

# THE DEMOGRAPHICAL ASPECTS OF MIGRATION

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## **Résumé**

Les problèmes démographiques et migratoires sont étroitement dépendants : les mouvements des populations influence dans le même temps les faits économiques et les structures sociales, soit dans les pays de départ soit dans les pays d'arrivée. Les coûts des migrations sont encore difficiles à estimer.

**Key terms:** Migrations, demographic processes, number of population, motivations of migration, fertility.

## **A. Theoretical background**

The problem of internal or international migration is one that has been greatly talked about over the last few years, especially by social science researchers and – in some respects – by the political decision-makers in Romania. This preoccupation is tightly linked to the conclusions drawn from studies on the demographical analysis, whether we are talking about statistical figures, nationally centralised, or predictions about the evolution of our population in the medium and long term.

In social sciences, migration can be seen from two angles: sociological and demographical:

- from a sociological point of view, migration refers to the movement of people from one zone to another, therefore changing their residence. If this has taken place, then we are speaking of a definitive migration, in the same way as, although a certain amount of time goes by,

migration is only circulatory<sup>1</sup> (with a return). There are also different specific typologies: internal/external migration; migration depending on the leaving/arriving place (rural to urban and vice-versa, urban to urban and rural to rural migration); legal/illegal migration, etc. Also from a sociological perspective there is a huge applicative field in social research which is still only at its beginning (from analysing motivation of migrating to analysing the cost and social and economical benefits of migration, etc.).

- from a demographical point of view, migration may be interpreted as the territorial movement (through emigration and/or immigration) which is added on to the natural movement of the population (through birth and death).

It is obvious that these two perspectives are complementary but for some authors, the sociological perspective is more comprehensive. T. Rotariu (1996) agrees with this and suggests specific dimensions through which one can study the phenomenon of migration: demographical, geographical, economical and juridical dimensions. An integrated perspective can be found in the research started by various super-state organisations: the World Bank or the Worldwide Organisation for Migration.

Coming back to the influence of migration on the demographical situation in a well defined social space, we must take into account, for example the following types of influence:

- Oscillations which appear in the total mass of the population (whether it be the present population or estimations for a population temporarily present/absent). These variations must be seen differently, based on the population receiving and losing migrants.
- The influence of the migrants on the natural increase of numbers (as opposed to birth or death) in the receiving places of the migrants.
- The gender and age ratio of the migrating population.

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<sup>1</sup> Here we include the phenomenon of *Commuting* and, more recently, what the Romanian press has now declared to be called *Euro-Commuting*!

- What is the rate of the effective migration (as opposed to immigration/emigration), etc.

### **B. Migration and the number of the population**

The first position taken referring to the demographical effects of migration, in our country at least, can be found in the argument started by the publishing of the final data of the census done from the 18-27 March 2002. As I have mentioned, first of all the population of Romania has decreased in ten years, from the preceding census, by approximately one million people (from a population of 22,810,035 people in 1992, to 21,698,181 in 2002), more precisely by 1,111,954 people. The main reasons for the decrease in the Romanian population have already been identified by demographers and other researchers: a naturally negative increase and emigration. In the following document we will be looking at the second reason: external migration.

All the demographical studies talk about it even if the statistics are not always very precise. The biggest migratory fluxes were seen immediately after 1990; they then diminished and again started to increase consistently. The following are the statistics on emigration, starting in 1990:

1990	...	1993	...	1996	...	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
90629	...	18446	...	21526	...	14753	9921	8154	10673	13082

These numbers refer to, as per the definition, the people who changed their residence, but there have been many other statistics: until 2007, the number of those who had left the country was over 10,000 people while the number of those officially registered for work varied around the number of 40,000 people per year (The Office for the Migration of the Work Force – OMFV reports 35,000 emigrants in 2004, 43,000 in 2005 and for the first nine months of 2006, over 46,000 Romanians working abroad).

There is, however, no certain data about the situations of the migrants and/or of illegal migration and neither about circulatory migration, especially after the opening up of Occidental Europe's borders. For the month of April 2003, after a CURS survey, they found that over

900,000 people were legally or illegally working abroad. Also, Sebastian Lăzăroiu, the director of CURS declared (in the *Ziua* newspaper, 13.07.2003) that 12% of Romania's households had, in April 2003, at least one member working abroad. Thus a part of the negative results of the census could be caused by those who work illegally abroad<sup>1</sup>! This kind of estimate was made by D. Sandu<sup>2</sup> in 2006: if in households where people were working abroad the average of those who had gone was of 1.34, then an estimate of those working abroad was 777,200 people (at the moment of their research). However a clear statistic is hard if not impossible to keep. It is more important from our point of view to see the links we can make from the demographical perspective to some facts of the above-mentioned researchers: the migrants are youth rather than adults or elderly people; in the age range of 18 to 59, most of them are from a rural background, the temporary migration of women is different age-wise and background-wise: up to 30 years there are more women from rural backgrounds and the opposite can be said of women over 30. In this context, from a demographical point of view, we can deduce a series of specific behaviour, proven in different specialised studies: the tendency to push back the first wedding date, the tendency to decrease the number of children per family, a higher incident of problems with child-bearing (we refer to women of a fertile age!), etc. It is obvious that there are many social problems which are directly linked to migration: from abandoning/forgetting children to the separation of the migrant's family. All of these phenomenons are important from the demographical point of view because they can directly and indirectly influence the principal events of demography: the birth and mortality rate. In this context we can add an examination, based on the fluxes of internal and external migration. If we expect high rates of return to Romania after stages of

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<sup>1</sup> It is worth mentioning the important decrease of the Hungarian population by about 200,000 people from 1992. This decrease of the Hungarian population however is probably not due to migration into neighbouring lands. Also, the UDMR deputy - R. Raduly said in the *Adevărul* newspaper, 23 July 2003, that „200,000 Hungarians from Romania have already chosen Hungarian wagons of European ones” referring directly to those of them who had gone to work abroad.

<sup>2</sup> See the report *Locuirea temporară în străinătate (Living abroad temporarily)*, Open Society Foundation, București, 2006

work in Turkey, Israel, etc, we could also expect a slow but sure increase of the definitive migration to Italy and Spain as we have seen over the past years but also to countries of traditional migration, like Canada.

As it is easy to guess, external migration has led and slowly leads to a decrease in the population for our country<sup>1</sup> and implicitly a growth in the receiving countries.

Let's have a look at the progress of these numbers in two of the receiving countries:

<b>Nr. population (million people)</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>May 2007</b>
Romania	23.2	22.4	21.6	21.6
Italy	57.8	57.8	58.7	59.3
Spain	39.1	39.8	43.5	45.3

Source: *Population et sociétés*, 1993-2007 (www.ined.fr).

Just reading this shows an important increase of the population and it is first of all due to the emigrational fluxes and insignificantly due to natural increase. There is another question to be asked, however: who are those who leave for good and with what demographical consequences? If we take a closer look at the age categories, these are the results for two years in a row:

<b>Emigrants</b>	<b>2005</b>		<b>2006</b>	
under 18 years	765	7%	963	7%
18-25 years	1408	13%	1726	12%
26-40 years	6359	58%	8198	58%
41-50 years	1355	12%	1782	13%
51-60 years	545	5%	839	6%
61 years and over	506	5%	689	5%
	<b>10938</b>		<b>14197</b>	

Source: *Anuarul statistic 2007*, INS.

<sup>1</sup> The decrease in the population is not a threat in itself, but it leads to changes that happen in the age structure of the population! See the conclusions in *Carta Verde a Populației*, Comisia națională pentru populație și dezvoltare, UNFPA, 2006

These numbers show us that 71% (and 70%) of the emigrants are between 18-40 years old, the perfect years for child bearing. These people therefore, either do not have children or will have them in the receiving country, or they have left their children at home and will call them over too. In both situations, our country loses a growth of the natural increase of the population, especially if we look at the report gender-wise: 63% of the migrants were women (in 2005) and 62% in 2006; these numbers can be alarming because they cover high percentages of women of a fertile age. This loss has two meanings: on one side the *possible* children (who will no longer be born in Romania) and on the other hand, families who have above average income who could have insured a *qualitative*<sup>1</sup> demographical increase.

### **C. Causes and motivations of the migrations. The sociological and demographical perspective**

Romanian sociological writings about internal or international migration are very prolific and there are many authors who can be named: D. Sandu, V. Ghețău, V. Miftode, T. Rotariu, etc. One of the subjects that are carefully studied by these authors is the tendency to migrate and the complex consequences of this phenomenon. The internal or international migration is for all these authors an existential alternative, a trend identified with social networks, a selective phenomenon, marked by some socio-economical variables, one which has ample demographical consequences, especially in the medium and long term, etc. If we speak about the causes/motivations lying behind the decision to emigrate, they are vastly diverse. One example is given by the push-pull study below, which was widespread in the sixties and which we can find in some of the World Bank's research:

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<sup>1</sup> The most important demographers in Romania have often repeated the need for a quality and not a quantity demographical increase! This is why we need policies which will encourage families with a certain living standard to have children! One of the last measures from the part of the Romanian government is to give for the young mothers 85% from the last salary (average), beginning with January 2009!

<b>Migration motivation</b>	<b>Push factors</b>	<b>Pull factors</b>
Economical and demographical	Poverty Joblessness Low salaries High birth rate Poor health and educational help	The possibility of a better salary The possibility of a better standard of living Personal/professional development
Political	Conflicts, insecurity, violence Poor governing Corruption Abuse of the Rights of Man	Safety and security Political freedom
Social and cultural	Discrimination based on race, gender, religion, etc.	Reuniting the family An „ethnic” migration Escaping the discrimination

Source: *Migration and Remittances* (eds. A. Mansoor, B. Quillin), World Bank, 2007

As we can see, a demographical dimension spoken about in this table is the fertility rate. This fact can be controlled comparatively with the international emigration from our country. These are, for example, the statistics for Romania from the Statistic Annual from 2005:

<b>Region of development</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Fertility rate (live births per 100 women)</b>	<b>International emigration (nb. of people)</b>	<b>Emigration rate (for 1000 people)</b>
North East	3738601	46.3	1853	0.50
South East	2850318	37.6	1039	0.36
South Muntenia	3342042	37.8	578	0.17
South West Oltenia West	2317636	35.6	589	0.25

North West	1939514	35.2	1738	0.90
Centre	2730461	39.1	2270	0.83
Bucureşti Ilfov	2539160	39.6	2958	1.16
	2207596	31.5	2057	0.93

Source: *Anuarul statistic 2005*, INS

Reading this information and a brief statistical analysis show us clearly that the dates are not related and we cannot confirm that a higher fertility rate corresponds to a higher definitive emigration rate. We have here an example through which we must carefully check the push-pull scheme. However the tendency to emigrate (as a potentiality) but also as a circulatory migration is still very high, for example in the North East regions. This is also confirmed by a recent study intituled *Eurobarometer 66* (2006) from which it is easy to see that, for example in the North East region, where we have the highest fertility rate, the tendency to circulatory migration is amongst the highest in Romania and is linked to the level of pessimism about the country's economical development. These conclusions reinforce the statistical study which was based on the data from the 2002 census. Prof. D. Sandu (2005) did such an analysis wherefrom we draw the following conclusions:

- The circulatory migration rate for work<sup>1</sup> was three times higher in the richer villages in Moldova (16‰) than the national average (5‰).
- The circulatory migration rate for work was four times higher in the towns of Moldova with between 100-200 thousand inhabitants (21.2‰) than the national average (5‰).
- In the West regions, the highest figures are in the towns with up to 30 thousand inhabitants.
- From an analysis of the counties, the highest rates of circulatory migration are in Satu Mare, Maramureş, Suceava, Bistriţa Năsăud, Bacău, Vrancea, generally speaking, counties where there has always been a migratory tradition! On the opposite end of the scale are the counties with a high rate of poverty and a lower circulatory migration rate for work,

<sup>1</sup> There is also an external migration, but not for work!



which makes them vulnerable from a socio-economical point of view and they are mostly in the South of Romania!

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Moving on to other things, professor D. Sandu (2003) considers that push-pull type studies are mechanistic and this is why he believes that we must never neglect the real sociological analysis of such a complex phenomenon. In the middle of this analysis, the author adds the concept of „life strategy” (to be read as *rational action structures*) and this concept is then analysed through three perspectives: phenomenological (in which the capital implied is taken into account: economical, human, social, relational and vital capital), instrumental perspective (which sums up the whole of the of the available methods for strategies of mobility, diversification and accumulation) and last of all the functional perspective (referring to the consequences of strategic actions).

This type of study sheds a different light on the problem of migration and bring into discussion every time how possible it is to form an integrated theory of the phenomenon.

The same question always comes up in each and every theory: is definitive or circulatory emigration a solution for some of the socio-economic problems of the work and demographical market in various developed countries: Italy, Germany, Spain or many other European countries which recently declared a liberalisation of this market? There are authors who do not hide their hesitation. M. Baldwin-Edwards (2004) thinks that to eliminate these difficulties, the level of migration should be at a much higher level but there are many barriers: political arguments, the threat of „ethnic” changes, social problems generated by emigrants with no qualifications necessary to the labour market and who create extra pressure for the *state of comfort*, growth of the informal (illegal) economy, increase of delinquency<sup>1</sup>, etc. In this context, the integration of immigrants, says M. Baldwin-Edwards, is conditioned by four references:

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<sup>1</sup> Today European documents talk about *mobility partnerships* between member states but also about Migration Support Teams!

accepting immigrants as privileged foreigners, as something imposed by the rights of man, as the capacity of the system of including them and as the consequence of an eventual emigrational social policy. It is obvious that all these references are necessary for the best possible integration of the newcomers in the receiving countries and to build an efficient system of social insurance. As the policies of social protection are very fragmented and diffused in Europe, we expect also specific demographical evolutions: an adherence of the immigrants to the demographical behaviour of the receiving countries with decreased rates of fertility and death. And this, to the extent in which today we can talk about a globalisation of fertility<sup>1</sup>! In other words the processes that characterise the population from the developed countries will, in time, change the demographical model of the immigrants but from a specific point of view: the social place of women, the use of contraception, the decreasing value put on families and children, etc. As a conclusion, we would say that migration is more of a short and medium term benefit for the work market than a solution for the demographical difficulties generalised in the economically developed countries (excepting those with vigorous pro-natality policies)! But the benefits of the work market are today questioned by the context of the world crisis and therefore people talk more and more of re-migration and therefore other demographical consequences. The process has only just begun!

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<sup>1</sup> See Caldwell J. 2001, "The Globalization of Fertility Behaviour", *Population and Development Review*, vol. 27.

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