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DOCTORAL THESIS
**THE MIGRATION PHENOMENON IN POSTCOMMUNIST ROMANIA IN A
EUROPEAN CONTEXT**

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Cluj-Napoca
2012

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KEY WORDS:

International migration, theories, legislation, causes and trends, Romania and Poland - similarities and differences, case study, Hunedoara.

SUMMARY

Globalisation and the process of European integration has resulted in remodeling the migration space, so much so that internal mobility has become a reality, the freedom of movement being facilitated by the granting of visas for third countries and for a number of countries that are not part of the European space or, more, the liberalisation of visas for certain countries in the Balkans. The barriers that once prevented migratory labour have fallen once again and this has led to a segmentation of the European labour market, as a consequence of the guest worker programs implemented by countries defined in the early 1990s as countries of immigration. The transition of the Central and Eastern European countries, immediately after the 1990s, from a communist regime to a free-market economy and a democratic state automatically entailed a change in the migratory behavior of individuals who, in terms of migration, had been severely limited. Given the new situation that Europe was facing, its countries came to be divided, for a period of time, into two categories, namely emigration and immigration countries. The countries “exporting” migrants were usually those in Central and Eastern Europe, while the countries receiving migrants were the western or occidental countries, as they were called. Migration to Western Europe was crucial for those countries where emigration had been restricted, as was the case of Romania. What is certain is the fact that migration flows over the past twenty years have changed the quality of economic life in a number of areas. All European societies have been faced with demographic changes, increased ethnic and cultural diversity, and the individualisation of values. The post-communist states have suffered the most drastic economic and social transformations following the shock of transition.

This paper, entitled *The Migration Phenomenon in Post-Communist Romania in a European Context*, considers the issues outlined above. Given the simple definition of migration, *the movement across territory of an individual or a group of individuals for periods of time that are fixed or not*, which also involves the changing of the workplace and residence, we start analysing aspects related to this phenomenon, which has been characteristic of Romania since 1989, in a European context. The hypotheses we base our entire research on derive from a series of assumptions, some based on the immediate reality, and some resulting from the numerous studies and researches undertaken by scientists.

The motivation for choosing this topic resides in our interest in migration and the problems arising from this phenomenon, starting from various questions: why do people choose to emigrate, what determines them to adopt this behavior, which factors influence migratory behavior most, what is the distance and the time duration, and what are the consequences of such a process?

In the case of Romania, migration tends to be brought to the fore only when the topic is profitable for the media, when Romania's image is affected by criminality and mendicancy, or in times of crisis, marked by the flight of the doctors, researchers, the people that the Romanian state has trained and continues to "export." The Romanian authorities' lack of response to the phenomenon has confirmed their indifference; moreover, the Romanians' migration has been perceived as potentially beneficent, which means that the main actor in this equation has become the Romanian worker, who is active, interested, with or without an individual plan. Bringing this issue to the fore does nothing but augment the migration issue, which is so delicate in the case of Romania, a country that, together with Poland, has sent the largest number of migrants on the labour market in Europe over the past two decades. Since Romania and Poland have common elements, we have extended our research by analysing the migration phenomenon in Romania in a comparative approach with the situation in Poland.

The bibliography of Romanian and international historiography on the migration phenomenon has enabled us to start from pertinent premises that we have tried to include in the four chapters of the thesis. The first chapter of the thesis is introductory, aiming to emphasise the historiography on the migration phenomenon in the contemporary world. The literature covering this subject can be accessible to all, precisely because it addresses both a less specialised audience, who may be less knowledgeable of the phenomenon, and those who study it closely. By presenting the bibliography, we have aimed to organise the literature in the field and overview several specific works. In the second part of this chapter, we analyse the explanatory theories of migration, which consider that the central role in triggering and fostering the process of migration is played by the economic factors. These theories are not mutually exclusive: they complement one another by providing multiple explanations of the phenomenon, especially since they refer to different reference levels: macro-, meso- and micro-

In the second chapter, entitled "The migration phenomenon in post-communist Romania in a European context", we examine the legislation and policies in the field, without which we cannot talk about immigration. They are absolutely necessary for the proper evolution of the entire process, as well as for the integration of immigrants in their countries of destination. The chapter is divided into two parts, Part A and Part B: the first part is reserved for the legislative framework and the integration processes valid in Europe but also in Romania, while Part B examines the migration phenomenon in Romania after 1989, trying to emphasise its main causes, quantitative dimensions, directions of evolution and consequences.

For Chapter three, investigations are extended by analysing the main trends of migration and its management in Romania, in a comparative perspective with the situation of Poland. The reasons for which Poland is chosen as the country with which Romania may be compared is that the two countries have many things in common, but the evolutions of these former communist countries have been slightly different. The aim of this research is to observe the differences and similarities between the Romanian and the Polish migration phenomena, and the emphasis is on the causes of the Romanian and Polish emigration, as well as on the countries of destination and the categories of people that fuel the phenomenon. The end of the chapter focuses on the phenomenon of return migration, considered as a less problematic stage: given that the migrants who choose to return to their country of origin do not encounter difficulties, this stage has so far not been regarded as an important aspect of the migration phenomenon. Unfortunately, Romania does not attach great importance to the return migration, unlike Poland, which has initiated various campaigns designed to bring the Polish immigrants back home.

In Chapter four, entitled “Internal specificities of the Romanian migration phenomenon - analyses and case studies,” we start from the general, namely from the premise that Romania is one of the migrant-exporting countries, to the particular, namely to the presentation of a sociological survey conducted in the town of Hunedoara, which is a representative town in this regard. The approach that we have undertaken is not meant to be exhaustive but seeks rather to provide an orientative analysis of the migration phenomenon in the area, which may be used later as a basis for more extensive research. Since migration has different peculiarities, in quantitative terms, depending on the historical regions of Romania, we highlight the specificities of the migration phenomenon. We embark, therefore, on a brief comparison between Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldova, so that the differences between them may become visible. We also present some considerations related to the migration of the rural population abroad, taking into account that at one point the idea that was circulated was that people from rural areas migrate more than those from the urban areas. The quantitative differences regarding international migration are not very large between the urban and the rural environment, but international migration based on the migration experience of the people from the rural areas has managed to form villages with a migration experience, which may be incipient, well or very well structured. The villages with a well-structured migration experience have a specific profile compared to those that do not have such an experience: a profile marked by high ethnic and religious diversity, high stocks of education, increased numbers of people who have returned from towns to villages, former commuters, etc.

All in all, this thesis focuses on the phenomenon of Romanian migration in a European context, insisting both on the migrant-exporting countries - Romania and Poland - and on those that receive the vast majority of migrants from Eastern Europe. We have also examined Romania's situation in terms of the legislative framework, the intensity of this phenomenon, the determining factors, which have "pushed" us towards investigating the Romanian migration phenomenon and particularising the research in the form of a case study about the town of Hunedoara. The selection of this locality was made after a finding that is highly personal: the lack of any systematic research concerning the phenomenon of temporary labour emigration from Hunedoara, an extremely widespread phenomenon in this urban community.