

PROSPECTS OF IMMIGRATION IN ROMANIA

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Abstract: *The paper focuses on immigration, which structures the contemporary world, highlighting multiple relationships and implications that make this phenomenon of a major importance, worldwide. We try to briefly present the conceptual framework of immigration and the prospects for immigration in Romania. Immigration in Romania is in the pattern of any migration in the start-up phase in Europe. The way in which Romania will manage to regulate this immigration will influence the evolution of the phenomenon over time. Lately, Romanian institutions and NGOs have managed this phenomenon effectively and positively. The legislation has been amended, respecting the European and international framework, so that the phenomenon is very well controlled by the authorities. As far as the Romanian state's policy on immigration is concerned, in the current context it will preserve the limits of the last years. The objectives of this research converge towards identifying the facilitators and the barriers that emerge in the integration of immigrants into the Romanian society, which is in a constant process of adaptation and transformation, socially and economically. In this context, the immigration phenomenon in Romania requires attention, even if its demographic impact is not significant, and foreign citizens registered with legal residence on national territory are below 1% of the total population. For Romania, immigration has proven to be a phenomenon with positive consequences, which contributes to the development of society.*

Key words: *migration; immigration; integration of immigrants; Romania.*

1. Conceptual specifications and delimitations on migration and immigration - classification and definition of terms

The issue of migration and immigration is a complex one, addressed in the specialized literature by various professionals, from many points of view. Thus, in his research on migration, Rentea (2013: 122-125) defines migration as "the moving process of the individual whenever it involves space - in terms of borders, which he/she must cross, time - the time spent outside the origin country, with a purpose - economic, studies, family reunification, humanitarian protection".

In Popescu's opinion (2006: 51), the migrant "is the person who, for reasons other than the fear of being persecuted in his/her own country, voluntarily leaves to reside elsewhere."

The World Migration Organization (IOM, 2019) considers the migrant to be "the person who moves from one place to another, crossing an international border

or moving within a state, away from his or her place of residence or family, leaving aside the legal status of a person, of the type of movement (voluntary / involuntary) and of the reasons that caused the movement without being established in a particular place."

Immigration, according to art. 2, letter. (b) of the (EC) Regulation No. 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of the 11th of June 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection and repealing of the (EEC) Regulation of the Council No. 311/76 concerning the drafting of statistics on foreign workers, means "an action whereby a person establishes his habitual residence in the territory of a Member State for a period which is or it is customary for at least 12 months, after which, he/she had previously resided in a Member State or in a third country."

Immigration is "the moving of a person within a state. Some states define immigration as including only the people interested in permanent residence, but the current concept generally includes all non-citizens entering a state, either for a short visit or for the purpose of staying permanently" (Van Krieken, 2001: 422).

By virtue of the above mentioned, for us, as a member of European space, the immigrant is the person who comes from a non-EU country and who chose Romania voluntarily as a destination country for work, business, studies or family reunification. The term immigrant can be defined in both negative and positive sense. In the negative sense, the term implies that we are dealing with a foreigner, the immigrant being a person who enters the territory of a state and does not have the citizenship of the state he/she entered. In a positive sense, we can say that the immigrant is the person entering a country in order to stay for a longer period of time. The approach of the term *immigrant* from a sociological point of view is much more appropriate, as we can understand the factors, causes, social, economic and cultural effects of it (Otovescu, 2010: 609-610; Otovescu, 2016; Otovescu, 2017).

Lately, the notion of third-country nationality / citizen (RTT) is increasingly used. The International Organization for Migration states that RTT is the person who is in the territory of an EU Member State and he/she is not a member of any of these countries. In accordance with the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (1967), the refugee is "the person leaving the country of origin because of persecution or fear of being persecuted on racial, religious, nationality reason as well as belonging to a particular social or political group."

Migration is the "process by which people change their place of residence definitively or temporarily" (Erdeli et al., 1999: 194). In this respect, international migration is defined as taking place outside the borders of a state, being motivated by the great economic gaps between states (Erdeli et al., 1999: 194).

According to Arango (2000: 283-296), migration is difficult to conceptualize, measure, or explain by building up theories. However, most definitions imply "referring to space (in terms of borders, internal or external, which a migrant has to

cross), time (time spent outside the home city or country of origin), purpose (economic, studies, family reunification, humanitarian protection, etc.) "(Rentea, 2013: 17). Moreover, the differences between the derived terms, such as emigrants, migrants and immigrants, are determined by the way a situation or person is judged.

Migration and immigration are a reality of our day. They are part of everyday life, requiring an analysis, an approach to the peculiarities of each category of immigrants. It is a continuous phenomenon, difficult to be managed and measured with precision. Officially, Romania is recognized as a transit country for immigrants, and a source country for international migration. As a result of economic, political and social developments, Romania has seen a positive and slightly oscillating trend in terms of immigration in the last decade.

No state in the world has remained outside the international migration flows, having the quality of either a country of origin, transit or destination for migrants, or all three attributes simultaneously. One has come to the conclusion that, through efficient management, migration and immigration can play a key role in the development and reduction of poverty, with clear benefits, which could be increased, and disadvantages that could be minimized.

2. Characteristics of immigration

According to the authors Andreescu, Andreescu and Bardas (2016: 161), the characteristics of immigration are the following ones:

- international migration affects almost all regions of the globe. Over time, migration has transformed from a regional process into a global phenomenon that is currently quantified at around 3% of the world's population;
- the definition of international migration as a definitive shift from one state to another is insufficient and today it only covers a part of the diversity of the phenomenon. "The various processes associated with globalization have accentuated the propensity for movement within international space; as proof in this respect, we can notice the increase in the number of people involved in international travel and the increase in the number of countries which, as origin or destination, appeared on the map of emigration" (Constantinescu, 2008: 280).
- recent data show that traditional immigration countries have also become emigration countries (Australia, Canada and the US); currently, developed countries are the preferred destinations of migrants;
- we can assert with certainty that the phenomenon of migration will never disappear, but it will develop new characteristics depending on the socio-political evolution of the world;
- the phenomenon is complex and dynamic, influenced by a number of factors both in the countries of origin and in the countries of destination. It is therefore necessary that the state's migration / immigration policy to be constantly updated, according to the new regional and international developments;

- the phenomenon should become a major area of study for authorities with competence in the field, so that the optimal positive effects for the country and, implicitly, for its own citizens can be maximized.

At present, the important features of international migration are the following (Stoica, 2011: 57):

- expansion of the number of emigration, immigration and transit countries, with flows of immigrants from new geographical areas;
- feminization of migratory flows as more and more women manage to reach their destination countries, due to the fact that there is an increasingly selective labor demand in favor of women's jobs in different sectors: services, medical care;
- the traditional distinction between countries of origin, transit and destination has become more diffuse;
- increasing the demand for the highly skilled labor, along with that for the unskilled workers, due to the segmentation of the labor market in developed countries and economic competition;
- increasing the volume of temporary migration for labor and circulatory migration;
- political control of the phenomenon.

The topic regarding the effects of international migration is rather controversial. There are differences even between experts. Thus, experts from the Copenhagen Development Research Center say that "there is no direct link between poverty, economic development, population growth and political and social changes, on the one hand, and international migration on the other" (Stoica, 2011:64). Also, Douglas Massey, the most important researcher of the phenomenon, appreciates that "international migration is not rooted in the lack of growth and economic development, but in the development itself" (Stoica, 2011: 64).

3. Consequences of migration

The consequences of migration upon the source countries are immediate and long-term, as highly skilled and qualified workforce leaves, displaying an imbalance in the labor market, affecting the level of the source country's budget. Foreign migration contributes to a certain extent, according to Constantinescu (2008), to population decreasing, Romania being mainly a country of emigration in a first phase after 1990, the presence of immigrants in Romania is now more obvious.

Regarding the consequences of migration / immigration upon the country / countries of destination, they are present for a long-term:

- immigrants are an important source of economic growth for a country;
- migration flows change the ethnic, racial and cultural composition of the receiving society;
- as immigrants fail to integrate into host societies, they are potential sources of social insecurity, degenerating, in some cases, into protests and violence;

- the most important changes occurred at the cultural level (culinary art, sports, art, media, fashion). For example, European and Romanian culture register mutations, from the meaning of national tradition, to that of human activities, in the broad sense of the word. This resulted into a mixed culture, a combination of the culture of the host country and that of the immigrants;

- immigration has altered the European political agenda and its priorities, contributing to the transformation of national and European institutions and organizations.

Migrants can be classified, taking as a reference the status of Member State of the European Union (EU), as migrants from the EU and migrants from the third-country category, non-EU (RTT) migrants.

Managing the migration process varies from one state to another. Through immigration policy, differences in admission of immigrants, integration, access to different areas of the host society can be created, leading to the occurrence of the so-called "civic stratification." The concept underlines the inequality created on the basis of the relationship between different categories of migrants and the destination state, the rights they are granted or denied, and the diversity of rights and legal residence.

Migrants do not equally enjoy the same rights, an important role in establishing them with the purpose of staying, the length of stay in the country of destination, the legal condition. Thus, a foreign citizen whose country of origin is an EU member will have a different package of rights and obligations compared to a foreign citizen coming from a third country. For example, immigrants from non-EU countries still face limitations of rights and opportunities in a destination state. Also, participation in the democratic system at national level is limited to the citizen status, and, thus, immigrants can not influence decisions that could affect them.

Full access to social rights is restricted in some countries, depending on the category of immigrants or the length of stay. Access to certain labor positions is only allowed to their own citizens (public functions) or access to the labor market of non-EU immigrants is limited to the country that offered them residence for this purpose while a citizen of an EU country has free access or facilities on the labor market of another Member State.

Migrants, citizens of the Member States of the European Union, are defined as privileged compared to those in third countries. Third-country migrants can enjoy indirect rights at EU level, due to their family status as a citizen of the European Union, bilateral international treaties (Joppke, 2001: 339-366). In the category of foreigners, citizens of the European Union Member States have become increasingly invisible; compared to the majority population, they no longer evoke complexities of inferiority (Diehl, Blohm, 2003: 133-162).

The different application of the legislation on foreigners within the European Union, depending on the category of migrants, may be a source of inequality and discriminatory practices. The most affected are the illegal migrants, temporary

migrants who, due to their purpose, are ineligible to obtain permanent residence (seasonal workers), migrants whose right of residence has been granted for family reunification (Rentea, 2013: 89).

As a social phenomenon that directly affects a significant part of the population, it is very important to know and highlight the profile of the migrant / immigrant.

In general terms, for immigrants, integration involves knowing the language of the host country (reading, writing), access to the education and labor market system in that country, possibilities to increase the professional mobility by raising the level of education and professional qualification, equality before the law, cultural and religious freedom, respect for the laws and traditions of the country where they live (Stoica, 2014: 51). At the same time, for the host society, migrant integration requires tolerance and openness, agreement to receive immigrants, understanding the benefits and challenges of multicultural societies, providing unhindered access to information on the benefits of integration, tolerance and intercultural dialogue, respecting and understanding the condition, the traditions and the culture of the immigrants, and the respect for immigrants' rights.

In Romania's case, given the lack of previous experience in the field, the still small number of immigrants, refugees and limited financial possibilities, it is clear that integration services and assistance are not entirely satisfactory, despite the efforts made in recent years to align with the international standards.

Even though Romania has so far distinguished itself as a country of emigration with a labor market that is less attractive to immigrants and which is of interest, rather from the transit point of view to the developed countries in the next period, given the EU membership, this quality implies the adoption of the rules and conditions of community life, Romania's attractiveness will grow and will turn into a country of immigration.

Immigration should not be seen as a negative aspect. It can contribute significantly to cultural exchange, economic development and the progress of Romanian society, as it can bring benefits to the countries of origin and migrant families. Immigration must therefore be seen as a process that must be managed and not as a problem to be solved.

In this respect, the main objective of the Romanian authorities is to maximize the positive effects and to limit the negative effects of immigration for our country and Romanian citizens.

That is why it is the responsibility of the Romanian state to establish clearly the categories of migrants that can be admitted and established on the national territory, according to national interests, but in close correlation with the programmatic policies and documents adopted at the level of the European Union, as well as respecting the rights of the migrants. Also, the Romanian state will continue to adopt pragmatic measures to prevent and combat illegal immigration

and to remove from the national territory those migrants who no longer meet the legal conditions of residence (Stoica, 2014: 92).

4. Perspectives of immigration

It is expected that globalization will increase international migration and put its mark on the characteristics of future migration systems. Current international migration is the result of social discrepancies between different regions of the globe and the labor market realities of the most industrialized countries. The countries of destination in the case of international migration are very involved in this process, providing conditions and circumstances in which international migration survives and even flourishes.

Immigration for better economic conditions remains a constant factor, but the potential of forced immigration, which has an upward trend, must not be ignored. People will be motivated to emigrate to protect themselves or their families or to escape from the economic decline of the society they live in. International immigration will continue to be stimulated by political, social and cultural rigidity or human rights violations, but also by the failure of governments in source countries to resolve the social problems of their citizens.

International migration is stimulated by the following (Stoica, 2011: 151-152):

- **tradition of migration** - the existence of political, social and economic relations between countries of origin and destination, including a tradition of migration, thus reducing the costs of migration, equating to encouraging this phenomenon;
- **the global expansion of the services sector** - migration from the developing countries to the developed ones will continue, as the need for qualified force in the services sector calls for this;
- **subsidies granted by the developed countries to farmers** – trained labor migration towards the developed countries with a performing agriculture;
- **massive cross-border migrations**, due to the fragmented tendencies of some countries;
- **decreased birth rates in developed countries** - current projections indicate a decline in population in developed countries; the simulations show that to compensate for the decline in Europe's labor force after 2020 and to maintain the level of employment constantly, a total of four million immigrants is needed annually. The admission rate in Europe is about one million immigrants annually. Demographic changes will be mostly driven by international migration; a partial solution to this problem would be to increase the retirement age in these countries by applying coherent employment policies, reforming the pension systems and increasing labor productivity;

- **population aging in developed countries** - the aging of active population and increased life expectancy lead to an unprecedented increase in the elderly population in developed countries.

The intensity of the challenges and the moment of their occurrence will depend on the domestic and regional context. The tendency to increase these stimuli, at least for the next decades, is real, the result being predictable. No country will be immune to the effects of the transition. The world will look different over the next 30-40 years. We support our idea on the realities of the past. In 1800, Europe had 20% of the world's 1 billion population, and Africa only 8% of this population. In 2000, the population of the two continents was roughly equal (Europe had 728 million, Africa 800 million). The projections for 2050 indicate a population of 660 million in Europe (representing 7% of the world's population at that time) and 1.8 billion in Africa (20% of the world's population) (Stoica, 2011: 152).

From a strictly economic point of view, the transformation of some countries of origin into destination areas for international migration will only take place in a small number of cases; developing countries that have achieved this jump to a superior level have been able to take advantage of the low labor costs and labor intensive exports. Most developing countries will, however, suffer adverse effects associated with development processes and will increase short-term export of labor force.

The strategies of developed countries wishing to improve their competitiveness will keep the labor force in developing countries, further widening the current economic gap between countries and regions of the globe.

Increasing demographic, economic and security differences between countries and regions of the world and the expansion of modern technologies in communications and transport will foster international migration, will help strengthening the role of immigrant networks and reduce the costs of international migration. In this context, there are prerequisites to reconsider the perception of international migration in the sense of transforming it into a largely random process, into an organized international business that involves a very large budget, engaging all the world's states, led by a group of people, organizations, agencies and institutions, all having an interest in promoting their own business.

The greatest challenge of the 21st century is how migration is directed to the security of states, but also to individuals.

As for the dynamics of immigration flows, there are expectations for a "natural increase" in the number of immigrants. In the perspective of Romania's accession to the Schengen area, serious problems of immigration management could arise. Thus, state institutions should focus on two categories of resources: a) endowment with equipment and technology at local and regional level; b) training for the improvement of human resources in all local / regional empowered institutions. Romania's new status by joining the Schengen Area could create additional responsibility for the Romanian state to secure the external borders of the

European Union and the achievement of the objective of combating illegal immigration. In this context, closer coordination of the efforts of the institutions with attributions in the regulation of immigration and the prevention of illegal immigration is required: the Romanian Immigration Office or the Border Police.

Migration, whether voluntary or forced, is increasingly connected to other pressing issues such as development, trade or human rights.

Conclusions

Immigration and migration are realities of our day. They are part of everyday life, requiring an analysis, an approach to the peculiarities of each category of migrants. They are continuous phenomena, difficult to manage and accurately measured. For the immigrant, integration consists in knowing the host country's language (reading, writing), access to the education and labor market system in that country, possibilities to increase professional mobility by raising the level of education and professional qualification, equality before the law, cultural and religious respect, respect for the laws and traditions of the country in which they live. At the same time, for the host society, migrant integration requires tolerance and openness, agreement to receive immigrants, understanding the benefits and challenges of multicultural societies, providing unhindered access to information on the benefits of integration, tolerance and intercultural dialogue, respecting and understanding the condition, traditions and culture of the immigrants and also respect for immigrants' rights.

In Romania's case, given the lack of previous experience in the field, the still low number of immigrants, refugees and limited financial possibilities, it is clear that integration services and assistance are not entirely satisfactory, despite the efforts made in recent years to align with the international standards.

If in the past our country had mainly a role as a transit country for the migratory flows from the Eastern states, on their way to the Western countries, with a high level of economic development, Romania has recently become, on every day that passes, also a destination country.

Current international migration is the result of social discrepancies between different regions of the globe and the realities of labor markets in the industrialized countries. The destination countries of international migration are very involved in this process, providing conditions and circumstances in which international migration survives and even flourishes.

Immigration for better economic conditions remains a constant factor, but the potential of forced immigration, which has an upward trend, should not be ignored. People will be motivated to emigrate to protect themselves or their families or to escape from the economic decline of the society they live in. International immigration will continue to be stimulated by political, social and cultural rigidity or

human rights violations, but also by the failure of governments in source countries to solve the social problems of their citizens.

It is obvious that migration and immigrants do not only contribute to the economic growth of the countries. Immigrants make it possible for people to interact with different traditions, habits and beliefs. This creates the premises for a continuous development of human society.

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