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MIGRATION IN 21ST CENTURY. EUROPEAN CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

- **PHD SUMMARY -**

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People's movement from place to place is a process characterizing the entire evolution of humankind. The motivation for mobility is a wide and thorough analytical endeavor, as it involves a constant adjustment to the challenges of present times. However, such challenges lay at the basis of the reconfiguring of the epistemologic framework and they are reasons for the increasing interest in the analysis of the phenomenon of the European and international migration.

As for the European Union space, we have two distinct approaches of population movement: on the one hand we report to the mobility of people from Member States of the European construction project, whose circulation is guaranteed and prescribed by treaties and regulations and, on the other hand, we report to the migration of people from third states into the community space and to the migration of people from Member States into the non-EU space. Within this complex movement dynamics, migration in the community space has certain particularities that shaped the beginning of the 21st century: first of all, the *current expansion of the* EU as a natural evolution process of the European construction project highlighted the need for a joint European policy on migration, second the *surge of revolutions in North Africa* reconfigured the prescriptive and institutional framework of the Union in order to handle the pressure exerted by the increasing number of immigrants that stormed the mediteranian border of EU at the end of 2010 and the beginning of 2011 and third, the *onset of the global economic crisis* that determined European leaders to propose, alongside with the economic objective of handling the crisis, a political objective of EU reinforcement.

Going into more detail about the directions of our analysis, we shall highlight the issues characterizing each particularity and its consequences on migration.

The aim of the paper is to expose the current context of migration at a European level and to analyze the theories that define the phenomenon and the current classification directions. The propensity to migrate of the past two decades of citizens from South-East Europe emerged as a natural effect of the overturn of the political systems in the 90's when democratization conduced automatically to border opening and when economically developed countries were the *pull factors,* mainly for the secondary sector of the labor market. In the past few years, the main sector, which requires highly skilled professionals, has an increasing number of calls for specialists from states that became meanwhile EU Members. The effects of the current global crises determined a reconfiguration of the phenomenon from the

perspective of migration volume, migration type, and ways of migrants' insertion. To this respect, the perspectives of analysis provided by the transnational paradigm, by the presentday models of migrants' insertion into the societies that became, from the net beneficiary of the advantages following migration (such as, for instance, Spain or Italy, where there are the highest number of migrants from Romania), tributaries to the economic policies of their own governments and integration policies. The analysis framework is general enough to leave room for later completion, as the European Union still needs to identify the technical and political tools to handle the problems generated by migration by reaching the long-expected agreement on a joint policy on migration.

In the first chapter the complex phenomenon of migration is approached, with referrals to theories, analysis perspectives of contemporary migtration and the right to mobility. The same chapter shows the relationship existing between migration and discrimination.

In the second chapter the European practices in migrants' insertion reported to the dynamics of the migration phenomenon and the EU involvement in managing migration are analyzed. It is of interest to see the way Romania evolved in various stages, migration problems, particularly in the after-Communist epoch. The pro-migrant lobby conducted by various European and international organizations is another relevant issue, having regard to the complexity of migration and the rising number of challenges this phenomenon faces in recent decades.

The third chapter deals with the effects of the current economic crisis on European migration and its implications over inter-generational solidarity and aims to put forward some alternatives to diminish the negative effects of migration. The contents of this chapter are completed by a case study entitled *Migration of Young Graduates from UAIC* and its conclusions. It is not hazardous that this study is included at the economic crisis analysis stage, considering that part of the conclusions of this study is consistent with the effects generated by the economic and financial crisis.

This paper is presented as a *crescendo of ideas* that somewhat generated each other by the logical connectivity of discourse and by the need to support a methodological framework on a well-documented theoretical one, the other way round being also valid.

Going on with this *crescendo of ideas*, we reached the stage of the last chapter where the European policy on migration is presented, the place where present-day migration is standing analytically-speaking between pressure and political solutions generated by various factors of the European and international system. The Romanian institutional and legislative framework is in agreement with the provisions of the European legislation, as results from this chapter as well. The relationship between migration and development involved a conceptual approach as well as a factual approach. The discourse of identifying the best European solutions to handling migration faces certain challenges: the identification of the most beneficial measures both for migrants and for states that turn into receiving countries, the observance of the fundamental human rights and of the existing international treaties (such as the Convention of Geneva, for instance) and – of course – the long-desired stage of reaching an agreement by the Member States on the European joint policy on migration.

Hence, we may conclude that the classification of presentday migration at a theoretical level of analysis that is pragmatic and objective (prescriptive and institutional) involves a set of rules, European solutions by a joint effort of all Member States and by a European policy on migration managed at a supranational level. This seemed to the "measure of relief" for many of the shortcomings shown also in this paper: from the lack of clear-cut provisions in the international law regarding the observance of migrants' rights up to the institutional and political incapacity of the European Union to handle firmly the status of the constantly mobile population, whether we speak of EU citizens or whether we report to the set of rules to be enforced on third states' citizens. Of course, a supranational accountability for the joint policy on migration might generate disadvantages, maybe even prejudices to various EU states and the often declarative optimism in supporting such a policy has not been always backed by a pragmatic behavior as it should. If we were to speak about a practical example, we can resort to the case of France that lobbies since 2007 for this purpose, but that has a discutable internal behavior to citizens of various ethnic origins on its territory.

The challenges of the 21st century determine the necessity of analyzing migration from a perspective that should include: migration volume and contents, diversification and dynamics of comtemporary migration, the rise of addiction to migration and the rise of migrants' issues. Based on how social, cultural, economic

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and political events influence population mobility, migration was compared by D. Sandu to a "highly sensitive oscillograph" that may measure "not only social quakes, but also current fluctuation effects" (Sandu 2010:44).

The term migration may be defined relatively simple as the movement of the population over the state borders for settlement purposes (Geddes 2003:7). In the large meaning of the term, being prescribed by law and implying the prerequisite of settling in the country of destination, this movement is considered by the receiving states immigration and by the sending states as *emigration*. Nevertheless, the term *migration* cannot be defined only from this basic perspective that is simplifying and somewhat reductionist, considering that there are several types of mobility of the population that crosses a state's border and each type may be analyzed and explained from various perspectives. The determination of the typologies of migrations is grounded on the existence of several analysis criteria of this phenomenon: national territory (internal and external migration), the factor *time* (short, medium or long term), the degree of constraint (free migrations, forced migrations), number of persons involved (individual, collective or group migrations), the legal status of migrants (legal migration, illegal migration), the purpose or the determining causes (work, studies, family reunion) (Rotariu 2009 :150-154).

Philippe Legrain, thee author of the book *Aftershock. Reshaping the World Economy after the Crisis*, considers that migration cannot be any longer explained only as a movement of population to a direction, as long as it manifests in recent years – largely – as a temporary phenomenon that should be reflected as such in the current debate (Legrain 2010:238). Practically, how migration is defined becomes an arbitrary decision specific to a certain period of time (Dobson et al. 2001:25). To cut the story short, international migration may be defined as a permanent or temporary movement of invididuals that cross states' borders,. The rise of migration over limited spans of time, circular migration, labor migration depending on employment contracts over determined periods of time show how "fine" the distinction between permanent migration and temporary migration is (Geddes 2003: 8).

"The central characteristic of modern times is the explicit primordiality of money-making" (Poede, 2004:82). Thus, understanding the phenomenon of migration in Europe means to take into account some general traits of international migration in the past 20 years, the most important being its fast rise from less developed countries to developed countries, some of them becoming relatively

recently receiving countries. The problems of inserting migrants became a priority on the agenda of most countries in the world and of some regional and international organizations, as labor mobility is inherent to globalization and world economy. Generally-speaking, migration is considered a source of insecurity as well as a source of security for the origin countries and their citizens, bringing benefits as well as economic, social, political, military or ecological issues for the countries of destination and its citizens (Alexe et al. 2011).

The extent of migration in recent decades and the new challenges this phenomenon has been facing show that the approach we propose both in the theoretical analysis and in the practical management of various situations is based on post-factum presentation of migration. Few studies bring to attention an ante-factum analysis that focus on a certain dimension of migration. This narrative approach is as challenging as daring, as the necessary quantitative and qualitative data are hard to transpose into an objective analysis with a high degree of predictability, because the influence of various factors – social, economic, political – may determine a major change of situation into a medium- or long-term projection. However, from the very beginning of this study, the central question revolved around the classification of the 21st century migration within the European context. Whether we talk of temporary migration, whether we talk of emigration and immigration as decisions made by various individuals, the joint policy on migration is a priority that should be assumed by Member States.

Romania is one of the important actors of the Union in that it is one of the main sending states that supplies intra-community mobility potential. From this standpoint, in our analysis we presented in detail the action directions assumed by the Romanian state in the *Strategy on Migration*, the pursued objectives, the institutions and the principles that lay at the basis of this strategy. It is important to underline that this strategy is also based on action directions generated by the post-factum approach of migration and does not forward concrete solutions that would lessen the negative effects of the fourth migration wave in whuich Romania is right now, namely the brain drain, as previously shown in this paper.

Concluding upon the study in this paper, the identified problem is that the propensity to migration prevails with the young graduates of UAIC ("Alexandru Ioan Cuza University" of Iasi). The solutions forwarded to lessen the negative effects of migration are: *determining an objective relation between investments in education*

and the labor market, proper funding of education in general and of academic education in particular, correlation of national policies for education with the European ones. The issue of making a living and having a decent life-style are the most motivating arguments for leaving.

Currently Europe is the scene of some processes with similar effects and sometimes with identical effects: opn the one hand, globalization, which erodes and even erases the barriers opposing international flows of people, assets, services, capital and information and on the other hand, the expansion of the European Union, which entitles citizens from less developed countries to aspire to a life-style considered to be better in EU. In the case of Europe, the issue of migration became more complex further to the European Union expansion. The thourough analysis of this phenomenon is the more necessary, the more it rises and its patterns start changing radically, revealing at an international level new surprising tendencies both in migratory flow direction and in the migrants' psychosocial representation and migration effects.

The European construction is based on cultural and traditional diversity, which is specific to the various regions composing it, and hence the "we" vs. "them" dichotomy must also be properly managed. This approach requires a serious involvement of the State, which plays a fundamental role in mediating the relation between individuals and society and implicitly generates inclusion and exclusion processes. This is particularly obvious in Eastern European countries. The 1990s were a real challenge for the European Union given the increase of the number of asylum applications – "the personality or the character of asylum applicants do not matter; what matters is rather the way in which they are treated by the institutions and organizations of the countries that receive them", argued Andrew Geddes (Geddes 2005:3). In such a context, European integration has significant effects on the production of "good" and "bad" international migration models. The encouragement vs. restriction policy is not in agreement with the migrants' characteristics, but with the way in which international migration is seen by the states and supranational decision makers. Therefore, Andrew Geddes proposes a distinction between "the institutionalization of Europe" and "the Europeanization of institutions", which is a difficult yet necessary process, which entails a complex interinstitutional approach and last but not least political will from the state actors (Geddes 2005).

The migration topic has so many aspects and it implies so many analysis directions that this perspective that we may limit to a political, institutional and sociological level partially covers the generosity of such a discursive field. Far from us the thought that we have dealt with all the analysis axes. Nevertheless, we may consider that we have the developmental grounds of a paper in which the conceptual section complements a case report that is this time ante-factum to migration occurrence. Once known, migration tendencies may be examined from the viewpoint of their positive and negative effects and they may thus give a valuable answer firstly to local decision makers and secondly to national and European decision makers.

Policies and institutions play an extremely important role in providing the necessary solutions to the 21st century migration process, both factually and formally. Institutions are the stage on which migration-related problems are debated on and analyzed, and policies provide answers further to these debates. The quality of the European solutions to the 21st century migration challenges depends on the formal quality, reliability and correct positioning in the decision making process of these institutions.

Assigning migration policies competencies to the Union creates migration insertion capacities in specific and limited areas. Generally speaking, the EU capacities in the social field resemble those of a "pre-New Deal liberal state", with a high level of civil rights and a low level of social rights (Streeck, 1996). Anti-discriminatory laws focused "on social policy as a productive dimension" (Wendon, 1998). The migrants' insertion claims seem to be successful if more attention is paid rather to market functionality than to the state's intervention, as the latter rather destabilizes markets.

The Commission receptivity to "migrant insertion" is revealed by the congruent approach between progressivism and instrumentalism. What it is debated is whether the EU has a progressive vision on the immigrants' rights issue or not. There is proof of a sort of left-wing progressivism in the Commission, which nevertheless more obvious in the Commission components that deal with social insertion (Hooghe, 1997).

A Residents Charter would extend the EU citizens' rights from legal residents to third country citizens. The pro-migration lobby groups relied on the existence of agreements between the UE and third countries such as Turkey or the Maghreb countries to support their claims according to which these agreements give rights to

citizens of third countries and these rights should be extended to include all the legal residents coming from third countries (Guild, 1998).

If we synthesize the content of the whole paper we may conclude that we have supported with arguments the importance of the involvement of the whole institutional, political and lobby design of the European Union in dealing with the new challenges brought about by the migration phenomenon at the beginning of the 21st century.

The justification of the right to individual spatial mobility does not guarantee the respect of the individual's civic rights. An open framework of manifestation of a plurality of identity-related values and experiences does not guarantee either the individuals' integration in the macro-social system. The existence of a series of European and international organizations that militate in favor of the migrants' rights does not guarantee the observance of these rights by the state actors. All these arguments determine us to plead for a multidisciplinary analysis of the migration phenomenon.

In its capacity of relevant political actor not only in the continental but also in the international power equation, the European Union has great responsibility in providing the reception and expulsion structures designed for the individuals of the intra- and extra-community countries. Please also note last years' efforts, accelerated by the pressure exerted by migrants from third countries. Yet they do not suffice. Not even a common European migration-related policy could be a guarantee that the Union manages this phenomenon efficiently and that it may become a migrant integration model.

On the other hand, the mirage of the unknown and the argument of different circumstances have always determined people to explore new countries, new cultural areas and new economic social and political opportunities. The case report included in this paper confirms the general trend among young UAIC graduates to leave their country of origin, relying on the arguments described above.

It is the researchers' and specialists' duty to find common trans-disciplinary analysis elements and to provide the best solutions, together with the people in charge of public policies.

In other words, it may be important to militate not so much in favor of a complex institutional and political migration-related structure within the UE but rather in favor of the operationalization of specific concepts, often blurred and

sometimes only formally invoked as "highest courts", and not in the least as everyday realities. We refer here to the need to transpose "strong terms" such as tolerance, cosmopolitism, pluralism, diversity, integration, selflessness, etc. into a reality of social praxis.