

CONSEQUENCES OF EXTERNAL ECONOMIC MIGRATION

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ABSTRACT: *In order to increase the quality of life, a large number of Romanians chose to go to work abroad, the remuneration received in exchange for the work performed being clearly higher than the ones they would have benefited from in our country. It is obvious, from a financial point of view, a first advantage of this decision. However, it is necessary to mention that the effects of external economic migration have not only been beneficial. Thus, studies conducted on this topic note an increase in the divorce rate, while marriage and birth rate decrease, demographic changes caused by labor migration abroad. Also, the consequences of the Romanian economic migration on the children left at home in the care of grandparents, other relatives or even neighbors should not be treated superficially. Numerous studies have treated this phenomenon from a psychological or sociological point of view, that is why we consider an approach from the perspective of the instructive-educational process to be opportune.*

KEY WORDS: *labor migration, quality of life, demographic change, external economic migration, instructive-educational process*

JEL CLASSIFICATIONS: *I20, I21, J24.*

1. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

1.1. Introduction to migration issues

The phenomenon of migration is widely studied by many researchers in various fields, from sociologists, psychologists, ethnologists, demographers, economists, lawyers, specialists in international relations, etc., including scientists who

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analyze animal behavior, because migration is not only specific human species. Also, this phenomenon is not only characteristic of contemporary society, migration accompanying the evolution of mankind from ancient times to the present day (and will probably continue as long as human beings remain on this planet), people will always try to find a better life. We can assert, in agreement with Vert, that migration "has a deep historical character, manifesting itself differently in space and time, depending on the factors and conditions, concrete, specific from one stage to another and from a place in another" (Vert, 2001, p.76).

According to Raboca and Surdu, the understanding of the migration phenomenon implies defining and clarifying of some concepts derived from it, namely: emigration, immigration and remigration (Raboca & Surdu, 1989, p.86). Thus, by emigration we mean the phenomenon by which one leaves the country of origin for another, immigration refers to the opposite phenomenon by which individuals settle, temporarily or permanently, in a new country. Remigration, which is also called circulatory migration, involves returning to the country of origin.

According to Vert, the term emigration refers to "departures (exits) of the population from a certain area, regardless of its size or taxonomic level." Under normal circumstances, emigration includes only population surpluses and does not bring about essential changes in the demographic structure. In certain situations, caused by various factors, a larger population may be set in motion in the migration process, with demographically significant effects on that community. If the number of those who leave a certain area is extremely large, we are talking about demographic exodus, the most common form being represented by rural exodus - migration from rural to urban areas. The term immigration "defines the migrant population, arriving or entering an area or locality. Immigration in the area of origin, return after a departure, considered at one time permanent or temporary, is called remigration" (Vert, 2001, pp. 76-78).

A classical approach to migration, which involves another form of mobility, namely social, is proposed by Szczeński, who defines social mobility as "the series of phenomena that reside in the movement of individuals or groups from place to place in the social space" (Szczeński, 1972, p.402) Social mobility is therefore an extremely complex phenomenon and with a different content from one stage to another of the development of society, which involves a whole series of other social phenomena.

The migration phenomenon is determined by social and economic factors, having a demographic aspect, but becoming of interest for other sciences such as economics, sociology, anthropology, etc. or being "object of psychological study, both of collective and individual behaviors" (Popescu-Neveanu, 1978, p.448).

In the context of the changes that have taken place in recent decades, topical approaches are proposed to us by many researchers in this vast field and of great complexity. Thus, Sandu considers migration as a life strategy, this being described as "a perspective of the sustainable relationship between assumed goals and means [...] rational structures of action, relatively sustainable at the level of the agent who adopts them" (Sandu, 2000, p.6), while Voicu, in his doctoral thesis, considers that migration can be a form of protest of citizens "in the face of change and abandonment of a society in which they do not find their place and he would like it" (Voicu, 2004, p. 2).

According to Cucu, migration is a "movement in the territory of an individual or a group of individuals, for certain periods of time or not", most often, this phenomenon being followed by the change of job, housing and even lifestyle, because migration involves, in most cases, adaptation to another society and its culture (Cucu, 1997, p.120)

1.1. Determinants and causes of migration

Initiating this approach, to elucidate the term migration, a legitimate question arises: what is the motivation of people to migrate? To answer this question, we must consider several categories of factors (www.romaniaeacasa.ro), such as:

- environmental factors - a situation in which people want to avoid certain areas where natural disasters occur (floods, earthquakes, etc.) or extremely polluted areas;
- factors of a political nature, when it is desired to avoid political persecution or war zones;
- social factors - people migrate for family reunification, to be with friends, for the qualitative increase of their life, from a social point of view;
- economic factors - in this case, the purpose of migration is to find a job, better paid than in the place of origin;
- professional factors, when pursuing training and professional development, career development.

When someone makes the decision to migrate, they can be influenced by rejection factors, which motivate them to leave an area (for example, poverty, disasters and natural disasters, high unemployment, areas of military conflict, etc.) or by attraction factors, which favor choosing a certain emigration space; for example, lightly polluted environment, freedom of expression, efficient economy, personal safety, etc. (www.romaniaeacasa.ro).

According to Vert, the causality of migrations is multiple, between these causes are distinguished:

- overpopulation, a demographic phenomenon considered to be the main cause of migration by most researchers;
- the expansion and development of communication networks can encourage, especially in developed countries, the spread of industry in the territory, leading to labor migration in these highly industrialized areas;
- maritime transport has been the main element of intercontinental migration in the past;
- social causes refer to migrations motivated by political, historical, cultural, religious arguments, etc .;
- cataclysms and diseases can be factors that can motivate mass migration;
- psychological causes; an example in this sense can be represented by the desire of the inhabitants of the plain to live in the mountains (Vert, 2001, p.78) or a quite common situation is that of retired persons who have lived in urban areas for so long. while they were active, later returning to rural areas.

Most of the time, the option for emigration is based on a multitude of causes, so that there are several categories of complex factors and motivations that result in the territorial mobility and implicitly, the social one, of the individuals.

1.2. Types of migrations and populations involved

Taking as a starting point the many causes that determine the mobility of people in the territory, Vert proposes the following taxonomy of migrations, according to the following criteria:

- residential environment; according to this criterion, we distinguish: rural-urban, urban-rural, interural, intrarural, interurban and intraurban migration;
- according to the duration and nature of the trips, there are permanent, temporary (seasonal), rhythmic and diurnal migrations;
- depending on the administrative criterion, we have internal migrations, which take place inside an administrative place and external, when the movement takes place outside a territorial-administrative border;
- according to the number of migrants, we encounter individual or group migrations;
- depending on how it takes place, migrations can be organized or unorganized;
- depending on the purpose of the migration, they can be economic, for tourism, pilgrimage, etc. (Vert, 2001, p.79).

In correlation with the types of territorial mobility mentioned, we can specify the following categories of migrating populations:

- the migrant population is the one that changes its stable domicile, together with the workplace; it ranges from individuals moving from one locality to another, to movements from one continent to another;
- seasonal population refers to the population that travels to work away from home, for a certain period of time or periodically (for example, those who work seasonally in agriculture). Also included in this category are those who travel to spas or recreation, for medical treatment or recreation during the holidays;
- the transitory population is the one that moves for various purposes (work, recreation, etc.) in another locality, different from the one of residence, without changing the basic domicile, for a time interval longer than 48 hours;
- the commuter population includes the population that travels daily from home to the place where it operates; such an example can be represented by commuting workers or students (Vert, 2001).

Another definition is provided by the United Nations (www.oim.ro) which considers the migrant as a person who has lived in a foreign country for more than a year, regardless of the causes or means of migration. Thus, according to this definition, those who leave for a shorter period of time are not considered migrants. However, the social reality requires the acceptance of short-term typologies of migrants

- economic migrant: a person who leaves his / her place of residence in order to increase his / her quality of life (for example, a person who wants to work in another country for a higher income than in the country of origin);
- legal migrant: one who has legally entered a country and settles here in accordance with the admission criteria;
- migrant with illegal status: the person who does not have legal status in the country of transit or destination;

- qualified migrant: he can receive preferential treatment in connection with his admission to the host country thanks to his qualification and professional experience;
- temporary migrant worker: is the worker who remains in the country of destination for a determined period, based on an employment contract. The temporary migrant worker can be qualified or unqualified, also called a contract migrant worker. (Www.oim.ro)

In achieving the objectives proposed for our research, we will consider the external and international migration of Romanians who are looking for a job or working abroad, their children remaining in the country, in the care of grandparents, other relatives or acquaintances (friends, neighbors etc.).

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND POPULATION

As a methodological starting point, the structured questionnaire was considered, thus constructed for each of the social categories involved in the research (children, parents / caregivers of children whose parents work abroad, teachers, local authorities).

In carrying out the research approach, both quantitative methods, with a ascertaining role, were used to surprise the perception of the main social actors involved, but also qualitative methods, which offer us a possibility to analyze the phenomenon in more depth. The two types of methods are not mutually exclusive but, on the contrary, there is a complementarity between them and numerous inferences, which lead to a mutual integration, because „, to increase a research activity, the logical option is from a combination of several methods. , techniques and procedures, thus minimizing methodological risks and maximizing the strength and flexibility of data” (Rotariu, 2006).

In light of the above, it can be concluded that a qualitative approach to research has been made that is at the intersection of a hermeneutic perspective (art of interpreting texts, interpreting languages, culture and history, understanding the whole to understand the parts) with ethnomethodological perspective (emphasizes the use of language, accentuates the way in which people make sense of the everyday world, based on behaviors starting from practical thinking, not logical-formal).

The research on the opinion on the consequences of economic migration on children left at home was conducted between February 2015 and February 2016. The first stage, that of theoretical documentation, was followed by finalizing the research objectives and working hypotheses. Next, the area and population of the research were delimited, the research method was established and the study tools were finalized, respectively the questionnaires were structured for the social actors whose opinion we wanted to capture. The field stage began in September 2015; questionnaires for students, parents (or other representatives of children with parents gone to work abroad), teachers were applied in various schools in the cities of the Jiu Valley. The fourth research tool was applied to the staff of the social assistance services of the Jiu Valley town halls.

It was decided both for the self-administration of the questionnaire in the case of teachers and representatives of local authorities, and for the administration of the working tool with the help of survey operators. The role of the operators was assumed by the teachers, but also by the study owner, who applied the questionnaire to students with parents abroad and the child's legal representatives (the other parent, grandparents or other people in whose care the child is entrusted). This variant of administering the instrument was chosen because we had the necessary support in the school institutions both at the level of the management and of the teachers who offered their support in the application of the questionnaires during the conducting classes and the meetings with the parents. The advantage of this option was, first of all, that the survey operators were able to provide the necessary explanations so as to limit the risk of misunderstanding questions and irrelevant answers, thus obtaining complete data and a wide range of information.

The population of the present research is represented by people from the Jiu Valley, the selection criterion being the availability to participate in this study. After the verification stage of the collected data, 582 questionnaires were validated, completed by the social actors involved as follows: 187 students from middle school or high school, 187 representatives of children, 151 teachers, 57 representatives of local authorities.

After completing the information gathering stage, the analysis of the collected data was used using statistical and mathematical methods recommended for the social sciences, the statistical analysis being followed by the interpretation of the results obtained from the field research.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS

3.1. Positive effects of parents leaving for work abroad

The positive effects identified by students with parents working abroad are primarily related to improving the family's financial situation, but also to the material rewards, gifts and opportunities that have arisen in family life due to the increased budget of parents. This situation was expressed in various ways, expressing the children's satisfaction from this point of view: "since my father left to work abroad, I got rid of debts", "we have no shortages as before", "my father bought a new car", "my parents renovated the house and we have everything", "for my birthday, I received a state-of-the-art phone as a gift" etc.

Another category of positive effects is represented by the child going abroad and visiting foreign countries, which would not have been possible if the parents did not go to work abroad: „I stayed all summer with my mother in Italy, I visited many beautiful places”.

Other positive effects mentioned by the respondents are expressed through the relational and communication context between the family members: "now it seems like my parents don't argue so much anymore", "my father's departure made me get along better with my mother", „, I don't get annoyed like before ”.

From the point of view of the legal representatives of children with parents who have gone abroad to work, most of the positive effects mentioned are also related to material earnings, the purchase of goods and holidays spent in the country or abroad which, before going to work. outside the borders of the country, the family budget would not have supported them.

Teachers mention the same types of positive effects (better financial situation of the family, increase in living standards, accumulated goods, holidays), but emphasize that these are positive results in the short or medium term, but in the long run they could act in the opposite direction.

Positive consequences related to increasing the child's autonomy, the child's appreciation and gratitude for the parent's work, contact with another culture, civilization, change of mentality, remittances sent from abroad that help the national economy are also mentioned.

Some voices, more radical, claim that there are no positive effects (excluding the material ones), as long as the costs related to the child's education are very high: "there are no positive effects, the development of the future adult is conditioned by psycho-emotional balance , emotional intelligence cannot develop harmoniously in the absence of a favorable family climate "," money does not replace love, it only finances".

Regarding the opinion of the representatives of the local authorities regarding the positive effects of the parents' departure to work abroad, the increased income of the family, the material advantages, but also the possibility of ensuring a "better future for children" through financial support are continued. studies by them ”.

3.2. Negative consequences of economic migration on children left at home

The opinion of the subjected students regarding the negative consequences of the economic migration of the parents on the children left at home was illustrated in figure 1.

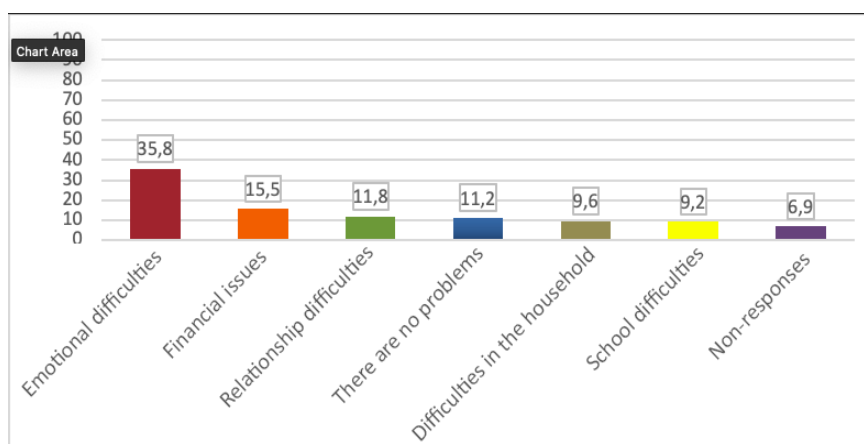


Figure 1. Negative consequences of economic migration on children left at home (%) (student subjects)

More than a third of the students surveyed (35.8%) mention that the main difficulties, related to the departure of their parents to work abroad, that they face are emotional: longing for parents, feelings of loneliness, abandonment, insecurity, sadness, anxiety, fears about parental safety, all expressed in different ways and tones:

- "I need to be the mother next to me, physically and mentally, not just talking on social networks";
- "I am upset, but I am aware that we would not be able to handle the money";
- "the first week is harder, then I start to get used to the lack of mother, this has been the case with us for many years";
- "the hardest part is the holidays or my birthday";
- "sometimes, when I think something might happen to him, I start to cry."

Unexpectedly, financial problems are expressed by 15.5% of the responding students: the parents did not leave with an employment contract and until they find a job, the family is in debt in the country, and the departed parent has great difficulties abroad. Sometimes, leaving involves initial costs (loans) that the family has to pay later; not all those who leave are doing very well, especially since the effects of the economic crisis were also felt in Italy or Spain, the destination countries preferred by Romanian migrants, which redirected the migratory wave to other destinations (eg England).

Another problem related to the departure of parents to work abroad is related to the appearance of relational difficulties (11.8%) which involves affecting the relations between children and parents, but also the deterioration of relations between the parents and even their divorce: „I don't know how to communicate with my mother, I don't even know what to talk about anymore", „my father abandoned his family, in three years he only came home three times", „my father has another family now, with two others children”.

Among those surveyed, 11.2% of students answered that they do not encounter difficulties, having a good relationship with the parent left at home, being supported by him; in other situations, the parents are gone, the children are in the care of their grandparents and “everything is fine” or this is the normality of their life: “I am taken care of by my grandparents, we understand each other well, there are no problems, my parents left ten years ago and they never came to visit me”.

Other difficulties mentioned are grouped in the category of problems arising from the physical lack of parents (9.6%): home care, household failures, time and energy resources allocated for household chores: "I do not even have time to go out with friends".

The school difficulties are mentioned by 9.2% of the responding students: "I don't feel like learning anymore since my family left", "I dropped out of school, I have lower grades", "in the past, my father helped me with math”.

Regarding the opinion of the students' representatives with the parents who went to work abroad, about the negative consequences of the parents' economic migration on the children left at home, this is highlighted in figure 2. Most (19.8%) of the representatives of the students with the parents who went to work abroad (the parent that stayed at home or other people to whom the child is entrusted) answered that there are no problems, the child they represent does not encounter difficulties

related to leaving away from their parents. This option is followed by problems related to the budget (17.7%), here being mentioned the financial problems of the family, but also a surplus of money available to students whose parents work abroad: "too much money in the hands of children."

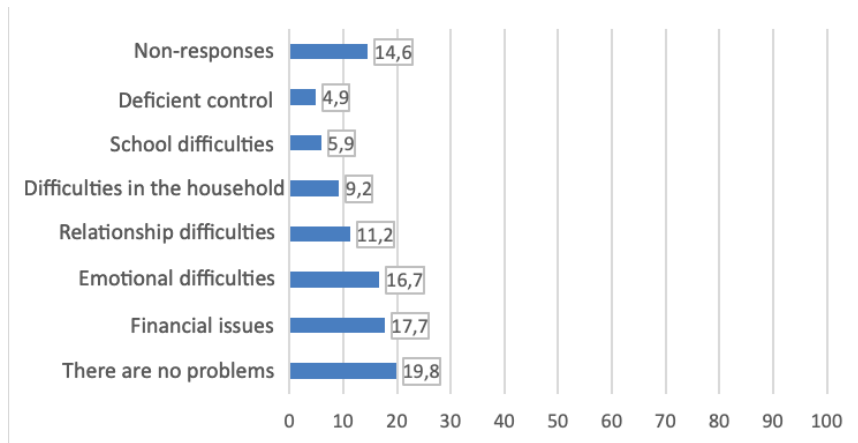


Figure 2. Negative consequences of economic migration on children left at home (student representatives)

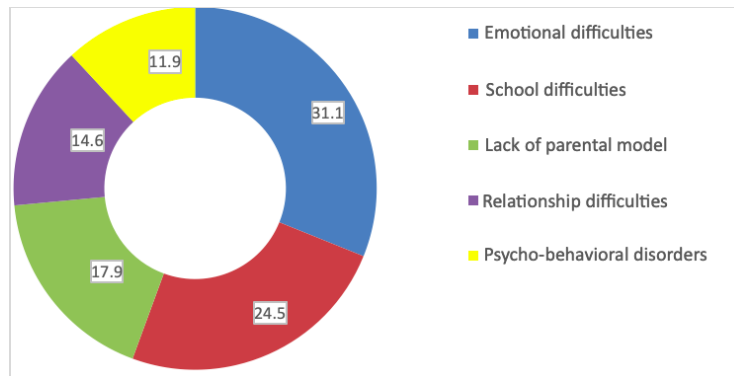


Figure 3. Negative consequences of economic migration on children left at home (teachers)

Emotional problems are reported by 16.7% of respondents, and communication and relational problems by 11.2% of student representatives: "he is no longer so communicative", "he is suffering". This category of respondents also mentions (9.2%) difficulties in managing household chores. Educational difficulties (poor homework, increasing number of absences) by 5.9% and control problems over the child they represent (4.9%) are specified. We also note a fairly high percentage (14.6%) of non-responses to this item. The interviewed teachers express their opinion on the negative consequences of parents' departure to work abroad on the children left at home, as illustrated in figure 3.

The category of affective-emotional problems has the highest share among teachers (31.1%) who say that students with parents who go to work outside the country face a lot of difficulties, such as: anxiety; depressive tendencies; emotion, excessive sensitivity; unfavourable family climate; emotional deprivation; emotional deficiencies; untimely growing up (emotional and social); sadness, insecurity, low self-esteem; low tolerance for frustration.

Almost a quarter of the teachers surveyed (24.5%) consider that students with parents working abroad may encounter school difficulties which are expressed by: increased absenteeism; the appearance of school maladaptation symptoms; decreased motivation for learning; low learning outcomes; increasing the risk of school failure.

The lack of the parental model is another problem faced by children with parents working abroad are about a fifth of respondents (17.9% of teachers).

Also, 14.6% of the responding teachers consider that there are relational and communication difficulties within the family.

Children with parents who go to work abroad are more introverted, have difficulty socializing in the school group and may face psycho-behavioural problems are 11.9% of teachers surveyed: increased aggression, violent behaviour, lack of attitude respect, the use of inappropriate vocabulary, the risk of joining some deviant groups and the development of addictive behaviours (smoking, alcohol consumption, banned substances) determined by the fact that these children have "too much money, spent without parental control", "the street dominates and replaces the family".

The opinion of the representatives of the local authorities regarding the negative consequences of the external economic migration of the parents on the children left at home, can be noticed in figure 4.

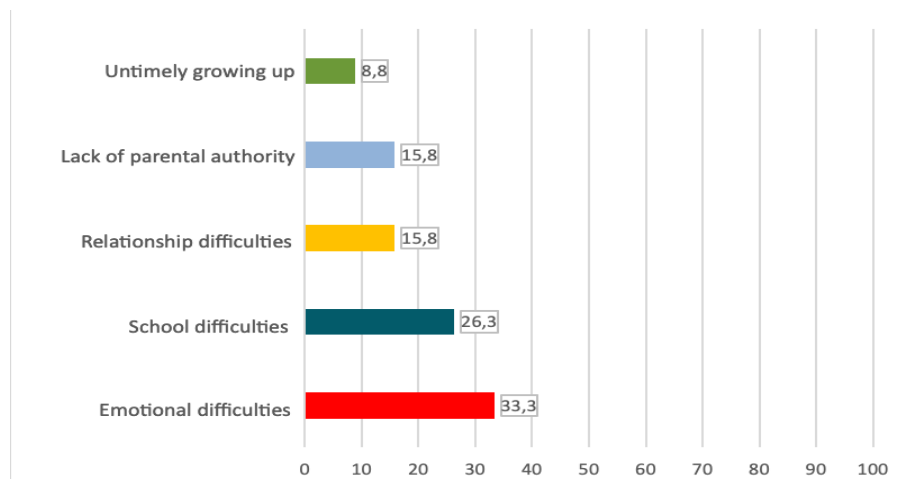


Figure 4. Negative consequences of economic migration on children left at home (%) (representatives of local authorities)

One third of the representatives of the local authorities (33.3%) report the appearance of affective-emotional difficulties in children with parents who went to work abroad, living in an unfavourable family climate, lacking parental love, deprived of moral and social support.

A little more than a quarter (26.32%) consider that these children encounter school difficulties due to non-supervision of school assignments, having poor results in school, losing interest in educational activities.

The social, communication and relational difficulties, but also the problems due to the lack of parental authority are mentioned in an equal share (15.8%) by the respondents who represented the local authorities.

Another negative consequence determined by the departure of parents to work abroad is the untimely growing up (8.8%) of these children as a result of the life situations they face, sometimes difficult for adults.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The migration phenomenon has spread in Romania since 1989, many compatriots going abroad in search of a better paid job, sacrificing family life, sometimes even family existence, with extreme costs for the development and education of their own children. As a result, interest in this issue has grown exponentially, given the consequences of parents leaving for work abroad and leave children (sometimes alone) at home. The number of articles on this topic has increased, in the written press, the televisions have broadcast several reports, studies have been carried out that have identified the effects, but also the needs of the children whose parents work abroad.

In support of these children, whose number is much higher than what the official statistics show, they are trying to find solutions, legislative changes are appearing, various non-governmental organizations are involved in running programs to meet their needs. Therefore, we can say that the effects of the phenomenon of external economic migration are not only among the positive ones and that they imprint, in an unfavourable way, the imprint on the children left at home and, finally, on the whole society. There are also attempts to find solutions to remedy the situation and, in this regard, some measures have been taken and various programs have been launched, but is it enough to save an endangered generation?

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