

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF ROMANIA'S RURAL AREAS IN THE MIGRATION CONTEXT

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to analyze the prospects of sustainable development in rural parts of Romania, at a national level, in the migration context of today. We start by describing the concept of sustainable development, with Romanian particularities, continuing with a review of the strategic documents and plans which drive this goal, an evaluation of the progress towards reaching these objectives – with the European Commission recommendations – and implementation of the National Rural Development Programme, and finishing by assessing Romanian migration and its effects on rural growth – alarming fresh data from the National Institute of Statistics on emigration are presented and explained. We offer a balanced approach, between the neo-liberal and neo-Marxists views on migration, and focus on facts. We try to quantify both the positive and negative aspects of this phenomenon. Our findings suggest that the positive effects of external migration – on their own – cannot drive the rural development, but similarly, negative effects cannot be blamed for the lack of it. A better implementation of the public policies is needed to enforce reforms in administration, education, health and law, to plant the seeds of growth, which in return will bring immigration, be it returns, or new arrivals.

Keywords:

Rural development, Europa 2020, Romanian migration, sustainable development

Introduction

In 1983, the UN Secretary-General invited Gro Brundtland to establish and be the coordinator of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). Later, in 1985, the ozone layer depletion above Antarctica was discovered, which led to the adoption of The Vienna Convention on toxic emissions reduction. In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development, under Brundtland G. coordination, published the Our Common Future report (Brundtland Report). The WCED program targeted sectorial issues of environmental factors (combating water, air, and soil pollution) and global threats (acid rains, ozone depletion, climate change, deforestation and desertification, biodiversity conservation, toxic waste trafficking etc.).

Sustainable development refers to the evolution of society on several directions. We refer to cultural, social or economic progress, to fighting poverty and creating a harmonious relationship between man, society, and environment. (Oprescu, 2012)

On the other hand, the debate on sustainable development cannot be separated from the current social, economic, political or cultural context of the 3rd-millennium start. Primordial is the process of globalization in the context of the financial crisis in recent years, and degradation of the relationship between man, society, and environment.

Today, most states have adopted sustainable development policies. From a theoretical standpoint, sustainable development includes a healthy economic development, based on structural changes; the distribution of economic benefits to the entire population; the implementation of economic policies with a consistent environmental protection component. All human activities depend on the environment and resources. The quality of life depends on public health, social safety, and economic stability. In recent years, the concept of green development has gained ground.

In this regard, forces that affect society, like migration or public policies, must be evaluated.

In this specific case, Romanian rural communities, in their quest to grow, must deal with a strong competition from other EU Member States. This race relates to most economic components, products, services, labor etc. On the other hand, the laggings behind in terms of public policy, administrative organization, corruption etc. fuel emigration – the loss of human capital – and lessen the improvements brought by development strategies – such as Europa 2020.

1. Literature review

Ambrosini, J. W., et al. (2015) in *The selection of migrants and returnees in Romania: Evidence and long-run implications* conclude that temporary migration might have positive long-term effects on average skills and wages.

Andrei, T., et al. (2015) in *Characteristics of the population of Romania during 1990-2013* present the population pyramid of Romania, between 2002-2013, emphasizing 4 distinct phases of evolution.

Anghel, R. G. (2016) in *Migration in Differentiated Localities: Changing Statuses and Ethnic Relations in a Multi-Ethnic Locality in Transylvania, Romania* researches the effects of emigration on the origin country in a new approach. The study focuses on a multi-cultural community composed by Hungarians, Roma, and Romanians. The author shows that local social differentiations alter migration, but also its relation to social change. Therefore, social barriers, based on class/group and ethnicity, have a powerful effect on the ways the groups migrate and the economic sectors they occupy in destination countries. In conclusion, higher social statuses gained abroad are contested in the origin communities, versus local values and class system.

Bartram, D. (2013) in *Migration, return, and happiness in Romania* concludes that returned migrants are less happy than non-migrants, while emigrants are just as happy as those back home.

Beciu, S. and G. R. Ladaru (2013) in *Towards Sustainable Regional Development – Study Case: The North-East Region of Development – Romania* evaluate assets and substitutes that can be used to grow The North-Eastern Region of Development and to find ways to better social and economic aspects, by using the principles of sustainable development.

Bleahu, A. (2004) in *Romanian migration to Spain Motivation, networks and strategies* elaborates on the Romanian migration to Spain, starting with the '92-2002 period, when the informal emigration from Romania to Spain was sustained by transnational networks of established migrants. The author describes how the liberty to move in EU gained in 2002 by Romanians diminished the importance of such networks and writes about the transition from circular migration to definitive emigration, of the Romanians in Spain. The paper also places an emphasis on the status of the migrants, who don't see themselves as part of the receiving society, therefore no job is bad, but part of the origin community. The author also describes the dramatic experiences migrants undergo: leaving loved ones, the contact with an unknown culture, migrant labor condition etc. A very wise observation made on Romanian migration in Spain, which is controlled by offer and demand. Furthermore, the study focuses even on the associations Romanians established in Spain, giving them a voice.

2. Romanian case

The *National Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Romania Horizons 2013-2020-2030* sets the goals and measures which need to be taken to move towards a development model based on generating high added value and continued quality of life growth).

Therefore, the tax system should transfer some of taxation on labor to taxing the consumption of resources. Also, concrete targets have been adopted for water management, eliminating discharges or emissions and dangerous substance losses, completing the inventory of historically contaminated sites, increasing the recovery of useful materials from waste, and commissioning of the National Agency for Protected Areas and Biodiversity Conservation etc. On the other hand, *The National Development Plan 2007-2013* of Romania was conceived as a strategic document for planning and multiannual financial programming.

Other important documents are the *Convergence Programme 2015-2018* and the *National Reform Programme 2015*, which are part of EUROPA 2020 strategy for Romania). EUROPA 2020 is the EU growth strategy for the next decade. In a world constantly changing, the EU wants to become smart, sustainable and have an inclusive growth. These three priorities reinforce each other and can help the EU and its Member States to achieve high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion.

3. Progress towards achieving Europa 2020 goals for Romania

The financial crisis affected the endeavor of achieving the objectives the EUROPA 2020 strategy, both at the European level and at the national level. The most affected areas have been employment and combating poverty. (Filip, 2014) On the other hand, on the objective of reducing gas emissions with the greenhouse effect, the crisis has had a positive impact, in the context of reducing the activities of production and transportation. Moreover, Romania occupies the 3rd place at the EU level in this chapter, with an emission reduction of over 49% compared to 1990 (the EU average being about 18%). Also, over the general average and very close to the national objective is the share of energy from renewable sources in gross final consumption.

Problematic areas remain efficient use of energy, early school leaving and poverty rate, the latter recording an upward trend in comparison with the period prior to the economic-financial crisis, a trend that can be seen in the clear majority of member states (Filip, 2014). Romania is on course for meeting all three of its national climate and energy targets for 2020, based on the situations observed in 2013. In relative terms, Romania achieved emission reductions of more than 10% above its target. The data for 2014 indicates that renewable energy shares of Romania are already higher than its 2020 RED targets. Romania exhibited a RES share (99%) very close to its 2020 RED. Also, in 2014, Romania shows higher shares than their indicative RED target for 2020. Romania managed to reduce its primary energy consumption between 2005 and 2013, thereby staying well below their linear trajectory between 2005 and the 2020 target.

Furthermore, there are some 40 ongoing projects that will contribute to increasing the share of energy from alternative sources, clean and without greenhouse gasses emissions, in total energy consumption: greenhouse program (installation of heating systems using renewable energy), measures for the withdrawal from use of cars polluting and encouraging the purchase of cars with low emissions and electric cars/hybrid. Other notable improvements are: the creation of renewable energy use through green certificates promotional campaigns; introduction in the Classification of Occupations in Romania of four qualifications (corresponding installers heat pumps, geothermal systems, solar photovoltaic and solar thermal systems) and development of two occupational standards (for installer systems use thermal renewable energy sources and installer PV) etc.

In schooling, measures have been taken for adapting higher education to labor market needs and facilitating access to tertiary education. An increase of deduction for research, development, and innovation from 20% to 50% of eligible costs; financing over 1000 post-doctoral and exploratory research projects, followed by the establishment of young

independent research teams; the support given for the implementation of over 750 projects with Romanian participation within different European and international initiatives in the research, development and innovation field. Also, the creation of preconditions to achieve the International Centre of Advanced Systems “Danubius”.

On the social inclusion chapter, we notice: revision of the social benefits for families and children; social benefits for heating with natural gas and electricity; development of day care services to prevent child separation from family; creation of the Central Electronic Registry for people with disabilities, it will make a unified system for collecting and reporting data on persons with disabilities.

On the health care reform progresses were made by: improving the access of vulnerable persons to health services; by improving the economic efficiency of the health system; modernization and equipping health services infrastructure; optimizing the provisioning system of medical services based on the minimum package of medical services; improving the funding of outpatient services; the implementation of the programs “Electronic Chart of the patient” and “National health Card”.

4. Migration and Romanian rural society

Migration influences the social composition of the population by changing racial, ethnic and class relations. It also is an important source of growth or decrease in population number. Recent data from 2014, suggest that emigration is still at a high rate, but also a decrease in the number of emigrants in comparison 2009, while the number of immigrants remained constant. (NIS)

Rural migration studies, with a focus on emigration, are not limited to the agricultural context, but also focus on researching the areas of public policy – at a national, regional and local level – local government performance and development of individual economic activities etc.

The evolution of the external work mobility can be divided into 3 periods, depending on what kind of access Romanians had to EU labor market. The first period was characterized by a low migration rate, dominated by men, from cities, most with high school education and between 30-54 years. Moving forward, the migration rhythm increased, but other aspects remained similar, to the early '90s, except for origin – rural migration started to happen a lot more often. After 2002, the picture changed dramatically: on average the rate of migrants per 1000 inhabitants reached 19; the structure changed too, first off women recovered the gap, but later, their proportion became dominant.

The main causes of the labor migration from Romania to EU are a lack of jobs (the decline of the communist economy after the '90s), low earnings (well below the EU minimum and average), bad governance and corruption of Romanian leaders, lack of career opportunities etc. Returned migrants, usually temporary, evoke the superiority of destination countries, life being more settled (the lack of social anomie), individuals being more honest, better service functionality and other advantages. Furthermore, the deindustrialization of the '90s, the transition from a socialist-statist to a capitalist democracy society – based on private ownership – has made changes in society, such as the transfer of assets – from the state to the private sector – the abandonment and capitalization of industrial, agricultural or trade economic capacities, or the return of properties nationalized by the communist regime in agriculture, real estate, forestry, hotels etc. Simultaneously, the statist industry, "privatized" in various forms, has been confronted, unevenly, with a tough foreign competition, triggered by associating and joining the EU. Consequently, by 2003, Romania lost about 3 million jobs.

By 2009, Romania had become an important supplier of cheaper labor to the EU, with over 1,15 million economic migrants, between 2009-2014. In this period, over 60% migrated to

Spain and Italy. Therefore, we can talk about a "migration of workers", rather than a "brain drain", given that most migrants were average or below qualified (high school graduates) and over 30% of them had not been employed until then (mostly women). (NIS)

Also, we witnessed important events that affected the migration of Romanians from rural parts towards the EU states. For example, measures to encourage legal temporary migration; better-living conditions abroad than in the country; the existence of a rich external environment, in cultural and material terms; incentives for emigration due to dual labor markets or segmentation (primary stable and lawful labor markets, secondary labor markets without papers).

I. Horváth and G. Anghel see a "cumulative causation" for migration, which is defined "by its ability to reproduce." Thus, migration causes a series of economic and social changes that generate the further perpetuating of migration. These causes can be extensive networks, distribution of resources, human capital, changes in economic organization in the localities of origin, cumulative changes that perpetuate migration, self-reproducing without the need for the existence of external facilitating factors (Anghel, Horváth, 2009).

In this context, from remittances – which represented about 1.9% of GDP for Romania in 2013, after a World Bank report – the construction of houses, by migrants, grew in rural Romania. They were regarded as safe investments. Other migrants have invested, for example, in tourist locations, in small and medium-sized agricultural holdings or in agricultural machinery.

The mediocre level of civic involvement led to reduced government policies drafted after discussions and formal, tolerating widespread corruption and traffic of interest. On the other hand, returnees are now critical about the lack of upgraded roads in localities that depend on migrant's remittances. (Stanculescu & Stoiciu, 2012)

Temporary migration has provided a context for Romanians' social learning, social strengthening of their confidence and participation in civil society. Polls indicate assimilation of modern values of democratic governance and constitutional knowledge. Work abroad contributes to changes in lifestyle, to an increase in civic participation, social trust and tolerance towards minority groups.

The recent data NIS show some interesting results, regarding the emigration distribution on gender and age. With respect to definitive emigration, more females emigrate, compared to men (57.29% vs. 42.71%). One cause could be that more females, than men, have difficulties finding a job in Romania, especially in the rural parts (Stanculescu & Stoiciu, 2012). Furthermore, this gap could be caused by the higher proportion of women in the total population: 51.1% women vs. 48.9% men. Other studies portray that men were affected more by the economic crisis, since many worked abroad in economic sectors that collapsed, such as construction. And in such cases, women manage to hold on to their jobs despite the crisis, therefore not returning home. However, some men eventually found income opportunities in the informal economy, therefore escaping our data. Therefore, the lack of opportunities for women, especially from the rural communities, without superior education, may lead to higher emigration rates than men, since they have better prospects than men with a similar background, in health or child care etc. On the other hand, data on temporary migration by gender and medium show a very volatile situation. For example, in 2012 and 2013, in both rural and urban areas, more women left for work abroad, compared to men (2012: urban females 56.9%/ rural females 60.79%; 2013: urban females 60.67%/rural females 58.46%). But, in 2014 and 2015 we see more men going for work abroad than women, from the urban medium, while still more women, than men, leave their rural communities (2014/2015: urban men 52.58%/52.97%; rural females 51.79%/51.43%). To conclude, both sets of data represented in Tables 4 and 6 show that more women than men leave their rural communities. Of course, we must not forget about the dynamics of the

labor market, what we see here could just be a result of the fact that in Romania some fields are mostly dominated by females or males (education, health, social assistance, office jobs or on the other side constructions, administration, agriculture, industry etc.), and the demand for jobs depends on how well a certain sector does in the destination country. In addition, between 2012-2015, show that more people migrate from urban areas, rather than villages, to work abroad. On a side note, in most cases, today's temporary emigrants are tomorrow's definitive ones. While, other categories consist of people between 20-24 and 25-29 and represent 34% of the total emigration, between 2009-2014. The rest are either family – bringing their children, and sometimes parents with them – or adults who either left their children home or who had no families. (NIS)

Over time, the young and mature Romanians have adapted faster and better to the external migration. Romanian migrants have the right to participate in local elections in the EU, to enter legal contracts of employment, to hold bank accounts etc. Remittances are conducted either if transnational migrants intend to stay outside, or settled there only temporarily. Flexible contracts are used by migrants who work in Italy or Spain. In the village of origin cash flow increases, local agricultural economies increasing their capitalization and their consumption substantially from the conditions of survival.

5. Rural development

Rural Romania is exposed to social risks and characterized by the existence of serious economic and social imbalances. This situation occurs on one hand, amid the social and economic gaps of Romania with Western Europe, and, on the other hand, because of changes caused by the communist regime in Romanian rural areas.

Although, in the communist period, among forced urbanization and industrialization, the quality of life in rural increased, also by reducing the number of people living in rural areas or improving schooling and labor, still, social imbalances were created, with important implications for the traditional village and newly urbanized cities.

With the change of the communist regime a state of anomie covered Romania, and given this background, rural development has been rather forgotten, no set of policies for rural development were adopted – except for the land reform of 1990 and 2000, the abandonment or privatization of production and processing capacities – right until accession of Romania to the EU in 2007.

The main problems of rural Romanian are the over-representation of agriculture in the rural economy and the lack of non-agricultural activities, the inefficient agricultural exploitation and subpar capitalization of agricultural potential caused by the size of the plots and the lack of distribution cooperatives, the weak development of the most rural communities caused by the poor schooling of a majority of the rural population, lack or resources for infrastructure investments and by emigration. (Mihalache, 2013)

Between 2007 and 2013, roughly 35% of the total EU budget was directed to the CAP. The division of allocations between EU Members is a consequence of negotiations, resulting in a compromise between the interests of states with an important agricultural sector, that support large allocations, and the objectives of Member States that benefit to a lesser extent from these allocations, agriculture not being this important to their economy. (Marchiş, 2011)

There are pertinent critical approaches about how the CAP is designed, especially about the lack of measures adapted to the specific of the states in Central and Eastern Europe. In this context, after the EU enlargement in 2004 and 2007, Poland and Romania became the states with the largest share of population employed in agriculture, but the yields of the main agricultural crops are very low. For these countries joining the EU has led to an increased pressure to adopt support and development measures for the agricultural sector and rural

environment, while that net EU contributing countries became more reluctant to finance these programs. The main categories of inaccuracies are the major differences between rural areas in old and new EU Member States; different ways of organizing farms; inadequate allocations under Pillar 1 and Pillar 2, available nationwide; poor capability of the new Member State to implement rural development programs based on the CAP methodology (Mihalache, 2013). In this respect, it is recommended for Bulgaria and Romania to achieve more EU policy integration by increasing their administrative capacity to conduct and implement Community programs (Wegener et. Al., 2011).

On the other hand, in the EU the main binder of rural development initiatives between the private and the public sector is the LEADER program, but in the new Member States the program results are poor, which is showing a lack of readiness by civil society to step up, but also the rigidity of the public institutions.

It's difficult to rule on the effects of RDP 2007-2013 financial allocations. The defining elements are the way amounts were divided from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) by measures and interim data showing the situation of the financing of contracts signed and payments that have already been made. Therefore, the data provided by the Government of Romania, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, shows different levels of contracting of the EU funds for RDP axes, ranging up to 100%. Until October 2016 there have been contracts signed worth 7.6 billion euros, while the total amounts paid by Agency for Payments and Intervention in Agriculture and the Agency for Financing Rural Investments amounted to 8.6 billion euros. For Axis 1 amounts paid amounted to 2.2 billion euro, for Axis 2 3.1 billion euro, Axis 3 to about 2 billion euro, for Axis 4 353 million euro, for measure 511 126 million euro, for guarantee schemes for the agricultural sector and SME 115 million euro, and for measure 611 395 million euro. (Table 1) Measures 322, 125, 312 and 214 (with contracting rate of 28%, 41%, 44%), have exceeded the amounts allocated initially, by reallocating, their success is largely due to the specifics of the direct beneficiaries, namely local authorities, companies and entrepreneurs in rural areas. Also, measures 125 and 312 – which address business and entrepreneurs in rural areas – have enjoyed significant allocations with the contracting rate of 41% and 44%. On the other hand, for a total of 3 measures, the data show an unfavorable situation, represented by contracting levels below the threshold of 50%, while the amounts already allocated to beneficiaries is only a few percent. This category includes: measures 111, 143 and 511 so far. Still, other measures recovered since 2013, in 2016 measures 142 and 313 having contracting rates of 93% and 70%. Based on the above, the main problem in terms of absorption of public funds available under the RDP does not seem to be at the stage of selection and contracting of projects, but in terms of the risks involved with the process of verification, monitoring and making related payments. It is expected that lack of expertise in implementing such projects, both in terms of contracting bodies and the direct beneficiaries, leads, in some cases, to the emergence of bottlenecks in mechanisms for achieving the proposed activities or the reimbursement of expenses provided.

Stepping away from the technicalities of RDP to the real impact of these financial allocations on the socioeconomic structure of the rural environment, several hotspots stand out, which indicate internal problems generated by the vision that guides such interventionist measures. This is somewhat inherent to any kind of intervention through, policies and public programs arise several questions about the adequacy of these measures to the specific financing rural society and economy, and what effect they may have in this context. Clearly, the implementation and impact of the CAP differ significantly between the Member States of the Union. The main problem arising from this vision is that countries with an underdeveloped agricultural sector, which retain a traditional character (as is the case of Romania), when applying this model of intervention tend to encounter barriers that

come from the internal structure of the agricultural sector and rural environment. Thus, there appears a "conflict" between rural specificity and the pressure for change coming from the policies promoted in agreement with EU policies in this sector. Successful implementation of the CAP in Romania, measured beyond the rate of access to available funds or meeting the goals of the program, underlying the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy, aims to transform the agricultural sector and rural areas so that the gaps registered in Romania compared to Western Europe are lowered.

The way RDP is conceived, increasing the competitiveness of Romanian rural environment can be done through an integrated approach, encompassing the industrial and agro-industrial, through investment in public infrastructure addressed to these types of facilities, through programs for supporting young farmers and for training future professionals, who will work in these sectors.

More than half of the amount available under Axis 1 of the RDP was directed to modernizing farms and adding value to agricultural products, and although it provides aid grants between 40% and 70% of the investment, providing the co-financing proves difficult, particularly for small and medium producers. Similarly, those applying for measure 123, which is meant to support SMEs with agricultural activity, face issues coming up with the co-financing, even though 50-80% of investment comes from grants. Therefore, we conclude that Axis 1 RDP is meant to support the activities of established agricultural producers and companies, rather than small or medium producers. Other shortcomings can be identified in Axes 3 and 4.

For instance, the maximum age criteria (40 years) of 312 measure, which supports the creation of non-agricultural micro enterprise which can manage to make at least one job, for every 25.000 euro invested, is dotted with 20 out of 100 points, thus artificial differentiations are being made, that may harm or not support the most competitive projects. Similarly, measure 313, which is addressed to support tourism activity conducted in rural areas, provides several constraints for potential categories of beneficiaries, among these the most important obstacle ensuring 50% co-financing of the project. Another concern is Axis 4 LEADER program which aims to create local action groups (LAG), which don't work so well in Romania, due to the lack of tradition and poor involvement of the public. We can't ignore the progress made by the Romanian authorities and by the applicants in implementing the RDP between measures, especially between 2013 and 2016, around 65% of the submitted projects having been accepted. (Mihalache, 2013)

Conclusions

High international mobility is pressuring local employers (owners of small and medium enterprises), forcing them to choose between increasing wages and bankruptcy (or closing the business). On the other hand, there are thousands of cases in which parents entrust raising and educating children to "family elders."

In a wider perspective, the birth rate has fallen ominously in Romania, and therefore the possibility of hiring labor. We emphasize that 10% of the country's inhabitants work abroad. The tendency to remain permanently in destination countries clearly jeopardizes part of the future of Romania. The countries of emigration face increasingly serious aging of the population, hence the slowdown of economic and social growth. Emigration affects age groups with high rates of fertility, reducing the potential for newborns in Romania. Currently, over 58% of migrants are women in the age group of 26-40 years, which has harsh effects on birth rates and fertility.

A "perverse effect" has so – called relief to the local labor market and decrease pressure on social assistance. In fact, it reduces the pressure of the governed society's obligation to modernize the economic, social, cultural etc.

In the economic sphere, the effects of migration appear as soon as it begins to manifest. It may have positive or negative effects and they may be felt on the long, medium or short-term. Identifying and analyzing the effects of migration can bring into question several aspects. Thus, we regard these effects from the perspective of the life of the individual, his/her family or social group, and community life to which the migrant belonged or wants to become integrated in.

Origin communities develop because of the migration of a large part of the population, so migration becomes a way to ensure the survival and improvement of the life quality of the people. In this way, the communities secure opportunities for long-term local development, creating jobs and economic choices and investment even from migrants. On the other hand, the main factors discouraging migrants' return to Romania are a lack of resources or lack of entrepreneurship and especially bureaucratic obstacles, discretionary and cumbersome procedures, and corruption in Romania.

Considering the population dynamic in the Romanian villages, we wonder how the measures of RDP will work, in terms of quality. Judging from what we learned it's unlikely to witness a massive return of emigrants in their prime to strengthen and diversify the rural economy, even if it's supported by the government agenda. The remittances and investments in houses alone cannot drive rural development, since the temporary or established emigrants will not return until the developments are already on the way, the development is rather a cause for migration than a consequence of it. Many governments tried to boost returns to enhance the development, but such approaches usually fail, or only have marginal effects.

On the other hand, political effects due to migration should not be overlooked. Emigrants form communities in the destination countries. Such associations try to import the values and know-how they exposed to, and affect public policies or invest in their hometowns, becoming a social change force. In this case, we can refer to the Romanian election of 2009 and the issues of voting abroad, which may have even cost the former prime minister the presidential elections, and later was the cause of adopting a new law for voting abroad.

Also, we can't ignore the "brain drain" effect towards the West (more than 200,000 university graduates left Romania after 1990) and the establishment of dozens of temporary western doctors and medical personnel. Simultaneously, gaps were created on the national labor market within the highly skilled workforce. But, regarding the "brain drain" experienced in the healthcare department, the approach should be less catastrophic. It's true, many professionals have left for better jobs in the EU, but also this demand may have made more people attracted to become a doctor or nurse, and therefore improving education. Also, the outside pressure is a driving force to improve the conditions back home. According to NIS, university graduates in the health sectors in 2009 were 3.34% out of the total graduates, while in 2010 were 4.34%, in 2011 were 5.47%, in 2012 were 6.86%, and in 2013 were 7.98%.

The negative effect of labor migration of highly qualified people, for the origin country, increases especially when migrating professions of the economy cannot do without affecting the development of the entire society, not only financially, on the short, medium and long term. Instead, it's notable that the countries which receive the highly skilled migrants enjoy economic growth through outstanding creative human capital abilities. On the other hand, at some point, the outside demand for workers drops and the anti-immigration policies get reinforced, which lessens the total number of emigrants, allowing origin countries to grow, in conjunction with structural reforms, rule of law etc., by attracting foreign capital in search for cheaper, but qualified labor.

The rural labor migration, towards urban areas or the EU, has serious negative consequences in the rural territory. Thus, from 3200 communes, only 1500 to 1800 have the capacity to be sustained by their population (in Romania some villages were depopulated).

Reducing the number of villages and municipalities is jammed by the interests of local governments. Perhaps only the modernization of agriculture and identifying forms of strengthening the entrepreneurial spirit and national structures, principles on which RDP is founded, will reduce, and even stop emigration trends.

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