

SOCIAL PEDAGOGY AS THE FOUNDATION OF A NEW SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL PROFESION – SOCIAL EDUCATOR

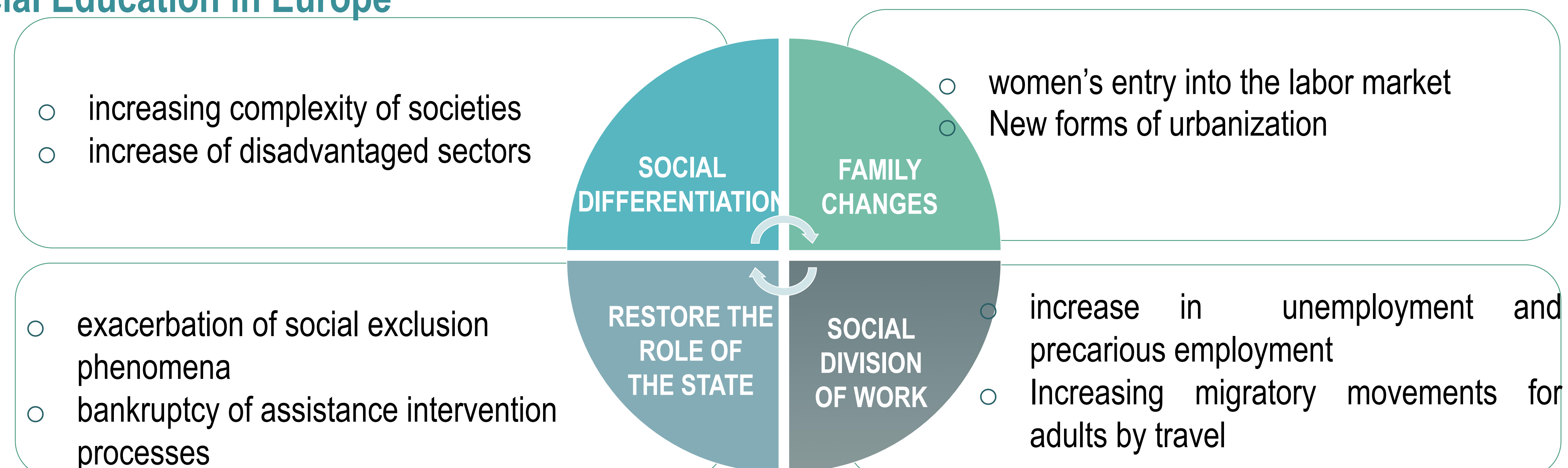
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Introduction

Social Education has recently emerged as a profession in Portugal. This work intends to describe the role these professionals play in developing society and how it finds its theoretical framework in Social Pedagogy. Social Education is a social work imbued with a pedagogical character (educational dimension in society) and educational work carried out in the context of social action (socializing dimension of education). Education constitutes a tool of social participation and socio-educational action and, consequently, of community development. Thus, Social Pedagogy seeks to respond to the potential of society as a factor of social development. Education is not limited only to the school context, extending to all areas of people's life in all dimensions, as essential scopes of the construction of citizenship. Social Education emerged in Portugal through the awareness that social work needed new educational policies, since the forms of traditional intervention / assistance were already reducing the need for social intervention. Through this new polyvalent profession, new methodologies of social intervention are verified in Portugal.

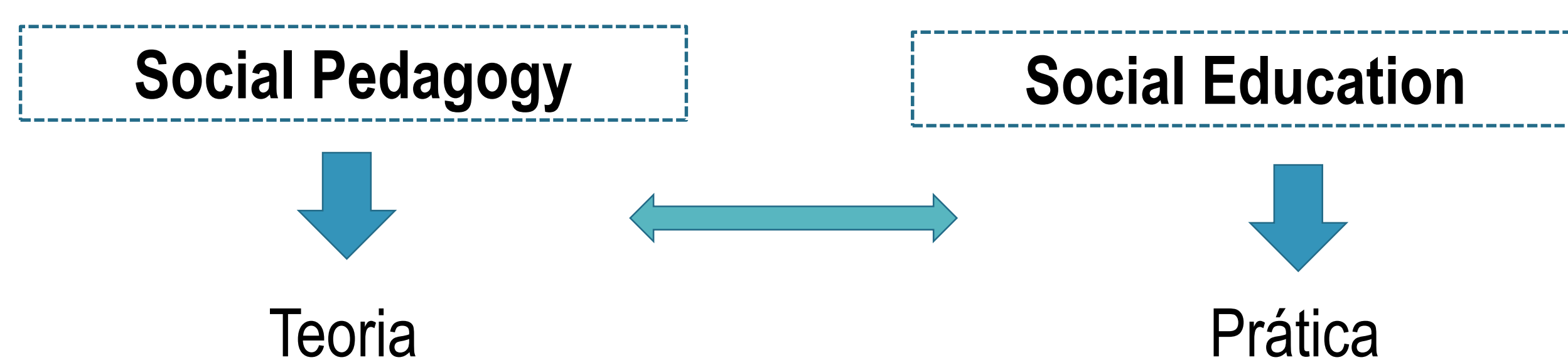
Outbreak of Social Education in Europe



Development of Social Education in Portugal: Social Pedagogy as theoretical matrix

In Portugal, two social professions coexist: social worker and social educator. Social Education developed from Social Pedagogy.

Social Pedagogy		
Epistemological framework	Methodological framework	Ethical framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> field of knowledge that integrates, in an interdisciplinary way, different skills area of knowledge that confers action philosophies oriented towards social participation and opportunities for development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> research-action (participatory) methodologies based on practices methodological models oriented towards a reflection of social and cultural problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> axiological and normative character of the educative action, the educability and sociability of the human being tool for social participation and socio-educational action and for development (community).



References

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A New Socio-Educational Profession – Social Educator

The socio-educational intervention of the Social Educator is part of the conceptual framework of Social Pedagogy, namely for the awareness and defense of human rights and new socio-educational policies, with the valuation of pedagogy of free time and non-formal education and the defense of a new concept of citizenship. From Social Pedagogy, the socio-educative work carried out by the Social Educator becomes more than supporting individuals. It is about promoting the autonomy, empowerment and emancipation of the subject. Social educators create the conditions that favor the right to social integration, through an educational aid and social mediation that respects the subject's individuality.

Social educators carry out their social work from an educational perspective, approaching more humanized and committed approaches. In this way, his professional activity differs from welfare practices, which bind "the assisted to the chains of a chronic subalternity and, in definitive, non emancipatory" (Carvalho and Baptista, 2004: 50). The educational commitment thus gives a new dimension to social interventions. In the multiplicity of roles that it can have, the added value of social educators comes from its pedagogical, technical and human knowledge.

Contexts of action of the Social Educator

The professional exercise of Social Education, located in the convergence between the educational and the social, seeks to help each individual to live in society. The areas of Social Education are, therefore, all those in which the life of the human being is developed. Intervene with populations of all age groups; with individuals and groups with specific problems; prevention, but also in terms of rehabilitation; intervene in open and street environments, semi-closed (eg schools) and closed (prisons, educational centers); intervene in different areas: training, culture, education, job placement, leisure time, adult education, environmental education, specialized education.