

## CORRELATIONS BETWEEN MIGRATION AND EMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

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### Abstract

*Irrespective if of temporary or permanent nature, the phenomenon of youths' migration is more and more an integral part of contemporary life. Globalisation, together with market liberalisation and global economic integration encourages a mobile workforce but, also, underpins the increase of the standard of living gap between the developed and the developing world. Even if youths migration has a positive impact both for the country receiving the human capital (diminishment of the labour force deficit, production increase, slowing down the process of active population ageing, etc.), and for the country of origin (free jobs, diminishment of the unemployment rate, consistent remittances, improvement of the living standard for the families of those who migrate), still if not properly managed this phenomenon can generate unfavourable effects in particular in the area of countries supplying human capital to the other countries. The negative effects of this phenomenon are diverse from the ones regarding their demographic nature, to the ones of human capital value and competences' nature that can contribute to economic growth, or fiscal losses because of the state investment in training the human capital that migrates subsequently, thus no longer contributing to the payment of any taxes and duties to the state of origin. The present paper presents a brief analysis of the developments of the youths' labour market at the European Union level and in Romania and of the youths' migration for jobs.*

**Key words:** youth, youth's employment rate, youth's unemployment rate, youth's labour migration

### INTRODUCTION

Under the conditions of the globalisation, international migration is a symbol in the increase of interdependencies. International migration underwent a constant increase in time, and in the last years, youth migration represents a relatively high weight in total migration flows with a significant impact on the countries of origin, transit countries, and on the countries of destination.

According to the most recent estimates of the United Nations Organisation [14], at world level, in the year 2013 there were 232 million migrants, representing 3.2% from the total population of Earth. From among these, 35 million migrants were under the age of 20 years (on increase by 4 million individuals against 2000) and 40 million migrants with ages between 20 and 29 years of age.

The existing data regarding the size and structure of migration flows for a certain period of time are less reliable. The motivations of the youths to migrate are very

often related to searching sustainable living means, jobs, decent working conditions, and the poor economic perspectives in their countries of origin. Continuing education, family reunification, or vocational training, as well as escaping regions affected by war, persecution, crises or natural disasters are also important factors leading to the increase in the size of migration flows among youths.

Migration flows shaped by youths are not homogenous. They come from various socio-economic environments and represent a wide range of profiles and competences.

The unemployment rate among youths at world level reached in 2013 to 13.1% that is almost three times higher than the unemployment rate among adults. The regions that are most affected are in the Middle East and North Africa, and in some regions of Latin America and the Caribbean's and in Southern Europe.

The sizes of youths' labour force employment and their migration turn into stringent challenges in the last years, both for

governments and for the sustainable development.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodology used in paper aims to ensure the achievement of its objectives. *Descriptive statistical analysis* (charts, tables) was used in particular for viewing and summarizing the information detached from a set of data. *The classification analysis* was used to establish a typology of youth employment and unemployment by creating groups of countries with similar labour market characteristics of youth and their vulnerability. *The factorial analysis* was used to identify the vulnerabilities of young people in the labour market, the effects of long-term unemployment among them, the effect of migration on the labour market vulnerability. In the analyzes carried were used the data published in Annual Reports (2008-2014) of the National Labour Force Employment Agency, the TEMPO-Online database of the National Institute of Statistics of Romania, studies and statistics of the European Commission, the World Youth Report published by the United Nations, studies and statistics on migration conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and other international organization, specialized works published in the country and abroad.

The European Union which generates about 20% of the world economic output has still not managed to identify a balance between austerity and economic growth after a decade of out of control public expenditures which concluded, apparently, with a W-shaped recession.

Only five countries with developed economies registered during the last five years an increase in the number of employees: Austria, Germany, Luxemburg, Malta and Poland.

The estimates realised at the European Union level indicate that this percentage could be even higher if youths are taken into account who either gave up job searching, or decided to prolong their period of studies because of the extremely unfavourable conditions on the labour force market.

The analyses performed by the International Labour Organisation highlights that the number of young unemployed shall not decrease, at least until 2016. An additional pressure on the unemployment rate is expected when those extending their period of studies because of the limited period in finding a job, shall finally enter the labour force market.

Especially, of concern are the youths who are neither employed, nor in education or training, known under the acronym of NEET in many countries, and as the “disconnected youths” in the United States and as the “neither-nor” youths in Spanish speaking countries.

The economic-financial crisis reflects a strong interdependence between the change in the economic conditions and the development of unemployment among youths. In several studies are approached the issues generated by the current economic cycle on the youths [2] – [5]. Still, the differences between the unemployment level among youths and the unemployment intensity in various countries cannot be regarded as being only the effects of the current economic recession.

These statements are supported by the statistics for a longer period of time regarding the unemployment level among youths and by the relationship between the unemployment rate among youths and the unemployment rate for adults.

Initially, from the analysis of unemployment among youths, special emphasis was laid on the structural components (structural changes in industries, non-matching skills with respect to market requirements, specific characteristics of the youths’ categories, etc.) [4]. At the beginning of this century, in approaching the unemployment rates also the effects of the economic and institutional cycles started to be taken into account, as well.

Authors such as Blanchflower and Freeman [4], Jimeneo and Rodriguez-Palenzuela [9] have shown that the effects of the economic cycles are more marked for the unemployment among youths than for the one among adult individuals.

Gangl analysed the impact of labour force market institutions on the labour force specific to each country and of the measures and policies of social protection on youths' unemployment [7].

Lacking length of service, the specific of the human capital within the company, the labour force market experience of the youths [10], the higher probability of working within the company for a determined period of time and other employment forms under precarious conditions are but a few of the factors leading to the increase in the number of unemployed among youths.

Under such circumstances, the transition from school to labour tends to become a chain of temporary training, education, military or civil compulsory service series, or of other activities, also only for some periods of time, which are very often in an institutional framework characterised in its turn, more often than not by set entry dates, outside the market and that does not take into account the requirements of the labour force market. Under these conditions, the youths accumulate less experience in searching for a job and do not develop a clear image about the job and/or incomes that would satisfy them. To these is added also the fact that in some countries the youths have fewer resources than older workers, while in others they have a stronger financial attachment to the family, which makes them less mobile in their searching for a job.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the year 2013, the employment rate of youths with ages between 15-24 years of age at EU-28 level was of 33.3%, on decrease by 8.7 pp. against the year 2008 [6].

Also in the year 2013, in the vast majority of member-states the long-term unemployment rate among youths continued to increase, the highest values being registered in Greece (30.5%), Spain (21.9%), Italy (21%) and Slovakia (20.6%). In Romania, the long-term unemployment rate among youths was of 9.3%, on decrease by - 0.5 pp against the preceding year.

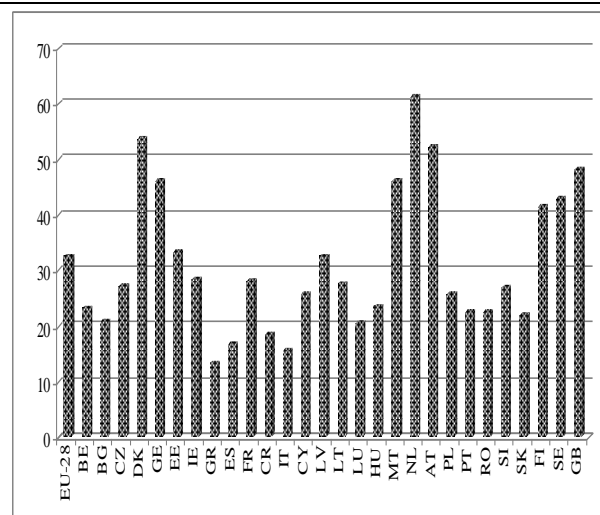


Fig. 1. Employment rate development for youths with ages between 15-24 years of age in the European Union  
 Source: Eurostat Statistics, www.eu.europa.eu

In most member-states, the employment rate of youths with ages between 15 and 24 years of age was higher for men, save for Ireland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden (Fig.1).

The **unemployment rate** for the age segment under 25 years of age was of 23.5% in the year 2013, on increase by 7.7 pp against the year 2008 (Fig.2).

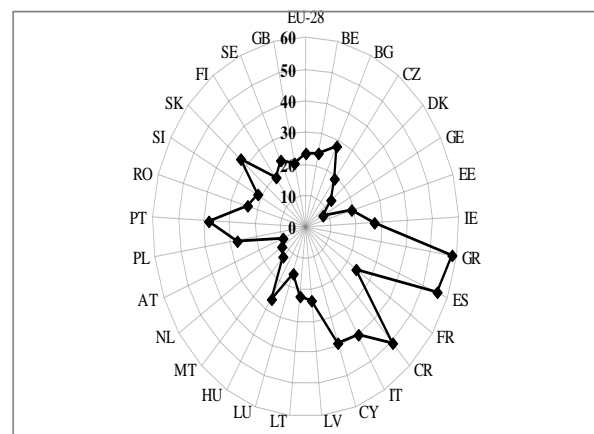


Fig. 2. Unemployment rate for youths with ages between 15 and 24 years of age in EU-28 countries  
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The **unemployment rate among youths is also dependent on their training level**. By and large, the highest unemployment is recorded among youths with pre-school, primary and lower secondary education (ISCED levels 0-2). Save for Greece, where the unemployment rate among youths with higher education (ISCED levels 5 and 6) was by approximately 6 pp higher than the one registered for youths with pre-school, primary and lower secondary educations (ISCED 0-2), Romania and Cyprus where the difference between the unemployment rate for youths with higher education and the youths with education corresponding to the ISCED levels 0-2 or 3-4 are significant.

According to the data supplied by the National Institute of Statistics from Romania [1], the **unemployment rate in Romania** for individuals with ages between 15-19 years of age, and 20 to 24 years of age, in the year 2013, reached a share of 31.5%, respectively 22.1%.

The evolution of the main macroeconomic indicators reflecting the situation of youths on labour market in Romania for the transition period does not highlight positive developments for individuals with ages between 15 and 24 years of age. Nevertheless, the few jobs existing in the country were fully put to good use, fact that cannot be said for several member countries of the European Union.

One of the issues facing Romania is the continuing population ageing which adds pressure to the social security system, to the pensions' fund, and to the educational system. The data supplied by the National Labour Force Employment Agency [11] indicate that the unemployment structure on age groups by the end of the year 2014 was:: 78185 unemployed under 25 years of age, 39024 unemployed with ages between 25 and 29 years of age, 102188 unemployed between 30 and 39 years of age; 129554 unemployed between 40 and 49 de years of age; 60679 unemployed between 50 and 55 years of age; 68708 unemployed over 55 years of age. Unemployed with upper secondary and post-

secondary education represented 19.27% from total registered unemployed, and unemployed with higher-education 6.05% (Fig.3).

The analysis of the statistics regarding unemployment development indicates that the structure of the number of registered unemployed on age groups maintained the same development as in the period 2008-2013, with periodical increases, the crisis period exerting no influence on this structure.

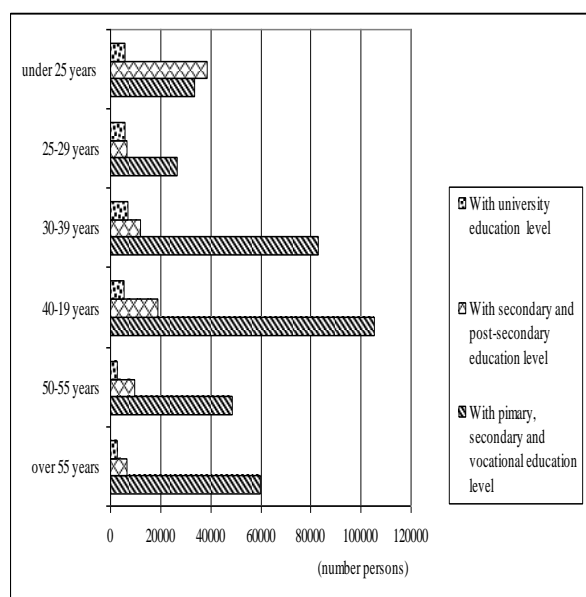


Fig. 3. Distribution of unemployed under 25 years of age, according to educational level, in the year 2014  
 Source: Unemployment situation on 31 December 2014, ANOFM, www.anofm.ro

With respect to long-term unemployment, by the end of December 2014, in the NLFEA [11], [12] were registered 20226 young individuals under 25 years of age in unemployment for over 6 months (which represents 25.87% from total unemployed less than 25 years of age).

Unemployment and youth unemployment rate are strongly related to the **labour force market participation of the youths**. The transition from school to work, the average age at which youths enter the labour market depend on the skills and the national systems of general interest and/or in the education and vocational training. The extended period of education in a certain country has as consequence the increase in the average age of the new entries on the labour market in time.

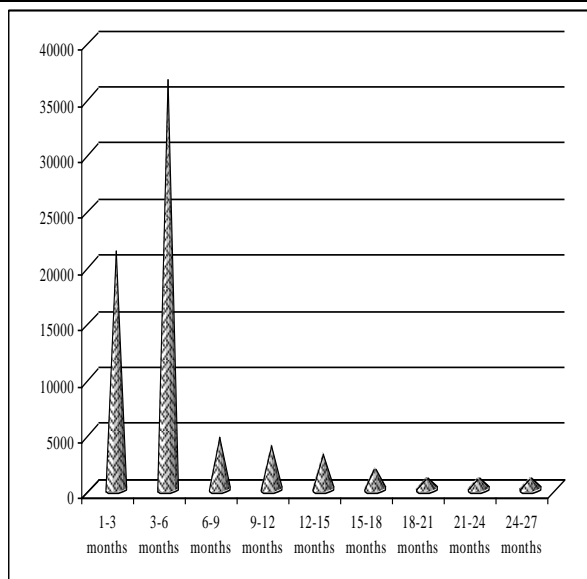


Fig. 4. Young unemployed distributions according to unemployment duration in the year 2014

Source: Unemployment situation on 31 December 2014, ANOFM, www.anofm.ro

From the viewpoint of labour market participation, the amplitude and dynamics of the unemployment among youths was changing between the European countries for the last two decades.

The outcomes of the statistical analyses performed at European Union level indicate the presence of some measures adopted at national level for diminishing the unemployment rate among youths, such as extending education or returning to school, inter-regional mobility, etc.

The unprecedented development of new technologies, the socio-demographic and political circumstances are just a part of the factors leading to increased mobility of capital, goods, services, technologies, knowledge and individuals.

The data supplied by various analyses on youths' migration indicate that to their vast majority the youths migrate searching for decent jobs to financially support themselves and their families. In many cases, this motivation is not still a priority, the youths migrating for increasing their education level, for personal development possibilities and opportunities.

The migration reasons of the youths vary from personal considerations, socio-economic circumstances to the political situation in the

country of origin. Most of the times, the main driving force in the migration decision of youths is the perceived level of inequality with respect to the opportunities on the labour force market, the incomes, human rights and standards of living between the countries of origin and the countries of destination. In general, the probability of migration is higher among youths with at least secondary education.

The information and communication technology (ICT) plays an important role in youths' migration. Youths with access to information about the opportunities from other regions of the Earth are more likely to take advantage of them. Also, it can be said that ICT changed the nature of transnational communication and, to a certain extent, the cultural experience of migration allowing young migrants to remain connected to those in the country of origin, and to face easier the adjustment challenges in the destination country.

Also, in the migration process an important role is played by social networks. These have a role in the migration decision, in the communication within the Diaspora communities, allowing for virtual contact with friends and family members in the country of origin and for supplying information and assistance to potential young migrants. Additionally, by means of ICT, the knowledge and skills gained in the destination country can be transferred to the communities from Diaspora or from the country of origin, thus contributing to the development process of the country of origin.

The youths' migration generates both *positive effects* and also negative ones in the country of origin, or in the destination country. Thus, among the positive effects of youths migration can be reminded:

- Migration can offer for youths work opportunities that they would not have had in the country of origin, and their leaving contributes to diminishing internal pressures on the labour force market;
- For young girls, migration for education or for labour allows for postponing early age marriage;
- The remittances flow that young migrants

send to families in the country of origin can contribute to economic growth and diminishing poverty in their countries;

- Diaspora can be a transfer source for technology, investments, and capital for the countries of origin;
- The actual or “virtual” return of young skilled workers leads to increasing the level of the domestic human capital, of knowledge-transfer skills.

Next to the positive effects, youths’ migration has also *negative effects*, that is:

- Very often, youths’ migration leads to high-skills loss of workers as result of the requirements on the labour market;
- In the country of origin, the absence of parents can increase the vulnerability of children left at home and teenagers frequently have difficulties in their social relationships;
- The leaving of young parents can lead to increases in school abandon;
- Migration can expose youths, in particular young women migrants to higher abuse risks, to discrimination and exploitation. A high number of young migrant women from developing countries are employed in household activities.

For many young immigrants, finding a job is the main priority, but this can prove difficult to achieve. Their knowledge of the language from the country of destination, their skills and their educational level, the work experience before immigration are but a few of the determinant factors for the insertion of young migrants in the labour market from the country of destination. Young migrants that come from countries with poor economies and who have less skills and lower educational levels are, generally, those who remain frequently unemployed or who are forced to take jobs under difficult conditions, in the so-called “3Ds” (demeaning, dangerous, dirty). Youths with average or superior skills, with higher-education level and who speak the language of the country of destination and, sometimes, even have prior labour market experience before migrating have better chances to find a decent job after emigration. Depending on the labour force market from

the countries of destination, young migrants, even consistently educated and with higher skills level can be sometimes compelled to accept jobs that are not corresponding to their skills’ level. The lacking match between educational level and skills of the young migrants and the employment opportunities in the destination countries are due to the requirements on the respective markets, but also due to lacking recognition of the foreign skills by the bodies of the host-country.

During the last years, as result of the economic-financial crisis, a diminishment was registered in the employment rate among youths and a decrease in the employment opportunities among young migrants and, in some areas, the discontent of the non-native residents were even intensified. During the economic recession, the probability for young migrants to lose their jobs is higher than for other workers due to their education level, to the prior work experience before migration, and to the working language competencies, etc., but also due to the fact that very often they are employed in activity sectors that are correlated with the economic cycles or are of the seasonal type. This fact is ascertained by the unemployment rate among migrant workers as compared with the unemployment rate for the domestic population, computed at the level of some countries.

Even if the impact on the various categories is not linear and varies from one country to another, it is a fact that migrant workers were hit harder by the deterioration of the economic situation than the domestic employees. Also, it could be mentioned that a clear differentiations occurs in the way in which the crisis is felt by the workers inside the EU member-states and the ones in the countries outside the EU. While the unemployment rate for migrants from the EU increased in average by approximately 3% during the period 2008-2012, for migrants from outside the EU this rate increased by about 6%, and one of the possible explanations could be the higher propensity of migrants from EU member-states to return in the country of origin when they lose their jobs.

The OECD reports [8] or the ones of other international bodies prove that previous

economic recessions, from the one in the years 1973-74, 1981-82, and up to the Asian crisis in 1997, did not hinder the increasing trend of labour migration, people continuing to migrate and find jobs outside the borders of their countries also in these periods. The Eurostat statistics [6] indicate that all in all, as of the outbreak of the economic crisis in the year 2007, the net migration flows remained positive at the level of the European Union, the main destinations for migrants being in the year 2012, Germany and Great Britain.

**In Romania**, even though up to date there is no institution with a clear record of the number of Romanians who left the country and work abroad, it is estimated that a number of about 3 million. Next to the high number of citizens choosing to work in other countries, an important issue is represented by the young intellectuals opting to emigrate [13]. According to the data supplied by the National Institute of Statistics, from total young emigrants with ages between 25 and 34 years of age leaving Romania in the year 2009, a percentage of 46.7% from among them were higher-education graduates, their numbers being on constant increase for the last years.

A study developed by the Romanian Institute for Evaluation and Strategies at the beginning of the year 2014 reveals that 51.6% from the young individuals with ages between 18 and 35 years of age intend to work abroad. The same answer was given also by 75% from the respondents with higher education from all age categories, which emphasises the fact that many of those intending to emigrate are young and higher educated citizens.

Among the most important negative consequences that this phenomenon can have on Romania are counted:

- unrecoverable investments in education and vocational training of migrants;
- loss of budget contributions, represented by taxes and duties that these youths paid;
- speeding up the population ageing process;
- diminishment in the quality of education and research services, because this type of labour force is necessary for working in research, development and innovation fields;

The positive consequences that the high-

skilled young migrants feel with respect to labour, or to involvement in migration and/or to graduating a higher-education level abroad are:

- gaining specialisation in accordance with the requirements of the labour market;
- international increased employment opportunities as result of graduating a recognised university at international level;
- obtaining higher wage incomes;
- the opportunity of developing working knowledge, competences and skills;
- gaining new social and cultural experiences;
- professional development;
- access to high-tech;
- working in an attractive and creative environment;
- obtaining a higher standard of living.

By creating development opportunities for career and/or professional advancement, for facilitating/encouraging youths' participation in collective research and development projects both at national and international level, where they can successfully make use of gained skills, by increasing the standard of living in Romania, and by developing those university specialisations that are in accordance with the requirements/exigencies of the labour force market, but also through other measures, the decision factors from Romania could diminish the number of young migrants.

## CONCLUSIONS

The world historical development indicates that migration was an essential element of economic growth and of development in many countries and regions. In a globalising world and under the conditions of the information society, labour force migration shall be increasingly important for the entire world. Countries in the whole world must reformulate the migration regime for ensuring a high level of the employment rate on their labour markets, and for making sure that all participants in the labour market, including young migrants have the right to a decent job. Migration flows shaped by young migrants are defined and differentiated depending on their socio-economic level, on education and

on the competences and nationality profiles.

The migration motivations among youths are not significantly different from the ones of the adults; still, youths are more flexible with respect to their labour migration: temporary, against the long-term one.

The youths have the tendency to assume higher risks, they can emigrate even if the opportunity of a job is (not) certain and are several times motivated not only by the economic gain, but also by the wish for personal development.

Depending on the demands of the labour force market in the countries of destination, a young migrant that is highly educated or with a high skills level can obtain or not a job corresponding to the level of training.

Youths who graduated abroad a university education form, or who migrated for work return to their country of origin firstly to be “closer to the family” and if their countries of origin would ensure development opportunities for their career and/or of professional advancement, if the job would be corresponding to the training gained abroad, if the evaluation would be made based on objective criteria, and based exclusively on quality and performance, and if the developed activity would allow for using their skills/knowledge gained abroad, and if the advancement/promotion criteria would comply with the principle of competence.

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