

## The Importance of Helping Professionals from the Point of View of Economic Theory Development

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### Abstract:

In developed market economies, the importance of the tertiary and quaternary spheres accelerates over the primary and secondary spheres. This is clearly proven by the data of macro-economic indicators such as the largest share in the area of services concerning the gross domestic product and in the area of employment in the economy. An integral part of the service sector is also helping professions intended for the interest groups of the population. According to the original theoretical concepts of Adam Smith and Karl Marx, the classics of economic theory, these professions are not the creators of the wealth of society. Their 'un-productive work' is therefore considered inferior. But the reality is quite different. In particular, the theory of system dynamics and synergetic effect will confirm how these professions contribute to the growth of the quality of life of all society members. The quality of life, as a component of human capital, is one of the sources of stable economic growth.

### Keywords:

helping professional, tertiary and quaternary spheres of economy, human and social capital, economic growth

### Introduction

The division of labour, consisting primarily of the qualitative differentiation of individual jobs, represents an objective basis for the necessary exchange of the results of these various concrete jobs among individual members or branches of society. These relationships of the exchange of work results connect the individual types of work with each other and give each particular kind of work its importance in society. As a result of labour division, a specialised producer is forced to produce goods for other members of society and vice versa. This has created specialised professions and each has its own specific position within the economy.

Economics, as an independent science, has been developed since the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It focuses on the creation and distribution of the wealth of society. However, the concept of such wealth has not been clear since the very beginning of economic science. This is obvious when one looks at many forms and disciplines of economic theory, each with a defined subject of

its own research and its content.<sup>1</sup> There is not just one answer to the question of what economic theory involves. In particular, the history of economic thought, which deals with the evolution of economics over time, confirms the existence of a number of trends, 'schools', and directions. These are often contradictory in their starting points, and even in the definition of the subject of research.<sup>2</sup> This can be seen with the example of helping professions (professional groups of doctors and medical staff, social workers, social services workers, educators, etc.). All of these professions can be clearly integrated into the tertiary sector of the economy. Some of them can even come into the sphere of the quaternary sector, that is, into a sector of knowledge that includes science, research, education, and information technology.

Based on the analysis of economic thinking, which was formed from the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century until its independence within the social sciences in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it is possible to deduce a considerable 'degradation' of all professions of the tertiary sphere of the national economy, including the helping professions. On the other hand, the reality in developed market economies is quite different. This is illustrated, among others, by the statistics of important macroeconomic indicators, such as the growing share of the service sectors in the gross domestic product and total employment in the economy. Employment in the sectors focused on the human factor dimension is also increasing within the service sector. The helping professions also contribute to this. Considering the current prognosis of demographic development, that is, the ageing of the population, helping professions in the field of gerontology will become more and more important.

In connection with the advent of Industry 4.0, social sciences and the humanities are also focusing on changes occurring due to innovation trends. Their interdisciplinary interconnection with technical disciplines has its impact on the quality of services of helping professions. This manifests itself as a result of implemented social policy at the level of the state, settlements, cities, regions, and civil society. As a result of its setting, the comprehensive view of creating a quality infrastructure for the human life of all population groups is significantly accelerated. It can therefore be stated that economic development accompanied by an increase in the quality of life of the population needs to reduce undesirable phenomena on a mass scale. The helping professionals contribute significantly to this.

For the reasons given above, the aim of the article is to explain the concept of essence, genesis, and position of helping professions within the mechanism of market economy functioning. It will be done by using an interdisciplinary approach, especially economic theory, philosophy, and sociology, with an outline of the relation to Christian anthropology. Another objective of the article is to present arguments about the increase of these professions which is happening in order to address the difficult situations of individuals due to pathological social events (illness, disability, unemployment, addiction, loss of self-sufficiency, poverty, social exclusion, etc.). This will be based on appropriate forecasts of demographic development of the population (its aging) with the example of the Czech Republic, linked with the impact of the advent of Technology 4.0.

## 1. Position of Helping Professions and their Performance within the Economy

The most important thing is to clarify what may be considered a helping profession. There is a lack of a precise definition. Thus, it is not generally accepted or even marginally anchored in one of the normative acts. Therefore, not only the discussion opinions differ but so also do a number

1 Cf. Pavel SIRUČEK, *Průvodce dějinami standardních ekonomických teorií*, 2<sup>nd</sup> updated edition, Slaný: Melandrium, 2003, p. 149.

2 Cf. Robert HOLMAN et al., *Dějiny ekonomického myšlení*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Praha: C. H. Beck, 2008, p. 17.

of acts within practical content. As it is not clear who the helping professional is, the systemisation of work with and care for him remains underestimated. According to economic theory, a professional, including a helping professional, is a person who meets two main characteristics:

- 1) the level of work provided by professionalism, manifested in both professional competence and performance;
- 2) paid work with the character of the profession.<sup>3</sup>

If a professional is to be distinguished from an amateur, he must obviously meet both features, not just one. An amateur may be characterised by a component of professional behaviour at most. An employed professional, on the other hand, without proper erudition, dedication, and success degrades himself to an amateur.<sup>4</sup> A helping professional is therefore an individual who has chosen to work in some 'noble profession' such as a psychologist, doctor, social worker, social services worker, that is, a person working in areas where one needs help with a difficult situation.<sup>5</sup>

When measuring labour productivity, the unit of labour is measured.<sup>6</sup> In the case of helping professions (as well as in the case of the whole tertiary and quaternary sectors), the unit of labour is the work which is done by a person (living labour) and is measured by the price of labour, i.e., the wage. An important indicator of the wage level and position of the profession in the structure of society is the comparison of the average or median wage within the national economy. According to statistical indicators, the tertiary sector in the Czech Republic currently accounts for more than 60% of the gross domestic product (which is approximately equivalent to employment in this sector – 58.3%).<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, in 2017 the average wage of social workers was CZK 20,514 (CZK 23,878.4 in the case of social services workers). That is, in both cases, way below the average wage of the Czech economy in that year which was CZK 29,504.<sup>8</sup> In this context, when analysing the valuation of helping professions on the labour market, two questions should be answered:

- 1) What are the causes of the lower valuation of helping professions on the labour market under the present conditions?
- 2) What motivates people to work as a helping professional even in a situation of lower financial evaluation?

The answer to the first question is based on the real position of helping professions as one of the 'interest groups'. In terms of public choice theory<sup>9</sup> (the interdisciplinary relationship between economics and political science), it can represent a group with little bargaining power. This fact is not clearly determined by the quantitative aspect, that is, the proportion of helping professions in total employment in the economy. In the Czech Republic, for example, the share of employment in social care is 7%, which is more than in other services (e.g., in tourism it is 4.7%).<sup>10</sup> One of the main causes lies in the deontological aspects (professional duties), and the area is linked

3 Cf. Vladimír BUREŠ, Řízení intelektuálního kapitálu, *E+M Ekonomie a Management* 3/2003, p. 77.

4 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 82.

5 Cf. Ivan ŮLEHLA, *Umění pomáhat: Učebnice metod sociální praxe*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Praha: Slon, 2005, p. 25.

6 Cf. Eva KISLINGEROVÁ et al., *Inovace nástrojů ekonomiky a managementu organizací*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Praha: C. H. Beck, 2008, p. 43.

7 Cf. Tomáš VOLEK and Martina NOVOTNÁ, Gross value added and total factor productivity in Czech sectors. *Contemporary Economics* 1/2015, pp. 17–28.

8 Cf. Statistická ročenka České republiky 2018. Český statistický úřad, 2018, pp. 300–302.

9 Cf. Dennis MUELLER, *Public choice. III.* 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, xix, p. 768.

10 Cf. Statistická ročenka České republiky 2018. Český statistický úřad, 2018, p. 143.

to Christian anthropology by one aspect, i.e., helping one's neighbour. One's neighbour, that is, a client of social care, is helped by helping professionals to rediscover and maintain a quality of dignified life in difficult situations. For this reason, this category of workers is not involved as an actor in any radical actions, such as striking, to support higher financial reward requirements.

Answers to the second question can be found in some theoretical concepts of personnel management and marketing from the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century which are supported by empirical research in the field of employment, corporate culture, and interpersonal relationships. They confirmed that the main motive is not primarily the financial remuneration of the worker but the appropriate quality of favourable interpersonal relationships with the employer and his system environment. At the same time (at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century), L. Bruni presented a comprehensive relationship between financial income and the subjective feeling of happiness<sup>11</sup> as a critical point beyond which the relationship of 'money – happiness' is reversed.<sup>12</sup> In the spirit of the interpretation of this theoretical concept, the lower level of financial remuneration should be a 'filter' during the process of applying for a job as the helping profession is 'noble' and, at the same time, it is a 'mission'. Therefore, individuals with internal motivation should apply for it. It is the subject of interest of the theoretical concept of personal motivation as an integral part of the theory of social capital.<sup>13</sup> B. Frey holds to this theory within the area of a contemporary new approach. His concept of 'economics of happiness'<sup>14</sup> focuses on the relationship of wealth and satisfaction (an interdisciplinary blending of economics with psychology). With this approach, he monitors if (and to what extent) wealth makes an individual happy, or if (and to what extent) other things are involved (such as helping others in their difficult situations).

Volunteers in social and health services can be considered as a special group of helping professions. They represent a form of human solidarity without wage compensation. The role of volunteers in today's services is supportive.<sup>15</sup> Volunteers complement the work of professionals and improve the quality of life of social and health care clients. Although the activities of volunteers have a legitimate position in modern social and health services (especially residential services), the operation of these services should not be based solely on them. It was the same with people who did alternative services instead of military service. This work was performed by a citizen of the Czech Republic who was subject to official duty<sup>16</sup> (from 1993 to the end of 2004 when compulsory military service was abolished).<sup>17</sup> Alternative services were an option for people who refused to perform basic military service for reasons of conscience or religion. A significant number of such individuals worked as a help in health and social services.

From the point of view of economic theory, the abovementioned groups of volunteers and former 'workers in alternative services' can evoke a question about their activity. Is such activity measurable in accordance with the concept of labour productivity? Since their work is not paid, their performance is not recorded in macroeconomic performance indicators such as gross domestic product. On the other hand, statisticians quantify the annual value of volunteer work (in 2018 it reached approximately CZK 6.41 billion).<sup>18</sup> In order to quantify it, they use the average wage according to the sector of activity. In the case of helping professions, the health and social services sectors are taken into account.

11 Cf. Luigino BRUNI, *Cena nezištnosti*, Bratislava: Veda, 2013, p. 190.

12 Cf. Lubomír MLČOCH, *Ekonomie Důvěry a společenského dobra*, Praha: Karolinum, 2005, p. 140.

13 Cf. Jiří HLAVÁČEK et al., *Mikroekonomie sounáležitosti se společenstvím*, Praha: Karolinum, 1999, p. 26.

14 Bruno FREY and Alois STUTZER, Happiness, Economy and Institutions, *The Economic Journal* 466/2000, pp. 918–938.

15 Cf. Zákon č. 198/2002 Sb., o dobrovolnické službě.

16 Cf. Zákon č. 18/1992 Sb., o civilní službě.

17 Cf. Zákon č. 587/2004 Sb., o zrušení civilní služby.

18 Cf. Statistická ročenka České republiky 2018. Český statistický úřad, 2018, p. 298.

## 2. Primary Analysis and Comparison of Theoretical Concepts of Helping Professionals

Understanding the genesis of this problem is necessary in order to find the essence of below-average remuneration of some helping professionals on the labour market. It has been unwinding itself as a 'red thread' since the independence of economic science with the onset of the first industrial revolution and the modern – industrial – type of society. This is also the key issue that calls for an analysis of the concepts of economic thought that have formed themselves since this period. From the very beginning, economic trends, movements, and 'schools' have evolved predominantly in an evolutionary way.<sup>19</sup> Evolution can be easily traced in individual movements or schools which are linked in the form of theoretical systems. The shift in economic thinking is accomplished by replacing one movement with another. This changes the way in which the questions are addressed. The paradigm is changing, that is, there is a change in the given approach and system of knowledge used in mainstream scientific analysis. In the relevant time period, these approaches and knowledge are made available and the position of the accepted paradigm of theory seeks to identify and analyse the problems of the national economy as a whole but it also examines its components – branches, sectors, and sections.<sup>20</sup> Some cases though are inexplicable from these positions. It is precisely the existence of such anomalies that leads to the search for new approaches. They are the basis for a new paradigm and its supporters reject the mainstream paradigm.<sup>21</sup> The position of helping professionals in the economy is a typical textbook example. In its basis, it is part of the tertiary or quaternary sphere of the economy. From the very beginning, according to the context of economic theory by the classics Adam Smith and Karl Marx, it is considered a part of the 'non-productive sphere'. The starting point for the analysis is the concept of human work. People have been interested in work since ancient thinking. An interesting point was its division into physical and mental, qualified and unqualified.

During the advent of the scientific revolution in the 16<sup>th</sup> century (founded by Nicolaus Copernicus), it was possible to see the division of labour into productive and non-productive. This dual division has brought a question: What is the source of a nation's wealth? The answer to such a question is not clear as it differs according to individual concepts of economic thinking. Mercantilism, an economic practice which prevailed in the field of European economic thought in the period from the scientific revolution to the industrial one, argued that the source of national wealth is foreign trade. Therefore, work in this sector is considered productive. On the other hand, the economic thinking of physiocrats (which was based on the idea of 'natural order' and '*natural law*') considered nature and society to be an organism governed by 'natural laws'. That is why their concept of '*agricultural kingdom*' identifies agricultural production as a source of wealth, and considers only agricultural work to be productive.<sup>22</sup> According to them, land (in connection with labour) is the only productive factor of a country's wealth. A prominent figure in formative economic theory, the Englishman William Petty, is considered the first statistician. In his important work (*Political Arithmetic* from 1678), he presents a confrontation of political and economic arguments with empirical data. In this context, reference can be made to the Petty's method of quantification, that is, determining the quantity of a certain quality while using numbers.<sup>23</sup> This is a procedure based

19 Cf. Paul HEYNE, *Ekonomický styl myšlení*, Praha: Vysoká škola ekonomická, 1991, pp. 146–150.

20 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 158.

21 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 163.

22 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 182.

23 Cf. HOLMAN et al., *Dějiny ...*, p. 17.



on assigning a quantitative symbol to a quality. Using this method, he considered the work of a seafarer to be three times more productive than that of a farmer.

### 3. The Concept of the Dual Nature of Work by Adam Smith as Relevant for the Concept of Helping Professions

The basis of economic life is an effort to make life more pleasant. In this endeavour, one encounters the limitations of the resources provided by the surroundings. Therefore, one has always been dealing with economic considerations which could answer the basic three questions of economics – ‘*What should we produce? How should we produce it? For whom should we produce it?*’<sup>24</sup> At first glance, these fundamental three questions (created by Paul Samuelson) make an impression that economics is concerned only with activities related to the production of material goods and services. As already indicated, this was true at the time of the emergence of an independent economic theory as all material produced goods represented the wealth of society. The proponent of this theoretical concept is the spiritual father of economic theory, the Scottish philosopher Adam Smith. At first, he dealt with a completely different field – moral philosophy. He considered solidarity and charity the basic human qualities. In his opinion, these should be the core of society’s order.<sup>25</sup> This is illustrated, among other things, by his important work *The Theory of Moral Sentiment*. In his book, he sees the basis of all ethics in social sentiment. According to him, the voice of conscience echoes how others judge us.<sup>26</sup>

A. Smith’s major reversal came in 1776 when he published his work *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. This work became a breakthrough in the development of economic science. This year also dates the independence of economics within the social sciences. A. Smith is considered to be the founder – the ‘*spiritual father*’ of economics. However, this work is in contradiction to his position in moral philosophy as its starting point is the pursuance of one’s own individual benefit. From an ethical point of view, A. Smith can be seen as a ‘*moral philosopher*’ and an ‘immoral’ economist.

Within Smith’s concept of economic thinking, human labour, its division, and productivity are a fundamental category of the market economy and its development.<sup>27</sup> According to his concept, if the work results in tangible goods which can satisfy human needs, it is merely productive work (not only in agriculture, as claimed by physiocrats, but also in industry or craft). It is work in the primary and secondary sectors of the economy. According to him, unproductive work was related to the provision of intangible services so it belongs to the tertiary sector.<sup>28</sup> According to the established function of productive labour, he then characterises the division of labour in the production of material goods as a source of wealth and thus the decisive factor in the economic growth of wealth. In the same vein is also his theoretical concept of the labour theory of value. According to this, the value of produced material goods consists of two components which are dead labour (materialised) and living labour. The first component in the form of old value is represented by dead labour where the items are consumed and the equipment is depreciated. The second component – living labour – is a new value. He assumes that the total labour fund is established by society but it does not represent a barrier that clearly limits the size of the product.

24 Paul SAMUELSON and William NORDHAUS, *Ekonomie*, Praha: Svoboda, 1991, p. 24.

25 Cf. Adam SMITH, *Teorie mravních citů*, Praha: Liberální institut, 2005, p. 272.

26 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 303–305.

27 Cf. Adam SMITH, *Pojednání o podstatě a původu bohatství národů*, Praha: Liberální institut, 2001, p. 293.

28 Cf. *ibid.* p. 204.

This depends on how productively labour will be spent. The division of labour is then a factor affecting labour productivity. Labour productivity grows mainly due to several factors which are the growth of dexterity and work skills, the organisation of labour spending, and the improvement and adjustment of tools for work procedures.<sup>29</sup>

Using inductive logic and inductive inference (after analysing the theoretical concept of A. Smith), the position of helping professionals within the national economy can be clearly interpreted. Here they clearly perform unproductive work in the non-productive sphere, and therefore their profession is considered inferior in society.

#### 4. The Concept of the 'Wider' Dual Nature of Work according to K. Marx as Relevant for the Concept of Helping Professions

The German philosopher, sociologist, historian, and economist K. Marx initially (like A. Smith) pursued philosophy. In 1845, together with Friedrich Engels, he developed the concept of the materialistic interpretation of German classical philosophy and dialectical and historical materialism. The transition to the economic issue of Marx and Engels is dated back to 1857–59 when *Grundrisse* (1857–58) and *A Contribution to Critique of Political Economy* (1859) were published. With the aim of a fundamental analysis of capitalism, Marx conceived *Das Kapital*. The pivotal first volume was published during his lifetime (1867), the second (1885), the third (1894) was completed by Engels, and the fourth (Theories of Surplus Value) was modified by K. Kautsky in 1904.

In *Das Kapital* Marx begins with an examination of goods that have utility value (the result of concrete work, with private nature) and exchange value (the result of dimensionless labour in general – an abstract work, with social nature).<sup>30</sup> Following his predecessors (starting with the equivalence of exchange described by Aristotle), he elaborates the theory of working value. He understands this value as a social category arising from abstract work, determined by the amount of socially necessary working time which one spends during the production of goods (taking into account average conditions). Here, value cannot manifest itself as the utility value but only in the interrelation of the goods understood as exchange value. The exchange of goods expresses links between producers through the market. Where other economics sees the relationship between things (exchange of goods for goods), Marx characterises the relationship between people.<sup>31</sup> Connections are amplified by money and capital where human labour becomes goods. The law of value operates – the exchange of goods is done according to values (according to the amount of work embodied in the goods). According to the Marxist concept, the value of goods is given by the capital components intended for the purchase of means of production (constant capital) and for the purchase of labour (variable capital). These capital components of value are almost identical to the concept of value by A. Smith. Moreover, according to Marx, the value of goods contains a component of surplus-value which, as a source of 'exploitation', has become the main focus of Marxist economic theory. In other economic theories, it is considered merely an ideological delusion, a 'fairy tale about capitalism'.<sup>32</sup> According to Marx, surplus value is the fruit of variable capital only as it is capable of value increase. This implies Marx's phenomenon of the dual nature of labour (but only the productive one), namely concrete and abstract labour. Concrete labour

29 Cf. *ibid.* pp. 329–341.

30 Cf. Karel MARX, *Ke kritice politické ekonomie*, Praha: Státní nakladatelství politické literatury, 1953, p. 7.

31 Cf. Karel MARX, *Kapitál I*, Praha: Svoboda, 1978, p. 62.

32 Joan Violet ROBINSON, *The Collected Economic Papers*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964, pp. 7–9.

transfers the value of the consumed means of production while abstract labour creates new value (representing variable capital and surplus value).<sup>33</sup>

Analytical conclusions to the theoretical concept of K. Marx can also be drawn using the same method as in the case of A. Smith. Marx was a fundamental critic and opponent of A. Smith, though, it can be unequivocally stated that they had almost identical views on the concept of work both productive and unproductive. The concept of human labour is broader in K. Marx's work, especially in his productive labour concept. Thus, it leads to the interpretation of the theory of surplus value. As in the case of A. Smith, one can also deduce Marx's 'degradation' of helping professionals in society. According to Marx's interdisciplinary approach to economics, philosophy, and sociology, these professionals would be merely 'savers' of the interests of the bourgeoisie from the revolution which is aimed at eliminating exploitation. The source of such exploitation is the existence of (already mentioned) surplus value. This is also obvious in his ideology directed against the social doctrine and charity activity of the Church which also formed specialised helping professions for the needy.

## 5. Jean Baptist Say – a Theoretical Concept as a Fundamental Turning Point in Economic Theory Relevant for the Understanding of the Importance of the Helping Professions

Both A. Smith and K. Marx were interested in human work. Unlike A. Smith, Marx saw it as an essential element of the labour process. It was understood in this way merely in the area of production of material goods as his style of economic thought was in the dimensions of material production only. In this context, human work, together with work items and means, represented the basic three elements of the work process. He called them the simple moments of the work process.<sup>34</sup> It can therefore be stated that since the advent of the first industrial revolution, human labour in material production has become the subject of analyses. These were initiated by A. Smith and further developed in the work by K. Marx.

In the period from 1803 to 1817 (more than 30 years before the presentation of Marx's economic model), the French classical economist J. B. Say specified the value through the theory of three factors of production. He presented it in his written work, *A Treatise On Political Economy* (1803) and his *Catechism of Political Economy* (1817). These works laid the foundation of the importance of work in all sectors of the economy – primary, secondary and tertiary. J. B. Say followed up on A. Smith, though, he included a number of specifics and differences. These can be seen in the further importance of the focus on utility in economic science. In this context, the value of the product was included. J. B. Say also specifies the production in terms of utility, and therefore fundamentally rejects both the version and the working theories of value according to A. Smith.

The theoretical concept by J. B. Say is a historical milestone in economic theory. Specifically, it is the microtheory of productivity of all factors of production – labour, capital, and land. These factors have an alternative use, that is, they have universal use in all sectors, branches, and professions. However, due to their limited nature, they cannot be used at the same time. This historic milestone opened the door for the interpretation of the theory of work regardless of sectors, branches, and professions. All work in the economy in the production of tangible

33 Cf. MARX, *Kapital*..., p. 62.

34 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 40.



goods and in the area of services provision of an intangible nature provides the wealth of society. This has been illustrated since the 1930s, among other things, by macroeconomic theories within the concepts of aggregate demand and national accounting statistics for calculating the gross domestic product of the national economy.

Say's concept of the three factors of production was defined before the presentation of Marx's economic model. In his model, Marx, among other things, criticised J. B. Say as he did not distinguish between utility and value.<sup>35</sup> In essence, however, the aim of criticism was merely based on Marx's economic teachings and its focus. Marx concentrated on the theory of surplus value which he could only explain in the theoretical concept of productive labour. Such labour creates goods, the 'economic cell of capitalism'.

## 6. The Theory of Human Capital in the Helping Professions Aspect

Almost every person is able to work. However, the quality and amount of work of each individual is determined by his physical and mental abilities. The theory of human capital can be applied to the interpretation of diversity of individuals within the working area. It is based on investing in human resources in order to create skills, to strengthen health, and to promote a universal quality of life. By its very nature, human capital represents the individual's productive capabilities. This concept is understood as basic human capital. In a broader sense, it is about the potential to develop and exercise one's capabilities. The origins of the theory of human capital can be dated to the intellectual environment of the Chicago School of Economics in the early 1950s. This school divided the wealth of society into human and non-human capital.<sup>36</sup> The spiritual father of this theory was a prominent figure in the world monetarist theory, Professor Milton Friedman (awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1976).

Friedman's theoretical concept was elaborated in detail by his pupil from the Chicago school Gary Stanley Becker (in 1992 awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics). Becker's approach is strictly economic. He says that the starting points of all human behaviour are based on the principle of rational choice, that is, maximising the benefits of a stable set of preferences. In essence, it is a generalisation and microanalysis of the rationality of economic man, respectively, the transfer of this principle also into the sphere of non-market subjects and situations or relationships. G. S. Becker views man primarily as '*homo oeconomicus*'.<sup>37</sup> What makes it different is the approach to the study of man. Especially thanks to Becker, economics began to encroach upon the fields of social sciences – ethics, psychology, sociology, criminology, or demography, thus it gained an 'imperial'<sup>38</sup> science status. In addition, G. S. Becker divided human capital into two capital components, namely human (individual) and social capital. Moreover, personal capital is determined by '*habitual*' and '*imaginative*' resources at the same time.<sup>39</sup> Becker's theoretical analysis of human capital is based on the assumption that every individual is an almost universal consumer. His consumption is determined by income while the orientation of consumption is based on his preferences. These are given by the appropriate constitutional and psychological typology of personality, social environment, and customs. Obviously, each individual is not born as an 'unwritten leaf'. He rather

35 Cf. Karel MARX, *Ke kritice politické ekonomie*, Praha: Státní nakladatelství politické literatury, 1953, pp. 19–24.

36 Cf. Gary Stanley BECKER, Investment in Human Capital: A Theoretical Analysis. Investment in Human Beings, *Journal of Political Economy* 5(2)/1962, pp. 9–49.

37 Gary Stanley BECKER, *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education*, Third Edition, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993, p. 390.

38 Gary Stanley BECKER, *Teorie preferencí*, Praha: Liberální institut/Grada Publishing, 1997, p. 350.

39 Ibid., p. 17.

comes into the world with limited experience that he develops in childhood and during his later development. This experience partly influences the desires and choices of adolescents and adults by the creation of habits, routines, and traditions.

G. S. Becker's second 'imaginative' resource of individual capital is the trained ability of an individual not to underestimate the future. This helps him to appreciate future benefits better.<sup>40</sup> Given the fact that the theory of the redistribution system seeks ways to 'decode' human behaviour, it could help develop this component of capital. It is the imagination in a broader context (a kind of perspective on our own and other people's behaviour) which can be a good entry capital into life.

Social capital then determines the influence of other people's preferences in the individual's social environment. The rise in social capital can increase or decrease an individual's benefit. A model example can explain this process. For instance, the reference group's pressure on a teen to start a quality lifestyle increases his benefit. Also, his dependence on the behaviour of others can create various externalities of a positive nature.<sup>41</sup>

For the abovementioned reasons, it is quite certain how the manifestations of the level of human capital in the area of helping professions will influence the human capital of their clients and, consequently, the quality of life of the whole society. This can be seen as a 'circular' movement. Its essence can be applied through the theory of behaviour of social systems, specifically, through system dynamics (formed in the middle of the last century by Jay Forrester), or through synergetics (since 1984). In both cases, the same conclusion can be drawn. It is the required quality of human resources – an internal force which helps to ensure long-term stable economic growth.<sup>42</sup> This is completely in accordance with the theoretical concepts of endogenous growth formed in the 1980s by Robert Lucas and Paul Romer. It is proven that human resources represent an important internal power of economy.<sup>43</sup> This also can justify the importance of investments into the universal support of human life and its quality. An important component of these investments is the abovementioned activity of helping professions in society.

In the spirit of theoretical concepts of human and social capital, a helping professional is an individual who has the appropriate experience and affiliation to a clearly defined organisation. There, he has an important responsibility. Thus, experience, affiliation to an organisation, and responsibility are the factors which distinguish a professional from others.<sup>44</sup> Experience is gained through specialised education and long practice. However, education and practice are generally not accessible to lay people, that is, to those who do not belong to the profession. The affiliation is a part and the assurance of the fact that a person acts as a valid and reliable member of the organisation and advances his skills, knowingly, through qualification improvement. Responsibility arises as a result of the importance of the professional service that the professional gives to others.

## 7. Economic Aspects in the Context of Current Challenges for Helping Professions

The helping profession is rightfully associated with sublimity. It is characterised by nobleness, sophistication, and seriousness. The helping profession is connected to people. This fact also implies

40 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 43.

41 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 36.

42 Cf. Robert LUCAS, On the Mechanics of Economic Development, *Journal of Monetary Economics* 22/1988, pp. 3–39.

43 Cf. Paul ROMER, Increasing Returns and Long-Run Growth, *Journal of Political Economy* 5/1986, pp. 1002–1037.

44 Cf. Angela BARON and Michael ARMSTRONG, *Human Capital Management: Achieving Added Value Through People*, London: Kogan Page Publishers, 2007, p. 240.

the appropriate staff requirements of these professions. The main priorities are in-depth knowledge of human values, human motivation, human behaviour, morality, and associated values. Education in the humanities and social sciences is an absolute necessity and a prerequisite for further professional growth. The qualification of a helping professional is not only a mechanical skill or 'art' that requires talent; it is the result of a combination of two study majors (social sciences and humanities) that stimulate thinking, of the specialised subjects studies in the area of his profession, but also of subsequent professional practice in the helping field. Therefore, the qualification of a worker in the helping professions requires holistic continuous education. This requires, among other things, the advent of Industry 4.0, which will also affect the changing style and organisation of the helping professions. In the context of such changes (such as the trend of digitisation, robotisation, automation, artificial intelligence...), we can also speak of the formation of Helping Professions 4.0. This is logical, because innovation in new technologies will bring a range of social problems. These will contribute to the unwanted or accelerated 'depreciation' of the human capital of some social groups – as in the past, innovation in new technologies has always brought unemployment for certain groups which have not been able to adapt to new trends in the work process. In this context, the helping professions will help to find appropriate employment for such groups of people or will (in the form of professional counselling) reduce the adverse effects on the unemployed and their immediate social environment, the family. At the same time, it acts as a lever in the social economy between the management of a social firm and an employee with specific needs. In addition, within the framework of Industry 4.0, there are (from the point of view of addictology) potential risks of new forms of vice in the form of addictions with the attributes 'digital', 'electronic', etc. Again, the helping professions will have to set up therapies and social work methods in order to help victims of 'electronic drug' addiction. At the same time, the emerging era of Industry 4.0 in the Czech Republic, as in other European countries, is accompanied by the process of population aging. This brings many economic and social changes. It is logical that older groups of people need special care and this is why the higher demand for helping professions focused on gerontology is expected to increase. It is almost certain that a significant acceleration of demand growth will occur after 2035 when the population born in the 1970s will retire. (Thanks to the population policy in the 1970s, an average of 190,000 children was born each year. The peak was reached in 1974 when 194,215 living children were born.)<sup>45</sup> Thus, after 2035, the growth of the number of seniors (as a social group) can be expected to accelerate.<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, the downward trend in the number of the productive group of population (by around 40% by the end of 2100) will be clearly reflected in macroeconomic and microeconomic impacts.<sup>47</sup>

Based on the abovementioned demographic forecast, this will also be related to the appropriate reform processes in the system and organisation of the work of the helping professions. In order to support this reform, it is necessary to apply the principle of subsidiarity, namely services in the area of gerontology. Regardless of the economic and social impacts of an aging population, seniors represent a social group of the population with a differentiated set of factors including health, family relationships, intelligence, lifestyle, education, ethnicity, religion, and socio-economic

45 Cf. Renata KLUFOVÁ and Zuzana POLÁKOVÁ, *Demografické metody a analýzy, demografie České a Slovenské populace*. Praha: Wolters Kluwer ČR a.s., 2010. p. 248.

46 Cf. © Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí: *Evropský rok aktivního stárnutí a mezigenerační solidarity (2012) v České republice* [online]. Available at: <https://www.mpsv.cz/cs/11696>, cited 26<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

47 Cf. Tomáš PAVELKA, *Long-term unemployment in the Czech Republic and the effect of constraints*. 11<sup>th</sup> International Days of Statistics and Economics. Praha, Czech Republic, 2017, pp. 1153–1162.

status. These factors are the reason for a different application of the helping professions when working with the mentioned social group of the population. For this reason, it would seem quite logical (with respect to economic efficiency) to develop a behavioural model and human resource planning for the helping professions in the area of gerontology. A simple moving approach, that is, the flexible up-to-date adaptation to all changes in the system environment (adaptation to the dynamics of legal norms, and the implementation of Technology 4.0) in the provision of social services, can be applied for the model development in the time horizon of 10 years. The output document would be a draft of the programme Human Resources Plan for the Provision of Social Services in Gerontology for the aforementioned time horizon. In essence, it would be a comprehensive plan at the macro level. The method of system dynamics with appropriate simulations based on input variables (i.e., documents of the Czech Statistical Office on the demographic development of population, sectors of health, labour, and social affairs, education, etc.) would be applied. It can be assumed that the end users of this programme will be (in particular) the authorities of the ministries involved (labour and social affairs, youth and physical education, health care...), the Association of Social Service Providers, or other participating institutions of state administration, self-government, and NGOs. The information gathered in this way would create the conditions for appropriate strategic decisions and measures for the right approach of helping professions in the area of gerontology. The potential risk of unavailability of some of these specific services within a city, municipality, region would be greatly reduced.

## Conclusion

Since the last third of the last century (in the developed market economies), the trend towards the human factor has accelerated considerably. The abovementioned theory of human and social capital is developing in parallel with this. The interdisciplinary approach of the social sciences, humanities, cybernetics, and managerial theories has resulted in marginal disciplines. The theoretical concepts of such disciplines are the base for the creation and development of completely new specialisations of helping professionals. The common feature of these professions is human orientation, various interest groups, interpersonal relationships, etc. A typical example is social workers when working with an individual or community. The specific interconnection of these professions is reflected in the fact that these narrowly focused areas are the domain of specialists focusing on the everyday activities of the required standard of quality of life. It is logical, because (in the end, and in spite of all economic, reduction, reorganisation, and financial problems) the central point is a person. He manages the whole process, realises it, and the end result is for him. As a result of the synergetic effect, his quality of life derives economic growth as a part of national wealth. This is also illustrated by the abovementioned theory of endogenous growth by R. Lucas and P. Romer. This theory is based on empirical analysis based on the correlation of investment in human resources in order to support economic growth. In the context of this theory, the helping professionals represent the internal power of the economy; they ensure its growth.

In spite of the fact that the assisting professions are a source of stable economic growth, their valuation in the labour market (this includes especially social workers and social services workers) is below the average wage in the national economy. In this context, the answer to the question of what the motivation is to act as a helping professional was sought during the processing. One of the possible versions of the answer can be found within the interconnection of the theory of human and social capital, precisely through customs, traditions from the family environment,



psychological personality typology, etc. The effect of these factors in the case of the helping professionals is a 'cultivated spirit' of helping, that is, to help the needy in their difficult situation. The situation is similar for volunteers working in the social sphere.

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