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## THE ANALYSES OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE FIELD OF PROFESSIONAL CAREER

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**Abstract:** *We are living nowadays in a society based on knowledge, which needs a qualified, educated and flexible labour force. There is a great need of individuals who continuously develop their competences, because it has not considered the problem of having a working place along the life time, but the possibility to adapt to many working places and institutions along one period (Chao, 2005).*

*O'Reilly (2001) estimates that during the next years, the young persons that are coming into the labour market will have seven-eight various working places along their career. Taking into account this professional fluidity, the aptitudes of taking decisions for their career must be developed now more than ever. The capacity of continuous evaluation and choosing the best alternative is a feature of the demanding for the tomorrow working force (Smith, Ryan, 2011).*

**Keywords:** *career, significant changes, competences*

### 1. Introduction

In order to use efficiently the notion of "career" we are going to refer to a number of significant conceptual delimitations. John Arnold (2001a) presents eight definitions of the concept of "career". According to the specialised literature there are many others. Three of them, belonging to Super, Perlmutter, & Hall și Gary Johns, underline the essential aspects of career. If Super (1978) considered career as a succession of professions, jobs and positions taken by a person along its life, Perlmutter și Hall (1992) sustained that the career is the ensemble of jobs characterized by training and experience, while a person reaches to superior positions, described by responsibilities and competences. Gary Johns (1998) defines career as an evolving succession of professional positions a person could have. As it can be noticed, the mutual aspect of the three definitions is that of

professional evolution along the life time. Conceived as a constellation of roles, the career could be graphically designed as a rainbow. Each coloured arch from the career rainbow represents the major roles of the child, the young person and the adult. The brightness and the breadth of the rainbow arch represents the time and space of life needed to fulfill the roles. „While getting older, there are new roles added to the rainbow, the new role reorganising the importance of the previous ones. Each human being has, in fact, a multi-role career in his life, in which he plays simultaneously eight or nine roles” (Luca, 2002: 17)

Based on these definitions, it could be sustained a synthetical definition of career, as: "Career is the succession of professions, jobs, positions, activities, experiences and roles suggested/played by the individual along his professional life simultaneous with the subjective interpretation that lead to distinct

professional trajectories (Zlate, 2004: 352). The career makes sense to the professional behaviour, establishing its direction and goal (Savickas, 2002, Young, Valach, Collin, 2002). The career could serve as a source of personal fulfilment, enrichment, happiness and satisfaction, important elements that influence the evolution of human personality (Kahneman, Riis, 2005).

## 2. Changes in the context of career

The society is marked by a lack of transition from school to the labour market. The teens are taught, but after finishing their studies they do not have a working place. The adults are compelled to attend another faculty in order to find a better working place. At the national level there is registered a loss of human capital due to migration, the people choosing to work abroad for more money and in more decent conditions. The lack of flexibility of the educational offer produces an unbalance at the level of labour market, and thus it imposes the transition from the education centred on knowledge to the education centred on competences. The role of key competences and the quality of their obtaining at different educational levels are getting more and more important. Education for active life and the cult of work are becoming the major objective of all educational strategies.

According to a study made in 2009 in USA, the average of duration of a working

contract is of 18 months. It is a very short period, according to the specialists in the domain, who consider that a person needs a six months period in order to integrate in a community, two years to accumulate all the vital aspects of a working place, 2-4 years to obtain performance in that working place, and only after 4 years there will appear the phase of professional calmness. In this rhythm it can be said that a person may have at least 9 careers along his life time. The person needs to adapt continuously. The results of the study shows that:

- 50% of the candidates consider that they need 6 months to find a working place;
- 40% of the candidates consider that they need 3-5 months to find a working place;
- 8% of the candidates consider that they need 1-2 months to find a working place;
- 2% find a job in less than a month.

In Romania, according to the studies made by The National Institute of Statistics, between 2003-2008, we may assert that the number of employees from the public sector has been continuously diminished, and as a result the number of employees from the private sector grew. I consider that since 2008 until the present the statistics data are showing a continuously diminishing. The inactive population is as numerous as the active one. (Table 2), and the number of unemployed is growing from one year to another.

Table 2 . The working force (16-64 years) registered in 2008, according to gender and averages (Investigation of working force in administration, 2009)

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Masculin</b>	<b>Feminin</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>
<b>Active population</b>	10.059.000	5.590.000	4.469.000	5.492.000	4.567.000
<b>Employed population</b>	9.493.000	5.228.000	4.265.000	5.116.000	4.377.000
<b>Unemployed</b>	566.000	362.000	204.000	376.000	190.000
<b>Inactive population</b>	11.469.000	4.900.000	6.569.000	6.348.000	5.121.000
	Percentage				
<b>Activation rate</b>	63,5	71,2	55,8	61,8	65,8
<b>Employment rate</b>	59,7	66,4	53,1	57,6	62,8
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	5,6	6,5	4,6	6,9	4,2



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The biggest part of the employed population is working in the agriculture, forestry and fishing, manufacturing and commerce. 81% from the active population works in the private sector, and 17,5% in the public sector. The adults have an important involvement potential in the working process in comparison with the teenagers.

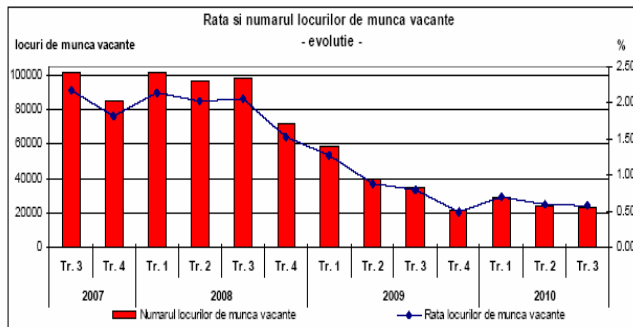


Figure 2.1. the evidence of vacant working places between 2007-2010 (INS, 2010)

In a communique of The National Institute of Statistics, (2010) it has been presented that the number of vacant working places in the second part of the year 2010 was of 23.300, diminished by 900 working places in comparison with the first part of the year and with 11.600 less than 2009 ( Figure 2.1).

More than one third (8.500) of the total number of vacant working places are to be found in the manufacture industry, followed by the public administration (2.700 working places) and social care (2.400 working places). The fewest working places are registered in the field of estate dealings (30 working places). The biggest need of working force expressed by the employers referred to operators for installations and machines, equipment assemblers. The less working places availability was among the members of the executive assembly and public administration.

Regarding the unemployment (Figure 2.2), we notice the fact that the year 2009 brought the biggest growths of the unemployed number, the year 2010 and 2011 offering a relative balance of the unemployment situation at Romanian level.

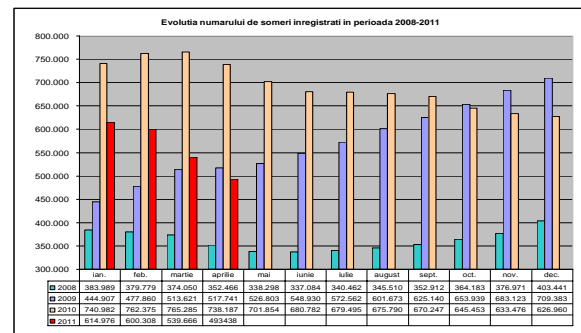


Figure 2.2. The Evidence of unemployment between 2008-2011 (INS, 2010)

If we are referring to the unemployment average according to the sex/gender, we are noticing that in April 2011, in comparison with the previous month, the average of male unemployment diminished from the value of 6,52% in March, to the value of 5,90%, and the average of female unemployment diminished from 5,24% to 4,85% (Figure 2.3)

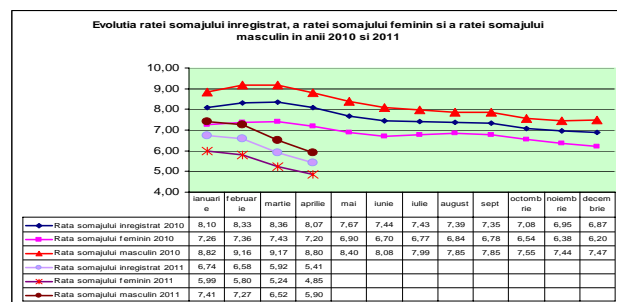


Figure 2.3. The Evidence of unemployment according to gender between 2010-2011 (INS, 2010)

Regarding the structure of unemployment according to the training level, the

unemployed persons with primarily, secondary and professional training level represent the larger group of persons who are addressing to the county agencies for the engagement of working force in order to find and obtain a working place, and this is of an average of 77,52%. The unemployed persons with highschool and post highschool training level represent 16,70%, and those with university studies only 5,78%. From the point of view of classification of the unemployed persons according to their age, the representative ones are the averages for the ages 40-49 years (28,72 %) and 30-39 years (26,48%). According to the long term unemployment, at the end of April, there were registered in the evidence of the agency 16.598 unemployed teenagers for over 6 months (that means 31,46% from the total of unemployed persons under 25 years old) and 91.134 adults being unemployed for over 12 months, (20,68% from the total of unemployed adults), the average of the long term unemployed from the total unemployed persons being of 21,83%.

Taking into account the actual situation of the labour market it is necessary to take measures to bring improvement and to allow a better evolving of the teenagers, youth and adults on the professional level. One of the measures is that one taken through the activities of career counselling, which offers career plans according to each individual. All these activities require the existance of results due to researches, studies, analyses, evaluations about the labour market or the jobs world (Jigău, 2001). The counsellor, together with the adolescent or the adult, will explore the personality features and obvious motivational aspects, the type of temperament, the intelligence level and professional interests. By identifying the interests, according to the personality type, it has done a better implementation in his own system of professional values. Analysing the profiles specific for each person, we find information and determine the growth of self-knowledge level. Fulfilled with information about the labour market, about the opportunities of the working places, the opportunities of training or specialisation, there are going to be identified those occupations and jobs suitable for the analysed profiles.

The recent estimations shows that until 2015, approximately 30% of the working places will demand higher education and almost 50% at least highschool studies, being significantly diminished the working places that are asking for a reduced level of qualification (Cedefop, 2008). This aspect requires the teens and youths specialization according to the market demandings, keeping in balance the request-offer report.

### **3. Conclusions**

The changes in the context of career are multiple and the new visions upon this are linked to the promotion of long-life learning as a way of integration and reintegration on the labour market and to the enhancement of efficiency and competitiveness of the specialised institutions and of the staff responsible with human resources management. In the future, the accent will be placed on the short term contracts, and the office from home will become a much more used alternative. The methods of staff recruitment and selection will be more varied, and the career counsellors will be better trained and adapted to the new changes. The perspective upon career will change, competence being on the first place. The new Working Code has brought changes by the fact that the employer may establish the objectives of individual performance and the evaluation criteria of these. The proposal offers the possibility to the employer to establish concrete objectives and performance adapted criteria for his own employees. This change will determine the growth of performance and competitiveness among the employees (Dugulescu, 2011).

The nowadays situation shows that Romania has made progress in restructuring the system of continuous professional development. The strategy for short and medium term for continuous professional development intends to develop a structured system of continuous professional development, transparent and flexible, with an adequate level of financing and a great involvement of social partners, which will assure the growth of working force mobility and to respond to the companies needs for



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qualified working force, taking into account the future economical restructuring and the alignment to the European market. The implementation of some career management programmes will be a future perspective of the career evolution and it will assure human capital with the potential to take coordinating positions and to face some difficult situations. By the positions rotating will be improved the abilities, knowledges and behaviours necessary for various professional roles. The employers tendency is to reassign, due to some staff restructuring, various tasks to the subordinated employees. Thus, very many employees will retrieve various responsibilities and will face many changes (□arapatin, 2011). By better knowing the employee, knowing his personality, motivation and professional interests, the strategies of career development will lead to the obtaining of wanted results. The actual studies in this field proved that the employees with an increased career selfmanagement and who know their interests and personality have a greater feeling of belonging to the organisation and, also, a bigger satisfaction. Under these circumstances, the companies must not give up to their role of managing their employees careers, but they must adapt a specific manner to the actual context. By developing the competences of career selfmanagement, by optimization of the decision-making process and by creating a favorable climat to personal initiative could lay the foundations of an organizational culture open to the new.

Analysing all of these, we are briefly presenting the most significant changes in the career context:

-Replacing the career stability with its mobility. Nowadays, the jobs are more often changed than in the past (Huteau, 2003).

-Diminishing the predictability of career's course. The careers became less safe for the majority of persons.

-Getting to careers open to aspects of large sociability. The individual evolution depends nowadays on the experience gathered along his life time. His blooming is due to the events from the outside of the organization (Feldman, 2002).

-Moving from career management to the selfmanagement. The individuals are much more involved in building their own careers and thus they are more careful in the moment of choosing their career. The transition is made from the model of a career managed by the organizations to the model of a self-managed career (Werner, 2002) and it has transferred the risk of career development from the organization to the individual (Leana, 2002).

-The simultaneous action of singular careers with limitless careers. The absence of careers limits means that these are surpassing the organizational boundaries linked to the function and hierarchy, they needed a much more personal flexibility regarding activities and abilities. The individuals may choose careers according with their own personality.

-The development of new employment ways (employment on a determined period) including new documents with evidence of work (replacing the work books with the electronic ones)

The changes from the labour market determined new visions upon career. Here are some of them:

-The individual work reflects his personality. The independent persons choose business professions that offer the possibility to have initiative and to lead. The aggressive individuals will choose

competitive professions and the coercive ones will take professions that require a certain degree of obedience.

-The choosing of career becomes a decision-making process in which the individual compares the occupational alternatives according to an algorithm that „includes the correspondence between aptitudinal requests, the competence ones, the personality ones, the valuable ones, the attitudinal ones specific to each occupation and his own aptitudes, competences, personality features, values and attitudes” (Luca, 2002: 22).

-People are forming their preferences for different activities through a multitude of learning experiences. They give significance to the activities through the ideas that have been sent” (Krumboltz, 1994: 17).

-People differ from the point of view of aptitudes, personality features, interests and values.

According to all these characteristics, the individuals are suitable for some professions, which give them the opportunity to organize and to value their personality. Their success in the confrontation with the working environment depends on the maturity degree in their career, that is the way in which the individual is ready to face the demands of his profession.

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