

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF LEAVING PARENTS TO WORK ABROAD ON CHILDREN LEFT ALONE AT HOME

Andreea Maria DIN<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D. Student, Doctoral School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Craiova, [dinmariaandreea@yahoo.com](mailto:dinmariaandreea@yahoo.com)

**Abstract :** *The present article proposes to analyze data and information on the size of the phenomenon of "children left alone at home" to the "portrait" of the family / community where the children are vulnerable, marginalized and / or excluded because of the migration of their parents and the practices implemented in the identification, monitoring and assessing children in this situation with the aim of proposing recommendations for development and improvement, all combined with the analysis of the legislative provisions on the issues and a opinions and the impact of the media and the general public in Romania. At the same time, a review of emigrants' motivations, a short history of the phenomenon, and the importance of relatives who remain the only support for these children is made. The complexity of the phenomenon derives from a series of aspects related to the economic and economic situation social problems of the Romanians, the difficulties and challenges of an expanding society economic growth that still leaves very large gaps between the different strata of society.*

**Keywords:** *motivations of emigration; the role of relative; hidden single parent; school results; benefits and disadvantages of migration.*

### 1. Introduction

The migration of the school population is a phenomenon involving demographic, social, economic and political consequences, being important to study since it has grown significantly since 1980, and the interest in analyzing this process has intensified and encompassed all regions of the world. The family is the most seriously affected institution, as one of the spouses usually migrates, which seriously damages the whole of the in-family relationships and, therefore, the functionality of the basic group of society. The Romanian society was not prepared to bear without risk the shock of such migrations, which it was not used to in previous decades.

Children are the most affected in their family relationships and in their school status, in public perception, and especially in their emotional state (the rupture of a parent causes stress, emotion of deprivation, shock, etc.).

The phenomenon of migration abroad is, to a large extent, new to our country. It does not have a secular existence, nor has it ever seen a larger scale. In order to be effective, however, it is necessary to first discover the causes

that led people's decisions to leave the country, and in order to reach the causes, we must stop at the current Romanians' living context, which was the significance of the family in the past and how has come to be seen today. At the same time it is necessary to treat the phenomenon of external migration in Romania by consulting the reports, studies and specialized literature.

Personally, I think that this migration phenomenon is a complex one, of scale, that has effects and implications not only on the children left alone, but on the whole of their social life. Work abroad appears to be a salvation in the face of the problems and responsibilities assigned to an individual who performs the role of parent. Suffering, labeling, lack of resources, and a middle class that comes as a support for those who are involved, brings about the saving solution - migration. I chose to study this phenomenon of parental migration to work abroad with effects on children who remain in the country by observing day by day and thinking about the generation of today's children that grows devoid of love and protection in particular I find myself only in the family, near their parents. Cases of children, from infants and adolescents, are confronted with a social reality marked by insecurity (Voinea M, 1993:79). The phenomenon expands rapidly and the state institutions are not aware of even the statistical reality, even less with resources and social policies to support families and children affected by migration.

One of the consequences with the most profound negative implications of the Romanians migration is that much of the current generation of children in Romania is growing without the irreplaceable support of parents. The departure of one of the parents or both causes deep, irreplaceable traces in the evolution of the children who stay at home. These are like internal scars, which we can not see, and therefore it will be very difficult to cure them. We often do not even know that they are there. This is the difference between physical injuries, those that are visible but eradicate with time, and the inner, inner ones against which it is very difficult to fight. Children are still before physical birth, a reason for joy, a message that brings hope, hope, that fills our soul with enthusiasm. Perhaps and for this reason we forget how great our responsibility as parents for their birth, growth and education is. We often forget that once we have decided to bring a child into the world, our priorities are changing, the way of living and thinking gets more connotations. I refer here to the fact that this situation makes us responsible as human and social beings, diminishing our selfish condition of reporting to those around us.

The natural order of things, in the current climate in which we live, however, has taken a negative turn, and the saddest thing is that at present, by what we do, we lay the foundation for the future society in which our children will grow. Therefore, we depend on how we shape them and how we prepare them for life. Migration to work abroad is taking place against the backdrop of major financial gaps. The current Romanian social reality is no longer for many of us, the place where we can professionally achieve ourselves or where we can live at least quietly with our family. Due to this fact, many Romanians have chosen the way of foreigners, the way of separation from their loved ones, a

path that may seem saving in the beginning, but which will have tough consequences over time.

## **2. Alarming statistics about children whose parents went to work abroad.**

Also, 77.1 million children were registered at European level born of immigrant parents. In this context, we mention that the total number of international immigrants was estimated at 214 million people in 2010, The US being considered the country with the most immigrants in the world. Due to permanent immigration, there have been changes.

Among the most important causes that lead Romanians to work abroad are: lack of a job, low incomes, the need for professional or personal gratitude, excessive inflation in Romania, especially at the legislative level, existence of the rule of law only on paper, social insecurity, corruption, injustice, bureaucracy, a more civilized life, a better social position, and especially poverty, due to the lack of governance measures, of policies that create opportunities for professional development and human.

Regarding the situation of poverty in our country, according to the data provided by the Institute for Research on the Quality of Life, which carries out concrete research in 1990 on the variation of the quality of life, three poverty peaks were registered in Romania in 1992-1993 1997-2000, 2010-2011, Romania faced with the third shock, determined by the social economic crisis, the standard of living and the confusion of the social-political environment are the main source of dissatisfaction collective.

In September 2009, Eurobarometer, Romania ranks third in the ranking of citizens perceptions of the spread of poverty in our country, with 90% of Romanians saying that poverty is widespread in our country.

According to recent studies (UNICEF, Soros Foundation Romania, Save the Children), 350,000 children are left home in Romania, of which 126,000 have both parents left, half of whom are under 10. 4% of children with both parents are less than one year old. As a result of UNICEF's analysis, it is relevant that 16% of these children spent more than a year without parents, and 3% - more than four years.

According to statistics and estimates at the end of 2015, the real number of children left behind at home after leaving one or both parents abroad for long periods of time was unknown. The way of collecting data on children with parents working abroad is regulated in Annex 1 to Government Decision 691 of 2015 on the Procedure for Monitoring the Way of Child Growing and Care with Parents Left to Work Abroad and Services which they can benefit from.

The total number of children in Romania, 2018, who had both parents left for work abroad is 18,012, 496 more children than at the end of the first quarter, while the total number of children with parents left for work abroad reached 94,991 (more than 195 of children), according to data centralized by

the National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoption (ANPDCA).

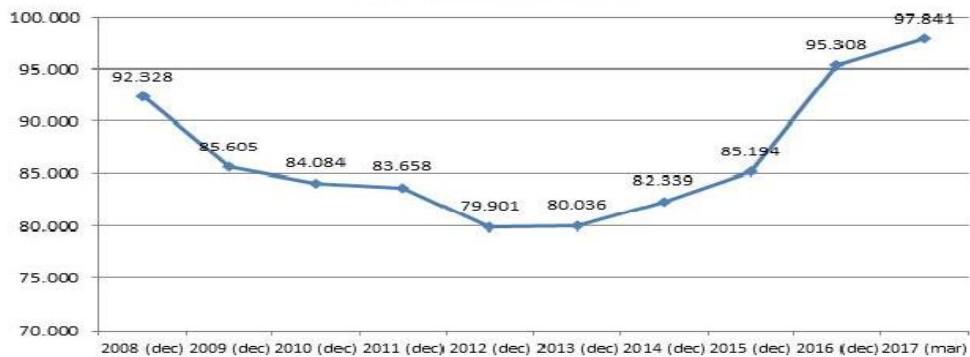
Of the 18,012 children with both parents left for work abroad, 16,797 were in the care of relatives up to grade IV without protection, the rest being placed in a foster care, foster care centers, or other families or people.

According to the cited source, a total of 63,891 children had a parent who had gone abroad (down 896 children compared to the end of March 2018) and 61,655 children were in the care of their relatives up to the fourth grade without any measure protective. At the same time, 1,462 children were in the special protection system, such as the care of a foster parent, placement centers or other families / people.

At the same time, a total of 13,088 children came from families where the sole parent was going to work abroad, compared to 12,493 as recorded at the end of the first quarter of 2018. Of these, 11,591 children remained home in the care of their relatives to grade IV, without protection.

The total number of children remaining at home in the special protection system amounted to 3,881, up 116 children, of whom 620 were in the care of a foster parent, 868 in foster care centers, 2,089 in relatives up to fourth degree, and 304 in care for other families or people.

**Table No.1. Children with one or both parents working abroad, 2008-2017**



Source: <http://copiisinguriacasa.ro/pentru-specialisti/studii-si-cercetari/situatia-copii-or-ai-caror-parinti-sunt-plecati-la-munca-in-strainatate/>

### 3. The right to education

Specialists have found the creation of a distance between homeless children and their parents, barriers direct communication. In many cases, children assume parents' economic motivations to take off and take most of the tasks of the adults in the household with enthusiasm, which is what leads to

overloading the child with roles in the family. Most of them think that parents make a considerable effort by leaving them a better life and education.

The right to education of children left alone at home must not be violated in any form. So, the absence of the parents in the household puts its mark on school performance or even school attendance of the child. Thus, although in some cases parents make efforts to support their child through meditation and support him to get school performance, there are cases where parents resemble the idea that they simply the child does not deal. This occurs in situations where, in the absence of the mother the child accumulates one or more corrigences (8%), has absenteeism (8% of those with mother or father left) or has problems with school with other aggressive children (8% of those with mother left) (UNICEF: 2008).

Involvement of children in different work within or outside the household must have in on the one hand, the ability of children to carry out those activities without having repercussions on physical development and, on the other hand, not to affect the education process child and also his/her leisure time. In the case of children with at least one parent left for work abroad, it is found that part took the adult roles within the household. The frequency of these situations is higher in where only mothers go to work abroad, even when compared to cases in which both parents are gone. This situation is explicable, on the one hand, by the role of more important of the mother in the conduct of domestic activities, and, on the other hand, by the solutions care and supervision of the children found in each family. Thus, in both cases parents are gone, 74% have spent most of their time with their grandparents, they largely taking over the tasks of their parents. In 52% of cases where the mother is the one who has the children remain in the care of their father, and they take over the majority of the performed roles of Mother.

Children's most common activities are housekeeping, shopping current food, food preparation and animal care. Even if taking some tasks in the framework of the household can have socialization and responsibility for children, they are certain activities to take into account the consequences of child involvement. Thus, in 4% of cases in which the mother or both parents are going to work abroad and in 7% of them cases where the father is gone, older children have largely taken over the task of having them care for the youngest in the household. This should be an alarm signal because such an activity takes a lot of a child's time, as it should dedicated to other activities, such as learning, and on the other hand, it is a responsibility very large on the shoulders of a child.

The primary responsibility for child care and education is by law to parents it. If parents can not fulfill this role, the state is bound to ensure protection for the child left without parental care. The condition for the state to this role is one of the state institutions to identify the remaining children without parental care and to develop the necessary services. Any child who is temporarily or permanently deprived of his / her family environment or who, to protect his or her superior interest, can not be left in this environment, has

the right to protection and special assistance from the state. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 36 Of families with parents leaving for work abroad, only 7% say they have been notified social assistance and child protection service that one or both parents go to abroad. Given that more than half of the parents leave by pretending to have tourism, it is unlikely that, while maintaining the current legislative framework, the state will succeed in identifying cases where children have remained in the care of others other than their parents. Of those who did not notify the authorities of going to work abroad, regardless of why they did not, 20% are cases where both parents they're gone.

The most important people children use when they have problems are their parents and grandparents, if this can not be achieved they appeal to relatives.

Children who live with their parents first turn to their mother when they have it problems with school (43%) or with school colleagues (27%), then to both parents measure (23% when having problems with school and 16% when having problems with colleagues). Just 6% turn to father for help when they have problems with school. Lack of one parents in the household lead to an increased involvement of the remaining parent in solving problems related to school. When both parents are missing from the household, grandparents take over in 39% of cases the role of parents. 18% of children mention that they call either parent or mother, although they are out of the country. 9% of those with both parents left I find support for brothers and 7% for friends. When problems are related to schoolmates, children with their mother or both parents have more readiness to call for teachers (16% of those with both parents leave and 19% of those with my mother left). It should be noted that the share is quite high (20% of those with both parents left and 19% of those with their mother left) who do not no one, finding a solution for the problem themselves.

Disagreements between parents and children are another situation the child needs advice, support of a third person. In the case of children with both parents left, the solution more frequently mentioned is the use of grandparents (41%). In addition, a large share of children interviewed (25%), irrespective of the migration experience of the family they come from, would not call to anyone (UNICEF, 2008).

The Psychological Effects of Parents Departure to Work Abroad on Children are: School regress (especially in gymnasium and lyceum); Cori-gence (especially in gymnasium and lyceum, with the highest percentage being at high school and SAM); Sleep disorder; Aggressiveness; Isolation; Shyness; Waiting for parents; Passivity; Verbal hate speech; The lie; Hostility; Emotional lability; Negligence in carrying out tasks; Anxiet; Impulsivity Frustration; Computer dependence; Farewell to street groups; Absenteeism; Lauda; Inability to concentrate; Passivity; Adding depressions, neuroses, indiscipline, homelessness, parents' accusations, revolt, resentment to parents, etc.

#### 4. Conclusions

The phenomenon of children left home increased. From a sociological perspective, the family is defined as a community-specific form human. (Otovescu D, 2010: 838). Grandparents, often helpless, sick, helpless at all kinds of temperament and behavior practiced by young people, are able to grow, educate, offer the best solutions to solve the problems they push for children. They do not know what they have to do, have solutions or not, but try to cope with this phenomenon they know either from their own family or from neighbors who have gone abroad. The problem that arises when we take care of a child, trying to replace the role of a parent or even worse, both parents, involves a series of responsibilities and consequences.

The contribution of the specialists is aimed at preventing the phenomenon analyzed by reducing the negative effects caused by the temporary lack of parents and intervention in the cases that require this:

- Information and awareness campaigns addressed to parents;
- Campaigns to raise awareness of Romanian communities in the countries of destination;
- Developing counseling services for carers of children left by both parents;
- Extending programs after school and school counselors (to provide them with beneficial ways of spending leisure time and doing themes for specialists).

It is undeniable, that both migration and effects on children by going to work abroad of parents are two extremely complex phenomena, affecting both family and society. The limited research and analysis possibilities are duplicated by the lack of some functional mechanisms that allow data collection at the local level.

#### References :

1. Bulai, T. (2006). *Fenomenul migrației și criza familială*, Iași: Lumen.
2. Chelcea, S. (2007). *Metodologia cercetării sociologice. Metode cantitative și calitative*, Bucharest: Economică
3. Killen, K. (1998). *Copilul maltratat*, Timișoara: Eurobit.
4. Otovescu, A. (2013). *Conservarea identității culturale în mediile românești din Europa*, Bucharest: Literaturii Române Publishing House.
5. Otovescu, D. coord. (2010). *Tratat de sociologie generală*, Craiova: Beladi.
6. Otovescu, D. (2014), *Relațiile dintre oameni și mediul lor social*. In *Puterea de a fi altfel - Valorile creștine vs valorile contemporane*, Bucharest: Didactică și Pedagogică.
7. UNICEF (2006). *Manual pentru implementarea Legii nr.272 / 2004 privind protecția și promovarea drepturilor copilului*. Bucharest: Vanemonde.

8. UNICEF (2008). *Analiză la nivel național asupra fenomenului copiilor lăsați acasă plecarea părinților la muncă în străinătate*, Bucharest.
9. Voinea, M. (1993). *Sociologia familiei*, Bucharest: Universității Publishing House.
10. \*\*\* Hotărârea Guvernului 691 din 2015
11. \*\*\*<http://www.revistadesociologie.ro/pdf-uri/nr.5-6-2012/07-Otovescu.pdf>
12. \*\*\*<http://publications.europa.eu/webpub/com/factsheets/migration-crisis/ro/>
13. \*\*\*<http://www.ziare.com/social/romani/statistica-alarmanata-creste-numarul-copiilor-ai-caror-parinti-au-plecat-sa-munceasca-in-strainatate-1534765>
14. \*\*\*<http://copiisinguriacasa.ro/pentru-specialisti/studii-si-cercetari/situatia-copiilor-ai-caror-parinti-sunt-plecati-la-munca-in-strainatate/>