

SECȚIUNEA 11: ECONOMETRIE ȘI STATISTICĂ ECONOMICĂ

THE IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

IMPACTUL MIGRAȚIEI ASUPRA ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNTULUI SUPERIOR DIN REPUBLICA MOLDOVA

MUNTEANU Alina, student, Specialitatea: FB

Academia de Studii Economice din Moldova

Republica Moldova, Chișinău, str. Bănulescu-Bodoni 61, www.ase.md

e-mail autor: alina.munteanu2002@icloud.com

Rezumat. *Procesul migrațional din Republica Moldova devine tot mai alarmant în ultimii ani. Astfel, se lasă o amprentă majoră asupra sistemului educațional din țară, iar în special, sunt afectate instituțiile de învățământ superior. Tinerii nu renunță la visul lor de a obține diplomă, însă ei preferă să și-l îndeplinească peste hotarele țării. Scopul cercetării este de a analiza corelația între migrația tinerilor și consecințele exodului de intelect pentru universitățile din Republica Moldova. În urma investigării s-au stabilit principalele cauze pentru optarea studiilor de peste hotare și se va afla, în baza chestionarului realizat în cadrul cercetării, părerea subiectivă a studenților din anul I, atât celor înscriși într-o instituție de învățământ superior din Republica Moldova, cât și a celor ce obțin diploma de licență peste hotarele țării.*
Cuvinte cheie: *Exod, Student, Universitate, Migrație, Calitate, Oportunități.*

JEL CLASSIFICATION: C1, C83

INTRODUCTION

Migration means the movement of people from one country to another for a variety of motives. It is a well-known phenomenon for nowadays world, that drives and empowers developed countries. It is, also, what leads to collapse, in case of developing states, including the Republic of Moldova. Its repercussions on country's higher education system are not taken into consideration. Nevertheless, the latest data provided by Moldovan National Bureau of Statistics confirms that universities have suffered enormously in the last years due to increasing rates of exodus. In order to comprehend the issue of the research, many aspects were analyzed, regarding the migration of young people and the number of students enrolled in Moldovan universities in the last years.

CONTENT

In order to tackle the issue of the research, several scientific sources have been analyzed, namely the following: The data provided by the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova regarding the numbers of Moldovan emigrants and the digits which represent how many students are enrolled in Moldovan higher education institutions. As well, another important source of information was a questionnaire, elaborated specifically for 1st students, where they offered their opinions in terms of higher education system in the Republic of Moldova.

For a better classification of the data, two types of methodology were used: Quantitative method, specifically Casual – Comparative Research, which allowed This allowed quantifying yearly numbers regarding young migrants and students enrolled in a Moldovan university, also to establish cause-effect relationship between the variables. Next, Qualitative Method, videlicet Questionnaire, which was elaborated to see the topic from a perspective, coming directly from the students.

First element represents is the yearly number of emigrants based on state border crossing ^[1]. In the graph are shown three age groups: 15-19, 20-24 and 25-29 years old. From another perspective, it

can be intuited as: a. First age group - high-school graduates; b. Second age group –1st year students Bachelor’s degree students up to Master’s degree alumni; c. Third age group - beginning or finishing their PhD degree. It is notable that adolescents had the lowest rates of emigration, starting with 9567 in 2014, ending with 9471 in 2018. The numbers remained almost the same, with some fluctuations. This is influenced by the fact that this age group is mostly consisted of 18-19 years old people, who leave the country in order to study. In the second age group, from year 2014 until 2018, the numbers of emigrants rose by 882, even if the data from 2018 shows a slight decrease in comparison to two previous years. Finally, the last group of 25-29 years old persons reached its peak in 2017, followed by 2018, with more than 22 250 emigrants yearly.

Even if some indicators had registered insignificant decreases between the years, it still can be concluded that the number of young people who leave the country is steadily growing and affecting many social aspects, including the higher education system.

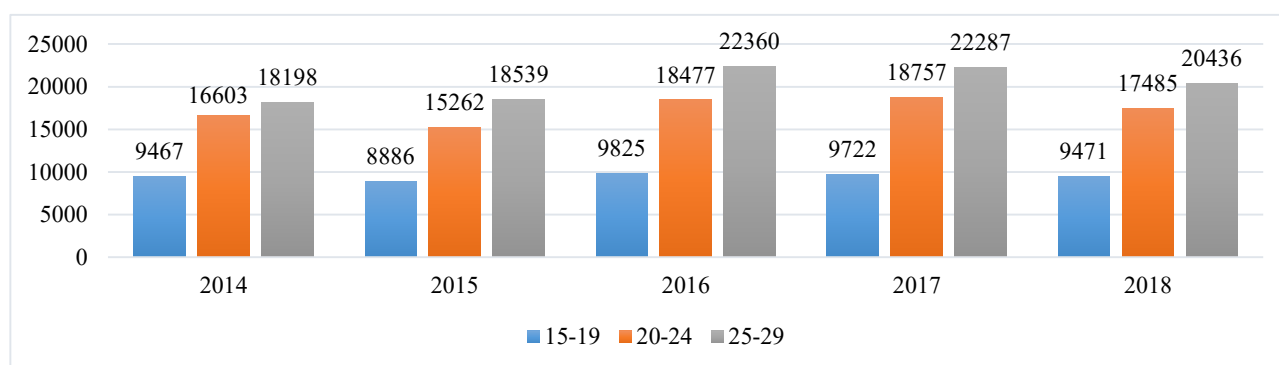


Figure 1. Young Moldovan emigrants based on state border crossing, grouped by age, years 2014 -2018

Source: Elaborated by the author based on data offered by National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova [1]

After analyzing data regarding the exodus of young people, it is crucial to present further the yearly number of students enrolled in higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova [2].

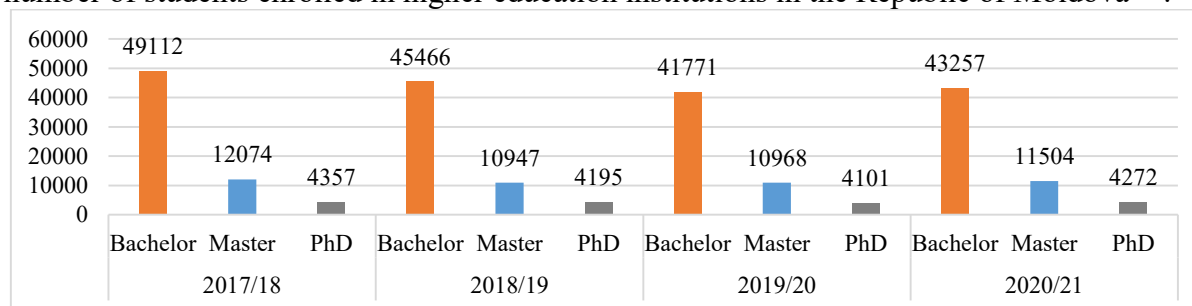


Figure 2. Students enrolled in a Moldovan higher education institution, grouped by cycle, years 2017/18 – 2020/21

Source: Elaborated by the author based on data offered by National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova [2]

According to the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, in the years 2017-2018, 49112 undergraduates, 12074 postgraduates and 4357 doctoral students were studying at a Moldovan university. In the next two periods, a drastic negative change is notable. Per instance, in comparison with 2017/2018 period, in 2018/19 the number of students in each area had fallen down: Bachelor’s degree – by 3646 people; Master’s degree – by 1127 people; PhD degree – by 162 people; whereas in 2019/20 period: Bachelor’s degree – by 7341 people, Master’s degree – 1106 people; PhD degree – by 256 people. It is prominent that the dynamic in this case is negative.

From the presented information, the following ideas can be concluded:

- The trend of opting for a foreign university among young Moldovan people had become more popular over those years, namely between freshly graduated high-school students who want to apply for an undergraduate programme.

- The discrepancy between people enrolled in a postgraduate programme is not as noticeable as in the 1st cycle, because most of Bachelor alumni had already been preferring to apply for a foreign Master's degree programme before the year of 2017. In addition, those who did not leave the country are usually the ones who had found a job or an internship in Moldova.

Moreover, what stands out in the above chart is that the evolution of the situation took a different turn in 2020/21. In contrast with the previous years, viz. 2019/20, the number of students enrolled in a Bachelor's cycle rose with 1486 persons, in a Master's cycle – 536 and in a PhD cycle – with 171. This positive outcome was influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, followed by the restrictions regarding travelling and studying, which compelled school leavers to opt for a Moldovan higher education institution.

For a better perspective of the crisis of higher education system, below is presented the data concerning the total number of people enrolled in a Moldovan university^[3], sc. the years 1995/96, 2006/07 and 2019/20. This comparison was elaborated in order to see that Moldova has regressed in terms of the development of the higher education system. In the year 1995 the number of students (circa 55300 people) started to grow significantly up until 2006/07, when it reached its highest peak of 124369 students enrolled (rise of 124%). Afterwards, data has shown continuous drop until 2019, when the numbers have reached the minimum quota in the last 24 years, namely 56840 people.

This retreat to the 90's results demonstrates once again that Moldovan youth sees higher quality of education and life somewhere far away, rather in their home country.

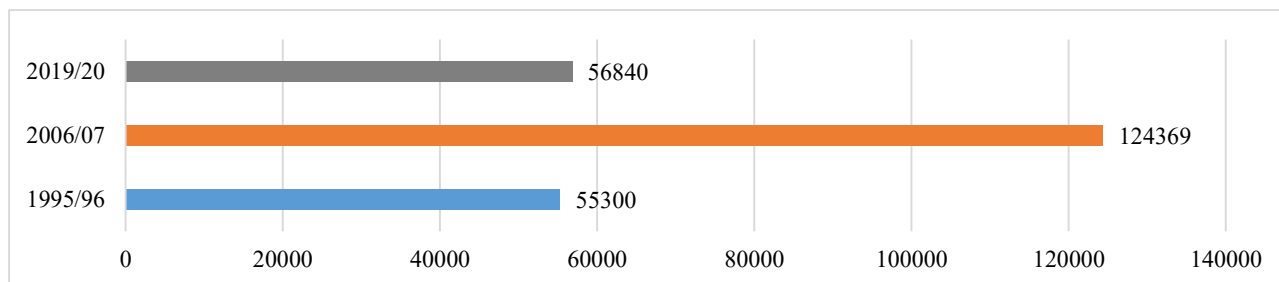


Figure 3. Total number of students enrolled in a Moldovan higher education institution

Source: Elaborated by the author based on data offered by National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova ^[3]

There is a vast amount of reasons for choosing a foreign university. To delve deeper into the problem, a questionnaire was elaborated, in which participated 1st year students (59 people), who are enrolled in a Moldovan university (48 people) and those who preferred to study abroad (11 people).

Questions were grouped accordingly to the person's status: A. Students who study in the Republic of Moldova; B. Students who study in a foreign university.

A. The first question was if they remained in Moldova willingly or it was influenced by external factors.

Thirty-seven students answered "Yes", sustaining their choice mainly by the following arguments: There are many opportunities to build dream career at home. The diploma is accepted and acknowledged by the EU. It was difficult to leave the family at this young age. Education is cheaper in comparison to European universities, but the competences and knowledge gained is at the same level.

Those 11 students who answered "No" to the question mentioned before, motivated their answer only by two explanations: Romanian citizenship had not been yet received. Also, the pandemic has caused a lot of issues, such as crossing the border, e-learning and many restrictions that made studying in Moldova the best option at that moment.

However, 6 out of 11 confirmed that they are going to apply to a foreign university in the following year, therefore terminating the studies here.

Another important question asked was to grade from 1 – 10, how satisfied they are with the quality of the Moldovan higher education system. The answers are presented below ^[4]:

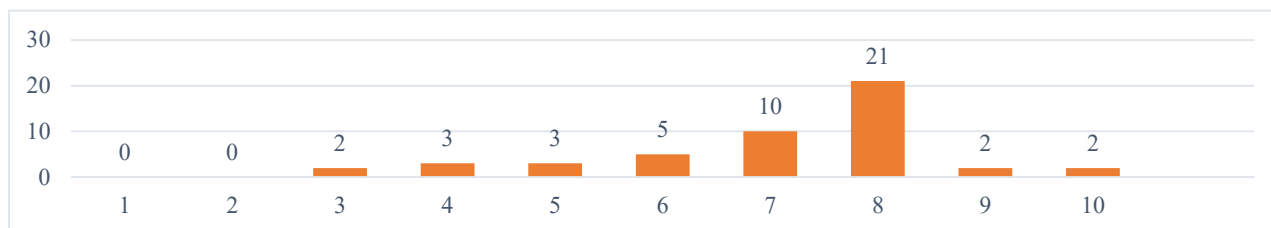


Figure 4. Scale of satisfaction of the students with the quality of the Moldovan higher education system

Source: Elaborated by the author based on an individually elaborated questionnaire ^[4]

According to the data, more than 52,2% of the students are content with the level of the Bachelor's degree Programme. However, there is still almost half of the students, who are not satisfied with the quality of the studies; five of them even graded it below mark 5.

Students, who study at a foreign university, supported their ideas with arguments such as: Higher quality of the studies, including modern methods of teaching, better technological equipment and more scientific sources available for research. Subjects that are not taught in Moldova. Free education and brighter carrier opportunities. As well, encouragement of self-expression.

Ten out of eleven students stated that foreign higher education system is better and they will not return to Moldova after finishing their studies.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing many aspects, it can be concluded that throughout the years young people have started opting increasingly for Degree Programmes far away from their home. Moldovan universities lose prospective minds and the country regresses. In order to solve this issue a considerable change is required, so that young generation will confidently know that the diploma they receive home is just as valuable as a foreign one, also that their life and career will be better in Moldova.

REFERENCES:

1. National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, *Population and demographic processes, Population with habitual residence and revised demographic indicators (2014-2020), Migration, Emigrants and immigrants based on state border crossing, by sex and age groups, 2014-2018*. Available at: <https://statbank.statistica.md>
2. National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, *Social statistics, Higher education, Students in higher education institutions by general field of study and cycles (2017/18 – 2020/21)*. Available at: <https://statbank.statistica.md>
3. National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, *Social statistics, Higher education, Students in higher education institutions by general field of study and cycles(years 1995/96, 2006/07, 2019/20)*. Available at: <https://statbank.statistica.md>
4. Individually elaborated questionnaire, “*The Impact of Migration on Higher Education System in the Republic of Moldova*”, available in Romanian at: <https://forms.gle/Mw9D1JsgT9aF34UH6>

Coordonator științific: CHICU Olga, lect. univ.
Academia de Studii Economice din Moldova
Republica Moldova, Chișinău, str. Bănulescu-Bodoni 61, www.ase.md
e-mail: chicu.olga@ase.md