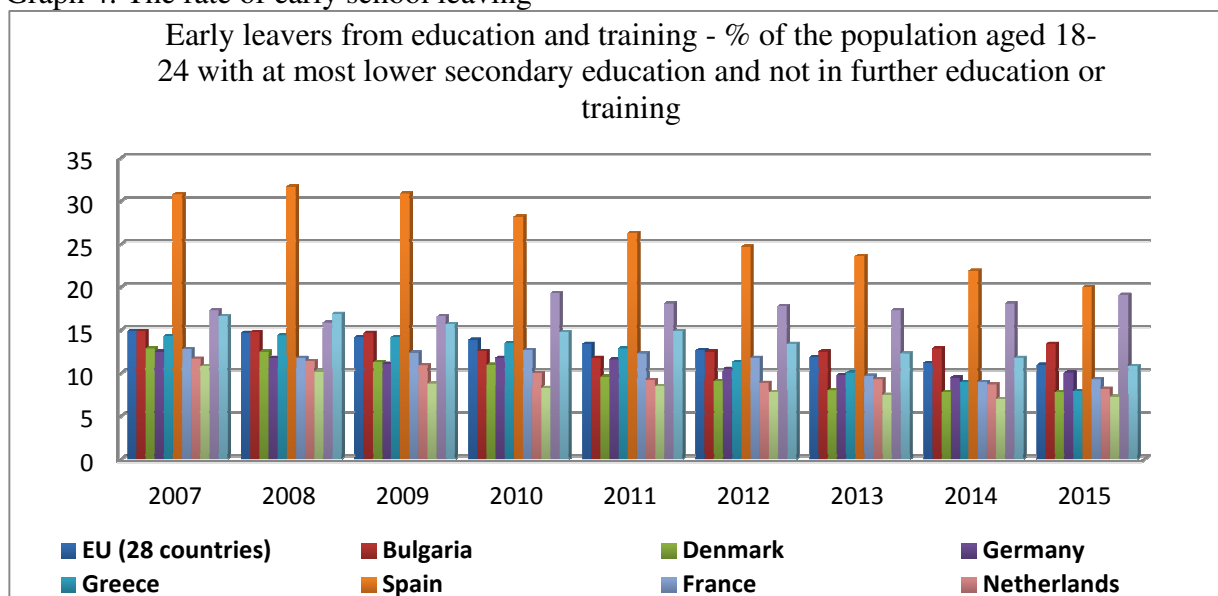


Graph 4: The rate of early school leaving



Source: Eurostat

An interesting behavior occurs in countries such as Germany or Austria. Both countries have an economy with a flexible labor market and an efficient system of apprenticeship and transition from school to working life. However, although they are below the EU average, there are increases in this indicator in 2015 compared to 2014.

Table 2: Participation in third level education

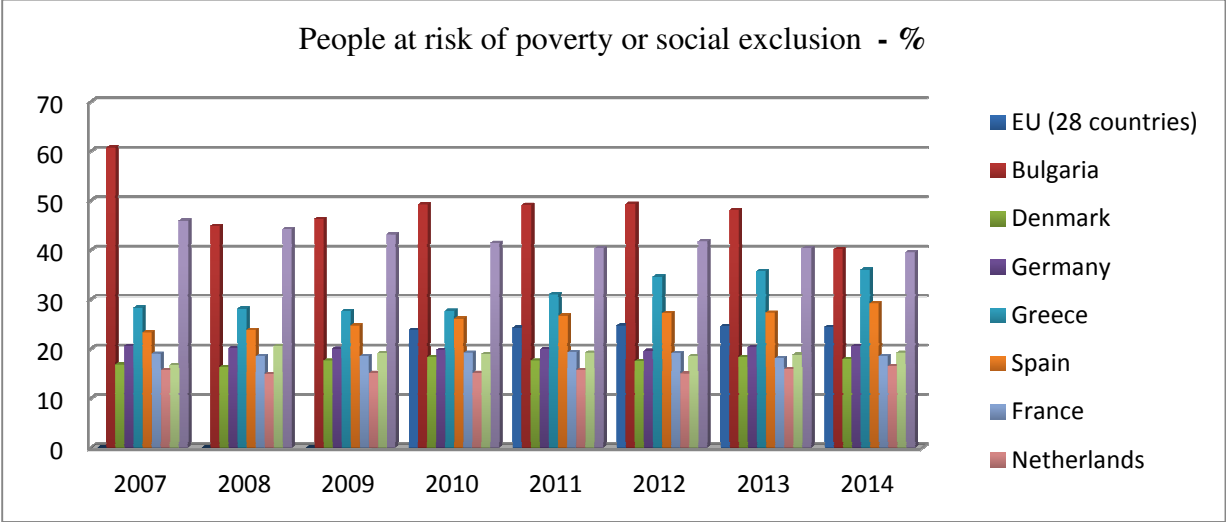
Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
EU (28 countries)	30,1	31,1	32,3	33,8	34,8	36	37,1	37,9	38,7
Bulgaria	26	27,1	27,9	28	27,3	26,9	29,4	30,9	32,1
Denmark	38,1	39,2	40,7	41,2	41,2	43	43,4	44,9	47,6
Germany	26,5	27,7	29,4	29,7	30,6	31,8	32,9	31,4	32,3
Greece	26,3	25,7	26,6	28,6	29,1	31,2	34,9	37,2	40,4
Spain	40,9	41,3	40,7	42	41,9	41,5	42,3	42,3	40,9
France	41,4	41	43	43,2	43,1	43,3	44	43,7	45,1
Netherlands	36,4	40,2	40,5	41,4	41,2	42,2	43,2	44,8	46,3
Austria	20,9	21,9	23,4	23,4	23,6	26,1	27,1	40	38,7
Romania	13,9	16	16,8	18,3	20,3	21,7	22,9	25	25,6

Source: Eurostat

The table above shows that Romania (25.6% in 2015) and Bulgaria (32.1% in 2015) are considerably below the EU average, and far below the average target of the Europe 2020 strategy. The Netherlands, Denmark and France have a substantial rate of participation in third level education, while in 2015 Germany had a participation rate of 32.3% in third level education.

3.5. THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

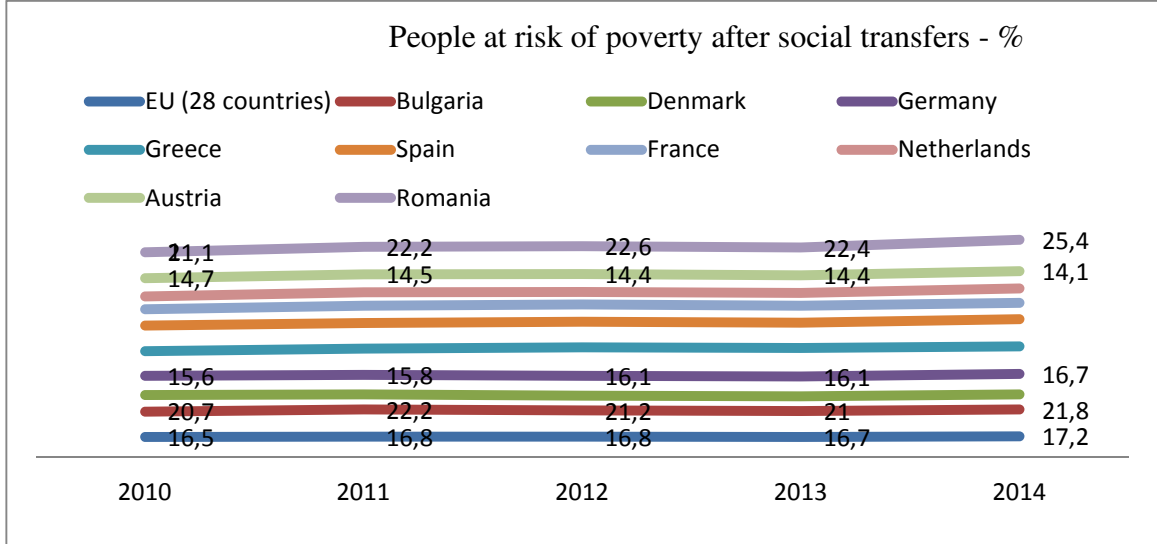
Graph 5: Persons at risk of poverty - % in 1,000 people



Source: Eurostat

The graph above places Bulgaria (40.1% in 2015), Romania (39.5% in 2015), Spain (29.2% in 2015) and Greece (36% in 2015) on the top spots in terms of people in or at poverty and risk of social exclusion. Western states face much lower values in terms of this indicator: Germany 20.6% in 2015, Denmark 17.9% in 2015, and Austria 19.2% in 2015. The efficiency of the social systems has been a constant concern for the Commission because they could catalyze the reduction of development disparities between East and West. Moreover, Europe 2020 strategy pays special attention to social issues.

Graph 6: People at risk of poverty after social transfers

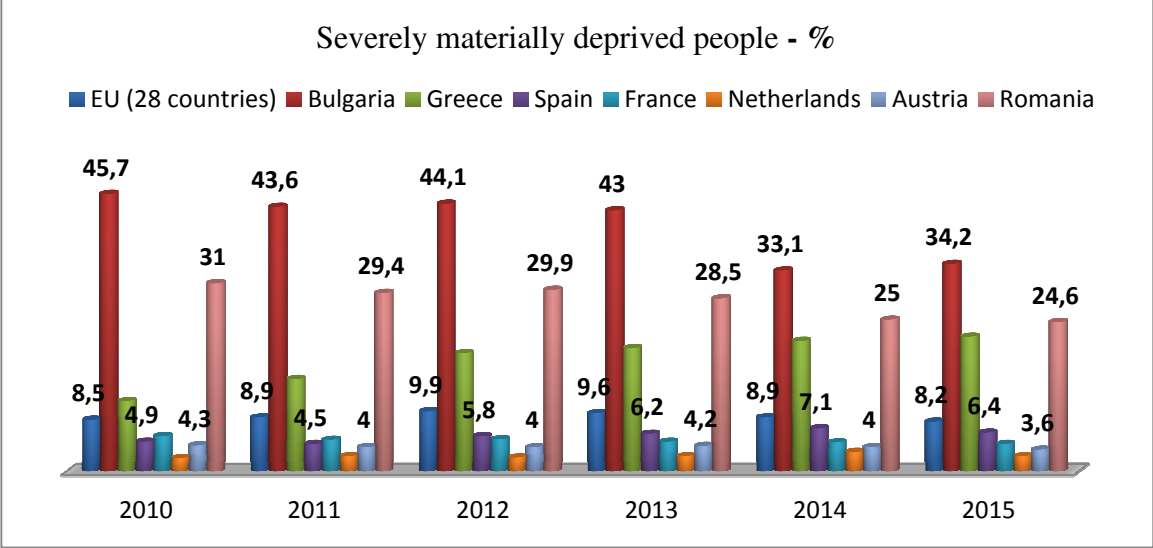


Source: Eurostat

Romania is facing one of the worst social systems in the EU. This statement is based on the fact that 25.4% of people in or at risk of poverty are still in poverty after social transfers. Bulgaria is in a similar situation with a percentage of 21.8%, Greece has 22.1%, and Spain has 22.2%. All states mentioned above were in 2015 above the EU average (percentage value of 17.2%). The situation is different with regard to the Western states, as most are

below the EU average. In 2015 the share of people in or at risk of poverty after social transfers is as follows: Denmark - 12.1%, Germany - 16.7%, the Netherlands - 11.6%, and Austria - 14.1%.

Graph 7: The share of people experiencing material deprivation



Source: Eurostat

Romania, Greece and Bulgaria are ranked at the top among the countries in which people struggle with severe poverty. This is clearly shown by the graph above. In Romania, in 2015, this indicator is 3 times higher than the EU average, 2.7 times higher in Greece, and 4.17 times higher in Bulgaria. The developed countries have a percentage value of this indicator far below the EU average. In 2015 France had 4.5% of the total population in this situation, the Netherlands had 2.5%, and Austria had 3.6%.

CONCLUSION

Europe 2020 is dealing with a 2-gear European Union. Under these circumstances it is almost impossible to establish a universally accepted set of goals. Europe 2020 goals can be distributed as follows: the innovation and environmental part concerns particularly the western part of EU, and the objectives aimed at the social side concern mainly the eastern part. Another element to be taken into account relates to the impact of the goals on the economic and social development. The diversity of the problems between East and West, as well as the fundamentally different needs affects the process of implementing the strategy in a balanced manner.

Analyzing the indicators an integral part of the Europe 2020 strategy is proven that the EU motto - Unity in diversity - is applicable in the case including social and economic environment. The existence of a unified European economy, with flows of global production occurs in a context in which each Member State needs are extremely diverse, as inequalities between Member States are extremely high. There are considerable differences between Eastern and Western countries in most indicators considered in the Europe 2020 strategy. Indicators on poverty, the rate of early school leavers or those concerning the allocations of GDP for R&D reveal the development gaps between the Western and the Eastern states. The only indicators for which the situation is reversed cover the emissions of greenhouse gas and renewable energy production. The Eastern states are closer to achieve the Europe 2020 targets. This situation practically cancels the sustainable recovery scenario underpinning the

Europe 2020 Strategy, revealing the inability to secure a uniform implementation of the strategic framework governing the 2014-2020 programming period.

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