# CONSIDERATIONS ON GLOBALIZATION AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract**: *This paper focuses on defining „globalization" and discussing its complex impact on society, from economy and politics, to education and culture. As globalization is a complex, enduring process, it entails a number of challenges, such as preserving a nation's identity while instilling global values, adjusting education to global tendencies, integrating communities etc.*

*„Globalization" is a popular and widely used term and a broadly accepted definition refers to disappearance of boundaries, transforming the world into one unit, and forming new supranational institutions. The process of globalization went through roughly three stages: 1870-1914, 1950-1980, and 1980-present day. Throughout these years, nations have seen changes in their economy, with the increase of trade, globalization of financial markets or transnational production.*

*Education has evolved and changed alongside society. If in the past education only meant one stage in an individual's life, contemporary society requires permanent education, as a result of labor movements or developments in science. In order to fully understand globalization, it is crucial to properly define the term „community". The concept is the subject of many studies, and is defined as a social unit in which members are brought together by common interests, beliefs, and value.*

*Closely related to globalization is sustainable development, which refers to meeting individual and social needs whithout negatively influencing the environment, so that future generations are not affected. As our world is facing a number of environmental problems, such as pollution, climate changes, resources depletion, nations have come together attempts to find proper, viable solutions.*

**Key words:** globalization; economy; development; community; sustainable.

## 1. Globalization – definition and importance

The term refers to the phenomenon of changing the world into one unit, manifested on a global scale, through the creation of institutions, supranational political organisms, through common security and economy policies (Romanian Language Dictionary). Globalization is the process which offers people and companies a grater liberty and ability to carry out economic tranzactions beyond national borders. This process is brought about by

elimination of national barriers and cost reduction, especiatlly that of transportation and communication (World Bank Atlas, 2000).

A first globalization stage takes place between 1870 and 1914 and comes about as a substantial product, capital, and workforce growth, due to advances in transportation and the diminishing of impediments that suppress the circulation of factors of production (the export level worldwide almost doubled, foreign capital tripled, compared to income in developing countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, milions of citizens emigrated from Europe to North America and other areas; movement from overpopulated countries such as China and India to less populated countries like Sri Lanka, Birminia, Thailand, the Philipines and Vietnam were as intense; ten per cent of the world population was in motion).

The first World War and the economical crisis during 1929-1933, and also the second World War could not maintain previous tendencies. On the contrary, incoherent economic policies unemploiment, nationalism etc. pushed the governments towards exceeded protectionism, which resulted in economical growth impairment, poverty increase and greater imbalances on a global scale. The second stage of globalization took place between 1950 and 1980, and was characterized by well developed nations focusing on the rebirth of trade relations through a series of multilateral liberalization governed by GATT, as well as through orientation towards economic integration. Most of the developing countries restricted export to base products, being isolated by the capital movement, which contributed to poverty growth and larger imbalances between countries.

The third stage, since 1980 onward, was speeded by the technological progress in transportation ang communication, as well as by the choice of developed countries to increase and improve investments to be open to foreign trade. For the first time it was proven that poor countries could use their labor force on the global market of goods and services (Buzducea, 2001). The countries which were dedicated to global integration showed economic growth, starting with the 1960s, increasing in the 70s and 90s, while most developing countries, with populations over two billion, became marginalized with a negative progress rate in the 90s, which lead to increase of contrast and imbalance. Examples of the level of globalization can be easily seen in the daily press, the economic aspect being the most focused on (trade and direct investment growth, financial market globalization, transnational production, transnational corporations, competition between local areas and states, depletion of national funds).

Some global issues, such as global warming, the hole in the ozone layer, tropical deforestation, explain the pheomenon of globalization in an impressive manner, as these are obvious global concerns which require global approach. Nonetheless, there are regional and local issues regarding the environment,

even though they present aspects which surpass the borders, such as river pollution. There are however other situations which do not refer to space and time. For example, the survival of small island countires, which have formed the AOSIS organization, and which are seriously threatened by the ongoing rise of sea level, depends on every individual's behaviour worldwide, especially those living in rich industrial countries. These type of issues were focused on by the first conference on environment and development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

The world has become a large global community, innovative social networks (chat, e-mail) adding to the traditional communities like family and neighborhood. However, they cannot replace these traditional communication areas, to give but one example regarding the social aspect. Politics is facing great challenges. Globalization and local competition limit national governing, and many problems cannot be properly solved on an international, global scale. Consequently, new political forms and arenas have had to be found and in this regard European integration has been considered a valid answer to the challenges of globalization. Regional and national politics has always been affected by the limited and paperless trade, taking place more and more internationally and globally. Capitalism, a significant factor of the social status, is also threatened by this fundamental imbalance (Jordan, 1998).

Innovations in technology – especially in computer science and communications – play an important part. The Internet is, in many aspects, a form of globalization. The globalization of financial markets, the transfer of large amounts of money around in a matter of seconds would not be possible without this kind of technology or without organizing transnational production. The extraordinary flourishing of trade, another defining element of economic globalization, is also caused by reduced transportation costs, thus the merchandise being dipatched more quickly. This can be most oftenly observed in the field of services: for example, software or database products can be sent from one part of the world to the other in a matter of seconds.

The end of the Cold War was often indicated as one of the causes of globalization. If, in the conflict between the East and the West, the world was devided into two sides that had little contact, this boundary (the Iron Curtain) fell in 1989-1990. The states that were part of the East bloc were opened to the world market. Also, more and more countries trust democracy and market economy as fundamental organization principles.

Irrespective the globalization level of a certain country, one must target balance between the advantages and disadvantages of this phenomenon, such as the support of international trade, new opportunities of growth, reducing the time for trading or financial operations, stimulating competition, rapid spread of innovations, easier access on capital markets, market expansion, and/or creating markets which do not depend on national/traditional ones, production costs reduction, increase in profit and productivity rate; on the

other hand, greater discrepancies between beneficiaries and nonbeneficiaries, threatening of the national state, increased marginalization of some states and lack of democratic spirit between nations, affecting cultures and traditions, developing countries with lower labor productivity will be affected by the reduction of job offerings, through SMN national markets are threatened, expantion of activities which generate pollution and overuse of natural resources (Gorun, 2010).

Another aspect of globalization refers to the globalization of education, which defines the ability of post modern learning systems to adjust to the changes in the social system, that have occurred worldwide on an economic level, through the model of mangement based on full usage of all existent resources, with an emphasis on IT resources; in the political system, through the model of social democracy viewed as strategy to positively use all human resources and to equalize success rate of all social factors; in culture, through the model of technologization, verified in superior products (science, arts, communication technology etc.) in social organizations/institutions (responsible for creating, broadcasting, and using information) and in each individual's behaviour. Education thus becomes the universal psychosocial activity, with a role in forming and developing subject personality, according to the objectives of the learning system, which aim at proper selection and processing of information for a continuous global adjustment to the necessities of a new global civilization (Solcanu, 2006).

European education defines a restricted area of globalization, essensial, however, to its proper achievement through forming European citizens endowed with European information and skills, according to European values, having European culture, conscience and identity. The national aspect of education reflects its ability to organize itself a macrostructural organization, related to the values of the national culture, and a microstructural one, in a teritorial and local context. Education aims at forming personalities in accordance with social and also individual objective requirements. As any social phenomenon, education also has an historical component. It came about alongside society, and it evolves and changes depending on the developments that take place inside it.

In the past, education only meant a stage in a person's life, due to the slow evolution of society. Even so, the great minds of humankind insisted that education must affect individuals throughout their lives. Seneca, for example, thought that „seniors must also learn", Comenius stated that „for every person life is school, from cradle to grave" and Nicolae Iorga stressed that a true „schollar is one who permanently teaches himself and permanently teaches others". Hence, permanent education becomes a necessity of the contemporary society, representing a theoretical and practical principle meant to organize a state of facts specific to this century.

The most important criterion which demands and justifies permanent education is the social factor based on the speeding of changes, labor movements, science evolution, increase of free time, the role model crisis, and also a greater level of democracy in social life. Lately, education has been required by a series of individual factors, such as the need for a dynamic integration of man into society, the high level of individual aspirations, the sense of personal dignity, the need to trust future and progress. The fundamental goal of permanent education is to maintain and increase quality of life and growth.

Education is a complex social activity which materializes through an endless chain of actions that one willingly, systematically, and constantly performs. Education reprezents the ansamble of measures systematically demanded by society, in order to form and develop intelectual, moral, and physical skills in children, youngsters, or adults.

## 2. Community development and sustainable development

The concept of community refers to the aspect of being common to more people or social groups, a group of people with common interests, religion, customs, or values; collectivity, society (lat. *communitas*, fr. *communauté*, it. *comunità*), the state of common ownership-common interests (Romanian Language Dictionary). Community reprezents the idea of a global social entity, in which relationships between members are tight and there is a strong sense of ingroup, rooted in well-established traditions (Pop, 2002).

Community is the expression of not only practical and political options, but also of human nature. It is at the same time a common fact, but also a cultural one, representing storage of common good and main values, found in its own laws and traditions. There are various raports and relations between human beings. The dual form of human affiliations, such as community and society is reprezented by community-like associations–family, and social-like associations–modern industrial corporations. This concept frame refers both to the description of smaller, primary groups, and to the assessment of larger organizations, even the entire society. Thus, living within a society involves three types of human relationships-family community, place community and spiritual community, with such settings as the house, where members share common goods, the village, which commonly owns and uses lands and the town, inside which professional institutions and religious communities are developed. Consequently, the family, village, and town, but also a generation or nation, are forms of community. In this regard, community is defined as a form of assembly for common living, based on will.

Life in common within a given community is characterized by pleasure, intimacy, habit, and is based on family, place, and spiritual relationships (Sandu, 2005). Also, society can be a form of virtual, mechanical association based on

the will of a group of independent individuals. Thus, the form of community life typical to family, village, and small town, is real and enduring, lifestyle in these communities being based on harmony, law and religion, while social life is mechanical, virtual, based on cohabitation, politics, and public opinion. Understood as an ideal type for the different forms of cohabitation, the idea of community, in Tonnies-Weber tradition, is quite clear, especially regarding essential aspects: interdependence between relation systems, high level of homigenization concerning values and norms, their presence as highly internalized elements, rather than formal ones, within a culture and common ways of life, the existance of a great ingroup sense in relation to an outgroup (Tonnies, 2016).

  Thus, weather the community is large or small is irrelevant. What is important is that the group of people live together in order to fulfill fundamental daily needs, not personal interests. A typical sign of community is the fact that life inside it can be fully lived, with its own social relationships, unlike in the case of associations. In their work, „Community Psychology Textbook", Zani B. and Palmonari A. find two types of community: local and cosmopolitan community. A local community is that in which the individual has tight relationships with society, so that he considers it his group. It is a close and isolated community, which does not accept change as it is negative. Inside the cosmopolitan community, relationships between friends and neighbors are weaker, whereas individuality is more valued. Tradition bonds are weak, the main values are financial, and change is considered positive (Zani, Palmonari, 2003, p.13).

  Human community must be regarded as a whole formed of interrelated units which exist symbiotically, just as plants and animals in the same habitat. Thus, the most important features of this type of community are: population organized on one land, has relatively strong roots in that region, and individuals live in a symbiotic and dependent relationship, that is they are mutually independent. The main processes which stimulate human communities are competition, conflict, understanding, and assimilation, and the relationships within the community are not simple or primitive, but complexly organized, often having rigid norms, summing up similar interests and tastes, often negociated by its members. Thus, community is not based on a contract, but on understanding, its members feel together, mutually, connectedly within a collective will, which is the expression of unity (Teeple, 1995).

  According to Max Weber, community is not related to structure, but culture. What makes a comunity is not proximity or same type cohabitation, but the „subjective feeling of members of belonging to the same community". The moment that, under this common feeling, individuals somehow gear their behavior mutually, a social relationship is formed and this relationship can then start a „community". A communitity is not formed on the base of objective

structural elements, necessary and suficient, such as family, proximity or co-rezidency, but on the base of a fundamental subjective element, which is the importance all of these have for the social actor. Community is a process: Max Weber replaces the noun „comunity" with the verb „communitarization" (Vergemeinschaftung). Considering this, even a family which has lived together for many years is not necessarily a community; it can „communitarize" or not, it can also „decommunitarize", at a certain point, changing into a co-existence-one next to the other. In consequence: „communitarization" takes place any time, anywhere; „community" is not the privilege or expression of just one type of social organization (pre-modern societies). (Weber, 1978)

The concept of „dezvoltare durabila" („sustainable develoment") describes revolutionary forms of this movement, of passing from one qualitative stage to another through leaps, as part of an intermittent evolution process, transforming quantity into quality. Also, this concept involves expansion, an increase in size, importance, or strength, emergence of new ideas, comprehention, detailed presentation and rendering, evolving (Romanian Language Dictionary). The concept of „dezvoltare durabila" is relatively new in modern literature, as an attempt to accurately render the English „sustainability".

Beyond these specific terms, lies the idea of meeting the current generation"s needs without affecting those of future ones. In a manner of speaking, we have borrowed Earth from future generations and so we cannot live today without being concerned with what we leave behind, without setting the base for a constructive activity for them, without supplying for their decent leaving conditions. We cannot endlessly exploit natural, economic, human resources without restoring and rationalizing them.

„Dezvoltarea durabilă" („sustainable development") is that type of development which refers to meeting present needs without compromising the possibility for future generations to meet their own needs, or achievment of balance between human needs and environment protection, not only in the present, but also in the endless future. It also states that sustainability policies include three fields of activity: economic, environmental, and social. „Dezvoltarea durabilă" („sustainable development") requires asessment of current needs: economic security, shelter, food, education, free space, political reprezentation, contact with nature, without compromising future generations opportunities by reducing the use of non regenerating resources so as to protect natural systems.

Lately people have been strenuously expressing economic and social needs. Everybody must have access to those things which improve quality of life, such as economic security, shelter, health, education, liberty and political representation. In the past twenty years, a new area of interest has appeared: environmental issues. The efforts to improve quality of life have resulted in

environment deterioration. As climate is changing, forests are disappearing, pollution is incresing, it is mandatory to be more concerned, so as to avoid paying a great price - that of living without the support of the environment. The concept of sustainable development originated over thirty years ago, as a response to environment issues and natural resources crisis, especially energy. In 1972, at Stockholm, the United Nations Conference takes place, at the innitiative of the USA and Scandinavian countries. The conference examines environmental issues (ECO I) and 113 nations express concern about how human actions influence it. Pollution, resource depletion, and environment destruction related problems are stressed.

In 1983, the United Nations form the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), which starts its activity by assessing the rate of environment distruction and searching for solutions for long term viability of our world.

**3. Conclusions**

It was found that, in order to achieve sustainability, economic and demografic growth must be considered, thus ensuring environment and resources protection measures. The relationship between economy and environment had two ideological directions – technocentrism and ecocentrism.

In 2016, the European Comission introduced its strategic approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda, sustainability involving constant management of natural resources and environment and included a series of activities such as : promoting sustained management of water supply; cooperation between states regarding energy and economic growth; promoting an international environment agreement; coming up with a plan to fight crime; finding ways to combat natural dizasters. Sustainability cannot be achieved without the involvment of the civil society, accomplishing global governing which is coherent and efficient economically, socially, and ecologically speaking.

The objective of sustainability is achieving a balanced interraction between four systems - economic, human, ecological, and technological - in a functional, dinamic, and flexible process. The optimal level corresponds to that kind of sustainability which can be assisted by the four systems. In order for the model to be operational, this sustainability or viability must be applied to all sub-systems which belong to the four dimentions of sustainability, i.e. from energy, transportation, agriculture, and industry to investments, human settlements and conservation of biodiversity.

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