men believe that they are responsible to acquire the income to support the family, and that women should perform the roles of wives and the mothers. Therefore, they do not consider important the labor market participation of women, or women's learning to increase their chances of employment. The young women in the village do not have any qualifications or work experience, or any knowledge that can help in finding employment. These women cannot rely on a network of family relationships either. First, men will receive help to capture the labor

market opportunities, and so these relation energies are concentrated to promote their male family members in employment. Mothers with small children can rarely attempt to search for a job on their own resources, but even those few are reportedly facing constant refusals, and this way these few women are losing their motivation for job research.

I'll never get called in, I don't know for what reason I haven't a faded idea. At the time, K I 'd have liked to work in a store, but they don't call me ... when they hear that I've got little children. Got rejected. (19 year old female)

The women's employment chances are reduced by what is discussed above and greatly by the presence of child(ren) as well. In the village, the couples undertake their first child at a too early age, and typically there are very large families. Most families undertake four or five children, therefore women's active time is almost completely filled with the upbringing of children, which is why women have no opportunity to complete school or acquire a profession. When men are unemployed, after the necessary registration process, can join the offered training programs. Because of their family situation, women may not benefit from these advantages. The young women we interviewed (18-35 years) have practically never entered the labor market. After finishing school they soon became pregnant, or sooner discontinued their studies due to pregnancy, today they are completely immersed in looking after the small child(ren) thus they have no chance to search for jobs in the surrounding settlements.

As most of their lives these women have looked after children, there are many women in their late thirties, early forties who are first-time jobseekers of little chance; who are in disadvantageous situation not only because of their place of residence, lack of education, ignorance, or lack of professional experience, gender, marital status, and in many cases because of their ethnic origin, but also because of their age. And for those who are only able to perform physical work, age is even more of a decisive factor than for skilled employees. According to fieldwork experience, the locals look many years older than their real age. Poverty, the scarcity of health care and information prevent them from pursuing a health-conscious, modest lifestyle. The constant physical and mental load and stress caused by the difficulties of everyday living have marred both their health and appearance. Another problem is that apparently they cannot finance the appropriate clothing needed for a job interview, or the cost of commuting to work until the first paycheck, so it is far from typical that they would search for jobs in other settlements. The situation is further worsened by the fact that when someone has failed in an attempt to get a job the news spread soon in the village, which induces feelings of shame and further undermines their

motivation. Several interviewees also indicated that because of their Roma origin they are reluctant to apply for jobs.

They will already judge me from the outside. When you can dress up as you like and do as you wish and you can be anything ... but they place you together with someone who.... to tell you, who is not brown, just so I say to you ... because now White can be of many origins not only Hungarian ... but they can now anyway say that well, now they are the Roma, the Gypsies ... it's just that ... only ... if even when they do not say it face to face, I can still know somehow. And I was always right, that is, ultimately it happened the way I thought. (33 year old female)

As young women in the village have no opportunity to participate in the primary labor market, their potential income is limited to the state's transfer incomes. In the prolonged absence of labor income, the husband's or partner's income is the decisive source for the family, so women's subordination due to their dependency status further strengthens their vulnerability within the family. This, however, will have a lifetime of consequences on their quality of life, according to the research results on women's poverty. Women living in extreme poverty suffer serious domestic disadvantages primarily because of the labor and power sharing between the two genders, and because of the use of time and leisure, inequalities in money management and financial management, as well as family conflicts and emerging violence, and a variety of psychiatric-mental health problems, as well as reducing personal consumptions extremely (Czibere, 2012). Women in the poor families are almost generally characterized by saving at the cost of their own individual needs for the family. The interviewees reported that, despite their young age, first of all, women want to satisfy the needs of children and husband even at the cost of sacrificing their own needs, should it be the most basic needs, like a meal, or clothing, getting medicine. In a discussion about women's poverty, the researchers demonstrated that (Koncz, 2002; Czibere, 2012), the difference in earnings between women and men affects power relations within the family, and the lack of independent income allows limited social integration, which may be interpreted as social seclusion.

The young women of the village will not only receive more limited material resources than their male family members, but because of family / relationship and life organizational strategies that may reverse into traditionalism, they will suffer disadvantages in learning, work, leisure time, and in terms of social relationships. In this environment, they do not have the opportunity to make autonomous decisions on their own lives, mostly their environment (family, parents, husband, and partner)

will make decisions for them. All their days are organized along the conditions set by others, they are isolated both spatially and socially, and by all this, they are maintaining and passing their exclusion situation to their coming daughters.

You, who just come around here, you cannot know what is life here ... only those of us who live here, but we understand that as we experience that there is nothing here that is a wasteland! Can you imagine that you look out the window and there is nothing out there? Should I go out of the house? So where to go? Why go? Have I got my work here? Have I got my friends here? Is there someone here for me who would listen? Is there a playground where I can take the children? Even a bloody shop is nowhere here! There's nothing here! Nothing at all! What do I tell the kids? To learn son, go to school, see if you'll make someone? Now, honestly! Is there a chance? I don't understand how you say that... that we should never give up ... but what do I fight for? How could I fight when I cannot see anything? And why this child'd want to study when they cannot see a thing? Child yet, but he feels and sees that we have such a fate. My mother lived like this, like we do... No never she went nowhere, but stayed in the household. For me, this is my destiny. And whatever anybody may say, this comes for my daughter also. I'm no longer a planner. (21 year old female)

Conclusion

Our study has presented young women's labor market perspectives in a community who live within a geographical space in a dead-end village –which is isolated from the socio-economic and geographical environment, and they are also an impoverished and excluded community according to other indicators too. We investigated this closed rural space where young people start life, make decisions on mating and child-bearing, or labor market, and also examined the most influential factors, how these are perpetuating poverty and exclusion existence onto the next generations through certain mechanisms. We assumed that in terms of family sociology, social policy, totally different motivations and constraints influence the decisions of young people who live here, as compared to the usual factors of the Hungarian society, especially women's maturation. We were looking for the primary reasons that determine the traditional status of women, and the private and environmental background factors behind their extreme exclusion and the lack of freedom to make decisions on their own

lives and choices. In connection with young women in the labor market, we highlighted that they get forced out of the labor market in every investigated aspect, or cannot enter the labor market either. In this poor environment, neither the primary nor secondary labor market alternatives are available to them. Not primarily for technical reasons, but rather that, the local norms and values strongly direct women's lives. Women do not appear among commuters on town jobs, neither do they get the local job opportunities provided by public employment. In the village, these are the main sources of earning an income, but usually these are opportunities only for man. The presence of women in the labor market is not expected and not supported by community standards. Despite all this, women who are still bringing up their children have future career plans that they would like to work in public employment. Already at this young life-stage, they regard this work as the possibility to obtain an independent income, moreover as the only opportunity to break out of their confinement.

However, most of them can hardly complete their primary education, and young women identify their biggest obstacles to labor market integration in early school dropouts and lack of skills. Apart from these, the daily living problems, the parents and the community discard any motivation for young women to succeed in education somehow. Examples of the elder female generation are absent too, that is, older women are uneducated, and their traditional, one-dimensional set of roles does not facilitate young women's future orientation.

The village youths start forming relationships a lot earlier than the national average and also enter childbearing earlier than the national average. In all cases, pregnancy terminates the girls' school career as well. The village has a very youthful age structure, one third of the population is under 18. Young mothers with children have high motivation to learn, but the geographical conditions of the settlement do not allow that. Public transport does not offer an immediate trip from the village to the training schools, it is practically impossible for a mother with a child. Young men, however, even when they have opportunities for vocational training do not show motivation for learning, in their role of a breadwinner, they consider their most important task to gain employment, and that is their primary victory. When young women leave the parental home, they receive no support or motivation for learning from their husbands or partners, indeed, their very young uneducated husbands do not allow, let alone support their wives' learning ambitions, or their participation in the labor market.

According to statistics, more than half of the village households have at least three children, and women spend most of their lives raising small children. It is not uncommon to have four or five children. Consequently women become jobseekers

late, as early childbearing, even childbearing during school years happens, and quite frequently they are in their late thirties, early forties when they enter the labor market as beginners. This will likely increase their failure in job search.

Young women living in this dead-end village bear their first child usually very early, between 16-20 years of age according to the local child-bearing tendencies and practices. Their low level of education and the complete absence of labor market opportunities do not delay their family bearing. Dropping out of school or just finishing it, and early childbearing often finalize an emerging, but not yet substantiated relationship, which creates additional family and relationship difficulties. Such relations do not possess security support that is characterized by strong emotional ties, which lack makes fighting the tensions caused by poverty even more difficult. Poverty has an immediate effect on juvenile parenting, and we have presented that the involved young women are primarily victims, because they do not have any influence on the social processes affecting premature childbirth. Women living in extreme poverty and in relationship are without an independent income, dependent, and such inequalities occur among them, that, already at this early stage in life, will limit their social integration, and define their long-term social exclusion.

The struggle of everyday living overtakes future planning, advocacy opportunities and intentions. Two thirds of the population has no more than primary education, highly trained professionals who could represent the interests of the village at different levels of development policy do not live in this village, and there is no realistic chance of obtaining development funds for the village.

A foundation has been working in the settlement for six years, whose staff has begun a development model specific to children and their families living in deep poverty so as to promote their integration. They not only focus on solving one problem, but the problems are treated in a system. Their activities are carried out along the pillars of education, family care and community development. The village has no professional helping service, therefore the Foundation's activities try to substitute, complement the village's missing institutions and services.

The Foundation's activities lead to changes in the situation of women. Firstly, because their services usually improve the quality of life locals and families therefore that of women too. Secondly, as the Foundation primarily reaches the families through the women, so they get stronger position within the family. The Foundation helps families in crisis, as needed with food packages, medicine, clothing, furniture, or loan which is especially valuable in the absence of other assistance. The women who live here feel that they cannot turn elsewhere but the Foundation's staff with their

problems. Women are more open to the Foundation's activities; they are more likely to ask for help, to participate in the programs than men. Men define themselves as breadwinners, so if they ask for help, especially from a person outside the family, it would mean that they cannot perform their job, do not work well in their roles. The Foundation can more easily reach the families through women who can motivate their husbands and their children to participate in various programs. Also women produce embroideries based on children's drawings: for example, table linens, handbags, and pillowcases. The foundation sells these products and reinvests the profits into programs. Moreover, they can participate in seasonal works, such as gardening, jam and pastry making. The women living in the village carry out most of these jobs in community, so it is also an opportunity to break away from the confinement of their homes while engaged in traditional activities or learning new jobs.

Although the Foundation's activities have brought positive changes in the local people's life quality, it has yet no effect on adult women's integration to the open labor market. Nevertheless, improving the living conditions of the current school-age children, supporting their school career, the presence of other activities to promote and help learning present a chance for the growing-up generations.

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