CONTRIBUTION REGARDING THE INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY OF POPULATION IN ROMANIA. CASE STUDY: MARAMURES COUNTY

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Abstract. The situation of the children whose parents are gone abroad to work is a recent vast in scope problem but which is less researched and known. The official statistics, although insufficient, notices this matter in order to take measures in favor of these children “abandoned” in the country. It is not known exactly their number, but the negative and positive consequences of their parents leaving abroad to work are well known. Non-governmental organization are those who by studies have initiated the investigations of the children with their parents gone abroad, and have noticed some of the problems arisen, notice which are a good start to resolve “children abandoned” problem.

Rezumat. Contribuţii referitoare la studiul mobilităţii populaţiei în România. Studiu de caz: judeţul Maramureş. Situaţia copiilor cu părinţi plecaţi în străinătate la muncă este o problemă actuală de mare ampoartă ce este puţin cercetată şi mediatizată. Statisticile oficiale, insuficiente, sesizează această problemă pentru a fi luate măsuri în favoarea acestor copii „abandaţii” în țară. Nu se cunoaște cu exactitate numărul acestora, însă sunt cunoscute consecinţele negative și pozitive generate de plecarea părinţilor la muncă în străinătate. Organizaţiile non guvernamentale sunt cele care, prin studii, au iniţiat anchete asupra copiilor cu părinţi plecaţi în străinătate, observând astfel câteva dintre problemele apărute, fapt care reprezintă un bun început în rezolvarea acestor aspecte referitoare la „copiii abandonăţi”.

Key words: migration, school abandonment, integration of the students, Maramures county

Cuvinte cheie: migrație, abandon școlar, integrarea elevilor, județul Maramureș.

At the international level migration is a phenomenon of big importance primarily for the states in course of development regarding poverty and a influencing the investments in them. Migration presents serious challenges for the development countries too, who in order to cover their economic needs became competitive by attracting immigrants, cheap work force.

In the European Union the free circulation of the population has been one of the first rights admitted to the citizens by the corporate low. Once with the liberalization of the citizen circulation, the European Union member states have confronted themselves with specific situation regarding migration, adopting different politics regarding the migration phenomenon.

The migration of the work force has an important role in covering, the needs of Europe an work market. The developed regions in Europe compete in attracting immigrants
in order to cover their economics needs. Reason for which the member states adopt politics in favor of the immigrants in the European Union, meanwhile assuring better and more profitable work conditions.

Having as basis complex and diverse motivation, the migration phenomenon in Romania has started to amplify after 1989. This phenomenon is still kept as a result of a poverty provoked by the transition period that Romania in passing and due to some attraction factors that the West European countries practice. Starting with 2001 year, which corresponded with the elimination of the entry visas in most of the European countries, thousands of Romanians decided to leave the country, in favor of the South and West countries, where they are looking for a better life. The number of people gone abroad is estimated to be over 1,5 million from different regions of the country, in this way immigration becoming a national phenomenon (source: The International Organization of the Work Force).

The phenomenon of going abroad to work is at present three times more intense than in 2002 (source: The International Organization of the Work Force). The most affected geographical regions by the migration phenomenon are the North and the North-West of the country (Moldova, Banat, Crișana, Maramures). In Maramures county 27% of the population is gone, and the number of the children left home with migrant parents is larger in the urban part than in the rural one. From the roughly 75,000 students in Maramures county, 3% have both parents gone and 5% have one of the parents gone to work abroad.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Students with both parents gone abroad</th>
<th>Students with one parent gone abroad</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>1398</td>
<td>3230</td>
<td>4628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>1495</td>
<td>2294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2197</td>
<td>4725</td>
<td>6922</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of Romanians left the country in order to have a financial situation, which allows a decent living, to them and their families. The migration of the Romanian population over the country border in searching of a job involves both positive and negative aspects.

The positive aspects are tied mainly by the rise of the gone population income and of their family left home. In our country the incomes from abroad an used mainly for extends and modernizations their homes, but also for constructions and purchasing of new houses, followed by the purchase of electronic demies, cars and other long term goods. Therefore the national consumerism is stimulated by the expenses on the part of the families of those gone beside the expenses of those who are gone, in their holidays spent in our country. The productive activities financed with the money from migration are different due to their residential environment, in the rural environment money are invested mainly in agricultural activities while in the urban environment money are invested in other types of businesses. At the national level, approximately 10% of volume of every type of investment, in the last years is made with the help of the incomes from the international immigration.
In the last five months of this year the transfers reached 2.9 billion euro with only 13% less comparative to the same period of the last year, when the sum was 3.35 billion euro (source: www.khris.ro).

![Money sent by Romanian immigrants](www.khris.ro)

**Fig. 1: Evolution of money sent by Romanian immigrant**

The main negative consequences of the migration of people due to work are those which have an impact on the family, even though the argument for “leaving” is “a better life for the family”. A lot of families fall apart and those who suffer are the children, but the problem is more severe there where both parents are left, and the children, most of times, are abandoned in the country. In a lot of regions migrations are in masses having as demographic unbalance consequence (the old population are predomination), and even the depopulation of some places.

At the urban level it can see a higher percentage with population who left because of the restructurations in the last years, which affected the entire country. The number of children with migrant parents, left home, is larger in the urban area than in the rural one, and it can be explained not only by the reduced number of jobs, but also by the higher degree of urban student population than the rural area.

Analising, in Maramures county, the situation of the students with their parents gone abroad, can be notice that, in the rural level, a high percentage of this students are in Maramures Depression. The migration phenomenon for this region can be explained by the lack of jobs and the low living conditions. Sighetu Marmatiei city is a nucleus in this region, but doesn’t satisfy the necessary of jobs for the population from Maramures Depression.

According to the latest notifications of the NACRP (The National Agency for the Children’s Rights Protection), institution which holds the role of pursue, this phenomenon in Romania comprise over 82,464 children left home, without one or both parents after their leaving abroad to work. Out of them 26,406 are children come from families where both parents are gone abroad to work; while 47,154 are children who come from families where one parent are left, and 8,904 children are from families where their unique legal
guardian left abroad to work. Almost 2500 of these kind of children are part of a special protection system. A recent study of the Soros Foundation: “The effects of migration. Children left home”, indicates twice a bigger number of children in lower secondary school with parents gone to work. This study indicates the existence of 170,000 students be the medium level with at least one parent gone to work abroad.

![Fig. 2. Situation of the students in Maramures whose parents are gone abroad](image)

The fact that, one or both parents are gone abroad, also present some positive aspects. First of all, can be observe a well-being of the living condition of children which have parents gone abroad. This well-being of living condition has being visible because of the objects they own (cell-telephone, computer, computer games, mp³, player, Ipod). Beyond the material well, being and unlike the other students, the children of the migrants, especially those who have both their parents gone, tend in a larger number to travel abroad, due to their wanting to spend their holidays or to continue their studies.

Between the negative aspects can be mention the fact that the leaving of one of the parents, determines in some cases the deterioration of the relation between the child and the parent who is home. Their situation at school raises problems, the lack of surveillance on the part of the parents and control over the students, lead to symptoms such as depression, the deterioration of the situation at school, absenteeism and even the abandonment of school. Family represent the only support for children when they confront themselves with a problem, especially if it is related to school. Other negative effects which can appear because of this lack of surveillance are the usage of underage forbidden substances
(cigarettes, alcohol), attitude problems, becoming juvenile criminal, including even health issues.

In the families where the mother is left, girl spend a lot of their free time with house activities, sometimes neglecting their school schedule and homework, leading to the deterioration of their school situation. In the rural environment there is a bigger amount of house activities therefore the free time for preparing themselves for school is diminished.

Smaller children are not consulted in their parents’ decision of leaving from home for a period of time, and most of the times they are not informed of the leaving but in the moment when it actually happens, thing that has severe psychological consequences: symptoms of depression and even suicide (for example, the case of the teen year old boy from Ciortesti).

To avoid of severe consequences, some parents have taken their children in the adoptive country, thing which lead to them being retired from the school units. This situation has created a multiple effect on the local and regional communities by: reduction of number of population and demographic olderness; the reduction of the number of school population and ending of didactic activities reflected in teachers loosing their jobs.

The temptation of leaving abroad is a lot bigger there where is already a parent or at least a relative, aspect which determines an interruption of the studies, risk to which especially boys with bad grades are exposed, and if they come from families with smaller incomes and live mainly in a rural area. The migration of students abroad is determined mainly by their missing the parents if they have been gone for a longer period or if it has been a long time since they last saw each other, or if both parents are gone.

The integration of the Romanian students in the new school systems is not easy to achieve. The knowledge achieved in the country at subjects like mathematics, physics is superior to those from the adoptive country, therefore students are integrated in forms with two levels ahead. With all that these, students encounter a lot of difficulties tied to the official language used in the adoptive school and at the subjects like Geography and History of that particular country.

The present financial problems which covered the entire world determines difficulties among the migrants in order to obtain a job. A lot of European States deal with the trouble of unemployment. In the countries where the communities of Romanians are larger (Spain, Italy), the trouble of finding a job is drastic because the recession has affected the activities of a lot of economic fields, especially construction, field where a lot of Romanians work. Under these circumstances, Romanian unemployers are put in the situation of coming back in the country, where problems are similar in finding a job. In this context, choosing to stay in Occidental Europe or coming back home is put under question mark. The reorientation of the strategies on the work market of the member states on the European Union by giving priority to native workers, have negatively influenced the situation of Romanians in those particular communities. Under these circumstances, the Romanian immigrants who have chosen to remain on the territory of those states have as only chance reorientation.
Romanians who unfortunately have entered in the unemployment statistics of different states, have chosen to wait for social support which would afford them a sure source of income for several months. For example in Italy the maximum value of the unemployment dole is between 859, respective 1.032 euro for those who had a grass income bigger than 1.857 euro per month. In Spain the unemployment dole is not bigger than 1.200 euro per month. The low says that after the unemployment expires the state must pay half of its value another 20 months (source: http://ec.europa.eu/social). Others begin to take in consideration the alternative of coming back in the country homing, that the incomes obtain abroad help them to develop a business in our country.

Families who decide to come back to Romania are re-registered their children in schools.

The number of those who re-registered in schools is equals or surpasses the number of those who leave. Reintegration and reajustment in Romanian schools is still achieved with difficulty. Besides the fact that students must give some test for study equivalence, they face difficulties even when they speak Romanian language. The amount of time spent

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**Fig. 3. Destination countries for the students of Maramures**

[Map showing destination countries for students of Maramures]
in another country and the frequent lack or lack in using Romanian language determines disagreement which can lead to mockery on the part of their colleagues and the inhibition of the reintegrated student. Another difficulty of reintegration children in Romanian school is from psychological nature. A lot of students who return and meet the Romanian reality, live with nostalgic feelings regarding the former adoptive places.

Tabel nr. 2. Students retired and re-registered in Romanian schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Students who abandoned school</th>
<th>Students re-registered in school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005 – 2006</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 – 2007</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 – 2008</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Romanian authorities made for the Romanian people leaved in Spain or Italy, campaigns in order to inform them about vacant jobs for our country. But the perspectives have not been propitious because the wages continue to be a lot smaller than the wages they earned in the European Union countries.

Tabel nr. 3. The number of students re-registered in Maramures in 2008-2009 school year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clasa</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>VI</th>
<th>VII</th>
<th>VII</th>
<th>IX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>XI</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>XI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of students</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not even the developed countries found under of migration effect, switch don’t have reasons for too much joy. The birth percentage is very reduced and the population is old. Beside, a lot of people got used to doing only easy works of management and well paid. It is very unlikely that they would hurry towards badly paid jobs, more than that almost 80% of the emigrant incomes are spent on food, clothes and other expenses things, which means rising the sales.

CONCLUSIONS

The migration of the work force abroad constituted basis of the Romanian social transformations. Working abroad is usually a temporary strategy, the majority of Romanian citizen choosing to return in the country beside their families.

The permissive politics of the developed Occidental countries in the European Union favour the orientation of the Romanians towards emigration, even in the context of the present world economic instability. Because of emigration a lot of families have an unsure situation. A lot of children are left in the care of relative or remain with a single parent, thing which affects them, especially the teenagers in a negative way.

Massive migration for work has severe consequences on the local and regional community by the reduction of the population and demographic olderness. But this
Contribution regarding the international mobility of the study population

Migration abroad has a positive aspect too. First of all the incomes of those who leave and that of their families rise significantly, children are offered better life conditions, and the possibility of traveling abroad be it for holidays or to study, the obtained incomes are reinvested in Romania. People who worked abroad have a certain attitude, they are more critical in what the situation in Romania is concerned, but in the same time are more positive about the future. They come with higher critics which favour social status in Romania.

In order to limit the negative effect of migration it is necessary to implement and elaborate public politics favourable to migrants and their children. This politics must help of which children being in a risky situation be identified, and followed parallel to the size of the capacity of social assistants at the local level. Children whose parents are left abroad must be considered in a risky situation.

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