

YOUTH PERCEPTIONS ON THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FUTURE OF ROMANIA IN A GLOBAL WORLD. REASONS FOR MIGRATION

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Abstract

This analysis aims at giving a coherent and synthetic view on the perceptions of the Romanian youth about the political participation and the economic future of Romania in the context of globalization and the increased migration. Youth is a socio-demographic category with an essential impact on the future of each country but also in Europe and in the world, who are, as many political, economic and social actors claim, the main beneficiaries. And yet the young Romanian males and females tend to migrate especially to the developed countries, where they are better remunerated. Thus, based on a primary research done by the Center for Urban and Regional Sociology (CURS) from Romania, it can be concluded that the Romanian youth are disappointed by the political young leaders and migration outside the country is a strong option for the present, even if only temporarily or definitively and become citizens of another country where they could fulfill their aspirations, lifestyle and leisure time.

Keywords. Youth; economic development; migration; benefits of globalization.

JEL Classification: J1, O15, R23

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization is accompanied by a complex phenomena: the migration of labor force but aside from this global effect, migration is also an effective, although notably selective, means of increasing the possibilities of individuals to better themselves: improving individual income, health, education and living conditions.

In these cases, young people plan their future in relation to the opportunities of migration, rather than seeking work and professional promotion in their own countries.

From the origin country perspective, as OECD note, the average age of migrants that come from Asia, Latin America and Oceania is higher in 2010/11 than in 2000/01. In other words, the share of older persons is higher and the share of younger persons is lower among migrants originating from these three regions. European migrants living in the OECD area in 2010/11, particularly those from former USSR countries such as Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Ukraine, Belarus and the Republic of Moldova as well as those from Romania, Poland and Bulgaria are, on average, younger than migrants from the same countries residing in the OECD a decade ago. (OECD:2014).

But as we can read in a study developed in *Oeconomica*, the quantitative and qualitative gaps that divide us translate EU, unequivocally, in and lower social and economic performances (Vass:2007, p.87).

2. REASONS OF DECISION ON EMIGRATION OF THE ROMANIAN YOUTH

A decision whether to emigrate or not is taken by young people in connection with their perceptions regarding the family future but, especially his/her own future. They will always be in position of comparison with the parents' life being bounded by the traditions, mentalities, values, and educational background they shared. Of course, the accession to European Union, with the guaranteed freedom of movement, bring more opportunities, but as we can see in the table 1 below, the wish to accomplish in other country is variation upon the age, gender and residential environment. Regarding the young people, especially those integrated in the labor market, one can remark that they fill more accomplished in Romania. But what creates a great worry for Romania is the

high percentage, over 30%, of those who embrace the idea of emigration. The traditional culture is also reflected in the figures (64, 1% considering their accomplished in Romania) emphasizing the role of women.

Table 1- View on the Future, by residential environment, age and gender (Romania, n = 1302)

	In 10 years' time I see myself as an accomplished person in Romania	In 10 years' time I see myself as an accomplished person in other country	DK/NA	Total
Total sample	58,7%	30,2%	11,1%	100%
Male	53,2%	34,9%	11,9%	100%
Female	64,1%	25,5%	10,4%	100%
Urban	58,6%	30,8%	10,6%	100%
Rural	58,8	29,4%	11,9%	100%
Age: 15-19 years	55,1	35,3%	9,6%	100%
Age: 20-24 years	59,1	30,1%	10,9%	100%
Age: 25-29 years	62,6	24,1%	13,4%	100%

Source: Romanian Youth: worries, aspirations, values and life style, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Bucharest, 2014, p.43.

An interesting aspect concern the motivation for leaving the country is the aspiration to a better life (more than a half). But is interesting to analyze the difference in opportunities as we can observe in table 2.

The desire to live in a society with a larger cultural diversity occurs among the young people from urban areas and another aspect is the desire to migrate in relation with aspirations, with the plans for a better education and the possibility to find a better job. So, those who look for emigration for economic reasons have chances to be fulfilled.

Table 2- Reasons of emigration by residential environment, age and gender (% calculated only for those wishing to emigrate)

	What is the main reason why you would like to leave Romania?								
	A better living standard	A larger cultural diversity	Better education	Better opportunities to find a job	Better opportunities to start my own business	To be closer to the beloved ones	Other	DN/NA	Total
Total sub-sample	55,1%	9,4%	5,1%	19,2%	3,9%	1,5%	3,4%	2,4%	100%
Male	59,6%	9,1%	3,1%	18,2%	4,3%	1,0%	2,9%	1,9%	100%
Female	50,1%	9,8%	7,4%	20,3%	3,4%	2,1%	4,0%	2,9%	100%
Urban	55,7%	11,6%	6,9%	13,7%	3,4%	1,7%	4,1%	3,0%	100%
Rural	54,2%	6,4%	2,7%	27,0%	4,5%	1,2%	2,4%	1,5%	100%
Age: 15-19 y.o.	50,5%	10,9%	7,9%	22,8%	4,3%	1,0%	1,3%	1,3%	100%
Age: 20-24 y.o.	53,7%	10,0%	5,0%	19,0%	3,7%	1,7%	4,3%	2,7%	100%
Age: 25-29 y.o.	64,4%	6,2%	1,0%	13,9%	3,6%	2,1%	5,2%	3,6%	100%

Source: Romanian Youth: worries, aspirations, values and life style, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Bucharest, 2014, p.45

Note: Bold figures show statistically significant differences

Looking in the table 2, we can see, again, differences between genders; women have lower intend to emigrate than men and the reasons also differed: almost double of the women (7,4% women in comparison with 3,1% men) would like to emigrate in order to get access to better education.

Table 3- Emigration destinations by residential environment, age and gender (39% of total sample , those who want much or very much to emigrate, n= 519)

	What country would you like to go to? (to work, permanently, to study, etc.) ?								
	England	France	Germany	Italy	Spain	USA	Other countries	DN/ NA	Total
Urban	21%	7%	15%	7%	9%	11%	21%	8,0%	100%
Rural	20%	5%	20%	18%	12%	3%	12%	8%	100%
Age: 15-19 y.o.	21%	5%	14%	12%	13%	9%	15%	10%	100%
Age: 20-24 y.o.	21%	8%	20%	11%	9%	8%	16%	6%	100%
Age: 25-29 y.o.	20%	5%	18%	11%	8%	6%	23%	9%	100%
Male	20%	5%	20%	10%	11%	8%	18%	9%	100%
Female	23%	8%	14%	13%	11%	7%	17%	7%	100%

Source: Romanian Youth: worries, aspirations, values and life style, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Bucharest, 2014, p.46

Note: Bold figures show statistically significant differences

Regarding the favorite destinations there are several countries that seem more attractive to the young people and England is on the first place.

As we can see from table 3 most of the young people who want to migrate for better education, especially from urban areas, chose England and USA.

Taking into account the above data, we can remark (infer) that the intention to migrate from economic reasons is quite important. In particular, the young people who feel they have no opportunities and no changes happen at national level will try to put their plan into practice. Also, the deepening, or at least, the lasting of the global economic crisis and of the deterioration of the economic problems make put pressure on those who intend to leave the country. As the respondents stated, a third of them see themselves accomplish in another country and for them migration seems to be the only solution for a decent life. A significant part is the group of the young people from the rural areas who would leave Romania from economic reasons and this is in contradiction with the young people from urban area. This aspect shows the gaps in the economic and social development during the post-communist transition in Romania.

3. CONCLUSIONS

After 1990, Romania entered into a process of transition from a centrally planned economy to a market one and from an undemocratic socio-political system to a democratic one, in the Western meaning of the word. It was not an easy process, as a number of impediments have hampered and delayed the reform steps. However, after 25 years of major changes, the Romanian society seems to be sufficiently changed not to resemble the country of the 1980s. But this result involved sacrifices, failures, incoherencies and regrets. From all the shortcomings, those that struck the citizens' welfare had the highest impact.

Development inequalities between Romania and other countries and among Romanian regions have generated an adjusting effect, manifested by strong migration flows.

One can noticed that the most mobile age segment of population was represented by the young people, especially those less than 19 years old, followed by

those aged between 19 and 34. As some Romanian author consider “However, it was not the freedom of movement that led to migration. It only facilitated it. Economic, social and political factors underlay migration modeling”. (Pânzaru: 2013, p.143).

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