Topic 6. International migration and migrant populations

Migration of Hungarian-speaking population from Romania: intentions and real processes

(Abstract)

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From the end of the 1980s Hungary transformed from a former sending country into a receiving (and partly a transit) country. The main country of origin of immigrants was Romania in this period: 45 percent of the immigrants arrived from this country between 1990 and 2007, most of them were ethnic Hungarian. From the end of the 1990s several surveys were conducted about migration intentions of Hungarians from Romania.

The main aim of our paper is the presentation of migration intentions and the migration processes of the Hungarian-speaking population from Romania. The Romanian society nowdays is also strongly affected by international migration. During the last two decades the Hungarian population – living in minority – has had its own distinct (e)migration profile. The presentation is based on a demographic panel-research, *Turning points of our life-course – Transylvania*. The panel-survey was designed and managed by the Demographic Research Institute of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (http://www.demografia.hu/english/) and the Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities (http://ispmn.gov.ro/en/). The survey's first wave was carried out in 2006. Its sample (N = 2500) was representative for the Hungarian-speaking population of 14 counties of Transylvania (province of Romania) aged between 25 and 45 years. The second wave took place in 2009: after three years we revisited the same respondents and we obtained about 1900 questionnaires. Many of those we did not find in the second

wave had migrated abroad during the 2006–2009 period (with the intention of temporary work or definitive settlement).

The novelty of our research and presentation is that we investigated migration intentions and migration processes based on a panel-survey. In our paper we discuss the following issues:

(1) What is the extent of migration processes: what is the ratio of the Hungarian speaking population of 20–45 ages who migrated during the 2006–2009 period? How can we define the socio-demographic profile of these migrants?

(2) In what extent were the intentions of international migration fulfilled? Is the effective migrant population identical with those who intended to migrate in 2006?

(3) Which factors increase the chance of fulfilling the migration intentions?

We use logistic regression in order to explore the factors determining this chance. Besides socio-demographic characteristics we take into account the following three groups of factors:

• human capital (young age, high level of education, language skills);

• material capital (employment status, income, good material circumstances, material deprivation);

• social capital (member of household living in country of destination).

We will investigate the odds ratios of fulfilling the migration intentions separately for Hungary and for other West-European countries, taking into account that the cost and risk of migration is different in these two cases.

Our presentation – besides providing information about migration patterns of Hungarian-speaking population – could be interesting theoretically from the perspective of migration-potential research. These investigations generally start from the assumption that migration processes can be forecasted, if we examine the migration intentions. We attempt to test and to nuance this assumption empirically.