

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMAN RESOURCES AND THE ECONOMY IN SOME OF THE DANUBE PORT TOWNS IN ROMANIA

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Abstract. *Port cities have been attractions for many businesses. Over time, tourism has taken the place of other industries. The present study tries to make an analysis of the local economies from several Danube ports in the Romanian sector. The labor crisis is also facing a shortage of jobs, thus generating a declining economy. Methodologically, a series of steps have been considered with respect to components of the studies; on the one hand, the assessment of the socio-demographic situation in each city-port, and on the other hand, finding and proposing solutions as alternatives to local development. The assessment of the local economic situation is based on the CAEN data of each city-port. The results of the study confirm the functional changes of each city-port, the mutations in the socio-demographic structure, as well as the acceptance and support provided by the population with respect to alternative solutions for the local economic development. In conclusion, the considerable reduction of the labour force with each year can cause serious changes in the Romanian economy, which requires finding a solution for the future, so that its situation will not become critical.*

Keywords: *population, mobility, economy, cities, development*

INTRODUCTION

In Romania, the phenomena of population aging and displacement of the working population in the European countries creates a visible lack of labour force. Demographic analyses are being made in this respect, but current demographic policies do not come up with concrete elements to remediate the situation (Teodorescu et al., 2016; Teodorescu et al., 2004).

The most affected areas are the rural ones, but the city is not excluded, especially the one near the polarizing centres. The area proposed and subject to analysis is the Danube Valley - the southern area (Figure 1), where the cities, alongside the neighbouring rural areas, have undergone

major changes with the change of the Romanian political regime. They developed during the Communist period, through the planned economic development programs, when the Danube River artery was the way of accessing imported raw materials (Chukwuedozie, et al., 2013; Sanchez, et al., 2016; Teodorescu et al., 2016). This centralized economy, after 1990, was replaced by the market economy when the main economic branches of Romania were reduced or eliminated (Simulescu, et al., 2013; Teodorescu et al., 2019).

The Danubian cities and towns have undergone such transformations that today they are confronted with major economic problems and obvious demographic problems (Valverde, 2002; Popescu, 2008). The young and working-age population with a high school or university education level do not return to their residence areas after studies but choose to work in large cities or in the European Union countries (Costa, 2014; Mareci, 2010;)

These demographic phenomena have a negative effect, not only on the local and national economy, but also on a negative effect on everything that is meant by family culture (Brown et al., 2009; Kennedy et al., 2010; Prieto et al., 2018; Reher, 2004; Dincă et al., 2015; Radoi et al., 2020).

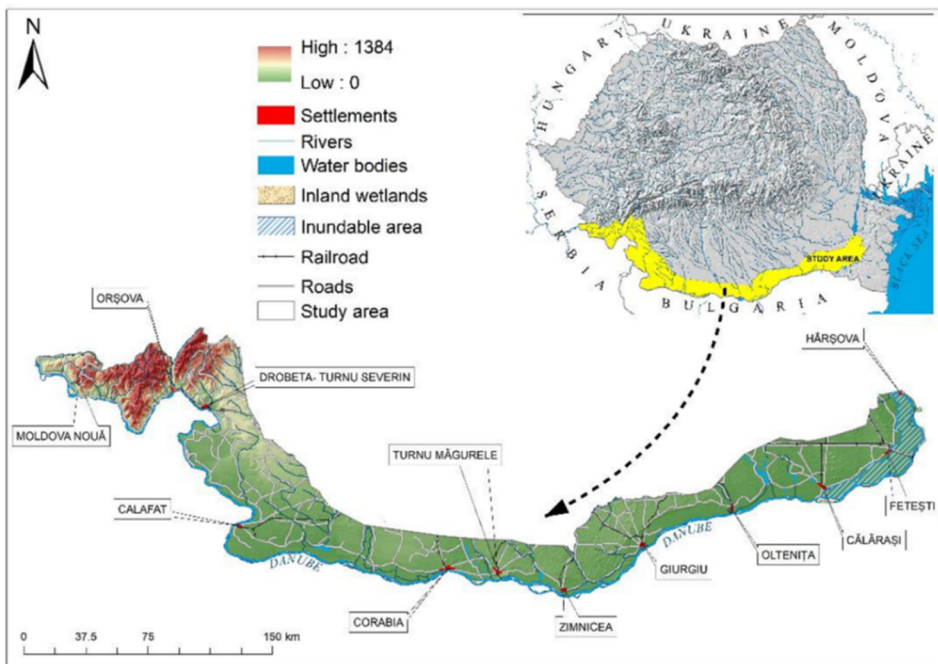


Figure 1. Geographic delimitation of the study area

METHODOLOGY

The method of analysis has been based on the interpretation and correlation of statistical data provided by the National Institute of Statistics. In order to highlight the demographic and economic situation of the cities/towns within the Danube meadow (southern area), we have developed a conceptual model of analysis (Figure 2), which took into account 4 determinant coordinates regarding the migration flow of the population, or, more precisely, the determination of emigration and the attitudinal changes recorded by those trained.

Thus, four determinant coordinates have been chosen in the choice of movement.

Firstly - **ATTRACTION** - to certain geographical areas occurs when workplace dissatisfaction exceeds the retention limit. They call those able to understand that they no longer represent the structural capital provided by the current workplace and feel the need to change it.

The second step is - **ADAPTING** - to the new job and to another geographic space with a new organizational culture and different social life. Most of those who left the Danube towns in southern Romania have adapted (the proof being the long time since their departure time up to the date of the study, many reaching the age of 15 and involving with time many friends and family members).

- **REFLECTING** - is considered "the moment of truth," when that decision concerning the future is being recorded. Many decide to ask for the citizenship of the state where they have arrived and work.

- **RETURN / IMPLEMENTING** is the case of all those deciding to return into the native areas, in order to found a company that should run according to the local legal provisions, yet maintaining at the same time some of the activity features specific to the original area in which they have formed themselves professionally speaking.

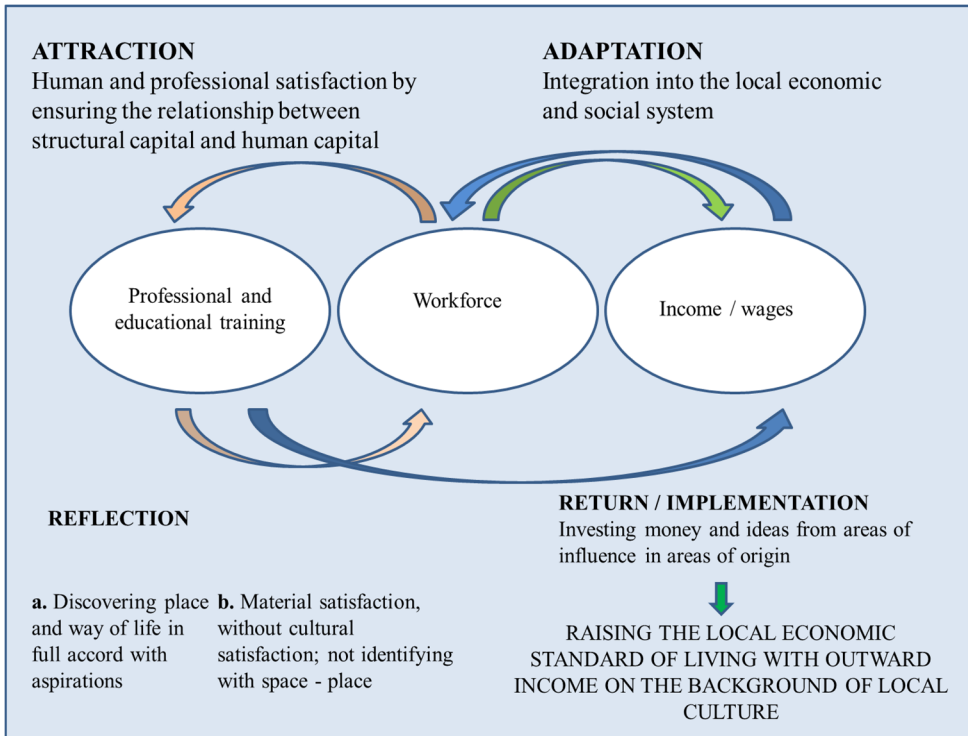


Figure 2. Conceptual model of analysis

RESULTS

The components under analysis in the study are demographic, especially the working population, employees, unemployed, the population sustained by other taxpayers (the elderly people, children and social assistants), to which there should be added the emigrants, those who have decided to work outside the Romanian borders, especially within the countries of The European Union.

These demographic components have been joined by the economic ones. One of the most important for us is represented by the number of companies in the Danube cities (Figure 3). This component has its role in establishing the ratio between the working population and the active population. Also, depending on the profile of these companies, it is possible to clarify the economic field or the economic profile of the city. Equally interesting is the evolution of the number of employees in each Danube city (Figure 4). These components can easily recreate the active image of the local economy in each Danubian city, confronted with a series of problems generated by the economy and reflected in the demographic component.

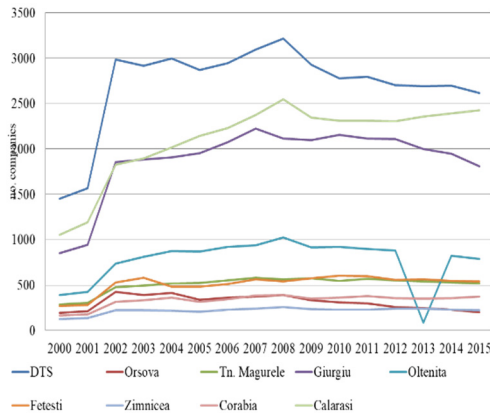


Fig. 3. The evolution of the number of companies in the Danube cities/ towns during 2000-2015

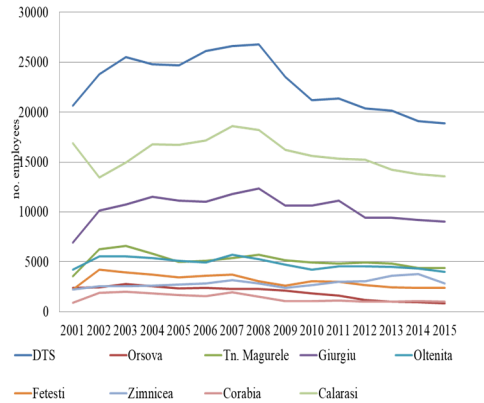


Fig. 4. Evolution of the number of employees in the Danube cities/ towns in 2000-2015

The most important Danube cities analysed by this study are Drobeta Turnu Severin (DTS) and Calarasi, with a total population of 92,617 in DTS, and respectively 65,181 inhabitants in Calarasi. Giurgiu city also occupies a significant position, with 61353 inhabitants. Each of them represents the administrative centre of the counties to which it belongs. After 1990 the economy of each of them has undergone significant changes. They have experienced a slight entry into the market economy, by the large number of firms that have taken over some of the former communist economic units, or have been focusing on new areas. Thus, the years 2001-2003 are the ones that record a great increase in the number of companies with a wide variety of fields. The number of employees increases equally.

This situation is maintained for all Danubian cities analysed until 2007-2008. Romania's entry into the European Union and getting the right to work easier, have prompted the population which is active and have training in a certain area (for the most part) to emigrate. It is the beginning of the demographic decline of the cities smonitored in the study. The departure, especially of young people with a high level of training, created a discrepancy between the jobs created by the existing companies and the available labour force. Specialists with medium and upper professional education) are registered in the company's statistical data (employed staff) with an average age of 50 - 55 years. After 2007 when the phenomenon of emigration of the young labour force is triggered, the majority employees reach 2015 -2016 at the age of 58-63 years. The retirement age in Romania is 60-65 years, depending on sex and other criteria mentioned by law. Most have this honourable age that allows them to leave the production area. The

natural balance of each Danubian city analysed reveals a low birth rate as a result of the aging of the population.

Analysing each city, taking into account the total population, the number of employees irrespective of age and field of activity, unemployed with and without compensation, the population left to work abroad and the population sustained by other tax payers (the elderly people, children and social assistants), the situation is different from one city to another (Figure 5-13). Each has a specific particularity and everybody is confronted with its difficulties. What they have in common is the very high share of the population sustained by other tax payers. In this category, the elderly have the highest numerical value. Regarding the population sustained by others financially, in each city there are particularities in its structure.

For all the nine Danube cities analysed, the majority are the elderly, whose share in this analysed population segment, holds between 38-55%. Young people are poorly represented, thus causing worries about the aging of the population and the creation of labour force in the years to come. Those registered as socially assisted (with a different allowance depending on the inactive period) are those who ensure the functioning of the "underground economy". Statistical data in this sense do not exist, but the phenomenon is quite clear. The amounts offered by the state as compensations are insufficient for a decent living.

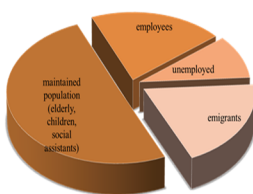


Fig. 5. The occupational structure of the population in Drobeta Turnu Severin (DTS) in 2015
Source: National Institute of Statistics

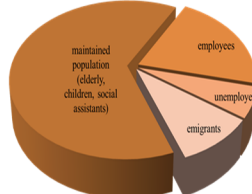


Fig. 6. The occupational structure of the population in Calarasi in 2015
Source: National Institute of Statistics

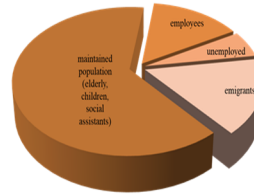


Fig. 7. The occupational structure of the population in Giurgiu in 2015
Source: National Institute of Statistics

Following the percentages of the population structure of the nine analysed cities/ towns, the concern is determined by the two components: the young population and the emigrants. There is a close link between these components.

The emigrants, according to the four coordinates analysed in the methodology, represent models for young people. If there dominate variants A, B and C, then young people are heading in the same direction. The relationship between young people and those who have found a satisfactory job abroad is quite tight, most of them being close relatives: parents, siblings or good friends. Material and social well-being is crucial in choosing a job,

no matter where it is. There has also been the attraction process of large cities upon the young population, especially after the completion of their studies (especially higher education). It is also a concern for the analysed Danubian cities. Population aging is a multiple-effect process.

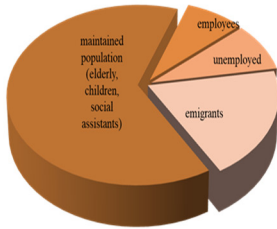


Fig. 8. The occupational structure of the population in Orsova in 2015
Source: National Institute of Statistics

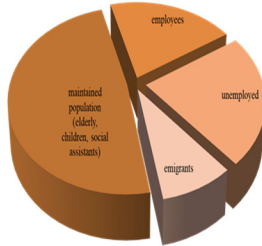


Fig. 9. The occupational structure of the population in Zimnicea in 2015
Source: National Institute of Statistics

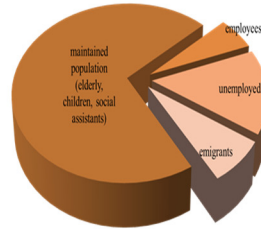


Fig. 10. The occupational structure of the population in Corabia in 2015
Source: National Institute of Statistics

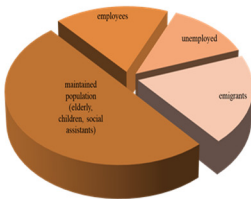


Fig. 11. The occupational structure of the population in Tn. Magurele in 2015
Source: National Institute of Statistics

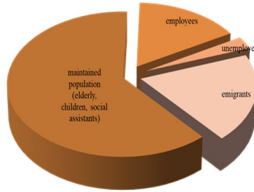


Fig. 12. The occupational structure of the population in Oltenita in 2015
Source: National Institute of Statistics

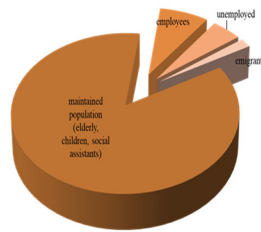


Fig. 13. The occupational structure of the population in Fetesti in 2015
Source: National Institute of Statistics

There has also been the attraction process of large cities upon the young population, especially after the completion of their studies (especially higher education). It is also a concern for the analysed Danubian cities.

Population aging is a multiple-effect process. Also worrying there is the reaction of those persons analysed in the methodology at points C, B and D. The lack of labour force in the cities/ towns in which they return being willing to develop a business and to impose on the standard, they are constrained by the lack of labour force, of the specialized workforce especially.

A new process of financial and wage overvaluation is created for those who are attracted to such an activity. Effects can be seen in a relatively short time, of which the most visible are as follows:

- the quality of the work performed does not rise to the level of the offered job;

- the lack of qualification of a large number of employees requires a lot of effort from the supervisors of the activity;
- the quality of the services offered in the end is not consistent with the international ones;
- the cost of implementing such a business is high.

Others can be added to them. What is essential is that poorly qualified workers, who perform poor quality services or work.

Following the methodological coordinates, the determining factors for the growth of C, B and D are continually decreasing. All activity manifests itself as a vicious circle; the difficulty in developing a sector of activity in the area of origin due to labour shortages and high costs slows the process of such concerns. This can also be seen from the evolution of the number of firms (Figure 3).

The lack of economic objectives that attract the workforce and create the economic and financial environment necessary for the increase of consumption/ consume levels, leads to limiting the expenses of both individuals and legal entities. All these components lead to anything good but to accentuate the poverty process (Pintilii et al., 2017; Teodorescu et al., 2004; Ducman et al., 2019). Optimizing work resources aims at better management of the existing resources, finding solutions, especially those that favour the development of economic objectives capable of generating attractive jobs for the young population still existing in these cities. There are cities that have a natural potential (the Danube neighbourhood).

CONCLUSIONS

The study tracks the evolution of labour resources in the new positioning cities within southern Romania, along the Danube River. These cities represented, during the period of the centralized economy until the 1990s, urban centres with an active economic life, and the share of the young population was quite high. Currently, these cities face major problems in terms of active population and very advanced aging level (Teodorescu, 2004).

The results of the study are based on the demographic and economic indicators of these localities over the period 2000-2015. Also, the results obtained can help to find solutions to reduce labour shortages and to find solutions for the implementation of some areas of activity that may maintain or raise these cities in terms of quality of life.

The analysis co-ordinates around which the study has been established led to clear and simple analysis in points of outcomes. It is necessary to have such knowledge on the medium and long term in order to find realistic solutions. The development of a locality must take into account the population that wants to live in that city, not based on all those who have been to work elsewhere. The development strategy of the respective localities must take into account all the demographic, economic and motivational, cultural and educational components for raising civilization, by joining and complementing traditional culture.

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