

CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

MASTER'S THESIS

Aspects of Europeanization through Implementation of Policies
on Child Poverty Eradication

-In the Case of the Republic of Serbia-

Author: Lidija Milinkovic

Subject: Public and Social Policy (PSP)

Academic Year: 2017/2018

Supervisor: Mgr. Ing. Olga Angelovská

Date Submitted: 3rd May 2018

Master thesis proposal

Name: Lidija Milinković

Topic: Influence of Family Policy in Child Poverty: Cases of Czech Republic and Republic of Serbia

Key words: Family policy; child poverty; Czech Republic; Serbia

Academic year: 2017/2018

Language of diploma theses: English

Supervisor: Ing. Mgr. Olga Angelovská

Field of study: Public and Policy

A. Research problem definition:

The master thesis project paper on the subject of family policy influence on child poverty has as a goal the presentation of cases in two different countries. Recent policy studies emphasized the value of family policy in reducing child poverty (Gronick and Mayers 2003; 2009; OECD 2007). The reason behind this comparative work is an attempt to find similarities and differences at hand that might help in developing future research work and practice. Somewhat similar historical experience between the two countries presented might give a better insight to the current situation.

This paper will relay on historical and contemporary work of domestic and foreign authors on the subject of family policy and child poverty and their interconnectedness. (Tomáš Sirovátka (2004); Tomáš Sobotka, Anna Šťastná, Kryštof Zeman, Dana Hamplová, and Vladimíra Kantorová (2008); Marina Pantelić (2015); Jelena Žarković Rakić, Marko Vladisavljević, Saša Randelović, Aleksandra Anić and Gorana Krstić (2016)).

Findings of this paper should present an addition to researches and papers done by the European Union and UN. As well as an addition to scientific community in its theoretical background.

Assessing the impact of policies on child poverty and social exclusion; cases of Czech Republic and Republic of Serbia

B. Objectives

The main of goal of this master thesis project could be formulated as such: Since both of the countries are post-communistic countries, with communistic heritage to family policy, I would like to verify if their development including the consequences of poverty are similar or not.

Specific goals are:

- Description and finding out the influence of family policies on child poverty in Czech Republic.
- Description and finding out the influence of family policies on child poverty in Serbia
- Understanding the influence of globalization as well as European Union in the matter.
- Comparative description and analysis in terms of policy implementation and understanding the connection between the countries.

C. Research questions

Proving or denying of the hypothesis that states: The connection between the influences of the policies between two countries may lead to better implementation of family policies and the reduction of child poverty in economically weaker Serbia.

D. Theoretical concept

Analyzing and describing concepts of poverty, family policy in the appropriate context and their implementation and the results in aforementioned countries. Theoretical background will also rely on analytical models of social, economic and political context especially the typologies of Esping-Andersen (Esping-Andersen 2002), as well as theories connected with family policy (Castles 2012). Concerning poverty, certain theories by Amartya Sen and his approach will also serve as a foundation to understanding the situation (Sen 1981) (Sen 2001).

E. Research plan

As it has already been mentioned the countries chosen to be presented in this project, share certain similarities in their historical background. Other than that, certain reliefs are taken into consideration, since I come from Serbia, but study in Czech Republic. The methodological background will use the analysis of secondary data. This includes both Czech and Serbian statistical office, and their researches on topics such as Populations and families and households (2016) CZSO, Porodice sa decom(2016) RZS Scholarly articles and data sources of both countries and of foreign authors. The analysis will include the national surveys and if possible interviews with officials and decision makers.

F. Literature:

Castles, Francis G., Stephan Leibfried, Jane Lewis, Herbert Obinger, and Christopher Pierson, eds. *The Oxford handbook of the welfare state*. OUP Oxford, 2012.

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. "A welfare state for the twenty-first century." *The welfare state reader* (2006): 434-454.

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. "After the golden age? Welfare state dilemmas in a global economy." *Welfare states in transition: National adaptations in global economies* (1996): 1-31.

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta, ed. *Family formation and family dilemmas in contemporary Europe*. Fundacion BBVA, 2007.

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. *Why we need a new welfare state*. OUP Oxford, 2002.

- Förster, Michael F., and István György Tóth. "Child poverty and family transfers in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland." *Journal of European Social Policy* 11, no. 4 (2001): 324-341.
- Förster, Michael F., and István György Tóth. Trends in child poverty and social transfers in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland: experiences from the years after transition. Luxembourg Income Study, 2000.
- Gornick, J., and M. Meyers. Families that work: Policies for reconciling parenthood and employment. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2003.
- Gornick, J., and M. Meyers. Gender equality: Transforming family divisions of labor. New York: Verso. 2009.
- Immervoll, Herwig, Holly Sutherland, Klaas de Vos, K. Vleminckx, and T. Smeeding. "Reducing child poverty in the European Union." *Child Well-Being in Modern Nations; What do we Know?* (2001): 407-432.
- Menchini, Leonardo, and Gerry Redmond. Child consumption poverty in South-Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of independent states. UNICEF, Innocenti Research Centre, 2006.
- OECD. Doing better for children. Paris: OECD Publishing 2009
- Pantelić, Marina. "Demografske promene i porodična politika." In *Politički identitet Srbije u globalnom i regionalnom kontekstu*, pp. 363-375. Fakultet političkih nauka Univerziteta u Beogradu.
- Sen, Amartya. Development as freedom. Oxford Paperbacks, 2001.
- Sen, Amartya. Poverty and famines: an essay on entitlement and deprivation. Oxford university press, 1981.
- Sirovátka, Tomáš. "„Family policy in the Czech Republic after 1989: From gendered and enforced de-familialism to gendered and implicit familialism." MAREŠ, Petr. *Society, Reproduction and Contemporary Challenges*. Brno: Barrister and Principal Publ (2004): 97-117.
- Sobotka, Tomáš, Anna Šťastná, Kryštof Zeman, Dana Hamplová, and Vladimíra Kantorová. "Czech Republic: A rapid transformation of fertility and family behaviour after the collapse of state socialism." *Demographic Research* 19, no. 14 (2008): 403-454.
- Unit, E. "Child poverty and child well-being in the European Union." (2010).
- Žarković Rakić, Jelena, Marko Vladislavljević, Saša Randelović, Aleksandra Anić and Gorana Krstić. "Smanjenje siromaštva dece u Srbiji: novčana pomoć ili radni podsticaji?" *Partnership for economic policy* no. 151 (2016)

<https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/home>

<http://www.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/Default.aspx>

H. Signatures

.....
Student

.....
Supervisor

Declaration

1. I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work, based on the sources and literature listed in the appended bibliography.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes
4. The thesis submitted is 184,213 keystrokes long (including spaces), i.e. 102 manuscript pages à 1800 keystrokes (including spaces).

Your name:

Lidija Milinković

Your signature:

In Prague on:

3rd May 2018

Abstract

The following thesis deals with the possibilities of family policy, but also other policies' influence in diminishing child poverty. The possibility is tested through the perspective of Europeanization aspects and if they could be identified in one country, in this case the Republic of Serbia, by applying new instruments to reduce the child poverty. Serbia is a country with notable potential on one hand, and still immense sustainability issues on the other. This is why the emphasis of this research paper is on the influence that European Union can have on the Republic of Serbia all in service of the child poverty eradication. The accession of the Republic of Serbia to the European Union is still in process however certain similarities, as well as some differences, found in the creations of public policy in Serbia, bear an EU seal. The comparison of certain strategies both in the EU and in Serbia will provide further explanations. Europeanization aspect in the case of Serbia is to a certain extent unavoidable, but how it is going to be received and implemented is up for discussion. Throughout the thesis many different terms, themes and approaches will occur all the while being guided with the specific set of goals and research questions. All of which due to the fact that it is the issue of poverty, i.e. child poverty that is being examined, a complex appearance for which we have to take into consideration the many faces of poverty, tangled causes, and an abundance of consequences. The current political, social and economic situation of the Republic of Serbia is nothing to be envious about, but there is a lot of potential and will for change and growth. There are lessons to be learned, both from the national past as well as the neighbors' present, and it is in the examples and guidance that the strength to combat child poverty should be found. This thesis will present these debates, while shining light and emphasizing all possibilities.

Key words

European Union, Republic of Serbia, child poverty, family policy instruments, Europeanization, recommendations

Abstrakt

Magisterská práce se zabývá možnostmi rodinné politiky, ale také ostatních politik, ovlivnit snížení dětské chudoby. Problematiku zkoumá z pohledu evropeizace a zjišťuje, zda je možné ji identifikovat v oblasti implementace nových nástrojů pro snížení dětské chudoby v Srbské republice. Srbská republika je na jedné straně zemí s pozoruhodným potenciálem a na druhé straně řeší velké problémy s udržitelností, a proto je v práci kladen důraz na vliv Evropské unie snižování dětské chudoby v Srbské republice. Veřejná politika Srbské republiky jakožto kandidátské země Evropské Unie podléhá evropskému vlivu. Srovnání některých strategií jak v EU, tak v Srbsku poskytne další vysvětlení. Aspekt evropeizace v případě politik Srbské republiky je nesporný, ale míra jeho konkrétního promítnutí do daných politik je stále diskutován. V diplomové práci se pracuje s řadou různých termínů, témat a přístupů, které se vážou k problematice chudoby, konkrétně dětské chudoby, která je předmětem zkoumání a je komplexní, proto musíme vzít v úvahu vzájemně propojené příčiny a následky chudoby. Současná politická, sociální a ekonomická situace Srbské republiky není záviděníhodná, ale existuje zde potenciál a vůle ke změně a růstu. Proto by se srbská veřejná a sociální politika mohla inspirovat z minulého i současného vývoje evropských zemí. Tato práce předkládá tyto debaty a zároveň osvětluje a zdůrazňuje všechny možnosti.

Klíčová slova

Evropská unie, Srbská republika, dětská chudoba, nástroje rodinné politiky, evropeizace, doporučení

Table of Contents

List of figures	11
Abbreviations	11
Introduction.....	12
1. Problem definition	14
2. Goals, sub goals and questions arising	16
2.1. Main goal.....	16
2.2. Sub goals	17
3. Methods and data used	18
3.1. Document analysis	19
3.2. Framing theory	19
3.3. Comparative research.....	20
3.4. Strategic documents	21
3.4.1. Research documents.....	22
3.5. Statistical data	23
4. Theoretical background	24
4.1. Poverty	24
4.1.1. Absolute and relative poverty	25
4.1.2. Different approaches to measuring poverty	25
4.1.3. Vulnerable groups and consequences of poverty.....	27
4.2. Child poverty.....	31
4.2.1. Dimensions of a child's well-being	33
4.3. Welfare state.....	35
4.3.1. The role of public sector in beating poverty	39

4.4.	Importance of family policy	41
4.5.	Europeanization concept	43
5.	Results of the research	45
5.1.	State of the poverty in EU	46
5.2.	State of poverty in the Republic of Serbia	50
5.3.	EU policies for diminishing child poverty	55
5.3.1.	The Europe 2020 Strategy	56
5.3.2.	Commission recommendation	66
5.3.3.	Europe's family policies, and their outcomes.....	70
5.4.	Serbia's policies for diminishing child poverty	72
5.4.1.	Poverty reduction strategy	72
5.5.	Family policy of the ex-communistic countries.....	81
5.5.1.	Family policy of the Republic of Serbia.....	83
5.6.	Competence of Serbian institutions in enforcing change.....	84
5.6.1.	General state of the matter	85
5.6.2.	Reliability of Serbia's institutions in accepting the change.....	87
5.7.	Recommendation.....	89
5.7.1.	What can EU teach us?	89
5.7.2.	The ex-communist experience in family policy.....	91
	Conclusion	92
	Bibliography	96

List of figures

Figure 1: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age group, 2015 (% of specified population).....	16
Figure 2: Impact of social transfers (excluding pensions) on the at-risk-of-poverty rate for the total population (percentage reduction), 2007.....	38
Figure 3: Share of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU, 2016.....	47
Figure 4: People (aged under 60) living in households with very low work intensity, 2014 and 2105 (%)......	50
Figure 5: Severe material deprivation rate, 2014 and 2015 (%)......	51
Figure 6: Inability to face unexpected financial expenses, 2014 and 2015 (%)......	52
Figure 7: Poverty rate of children and adults.....	53

Abbreviations

EU	European Union
ESF	European Social Fund
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
SDI	Strane direktne investicije (Direct foreign investments)
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organization

Introduction

“Call it when you see it”, has long been and in some cases still is an accepted definition of poverty. Even though there is no denying that this is true, that poverty sometimes is a ‘feeling’, and that it stands to be a difficult term to define, some frame of understanding should be given. In Amartya Sen’s (Sen 2001) words poverty is omnipresent and presents a much wider range of issues than just a simple income deprivation. His approach on social justice puts poverty in the center of attention, especially in specific terms that he defines it. It is the poverty of opportunities that such a huge percentage of the world’s population falls under, and it is this encompassing understanding of poverty that is the main issue our empathic world is facing. It is not impossible to change this state, but it does require a change bigger than mere income distribution.

Theoretical part of this thesis will deal with more elaborate definitions of poverty and its outcomes, as well as the specific groups of people that can easily fall into poverty. In this situation, I would like to discuss the issue of child poverty. The definitions again vary, but there is no doubt that the issue exists and should be dealt with. EU, UN, and other respective institutions have come to a common conclusion on what are the cultural, material and social opportunities that a child should possess in order not to be considered poor. Some of these circumstances are easy to measure, some not, mostly due to the fact that child poverty is an issue closely connected to several other concepts. One of the biggest factors influencing the appearance of child poverty is family circumstances, or for that matter, the lack of family opportunities.

Family should be observed as an entity with the biggest role in determining the wellbeing of a child. This is to a certain extent self-explanatory, when we consider the stages of growth for children, and their ability to tend to themselves. Other circumstances are the distribution of family income and the consequences it has on the child. Tradition plays an important role in this setting, but so does the development of family policy, which can have a substantial impact on how families function and according to the policy goals, these actions can also concentrate on diminishing child poverty.

After setting a terminological framework within which this paper will operate it is important to emphasize territorial frame, as well as the time frame and the actors responsible.

I would like to emphasize here shortly, that the initial idea of developing comparisons in family policy and child poverty eradication policies between Czech Republic and the Republic of Serbia has been broadened to include the whole of EU, not just the Czech Republic due to certain issues with data collection and the very development of the thesis.

As it has been mentioned, there are several actors in the contemporary world that deal with these issues one way or another, still in terms of advocating for the implementation of policies, and in that sense not only family policies, due to the current most common world order, here I will concentrate on state policies towards the eradication of child poverty. In terms of narrowing down the scope, and with a specific goal in mind, I would like to explore the following; Serbia, being the country on the way to join EU in terms of Europeanization aspects and a country that had several economic and political blows in recent history stands as a society and state that is ready to receive recommendation. That being said, this paper will consider some of the strong, successful or similar strategies in dealing with poverty and children poverty inside the EU, and try to create recommendations for the Republic of Serbia according to the data available.

To be more specific; it is important to evaluate certain policy instruments, those that are directly dealing with the eradication of poverty as well as those which goals do not necessarily directly attack this issue, but still contribute greatly to its solution. These policies could be found in numerous examples around the EU. In this way, Serbia as a country that is accepting majority of the Europeanization aspects has examples from its neighbors that can serve as a teacher. I would like to emphasize at this moment some of the examples that could be followed for their uniqueness. Serbia is an, ex-Yugoslavian, ex-socialist country, which is still struggling with the after-war consequences, and according to some still, dealing with the economic transition from a communist to a capitalist world order. This is why examples of some of the member countries with similar historical path, could be of great significance. Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, and other countries with the socialist past, can provide important insights in the possible recommendations for Serbia.

The governments of these respected countries have all incorporated certain means to deal with poverty issues, especially in recent history with the EU Commission giving straightforward guidelines that put eradication of poverty on the top of the priority list.

By relying on document analysis, the gathered data should serve as a firm starting point in terms of constructing and developing recommendations for the government of Serbia. Programs, goals and policies should all serve as a learning database for the government of Serbia.

Political complexities of becoming an EU member state will not be discussed here, due to the existence of much important work already done on this topic by experts of the field. Still I feel that few things are important, and should be mentioned. Even though Serbia has been struggling in the recent history in comparison with many of the other member states, it still has a strong tradition in terms of already existing social policy structures and approach to care and sense of welfare. Simple “copying” of already developed policies could turn out to be fruitless and in vain. On the other hand, there is no denying that many internal and external circumstances have held this country back in achieving its potential which is why I am suggesting a set of recommendations, based on the EU’s experience.

In terms of dealing with poverty, and especially child poverty, Serbia, as well as the rest of the world, should have strong stance and very much developed government means and policy measures oriented towards the eradication of this problem.

In the presented work, following steps will be taken in order to justify the research questions and the set goals; thorough analysis of already given, and/or implemented policies in the EU, and some other research done on the policy influence; following on that, analysis of the existing policies in Serbia, including the tendencies in recent history. Lastly, concluding parts of the study will concern with whether any of the given guidelines and policies can be implemented by the government (and, if possible, other actors) of Serbia; and if yes how; and what consequences will that have for the people, mostly children, of the country.

1. Problem definition

The topic that is being studied in this paper concerns the issue of family policy influence, or more precisely, family policy recommendations that can help diminish, and ideally eradicate child poverty in Serbia. The importance of eradicating child poverty has appeared in literature numerous times, and the problems of children growing up in poverty has been elaborated at

length in many scholarly works (Chapple and Richardson 2009; Ridge 2002; Bourdillon and Boyden 2011; Camp Yeakey, Richardson and Brooks Buck 2004). This is why recommendations and studies on how to deal with this issue, that is spread globally, are never exhausted. Examples are found in philosophical perspective, political, economic and social works as well.

Particular relevance of the issue at hand is found in the current social, political and economic situation that the state of Serbia has found itself in. Data shows that 155 thousand children are living in poverty (UNICEF 2007). This UNICEF report, unlike the EU standard, measured the number of children living under the poverty line, which in 2003 was 10.6%. Some reports from 2016 show an improvement stating that 8.4% of children are living under the poverty line. (Mladenović 2017) These statistical findings are somewhat different than the more encompassing research done by Eurostat on children living at risk of poverty and social exclusion for the year 2015. These findings show that 41.8% of Serbia's children are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, which is considerably higher than the EU's average of 26.9% according to 2015 statistics. (Eurostat 2016) Still, it is interesting to note these numbers and keep in mind the difference in the approach, since both contribute to the clarification of the problem. Children growing up in poverty face numerous challenges, deprivations, and usually end up in poverty as adults prolonging the vicious poverty cycle (see the chapter on Consequences of poverty). Children who live in any form of deprivation are unable to practice their rights, and live the life they have reason to value (a. U. UNICEF 1991). Having such a significantly higher percentage of children at the risk of poverty than most other EU member states, Serbia shows the needs for better constructed solutions for diminishing child poverty. Since the country is on its way to join the EU it is understandable why comparison is drawn between these two entities, and why there is a need to further investigate the EU's options in terms of recommendation for further government action. Due to EU being a union of states, and Serbia a single state, the comparison will be drawn from the EU average.

As the following table shows, there are only two member states with higher percentage of child poverty than the Republic of Serbia, while all the others clearly show better results.

	Total	Children (0–17)	Adults (18–64)	Elderly (65 years and over)
EU-28 (*)	23.7	26.9	24.7	17.4
Belgium	21.1	23.3	21.7	16.2
Bulgaria	41.3	43.7	37.4	51.8
Czech Republic	14.0	18.5	13.6	10.9
Denmark	17.7	15.7	20.9	9.9
Germany	20.0	18.5	21.3	17.2
Estonia	24.2	22.5	21.0	37.0
Ireland				
Greece	35.7	37.8	39.4	22.8
Spain	28.6	34.4	31.2	13.7
France	17.7	21.2	19.0	9.3
Croatia	29.1	28.2	28.5	31.9
Italy	28.7	33.5	30.4	19.9
Cyprus	28.9	28.9	30.5	20.8
Latvia	30.9	31.3	27.3	42.1
Lithuania	29.3	32.7	26.4	36.0
Luxembourg	18.5	23.0	19.2	8.2
Hungary	28.2	36.1	28.9	17.1
Malta	22.4	28.2	20.5	23.7
Netherlands	16.4	16.8	19.1	6.1
Austria	18.3	22.3	18.4	14.0
Poland	23.4	26.6	24.1	17.0
Portugal	26.6	29.6	27.4	21.7
Romania	37.4	46.8	35.7	33.3
Slovenia	19.2	16.6	19.7	20.2
Slovakia	18.4	24.9	17.8	12.8
Finland	16.8	14.9	18.1	14.5
Sweden	16.0	14.0	15.9	18.3
United Kingdom	23.5	30.3	22.9	17.7
Iceland	13.0	14.6	13.1	9.4
Norway	15.0	13.7	17.0	9.2
Serbia	41.3	41.8	42.9	35.2

(*) Estimates.
: not available

Figure 1: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age group, 2015 (% of specified population)

Source: Eurostat 2016

2. Goals, sub goals and questions arising

2.1. Main goal

- To find out if Europeanization aspect can be identified in applying new instruments to reduction of child poverty.

Finding out if through comparison of goals, and frames (the way certain terms are framed within the researched documents), new instruments on eradicating/reducing child poverty in the

Republic of Serbia can be presented. As Serbia is a country on its way to join European Union, policies analyzed will be those made and executed within the EU. Here, new instruments denote those instruments that have not been considered before by the Republic of Serbia, they are not necessarily a recent invention.

Research questions arising from the presented goal deal with the studying of some basic theoretical backgrounds and contemporary territorial strategies. *What is the comparison of organizational and institutional structure? What is the ideological comparison of goals and frames?* Based on those research questions, one other could be drawn, the one dealing with the core of the goal which is the improvement of currently inadequate means by the government of Serbia to combat child poverty: *Could these new instruments be relevant?*

2.2. Sub goals

- To find out if instruments used by family policy to improve the well-being of children differ between the EU and Serbia.

The narrow scope of family policy will be further justified in this thesis (see the chapter on Importance of family policy). Without neglecting other efforts within social policy to diminish child poverty it is the family policy that can benefit both in preventing as well as breaking the poverty cycle.

Research questions that require focus on in terms of the presented sub goal are mostly dealing with different comparisons in order to draw the solid conclusions. *What are the family policy instruments used by the EU to diminish child poverty, and is there an equivalent to those in the Republic of Serbia?* Analyzing the existing strategies, prepositions and publications within the EU is corner stone in answering this question. The abovementioned goal can also be achieved by researching and concentrating on the comparison of the objectives of the policies in all the presented documents from both sides, as well as the comparison of the framing used to encompass particular terms, specifically the issue of child poverty.

- To identify some other instruments within different policy directions in order to show a broader concept of battling the child poverty.

Some instruments serve to diminish poverty on a much larger scale. These tools are used to improve the economic stability and spur the economic growth which should result in diminishing all poverty rates. Also, labor market, health and education policies play their part in contributing to battling poverty.

Research questions related to this particular sub goals, could be formulated as follows: *What other policies and their instruments can help in combating child poverty? How are they connected?* and *Why are they important?*

- To propose possible recommendations for improving Serbia's existing policy design.

In order to present meaningful recommendations it is important to lay out some of the possibilities for new ideas, by examining existing policies, and relying on theoretical background. *How could the existing policies within the EU be modified if necessary, so that they fit the peculiarity of the situation in Serbia?* If the conception could be formulated as so that implementing, and accepting the recommendations from already developed policies within the EU on eradicating child poverty, will benefit to a county on its way to join the EU, questions that could rise from this formulation would be as follows: *Could the recommendations from the EU's example be accepted by the government of Serbia? (Is there an infrastructure that can support them?) If yes, how can these recommendations be implemented?* And lastly: *What might be the outcomes of these implementations?*

3. Methods and data used

It is important to note that in order to achieve the goals presented, methods implemented will be deduction, comparison and framing; I will also analyze secondary data, and conduct document analysis. Therefore the methodological process of achieving goals was conducted as follows: 1) collected theoretical framework, the first part of the thesis, provides a guideline for the paper as well as definition of terms used in the research part and is presented as a qualitative overcompensation of knowledge; 2) the second part of the thesis elaborates on the research

aspect of the paper, firstly by analyzing documents of the political entities in question, and secondly by deducing certain conclusions and statements through comparison and term framing.

The prevailing methodology used for achieving the goals is presented in this chapter as a short elaboration on how the paper was conducted. The following theoretical underpinning should help understand what methods were applied in order to achieve the specific results.

3.1. Document analysis

Document analysis found its place in this paper as a form of qualitative research in which the documents presented were interpreted to give voice and meaning to the assessment topic. (Bowen 2009) All the documents used fall under the category of public records, being that they are mostly annual reports, policy manuals, strategic plans, and so on. The chapter on strategic documents highlights the most prominent ones. The very nature of most of the documents analyzed should exclude the possibility of biases; still the interpretation might not be fully subjective, as I now state. Most documents being edited or solicited have used previously collected secondary data on different statistical reports that they rely on, nevertheless, other documents rely fully on the research conducted by the author, while only referencing on the works of others. The technique used in this paper is the one referred to as the “*interview technique*” (Bowen 2009) since the documents were treated as a respondent that provides the researcher with relevant information.

3.2. Framing theory

Framing theory, in a nutshell is a multi-disciplinary social science research method used to analyze how people understand situations and activities. Even though it is widely used in communication and media studies, its applicability is vast. A frame-reflective approach is able to deal with on one hand with the academic arguments that find their place in policy analysis, and on the other hand with any arguments within the policy practice. (Rein and Schön 1996) The way this theory has been formulated presents four different ways of looking at it. (Rein and Schön 1996) The needs of this paper have been found in, what the authors refer to as a third way, “*the schema of interpretation*”; this schema should enable individuals to perceive, understand,

identify and locate different occurrences, where the frames' primary function is to organize the experience and lead the action. (Rein and Schön 1996) This layout of framing theory as a method is mirrored in the understanding of how specific terms have been used and understood in different documents and policy proposals within this paper. The differences or similarities of the ways these terms are framed should help in setting the basis for further comparison if possible. Child poverty, as a main focus of this thesis has been one of the terms framed, as well as the notion of Europeanization and the role of family policy.

3.3. Comparative research

Comparative research methodology in the social sciences aims at making comparisons across different countries or cultures. One of the biggest limitations to comparative research is the possible difference in the usage of terms or categories, which has been experienced in this paper in terms of different statistical approach to measuring poverty in the EU and Serbia. Since the major aim of comparative research is to identify similarities and differences between social entities it is not difficult to place this method within this paper. Comparisons uncover unique aspects of a particular entity and point out differences which help understand specificities. (Mills, van de Bunt and de Bruijn 2006) The comparison of EU's and Serbia's strategies, mostly the comparison of the goals presented should help in understanding the instruments applied to reduce children poverty, and the possibility of expanding these instruments in the case of Serbia. The aspects of comparison between the EU and Serbia throughout this thesis will concentrate on the following aspects: 1) how is the poverty defined; 2) who is responsible for actions towards the reduction of poverty; 3) who is going to finance actions and policies; and 4) which instruments are going to be defined for combating poverty. Serbia is a country in the accession process to join the EU and it has been shown in the definition of the problem that the percentages in poverty rates vary greatly between Serbia and the EU average. In this process, Serbia has to fulfill certain requirements, so that it can become an equal member of the union. For these reasons the average results of the statistical analysis for the EU have been taken as a comparative indicator.

3.4. Strategic documents

Strategic documents that will be analyzed and used to conduct the part of the paper that deals with recommendation and applicability of policies are official strategies in the field of public and social policy, specifically those that as a goal have diminishing and eradicating poverty, with focus on child poverty. Strategies chosen are core documents and furthermore newest in their respected fields. They are chosen for their importance and value they have for the EU and for the Republic of Serbia. Special emphasis has been given to the Europe 2020 strategy and the Poverty reduction Strategy in Serbia. All of the mentioned strategies make the basis of the proposed solutions and are a product of long traditions within the world leading organizations that deal with human rights and equality, such as UNICEF, organizations dealing with governing on a supra-territorial level such as EU; and sovereign nation states that implement these rules such as the Republic of Serbia.

Europe 2020 – A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth; this document asks from the political level to be more determined in responding to the fast-moving realities of economic interdependence. It is constructed in a way that it puts forward mutually reinforcing priorities, which are then formulated in terms of well-defined headline targets. This is further on underpinned by seven flagship initiatives that will catalyze progress. The strategy falls under the full ownership of the European Council. (Commission 2010)

Commission Recommendation of 20.2.2013: Investing in Children: Breaking the cycle of disadvantage; this document has created a set of recommendations that deal with child poverty in the European Union. It encourages member states to organize and implement policies to address child poverty and social exclusion, while promoting children's well-being. The recommendation proposes the use of multi-dimensional strategies. (Commission 2013)

Poor and excluded children – the state of children in Serbia 2006; this UNICEF report has a specific goal, which is to raise awareness on child rights of the general public, but also of policy and decision makers in Serbia. It is laid out in a way that it calls for urgent action from the government of Serbia in terms of creating inclusive policies, accountable measures, and

participation of all levels of government in monitoring and implementing policies. (UNICEF 2007)

Poverty reduction Strategy in Serbia; this Strategy presents crucial part of the integral development strategy constructed with a specific goal of Serbia joining the EU. The Strategy is an encompassing activity plan directed towards the diminishing all the key aspects of poverty in Serbia. It has been published in 2003 and its construction was a joint work of civil organizations and the government of Serbia, which has been approved by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. (Srbije 2003)

3.4.1. Research documents

Following researches have been highlighted due to their significant contribution, which targets child poverty. These scientific papers have been used in this paper for the information and knowledge they provide. More than that, these research papers have a wholesome and strongly developed viewpoint on the issue of child poverty spread across Europe.

Child poverty and family policies across eighteen wealthy Western democracies; this article, written by Daniel Engster (Engster 2012) for the Journal of Children and Poverty is a cross-national quantitative study on the topic of potential value of family policies in reducing child poverty in Western countries. Its elaborated methodology and sources that it relies on provide a strong research bases on which the author conducts his own results. (Engster 2012)

Trends in Child Poverty and Social Transfers in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland: Experiences from the Years After Transition; this paper was prepared for the presentation at the conference dealing with the growing danger of children being socially exclusion. The authors, Michael F. Förster, and István György Tóth (Förster and Tóth 2000) are presenting development of poverty and inequalities in the abovementioned countries, with an analysis of the effects of policies on poverty patterns with a focus on children and families with children. The present a wide time span, more recent data and an extended country coverage. (Förster and Tóth 2000)

3.5. Statistical data

Statistical data that will be used in this paper has been gathered from several statistical reports, done both on the territory of EU (Eurostat 2017), as well as in the Republic of Serbia (RZS 2017). The results used, are of the most recent date available and are concerning the following fields: demographic characteristics of Serbia as well as generalized statistics of EU member states in terms of demographical tendencies; poverty reports, i.e. recent statistics on the percentage of people living under the poverty line and people living at high risk of falling under it; economic and political situation, more precisely a short overview of the current figures in terms of political conditions, and economic development.

In order to present an illustrated image of the current situation in terms of poverty, specifically child poverty within the EU, certain statistical data will be listed. It is important to have a clear overview on what are the most recent research results, so that comparisons could be made, and ideas drawn.

One of the issues that came straight up front, when it comes to analyzing statistical data on child poverty is the difference in approaching the measurement of child poverty between the EU and Serbia. European Union research centers, such as Eurostat (Eurostat 2016), concentrate on people who are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, in order to point out main indicators of 'Europe 2020' strategy (Eurostat 2017). As far as the available data on Serbia's poor children is concerned, many of the reports emphasize the percentage of children already living under the poverty line. (Mijatović 2015) Although this presents a certain limitation in terms of methodology, for the purpose of this paper it will suffice. Additionally, some of the rough figures are found for both Serbia and EU in the Eurostat report in terms of the percentage of population living at risk of poverty or social exclusion and these will be used as primary guidelines.

4. Theoretical background

4.1. Poverty

The importance of a good definition lies in the fact that only by knowing what it is that we are dealing with we can constitute a valid way of measuring it and determining its causes and consequences. It is only by knowing this, that the theorists, philosophers and policy makers can create valuable contributions in terms of solving or at least lessening the impacts of an issue. (Knežić and Lakićević 2011)

The general argument that is adopted is that poverty is defined as having an “*insufficient command of resources over time.*” (Gordon 2006, 32) This statement, however, did not satisfy many of social researchers, philosophers, and organizations that are dealing with poverty. Though they do agree to a certain extent with the definition, the issue of measurement, difference between absolute and relative poverty and the very scope of poverty are being examined. To say that poverty is the lack of resources, and that the consequence of poverty is deprivation (Gordon 2006) is a good starting point in developing further the definition of poverty. Amartya Sen, as a philosopher and social thinker, claims that even though deprivation is a consequence of low income, income itself cannot be sufficient indicator to poverty. It is the lack of opportunity that leads to poverty, since it forbids an individual to live a life without shame, as Sen puts it. (Sen 2001) “*An alternative to focusing on means of good living is to concentrate on the actual living that people manage to achieve (or going beyond that, on the freedom to achieve actual livings that one can have reason to value).*” (Sen 2001, 73) It is this definition that I have chosen for the purposes of this paper, namely out of personal preference, but also due to the fact that poverty that is going to be examined in this is of specific characteristics. The examples chosen are mostly from well-off western European countries, and Serbia, which does not fall under the category of having absolute poverty, amongst the majority of its poor citizens.

4.1.1. Absolute and relative poverty

Having mentioned this, I would use the opportunity to shortly elaborate on the differences between the absolute and the relative poverty. The debate between renowned scholars, Amartya Sen and Peter Townsend on what is the absolutist core was settled in 1995, even though to some extent it has continued, and still is open for argumentation. In 1995 the United Nations (UN) defined it as: *“a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to services.”* (UN 1995, 57) The World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 adopted a declaration of action with a firm goal about eradicating ‘absolute’ poverty and reducing ‘overall’ poverty. In this case overall poverty consists of various forms, such as: *“lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments and social discrimination and exclusion. It is also characterized by lack of participation in decision-making and in civil, social and cultural life. It occurs in all countries: as mass poverty in many developing countries, pockets of poverty amid wealth in developed countries, loss of livelihoods as a result of economic recession, sudden poverty as a result of disaster or conflict, the poverty of low-wage workers, and the utter destitution of people who fall outside family support systems, social institutions and safety nets.”* (UN 1995, 57)

4.1.2. Different approaches to measuring poverty

The last point mentioned in defining poverty here, would be the measurement of poverty. Some authors claim that to scientifically measure poverty is almost impossible, and even though it is true that it is hard, it is far from being undoable, and in terms of theory and policy, it is also very necessary.

The most usual and undeniably logical approach is that of measuring the income. To be more specific; by measuring a low standard of consumption and a low level of income. This means

that a 'line' must be formed in order to distinguish those below it (low income receivers) and those above it (people living above the poverty line). These lines reflect the value, usually monetary value, needed to maintain a minimum level of welfare. This value or cost should allow a person to reach minimum satisfaction of basic needs. This line, the poverty line, varies from country to country, and is calculated by finding the total cost of all the essential resources that an average human adult consumes in one year. European Union uses the 'economic distance', i.e. a level of income set at 60% of the median household income in order to avoid the issue of setting the poverty line. (Castles, et al. 2012) These measures, used in Europe, can show how much poverty exists at a particular point in time, but what it does not show is how many of those who are poor today have been poor a year ago as well, and what are the ways in and out of the poverty. This is mended by the use of longitudinal data, which can give a more detailed insight in the causes and pathways of poverty. (Castles, et al. 2012)

As far as the poverty threshold or poverty line is considered, World Bank has created international poverty line with the \$1.90 a day according to the update from 2015. (Bank 2018) It is the minimum level of income deemed to be enough in a particular country and it represents "purchasing-power parity". Determining the poverty line is usually done by finding the total cost of all the essential resources that an average human consumes in one year. (Bank 2018) Still it has been criticized for not including other indicators of poverty besides income and for the difficulty of comparing prices between countries. (Allen 2011)

Last couple of decades started questioning the validity of only measuring income and consumption in determining poverty levels. Poverty is a multi-dimensional problem, and it is consisted of a complex set of deprivations. (Chambers 2006) Still, despite this shift in understanding poverty, monitoring has continued to rely on income measures, such as the 60% of median household income, or the global 'one dollar per day' measure that has been developed by the World Bank and is designed to monitor the size and trends in global poverty. The reason for this is the difficulty in measuring and comparing many other indicators of poverty in making an overall assessment. (Chambers 1989) That is why Human Poverty Index (HPI) has been introduced in an attempt to capture 'human poverty' rather than 'income poverty' (Chambers 2006). Human Poverty Index has been developed by the United Nations to complement the Human Development Index (HDI) and it is supposed to measure "*failures to achieve the basic*

capabilities needed for human functioning rather than any given level of consumption or income.” (Chambers 2006, 8) HPI has many challenges, like the selection of key dimensions, search for data sets, and quantifying some of the important aspects of human poverty which seem to be uncountable, like political freedom and cultural choices. Nevertheless, it is considered to be more adequate way of measuring poverty and deprivation, than the income poverty measure. (Chambers 2006) The three key dimensions on which HPI focuses are “*the capability to 1) survive, measured by vulnerability to early death defined as before 40 years 2) be knowledgeable, measured by the adult illiteracy rate; and 3) have access to private income as well as public provisioning, measured by the percentage of malnourished children under five and by the percentage of people without access to safe water.*” (Chambers 2006, 8) Since these dimensions have little relevance for the richer countries, the adjusted index (HPI-2) has been created measuring long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living. The HPI way of measuring deprivation has shown certain strengths in terms of pointing out the direction of policy priorities, or in demonstrating the relevance of a multi-dimensional measure to monitor human poverty instead of the income poverty. (Chambers 2006) It also showed the significant difference between income and human poverty, since countries with low income poverty can still have very high human poverty percentages, and vice versa. This method requires further development, but could be considered the future of poverty measurements. (Chambers 2006)

As it has been mentioned scientific measurement of poverty, income measurement, is being criticized for its inability to encompass all the indicators of poverty. The measurement of poverty as such has even been deemed impossible, mostly due to the controversy over where to set the poverty line, and more importantly, if any type of measurement is at all capable of capturing deprivation. (Castles, et al. 2012) Nevertheless, until more encompassing system is developed, any scientific research will have to rely on the data given, and the methodology that stands behind the data. The same goes for this particular thesis, which relies on secondary data gathered, which for the case of EU and Serbia measures the income deprivation.

4.1.3. Vulnerable groups and consequences of poverty

Since it has been loosely established what poverty is and how it is measured, some contribution will be mentioned on which are the vulnerable groups that have higher chances of

falling under the poverty line. This small addition should help in creating a clearer picture of some of the most present aspects of poverty.

According to some contemporary research done in the field, specifically in the territories of EU, there are certain social groups, which are at greater risk of poverty or social exclusion. There are different thoughts on vulnerability, and the social groups that could be categorized as such. Close term could also be marginalization and this includes HIV infected people, widows, and disabled people, but nonetheless, these groups exist parallel to poverty, and whether considered poor or not, are still on the edge (Hoogeveen, et al. 2004). Other inputs debate on the approach to vulnerability and call on different policy interventions for different types and groups that are vulnerable, pointing out that gender issues and immigration issues cannot always be treated with the same methods (Chambers, Editorial introduction: vulnerability, coping and policy 1989). Still, certain consensus can be found and drawn from different sources and it could be presented as follows, categorized by the results of Eurostat's findings (Eurostat 2017):

1. Gender and age; women and young people are at greater risk of poverty, for several reasons. Women still have a specific gender role in most of the EU member states as well as the rest of the world, which means that sometimes their income depends on a male breadwinner or on a lower paid job if they are working part-time, due to other obligations. Another reason for these statistics being as they are is that lone-parent households are usually single female households with dependent children. Older women are again at a higher risk of poverty since they receive smaller pensions than men, due to childcare, which brought them away from the labor market. Young adults, according to the statistics, are for the first time in recent history at higher risk of poverty than the elderly. It is mostly because of the effects of the recent economic crisis which led to many young people being unable to find any, or satisfying employment.
2. Employment; since having work is for most people the only steady source of income, being unemployed, puts this group at a very high risk of experiencing poverty.
3. Single parenthood; being that single parents are usually both the caregivers, and the primary breadwinners, it is of no surprise that this group of people is vulnerable to poverty. In cases of households with more than one child, the risk increases. The

- conditions of temporary or long-term unemployment or sickness also contribute to the higher risk of poverty.
4. Education; as it has been mentioned shortly above, education plays an important role in diminishing poverty. People with low educational attainment are facing a bigger risk of poverty than people with high educational attainment. Additionally the underprivileged situation of low skilled adults is worsened by the statistical tendencies, as children who grow up in a household with low education will most probably not pursue it themselves either, which then passes on the risk of poverty onto the next generation.
 5. Immigration; foreign citizens are at much higher risk of poverty than the native ones, for several reasons. Besides the possible difference in the level of education and employment status, foreigners face much bigger obstacles when it comes to labor market access in terms of migration-specific work barriers, i.e. problems with credential recognition, language and communication issues, or discrimination on social and religious grounds.
 6. Location; rural area citizens are more likely to live at risk of poverty than those in urban areas. Main categories of problems that characterize this risk are demography, and more specifically the fact that the population is slowly moving from rural to urban areas; remoteness, which includes the lack of infrastructure and basic services; education, mostly connected to the lack of preschools, or to the difficulty in accessing higher schools; and lastly, labor market instability, which in rural areas is common, leading to lower employment rates, number of seasonal workers, and long-term unemployment. (Eurostat 2017)

Lastly, before moving on to following chapters, some analysis on the consequences of poverty should be outlined as a contribution to the explanation and reason to always and further investigate this issue.

Consequences and effects of the poverty on children are many and tend to follow them through life. The following outcomes of poverty are just few, and have been summarized from a wide-spread literature on different types of deprivation. The issues that arise are, amongst others, family problems, and potential neglect of the children growing up in impoverished households

(Evans, The environment of childhood poverty 2004). Education, or for that matter the lack of it, as well as the lack of opportunities to attain higher education, is another effect that, as it has been investigated, is closely connected to the poverty of children (Velminckx, Smeeding and eds 2001). Last but not least, the effect that has been emphasized in many articles from different perspective is the health issues that poor children face. Besides obvious consequences that poverty can have on health, high levels of stress and increased physical and social risk factors take their toll on children as young as 13 (Evans and Kim 2007)

Following, are some the most common outcomes of poverty categorized by Barkan (Barkan 2013):

1. Family problems; namely the frequent occurrence of domestic violence, divorce, etc. This is mostly due to the increased stress from which the poor families suffer more than the wealthier ones. Stress of an ordinary life is more present where there are no means to deal with many issues that are a constant.
2. Health problems; due to poor or unhealthy diets many people are at risk of getting sick and risking their lives. Insufficient means, usually lead to inadequate medical care which leads to higher rates of mortality among the poor. Children who do not have proper nutrition tend to suffer behavioral and cognitive problems, which affects their school performance, which can deprive them of a competing employment position and hence ensure that poverty will remain throughout generations.
3. Education; besides cognitive issues that can cause worse grades among the poorer children, the problem of actually graduating is often present. Children living in poor areas, attend schools that also lack in means and cadre. Many drop out in order to find immediate employment which limits them to better paying jobs, and again the viscous cycle of poverty continues.
4. Housing problems; naturally, poor struggle with acquiring affordable housing solutions, which means that they are in higher risk of becoming homeless, or living in unsanitary, unhealthy conditions most likely in the poor neighborhood.
5. Criminal action; as it has been mentioned, poor people usually live in specific neighborhoods which are not appealing for investors, and do not offer quality employment. This is why, mostly young people, turn to crime due to frustration and

stress. This concentration of criminal activities, leads also to the problem of victimization, since these neighborhoods are often the target of criminals, victims of crimes are also the poor. (Barkan 2013)

4.2. Child poverty

In order to understand what could possibly fall under those means and measures, a brief summary of the specifics of child poverty in contemporary societies will be outlined. Definitions of poverty, usually cannot fully explain child poverty, since the lack of opportunity is additionally burdened with the situation of close dependence, at least, until certain age, which means that for children, poverty is usually ‘inherited’. Their lives and future is at constant risk whatever the outside circumstances are. (Camp Yeakey, Richardson and Brooks Buck 2004)

The history of children poverty has changed over time, but so has the world’s perception and with it the need for action has taken a considerable turn over in the last century. Children have always been experiencing poverty alongside their families and additionally have been considered one of the reasons for in-family poverty. Until they could start earning and contributing to the household, children were likely to be the cause of poverty itself, rather than to be understood as a group vulnerable to poverty. (Ridge 2002)

The end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century have brought a change in thought, in terms of policy development, especially policies oriented towards eradicating poverty. The crisis in the 70s and the expansion of the welfare state inside the European continent resulted in agenda being occupied with policies about diminishing child poverty. These developments, further on, influenced many contemporary researches in the field, which proposed a child-oriented emphasis in dealing with the poverty issues. This is considered an important and valuable addition both to the practical and theoretical importance of dealing with poverty, since children are not merely just the extension of their parents’ needs. (Ridge 2002)

Before further explaining the child’s perspective of his or hers own poverty it is important to mention what are the main causes to child poverty. The circumstantial factors include living in the lone parent family; living in an ethnic minority family; being a member of a large family with more siblings; living in a family where either an adult or a child suffers from a long term

sickness and/or disability; and living in low pay or workless household. (Camp Yeakey, Richardson and Brooks Buck 2004; Ridge 2002)

Although none of these factors alone has to or will lead to child poverty it is the existence of risks and disadvantage and the most common combination of one or several of the factors. (Walker and ed. 1999) Children in lone parent families experience poverty only in the combination of financial hardship and/or large families. Children in ethnic minority households usually have more than one sibling and their parents often experience discrimination which leads to unemployment or low wage work. Disability and poverty unfortunately go hand in hand, and children living with a sick parent usually suffer from poverty but also social exclusion. Since employment is one of the most common ways of acquiring the necessary and steady income, unemployment is one of the biggest and most constant cause to any kind of poverty, but with the right set of benefits it should be possible for the government to bridge the gap and make sure that the children with one or both unemployed caregivers are taken care of. These benefits should be constructed so that they tackle the chronic poverty among children, but also to make sure that the damage of transitory spells of poverty during childhood is minimized. (Ridge 2002)

Tackling the issue of child poverty is a complex and difficult endeavor. This is why scientists and policy creators, and all the other private or public actors who are involved in this endeavor could use all the help that is offered. Consequently, the children's perspective of poverty provides a valuable insight into the core of the issue. Study by Tess Ridge, called *Childhood Poverty and Social Exclusion* (Ridge 2002), gives exactly this perspective, and it will be outlined here, only in its basic essence.

The outcomes of research performed on a random sample of children and young people in the UK, all of which were receiving Income Support for at least six months, showed a very specific insight into what children said about their lives in poverty. Firstly, economic autonomy was highly valued, children receiving pocket money, or children working, found it very comforting to know and manage their finances. This also meant that they had an opportunity to prioritize their spending and it is important to note that many chose to spend their money on items that would help them integrate better in the school environment, such as clothes or other school utensils. This of course refers to older children, those that can acquire some sort of job, but nonetheless, the importance of autonomy was highlighted several times. Besides this,

children found themselves deprived in terms of opportunity and accessibility to many social interactions that their peers enjoyed. The issue of expensive or irregular transportation held them back from experiencing social interactions, whether at someone's home or in some other venue. Additionally, lack of resources had an impact on their grades at school, either due to work taking up time from homework or because they were unable to afford certain utensils. Lastly, not being able to attend school trips, alongside with other deprivations, led the children to feel excluded from the social interaction. This meant that the children developed an awareness of their own scarce opportunities, and fear of future and fitting in. The experience of bullying was very common among the impoverished children, which led to even stronger feelings of stigmatization. (Ridge 2002)

4.2.1. Dimensions of a child's well-being

When it comes to children living in poverty, besides already mentioned aspects of how their everyday lives look like, there are seven dimensions worth monitoring that describe a person's well-being. (Institute 2010) It is these seven attributes that need to be fulfilled in order for the child to live a life worth living. In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (a. U. UNICEF 1991) that refers to the right of survival, the right to development, the right to protection, and the right to participation, these seven dimensions have been constructed and they are as follows: *“(1) economic security and material situation, (2) housing, (3) education, (4) health, (5) exposure to risk and risk behavior, (6) social participation and relationships, family environment, and (7) local environment”*. (Institute 2010, 8)

They could be categorized into two groups; material well-being and non-material well being, and split into smaller subcategories, so that the bigger picture would emerge and so that the short explanation following could contribute to better understanding of child poverty (Institute 2010):

1. *“Material well-being: factors relating to material resources of the household that the child has access to (or lacks) during his/her life and development, including indicators of:*
 - *income*
 - *material deprivation*

- *housing*
 - *labour-market attachment of the members of the child's household*
2. *Non-material dimensions of child well-being, which may reflect both the resources a child has access to (or lacks) during his/hers development and outcomes at different stages of this development:*
- *education*
 - *health*
 - *exposure to risk and risk behaviour*
 - *social participation and relationships, family environment*
 - *local environment*". (Institute 2010, 8)

Material deprivation refers to the inability for individuals or households to afford those consumption goods and activities that are typical in a society at a given point in time. (Glossary n.d.) These goods and activities have been defined by Marlier (Marlier, et al. 2007) and the list comprises of these items: "*(1) arrears on mortgage or rent payments, utility bills, hire purchase installments or other loan payments; (2) capacity to afford one week's annual holiday away from home; (3) capacity to afford a meal with meat, chicken or fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day; (4) capacity to face unexpected financial expenses (a set amount corresponding to the monthly national at-risk-of-poverty threshold of the previous year); (5) household cannot afford a telephone (including mobile phone); (6) household cannot afford a colour TV; (7) household cannot afford a washing machine; (8) household cannot afford a car; and (9) ability of the household to pay to keep the home adequately heated*". (Institute 2010, 86)

Children living in families with low or no employment are much more vulnerable to material deprivation. The most problematic aspects are one week of holiday away from home in a year's time, and affording a meal with meat every other day subsequently, issues such as keeping the house warm, being able to pay for arrears or being able to afford a car, are the next most common indicators of material deprivation. (Marlier, et al. 2007)

Continuing with the elaboration of aforementioned factors relating to the material well-being of a child it is important to mention that material deprivation and income poverty are related but distinct terms. It is common for a person to be both, materially deprived and at risk of income

poverty. Still, some individuals could suffer from just one or the other; that is to say, some people can suffer from monetary poverty, but not experience material deprivation, as well as the other way around. (Bourdillon and Boyden 2011)

While there has been word about the labor-market attachment, i.e. about the obvious connection between the employment and poverty, it will be mentioned again throughout this paper as an important factor in regulating poverty. For now, it will be sufficient to acknowledge the importance of this attachment in terms of child well-being.

The last point in the factors constituting child's material well-being is that of housing. Housing deprivation has been considered a very important cause leading to social exclusion (Marlier, et al. 2007). Measurements for housing deprivation are two-fold; overburden and overcrowding. Housing costs that present an overburden to the family with children are those that exceed 40% of the total disposable household income. While the household is considered overcrowded in following circumstances: *“(1) one room for the household; (2) one room for each couple; (3) one room for each single person aged 18+; (4) one room for two single people of the same sex aged 12-17; (5) one room for each single person of different sex aged 12-17; (6) one room for two people under 12 years of age”*. (Institute 2010, 90)

4.3. Welfare state

Social policy can react on child poverty with its many means and instruments. Since it is the welfare state that influences the flow of social policy and since it is the difference between the welfare states and their handling of societal issues that dictates the difference in executing policies, the reason for this chapter appears, and the will to shortly discuss the welfare state.

Welfare state, as a concept and as a reality for most of the European states, deserves a chapter within the theoretical background, since it is necessary for this paper that it is understood what is considered the frame within which we can talk about the problem itself and the possible solutions.

Talking about the welfare state means that it has to be explained how and when did the welfare state come to be, in the first place, what it is, and what are its goals, scope and a general role in the modern world.

As it has been agreed upon by many authors that deal with the welfare state, the origins of the Western welfare state date back to the, approximately, last twenty years of the nineteenth century. (Castles, et al. 2012) Reasons for this new state order could be found in the aftermath of the spurring industrialization, which brought massive urbanization, capitalism and population growth. These fast and overwhelming changes influenced also the traditional distribution of welfare. Support and care that was, until the end of the nineteenth century, provided by mostly family, churches, charity organizations and so on, could not be provided by these institutions anymore, at least not in the same amount, since substantial amount of people became poor and in need of some sort of social support, in a short period of time. (Castles, et al. 2012) Additionally, the space for the emergence of the welfare state was created by other historical changes, such as the spread of democracy and civil rights, the formation of nation states and their secularization, and the long period of peace, which all influenced the creation of the basis for political interference in the social state of the people. (Castles, et al. 2012)

From the very beginning of the welfare state as a concept, the countries took different approaches to its development. The differences were in goals set by the state, such as whether the welfare state should provide a safety net for few, to work for the optimal provision for all, or to just maintain the status quo. States' approach also differed in forms of institutional solutions, financing systems, and administration. Lastly, some states chose to implement social programs using the top down approach, while other favored the bottom up one. (Castles, et al. 2012) Still, despite all these differences between various implementation of the welfare provision, the very foundation, and therefore the 'universal' essence, and definition of the welfare state as such is shared in all the countries that claim to be a welfare state, and this essence is presented through the ideal versions that are: 1) scope of the welfare state; 2) goals; and 3) role of the welfare state.

As welfare states started to expand over time, social security became an integral part of many governments' policies. This means that the scope of the welfare state also started to expand, carrying the ethical ideal on which the development of the welfare has been founded on. It was not enough anymore that the state guaranteed just a minimum economic security, but some sort

of a life-time protection was needed. On one hand this came to be an ideal to strive for, based on the ethical belief in equality of everyone. The scope of the welfare state is seen as the aspiration to switch focus from mere social welfare to social justice, which would universally and ideally cover and improve all the injustices and inequalities of the people. (Castles, et al. 2012) On the other hand the problems occurred, once the rapid spread of industrialization came to threaten the welfare state deeming it incompatible with economic development, full employment and to a certain extent even personal liberties. (Esping-Andersen 1994) The welfare state crisis is a constant topic among experts whose observations and conclusions are dictating the need for change, but more importantly the need of welfare state to defend itself and prove its value. (Esping-Andersen 1994)

Many of the terms used in the abovementioned paragraphs carry certain contradictions to them. As much as it might be considered that here they are used lightly and without being defined properly, terms like what are the injustices and inequalities that people experience? or, should the scope of welfare state really cover every person and to what extent? there is a short explanation to why these terms are being unexplained. The reason for not engaging into an in-depth debate on the philosophical approach to understanding of ethical reasons to welfare state is firstly the very length of the different comments from renowned theorists and philosophers, which could be considered out of topic in this particular paper, and secondly, due to the philosophical charge of the topic, it would be wise, in this case, to just use the terminology in sense of its primary meanings, and leave the interpretation to the sources that are being used in this chapter.

Establishing that certain terminology will be used here with regard to common sense, this paragraph will continue with the short elaboration on the common characteristics of the welfare states, by trying to explain the shared goals. Extracting from the vast literature on welfare state, it is understood that the main goal of any welfare state is, or at least should be, the satisfaction of basic needs. (Castles, et al. 2012) In this case, basic needs are understood, as it has been mentioned in previous chapters (see chapter on Poverty) as “*freedoms*” missing from a person’s life, that are stopping him from achieving a “*life he has reason to value*”, as Sen put it (Sen 2001, 73). (Castles, et al. 2012) This definition of welfare goals puts fighting against poverty as one of the main tasks of any welfare state.

The role of the welfare state is, at the end of day, to fix the inequalities brought on to people by the unjust capitalistic, market redistribution. (Castles , et al. 2012; Esping-Andersen 1994) Wether this role could be considered as paternalistic approach, or an undemocratic solution, is a debate put aside for some other time.

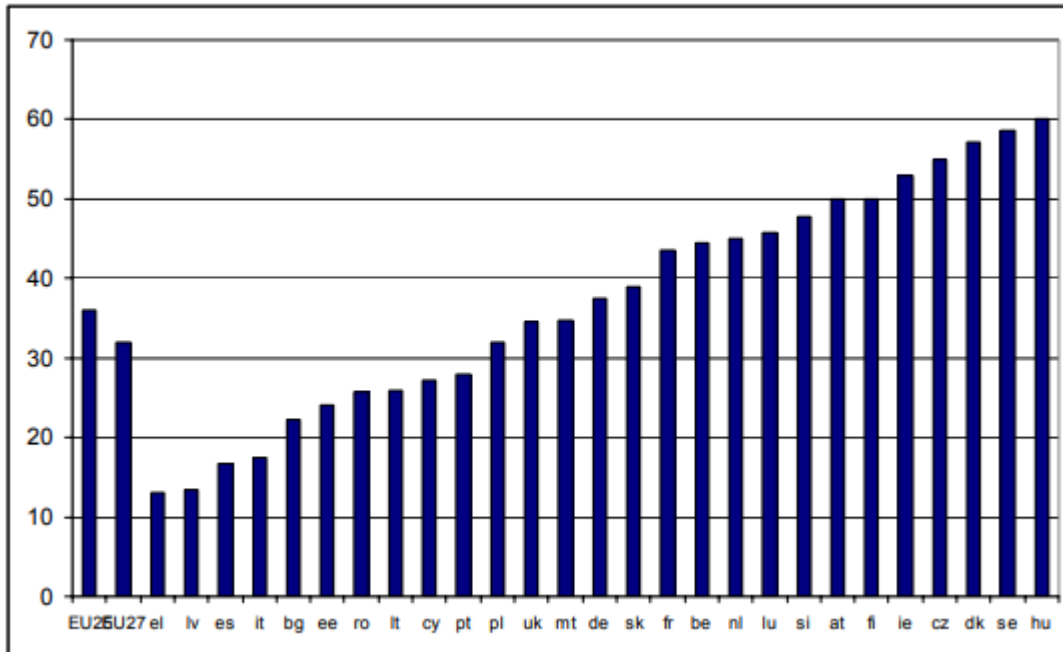


Figure 2: Impact of social transfers (excluding pensions) on the at-risk-of-poverty rate for the total population (percentage reduction), 2007
 Source: Commission 2010

This figure shows the EU data that prove the effectiveness of social transfers other than pensions in reducing poverty risks. The degree to which these transfers influence the reduction varies across member states (ranging from 50% to 17% or less). This figure should point out the role of the welfare state, and the direct role of it in combating poverty. (Commission 2010)

With all this being said, having in mind the new and progressive social policies that are being constructed, it is significant to mention a bit more detailed shift in the role of the modern welfare state. Along with the notable rise in economic situation in Europe, at least up until the crisis in 2008, the welfare state, too, refocused. Without neglecting the traditional approach to income protections, the scope of the welfare was broadened so as to target the promotion of equality of

opportunity. (Bonoli 2013) This shift meant turning the focus to the promotion of labor market participation, having mostly women and young people as target groups. One of the reasons for this is the appearance of new social risks, such as, “*reconciling work and family life, single parenthood, having a frail relative, possessing low or obsolete skills*” (Bonoli 2013, 16), and so on. These risks, as it has been mentioned, have a strong impact on child poverty as such and it is important for them to be acknowledged and incorporated in the scope of the welfare.

Additionally, policies that are family oriented, ones targeting the new social risks have been proved to contribute not only to the well-being of children, but also touch upon other issues in modern societies, such as unemployment and demographic decline of population. (Esping-Andersen 2016)

Active social policies concentrate on human capital investment and reliefs to labor market participation. The tools to achieve these policies are active labor market policies and work-life balance policies. The former notion deals with variety of different policies, such as vocational retraining, job search programs, tax credits, and so on, while the latter focuses on families with children, providing childcare alternatives, “*flexicurity*” measures, maternity and parental leave and such. (Bonoli 2013)

The accepted point of view, in the case of this paper, is that the main structure which can contribute the most to the fight against poverty is the welfare state.

4.3.1. The role of public sector in beating poverty

Understanding that child poverty is an omnipresent problem in the modern world, a problem accepted as such not only by governments but also by the public, logically, the need for solution will follow. This chapter will shortly introduce the concept of public interest, a specific matter of concern, which then requires specific action. Following on this, a short description of actors and institutions will be outlined. If child poverty falls under the matter of concern to the public, and if the action is seen and understood as a set of family and other policies that can be implemented, the question remains, how and why the public, state sector should be involved, especially in a setting of a welfare state.

Formulation of public interests could be defined on the account of their shared characteristics: *“they pertain to the quality of life of a given society’s members, or other values they find important; they can be related to the quality or the effects of functioning society as a whole; they are embedded historically, in a given stage of civilization development, and may change; they enter an arena where they clash with differentiated individual, group and institutional interests and come to be identified, articulated, acknowledged and satisfied. Decisions adopted affect the ways public goods are produced, distributed and used; the quality of life of large social groups; and the satisfaction of the functional needs of society as a whole; they are related to current social problems or possible futures; their realisation often goes beyond the competences of a single institution or an entire department of government, or even a nation.”* (Potůček 2016, 12-13)

Referring back to the concepts of poverty and in particular child poverty, which have been developed in the previous chapters, it is easy to ascribe many if not all of these characteristics to the definition of child poverty. This being said, it becomes quite clear why there is a need for a specific action to be taken. Naturally, the question of who are the actors, institutions that can take it upon themselves to react to this public interest, poses itself.

Once a public interest reaches the agenda of any government it becomes a problem that needs solving by the very instruments of that particular government. (Potůček 2016) Ways and means of distribution naturally vary from state to state in terms of the specific state authorities that are given jurisdiction. When it comes to dealing with poverty, state with all its ministries, government bodies and budget control has the ability to influence every aspect that needs to be addressed in order to achieve specific policy goals. (Srbije 2003) Still it is the cooperation of the public, private and civil sector that ensures bigger chances of success. The state needs to include all these actors, improve the communication between local and central level of government and if necessary create hybrid entities that would serve a specific purpose, for a specific time period. (Srbije 2003)

Despite the many differences in the political structure and organizational scheme of each country, the connection between the welfare and the state apparatus is undeniable. The state can, and should deliver a uniform service when it comes to social security, its laws and regulations

should additionally work towards fairness, and the scope and the power of the state should be utilized when it comes to monitoring and implementing policies. (Srbije 2003)

For all these reasons it is understandable why the public sector is the main actor in the fight against poverty, but its cooperation with other actors and its competence to delegate are of utmost importance. (Mladenović 2017)

4.4. Importance of family policy

The importance of family policy in diminishing child poverty has proven undeniable in the modern society. Among all the social policy measures that deal with poverty reduction, it is the family policy that manages to encompass all the factors needed for fair starting chance to all the children. (Velminckx, Smeeding and eds 2001) Poverty is a complex and multi-dimensional problem, which requires efforts from all relevant actors, still it is the family policy that stands out due to its ability to work on prevention of child poverty as well as reduction of poverty once it already happens. (Velminckx, Smeeding and eds 2001)

Family as a specific unit within the society started receiving the attention of the state, in terms of family policy, only recently. In the eyes of most of the welfare states, family was not the focus, as was the market-state relationship, especially in connection to the class struggle and male breadwinner. It is the expansion of feministic approaches to the welfare that drew attention to the family, as a unit in need of help. (Castles, et al. 2012) Additionally, the emergence of new social risks, and the shift in understanding the benefits of active social policies contributed to development of stronger family policies. (Bonoli 2013)

Changes in family structure, the growth of single parent family and the drop of fertility rates, as well as the pressure of unchanged gender roles within a family structure have led many scholars to believe that the 21st century will be the end of family. In his book on the future of families in the modern times, Esping-Andersen (Esping-Andersen 2016) contradicts the notion of the end of the family and points out the examples of Nordic countries, and the very causes and reasons for his hypothesis of the returned increase in family stability. (Esping-Andersen 2016) His research is not the only one mentioning the same policies that are benefiting the families across Europe. Daniel Engster's research (Engster 2012) talks about same policies that are

contributing to the diminishing of child poverty in Western countries. (Engster 2012) It is these three policies that will be briefly outlined here, due to their significance in dealing with child poverty, but also in other aspects of social well-being.

Child benefits or children allowances present usually cash transfers along with labor market income to families in need. These transfers are subsidizing parents' low earnings and childcare costs while they are actively participating in the labor market or the full time parents' care if they are not employed. (Bradshaw 2006)

Child benefits are usually means-tested, and in some cases conditional and depend on receivers' actions, such as enrolling children into schools, and health check-ups, vaccinations, and so on. These policies directly influence the child poverty rates, by simply putting more money to the families with children. Recent research has also shown the relation between low child poverty rates and high child benefits. (Engster 2012) Child benefits additionally suggest the improvement of children's lives in terms of positive effects on test scores, maternal health, and mental health for both the parents and children. (Milligan and Stabile 2011) The simplest benefit would be a universal flat-rate benefit for all the children that is not conditioned, and some works and researches suggest that it has many functions in addition to reducing the rate of child poverty. (Velminckx, Smeeding and eds 2001) It helps in securing redistribution by improving family incomes during the period of need, especially resources towards mothers, which are likely to benefit their children. Comparatively, the means-tested benefits could be seen as prioritizing short-term maintenance of income which can negatively affect work incentives and prolong the stigma associated with means-testing. (Velminckx, Smeeding and eds 2001) With all this in mind, contradictions and fine tuning, there is no denying the importance of child benefits in combating child poverty. Careful targeting and developed pattern in applying these allowances can have valid impact on improving children's lives.

Parental leave, as a policy measure, targeting child poverty but also other social securities, has been a controversial topic among scholars. Many recent works point out the importance of women entering the labor market, not only in terms of achieving greater gender equality, women involvement has also been seen as a cause to significant reduction in child poverty. (Velminckx, Smeeding and eds 2001) With this in mind the question of parental leave policies comes up, and

subsequently that of childcare options. For the obvious connection between these two policies, they will be jointly presented in the following paragraph.

The reports show that with generous parental leaves and affordable childcare options, women employment has increased substantially, especially for those women around childbirth. Consequently, the main reason for women abandoning the working position and staying home to take care of their children is the high costs of childcare facilities. (Velminckx, Smeeding and eds 2001) Some European countries have noted the drop in women's employment due to generous parental leaves, while others, on the contrary have noted a steady growth in mother's employment because of the possibility of parental leaves. (Castles, et al. 2012) This difference is caused by possibly other incentives, like childcare options, and traditional gender role traditions. Still the lengthy report on the high fertility rate, and higher employment has been noted in the Nordic countries, which all offer munificent parental leave and affordable childcare services. (Esping-Andersen 2016)

There are other instruments within the family policy that play important role in their respective fields, but were deemed not so relevant for achieving specific goals of this thesis.

4.5. Europeanization concept

This chapter will shortly elaborate on the main ideas behind the Europeanization theory. Main reason and relevance of the given summary is to provide a necessary understanding to why are the recommendations extracted from the EU policies, and not some other organization's policy briefs. This being said the following paragraphs will mainly concentrate on the concept of Europeanization as EU enlargement process. Additionally it is important to mention that Serbia as a country deeply involved in the accession process and developing dialogs with the EU on the idea of Serbia joining has all the interests in examining EU's policies, politics and so on. Since the topic of this paper does not include the political aspect of Serbia's potential membership, difficulties, and conditions, the general debate will be excluded from this section. Still, since the concept of Europeanization, similar to concepts of globalization and modernization has a strong political component, some of these aspects will be mentioned.

Within the group of European studies there are many different approaches to the term ‘Europeanization’. From the historical point of view in terms of colonization, or known and spread Greco-Roman influence, until the impact of current European law and policies, the idea of Europeanization is vastly applied. (Trenz 2014) For this particular situation the idea of Europeanization as European Union, concentrating on the political Europe is the most relevant.

Firstly, Europeanization as EU enlargement, deals with, simply put the conditions and terms under which a country is eligible for joining. Further then that it promotes a type of a modernization process in which economically less developed countries get to be financially supported in order for them to reach the standards of member states that are better off. Secondly, Europeanization is widely represented as a specific level of governance. The idea of specific spread of institutionalization of evidently European political system is one of those levels. Lastly, Europeanization in terms of political Europe is understood as an institutional change, as well as a change in policy processes within each member state. This means that Europeanization could be understood twofold; as an entity undermining the national sovereignty by imposing policies and practices that are not accepted by the nation state on one, or more levels, and as a specific gain, to local governments, which are receiving wide support, but also to other government or non-government interest groups that have new political opportunity to turn to. (Sittermann 2006)

The relevance and importance of covering the basic concept of Europeanization for this particular paper is found in the basic agreement that Europeanization process occurs once there is a ‘misfit’ between the state and the EU. (Sittermann 2006) This short elaboration that will follow is important, since the process of Europeanization can easily occur once there is a misfit in some of the EU policies, passed on to Serbia. Even though, most of these misfits, and gaps between a nation state and the EU refer strictly to the countries which already are member states, simple understanding of the adaptation process, might prove useful in developing proposals for the Republic of Serbia in terms of policy recommendations.

Whether Europeanization is seen as a ‘top-down’ process, where the focus is on the different ways EU has been able to hand down to the national level its requirements, guidelines and ideas; or as a ‘bottom up’ reaction, where adaptation processes can be explained by the reactions and behaviour of the affected actors at the national level; it is clear that Europeanization occurs once

one or both of these processes seem to fall into a gap. (Sittermann 2006) These gaps could be later on, understood in two different ways, both of which are somewhat important for the following analysis. The first gap is considered a “*policy misfit*” and it is a gap between certain European regulations and rules, and existing national policies, or the understanding of the rules. (Sittermann 2006) The second gap is known as an “*institutional misfit*” and it refers to the fact that some domestic rules and procedures within a nation-state, do not exactly correspond to the requirements of the European Union.

Once these gaps occur, the natural process is the one of Europeanization, or simple adaptation; outcomes of which could be both positive and negative, depending on the specifications of the situation. Whichever path the country or the EU chooses to take, certain European influence will be passed on, and eventually, possibly, even prevail. (Trenz 2014)

5. Results of the research

Previous chapters have given a specific insight into the matter at hand. The definition and clarification of well known terms such as poverty, child poverty, welfare state, family policy, and so on, will undoubtedly serve in the continuation of this paper.

Having established certain theoretical framework and basis on which further exploration and explanation can be based, the paper will from now on focus on somewhat more practical aspects of potentially applied theories. To be more specific, paragraphs that will follow have a task to analyze certain existing policies, mostly those falling under the category of family policy, or policies that could have direct impact on family life and structure, and use this analysis to hermeneutically propose certain recommendations on how to diminish child poverty. Additionally, certain comparisons are to be made in terms of goals, and also in terms of the way basic concepts are framed. The analysis of existing policies will focus on those made and put to practice by and in the European Union, reasons for this have already been mentioned (see chapter on Europeanization concept), and the process of recommendation as well as the results of given analysis will be interpreted within the specifics of the social situation in the Republic of Serbia.

Comparing these two territorial entities, some distinguishable differences have already emerged in the previous sections of the paper and some are yet to be revealed. This is why throughout the whole analysis of the family policies of the EU, special emphasis will be given on the key points that could be problematic in the case of Serbia. Certain explanations have been elaborated in the methodological part of the paper where the main characteristics of both entities have been pointed out, characteristics relevant for dealing with the main issue of this paper. Here it will be given some further elaboration on differences in structure, actors, financing abilities, policy approaches and instruments at disposal, all through the example of presented policies.

Lastly, it would be helpful to mention the very outline of the next few chapters for transparency reasons. The first subtopics that occur deal with the basic outline of the current poverty rates in both the EU and the Republic of Serbia. Second subtopic presents chosen policies within the European Union, completed with the given analysis of key points, based on potential or possible outcomes as well as the critical approach based on scholarly articles. Third subtopic will elaborate more on the specific strategies that have been created within Serbia and for Serbia, all with the goal of diminishing poverty, and with it child poverty in particular. Fourth subtopic deals with a perception given to the family policies by those European countries that possibly have more in common with the Republic of Serbia. Those respective member countries are the ones that also have communistic or socialist past, and have themselves experienced the process of transition at the same time Serbia did, towards the end of the 20th century. This section should help guide the recommendations that will be elaborated in the last subtopic, just before the conclusion. Before reaching the last subtitle which will provide advice and recommendation based on the results of the analysis, there is one more topic to be covered. In order for the recommendations to be applicable and not just theoretical, the ability of accepting and developing those recommendations needs to be elaborated. That is the task of the fifth given subtopic, the one that will concentrate on the ability of Serbia's infrastructure to respond positively on the given policy instruments.

5.1. State of the poverty in EU

Latest available data on the child poverty rates in the EU has been published in 2016 and present statistical data for the year 2015 in which 26.9%, which is around 25 million children

were at risk of poverty or social exclusion. (Eurostat 2016) These children were living in households which are either at-risk-of-poverty after social transfers (income poverty), severely materially deprived or with very low work intensity. Some children are affected simultaneously by more than one of these situations.

Children at-risk-of-poverty are those living in a household with a disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income (after social transfers). Severely materially deprived children are those living in a household with living conditions compelled by a lack of at least 4 out of 9 defined deprivation items (cannot afford 1) to pay rent/mortgage or utility bills on time, 2) to keep home adequately warm, 3) to face unexpected expenses, 4) to eat meat, fish or a protein equivalent every second day, 5) a one week holiday away from home, 6) a car, 7) a washing machine, 8) a colour TV, or 9) a telephone (including mobile phone)). Children living in households with very low work intensity are those living in a household where on average the adults aged between 18 and 59, excluding students, worked less than 20% of their total work potential during the past year. (Eurostat 2016)

Even though the situation in the EU slightly changed from 2010 where 27.5% children were at risk of poverty, contrasting trends were observed across the member states.

Share of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU, 2016

(% of total population aged 0 to 17)

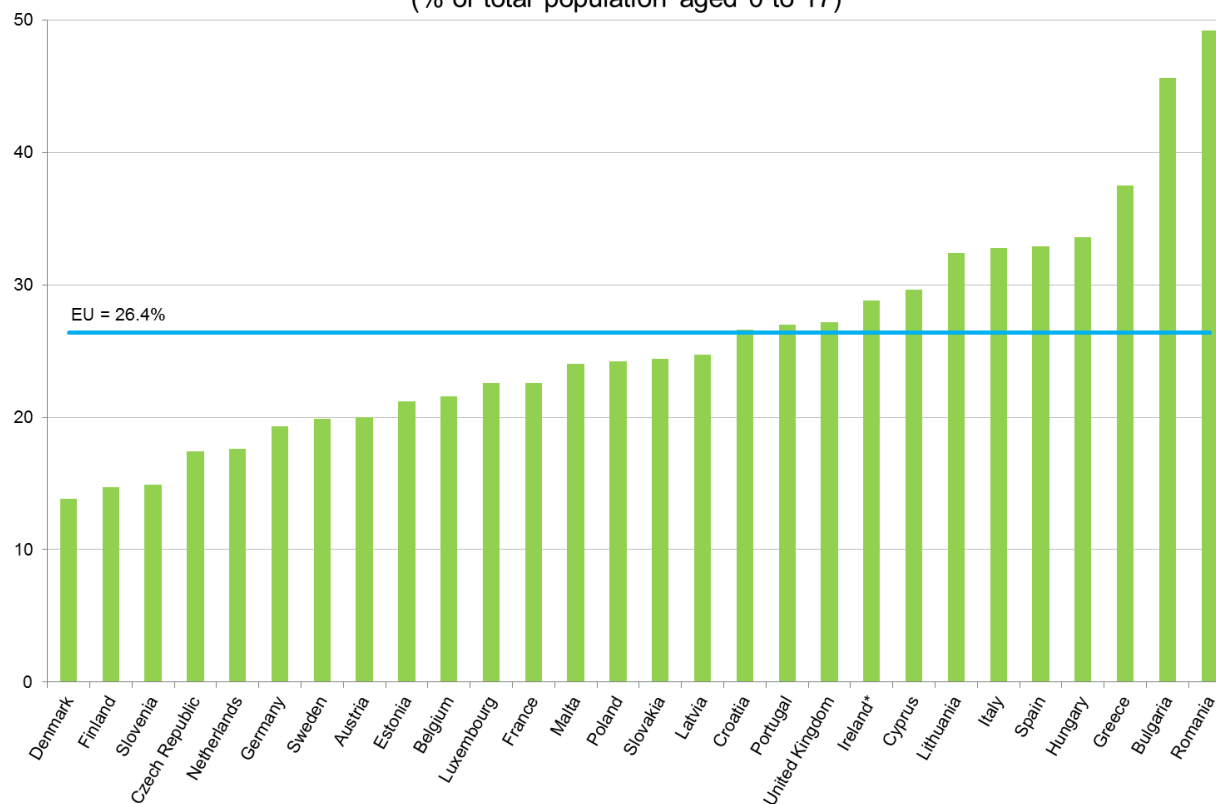


Figure 3: Share of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU, 2016

Source: Eurostat 2016

The statistical reports that are explaining the situation by using numbers and percentages of children living at the risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU, are doing so by analyzing factors that are influencing this risk. (Eurostat 2016) It is important to note that there are substantial differences between certain member countries and they will be briefly mentioned.

Main statistical findings, according to Eurostat, are as follows: children, who grow up in poverty, are at a much higher risk of becoming unemployed and poor later in life (Eurostat 2016). In the last couple of years some member countries have developed higher risks of poverty among children, countries like Greece, Cyprus and Italy; consequently some other countries have managed to diminish their risks. Falls were reported in Latvia, Bulgaria and Poland. (Eurostat 2016) This all has led to an overall situation in 2015 (latest available data for now), that states that the share of children living in a household at risk of poverty (or social exclusion) ranged from 14% in Sweden, to 46.8% in Romania; the EU-28 rate was 26.9%. (Eurostat 2016) “In

2015, 26.9% of children (aged 0-17) in the EU-28 were at risk of poverty or social exclusion compared with 24.7% of adults (aged 18-64) and 17.4% of the elderly (aged 65 or over).” (Eurostat 2016, 1)

Additionally it is valuable to mention main factors affecting child poverty, and the European situation in numbers, after taking account of the effects of social transfers in reducing child poverty. These factors are the composition of the household in which the children live and the employment situation of their parents, linked to their level of education. (Eurostat 2016)

When defining different types of household, the concept of dependent children is used rather than the concept of children (aged 0-17) as a population age group. Dependent children are individuals aged 0-17 and 18-24, in case they are inactive and living with at least one parent. Having this in mind, 47,8% of single-person households with dependent children were at risk of poverty, compared with only 18.2% of households with two adults and two dependent children. (Eurostat 2016) The composition of a household plays an important role as a factor in determining the rate of the risk of poverty among children proving, especially, the vulnerability of single-person/parent households.

“Around 78.2% of the very low work intensity households with dependent children and 62.2% of the low work intensity households with dependent children in the EU-28 were at risk of poverty.” (Eurostat 2016, 1) Since labor is considered to be the most important source of income for the majority of households, joblessness greatly improves the risk of poverty. In this case, the measurement unit is that of *“work intensity”*, since work intensity reflects how much an adult of working age has worked in a relation to their total work potential in a year. (Eurostat 2016)

Closely connected to the type of job a person can acquire is the level of education. In 2015 in the EU-28, 52.3% of children between 0 and 17 years of age, living in the households where the highest level of education by the parents was lower secondary level, were at risk of poverty, compared with only 8.1% for parents with higher levels of education. (Eurostat 2016)

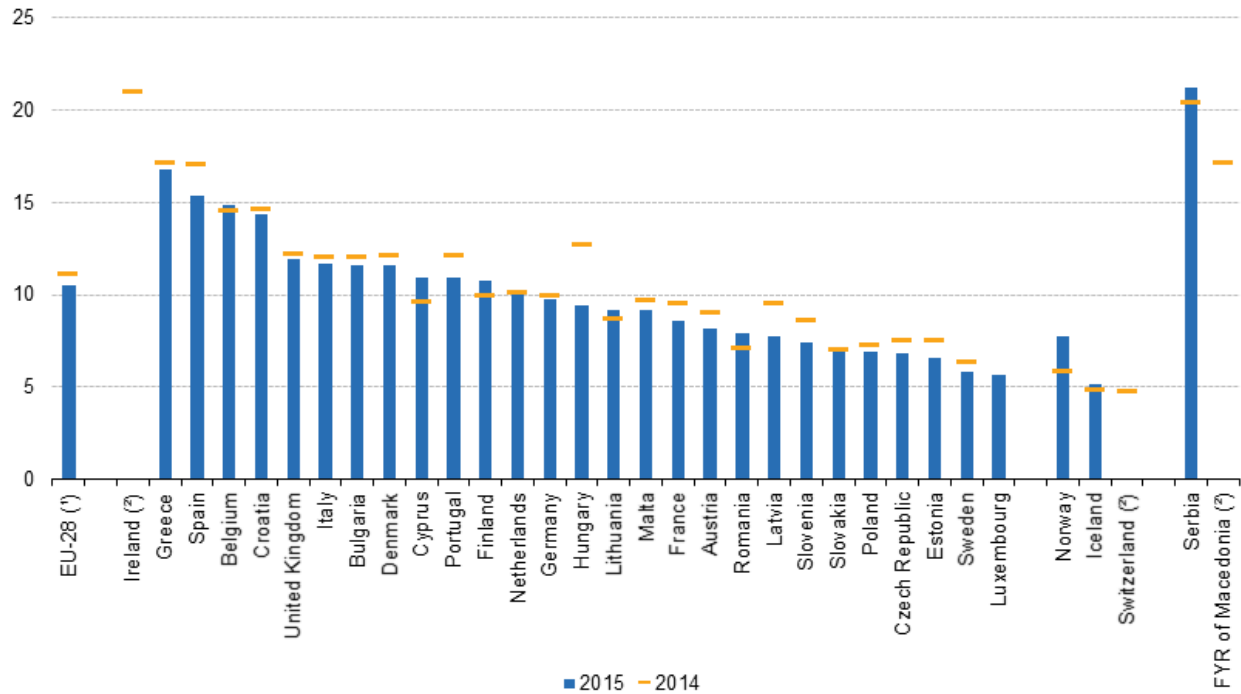
It has been noted that the migrant background also matters. Figures show that children with at least one foreign-born parent were at a greater risk of poverty (14.8 percentage points higher) than children with native-born parents. (Eurostat 2016)

Lastly, indicators of material deprivation can provide an additional view of children's well-being and living conditions, which in 2015, in the EU-28 was 17.0% for children living with single parents, compared with 9.0% of households with dependent children. (Eurostat 2016)

5.2. State of poverty in the Republic of Serbia

Having briefly elaborated on the current situation in the European Union, this section will try to cover some of the basic numbers and statistics for the Republic of Serbia. First thing that should be mentioned before presenting the outline of the data available, is the origin of the data presented. Since Serbia is not in the EU, monitoring, evaluating and tracking the statistical situation is not completely equivalent to the methods of European statistical offices. Most data available comes from either world-wide organizations such as UNICEF (UNICEF 2007), or some of the domestic statistical offices, such as RZS (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia) (RZS 2017) and governmental (Mladenović 2017) organizations working with the EU (Mijatović 2015) and they measure poverty differently, each concentrating on different goal. The latest Eurostat report (Eurostat 2016) includes Serbia in its measurements, seemingly as a reference.

Nonetheless, this report is the only statistical document that encompasses under the same methodology of collecting data, both Serbia and the EU. The emphasis is on general poverty rates and not child poverty exclusively; still for further comparison illustration of the situation is as follows:

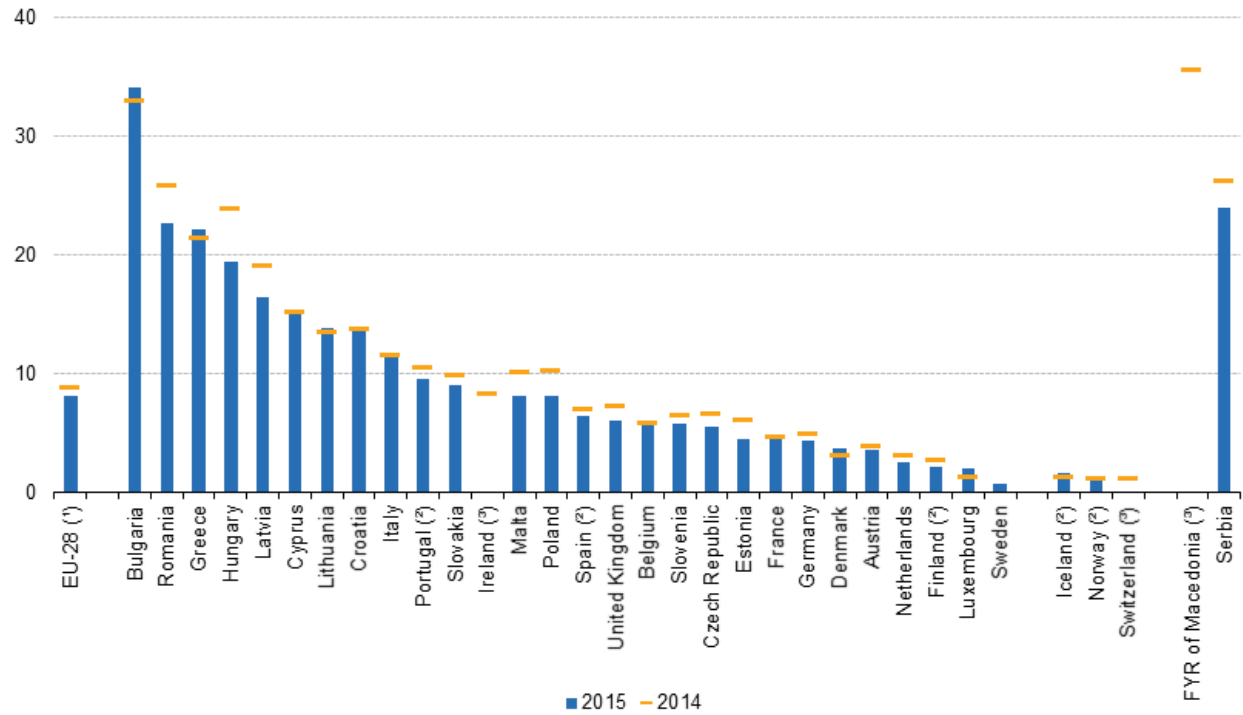


(*) 2015: estimate.
 (*) 2015: not available.

Figure 4: People (aged under 60) living in households with very low work intensity, 2014 and 2105 (%)

Source: Eurostat 2016

This table shows percentage of people of all ages (from 0 to 59 years) living in a households where the adults (those aged 18 to 59 years, but excluding student aged 18 to 24 years) worked 20% or less of their potential during the previous year. (Eurostat 2016)

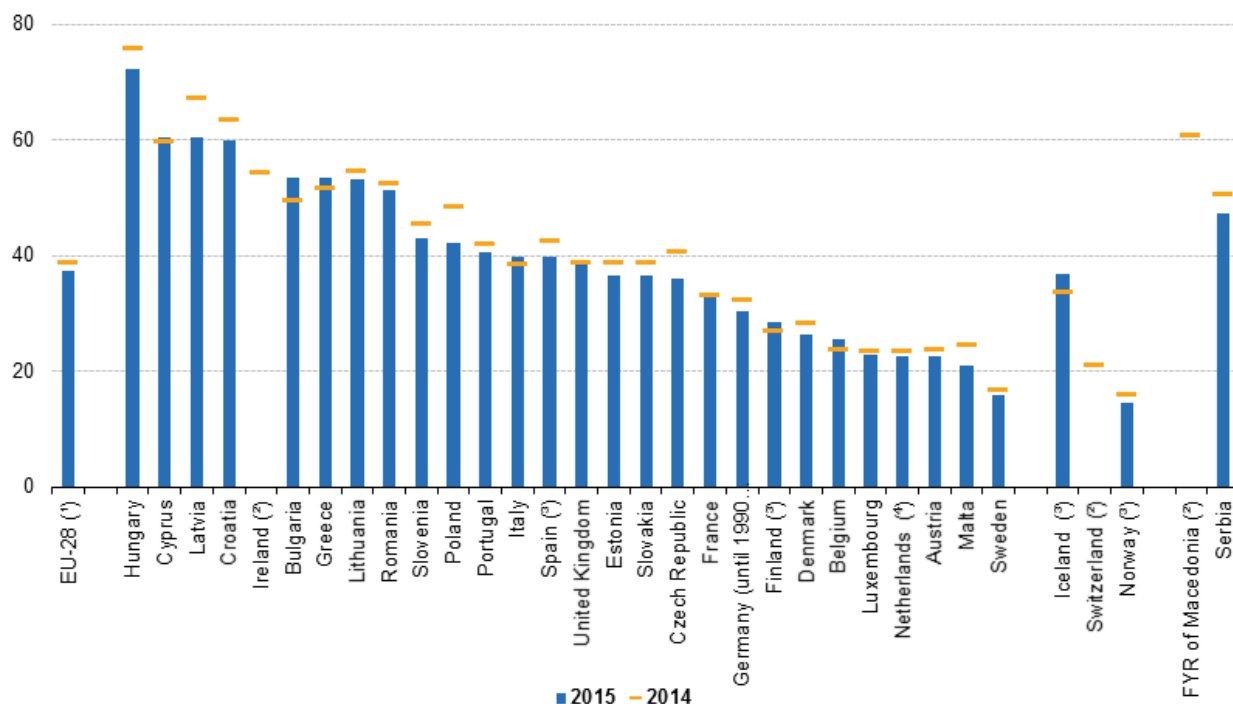


(*) 2015: estimate.
 (?) 2015: provisional.
 (?) 2015: not available.

Figure 5: Severe material deprivation rate, 2014 and 2015 (%)

Source: Eurostat 2016

This table illustrates the material deprivation rate, the proportion of people who cannot afford at least four of the nine items that have been listed at the beginning of the previous chapter (see chapter on State of the poverty in EU)



(*) 2015: estimate.
 (*) 2015: not available.
 (*) 2015: provisional.
 (*) 2014 and 2015: provisional.

Figure 6: Inability to face unexpected financial expenses, 2014 and 2015 (%)

Source: Eurostat 2016

This table measures the ability of a household to cover an unexpected expense from their own resources. These expenses amount to a fraction (1/12) of the poverty threshold.

Not at all surprisingly comes the fact that children who are considered poor in Serbia, around 155 thousand of them, with additional 155 thousand just above the poverty line, are children of primary school age, those living in larger families with more children, children living in rural areas, and children living in households where adults do not have an income of their own and are less educated. (UNICEF 2007) All these findings on factors leading to poverty closely relate to the factors known in the EU.

Education in Serbia is considered the most important determinant, since only 1% of children living under the poverty line in households where at least one adult has a secondary or university education. (UNICEF 2007)

Latest available reports of domestic characteristic deal only with severe poverty and claim the following; In 2016 the poverty rate for severe poverty among children aged 0-18 was 8.4% while for the adults it was 7.1%. (Mladenović 2017) Among the poor children it is interesting to note that children aged 14-18 are more deprived than the children aged 0-13. (Mladenović 2017) Also, in terms of the type of household, the poverty percentage varies notably. Poor households with just one member are 5.8%, households with two members that are poor are 7.3%, three members, 5.9%, four, 5.6%, five 7.3%, and six or more household members that are poor present 12.1% of the poor in general. (Mladenović 2017)

These statistics currently cannot be compared with the EU's standard since their primary goal was to show the percentage of sever poverty, which is why the numbers seem to be small. The reason for the inclusion of these statistics is solely to put in perspective who the children experiencing the most poverty are and how is this poverty distributed. The next paragraph also serves as an illustration of the current situation and possible prognosis, again, only in terms of severe poverty rates.

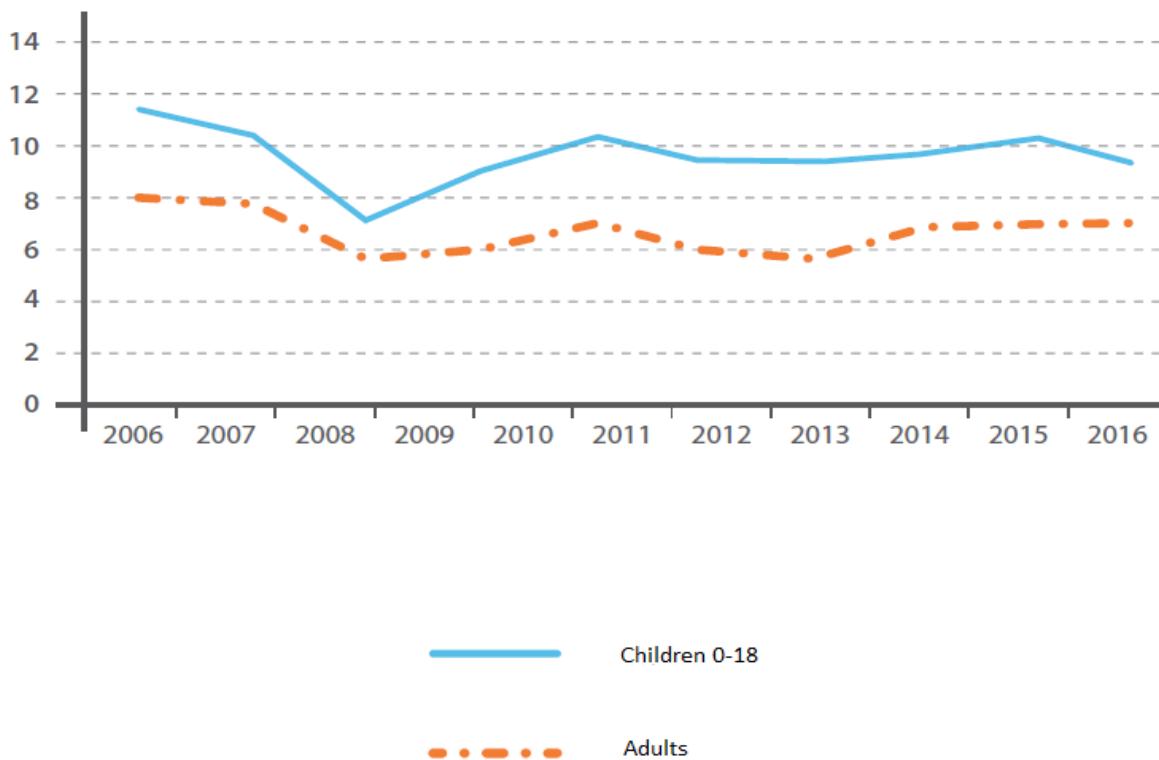


Figure 7: Poverty rate of children and adults

Source: Mladenović 2017

The other statistical prognosis that is of somewhat newer date, deals with poverty rates in general and states the following: fast economic growth between 2000 and 2008 did result in the decrease of poverty rates, still in 2008, due to economic crisis, the population's living standard deteriorated gradually. (Mijatović 2015) The severe poverty in terms of population percentage jumped from 6.9% in 2009 to 9.2% in 2010; 2011 saw a decrease to 6.8%, only to see it rise again in 2012 to 8.8% which remained unchanged until 2014 (8.9%) which is the last available data. (Mijatović 2015)

5.3. EU policies for diminishing child poverty

European Union has long since had a specific social policy goal, when it came to combating poverty and social exclusion. Ever since 1975, the European Economic Community designed and conducted certain pilot programs and projects with a goal to combat poverty and exclusion. (Lecerf 2016) At the UN World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995, the idea and the concept of eradicating poverty came to be included for the first time in the language of the international community, including the EU. (Van Reisen 2002) Since then, it has been decided in March 2000, that cooperation on policies which are designed in order to combat poverty and social exclusion, should be based on OMC (Open Method of Coordination). This method would combine national action plans and Commission initiatives. The objectives were as follows (Lecerf 2016):

- *“social cohesion, equality between men and women and equal opportunities for all through adequate, accessible, financially sustainable, adaptable and efficient social protection systems and social inclusion policies;*
- *effective and mutual interaction between the Lisbon objectives of greater economic growth, more and better jobs and greater social cohesion, and with the European Union's sustainable development strategy;*
- *good governance, transparency and the involvement of stakeholders in policy design, implementation and monitoring”.* (Lecerf 2016, 19)

This has all lead to creation of more direct, bold and comprehensive strategies that have strict goals when it comes to achieving economic and other equalities.

The first document that will be presented is the Europe 2020 strategy and its policies, specifically those addressed to fight poverty and social exclusion, through the platform of social policy, and within social, family policy as well. This strategy has its goals set up high and is trying to reach the general diminishing of poverty amongst people. This of course has a strong impact on the children living in poverty. Nonetheless, the continuation of this chapter will deal with the EU proposals on how to combat child poverty, i.e. how can the existing policy instruments be used, to better attack this issue.

There are other documents published by the EU that deal with this broad goal of poverty reduction, but it is the Europe 2020 strategy that seemed to be most relevant. The EU proposals, i.e. the Commission recommendations on how to combat child poverty, are directly extracted from the broad Europe 2020 incentives and their implementation will be monitored through the evolution of key policies through the Europe 2020 strategy. Certain comments and criticisms may appear, but since currently there are no better recommendations, these are the ones that will be examined and compared.

5.3.1. The Europe 2020 Strategy

“We need a strategy to help us come out stronger from the crisis and turn the EU into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. Europe 2020 sets out a vision of Europe’s social market economy for the 21st century.” (Commission 2010, 5)

The Europe 2020 strategy has developed as a response to the economy’s fast growth from the very beginning of the 21st century. This advancement needed to be backed up by the political realities that would match the economic ones. (Commission 2010) Priorities of the strategy are smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. This means that economy should be based on knowledge and innovation; that greener and more competitive economy should be promoted; and that high employment delivering social cohesion should be fostered. Targets defined by the strategy are as follows (Commission 2010):

- *“75% of the population aged 20-64 should be employed.*
- *3% of the EU’s GDP should be invested in R&D.*
- *The “20/20/20” climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right).*
- *The share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree.*
- *20 million less people should be at risk of poverty.” (Commission 2010, 5)*

From these targets four out of five lead to better opportunities for all and the elevation from undesired and unequal position, especially the last one mentioned. It is easy to understand that the EU is forcefully targeting the poverty, and the eradication of it. Taking into consideration the many consequences and reasons for poverty that have been pointed out in this paper, (see the chapter on Poverty) it becomes clear, that the strategy at hand, if successful, will be able to address many of the reasons leading to poverty, including child poverty as well. Improvements in education and employment as well as the investment in research and development can strikingly alter and influence the causes of child poverty. Furthermore, from these broad targets, many policy instruments targeting family could be drawn and developed. Several paragraphs of this thesis already mention the many faces of poverty and the need for a multi-disciplinary approach in its eradication. This is why it is important to consider all possible instruments and policies that may not necessarily have poverty eradication as a primary goal, but their implementation could nonetheless influence the child poverty rate. For all these reasons, Europe 2020 strategy presents itself as a crucial strategic document.

The importance of analyzing this particular strategy when it comes to creating recommendations for the reduction of child poverty in Serbia is mirrored in its economic oriented structure. This analysis will serve as a solid base on which the discussion about family policies could be developed. Many of the goals and policies within this strategy clearly address reasons and outcomes of child poverty, such as low education of parents, low employment rates, migrant background, and so on. Continuing on this, in order to make the comparison of goals and frames clearer, few things should be mentioned. Firstly, the goals set by the EU are very much clear; they represent transparent touchstones which are easy to measure in order to assess the progress. Secondly the way children poverty is framed within this document is clearly shown in

the goal dealing with diminishing poverty by getting 20 million people out of the risk at poverty. This means that child poverty eradication, or reduction is an obvious consequence of already set policies, and their instruments.

Before moving on to somewhat more direct prepositions of the strategy, certain quotes should help with framing of the widely used term within the strategy. In order to fully comprehend the meaning and importance given to the terminology of poverty, and so that its usage becomes easier to compare further on, the meaning given to '*poverty*' within the strategy should be outlined. The need for framing this term, within both official strategies arises from the presented research questions that seek to compare these frames, as well as the goals and ideologies behind the strategies. If the outline of the idea and understanding of poverty differs substantially, it can be expected that the outcomes and the very structure of the strategies will differ. The fact that children as a group are vulnerable to poverty and in greater risk than the rest has been pointed out throughout the strategy. Still, since the strategy itself has not oriented specifically towards child poverty as an issue, but has rather understood the child poverty reduction as a consequence of the all in all poverty reduction, this term has been particularly framed within the strategy.

"Fighting poverty: 80 million people were at risk of poverty prior to the crisis. 19 million of them are children. 8 per cent of people in work do not earn enough to make it above the poverty threshold. Unemployed people are particularly exposed." (Commission 2010, 18) Here, poverty is presented in terms of specific numbers, giving this phenomenon specific power and clear importance that is supposed to attract all the relevant parties to get involved in resolving the issue. Another concept that stands out is that of '*fighting*' which clearly states that the existence of poverty needs to be fought against.

"A major effort will be needed to combat poverty and social exclusion and reduce health inequalities to ensure that everybody can benefit from growth." (Commission 2010, 18) Even though the strategy is to a major extent concerned with the economic growth it is clear that the way poverty is framed within it deals with inequalities which demand a major effort. This emphasis should prove the importance given to the fight against poverty. Wording in this quotation being '*combat*' but still carrying the idea and the notion that poverty should be defeated.

“...to promote shared collective and individual responsibility in combating poverty and social exclusion;” (Commission 2010, 19) In this frame, it is shown that the European Union considers the issue of poverty to be everyone’s responsibility, which again emphasizes the immense presence of poverty as well as the need for collective action against it.

Having defined the frames in which the poverty is set according to the Europe 2020 strategy, the next step is to present and comment on the components that can and should lead to poverty reduction.

5.3.1.1. *Responsible institutions*

Understanding who are the responsible parties for delivering the fulfillment of the abovementioned goals is important, not only to better comprehend the strategy itself, but also to help in developing recommendations, since actors are one of the important pillars of infrastructure.

The European Council has the full ownership of the strategy. The Commission is in charge of monitoring the progress towards the targets. The European Parliament is to be a driving force for mobilization of citizens, and will act as a co-legislator on the most important initiatives. Additionally, this partnership should further on *“extend to EU committees, to national parliaments and national, local and regional authorities, to social partners and to stakeholders and civil society so that everyone is involved in delivering on the vision.”* (Commission 2010, 6)

Observing the division of responsibilities within the EU in terms of the Europe 2020 strategy, certain parallels could be drawn. If a general model could be understood from the abovementioned example and translated onto a much smaller scale that is the state of Serbia, it would seem that in order for certain policies to be implemented, Serbia, as a political entity would have to insure the following: a monitoring body, which does not necessarily have to be the enforcing body as well; a body or an institution that will be able to mobilize citizens, and promote policies; and lastly, Serbia would have to be able to rely on local and regional authorities, as well as non-governmental partners in achieving the goals.

Predispositions for this model are definitively present, and as the later chapters will show, at least on the paper, the government of Serbia has pointed out the importance of including

different stakeholders, such as the expertise of NGOs and. Tight cooperation between the local and the central government has also been stressed in the Serbian Strategy, even though the decentralization model has not yet been fully implemented, as some other findings show, such as the low development of rural areas and Southern Serbia. (Srbije 2003)

5.3.1.2. *Financing*

Financing is of crucial importance in any attempt to promote and implement policies. This particular aspect of policy development could be considered a problematic point in the case of Serbia, since due to obvious reasons; the country itself does not have same means, or types of means available.

The strategy for the year 2020 is relying on the European Social Fund (ESF), since this is Europe's main instrument for promoting employment and social inclusion. It does so by helping people to get better jobs and ensuring equal job opportunities for all EU citizens: young, old, employed or jobless. In the long run, ESF is helping remodel Europe's economy by creating not just jobs, but also an inclusive society, which is of great importance in the recent rise of unemployment and poverty levels. (ESF 2017)

5.3.1.3. *Policies*

The broad policies at disposal for enforcing the following policy instruments are obviously tightly connected to the instruments themselves. The strategy, in its report, concentrates on three specific key policies that need improving if the strategy's goals are to be met. In connection to these listed policies being transferable and implemented within the Republic of Serbia, one should bear in mind the obvious political, economic and demographical difference between these two territorial entities. This means that certain instruments are achieved easier within smaller territorial boundaries, while some are strictly oriented towards a union. Naturally, these policies present a certain precondition for the fulfillment of developed instruments, and if their existence or at least some potential for their development can be detected within the infrastructure of Serbia, accepting and proposing recommendations based on the Europe's existing policy instruments, would be much more tangible.

Since the following policies, that have been singled out by the European Commission are mostly falling into the field of economy, here will only be mentioned in their most basic form, on which level the comparison with the Republic of Serbia can be made. Further analysis of economic goals, targets and means, are to be left for further research.

According to the strategy itself all EU policies at disposal should be mobilized in achieving the strategy's goals. The Commission is planning on enhancing the essential elements of the operational proposals. (Commission 2010) More precisely, three particular encompassing policies have been pointed out:

1. “*A single market for the 21st century*” – even though single market exists legally within the EU, citizens and businesses are often faced with the uneven rules and enforcements within 28 different legal systems. In order for the single market to serve goals and objectives of the Europe 2020, individual national markets need to be well connected and well functioning. These markets should share the same goals towards growth and innovation. (Commission 2010)

European Union proposes certain actions on how to tackle existing stalls in the single market today, and these actions are based on technological development and reliefs in administration, taxes and so on. (Commission 2010) The state of Serbia, being a sovereign national state, does not have these particular economic obstacles that EU, as a Union faces. Still, in its pursue for membership within the Union, and looking up to the more developed economies, Serbia could take Europe's action as a potential example. The technological development, more precisely the need for it, has been mentioned in media, as well as in some contemporary articles on technological innovation. The issue that has been mostly pointed out is that even though the country has the ‘brains’ it is the means that lack. The investments in technological development usually come from foreign sources, which usually mean that both the scientists and their products do not belong to Serbia. (Duverger, Lisičić and Milardović 2001) Other than this, the reliefs for business investment in Serbia are rapidly changing and more and more companies are able to move some of their production to Serbia. (Potočnik 2014) Relying on economic advice from the EU and considering the accession process, it is not so hard to believe that in this matter, Serbia is on the right track.

2. *“Investing in growth: cohesion policy, mobilising the EU budget and private finance”* – in order for the EU financial framework to reflect the long-term growth, certain changes in managing finances should be enforced. The already existing budget could be altered to better support different priorities; cooperation with the private sector should be improved; as well as the financing of start-up companies and innovative small and medium-sized enterprises.

Even though finance is not the main topic here, and it does deserve more attention in some other paper, the idea of properly managing the existing budget and expanding on some loose connections is of great importance in reflecting on the Serbian financial infrastructure. Some of the options and opportunities that Serbia has will be mentioned in the section on reliability of Serbia’s infrastructure.

3. *“Deploying our external policy instruments”* – European Union set a task for itself to expand in terms of global and international trading and economy. (Commission 2010) On a much smaller scale the same goal could be easily set in Serbia as well, since good relationships both in terms of economy and politics bring strong core value to the infrastructure. The increase of export and domestic consumption is definitely the top of economic goal priority for the Republic of Serbia.

5.3.1.4. Policy instruments

Direct propositions made by the EU in the Europe 2020 strategy are identified through new engines to boost growth and jobs. These areas are addressed by seven flagship initiatives. These initiatives are divided under three categories 1) *“smart growth – an economy based on knowledge and innovation*, 2) *sustainable growth – promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy*, and 3) *inclusive growth – a high-employment economy delivering economic, social and territorial cohesion”*. (Commission 2010, 10) The first two categories emphasize, as the title suggests, economic and ecological growth. Flagship initiatives within these categories are oriented towards achieving these goals. The third category, though, concentrates on achieving the strategy’s goal on diminishing poverty. Before elaborating more on the last category of initiatives, there is one flagship initiative that falls under the *“smart*

growth” agenda and could be considered important, since it deals with educational component which has been previously mentioned as an important factor in combating poverty.

1. “*Youth on the move*” initiative aims at promoting and improving Europe’s higher education institutions. The goal is to enhance the quality of education and training within the EU, concentrating on equality and reaching a substantial improvement in terms of employment situation of young people. (Commission 2010) The Commission’s task is mostly to work on increasing mobility within the EU borders. (Commission 2010) Since Serbia is not a member state, this policy action would require bilateral agreements and visa reliefs, still improved standardization of education and an increase in mobility could greatly benefit Serbia’s economy and youth employment. (Freeman 2010) This might bring up the issue of ‘brain drain’ as it has been reported in Croatia, shortly after this country joined the EU. Some statistics point out that every third citizen of Croatia with a university diploma has left the country in the last four years. (Duić 2017) Relying on the experience of its neighbors, Serbia has even more reasons to try and actively develop agreements with EU member states and further, which will encourage mobility but not long term emigration.

Besides an encompassing frame that EU should deliver to ensure benefits for its member states, there are a couple of initiatives and policy instrument proposals for each country individually that Serbia too could look into:

- Firstly, since the goal is youth mobility and employment, member states will need to improve young’s people access to labor market through actions covering counseling, apprenticeships, and guidance. (Commission 2010) This means that designed reliefs should be made in terms of entering the labor market and receiving proper experience. This could be achieved through proper cooperation with the private and market sector, all the while enhancing openness of education systems so that they could lead to better learning outcomes towards labor market needs. (Commission 2010)

The reform of the educational system so that it fits the contemporary needs of the labor market is a recognized need in many corners of the world, including Serbia, but the issue arises once all this has served its purpose young people

still cannot find employment due to the lack of experience in the field. This is where the counseling and apprenticeships come to action. Additionally projects in cooperation with the private sector, that enable young people to gain some practical knowledge and experience should be further developed in Serbia.

- Secondly, within this same category, is addressing the issue of early school leaves. EU proposes for each state how to work on altering educational outcomes by addressing each stage in education with an integrated approach. (Commission 2010) This means detecting and then tackling reasons for early drop-outs at every benchmark in the system. For Serbia, it means ensuring that everyone has primary school education, which still is not a norm, and improving desegregation policies. (Srbije 2003)

2. “*An Agenda for new skills and jobs*” initiative is oriented towards the reduction of unemployment and enhancement of labor productivity. (Commission 2010) The Commission proposes the following:

- “*Flexicurity*” which is an integrated strategy for simultaneous enhancement of flexibility and security in the labor market. This strategy should fulfill on one hand, employers’ need for flexible workforce, and on the other hand, workers’ need for confidence that they will not face long periods of unemployment. (Commission 2010) Each member state needs to reduce labor market segmentation and facilitate reconciliation work with family life. (Commission 2010) This particular instrument falls under the field of also family policy, and will be elaborated more, later on. It is a light-motive hiding behind many policies that attack poverty, but even more so, child poverty. This instrument presents reconciliation between the consuming capitalism and the social welfare state. Serbia has generous maternity leaves, up to one year after the child is born, after which there is usually no program of support for mothers or fathers to rejoin the labor market. Even less developed is an option for flexible working arrangements after the maternity leave, this often leads to one parent, usually the mother staying home to provide childcare. The vicious cycle of parent’s unemployment continues when they try to rejoin the market

after a couple of years being at home and taking care of the children. It is crucial for Serbia to develop the notion of ‘flexicurity’ since this will have many beneficial consequences on the well-being of parents, and therefore children.

3. *“European Platform against Poverty”* aims at combating poverty and social exclusion in order to enable people experiencing poverty to live in dignity and take an active part in the society. (Commission 2010) The Commission set its target on the EU level, and it will work to design and implement programs that will provide innovative education, employment opportunities and training for deprived communities, additionally, to goal is to fight discrimination and to develop a new agenda that will enable migrants to take full advantage of their potential. (Commission 2010) In order for the EU to be able to develop these programs and designs each member state has to take responsibility in fighting poverty. (Commission 2010)

- Targeting the specific circumstances of vulnerable groups that are at risk of poverty is an important step in claiming responsibility. (Commission 2010) In the Europe 2020 strategy groups at risk are, among others, one-parent families, Roma people, elderly women, homeless, and so on. By identifying the uniqueness of each group’s risks of poverty, different measures could be constructed. Serbia has also defined the specifically vulnerable groups within the country, and has its instruments oriented towards them. Achieving the balance between the universal benefits and means-tested benefits is of great importance, since specific groups face multiple risks of poverty at the same time. Additionally, their marginalized position has deprived them of achieving the same opportunities as others, which is why the educational, health and other social systems have to develop reliefs for the specific groups of people that are jeopardized. The groups defined as vulnerable in Serbia, are children, Roma population, elderly, single parents, and so on, much similar to the EU categorization. (Srbije 2003)

5.3.2. Commission recommendation

This document, titled *“Recommendations: Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage”* (Commission 2013) has created a set of recommendations that emphasize the need to invest in children first and foremost.

“Preventing the transmission of disadvantage across generations is a crucial investment in Europe’s future, as well as a direct contribution to the Europe 2029 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, with long-term benefits for children, the economy and society as a whole.” (Commission 2013, 5) This is a specific thread to follow in combining the major goals of Europe 2020 and the specific child-oriented recommendations presented in this document. These recommendations are organized to follow specific principles, according to which integrated strategies and policy instruments are developed, which are then monitored and implemented by specifically constructed governance. (Commission 2013)

The key principles that guide the recommendations, present an ideology that has been mentioned at the very beginning of this thesis (see the chapters on Poverty and Child poverty) and emphasize the importance of equal opportunities so that every child can realize its full potential. Further on, the recommendations are constructed on the basis of children’s rights approach, and call upon all the authorities and policy designers to always bear these in mind. It is then pointed out that the importance of supporting the families as primary carers should be fully acknowledged, while keeping the child’s best interest as a primary concern. This key principle and instruments based on it that will follow; additionally put greater importance in developing and constructing family policies in order to secure child’s well-being. Lastly, the principles on which any further action should be based are those of achieving an appropriate balance between the universal policies and those that target the most disadvantages. Leaning on this principle is the one aiming at ensuring the focus on children who face an increased risk due to multiple disadvantages, such as Roma children, children living in a single parent household, or in large families, and so on. (Commission 2013)

The following recommendations and instruments are falling under different policy fields, but nonetheless require joint forces, and in their elaborate goals include many responsible institutions.

1. *“Support parents’ participation in the labour market”* – this instrument proposes an active labor market involvement by securing employment positions for parents that provide more security than that of tax and benefit system. Additionally, this also means supporting the employment of single parents and ensuring training measures, quality childcare services access, and flexible working arrangements.
2. *“Provide for adequate living standards through a combination of benefits”* – it is the combination of cash and in kind benefits that plays an important role in relieving child poverty. Means-tested or other targeted benefits should be delivered in a way that avoids stigmatization, and conditional benefits have to be discrete and constantly revised according to the impact they are achieving.
3. *“Reduce inequality at a young age by investing in early childhood education and care”* – this means, that besides providing access to high-quality, inclusive early education and childcare, it is equally important to empower parents in their role as educators, by raising their awareness of the benefits and programs offered to help disadvantaged families.
4. *“Improve education systems’ impact on equal opportunities”* – educational system has an important role in breaking the cycle of disadvantage. It has to target its resources towards the most deprived by providing personalized support to compensate for specific deficiency financially as well as in strengthening and preparing teachers for social diversity. Educational system, should further on, reduce early school leaving and reinforce the learning of literacy, numeracy and basic maths and science to ensure the right to receive a quality minimum qualification.
5. *“Improve the responsiveness of health systems to address the needs of disadvantaged children”* – this instrument should address the obstacles to accessing health care, including costs, cultural and linguistic barriers and lack of information. Additionally, specific attention should be paid to the prevention of health issues by improving child’s nutrition and by early detection of disabilities and mental health problems.
6. *“Provide children with a safe, adequate housing and living environment”* – besides ensuring that impoverished families have access to affordable, quality housing, it is also

important to avoid ‘ghettoisation’ of poor families, by ensuring that the environment in which children live does not have a high criminal rate, and possibilities of children falling victims to violence and abuse.

7. *“Enhance family support and the quality of alternative care settings”* – this instrument, once again, emphasizes the importance of family, and argues for the particular setting in which poverty will never be the reason for separation of children and their parents. Also, alternative services and institutions for children without parents have to ensure the same chances and options for orphans in terms of health access, security, education, employment, and so on.
8. *“Support the participation of all children in play, recreation, sport and cultural activities”* – the policy task is to remove the costs for access to sport, recreation and cultural events. This can additionally be achieved by creating after-school activities, involving communities, volunteers and parents, which will enable parents to foster positive family communication and children to enjoy informal learning activities that take place outside the home and develop social skills.
9. *“Put in place mechanisms that promote children’s participation in decision making that affects their lives”* – in the theoretical part of this thesis, there was a special section oriented towards the children’s view on the poverty they are experiencing (see the chapter on Child poverty) and the set of needs that they find the most necessary. Children should be able to express their views and know that their opinion will be heard.
(Commission 2013)

In order for these instruments to bear fruit it is important to link all the policy areas as well as the public authority at all levels. Monitoring, evaluating, and the exchange of good practice and knowledge are of equal importance. (Commission 2013)

Eurochild, a network of organizations and individuals working in and across Europe to promote the rights and well-being of children and young people, has issued an article commenting on the Recommendation document issued by the Commission. This article criticizes the Recommendations for not having a clear roadmap for the implementation, but it welcomes the incentive and the recognition given to the priority of diminishing child poverty. (Eurochild 2017)

Despite the critique, these specific and straight-forward recommendations embedded in the Europe 2020 strategy and specifically developed to address the diminishing of child poverty, serve as strong basis for both comparison between the EU policy instruments and Serbia's policy instruments as well as identification of possibly applying new instruments and creating further recommendation. The presentation of Serbia's strategy on poverty reduction measures, which will be pointed out in one of the following chapters, does impose certain similarities in policy instruments to the nine abovementioned references. Those instruments that concentrate on improving the chances within the labor market for parents, improving educational and health systems, as well as the carefully constructed plan on distributing child benefits, could all be found mentioned within the Strategy on poverty reduction in Serbia. Sometimes these instruments align completely; on one hand health access for the most deprived is on top of the priority list in this area, as well as the inclusion of social diversity in the school system in the educational area. On the other hand some particularities of Commission's recommendations seem to be overlooked in the Serbia's Strategy. These particularities, defend their importance by being emphasized by multiple different sources, such as, for example the importance of children's voices being heard and acknowledged. It also seems that the importance of living environment and the access to sports and recreation have been neglected. This could be justified by the Strategy's focus on poverty as a whole, but still, the only instrument mentioned is the improvement of traffic infrastructure for the rural areas. Lastly, the instruments and incentives that are narrowly defined within the EU recommendation document, and fall under the family policy category, the importance of which has been pointed out earlier (see the chapter on Importance of family policy) talk about the magnitude of childcare services and the availability of such, combined with the flexible working arrangements. Again the justification could be found in the very broadly set goals of Serbian Strategy, which means that very specific instruments such as these have not found their place, but only yet. Comparing to the existing family policy situation in Serbia, and in constructing the recommendations for this country, these references will find their place.

5.3.3. Europe's family policies, and their outcomes

The following cross-national study elaborates in depth the relationship between family policy and child poverty, by studying three main family policies – child cash and tax benefits, paid parenting leaves and public support for childcare. Data for this study has been collected from eighteen Western democracies from 1987 to 2007. (Engster 2012) Findings and elaborations within this paper should serve in constructing a solid comparison in terms of goals and successes of public policy between Western democracies (most of which are EU member states and main carriers of European Union's ideologies and goals) and the Republic of Serbia.

Firstly it is important to note that the cross-national study showed that demographic and household characteristics do not pose a significant factor in determining poverty rates across different countries. (Engster 2012) This means that any demographical differences between Serbia and EU should not pose a problem when it comes to creating recommendations and comparing family policy inputs.

Main findings of this cross-national study, and consequently the reasons for its importance in this particular paper, are that it is the family policy reform that is a key strategy for reducing child poverty across the world. (Engster 2012) Besides combating unemployment, which is a self-explanatory reason leading to poverty; there are other means, as Daniel Engster shows with which influential results can be achieved.

The result of this cross-national study is that in each model which tested the relationship between three family policies (child cash and tax benefits, paid parental leaves, and public support for childcare) combined, and a general child poverty rate, there has been a significant finding that the family policies have a significantly negative association with the percentage of poor children. (Engster 2012) Further on, this study explored the differences between single-parent and two-parent families in terms of family policies. This input is of great value, given the fact that the single-parent households are at much greater risk of experiencing poverty, and there is a need for policies constructed in order to help these households. Nonetheless, the poverty of two-parent family is not to be neglected, and the positive outcome of different policies in this case is of great importance. The results showed that the public support for childcare correlates

significantly with lowering the poverty rate among children living in the single-parent families; whereas paid parenting leaves correlate with lowering the poverty rate in the two-parent families. (Engster 2012) These findings can help in constructing policies when it comes to prioritizing. Depending on the demographical situation, and poverty reports, certain families might be at greater risk than the others in which case the means to help them would be prioritized.

The introductory chapter at the beginning of this thesis (see chapter on Importance of family policy) points out the value of family policy in diminishing child poverty, and this report provides evidence to that claim. It is these results that help understand the complexity of influencing child poverty, and that contribute to the notion that not all, though much, is dependent on the economic policies and instruments. Along with the recommendations from the previous chapter, which emphasize the importance of children's perspective and leisure time this study points out the combined value of parental leave and childcare systems, as well as cash and in kind benefits for children.

One other finding in this cross-national study is the persistently notable relation between disability benefits and lower child poverty rates. (Engster 2012) Since the chapters at the very beginning of this paper do bring up the strong relationship between the occurrence of disability and poverty among families, this finding does not come as a full surprise. Still, because on one hand parents who are sick or disabled usually have limited opportunities for employment and work, and on the other hand parents who have children who are disabled have to achieve flexible employment due to the special needs of their children, disability benefits may be of utmost importance. (Engster 2012)

Lastly, the support for these findings could be found in numbers as well: *“a 10% increase in family cash and tax benefits, an 10-week increase in full-time paid parenting leave, and a \$1000 increase in public spending on childcare is associated with a 5.325% decrease (in absolute terms) in overall child poverty at the 50% threshold. A 1% increase in disability and sickness benefits relative to GDP correlates with an additional reduction of child poverty by 1.82% (in absolute terms).”* (Engster 2012, 136) This means that the balanced strategy between work and benefit is the key for diminishing children poverty.

5.4. Serbia's policies for diminishing child poverty

The Republic of Serbia has recognized the need to protect that part of its population which is living in poverty or just about the poverty line. This decision to act is mirrored in some strategies and instruments that have been constructed by the government of Serbia, but also some works by the non-governmental sector, such as UNICEF. Still, as the following sections will show that in the contemporary social circumstances this is not enough.

5.4.1. Poverty reduction strategy

It is important to note that the first and the last "Poverty reduction strategy" (Srbije 2003) constructed by the government of Serbia, has been done in year 2003 under the Democratic Party's leadership. Though its value should not be undermined, it is obvious that this strategy is somewhat outdated and as such should be considered with some reserve.

Since one of the goals of this paper is to create a relevant conclusion in terms of goal comparisons between the EU's strategy and that of Serbia's, some background information about Serbia's strategy could be found useful, even though the difference in publishing dates is seven years. Additionally, before moving on to defining goals and breaking down the aspects of the strategy, some peculiarities of the Serbian case will be mentioned so as to serve as a basic clarification.

The strategic direction and the very creation of Strategy have been approved by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB); also the very creation of this document, besides the economic situation Serbia found itself in at the beginning of the 21st century, was based on the integral development of Serbia as a potential EU member state (at the time Serbia and Montenegro were still one country, but the strategy is limited to just Serbia). (Srbije 2003) The Strategy is based on human rights as an ultimate starting point, which led to many NGOs being involved in the very creation of it. (Srbije 2003) These facts correlate well with certain details of the EU's strategy, mainly those concerning the need for a more encompassing structure that will rely on many available stakeholders.

Even though Serbia shares some particularities with some other post-communist countries in the Central and Eastern Europe in terms of transitional path, some aspects of its development are very unique. Firstly, in the years that preceded the creation of the Strategy, Serbia experienced dramatic economic downfall, due to the consequences of authoritarian regime, civil war, international isolation, and lastly NATO bombing in 1999 which led to dramatic political changes. (Srbije 2003) These, both internal and external circumstances were responsible for the spread of poverty to traditionally 'richer' parts of the country, as well as for the attainment of some new groups, like refugees from other Yugoslavian states. Vulnerable groups also experienced the increase of poverty, and children, old, Roma population and disabled were in a worse situation than before. Reports show, for the sake of comparison that 28.9 % people were living under the poverty line in 1995 and then 36.5% in the year 2000. This comparison was made according to the poverty index from 1990s to allow the comparison, and shows rapid decline due to the abovementioned circumstances. (Srbije 2003)

The broader goals of the 'Program Reforms of the Republic of Serbia' (2001) were formulated as follows (Srbije 2003):

- *“constitution of modern state, based on the rule of law and fight against corruption and organized criminal;*
- *revitalization of economy through market reforms;*
- *fight against poverty and improvement of social protection system for the most endangered groups”.* (Srbije 2003, 1)

The last goal is the driving force of the Strategy, and even though it is not as clear and measurable as the one proposed by the EU in 2010, the idea behind both these goals is the same and deals with poverty reduction. Throughout the Strategy, children as a vulnerable group have given specific attention, but the overall idea, similarly to the EU is that the reduction in poverty on all levels will ultimately lead to the reduction of child poverty as well. The creators of Strategy pointed out in the video reportage that the plan was to halve the number of people living in poverty by 2010; but since the political situation changed it is only this reportage that claim the Strategy succeeded in its plan already in 2009. (SIPRUnit 2009) No other document was provided in order to support this statement and the success of the Strategy; even less is known of the results and changes implied by the Strategy from 2009 up until today.

As it has been mentioned while elaborating on the Europe 2020 strategy, for the sake of understanding the framing of the term ‘poverty’ certain examples have been put forward to explain the basic idea of the creators of the strategy. Same example will be followed in the next few paragraphs to explain the frames that have been given to the same term in the Serbian Strategy. From the very beginning it should be noted that the same idea of child poverty reduction is understood as an outcome of joined attack on the poverty as a whole. Besides this, following sections from the Strategy will explain the how the term has been perceived and whether it differs from the perception of the EU.

“Само повећање економске активности и већа међународна конкурентност домаће привреде доводе до повећања друштвеног производа, стварања нових радних места, бољих зарада и реалних извора финансирања социјалних и других јавних потреба. То је кључни развојни правац и приоритет Србије који једино може да побољша живот свим грађанима и да истовремено смањи ризик сиромаштва на трајним основама.” (Srbije 2003, 2) (Just the enhancement of economic activity and greater international competitiveness of domestic economy lead to the increase in the social product, creation of new work places, increase in earnings and realistic sources of funding for social and other public needs. This is the key direction for development and a key priority of Serbia, the only one that can improve the lives of all citizens and simultaneously reduce the risk of poverty in the long run.) This loose translation of the presented quote has a task to explain the meaning given to the idea of poverty, and like the EU it concentrates on the reduction of poverty being the logic consequence of economic growth. Additionally, poverty has been presented as a lack of opportunity to reach equality, which should be amended through tireless efforts.

“Овакав, вишедимензионални приступ смањивања сиромаштва, поред значајних финансијских средстава, захтева велике организационе напоре, усаглашавање републичког и локалног нивоа, утврђивање секторских и других приоритета, интензивну сарадњу државних институција, цивилног сектора и међународног фактора, професионалну подршку, а пре свега искрену жељу и спремност свих учесника да активно и одговорно учествују у целокупном процесу.” (Srbije 2003, 3) (This multi-dimensional approach to the reduction of poverty, besides significant financial means, requires immense organizational efforts, harmonization of sectoral and other priorities, intensive cooperation of state institutions, civil sector and international factors, professional support and

above all genuine will and readiness of all participants to actively and responsibly participate in the entire process.) This frame shows the placement of poverty under everyone's responsibility but more than that it shows the presence of the issue in every aspect of the state. This correlates with the framing of poverty by the EU.

As far as the position of poverty as an issue that need to be fought against, as an issue that is present in the lives of many people in Serbia is concerned, it has been broadly elaborated within the strategy and mentioned also in this thesis (see the chapter on the State of poverty in the Republic of Serbia). Additionally, since the Strategy is fully concentrated on the reduction of poverty, it is understandable that the importance of it is undeniable. Comparison of the poverty frame within the Europe 2020 strategy and the Poverty reduction strategy leads to the conclusion that there are much more similarities than differences, meaning that any further analysis has a strong base to begin with.

5.4.1.1. Responsible institutions

The institutions responsible for delivering the Strategy are certain government ministries, governmental institutions and agencies that are responsible for implementation of the Strategy. Their task is to allocate the responsibilities to local governments as well as to create a specific team, consisting of experts in the field, in charge of developing and implementing programs, controlling the budget and utilizing men power. (Srbije 2003) This Strategy has included civil society as an important actor, both in implementing and monitoring the results of the Strategy, which is quite the novelty in the recent Serbian history. (Srbije 2003)

Given its extensive scope, the Strategy needs to rely on many actors and their willingness for cooperation. It has been mentioned that, each in its respective filed the following actors will play a major role in implementing and evaluating the effects of the Strategy.

1. Statistical institutes; in charge of collecting and processing data on poverty;
2. Health care system; implementing some adjustments and changes so as to accommodate the goals of the policies;
3. National bank; financial aspect of the Strategy;

4. Ministries and their resource registers, each in its respective field (system of social care, educational system, etc.). (Srbije 2003)

Comparing these responsible institutions, to those listed within the EU's strategy the main similarity that could be drawn is that of a multi-faced actor that cooperates and exchanges ideas. This all seems like a good start and proves the readiness of Serbia to, at least in this aspect, compete with any member state within the EU.

5.4.1.2. Financing

The country has had a dramatic turnover in the role of the public sector, when it comes to financing. The state has abandoned its previous communist role of the sole producer of goods in favor of the more supportive role, one that is providing social security, investments in economy and regulating laws and frames for the active participation of the private sector. (Srbije 2003)

These vast economic changes represent a certain obstacle in determining the financing of the Strategy. Still, the document places emphasis on the financing through the budget process. This means that the activities will be financed through an encompassing macro-fiscal governmental frame, which is based on budget savings and better prioritizing. (Srbije 2003)

The principles of expenses for the Strategy itself are as follows:

1. The stress is on budget savings and work rationalization of ministries, local and other state bodies.
2. Financial sources for the realization of the Strategy are meant to grow, so that in due time (the end of 2010) Serbia can be ready to deal with poverty issues on its own.
3. Necessary maintenance of balance between the means intended for diminishing the consequences of poverty, such as social protection, and the means intended to remove the cause of poverty such as education, health system, employment measures, and so on.

5.4.1.3. *Policies*

Policies presented in the Strategy are well elaborated and mostly concentrated on enabling the change from closed to open labor market, improvement of the economy and strengthening the regional and European ties. These policies should be improved so that they can support the instruments that are to be used in combating poverty (Srbije 2003)

1. Macroeconomic frame and factors ensuring economic growth; this frame represents a governmental plan for not only dealing with the multi-dimensional factors of poverty, but also for obtaining and increasing the GDP of the country. Economic growth under these conditions will ensure economic possibilities for the poor in terms of employment, or increase in income which will help them fight against poverty.
2. Fiscal constraints in achieving the Strategy; this policy plays an important role in the Strategy's plan to use public expenditures for concrete budget activities. These need to be the main policy allowing successful implementation of the Strategy.
3. Transition to the free market economy; in achieving any of the Strategy's goals, this policy plan plays a vital role. Parallel development of both the Strategy and the transition to the free market are crucial for the development of the country as a whole. The government sees it as a three-fold action which consists of:
 - creating conditions for the development of the private/market sector,
 - construction of more effective public institutions,
 - global and regional integration. (Srbije 2003)

More thorough explanation on the similarities and differences between policy measures that can enable the execution of policy instruments will be elaborated later on. Still one comment that proposes itself is while the EU is working on establishing a single market economy on the level of the union, Serbia still needs to work through to achieve full transition. This does present a proper disadvantage, but also an opportunity to learn from other's examples and excel at a quicker pace.

5.4.1.4. Policy instruments

In order to fulfill its goals of diminishing poverty in the Republic of Serbia, the document at hand, created seven comprehensive and ambitious policy instruments that are to be joined together in the mission to relieve the country of poverty. Some of them have direct or indirect influence to diminishing child poverty, while some target other vulnerable groups and as such contribute to the general poverty relief.

1. Increasing the possibility of employment; in order to create new possibilities for employment and to increase the economic activity the strategy will rely on mechanisms that increase domestic and foreign demand. The domestic demand should be increased under the influence of the following factors combined:
 - increasing the employment level and investments through the privatization process based on “*Direct foreign investments*” (SDI),
 - increasing the employment level and investments as a result of direct Greenfield¹ investments,
 - increase in purchasing power and domestic savings,
 - increase in public investments.

To the increase of foreign demand the biggest influence will have the following elements:

- liberalization of foreign trade,
- increase in export,
- strategic position,
- free trade agreements,
- WTO and European integration.

EU talks about getting youth engaged and providing employment for the young and women, while Serbia might be taking a step back here, trying to ensure just the simple possibility for employment. Nonetheless, there is no reason why these target groups could not be addressed together. ‘Flexicurity’ and options for additional

¹ A type of investment, which is known by its characteristic business way of starting everything from the very beginning. (Investopedia 2018)

training should develop at the same time as the increasing of foreign investments. The EU recommendations point out the importance of work environment for parents which balances out their work and their parenting roles, which can be achieved in the Serbian economy as well if enough attention is given to this issue.

2. Effective social protection; this policy has a specific goal oriented towards creating minimum social safety net for the whole population, but specifically vulnerable groups. Social care programs cannot prevent poverty but can and should act as support for those who are in need, for various reasons. These programs, particularly target children as they are entitled to greater protection than the rest. The Strategy provides a list of social benefit aspects that should be improved if Serbia is to fairly combat poverty:

- the creation of “absolute poverty line” which would not be connected to the economic income;
- new “poverty line” which would be equal for all the municipalities and territories of the Republic of Serbia;
- the “poverty line” should be increased as to accommodate more people and include them in the social care programs;
- increase in help for the large families;
- limited help to the population which is work capable.

Incentives for work have already been mentioned in the EU recommendations, along with the importance of cash and in kind benefits to the families with children. Further on, the *“European Platform against Poverty”* highlights the importance of specially addressing the vulnerable groups, which is also shown in this part of the Serbian Strategy. By expanding the conditions, more people will be eligible for social care programs, which will consequently have good effects on preventing poverty, or for that matter preventing absolute poverty.

As far as the children benefits are concerned, the Strategy asks two important questions. Firstly, is the stress in children benefits on social or population goals? Secondly, are the desired goals better achieved through universal child benefit, that

target all, or through means-tested benefits, that target only the poor? Policy instruments that are offered are a combination of these questions.

- child benefit should be targeted to a wider range of the population, wider than the one oriented towards adult population, but with a specific focus on the poorer families,
 - child benefits should be means tested, so that the poorer families receive more, but also age tested, so that the benefits accommodate the needs of the children, given their specific age.
3. Improving the situation of old and pensioners; this instrument is following the world's trend in pension reforms, as well as in adjusting the system to better accommodate the needs of the elderly.
 4. Health care as in service of diminishing poverty; besides the developed system of strategies for the improvement of the health care system, such as the reform of the financial system, and better distribution of resources, there are a couple of strategies that concentrate solely on the vulnerable and poor, the most prominent one is this:
 - the development of the program which targets vulnerable groups in particular; the concept is created so that the information about services should be widely available, and that the specifics of the program are created in association with the particular groups and their needs. Special emphasis is given to mental illness treatment.

EU recommendations on investing in children have pointed out the same set of instruments that should be implemented in order to diminish child poverty. Since children are a vulnerable group in Serbia, these instruments should apply to them as well. The only thing missing is the investment in prevention which could be realized through cooperation with schooling system.

5. Educational system in service of diminishing poverty has many advantages. In order to better the chances of the poor, especially children born in the poorer families, the educational system of Serbia has to undergo some changes. It is important that the educational system matches the new market needs of the world, also specific emphasis is given to the education of Roma children, and children with special needs,

as they are statistically known to be marginalized and vulnerable. Some of the ways of achieving a more encompassing educational system are the policy instruments proposed by the Strategy.

- obligatory preschool education,
- obligatory education for children with special needs,
- inclusion of Roma children to all levels of education; inclusion of their culture in the curriculum; and special emphasis on supporting Roma teachers and students.

Another goal that might be set concerns the need to reduce early school leaving which leaves the children without the minimum quality qualifications. Also, the preparation of teachers is of equal importance, especially for the integration of Roma children and for promotion of social diversity, as well as in the field of health improvement and promotion of preventive medicine.

6. Regional, rural and urban aspects of diminishing poverty have a specific goal of developing networks on a regional and national level in terms of improving competitive economy, as well as the communicational and traffic infrastructure.
7. Ecological aspect of diminishing poverty has a three-fold plan with goals to better the water supply, sewage system, and ecologically black spots of Serbia.

5.5. Family policy of the ex-communistic countries

Having listed a general overview of the policies that are currently being discussed and offered up to practice, both on the European Union level, and on the level of the Republic of Serbia, the next section will briefly outline the situation of EU countries that have more similarities with Serbia. This elaboration should help in understanding the transitional path, especially since there is more information in terms of projects' successes or failure, which is missing in the case of Serbia.

One example is the research done on comparative analysis of the effects of family policy measures on poverty patterns in the Visegrad countries², all except Slovakia since it joined in 1999. (Förster and Tóth 2000) Each of these countries had had their own differences in approaching economic and social difficulties, still in this paper, for the purposes of creating a bond between countries that have made the modern economic transition, and Serbia, who is still struggling in this sense, the emphasis will fall on similarities in policy overview.

It has been noted that in each of these countries the welfare reform lagged behind the economic one. At the very beginning of transition, collective situation in these countries was that of generous social policies that were inadequately targeted which lead to the erosion of benefits. (Förster and Tóth 2000) Still, throughout the ten year transition period certain changes and reforms in family policy approach have been implemented in all three countries, which, according to the authors of the abovementioned research, led to the normalizing the percentage of the children living in poverty. If these measures did not take place, many more children would be living in poverty as a consequence of the economic transition and the inflation, and GDP falling that followed the transition. (Förster and Tóth 2000)

Main findings of the research paper prove that through the years of transition, poverty rates and intensity of poverty were higher for children than for the rest of the population. This meant that the specific attention needed to be paid to the families with children. (Förster and Tóth 2000) Although, the authors themselves note that in order to relieve the child poverty, family policy cannot be consisted of only cash benefits, but is heavily dependent on a number of other factors, the focus of their research is the change and the effect of cash benefits. (Förster and Tóth 2000)

Around the year 1995, all the mentioned countries introduced one of the basic changes in dealing with cash benefits for the families, which is the switch from universal coverage, typical for the communistic regime, to means tested benefits. The main concept was to push the wealthier out of the system, which immediately led to the better targeting, all in all. (Förster and Tóth 2000)

² Visegrad Group, Visegrad Four is a cultural and political alliance of four Central European nations – the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. (Visegrad 2016-2018)

Even though it is clear, from the findings of the Förster and Tóth (Förster and Tóth 2000) paper that this particular shift in family policy managed to keep the poverty levels of children in line over the course of difficult transitioning years for the Central European countries, some other findings and articles from the same period of time show that there is still room for improvement in the field of family policy. Tomáš Sirovátka, in his paper on family policies after 1989 in Czech Republic (Sirovátka 2004) accuses the welfare state as being passive and contradictory to the new life-style and the change in values of the people. The emphasis he is giving is the inclusion of women with young children into the labor market and the importance of other policies compiling with this inclusion. (Sirovátka 2004) This notion is not new, and the chapter on family policy in this paper, quotes Esping-Andersen and his work on this matter. Still, modern examples, especially those of countries that Serbia has a reason to look up to, or learn from are of some importance, and will not be overlooked in the following chapters.

5.5.1. Family policy of the Republic of Serbia

The following chapters will shine some light on the main causes of poverty in Serbia, as well as the organizational scheme that allows or prevents Serbia from accepting recommendation and changing its system to accommodate new instruments that are designed to combat poverty. Before all this is made clear, the next few paragraphs will shortly outline the current situation of family policy in Serbia, as an operational measure for future reference.

Family policy in Serbia falls under the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy. With the ministry's jurisdiction is to follow certain law regulations in areas of social protection, family protection, and financial support for families with children. It is then understood that the section of social policy within the ministry will ensure quality social service for all vulnerable and marginalized groups. This is being realized through different strategies that promote equality, support and anti-stigmatization. These strategies include promoting gender equality, millennium goals, poverty reduction, and fertility, as well as strategies dealing with refugees, mental health issues and domestic violence, to name a few. (MINRZS 2017)

Still, the difference between a written strategy and practical implementation of the same is still substantial in Serbia. (Jovanović 2017) There is a lack of childcare facilities for young

children, the employers rarely offer flexible working hours for the parents, and parental and children allowances are a onetime cash benefit that covers only the very beginning of child rearing. (Jovanović 2017) Even though the platform for the development of the family policy instruments exists within the agenda of the government of Serbia, there are several instruments that Serbia is not implementing, as it has been stated. These are the main differences between the EU and Serbia in utilizing the recourses for improvement of children well-being. Previous sections point out exactly to these instruments in service of child poverty reduction, showing certain equivalents, but also pointing out the differences.

Lastly, what separates Serbia from other ex-communistic countries is the specific family traditions, which usually meant that childcare and care for the elderly were done by the family members within a multi-generational household. Strong patriarchal influence was predominant until 1960s when anti-patriarchal trends started to develop, in a more or less suppressed form. (Vujadinović 2013) The turbulent changes over the past couple of decades have clearly shaken up the family structure, and the slow realization of feministic aspects to family policy has rapidly accelerated. With Serbia being excluded from the modern trends due to the civil war and the change in regime, many of the prominent changes within the social policy came rushing in after the 2000s. Culturally and traditionally these changes still present something quite new and different, hence the gap between the ideas and propositions on one hand, and practice on the other. (Vujadinović 2013) Still this should not be an excuse anymore for the halt in expanding family policies, especially if those can contribute to the diminishing of children poverty.

5.6. Competence of Serbian institutions in enforcing change

In order to examine the possibility of the Republic of Serbia as a young European state, striving to join the EU, to accept and follow through certain family policy recommendations in order to diminish the child poverty, it is necessary to explain this country in terms of organizational frame, so that the comparison could be easier. In order to find out if Europeanization aspect can be identified in applying new instruments to reduction of child poverty, certain clarification is needed.

Firstly, there is a need for short elaboration on the backgrounds in terms of historical development and cultural heritage of the Republic of Serbia, so that the current general state of Serbia in terms of possibilities of institutions to deal with the child poverty issues may be presented. This should give a glimpse into the complex organizational scheme that is dwelling between the old and the new state order. Secondly, and more practically, the subtitle on reliability of Serbia's institutions to implement the proposed change is dealing with offering up Serbia's alternatives to Europe's instruments. Understanding the possibility of these instruments to expand and develop is considered important, especially when it comes to accepting recommendations from independent sources.

5.6.1. General state of the matter

Even though the poverty rates in South Eastern Europe grew noticeably since 1980s, it was not until 1990s and the fall of communism that poverty rates jumped up rapidly. The economic crisis, declining of the living standards and in case of Yugoslavia an armed conflict and nation-building attempts led to the severe collapse of public expenditure. (Menchini and Redmond 2006) This meant that the uncertain legitimacy of post-communist regimes, conflicts, and liberalization of markets led to public disappointment in the institutions of the state, contributing to the ineffectiveness of regulation and tax collection, which affected all areas of state activity, including the provision of public and social services. (Menchini and Redmond 2006) *“As GDP declined, so did public expenditure, including spending on social services that children had traditionally relied on.”* (Menchini and Redmond 2006, 4)

Through all this period a constant across the region was that of the role of state in social service provision for children. (Menchini and Redmond 2006) This pattern is important in accessing the ability of the Republic of Serbia and its institutions to accept other policy recommendations. During the 1990s, despite experiencing declines in public expenditure, the state was an important source of the welfare that should not be underestimated. The state formed service provisions and cash transfers which is still what most families with children rely on nowadays. (Menchini and Redmond 2006) Enrollment in basic education and the availability of medically trained personnel are mostly and generally achievable for everyone, even the poorest

citizens. What this means for the ability of Serbia's institutions to be flexible is mirrored in their current advancement.

Important laws and policies have been developed in Serbia, which means that the administratively and legally there are no boundaries to achieving all the proposed goals, of both the Strategy as well as the international recommendations done on a global level. (UNICEF 2007) Still there is quite a visible gap between the development and the implementation of the law. Mechanisms for inclusion, dialog with the excluded population, and the capacities of services providers all lack behind the theoretical idea of poverty reduction. (UNICEF 2007)

As it has been mentioned in some of the chapters of this paper, combating poverty, especially child poverty is a specific task that requires involvement from all state and non state actors, including the willingness of the population itself to participate and contribute to the effective delivery of the policies. Nonetheless, some institutions wear a heavier burden, and need to be much more flexible and determined to implement the possible policy instruments. Institutions, which have an opportunity of attacking the very source and cause of child poverty, are the ones being stressed out in the following paragraphs, since it is their flexibility and current state that can allow for the penetration of other policy proposals.

Education has undergone a specific set of reforms in order to make schools fit for children. Some of the most important changes that are being accepted are also the ones leading to the diminishing of child poverty and social exclusion, and providing an equal chance to all. They present a current state of the educational institutions in Serbia (UNICEF 2007):

1. Revision of education methodology and curriculum, especially for lower grades.
2. Promotion projects for Roma education.
3. Obligatory kindergarten and pre-school education.
4. Creating an enabling and safe school environment and decentralized education based on inclusivity and child rights. (UNICEF 2007)

Despite agreeing and developing strategies and reforms that are oriented towards eradicating child poverty there are still quite a few issues that the government and the Ministry of Education are facing, according to UNICEF reports. (UNICEF 2007) Nonetheless, the institutional opportunity is there, and should not be neglected.

Social Welfare in Serbia is under the governmental authority with the addition of some local and international NGOs providing some sort of support for the children. These NGOs deal with fundraising, and only rarely and within the governmental frames, provide service benefits. The noticeable changes within the social service institutions have been defined as follows (UNICEF 2007):

1. The increasing of cash benefits coverage to the poorest households as well as the increased allowance for persons with disability.
2. Transformation of institutions and promotion of alternative social welfare options, like foster care.
3. Testing of innovative forms in association with the non-government organizations
4. Adoption of the *Family Law*, first official recognition of family violence as a social problem, as well as the recognition of the necessary child protection.
5. Increasing allowance for the carers of persons who are 100 per cent physically disabled. (UNICEF 2007)

Again, besides these important measures included in the social welfare institutions, there are still many challenges in the area that need addressing. (UNICEF 2007) This is why Serbia is still lagging behind some more advanced countries in the region and in Europe, but these flexible and thoughtful adaptations should mark an important step forward.

As far as the direct contemporary EU influence on the Republic of Serbia, it has been noted that all the recommendations directed to Serbia are of economic character, as it is shown in the Economic Reform Programme of Serbia (2017-2019) (Commission 2017), still it is expected that through the goals for improvement of the economic situation the poverty will be substantially diminished. Still as it has been mentioned in previous chapters, Serbia has some concrete instruments that have not lost in their value since 2003 and with the help of EU and exchange of good practice and knowledge, definite benefits could be drawn.

5.6.2. Reliability of Serbia's institutions in accepting the change

Creations of teams and monitoring bodies, as well as the creative input and the inclusion of NGOs alongside with the practical implementing of the Europe's and other policy

recommendation, comes after there has been created a platform for those activities. It is not just enough to create laws and willful changes and arrangements, even though this too is of high importance. Certain background needs to be assessed and established.

Policies that have been mentioned in terms of the Europe 2020 strategy need to have a certain equivalent in the structure of the Republic of Serbia in order for the latter to be able to apply the former's policy instrument proposals. Three policies have been singled out within the Europe 2020 strategy, each of which creates a solid platform for development and poverty elevation.

The first policy deals with the Europe's need for a single market economy. Even though the main focus of EU is to unite markets of its member states, other factors also draw EU's attention in terms of single market economy. Those factors are focusing on technological development and relief in administration, taxes and so on. (Commission 2010) Other two instruments that have been mentioned are on options and opportunities for better targeted financing and expanding the trading possibilities. (Commission 2010) Since the economic and political aspect are not the main topic of this paper, and due to the author's limited knowledge in this area, only brief adaptations from EU's working document on "*Economic Reform Programme of Serbia (2017-2109)*" (Commission 2017) are to be presented, in order to back up the institutional, instrumental and financial (in)capability of Serbia to start implementing policy proposals that target poverty.

According to the Commission assessment of the economic program of Serbia, many reforms that have taken place have proved efficient, but the prioritization should be significantly improved. The Assessment has pointed out key obstacles to growth, employment, competitiveness and social development in Serbia, and even though there are shortages in budgeting and slow administration as well as some fails in energy projects, there is a strong commitment by the government to reform implementation. (Commission 2017) The economic crisis from 2008 has taken its toll on some important reforms that came to a halt, especially those with goals of having more formal jobs, increasing employment, controlling the brain drain and so on. (Commission 2017) Nonetheless, the Commission noted a constant growth over the past couple of years, which could mean a steady economic growth that would ensure a platform for developing strong anti-poverty policies. (Commission 2017) The strategic reforms, as well as the key obstacles are formulated so that the main emphasis is on the smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Finally, these reports show an important characteristic of economic and political layout in Serbia. As it has been mentioned in the chapter on Europeanization (see the chapter on Europeanization concept), this phenomenon occurs once there is a misfit in accepting EU policies either in terms of inadequate institutions or mismatch in policy understanding. (Sittermann 2006) Comparing the two strategies, both the Europe 2020 and the Poverty reduction strategy in Serbia, there is almost no misfit in terms of policy and goals acceptance, partly since the Serbian strategy was modeled in association with EU bodies. Additionally, Commission's economic report shows the strong will of Serbia to commit to the reforms required (Commission 2017) which means that the institutional misfits are yet to be seen, after the reform takes hold. Whether this shows that the process of Europeanization in the aspect investigated in this paper has already happened, or that it largely remains to be seen after Serbia joins the Union, there is no denying of constant and oriented influence EU is having on Serbia. In applying new instruments to child poverty reduction, one can only assume the even steadier growth of Europeanization aspects within the family policy tradition in Serbia.

5.7. Recommendation

Certain considerations about the abovementioned and elaborated experiences of European Union and Commission's specific recommendations, and then in particular the experiences of some of the member states that share historical and cultural background with Serbia, as well as the brief overview of the Strategy that was made in Serbia, and for Serbia should be presented as a comprehensive picture, drawing ideas and findings that could be understood as recommendations for the action of the governmental and non-governmental bodies in the Republic of Serbia. Taking into consideration the particularities of the Serbian state, shaping the propositions and findings so that they can fit the situation could be of importance. The following subtopics deal with certain entities that have developed policies on how to diminish the child poverty.

5.7.1. What can EU teach us?

Few comments come up while rethinking the broad and optimistic goals of Europe 2020 strategy. One of them is connected to the specific initiative to mobilize the youth and through

counseling and guidance help the young enter the job market. The Serbian Strategy recognizes the need for more effective education, and talks about orienting the education towards the need of the market, but there is still no incentive to deal with the post-school youth population. The first chance or some other initiative that would ensure the practical attainment of knowledge for the young people just entering the job market is missing in Serbia's reports and goals. The importance of which should not be neglected since many companies are looking for experience when hiring and without proper training young people do not get the chance at the job they are qualified for. (Matković, Krstić and Mijatović 2015) This recommendation is fairly straight forward and has its own space in the reformation of the education as well as in the development of the free labor market economy that is being established in Serbia.

Second comment and an important recommendation that could be borrowed from the EU, concerns the details of the "*flexicurity*" system. The introduction of women, especially young mothers to the labor market is on the agenda of the Republic of Serbia, but has not yet developed its potential. The experience of some formerly communistic countries in the EU, speaks of the same issue, and of the need of emphasizing the development of the secure and flexible system. Even though this does not, obviously, only concern women, it is they who will benefit the most from having flexible working hours and certain amount of social security.

Third comment is oriented towards the specific EU recommendations on investing in children, and elaborates on a couple of specific policy instruments that seem to be missing from the Serbia's Strategy. Investing in early childhood education and care could have very positive outcomes on the long run, since these investments should be aiming at early intervention in addressing inequality and challenges faced by disadvantaged children. Building on this is the instrument dealing with the empowerment of parents, helping them to develop their parenting skills in a non-stigmatizing way which would also serve as a preventive measure in poverty reduction and would strengthen child protection. Last two incentives that should find their place in Serbia, as well are concerning the child's right to leisure time and his/hers right to voice out their opinion. Access to sports, cultural activities and recreation should be affordable to all children, and it is the state's duty to enable disadvantaged children to participate. Cutting down the access costs to these activities, creating better after-school activities and including local support through communities and volunteers could have a strong impact in preventing social

exclusion and poverty within the children. All these things have been mentioned earlier in this thesis (see the chapter on Child poverty) when talking about the children's perspective of their poverty and the list of deprivations that they themselves are aware of. This additionally proves the importance of children's expressed views, which have to be given due weight.

5.7.2. The ex-communist experience in family policy

Visegrad countries and some of the ex-Yugoslavian countries have gone through the economic transitions much faster and with less 'casualties' than the Republic of Serbia, but nonetheless they still had to experience drastic economic crisis, cut-backs, and struggles to achieve the standard they have now. The biggest issue that some of these countries faced in their try to maintain the social security for the families with children while simultaneously dealing with the transition is the targeting issue. In the times of economic crisis and the general lack of funds, targeting is an important and vital concern. UNICEF's report mentions the same problem in the Republic of Serbia, since the universal coverage in terms of family allowance rarely covers the ones who are in the biggest need. (UNICEF 2007) This specific experience should serve as a guideline in all other policies that the government of Serbia adopts, for as long as the country is lagging behind its mightier neighbors.

Conclusion

Much has been said about poverty, child poverty, deprivation, and social exclusion. Much has been said about consequences, causes, and reasons for falling under the poverty line. There was also talk about poverty lines and income medians and many ways of determining if someone is considered poor, and by whom. Nevertheless the idea of this paper was not to throw its readers into despair and hopelessness at the state of the world, but quite the opposite. As it has been mentioned in some of the previous chapters, ideas are in abundance. Many different organizations deal with this issue and work hard to solve it. Of course it is much easier said than done, and there is a long way from theory to practice. Still, there has to be a start, so why not here.

Modern state of the world with increased globalization, modernization, and Europeanization has brought different experiences much closer. Learning from other's 'mistakes' has never been easier. The examples of good practice, as well as the availability of variety of different research results are at everyone's disposal. It is not on one single person to heal the world, but on divided efforts of many. This paper has hopefully shown certain advantages of the possibility to look up to someone else's work. Main goal of this thesis was *"to find out if Europeanization aspect can be identified in applying new instruments to reduction of child poverty"* and the questions that assisted in finding out the answer dealt with several not so different aspects. The comparison of organizational structure has been elaborated while dealing with the instruments that both territorial entities (Serbia and EU) have to offer in terms of strategies presented. These strategies also talk about goals and present easy comparison of the main ideas and main terms and how they are framed. Certain relevance in these comparisons can be even now recognized and predicted, as some of the recommendations show, while some other application and their value remain to be seen. Both strategies were found to be the most relevant and by observing them together, through different facets, conclusions on definite existence of certain Europeanization aspects can be identified. Still some of these aspects remain to be tested, depending on the development of political and economic situation, and relationship of Serbia and EU.

Social problems as such, the ones calling for action, are usually intertwined and very much dependent on one another. Low fertility influences the security of older generations, high

unemployment brings faults in the market, and then poverty, social exclusion, material deprivation, and so on. Designing just one change for the better, no matter how small, can impact many other things, like the domino effect. This is why strong family policies, this specific concentration on just a household can have immeasurable consequences, like breaking of the unemployment cycle, and improvement in the health of the population. While trying to answer and test out the existence of family policy instruments both in Serbia and the EU in order to “*find out if instruments used by family policy to improve the well-being of children differ between the EU and Serbia*” different topics reviled themselves, intertwining and building upon the idea of family policy. Nevertheless being that some researches as well as some scholarly theoretical work prove the value of family policy in child poverty reduction, the only remaining aspect is the already mentioned difference in approach to family policy such as ‘*flexicurity*’ which still does not have an equivalent in the Serbian means and measures to eradicate child poverty.

While concentrating on the development of family policy instruments in combating child poverty, and indentifying the possible differences and the very occurrence of these events, certain attentions have been given to “*some other instruments with different policy directions that have been identified in order to show a broader concept of battling the child poverty*” These instruments have been shown throughout the research part of the thesis relying on the theoretical background that provided a strong base in understanding what are the causes of poverty and how they can be dealt with. Educational and health policy instruments stand out in the fight against poverty. The multi-faced poverty, gives an explanation to how all these instruments are connected, and how each link is important.

Serbia is a country that struggled a lot in the recent past, and is struggling still in so many ways. There are issues with economic growth, brain drain, social and political reforms and other indicators which prove that Serbia is notably lagging behind its neighbors. Nevertheless, this country has a strong potential and a long history of emphatic social security, which is why it is easy to believe in its recovery if the guidance is right. Serbia’s mighty neighbor, the EU, has certain practices, recommendations and advice to give, but more than that, since Serbia is on its way to join the European Union, these recommendations should speed up the process of Serbia’s growth so that it too can compete with other member states. This is why the research part of the paper concentrated also on how Europe’s notions in the field of family policy and other polices

as well, can be of service to the Republic of Serbia. The very end of this section of the paper, chapters 5.6. and 5.7. deal with the last, third, sub goal which is “*to propose possible recommendations for improving Serbia’s existing policy design*”. In reaching this goal the questions that guided the research discussed the peculiarity of the situation in Serbia, the ability of Serbia’s institutions to undergo certain changes in order to accept these recommendations and what could be the expected outcomes. These outcomes could serve not only in diminishing poverty, which is their main goal, but also in terms of improving Serbia’s situation as a whole.

This paper has tried to test the possibility of family policy, and other policy influences in terms of diminishing child poverty in Serbia and has managed to at least scratch the surface. Practical results are yet to be measured and their success requires time and effort, all of which is yet to be seen.

The main goal of finding out if Europeanization aspect can be identified in applying new instruments to reduction of child poverty has been explored while elaborating on the ability of Serbia’s institutions to accept change. In this regard things seem to fall in their place, though not without difficulties. The intertwined complexities of accession process have enabled Serbia to develop and reform its structural organization under the watchful eye of the European Union, all the while struggling with the economic transition which brings specific issues into focus, along with the need to solve those specific issues. Europeanization aspect in the case of Serbia is to a certain extent unavoidable, but how it is going to be received and implemented is up for discussion, so if the targeting is right and goals firm this aspect can be received in a positive light.

The abovementioned elaboration can be understood very much through the example of poverty eradication policies which undeniably carry Europe’s notions, ideals and goals, which if implemented in Serbia’s poverty reduction strategies will inevitably come to light.

All this is dealing with some sort of predictions and particular time in the future, but the conclusion that could be drawn right now is that the instruments and goals used by family policy to improve the well-being of children do not significantly differ between the EU and Serbia. Reason for that could be the already ongoing Europeanization impact as a consequence of the

accession process or the existing cooperation between different EU bodies and the government of Serbia.

Despite the existence of these similarities, there is still room for improvement. Serbia can still benefit from the examples of Europe's practices, even more so from the examples of some of its member states. The current strategic design in Serbia has been neglected and forgotten in the constant political disputes, fights for power, and instable government. The recommendations that the state of Serbia should rely on, are those that should be in focus of any ruling party unconnected to the popularity points, and to some extent stripped off the political influence.

The current state of affairs in the Republic of Serbia, in terms of the potential and availability of institutions is such that much can be done if there is proper prioritizing of goals, and reasonable targeting. These are the lessons that can be learned and that should be presented as guidelines for any future endeavor when it comes to constructing specific set of policies designed to combat child poverty.

Bibliography

Allen, Robert C. *Global economic history: a very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Bank, The World. *World Bank*. 2018. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/brief> (accessed April 21, 2018).

Barkan, Steven E. *Social problems: Continuity and change*. Flat World Knowledge, Incorporated, 2013.

Bonoli, Giuliano. *The origins of active social policy: Labour market and childcare policies in a comparative perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Bourdillon, Michael, and Jo Boyden. *Childhood poverty: Multidisciplinary approaches*. Springer, 2011.

Bowen, Glenn A. "Document analysis as a qualitative research method." *Qualitative research journal* 9, no. 2, 2009: 27-40.

Bradshaw, Jonathan. "Child benefit packages in 15 countries in 2004." *Children, changing families and welfare states*, 2006: 26-50.

Camp Yeakey, Carol, Jeanita W. Richardson, and Judith Brooks Buck. *'Suffer The Little Children': National and international dimensions of child poverty and public policy*. 2004.

Castles, Francis G., Stephan Leibfried, Jane Lewis, Herbert Obinger, Christopher Pierson, and eds. *The Oxford handbook of the welfare state*. Oxford: OUP, 2012.

Chambers, Robert. "Editorial introduction: vulnerability, coping and policy." *IDS bulletin* 20, no. 2, 1989: 1-7.

Chambers, Robert. *What is poverty? Who asks? Who answers?* Brasilia: United Nations Development Programme, 2006.

Chapple, Simon, and Dominic Richardson. *Doing better for children*. Vol. Vol. 168. OECD, 2009.

Commission, European. *Commission Recommendation of 20.2.2013: Investing in Children: Breaking the cycle of disadvantage*. Brussels, 2013.

Commission, European. *Economic reform programme of Serbia (2017-2019)*. Commission Assessment, Commission staff working document, Brussels: European Commission, 2017.

Commission, European. "Europe 2020: a strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth." *Working paper*, 2010.

—. *Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2010*. Luxembourg, 2010.

Commission, European. *The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion: A European framework for social and territorial cohesion*. Brussels: European Commission, 2010.

Duić, Marta. "Odljev mozgova postao je naša stvarnost." *Poslovni dnevnik*, 2017.

Duverger, Maurice, Vesna Lisičić, and Anđelko Milardović. *Politička sociologija*. Pan liber, 2001.

Engster, Daniel. "Child poverty and family policies across eighteen wealthy Western democracies." *Journal of Children and Poverty*, 2012: 121-139.

ESF. *European Commission*. 10 24, 2017. <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=35&langId=en> (accessed 3 17, 2018).

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. "After the golden age: the future of the welfare state in the new global order." *No. 7. UNRISD Occasional Paper: World Summit for Social Development*, 1994.

—. *Families in the 21st Century*. Stockholm: SNS Förlag, 2016.

Eurochild. *Joint statement on the Recommendation on Investing in Children working document*. Eurochild News, 2017.

Eurostat. "Children at risk of poverty or social exclusion." *Statistics Explained*, 2016.

- Eurostat. "Europe 2020 indicators-poverty and social exclusion." Statistics Explained, 2017.
- Eurostat. *People at risk of poverty or social exclusion*. Eurostat Statistics Explained, 2016.
- Evans, Gary W. "The environment of childhood poverty." *American psychologist* 59, no. 2, 2004: 77.
- Evans, Gary W., and Pilyoung Kim. "Child poverty and health: cumulative risk exposure and stress dysregulation." *Psychological Science* 18, no. 11, 2007: 953-957.
- Förster, Michael F., and István György Tóth. "Trends in Child Poverty and Social Transfers in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland: Experience from the Years after Transition." *Luxemburg Income Study Working Paper No. 226*, 2000.
- Freeman, Richard B. "Globalization of scientific and engineering talent: international mobility of students, workers and ideas and the world economy." *Economics of Innovation and New Technology* 19, no. 5, 2010: 393-406.
- Glossary, O.E.C.D. *OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms*. 2003.
- Gordon, David. "The concept and measurement of poverty." *Poverty and Social Exclusion in Britain. The Millennium Survey* (Policy Press), 2006: 29-69.
- Hoogeveen, Johannes, Emil Tesliuc, Renos Vakis, and Stefan Dercon. *A guide to the analysis of risk, vulnerability and vulnerable groups*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2004.
- Institute, Tarki Social Research. *Child poverty and child well-being in the European Union*. Budapest-Brussels: Applica, 2010.
- Investopedia. *Investopedia*. 2018. <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/black-earth-red-earth/> (accessed March 26, 2018).
- Jovanović, Ana. *Porodična politika*. Belgrade: Pešćanik, 2017.
- Knežić, Branislava, and Mira Lakićević. "Problemi istraživanja u oblasti socijalne politike i socijalnog rada." *Yearbook of the Faculty of Political Sciences/Godišnjak Fakultet Političkih Nauka Beograd* 5, no. 6, 2011.

- Lecerf, Marie. *Peverty in the European Union: The crisis and its aftermath*. EPRS European Parliamentary Research Service, 2016.
- Marlier, Eric, T. Atkinson, B. Cantillon, and B. Nolan. "The EU and social inclusion. Facing the challenges." *The Policy Press*, 2007.
- Matković, Gordana, Gorana Krstić, and Boško Mijatović. *Serbia Income and Living Conditions 2013*. Belgrade: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2015.
- Menchini, Leonardo, and Gerry Redmond. *Child consumption poverty in South-Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of independent states*. UNICEF, Innocenti Research Centre, 2006.
- Mijatović, Boško. *Poverty in Serbia 2014*. Belgrade: Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2015.
- Milanovic, Branko. "A simple way to calculate the Gini coefficient, and some implications." *Economics Letters* 56, no. 1, 1997: 45-49.
- Milligan, Kevin, and Mark Stabile. "Do child tax benefits affect the well-being of children? Evidence from Canadian child benefit expansions." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 3, no. 3, 2011: 175-205.
- Mills, Melinda, Gerhard G van de Bunt, and Jeanne de Bruijn. "Comparative research: Persistent problems and promising solutions." *International Sociology* 21, no. 5, 2006: 619-631.
- MINRZS. *Република Србија Министарство за рад, запошљавање, борачка и социјална питања*. 2017. <https://www.minrzs.gov.rs/sektor-za-brigu-o-porodici-i-socijalnu-zastitu.html> (accessed April 24, 2018).
- Mladenović, Biljana. *Siromaštvo u Republici Srbiji 2006-2016. godine; Revidirani i novi podaci*. Beograd: Tim za socijalno uključivanje i smanjenje siromaštva Vlada Republike Srbije, 2017.
- Potočnik, Dunja. "Mladen Lazić Čekajući kapitalizam." *Sociologija i prostor: časopis za istraživanje prostornoga i sociokulturnog razvoja* 51, no. 3 (197), 2014: 585-588.
- Potůček, Martin. *Public Policy*. Prague: C.H. Beck, 2016.

- Rein, Martin, and Donald Schön. "Frame-critical policy analysis and frame-reflective policy practice." *Knowledge and policy* 9, no.1, 1996: 85-104.
- Ridge, Tess. *Childhood poverty and social exclusion: From a child's perspective*. Bristol: Policy Press, 2002.
- RZS. "Republički zavod za statistiku." Beograd, 2017.
- Sen, Amartya Kumar. *Development as freedom*. Oxford: Oxford Paperbacks, 2001.
- Strategija za smanjenje siromaštva 2003-2009*. Directed by SIPRUnit. 2009.
- Sirovátka, Tomáš. "Family policy in Czech Republic after 1989: From gendered and enforced de-familialism to gendered and implicit familialism." *MAREŠ, Petr. Society, Reproduction and Contemporary Challenges. Brno: Barrister and Principal Publ*, 2004: 97-117.
- Sittermann, Brigit. "Europeanisation-A Step Forward in Understanding Europe." *Nachwuchsgruppe Europäische Zivilgesellschaft*, 2006.
- Srbije, Vlada Republike. *Strategija za smanjenje siromaštva u Srbiji*. Beograd: Vlada Republike Srbije, 2003.
- Townsend, Peter. "A sociological approach to the measurement of poverty - a rejoinder to Professor Amartya Sen." *Oxford Economic Papers* 37, no. 4, 1985: 659-668.
- Trenz, Hans-Jörg. "The Saga of Europeanisation." *Arena Working Paper 7/2014*, 2014.
- UN. *The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action: World Summit for Social Development*. New York: United Nations Department of Publications, 1995.
- UNICEF. *The state of children in Serbia 2006*. Belgrade: UNICEF BELgrade, 2007.
- UNICEF, and United Nations Centre for Human Rights. *Convention on the Rights of the Child: Information Kit*. United Nations Centre for Human Rights, 1991.
- Van Reisen, Mirjam. "Directing EU policy towards poverty eradication: from commitments to targets to results." 2002.

Velminckx, Koen, Timothy M. Smeeding, and eds. *Child Well-being, Child Pverty and Child Policy in Modern Nations (Revised 2nd Edition): What Do We Know?* Bristol: Policy Press, 2001.

Visegrad, Fund International. *Visegrad Group*. 2016-2018. <http://www.visegradgroup.eu/about> (accessed April 5, 2018).

Vujadinović, Dragica. "Family Structure and Civil Society Perspectives in Present-Day Serbia." In *The Golden Chain: Family, Civil Society and the State Vol.6.*, by Jürgen Nautz, Paul Ginsborg and Ton Nijhuis, 260-279. Berghahn Books, 2013.

Walker, Robert, and ed. *Ending child poverty*. Policy Press, 1999.