

# **The Social Security Benefits and Beneficiaries and Gypsies: The Case of the Municipality of Faro – Algarve - Portugal**

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## **Introduction**

Modern societies are founded on the values of equality, in particular principles of equal opportunity, and that is the way to build citizenship. Simply, it seems that equality of opportunity has not yet been fully achieved, because there remain vulnerable to poverty and exclusion, and these situations tend to reproduce themselves socially from the same categories of individuals. The most common way to describe poverty is to assess the material conditions of each individual and how you live your day, to meet the basic needs: food, clothing, hygiene and housing, access to education and health, among others. Social exclusion emerges as a relational process that removes the individual from society, and can be caused by inequalities associated with the causes of poverty and welfare dependency of the state. In turn, public policies haven't been able to combat poverty and exclusion, nor predict its onset.

The relevance of the study relates to the difficulties in equal opportunities for groups vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion. The fact that the Social Integration Income (SII) is recognized as a subsidy that has more emphasis on the subsidy on the Roma, as well as the lack of citizenship in the gypsy group makes research a challenge to address a subject already stereotyped.

The research questions are:

- How they live gypsies that they are beneficiaries of Social Integration (SII)?
- What are your perceptions and for this type of assistance?
- How to deal with the stereotype of the majority society?
- What is your perception of rights and duties of solidarity?
- How do coaches perceive the fight against poverty experienced by Gypsies through the award of (SII)?

## **Poverty**

Poverty leads to a very strong human cargo and it is a social problem, most people feel the need to talk about it, or give an opinion on the matter.

Alfredo Bruto da Costa (2007), poverty is the "situation of deprivation resulting from lack of resources", where deprivation is depicted by the few material conditions of each individual to meet basic needs: food, clothing, conditions hygiene and housing, access to education and health, among others. For most people it is easier to identify poverty by material needs, they are visible. Further to this, the psychological dimension, spiritual, social and cultural, may affect the individual's personality, leading him to a close relationship with society.

Paul Spick (2007cit in Bruto da Costa, 2008) gave a definition of poverty divided into three categories: the need for material, economic circumstances and social relations. The material need as a deprivation of essential goods and services to well-being of individuals, because of the absence of a source of income that can not deliver sufficient economic class for primary products to the livelihoods of people. Finally, social relationships, poverty is defined in terms of social class, from which the economic position, educational level and social status of the individual. Therefore poverty is linked to lower social class, with little power and opportunities which apply to persons belonging to the upper classes. Against this background many poor people become dependent on welfare so they can meet their basic needs (pp. 24).

## **Causes of Poverty**

The two approaches shows that attempt to explain the reproduction of poverty, or their causes, whether internal or external to the individual.

To Paugam cit by Diogo (2007), "the poor are those who are able to go through the ritual of asking for support, followed by analysis of privacy, the status, poor revenues and support for reintegration and monitoring in their intimacy by a technician, "ie the poor go through a social and institutional process that they apply a social label of poor (pp.29).

## **Structuralist approaches: Capitalism: "The system is to blame"**

The structuralist approach advocates the analysis of external causes to the poor guy. Poverty is caused by the organization of the capitalist system characteristic of

modern society, with individualistic and liberal ideals. Anthony Leeds (1971 cit in Paugam, 2003) considers that "the structural constraints that weigh on the social environment of the poor and to escape them entirely or almost" causes obstacles to the participation of the poor "in the system of economic and social organization, and the low status that society grants "(pp. 27).

Ruweu Ogień citing Leeds contradictory theory establishes a culture of poverty that leads to an "overpopulation can be seen as a response to the low level of resources, not owned by institutions is the result of social exclusion rather than disinterest or apathy culturally typical transmitted, and the very consciousness results from the resignation of the insurmountable obstacles that the objective conditions of existence imposed on individuals without resources "(Diogo 1992/1993).

### **Approaches Cultural: Culture of poverty: "The culprit is poor"**

In line with the current culture, the processes of exclusion primarily result from internal causes, that is the responsibility of the individual being poor is their own, as well as the rest of the family. The design of the culture of poverty that launched Lewis intends to defend the thesis that poverty is spreading across the generations, forming a vicious cycle, trapping people in poverty (Khan, 2010).

Oscar Lewis believes that

"Culture of poverty is at the same time, one adaptation and a reaction of the poor to their marginal position in a class stratified society, highly individualized and capitalist. It represents an effort to cope with feelings of despair that arise when poor people understand how far it is unlikely to achieve success as it is conceived according to the values and objectives of the society in which they live. The culture of poverty is not only an adaptation to a set of objective conditions of society as a whole. Once there, it tends to perpetuate itself from generation to generation because of the effect it has on children "(Paugam, 2003: 27).

## **Social exclusion - Definition**

The concept of exclusion has emerged to complement the concept of poverty, which are increasingly linked. As advocates Diogo "new forms of poverty jeopardize social cohesion, in particular the relationship of individuals with work and social ties", and the job market the way for people to secure their income and maintain their social relations (2007: 26).

Robert Castel (cit in Bruto da Costa) defines social exclusion "as the extreme phase of the process of" marginalization ", understood as a journey" descending ", over which there are successive breaks in the individual's relationship with society" (2007:10). Castel breaches that refers are related to lack of work, family breakdown, emotional and friendship, family breakdown or emotional Castel characterized as "extreme" social exclusion, the exclusion is a gradual process in the life of a person (pp. 18).

Bruto da Costa (2007) states that the concept of social exclusion have to become involved issues of citizenship means having access to a basic set of social systems, "that individuals should have access to just get out of poverty (pp.13). Social systems are divided into five basic areas: social, economic, institutional, territorial and symbolic references.

The relationship with each of the domains depends on their position regarding the economic field, or by mechanisms that create income, either for the opportunity to access goods and services.

In the social interpersonal relations corresponding to the basic institutions that embody the exercise of citizenship in the institutional influence the way that it is perpetuated in access to information and knowledge. A form of social exclusion can be through the territory where the person or family lives is the characteristics of the area (slums) or by geographical location (rural areas). The territorial domain you want the "space where people live to be integrated into the space that surrounds it." Finally symbolic references representatives of individual identity, you want the individual to be recognized in society according to their values and characteristics.

## **Relationship between poverty and exclusion (poverty can lead to exclusion but not always)**

Poverty has many definitions as can be seen in the previous paragraphs. All factors will ultimately not be portrayed as visible to ordinary people and sometimes even for professionals who work with poor people. Poverty is a complex phenomenon to understand. With poverty being the lack of resources of the resolutions can go through an extraordinary support which in turn can create another dimension of poverty, dependence on social returns. A person will be offered a monetary support to address their lack of resources, you may not be all independent, but may remain in a situation of social exclusion, does not have access to all basic services. Because we live in a society characterized by the market economy in which access to goods and services depend on the income that people have some assurances and / limit orders of the State (Bruto da Costa, 2008:63). In the same line of thought is the more insightful the poverty, the lower the number of social systems and more intense covered the state of social exclusion.

In conclusion, poverty encompasses a form of social exclusion, there is no poverty without social exclusion. The opposite is not possible, "because there are forms of social exclusion does not imply that poverty" (Bruto da Costa, 2008:63). Social exclusion turns out to be a process of organizing society and its lifestyles, which can result other representations of prejudice and exclusion as forms of discrimination against social minorities.

## **Portuguese Gypsies - social situation**

The earliest records of Roma in Portugal date from the sixth century. The lifestyle of the Roma has changed little Portugal remained an essentially rural country. Gypsies continued to be nomadic, devoting himself to the street vendors. Its characteristics remain rooted, for example, girls leave school early for a family.

The Roma are the ethnic group most exposed to poverty and social exclusion, and are constantly described as the major "predators" of the state social benefits, but not before they had contributed to such support. Against this background, a large part of society seems to manifest some form of dislike for this ethnic group, resulting largely from a poor implementation of social policies in the country.

In Portugal there are about 30 to 50 thousand Roma. According to this study, the Roma are mainly concentrated in the coastal and border areas (Lisbon district of Viana do Castelo, Castelo Branco, Coimbra and Évora). Despite this, the integration problems persist and sometimes take on contours concern. The main obstacle to successful integration is based on a persistent self-exclusion of Portuguese citizens, stays for a few ideas, traditions and lifestyles of the time lags and civic needs of the country (the Parliamentary Committee on Ethics, Society and Culture (2008)).

## **Gypsies and SII**

According to the Parliamentary Committee on Ethics, Society and Culture (2008) states that the Social Integration proved to be a measure of the utmost importance in the face of extreme poverty that is part of the Roma community:

a. Allowed to a situation of total material failure to meet basic needs, but it was also important factor to establish some links between the state and Roma.

b. possible to establish a agreement with the Gypsy families through which children spend in school, women and children to be covered by maternal and child health, women and men to have access to recurrent training, the adult population attending activities vocational training, the community in general, be covered by the Social Action in support of the exercise of citizenship and the organization of everyday life.

However, this measure is also associated with complaints and criticisms, which can stand out among others:

- a. the amounts are insufficient, and they cover only the precariousness;
- b. benefits are improperly used to purchase goods;
- c. there are social workers who make the wrong assessment of the balance of sales and Gypsies lose the right to benefit;
- d. benefits are discouraging work / inducing parasitism;
- e. supplies are ways to blackmail the Roma community to behave in accordance with our objectives;

f. SII is an important measure that is in danger of losing their actual size the way it is applied to Gypsies.

The application of the SII requires multidisciplinary teams working with families their skills, thereby facilitating their integration. Requires partnerships and networking, without which it will gather the resources needed to achieve the objectives

of this measure. It also requires the formation of technical teams to integrate both Social Security and workers in local authorities or other bodies with which we need to establish partnerships.

### **European concept of the welfare state**

The economic crises of 70 years of the twentieth century changed the outlook of state intervention, which was blamed for the inflation, unemployment and weak economic growth. The years of growth and development based on the neoliberal political-economic structure emerged after the Second World War, with the appearance of organisms underpinning economic growth in countries such as the World Bank or the IMF (International Monetary Fund).

The welfare state seeks to develop a response to criticism of failure to reduce or eradicate the problem of poverty and discourage work in providing social supports (Diogo, 2007:123).

The welfare state emerged to balance the economic adjustment processes of the different social classes in capitalist context. Aims to promote social rights through the provision of support services which "the market is not aware" (Rodrigues, 2010:71). It is the welfare state determine social policies in health, education, housing, labor, equipment and services, among others.

Under the welfare state were springing up all over Europe social models, in which each country has its social policies based on two theories of solidarity.

In the EU social protection systems are characterized by strong state intervention. Each country has its own conception of social rights, their customs, their history, and the level of economic and social development. According to Rodrigues, "despite the harmonization of social policies appear as an unrealistic horizon, the principle underpinning this effort served to standardizing that raged in Europe several exchanges of experiences and universalize various measures, such as guaranteed minimum income" (2010: 41).

Social models have their historical basis in the two conceptions of social policies developed since the Industrial Revolution, Bismarck (professional solidarity) and Beveridge (national solidarity). Both were intended to protect citizens from social risks, especially the workers.

European social models have their basis in the principles of civic participation and exercise of citizenship. According to Gösta Esping-Andersen (2001, cit in Rodrigues 2010), there are three models of social protection in Europe: the Scandinavian model, the Anglo-saxon and continental or corporatist model - composed by countries of the South.

### **Policies social minimum incomes as a mechanism to fight poverty**

With the consolidation of the principles of democracy, equality and welfare, the existence of cases of poverty becomes increasingly difficult to accept.

The current social policies are based on a set of innovative measures and new methods of social intervention to vulnerable groups and allows for an institutional linkage and closer to the ground, seek to combat the economic dimension of exclusion, defending the right to work the principle of equal opportunities and universal access to social policies, but also acts to prevent accommodation and dependence on subsidies (Rodrigues, 2010:95).

As social policy of income support is widespread in Europe in 1992 as part of a global instrument for fighting poverty and social exclusion. Human dignity passed through the right of individuals to have the essentials to live. In order to achieve economic and social progress, like democracy, the EU has defined three types of minimum income in accordance with the applications in European countries (based on European social models). The first "guaranteed income" characterized by "distinguished award, guaranteeing recipients that their income will not be less than a set amount stipulated" in any case if the recipient fails to find a job benefit income, the second type of income allows the recipient to look for work and when their income exceeds the minimum support it receives from the leaves to enjoy, there is a gradual decrease in the minimum wage. Finally, the "worldwide income" benefits all individuals of the same value of the benefit, considering just the social benefit for rich and poor, promoting citizenship.

The groups most vulnerable to economic hardship and poverty, with the characteristics and conditions for receiving monetary support, became the privileged class. The assignment of support depends on an analysis and understanding of the causes of poverty of individuals. (Rodrigues, 2010: 90-92).



In many cases the social protection can not be fully successful, the social inclusion of poor people, discouragement and thus generates a social resentment, because the failure gives reasons to individualize poverty, blaming individuals and thus reduce public intervention (Rodrigues, 2010:30).

Rodrigues (2010) states that "Europe the number of benefit recipients of the GMI has increased since the end of the 1980s," this statement is due to the increasing lack of work that persists in the poorest groups and the high number of people excluded socially by the various social and family breakdown (pp.93).

### **The Social Inclusion as a mechanism for combating poverty and exclusion: GMI and SII**

The European Social Model is the basis for creating the so-called 'benefit of the poor' in Portugal, called the Guaranteed Minimum Income (GMI) established in 1996 with the aim to combat poverty and social exclusion through a new policy model income redistribution policies to active inclusion, ie, through a new law that guarantees all citizens a minimum level of economic resources and the right / duty to social and professional integration in the sense of promoting social cohesion. Apart from this objective in the short term, the GMI is designed to introduce social policies in Portugal, a tool for combating poverty and social exclusion, blaming the state a share of responsibilities between it and civil society (Cruz, 2009).

The GMI allowed to give a monthly amount to families and individuals who were unemployed or living situations of economic need and who meet certain conditions for allocation. This allowance would stand to live with a guaranteed minimum, with the main objective the satisfaction of basic needs of these people. In 2003, there was a change of social policies in Portugal, after the GMI renamed the Social Insertion Income (SII), which lies to the beneficiary (and family) responsibility to comply with a plan negotiated with a social inclusion monitoring techniques, with the aim of improving the material conditions, with the support of a cash benefit. According to the explanation of Rodrigues "aimed at promoting the integration of the individual beneficiaries, either through the financial benefit, and above all, through adherence to an inclusion program in several areas of vulnerability of life of individuals and social groups" (2010: 92).

What sets the SII is the enhancement of the GMI in the employability of the beneficiaries, the introduction of new factors of positive discrimination in the allocation

of the cash benefit, greater accountability of civil society in promoting and implementing the program for insertion and an increase in the mechanisms oversight to prevent situations of fraud. Currently, to take advantage of the SII, the applicant can not have monthly income above € 189.52, and lasted for 1 year (Social Security Institute, 2010).

From 2010 the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, reported that over 400 000 people benefited from the RSI and 77% were children, the elderly and workers (Luz, 2010).

## **Methodological process**

The object of study, this research is the recipient of the Roma Social Integration. The direct collection of data from the subjects covered in the study generally implies that the researcher is in permanent contact with the subjects, which is why this form of information gathering is known as field work or field research (Rocha-Trindade , 1995).

The interpretive paradigm contributes to reality to be studied and understood through an analysis and a reflection of the individuals under study. Hence the object of the problem (the paradigm) is to understand a situation and understand it through the vision of individuals, ie their perceptions, feelings and opinions. The techniques used in this model are qualitative, enabling triangulation of data.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1994), "the interview is used to collect descriptive data on the language of the subject, allowing the researcher to develop, intuitively, an idea on how subjects interpret aspects of the world" (pp.134). The interview is structured or semi-directive, in that it is not opened or closed.

To Berelson (cit in Vala, 1986), "content analysis is an investigation technique that allows objective description, systematic and quantitative or qualitative manifest content of communication" (pp. 103) allows us to interpret the information collected through interviews, conversations held and facilitates its integration into the reflection and study.

## **Background research**

The municipality of Faro, according to statistics of 2011, has 63.967 million inhabitants.

The research in question is held in conjunction in the context of the professional researcher, social housing estates in the city of Faro, where most residents are poor. The ground contact is daily, making it possible to observe and experience the dynamics of the public to study, specifically the Roma beneficiaries of the SII.

The investigation itself began in October 2010, through informal conversations with some Gypsies living in city housing projects, in order to gain more confidence, to collect information and build scripts for semi-directive. I confess that it was not easy, because for each Gypsy was necessary to adjust the questions. The degree of understanding of each interview varied depending on prior knowledge related to the subject.

In order to understand the perceptions of professionals who monitor recipients gypsies, I contacted a few technical institution and the accompanying Social Security beneficiaries Roma.

In the municipality of Faro, the institution that monitors the SII beneficiaries, the universe of 550 cases, 125 are Roma families.

The context of the study covers the district of Faro, or beneficiaries will be conducted interviews with Gypsies in the city and the countryside. It is important to understand the perceptions of Roma, as the importance attached to SII varies depending on the needs of each person. Each territory has its characteristics, and the gypsies of rural beneficiaries live longer excluded due to the distance of basic social services, as well as access to work. Most beneficiaries Gypsies can not work because the Portuguese society still has many stereotypes and prejudices against Roma.

In preparing this research, the methodology was a very important part, constantly using various techniques essential, interviews and observation in the field. The search and retrieval of bibliographic information have been hampered by the few existing studies on Gypsies and SII.

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