

The Migration Phenomenon in Republic of Moldova

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Abstract: Migration is a phenomenon which experienced an unprecedented scale in the last twenty years. The socio-geo-political and economic changes which took place in Europe after 1990 led to an influx of people from east to west. Most often those who left their countries came from among the former socialist countries. This paper is a continuation of a study published last year entitled "Employment of Labor Force in Albania and Moldova - Evolution and Trends" in which was made a snapshot "of the labor situation in the two countries aspiring to accede to the European Union. In this paper, we focused on the Republic of Moldova as Romania's neighbor, followed by a future study to address the phenomenon of migration in Albania. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the phenomenon of migration from the Republic of Moldova and its immediate consequences upon Romania and the European Union. The hypothesis from which we started this study is that: Romania, as a friend and neighbor country of the Republic of Moldova, attracts a large number of Moldovan citizens who become full citizens, Romanian or of other nationalities in the EU. The study was conducted during 2001-2010 and was based on: the census in Moldova in 2004 (last done in this country), information from the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, the statistical database respectively, and information processed from the Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2008.

Keywords: emigrant; country of destination; reason of absence; period of absence

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1 Introduction

Migration has become a major problem both for the countries from people leave, and for the countries where this population arrives. The migratory movement of population is not fortuitous. It is determined by several factors, economic and in

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lesser extent social, ethnic, cultural or political factors. (Sora & Mihăescu, 2004, p. 207) After 1990 emigration from Moldova to Romania has seen an influx, especially when many young Moldovans came to study in Romania. Access to other EU countries has been quite restricted due to political conditions existing in Moldova, but also to restrictions imposed by EU to non-members countries. Moldova has a population of 3 567 512 inhabitants, is a member of UNO since 27th August 1991 and also of NATO (Matei, 2006). Moldova is a potential candidate for EU accession, the two political structures establishing a cooperation agreement designed to improve and expand relations between them. Anyway, Chisinau government's endeavors to join the EU can already be seen since on 15th September 2011, the European Parliament adopted the Resolution on the Association Agreement negotiations between Moldova and the European Union (Council of the European Union, 2011). The EP resolution text contains a number of important references for future relations between Moldova and the EU, stating even visa liberalization, negotiation of free trade area and sectoral cooperation.

2 Materials and Methods

The study was conducted during 2001-2010 and was based on: the census in Moldova in 2004 (it was the first census conducted after the declaration of sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova in 1991), information from the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova (Neacsu, 2011), the statistical database respectively, and information about emigration processed from the Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2008. The methods used were those specific to a statistical research: observation, grouping, processing, presentation and data analysis. The statistical unit was the Moldovan citizen who went abroad to settle down permanently or temporarily to another state.

The following indicators were studied:

I. Data provided by the 2004 census

- Temporarily absent population, went abroad, by gender, by reason of absence and by period of absence;
- Temporarily absent population, went abroad, by country of the current location;

- Temporarily absent population, went abroad, by destination country and by period of absence.

II. Data from the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, the statistical database respectively

- Emigrants by country of destination on age groups during 2001-2010. There were also consulted documents from the Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies (MITC), the State Enterprise “State Information Resources Center” record - holder of the Register of population database on the agreement with NBS no. 19-S of 13 April 2009 (owner of the information on emigration flows from Moldova) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) (owner of the information on immigration flows into Moldova).

3 Results and Discussions

The study has been conducted in two stages. In the first stage the indicators that characterize the phenomenon of migration in Moldova were taken into consideration, while the second part of the study included a brief overview of the migration phenomenon in Romania, in comparison to the Moldovan citizens.

The considered indicators were based on data collected during the census of 2004, respectively the processed data for 2001-2010, provided by the National Bureau of Statistics. The first category of monitored indicators has analyzed the structure of migrant population by: gender, reason for traveling abroad, period of absence, and the main countries of destination. Indicators can be seen in figure 1:

- Temporarily absent population, went abroad, by gender;
- Temporarily absent population, went abroad, by reason of absence;
- Temporarily absent population, went abroad, by period of absence;
- Temporarily absent population, went abroad, by country of the current location.

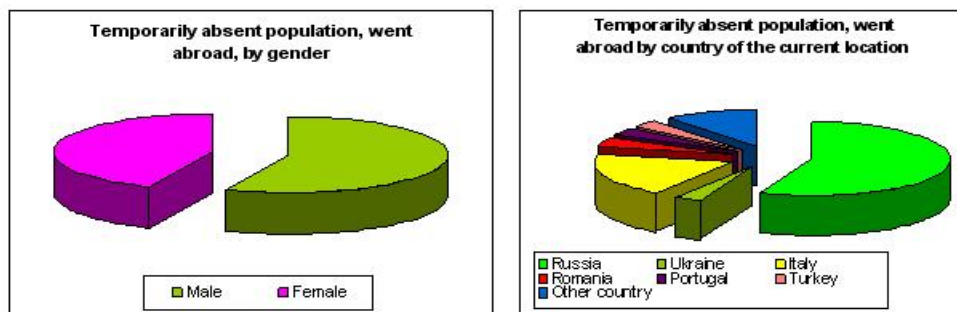


Figure 1. Structure of Emigrants by gender and country of the current location

It is known that men are those who leave to work abroad but the migrant profile has changed over time. Men between 18-59 years old from rural areas prevailed, later rural women (aged between 30-59), as well as in urban women (aged between 18-29), began to emigrate in order to find jobs in the domestic sector.

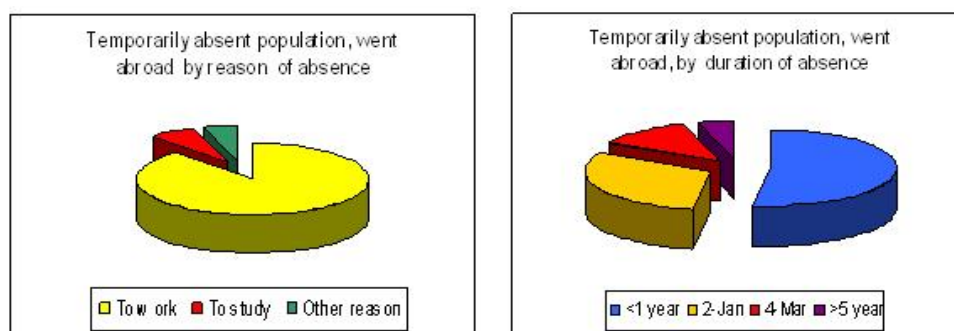


Figure 2. Structure of Emigrants by reason and duration of absence

At present, more and more women want to emigrate; a phenomenon illustrated by the men - women ratio which reached 56%- 44%. The determining factor for the emigrant is the desire to ensure economic prosperity for their families, even if this means to be away from family for long periods of time. Most people leave for short periods (less than one year) and from one to two years. Work comes first (89%), Moldovan workers are employed mainly in three economic sectors: domestic services, social services, construction and agriculture. The countries where they move to the most are: Russia 56%, Italy 19.4%, Romania 4% and Ukraine 3.14%.

Next we watched the indicators showing the distribution of emigrants in different areas of Europe. Thus, we studied the distribution of emigrants in major EU countries and in the main countries of the former USSR. The second category of indicators was made using the same data collected during the census of 2004. The evolution of the persons temporarily absent from this point of view can be seen in figures 2, 3 and 4.

Temporarily absent population, went abroad, by gender and age group.

Temporarily absent population, went abroad, by country of the current location and duration of absence.

Temporarily absent population, went abroad, in countries of the E.U. and duration of absence.

Temporarily absent population, went abroad, in countries non-members of the E.U. and duration of absence.

Temporarily absent population, went abroad, in countries of the former USSR and duration of absence.

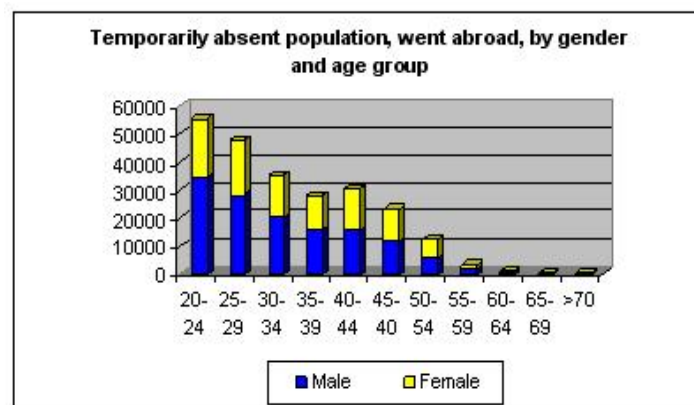


Figure 3. Distribution emigrants by gender and age

Most people who leave the country temporarily are young (37.74%) aged between 20 and 29, some of them go to study but most go to work. A significant age group (19.68%) is also that of 40-49. Interestingly, after the age of 65, the women are those who have the courage to go abroad to work.

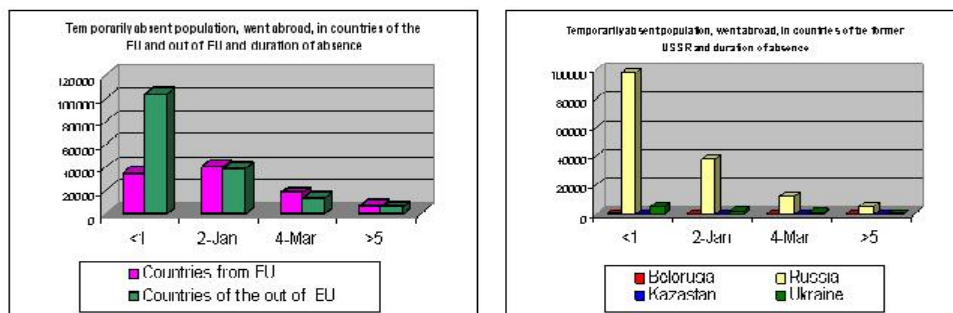


Figure 4. Distribution of emigrants in areas of Europe

It is noted that the population of Moldova moves particularly to countries of the former Soviet Union primarily because of the close ties with Russia from which Moldova cut itself, and less to European countries; this due to the restrictions imposed to the countries that are not members of the EU. For shorter or longer periods emigrants move to Russia and Ukraine.

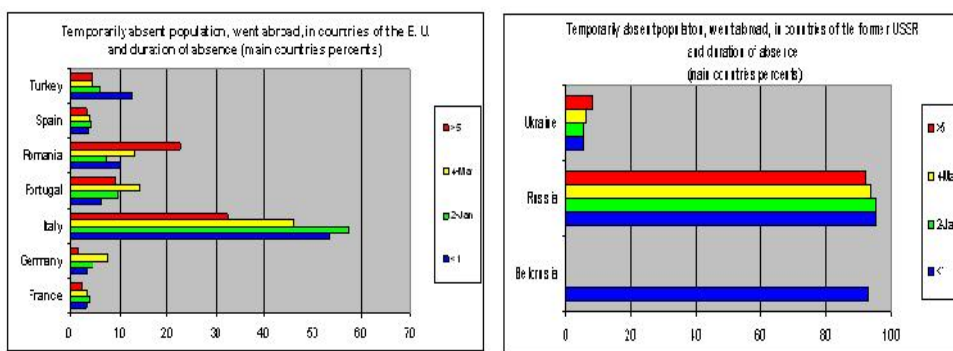


Figure 5. Distribution of temporarily absent population, went abroad by duration of absence

This study was interested in the areas in Europe where the citizens from Moldova emigrate to. The two areas of interest – EU and non-EU countries, have been studied in terms of period of absence and reason of absence. Of the EU countries, the most popular are Italy, Romania and Turkey. In Italy are preferred periods of 1-2 years (57.52%), in Romania the periods over five years (22.50%), and in Turkey less than one year periods (12.64%). Of the former USSR countries, the most

sought for are Russia – over (90%), Belarus - for very short term (92, 66%) and Ukraine -between 5% -8%.

The areas where citizens from Moldova emigrate to in terms of reason of moving can be seen in Figure 6.

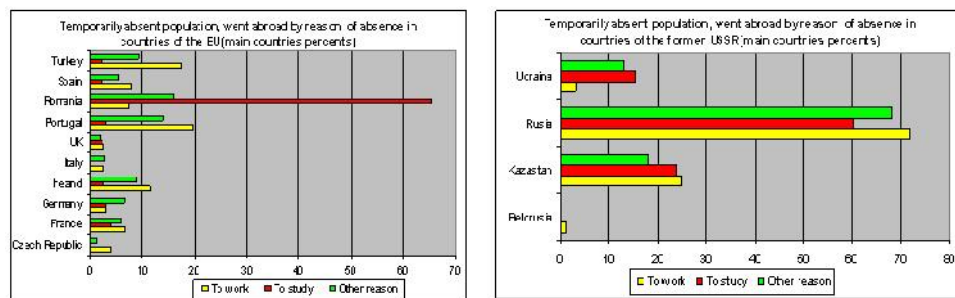


Figure 6. Distribution of temporarily absent population, went abroad by reason of absence

The countries sought for work are Portugal (19.75%), Turkey (17.55%) and Ireland (11.45%). In Portugal foreign labor is 5-6% of total employment, this means about 416, 000 people. As a general trend, citizens from Eastern Europe, including Moldova, find jobs requiring low qualifications, which is below their basic qualification. In Ireland the highest concentration is found in construction. In studies, most Moldovans choose Romania (65.59%), otherwise the percentage of immigrants in other countries varies between 2% -4%.

Of the countries of the former USSR, Russia is the most sought for both for work (71.79) and for education (60.17%), Kazakhstan is the next most wanted for work (24.96%) and education (23.89%). Ukraine is wanted more for education (15.51%) and less for work (3.11%).

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, the statistical database respectively, was used to identify the number of emigrants by country of destination, by age group during 2001-2010. In Figure 7 the situation of emigrants from Moldova to EU countries for a period of ten years is shown. Of the 25 EU member states, those were chosen where a significant number of emigrants were found. Thus, Germany ranks first with a peak in 2002 (793 emigrants), decreasing gradually towards the year 2010 (175 emigrants).

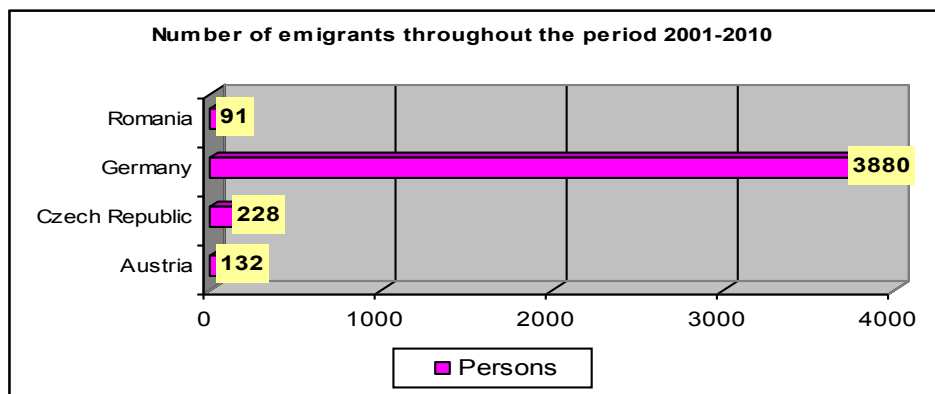


Figure 7. Emigrants by main country of EU

As for the countries of the former USSR, those countries were chosen where the highest flow of Moldovan citizens was found.

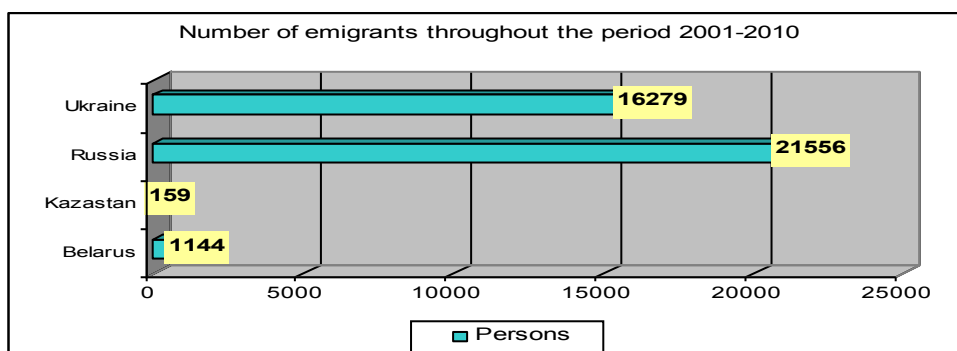


Figure 8. Emigrants by main country of the former USSR

Russia remains the most requested country, with a peak in 2005 (2778 emigrants), but with a sudden drop in the year 2010 (744 emigrants). Ukraine also registered a peak in 2008 (2521 emigrants). The values posted on the graph represent the total number of people emigrated from Moldova in the entire period.

4. Conclusions

1. The structure of emigration and the main countries of destination:

- the share of women who emigrate tends to equal that of men, and the elderly age(over 65) even dominates men in this age segment;
- the previous study (mentioned here), highlighted the fact that unemployment is exacerbated on the age segment of 30-49 years, which explains the great flow of citizens to other countries just on the 25-55 years age segment. In addition, the majority of the unemployed have secondary education, which has oriented them to activities such as those in the domestic, social, agricultural sector, or construction;
- generally speaking, the people who emigrate come from rural environment (67.57%) and leave for short periods of 1 - 2 years;
- -the most popular countries are: Russia, Italy, Ukraine, Portugal, and the Czech Republic;
- the main goal of emigration is to look for a job, in order to ensure a decent standard of living for their families;
- the consequences of emigration appear immediately: remissions of million MDL from Moldovan emigrants, broken families and many children who are raised by single parents, by relatives or who even get to care homes.

2. Emigration to the EU has expressed the following trends:

- the restrictions imposed by the EU to the countries that are not part of it, made that citizens of the Republic of Moldova to have limited access and generally to respect the older line of emigration: Germany, Austria, Italy and Turkey;
- countries like Spain, Portugal, Poland and Holland were the subject of emigrations after 2003, but their number was significantly lower (less than 30 people received citizenship) than in the countries mentioned above;
- currently the government in Chisinau make serious progress (politically speaking) to expand the EU, signing a series of agreements with it.

3. Emigration to the former USSR countries is manifested by the following trends:

- Moldovan citizens emigrate in large numbers to countries of the former USSR (Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus), due to the easier adaptability through language, customs and culture;
- Russia is the most requested country, both on short and long term, for work or other reasons (which are not always clear).

4. Emigration to Romania has highlighted the following:

- after 1990 the opening of Romania to Moldova has attracted a large number of Moldovan citizens in our country, most of them came here to study (65.59%), and they came for a long time (over 5 years);
- many of those who had come here got married in Romania, thus receiving the Romanian citizenship;
- according to the information provided by the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic, less than 100 people received Romanian citizenship throughout the analyzed period;
- the information provided by the statistics of Romania shows that in 2000, out of the total of immigrants (11,024), 82.965% were from Moldova. Their number has gradually decreased reaching only 3,704 immigrants in 2005, of which 51.75% are Moldovan citizens, a situation which persists to this day.

The hypothesis from which we have started this study has been disproved, as most emigrants head to the former especially for labor. The main purpose for which people emigrated to Romania was further education as most emigrants come from urban areas. The EU countries (Italy, Germany, Spain, Portugal) are sought for especially for work; different activities are much better paid there than in Romania.

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