

EMIGRATION AND GENDER IN BACĂU AND VASLUI COUNTIES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract: This study analyses gender emigration in Bacău and Vaslui counties, focusing on the main problem raised by it. The article starts with an analysis concerning the total emigrant registered at 2011 census. The second part brings forward the problem of emigration by gender which give a clear view over the situation present in the counties mentioned above. Starting from these remarks the article tries a report on the situation of the two counties using cartographic examples to provide a clearer picture of the situation and to facilitate subsequent comparisons between the two counties which faces various stages of emigration.

Key words: emigration, gender, demography, Bacău County, Vaslui County

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INTRODUCTION

Migration, a social phenomenon that has dominated almost over 3.1 million countrymen, as specialized institutions concluded, has many structural transformations that consider the individual as a participant in this process. This generalized concern for the issue of migration is therefore falling mainly on the two genres that once destabilized can affect a country's demographic specifics. Unfortunately, Romanian space represents important demographic imbalances as a result of a constant international migration. Pausing over the gender migration we may capture demographic changes, resulted as a consequence of „gendering” at macrospatial level, as we may also capture the medium and long-term effects at microspatial level. The perspective of analysis pursued in this article is primarily to identify those interferences that caused the transmission of

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this phenomenon, which has become a temporary or permanent way of life for many of the participants, seen from the perspective of both genders. In this article we analyse the cases of the two counties taken in the viewfinder, Bacau and Vaslui, using cartographic examples to provide a clearer picture of the situation and to facilitate subsequent comparisons between the two counties, neighboring counties that faced and still faces various stages of migration.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Migration is infiltrated in all social layers of the population following an unwritten plan and access roads led by relationships. Opening to Europe led to the intensification of this report which has consequences visible today in choosing temporary residence, family building, prospects for employment and education of those left behind. Being a social phenomenon, takes into account the two genres, that have responded to this challenge with a unexpected preference and active participation as a result of a need, a result that is translated by a reduction of population in the area of departure. Sometime the strong impact of migration is obvious like in the case of Ozana - Pirig Basin (Bistriceanu & Brânduș, 2012) or the case of Buzău Subcarpathians area (Stoica, 2013), where, due to negative migration rate, population number is decreasing.

Simelane (1999) states that when we study the impact of migration on gender structure we must take into account the distances to which they migrate because there might appear significant variations. In general, migration is higher among men than among women when it comes to migration at long distances. Domination of female migration flows is expected when traveling to shorter distances. Clearly, the pattern of migration presented by Simelane has an effect of reducing rates by gender in the origin country and a growth in the destination country. As a result of international migration model mentioned above, the number of women who take care of the household increases in countries of origin - at least during the absence of male migrants. Kanaiaupuni (2000) found that Mexican men are more likely to migrate than mexican women, with the exception of exceeding the age of 50, when women often migrate to reunite with family members or to join their husbands abroad once their children become adults. Nowadays it can be noticed a high mobility of women no matter the distance, not the distances being the one that influence male-female difference, but we tend to think that destination country and the chances of finding a job there are decisive. Thus, sometime women migrate in far higher numbers and an example has certainly been the experience of women from Maghreb in the EU region (Khachani, 2001; Sorensen, 2004). As they often go abroad to serve families of a higher social status, while they pass their own family caring role to other family members (Asis, 2003), women are sometime called „*servants of globalization*” these being the case of Romanian women too.

Louka et al., 2006, argue that although in the first phase of migration, it is possible that the number of male migrants to be much higher, once they become stable in the destination country, wives and their children will also migrate in order to reunite their family in the country of destination. The same thing happened in Romania where, at the beginning, until 2001, Romanian emigration was highly selective, with a predominance of men migrants (Sandu, 2006).

Since 2001 the trend has changed by reducing the selectivity of gender migration, men and women having close percentages in the new Romanian Diaspora established since 1990, according to the 2009 study conducted by the Presidential Commission for Social and Demographic Risk Analysis. However the study accomplished by Suditu (2013) shows that the first 10 years after the revolution the total percentage of women who have emigrated was 52.3% and the flow of emigration after 2000 is characterized by a high degree of feminization, reaching 59.8% from the total emigration. Also noteworthy is that in 2004, 62% of emigrants were women aged from 26 to 40 years (Roman & Voicu, 2010).

According to the National Statistics Institute, on 1 January 2013, the number of women exceeds the number of men, above 50 years, given that, at birth, the boys outnumber girls. From these data it can be seen an overall numerical difference between these two genres, difference that

put in difficulty the demographic status of a state. Along with this, which is considering birth and occupational risks faced by the two genres during lifelong, international migration occurs leading to a reduction in the average annual population of almost 104,200 Romanian people since the early '90 (INSSE- International Migration Report, 2014).

In this context, one can deduce the particular intensity of this phenomenon manifested itself like an epidemic, transforming the idea of working abroad in a „*savior medicine*” for both genres, especially for those between 19-45 of years. This massive departure, registered or not, determined, during the last decade, changes in structure by age, especially among women, motivated by the departure of younger age group 25-34 years, in conjunction with decreased of reproductive capacity, today being one of the reasons why the birth rate in Romania is among the lowest on the continent (Arsene, 2010).

Looking this process from the perspective of both genders it can be seen meandering course of the two groups that debuted with male emigrants, and in the meantime joined by feminine emigrants who surpassed masculine emigrants as an effect of economic crisis in the productive sectors represented by the construction and mechanical metal, economic crisis that affected European countries. Thus, if at the beginning international migration was supported by male emigrants this situation has changed over time and migration became a target for young women with secondary education in search of a job well paid, says Georgescu (2008).

MIGRATION AS A SOCIAL EPIDEMIC IN BACĂU AND VASLUI COUNTIES

The relevance of this analysis stops mainly on identifying some differences in the gender emigration concerning the two counties here in discussion, Bacău and Vaslui. Starting from these, the article try to relate to the situation of the two counties taken in the viewfinder, using cartographic examples to provide a clearer picture of the situation and to facilitate subsequent comparisons between the two counties, neighboring counties, that face various stages of emigration. Just like a plague, this phenomenon has penetrated the mind of every individual in need that decided to choose emigration to find a better paid job.

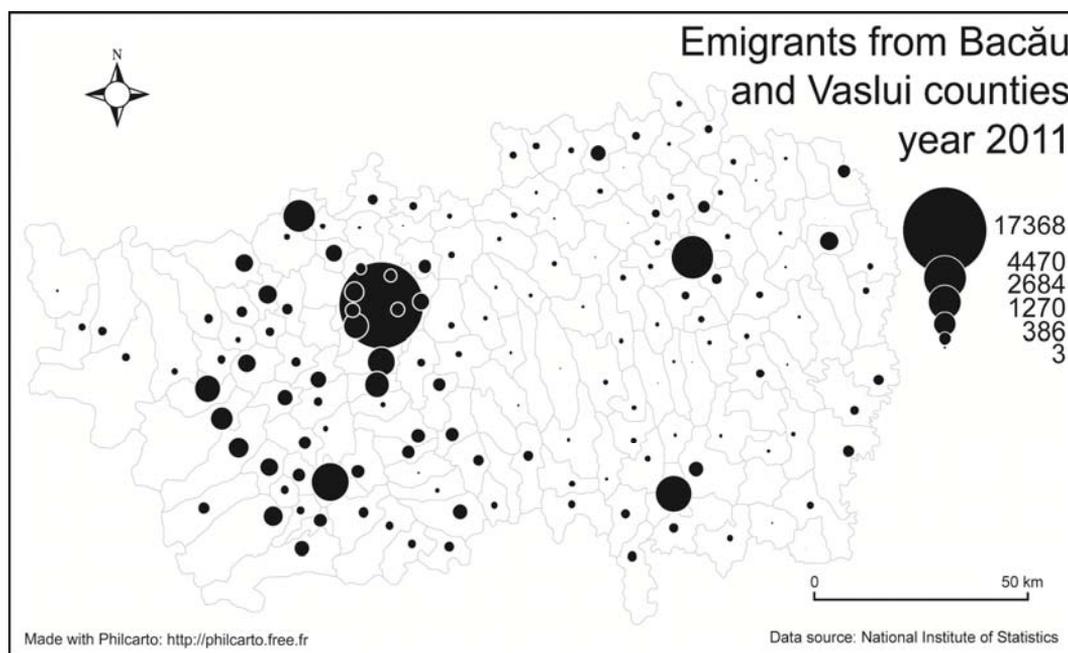


Figure 1. Emigrants from Bacău and Vaslui Counties, in 2011
(Data Source: National Institute of Statistics)

If, at the level of Bacău County, emigration was driven by religious bond due to international migration of the Catholic communities - especially towards Italy (Muntele & Atudorei, 2011), in Vaslui County the community was the main factor. The traditional was put „*in face of change and abandonment of a society that cannot find the desired place*” (Voicu, 2004, p. 2) and, at the census of October 2011, the extent of this phenomenon in Vaslui was evident when were reviewed 415 694 inhabitants, of which 20 195 were away for a long period, with an additional 5724 temporary left. The results of the 2011 census reveals, unexpectedly, a large size of external migration. Given these data it can be noticed that the temptation of migration expanded and the leave of young people contribute to the destabilization of demographic factors that a country depends of (Horvath, 2008). Emigration in Bacău County is even more accentuate than in Vaslui County, so we can expect to more evident consequences on Bacău. Bacău Town can be considered the pioneer of emigration, at the level of these two counties, given that there were registered 17 368 emigrants at the 2011 census. Vaslui, Onești, Bârlad and Buhuși register also significant number of emigrants, even if far from the situation present in Bacău town. When is about repartition of emigration by areas it can be noticed the Eastern part of Bacău county in oposite with the western part of it, Eastern part registering small number of emigrants but that is also because there are rural areas with predominant elderly population. Most of rural areas of Vaslui county face the same reality, registering smaller numbers of emigrants, less people choosing to work abroad, agriculture beeing most of the time their more viable option (figure 1).

The map of differences in terms of female and male migrants use cold colors to show predominant women emigrants and warm colors show the opposite, male holding a higher percentage in emigration. In Bacau County, excluding the cities Dărmănești and Comănești, all other cities are characterized by a predominantly female emigration, on the top of the county being Bacau town. In the same category also are included rural areas like Secuieni, Ungureni, Vultureni, Podu Turcului etc. Vaslui County is characterized by a higher number of administrative units with mostly female emigrants than Bacău County, including here cities like Vaslui, Huși, Negrești and rural areas like Vulturești, Tanacu, Ibănești, Costești Muntenii de Jos etc. Most administrative units still stands with a predominance of male emigrants and here are mentioned Pungești, Cozmești, Botești, Iana, Ivești, Epureni, Mălușteni in Vaslui county and Stănișești in Bacău county. Most of these administrative units share the same situation: poor accessibility, part of the economic deficit areas of these counties which explain to some extent the low number of emigrant or position closer to the cities. The fact that men migrate more shows that there is still present a preserved traditional mentality in some rural areas, women choosing to stay home and take care of children and household. It is therefore apparent from the graphical material a female predilection of emigration in cities - less from Comănești, it might be explained by the predominance of mining in the past - unlike rural areas where men emigrants predominate. It might be also different behaviors as in cities they often go with family while in villages men are preferentially emigrating even if there are exceptions so it should be noted that the information is incomplete and does not reveal all its forms and migration (figure 2).

If we analyze these data percentage at county level, the situation is as follows: emigrants in Bacău County monopolies at the expense of Vaslui County, situation previously stated, and the distribution by gender shows that male emigrants holds the first place. Comparing the two counties note that the difference male-female is more visible in Bacau County than in Vaslui County, but in both cases men seem to take much easier the decision to emigrate than women, but as we have seen in the map above is not appropriate to generalize as the situations are different from territory to territory depending on motivational factors of migration. If we look at the consequences of this phenomenon, we can say that, at the level of these two counties, they lost through emigration a more significant number of male population than female persons.

The chart below highlights the differences in terms of mobility of both genders analyzed. Bacău captures a high male predominance while in Vaslui County these differences are almost imperceptible. Despite of the traditionality surrounding Vaslui county and quite unfavorable

position as an opening to emigrate networks, this county presents less differences between the two genders despite of the latest debated of emigration, comparing with Bacău. This situation can be explained by the fact that those who leave become role models and thus have managed to influence those in their communities to the point of deciding to leave them too. Comparing with Bacău, where religious branch was predominant, in Vaslui pathways were various from secure contracts or empty promises, through relatives, friends, alone or using religious branch, especially for those from Eastern county.

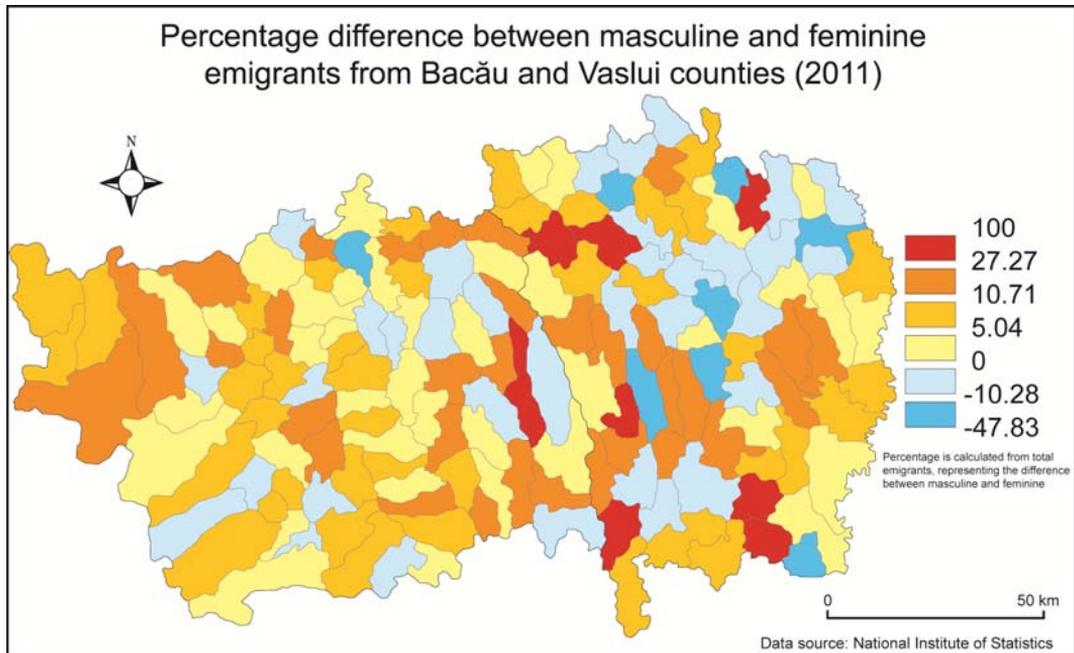


Figure 2. Percentage difference between masculine and feminine emigrants from Bacău and Vaslui Counties
(Data Source: National Institute of Statistics)

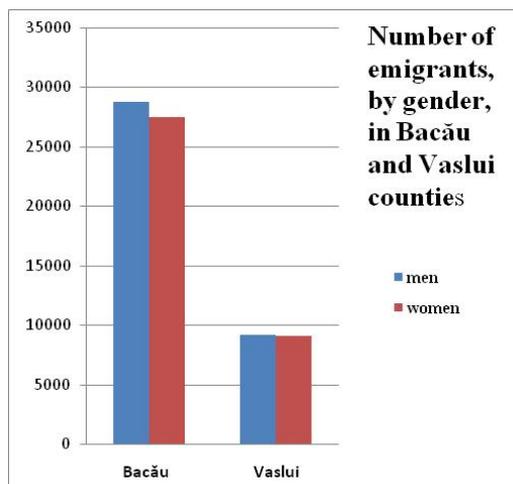


Figure 3. Number of emigrants by gender, in Bacău and Vaslui Counties
(Data Source: National Institute of Statistics)

CONCLUSIONS

Although it cannot be exactly determined what kind of emigration practice each gender, they integrated into this wave of departures pursuing a well defined purpose. If it is to find a main cause of the emigration emergence, at the level of Bacău and Vaslui counties, it is important to acknowledge the changes in economic structures that created a surplus of population. Many individuals have seen and still see emigration like a viable option, even if they often deny the possibility to become a definitive one.

These two counties register differences by the way that emigration started, but also through the expansion and networks used. Bacău County is characterised by a more complex network dominated, at the beginning, by religion and a constant of men emigration comparing with the neighboring county, Vaslui, that, in the context of industrial decay reiteration, the employed population became inactive and that determined the entry of a risky solutions, but which gave hope of material advantages. A special case is Vaslui which entered in this race of emigration in a late phase, but this „*social epidemic*” became contoured and succeeded to develop in all areas. In both counties is found that the large number of emigrant women causes a decrease in the population which has a greater impact than male emigration.

If we consider the gender emigration through an economic view, it can be seen, according to data from the Department of Statistics, in the two counties analyzed, that the proportion of unemployment women has ascendant trends till 2009 when it becomes descendant which may lead to think that emigration created an effect of lower female unemployment at short term, but determined without doubt a declining birth rates. Labor emigration generates what we call the family crisis and the feminization of emigration deepens the crisis so that the family is no longer united; a family where wife or, even worse, mother is gone works very hard or even fall apart.

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