

### **Long Abstract – Monographic Section**

#### **INVESTING IN THE SOCIAL REINTEGRATION CARE FOR DETAINEES: TRENDS AND NEW PERSPECTIVES OF THE ITALIAN WELFARE SYSTEM**

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#### ***Community Work and University. A Best Practice.***

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An agreement signed in 2016 between the Italian Ministry of Justice and the Conference of Rectors of Italian Universities (CRUI) allows the Italian universities to provide community service programs for defendants. The focus of the research is oriented to the unpaid service for the community, called Lavoro di Pubblica Utilità (Italian acronym: LPU), which must consider the specific professionalism and working aptitudes of the worker.

As known, the community service is one of the most typical elements of the probation measure that in Italy is called ‘messa alla prova’ (MAP), outlined by the 2014 Italian legislator (L. no. 67/2014). This probation measure needs the specific knowledge and expertise of Social Work Units at the Ministry of Justice (Italian acronym: UEPE, Uffici di Esecuzione Penale Esterna) to be implemented, but it also requires networking and many resources at local level.

The paper reports some of the results collected by a case-study carried out with a University of Northern Italy, using qualitative semi-structured interviews with community service workers and with academic and social work professionals. Our interviews were conducted with 4 community service workers and 4 professionals and are referred to 5 community service workplaces.

The results confirm that community service is a space of social innovation and a tool able to take the punishment away from repression, directing it towards more effective pro-social practices, oriented to rehabilitation goals. Furthermore, the challenge of implementing the LPU at the university level also enlightens the ability of the formal control agencies (lawyers, courts and UEPE social workers) to virtuously interatoward an inclusive penalty management.

The results are useful to confirm also the need to fight against the “criminal common sense” and the stereotype of the criminal and to confirm the role and the value of the probation measures in the local community.

*Key words: probation, social work, university, community service.*

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