

COMMUNITY BASED MIGRATION STRATEGIES
OF YOUNG ROMANIANS

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ABSTRACT

The paper will focus on temporary migration for work of young Romanians as a phenomenon that involves a significant part of society and creates consistent effects on the community of origin. This study explores the recent widespread culture of emigration, the motivations for leaving and returning, the values and behavioral changes as a result of "living" migration. The qualitative research methodology includes in-depth interviews, focus groups and case studies, taking as subjects, young migrants and families in Romania and the main destination countries and relevant actors in the host communities. The results indicate a complex picture of migration with the individual, the family, the household and the origin and destination communities as multi-acting factors in this phenomenon.

Key words: migration, young people, community, belonging groups, social capital

STRATEGIE DI MIGRAZIONE BASATE SULLA COMUNITÀ DEI GIOVANI RUMENI

SINTESI

Il contributo s'incentra sulla migrazione temporanea per motivi di lavoro dei giovani rumeni come fenomeno interessante un'ampia parte della popolazione e con effetti costanti al livello della comunità originaria. Lo studio esplora la nuova cultura di emigrazione diffusa, i motivi che spingono i giovani a emigrare e ritornare, nonché i cambiamenti di valore e di comportamento causati dall'esperienza della vita di migrante. La metodologia di ricerca qualitativa comprende interviste in profondità, focus group e studi analitici, impostando come gruppi indagati i giovani migranti e le loro famiglie in Romania, i principali paesi di destinazione e i fattori rilevanti nelle comunità ospitanti. I risultati indicano un'immagine complessa di migrazione con l'individuo, la famiglia, e le comunità di origine e destinazione quali fattori con azione complessa e coinvolgente vari livelli di questo fenomeno.

Parole chiave: migrazione, giovani, comunità, gruppi di appartenenza, capitale sociale

INTRODUCTION

While international migration is far from being a new phenomenon, its current scale, characteristics and effects are unprecedented in Romanian society.

Although young people are the main participants of all relevant forms of migration affecting contemporary Romanian society, this paper will focus on temporary migration for work. This type of migration is the phenomenon that draws the greatest number of persons and produces the most consistent effects on the level of the community of origin.

The migration for work of young Romanians has become a consolidated strategy to pass through the problematic post-communist transition of Romanian society, especially after 1996-1997. During the last years, external migration has developed as one of the defining phenomena of Romanian society, becoming at the same time one of the more significant migratory flows on a European level. Estimations based on the Public Opinion Barometer (2003-2007) data have shown that while in 2003, 12% of the households were affected by migration, in 2005, the figure reached 16%, and in 2007, 41% of Romanian households had at least one migrant or former migrant as a member. Temporary emigration proved to be a "total social phenomenon" (Mauss, 1954), affecting the lives of individuals, of their families and communities, both at the origin and the destination. Most research approaches of the phenomenon favor the economic and demographic perspectives, trying to give content to the "hard" variables (Sztompka, 1993) involved in the construction and understanding of emigration and its effects.

This study aims to describe some of the pieces composing the complex world of "soft" variables involved in individual and group emigration strategies. It explores the newly spread culture of emigration, the motivations for leaving and returning, values and behavioral changes as a result of "living" migration. Alongside this process, a special focus will be placed on the social and symbolic ties between migrants and their groups of belonging (of origin and destination) and the inherent resources associated with these relations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is the result of a multi-level analysis using individual and family stories, groups and community strategies on a background structured by economic, social, and political elements.

The field research used a complex qualitative research methodology, including in-depth interviews, focus groups and case studies.

In each of the investigated destination countries (Spain - in Barcelona, Italy - in Milan and Germany - in Munich and Stuttgart) were conducted 10 in-depth interviews and 5 focus groups with young Romanian migrants (age group: 18-35) and 4 in-depth interviews with key Romanian actors in emigrant host communities (Romanian teachers and priests, representatives of Romanian community associations)¹.

Following the research carried out abroad, an investigation of 6 Romanian representative communities of origin was carried out (the villages in question were: Milcov village in Vrancea county, Nicolae Balcescu village in Bacau county, Cordun village in Neamt county, Moisei and Sisesti villages in Maramures county, Certeze village in Satu Mare county). In each village 8 in-depth interviews were conducted with the representatives of local authorities, priests and teachers and 5 focus groups with the family members of migrants.²

Background quantitative data (demographic, behavioral, values) were provided by the Romanian Youth Barometers 2006-2008, (opinion polls nationally representative for the age group 14-35, carried out by the Youth Studies and Research Directorate), the Public Opinion Barometers 2003-2007 (opinion polls nationally representative for the adult population initiated and financed by Open Society Foundation in Romania) and Community Migration Census in Romania 2001 (initiated and financed by International Migration Organization).

THEORETICAL REVIEW FOR THE BUILDING OF PATTERNS OF TEMPORARY ROMANIAN EMIGRATION

The attempt to identify a theoretical frame suitable for the analysis of the external migration of Romanians has led to the conclusion that a large share of international migration theories approach the phenomenon unilaterally, favoring either one of the levels of analysis (individually or socially) or one of the dimensions of this extremely complex social reality.

The role of the economic factors in the explanation of the emergence of migration flows (in the macro - variant) and of the decision to migrate (in the micro - variant) is also indisputable. The neoclassical theory of economy is an important reference in the category of those motivating the significance of economic factors in determining external migration.

1 The field research in Spain, Italy and Germany was carried out in September-December 2007, as part of the Project *Economic Migration of the Young Romanians*, carried out and financed by the Youth Studies and Research Directorate; the study was coordinated by Ancuta Plaesu and Ana-Maria Dalu.

2 The investigation of the Romanian migrants' origin communities was carried out in November-December 2008, as part of the Project *The Effects of the Economic Migration of Young Romanians, on their origin communities*, carried out by the Youth Studies and Research Directorate and financed by Romanian National Authority for Youth. The study was coordinated by Ancuta Plaesu and Ana-Maria Dalu.

The international migration flows become, according to this theory, the mechanisms of the balance of the internal deficiencies of the labor market on a global level. On the individual level, the decision to emigrate is the result of a process by which the individual rationally evaluates the benefits of international migration. Thus, increase in salary, mediated by the probability of obtaining a job at the destination is compared with the earnings under the condition of remaining in their home of origin (the salary of origin mediated by the probability of getting a job in their place of origin). The costs of travel are also taken into consideration: the cost of the trip, survival in the destination country until a job is obtained, the difficulty of adapting to a new labor market, the effort of learning a new language and of adapting to a new culture, the psychological cost of disrupting old relations and establishing new ones.

The favoring of the economic as the sole factor in the start of migration seems to be, in the expression of Joaquin Arango, the “Achilles heel” in the case of neoclassic economy theory (Arango, 2000). The economic difference between the country of origin and that of the destination certainly is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition to explain such a complex phenomenon. Not only that the actual volume of international migration is far from the predictions of the neoclassic economic theory, but also the number of the countries of origin of the flows is smaller in comparison to the number of the possible ones.

On an individual level perhaps, even more than in the case of the macro-social level explanation, the theory itself raises a series of problems and the most important is probably the assumption of individual rationality as principle of human action. Qualitative studies carried out on Romanian emigrants have shown the image of individuals strongly related to their families, part of strong social networks with symbolic bonds to others, being integrated into functional ethnic communities in the host society. All these elements do not appear in the complicated calculus by which a migrant rationally decides to maximize his income.

Even if we assume the economic calculus as the main mechanism of the emigration decision, the possibility of the individual to comparatively estimate the reward against the human capital between the country of origin and that of destination is debatable. This is a problem especially in the case of those migrants possessing an educational capital acquired at the origin, a capital difficult to transfer into the host society. The problem is partly answered by the elements omitted by the neoclassic economic theory and revealed by qualitative studies. The relational capital of the migrants is the resource that makes the migration experience predictable and which offers models to be followed by the individuals drawn into the network. The information given by other migrants or former migrants diminishes the risks and mitigates the shock generated by such a diverse experience for most individuals.

Therefore, the neoclassic theory highlights the significance of the factors of economic nature in emigration, underlines the importance of taking into consideration the elements which simultaneously act at the origin and at the destination, but it works only partially in the explanation of the present Romanian emigration.

The new economy of migration, related especially to the name of Oded Stark (2005) as main promoter, brings important changes into the neoclassic economy theory, offering consistent elements for the analysis of the target phenomenon. The individual who decided by himself is replaced by the much larger unit of the family or household, and the economic, in its form of differences in income level (absolute or perceived between the origin and destination), ceases to play the fundamental role. Within the frame of the new perspective, the migration decision belongs to the family/household and takes into account not only the maximization of income, but also the minimization of risks. The strategy of minimizing the risks (related to the loss of income, unemployment, etc), especially under terms of the absence or poor performance of the social insurance systems (as is the case in Romania), consists of the diversification of income sources through migration. Migration as a solution is meant to help households overcome the deficiencies of the internal labor market and of the governmental support programs, supplying a supposedly continuous flow of money to the members of the family left at home. Household incomes are no longer considered in absolute (as in the neoclassic variant), but by comparison to the level of the community of origin. Migration ceases to be only the effect of the differences of development between the countries as reflected in salary disparity. The household income status within the community of origin can act as a stimulus for migration. As a result, one of the important consequences of the phenomenon at the community level is the increase of the probability of migration within the households without migrants because of the rearrangement of the positions in the incomes distribution and the amplification of relative deprivation.

Although the explanatory and predictive capacity of this theory for the Romanian emigration phenomenon is considerable, there are aspects and stages of this phenomenon that are also omitted by the theory. The rational calculus of diminishing the risk under the terms of the imperfect operation or non-existence of stable markets is difficult to accept as a hypothesis for the migration decision in the initial stage of the process when the risks and costs associated to international migration (especially in its clandestine form) are high. Involvement of Romanian households in a strategy of risks reduction by sending one of its members to work abroad (and integration of the money received as a constant budget source) was made at the moment of reduction of the costs of the migration (as a result of the development of the networks), i.e. is in the maturity stage of the flow. Also in this stage the relative deprivation acts as a stimulus for emigration.

The emigration gradually and cumulatively enhances deprivation of the origin households which do not include migrants, the effects appearing in the advanced stages of the phenomenon. Thus, the new economy of migration offers rather a post factum explanation, leaving unexplained the initial stages when emigration was not a behavioral alternative at the community level. Although the theory has moved the emphasis from isolated individuals to family/household, it no longer follows the family emigration strategies which frequently lead in the advanced stages, to the reunion of the family at the migration destination. Although the self-defined status further remains as a temporary emigrant and the intentions of return to the country of origin exist, the attainment of a financial balance is often followed by bringing the partner and children to the destination country. This fact, as well as the better integration into the host society produces a growth of the consumption and a diminution of the remittances to the main household from the country of origin. These developments in the advanced stages of the phenomenon change the relations of the emigrants with the country of origin and the host one, exceeding the problematic field of reference theory.

A structural perspective on the factors of emigration offers the theory of the segmented labor market, developed at the end of the 70's (Piore, 1979). Focusing exclusively on factors from the area of destination, the theory asserts that international migration is the effect of the labor demand from the developed countries. The essential element is the existence of a dual labor market, including a primary and secondary sector. The primary sector is mainly characterized by stable jobs, good work conditions, generous benefits and the possibility of upward mobility. The secondary sector is characterized by unqualified and unstable jobs, hard or dangerous work conditions and limited possibilities of upward mobility. Native workers avoid employment in the secondary sector due to the instability of the jobs, low salaries, low status and prestige associated with these positions. Transformation of the secondary sector into an attractive one for the indigenous labor by rise of salaries is not a solution for employers while it implies, in spite of the occupational hierarchy that associates salary with prestige and status, increases in chain across this hierarchy. The result would be the general increase of salaries which leads to structural inflation. While the labor demand in the secondary segment was previously done internally by women, teenagers and the rural migrant population, the social and demographic changes related to these categories have substantially reduced their hiring potential in low paid, unqualified and unstable jobs. Within this context, immigrants become the labor force which can successfully solve (from the employer's point of view) the crisis, without entailing the negative consequences of structural inflation. There are many aspects of the immigrant's situation that make even the most unattractive jobs acceptable. Thus, no matter how

small the salaries are, it is probable that they would exceed the level of the ones from the country of origin. Moreover, the immigrant, at least in the first stage of his living abroad, is not inserted into the society of destination as a reference unit. As a consequence, the social prestige and status of reference are those from the society of origin. This theory, without being an authentic theory of migration, supplies interesting explanations for the occupational opportunities of emigrants on the European markets, answering in a certain way the public debate about emigration and the fundamental fear that immigrants become the competitors of natives in taking their jobs. The theory leaves unanswered the questions regarding the motivation for emigration, the individual and family evolution of emigrants as well as their relations to the society of origin and of destination.

The development of economically active ethnic migrant communities, and the studies dedicated to them, have brought shade on the theory of dual labor market by the identification of a third segment: ethnic (economic) enclave associated with the companies, property of immigrants (Portes, 1997). The peculiarity of the enclave consists of the combination of characteristics specific to the primary and secondary sector, creating new opportunities of mobility for immigrants and allowing the use of their previous investment into the human capital (Portes, 1997), both characteristics being absent in the secondary sector, but present in the primary one.

It is difficult to assert the development of such enclaves in Romanian communities in Europe, still, Romanian emigrants with enough capital and entrepreneurial abilities have developed businesses (especially in the field of construction) which employ mostly Romanians. In addition, the community networks activate when needed as informal networks of labor recruiting in local communities from the country so that a renewal of Romanian labor takes place by sustained immigration. Even if the Romanian community from Italy and Spain is consistent from the point of view of volume (in Italy being the most numerous community of immigrants), its recent existence, cultural and linguistic affinity of Romanians with host societies, as well as the socio-demographic structure of temporary Romanian emigration, are not elements leading to future development of such enclaves.

Another frequently cited theoretical model is the cumulative causality, rather more a perspective on migration than a theory. It approaches international migration as a cumulative process on the level of the causes and also of the supporting factors. The works of Myrdal (1987) on dynamic/cumulative causality are at the origin of this idea, further processed and applied in the field of present international migration by Douglas Massey. The key idea is that by its nature, "causality is cumulative by the fact that each act of migration alters the social context in which future (subsequent) decisions are taken, in a typical way that makes additional migra-

tion actions more probable" (Massey, 1990). Therefore, it is a dynamic perspective that places migration in the category of self-sustaining processes, becoming established through the mechanisms they generate.

In Massey's approach, factors involved at combined levels (individual, family, household, community, region of origin and destination) are responsible for the cumulative character of international migration.

The culture of migration is maybe one of the most interesting contributions of the theory of cumulative causality. The main assumption is that migrants' tastes and motivations change as a result of their experience in the industrially developed countries. The individuals assume the "habit" of a life style (including the level of consumption), which is hardly sustained upon returning to their place of origin, increasing the likelihood of a return to the previous destination (the case of circulatory migration).

What are the associated values and what is the relationship between these spread values and the migration growth at community level? These are questions for which this study tries to find answers.

Migrant networks represent one of the favorite themes of literature dedicated to contemporary international migration (and not only international). Ten years ago, within a discussion on the theories used in explaining the migration, Arango remarked: "Few things, if any, are as characteristic for the contemporary way migration is approached, as the central attention granted to the migration networks..." (Arango, 2000).

Migrant networks designate "the sets of cross border interpersonal ties connecting migrants, return migrants, and non-migrants through kinship, friendship, and attachment to share place of origin" (Levitt, 2001, 8).

As a theoretic perspective, this approach tries to integrate the separate elements into a unitary construction based on the centrality of the networks in migration explanation and on pointing out the dynamic and cumulative character of migration. The revealed image is one of the interconnected spaces: the space of origin (most frequently considered in the form of community) and of the destination space (mostly addressed in the form of ethnic community of immigrants). The social and symbolic ties set up the relations, supplying the potential migrant access to information, support in finding the most secure and cheap arrangements to overcome the interdictions of entrance into the destination country, support in finding a job and a dwelling and, eventually, means of living for an initial period of time, plus emotional and social support. The migrant networks which have reached maturity increase the accessibility of migration as a strategy (from the point of view of resources they entail at an individual or household level), diminishing the selectivity of the field. Any event of migration, by inclusion of a new member into the network, increases the probability of the appearance of a new similar phenomenon in the future, widening the circle of those who have access to

the network resources and increasing them at the same time. Some authors assert changes at the level of the individual motivation, migration becoming an imitative behavior or meant to maintain the group's cohesion.

Within the frame of this theoretical model (of migrant networks) there is a distinct institutional approach, more recent, according to which the development of the institutional level of a migratory flow (individuals, companies, NGOs), combined with existence of migrant networks, grants the process independence against the environment. These elements are fundamentals upon which its self-sustaining feature is based. For the phenomenon of Romanian emigration, this direction of study does not seem productive because the formal institutional dimension is less developed, poorly exploited and non-functional for a significant percentage of Romanian emigrants.

The approach of emigrant networks as a form of social capital in emigration (Massey et al., 1998) proved to be the closest theoretical perspective to the specificity of the phenomenon of Romanian emigration for work.

Comparing to other related theories, the benefit of using this model is the consideration of migration as a process developed between two systems (the origin and destination one) interconnected in a dynamic relation. Placing the emphasis at the meso level – so called by Thomas Faist (2000), also provides the model the possibility to overcome the limits of some approaches that reduce everything to individual factors or, on the contrary, to societal structural factors.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ROMANIAN EMIGRATION

Romania is not a country with a tradition in international migration. Compared to the historic and scientific references of such nations as Jewish, Armenian, Greek, Italian or Irish, Romanian history of migration registers only a few quantitatively limited migration flows.

The end of the Second World War outlined the Romanian political emigration. This first wave, formed almost entirely of vehement opponents of the political regime, was followed by a second one which started in 1960-1970. Taking advantage of the apparent and relative openness shown by Ceausescu regime to the West, individuals with professions valued in the USA or Western Europe (engineers, constructors, doctors, researchers, artists) legally or illegally migrated without returning to Romania until after 1990. After a period of relative prosperity and openness towards abroad, following the apparently pro-west position of Ceausescu's regime, the end of 70's marked a period of physical isolation towards the West. Practically, external migration was limited to isolated cases: departures with work contracts for Arabian states (rarely for Western countries), touristic trips to the member states of the Warsaw pact, short official journeys to neighboring countries for commercial purposes (the so-called frontier traffic). All these forms of

temporary migration were closely regulated and monitored by authorities. The only form of definitive external migration was either the departure with the state agreement (for the persons considered “unwanted” - disidents or opponents of the regime), or illegal departure (illicit crossing of the borders or demand of political asylum during a visit abroad). Any form would have taken the departure from the origin country, this action was considered to be blamable, having consequences for the individual and his relatives such as stigmatization and also direct repercussions.

After 1989, the Romanian emigration system was affected by structural changes. Opening of the borders with the fall of the communist regime led, at the beginning of the 90's, to the first postcommunist external emigration wave, this time a final one, composed especially of individual of German ethnicity who were willing to join the reunited Germany, being attracted by the policies of support drawn up by the new German state. During the same period, smaller flows of emigration with ethnic determination were to Hungary and Israel, under similar conditions. In the middle of the 90's, the final migration was especially concentrated towards the USA and Canada, countries with specific policies for receiving emigrants – highly qualified specialists. One of the results of the departure of qualified specialists was the fall of Romania's research system and the small payment perspectives as compared to the qualification.

The living conditions in Romania have dramatically fallen during the mid 90's, and temporary emigration as a survival strategy started through short distance moves to border countries like Hungary, parts of former Yugoslavia, but also Turkey and Austria. The main targets of these movements were small trade and temporary work. After 1996-1997, the temporary emigration flows for work became significant, and after the year 2000 they have become a diffuse, mass phenomenon, spread at the level of the entire country. The emigration flows, although unstable, have concentrated upon Italy and Spain - other frequent destinations being Germany, Great Britain, and Portugal.

THE STRATEGIES AND TRAJECTORIES OF EMIGRATION FOR YOUNG ROMANIANS

After 1990 the official external migration registered explosive growth (reaching 4.2‰ of inhabitants), gradually decreasing to the year 2002 (when values of 0.37‰ were registered), and afterwards rising slightly to 0.65‰ for the year 2006.

But temporary migration, the most consistent form of migration, is largely illegal, meaning it is not declared and consequently difficult to measure by traditional means. An important segment of temporary emigrants work an indefinite period, most often without legal status, in the underground labor market of the countries of destination. Employers agree with this form of occupa-

tion because salary costs are lower and emigrants accept these wages, being generally interested only by the level of the effective income, self-defining their status there as a temporary one.

Though the emigration is initially defined as temporary, its duration is difficult to specify. Besides, the characterization of a migratory action as temporary or final is difficult to be made at the moment of its happening. That is generally why a reconstruction of migration is needed after a period of time, beyond which it can be catalogued. A frequent form of the temporary migration of Romanians is the circulatory migration which implies successive departures and returns, in case of which the duration of each cycle varies, depending on the opportunities of occupation (in both the community of origin and that of the destination), accumulated incomes and family strategies.

The emigration volume is therefore impossible to formally register; the limited number of legal emigrants adds a much higher number of Romanian “tourists” in the space of Western Europe. Alternative sources of data are public opinion polls, which, during the period 2003-2007, gathered data regarding external migration among households in Romania.

The community census of migration, carried out in 2003 in villages and small towns (under 20,000 inhabitants) in Romania, showed an incidence of temporary migration at approximately 19‰ for rural communities and of 25‰ for small towns, the numbers showing the ratio between the total number of temporary emigrants and the reference population. If we appraise the evolution of these rates after the evolution of estimations based on the Public Opinion Barometers data, the rates of the actual phenomenon in 2007 are much higher (while in 2003, 12% of households were affected by migration, in 2005, that figure reached 16%, and in 2007, 41% of Romanian households had at least one migrant or former migrant). In order to show the inefficiency of the traditional means of the registration of Romanian migration and subregistration of the phenomenon, we can mention that during the period 1990-2002, the ratio between the number of emigrants estimated by the public opinion polls and the one registered in the official statistics is 10:1 (Voicu, 2005).

It could be assumed that the second half of 2008 brought a slight decrease in the volume of temporary emigration, due to the problems of the labor markets in the main countries of destination. The opinion polls in 2008 also showed a decrease in the intensity of Romanians' intentions to emigrate, as a result of the same unfavorable evolution of the European labor market.

Romanian Youth Barometer 2008 registers convergent data with the polls on the adult population. Approximately one third of young people have in their family a former or current migrant working in a foreign country, and 12% of those polled have worked abroad themselves. As for young people, 30% of them intend

to leave the country for work and another 10% are considering this option, without being decided whether to do it and when. Young people who express the strongest intent of working abroad belong to geographical regions which are significantly affected by poverty, are inactive in the labor market and are not enrolled in any form of education. This profile, together with the main reasons of their intention to emigrate, show as an apparent and obvious cause of emigration, the impossibility to satisfy the material needs within the country. The role of economic factors in the explanation of the emergence of the decision to migrate is therefore indisputable. But the qualitative studies carried out on young Romanian migrants, their families and communities reveal a complex determination that exceeds the individual level of analysis of the phenomenon and a strong community determination of the temporary migration, during the entire development of the process. According to the Romanian migrants both in Italy and Spain, the decision to emigrate was itself fundamentally influenced by the personal relations to other migrants. Having relatives abroad strongly favored the orientation toward emigration. The whole image of “living abroad” was built through the personal, family and community emigration experiences. The core of the phenomenon of Romanian temporary emigration is represented by the community structured social relationships (Sandu, 2006).

Identifying the destination of migration is, in most cases, the result of social network (family, friends, colleagues, neighbors etc.). A possible job is also identified through social relations, the main problem being the transportation cost to the host country and start-up money, which generally comes from acquaintances or relatives.

Romanian migrants usually gather in the same area, at first living together in an apartment or even a room, in order to cut subsistence costs, as well as for the opportunity to have access to the information resources of the other group members.

The main jobs that Romanian migrants can occupy depend on gender: thus, jobs for men are especially related to construction and agriculture, while women work mainly as housekeepers, nurses, maids, baby-sitters, and waitresses. There are also young people who work in computer science, medical nurses, teachers who often work as intercultural mediators.

According to the findings of the representatives of Romanian associations in Italy and Spain, more than half of migrants work without a legal contract, employers being interested in this kind of condition because they pay significantly less taxes.

Links with the family back in the country are quite strong, especially in the first period of adjustment, given the multiple opportunities of communication. In general, those who have left support their relatives who seek to migrate, both financially and relationally.

The savings of migrants are, in most cases, directed

to Romania, initially for supporting the family left behind, and then for investment in the rehabilitation of housing and durable goods.

Free time is very limited; work takes priority, many Romanian migrants acknowledge that they have no free time, as they work on Saturdays and even on Sundays.

The relations with the host community members are usually good but formal, generally of good neighborhood and mutual aid, as long as no financial costs are involved.

Meetings with other Romanian migrants outside the close group are occasional and brought by major events (weddings, christenings, holidays, etc.). Interpersonal relations are particularly linked to relatives who were brought there from the country of origin. Qualitative data show a widespread culture of sociability limited to the groups of belonging (family, relatives, friends, community based relations). The emigrants having successful trajectories are usually well integrated into social networks outside the groups of belonging.

The Romanian Church in the destination communities has an important and complex role, fulfilling not only the spiritual needs but also the needs for information about the host society. Churches have adapted to these needs by setting up facilities for displaying the bids and offers on jobs and housing. Priests and other institution members are involved both in providing general information, support through counseling and organizing school activities and the education of children by teaching classes of Romanian language, history, culture and civilization. Church is the meeting point of Romanians, the place where they can learn both the local news and the news from home.

The study on families with at least one migrant member (The Gallup Organization, 2008) reveals both the positive and negative effects of migration on the family left at home:

1. raising the living standards (families have a better financial situation than before);
2. changing the family structure (separation leads to a break that can result in divorce);
3. changing the roles in family (overload and reversal of roles, such as taking the parent's role by the oldest brother or sister, who in turn will neglect his/her school activities);
4. cultural exchange (the parents come back with a new mentality, which may influence the family environment);
5. emergence of various problems regarding the children.

In 2007, official figures provided by the National Authority for Child Protection indicate a total of 82,464 children whose parents were abroad for work. This figure is significantly underestimated, as the assessment of the survey data reveals a figure two times higher than that of the official statistics, taking into account only the children registered in the classes V-VIII. Thus, at the end

of the 2006-2007 school year, both estimates based on children's statements and those based on statements of principals of the 200 schools in the sample, show that 16-18% of middle school students had at least one parent working abroad, which in absolute figures represents about 170,000 out of the nearly one million students enrolled in V-VIII classes.

Out of these, about 35,000 have both parents abroad, 55,000 have only the mother and 80,000 have only the father abroad.

Qualitative research of migrant families left at home also reveals that the main positive effects of this situation are related to the welfare of pupils whose parents work abroad. In most cases the migration of parents increases the standard of living of the child left at home. As other studies have shown, income from abroad is used mainly to improve housing conditions and home appliance endowment.

Beyond material wealth, children of migrants, particularly those with both parents abroad, tend to have a higher rate of trips abroad as compared to other children.

Although the migration strategy at the time of departure usually involved a period of stay estimated at 1-2 years, the moment of return is always postponed. The original intent of most migrants is to earn money in a short period, enough to achieve certain specific objectives in the country of origin (buying a car, improving living conditions etc.), but after integration into the host system, working abroad is extended on a long-term basis. The migrants acquire the "habit" of a life style which is hardly sustained in the area of origin, decreasing the probability of their returning and increasing the probability of a return to the previous destination (the case of circulatory migration). Local lifestyle leads to changes in the consumption behavior of migrants which lowers their savings. Over time, the new behavior becomes permanent, getting used to the new lifestyle and radically changing the initial plans and strategy of the migrants.

Young people return to their country during holidays, when they have the opportunity to compare the two - departure and destination - environments, thus realizing the benefits offered by the country of destination. Facing local bureaucracy again, the systemic problems in Romania but also the significantly higher prices of commodities, contributes decisively to the permanent postponement of the return.

For those with reunited family, the education and social offer in general, as well as children's perspectives, makes the desire to return the country to wane significantly.

Integrating children into education systems of the countries of destination is an important barrier to the return to the country. The children, once integrated into the host educational system, find it difficult to readjust to the Romanian system, which is more complicated in

terms of requirements and demands; the facilities offered to children in the destination country (access to sports fields, swimming pools, health care, after-school programs, etc.) is an additional argument in favor of remaining.

The desire to return to the country of origin appears to be stronger among those in the adjustment period, while in time, the return becomes conditioned by important changes to be made in the Romanian social system. The choice of emigration itself is post-factum motivated by the migrants, by their desire to be taken into account by authorities and to live in a civilized and well established environment.

Along experimentation and interaction with the institutions in the country of destination, the requirements towards Romanian authorities crystallize, clarifying the necessary changes in the country. The migrants express significant social criticism as a consequence of their living abroad. They are more aware of their rights as citizens, more critical of the local authorities and more concerned about corruption in the country.

The main result of the qualitative study of the migrants' families is that this emigration culture was diffused to the members of the origin community, sporadically changing the local civic and political culture. The migrants' family members are more critical of the local council representatives, policemen and local authorities in general. They are also more interested in European issues, broadening their area of concern.

CONCLUSION

The general image of the temporary emigration of young Romanians for work is one of interconnected areas: origin area (mostly considered to be family and community) and destination area (as the migrants' host community), both in a functional, permanent relation.

The study carried out on young Romanian migrants, their families and communities, reveals a determination of the migration that exceeds the individual level of analysis of the phenomenon and a strong community background, during the entire development of the process. The whole image of "living abroad" was built through the personal, family and community emigration experience, the study showing a widespread culture of migrant sociability limited to the groups of belonging (family, relatives, friends, community based relations).

The migrants express significant social criticism as a consequence of their living abroad. They are more aware of their rights as citizens, more critical of local authorities and more concerned about corruption in the country, this new emigration culture being diffused to the members of the origin community, sporadically changing the local civic and political culture.

MIGRACIJSKE STRATEGIJE MLADIH ROMUNOV
OSNOVANE NA BAZI SKUPNOSTI

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POVZETEK

Migracije mladih z namenom najti delo v tujini so postale zelo pogosta strategija za prehod iz problematičnega obdobja postkomunistične tranzicije v romunski družbi. Namen te študije je raziskati mehanizme in značilnosti tega obsežnega pojava, ki zadeva mlade, njihove družine in skupnosti. Glavni cilj je opisati zapleteni svet družbenih in simbolnih vezi med migranti in njihovimi pripadajočimi skupinami (v državi izvora in destinacije), prav tako kot tudi s temi odnosi neločljivo povezana sredstva.

Študija je opravljena s pomočjo kompleksne kvalitativne raziskovalne metodologije; zajema poglobljene intervjuje, raziskave fokusnih skupin in študije posamičnih primerov. Raziskovane skupine so: mladi romunski priseljenci v najpogostejših ciljnih državah (Španiji, Italiji, Nemčiji, Združenem kraljestvu in Portugalski), družine migrantov, pomembni akterji v izvorni skupnosti migrantov (romunski učitelji, duhovniki, predstavniki organizacij romunskih skupnosti) in predstavniki lokalnih oblasti tako iz države izvora kot iz ciljnih držav. Osnovne podatke (socialne, vedenjske, vrednotne) so zagotovile javnomnenjske raziskave Romanian Youth Barometer 2006–2008, ki jih je izvedel direktorat za študije in raziskavo mladine v Romuniji.

Rezultati kažejo na kompleksen splet razlogov za izseljevanje: te najdemo na ravni posameznika, a tudi kot družinsko odločitev sprejeti migracijo kot rešitev. Kultura migracije je prav tako vnesena v skupnost izvora preko drugih priseljencev ob njihovi vrnitvi. Poleg tega na odločitev vpliva socialni kapital v ciljni državi, ojačanje relativnega pomanjkanja v gospodinjstvih brez izseljencev in nedoslednost negativnega statusa.

Ta kumulativna vzročnost razkriva posameznika, družino, gospodinjstvo, skupnost izvora in namembne države, kot dejavnike, delujoče na več plasteh pri pojavu migracije. Splošna podoba tega pojava je podoba med seboj povezanih področjih: področje izvora (predvsem se sem uvršča družino in skupnost) in ciljno področje (t.j. skupnosti migrantov v ciljni državi), v stalni medsebojni funkcionalni zvezi. Elementi v ozadju so gospodarske, socialne in politične razmere, ki ustvarjajo kontekst za migracijo in vplivajo na vedenje posameznika.

Ključne besede: migracije, mladi, skupnost, pripadne skupnosti, socialni kapital

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