

## **THE ROMA COMMUNITY FROM DOBREȘTI BEFORE AND AFTER MIGRATION. INTEGRATION PROJECTS: “SPERANȚA” PROJECT**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

*The connection between the Roma and migration is described in history as being characterized by a nomadic race. Migration is a phenomenon that affects the whole world, and Romania is one of the countries in Eastern Europe that is facing population decline due to population movements in other countries. Along with Romanians, Roma also migrate for a better life because of this, the paper aims to analyze at the micro level the changes experienced in the Roma community in Dobrești, the positive and negative effects, whether they integrated more easily returning to the country or not nothing has changed.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Roma, community, Dobresti, Speranta, project.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the first part of the paper we will analyze the differences produced by the migration of Roma from Dobrești, the positive and negative consequences, how it changed in terms of living standards, and attendance at school. Identification and characteristics of the community before migration, their culture and customs, before and with the cultural exchange. Thus to observe the change of the Roma community in terms of their integration into the community.

Integration projects and the elimination of social exclusion are necessary to evolve and integrate Roma into society because of this in the second part we will research the Hope Project long-term, medium and short term results on beneficiaries and the whole community. How to approach the observance of the conditions in the project and how they received and followed steps to integrate not only in the project but in the whole society.

#### **1. The Roma community from Dobrești before and after migration**

Roma are the second largest minority in Romania according to the 2011 Census, their number is 621,576, more than half of them live in rural areas, Bihor County is in second place in terms of the number of ethnic Roma. For this reason, I will analyze the migration of Roma from a locality in Bihor County, Dobrești, where the commune represents a percentage of 14.94% of the number of the total population of 5260 inhabitants<sup>1</sup>.

The phenomenon of migration is in the history of the Roma because they are considered nomadic. Since 2007, when Romania is a member of the European Union, and with this event, free movement has been adopted on the entire territory of the EU. Along with

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<sup>1</sup> Institutul Național de Statistică, *Recesământul populației și al locuințelor din 2011*,  
<http://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-2/>

Romanians, Roma people migrated with the hope of a better life. As in the case of the Romanians, they fall under the various forms of seasonal, permanent migration or for a long period of time, but with the aim of returning home.

Roma from Dobrești have migrated since 2003, especially in the three countries: Spain, Italy and France. Most did not go to an established job in the country, which in the hope that when they arrived in the destination country they would get a job, because of this the first members of the family who migrated were men.

In the case of the Roma community from Dobrești, we are not talking about a traditional one or a semi-open one, because men worked at the mining exploitations in the area until they closed. A few years of poverty followed, from the lack of furniture, to clothes, to the lack of food because they did not own agricultural land and were unable to raise animals because they had nothing to feed them. The beginning of the 2000s was a recovery due to their employment in the forest exploitation, having a constant income above average. The opening of small production factories and the employment of Roma women, resulted in the evolution of women in the community, not only having the role of taking care of children and the house, which brings money into the house and had the possibility of financial independence. Hiring Roma women led to another positive thing in reducing the dropout rate because they no longer had to work to help their families and because their parents could afford to buy what they needed for school.

The geographical location of the community is beyond the railway, at the exit of the village, where 98% live only Roma show a geographical, cultural and social barrier. Romani connoisseurs and speakers of the language with the specific dialect, having the same dialect with the Roma from Lupoiaia, Tășad, Răbăgani especially with those from the Beiuș area, justifies that they are not Castilian Roma, so they are a semi-open community. It is not a closed community. Religiously they have no inherited religion because they were nomads and excluded from social events, but they inherit various rituals and superstitions, such as rabbit superstition if someone wishes you "shosoi" means bad luck, luck and bad luck are the inherited values to explain different events in life. Rituals to fulfill certain desires for healing considered witchcraft testimony is a document from around 1025 in which a monk from Mount Athos asks for help from a Roma witch to heal. Currently there are three special churches for the community, two pentecostal and one orthodox, in the two pentecostal the pastor is among the Roma in the community and in the orthodox is the father who serves in the village church, in addition to this in the locality there are three other churches a Pentecostal, Baptist and Orthodox one. From the outside, there is discrimination in this regard, but they opted for the establishment of places of worship in the chariot of communities to convert them to a cult because they were not used to going to any of the three churches. Churches in the community have had a positive impact the crime rate has dropped and it is not necessarily positive because they have given up their traditional networks in which they cooked animals from which no blood flowed.

The houses before 2003 were built of adobe and consisted of a single room where all members of the family slept, cooked and washed, the standard of living was low for most of them, there is a lack of fences which means lack of fencing and freedom. but also equality and mutual help between local families.

The marriage took place in front of the community, not in front of the civil status officer or the priest, because the bride and groom were minors and cultural heirs, and in the novel *Șatra* by Zaharia Stanciu we describe the wedding as an event in the community with its own rituals. The effects of early marriage are early school leaving, the birth of children at an early age, the lack of education leads to the lack of community development and education that is passed down from one generation to another.

The changes following migration are visible, the change of concepts, the increase of the living standard and the reduction of school dropout. The first results were not exactly the most positive because they went without knowing the language or with an employment contract in the country, Roma who migrated to France ended up living on "plates"<sup>2</sup> which translates as market name comes from the fact that unhealthy butter houses rented by a family and from the fact that several Indians, Romanians, Bulgarian Albanians and Moldovans live. Coexistence with other Roma has also led to cultural exchange since the promise of children for marriage and the "sale" of girls receiving money, gold or other goods in exchange, with the help of local authorities and the mediator, these practices have not become a habit.

Migration has also decreased the number of social benefits among Roma from 200 to 16 in 2018, in the first part of emigration tried to keep social assistance but vigilance fraud was not possible, in addition they prefer the aid and benefits they received from the host country.

With money earned abroad, property was bought and houses were built, breaking down the geographical and social barrier. And they opened small family business grocery store, car workshop and sale of second hand products. The number of those who want to settle or have settled permanently in another country is growing and have posted their houses for sale but due to architecture they are very difficult to sell.

Raising the standard of living is not only due to migration, but also through the involvement and access to projects of local institutions, through the collaboration of schools, town halls and mediators. Drinking water that represented a need regardless of ethnicity and after school to discourage dropout. school.

In conclusion, migration brought both positive and negative factors through the decrease of the population, the loss of some customs and traditions, but instead the frequency of children's schooling increased, the standard of living increased, the crimes in the area decreased.

## **2. "Speranțe" Project**

The Speranta project consists of two components: small infrastructure and social services. Within the small infrastructure component, it is desired to build a small drinking water network with street taps for the Roma community, this network will be connected to the water network of Dobresti commune.

In the second stage of the project, it aims to create a Multifunctional Day Center, arranging public bathrooms. Carrying out activities for parents and children together for information, increasing school results and awareness of the traditions of the ethnic group they belong to through shows and various events.

The target group is represented by very poor families, with a poor education with minor mothers and single-parent families and children who are raised by relatives whose parents have gone abroad and who do not offer enough material and emotional help to avoid dropping out of school. The whole community is at constant risk of illness, as the Roma have to use water from two streams. Motivating the fact that only 1.8 km from the Roma colony there is a water treatment plant, which has the capacity to provide drinking water to the entire community.

a) Impact on short term:

1. the endowment of the Center was made, but in the locality of Hidisel where the number of Roma students is 0
2. an educational trip was organized
3. there was no improvement of communication between the school and the Roma community

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<sup>2</sup> Pleats means illegal camps where they live with other Roma, Indians, Bulgarians and Albanians

b) Impact on medium and long term:

Expected impact	Real impact
- decrease school dropout	- the number of school dropouts is increasing
- increasing school performance	- the increase in school performance was observed only among the students involved in the program
- increase counseling services	- counseling services have increased over a short period of time
- decrease in absences	- the number of absentees is currently increasing
- parental involvement in school education	- with the end of the program, the parents returned to their old habits
- active involvement in extracurricular activities	- the involvement of Roma children in extracurricular activities is an attraction for decreasing school dropout
- easy access to the source of drinking water	- drinking water wells make life easier
- increasing hope for life	- the quality of life has increased with the water network
- awareness of education for the future	- this has not been proven once the number of school dropouts is increasing
- discovering the artistic potential	- their discovery is constant but their knowledge remains at school level
- rediscovering traditions	- keeping the traditional dance

. Beneficiaries:

Number of inhabitants in the colony	720
Men	240
Women	255
Children	225
Number of households	163
Number of children in the community enrolled in grades V-X who attend a school outside the locality	103
Number of children in the community who attend a school outside the locality	2
Number of school-age children (6-18 years)	205
Number of school-age children who are not enrolled in compulsory education	0
Community unemployment rate	0%
Community dropout rate	2%

The project is beneficial for the Roma community in Dobresti, increasing the standard of living with the introduction of the drinking water network. The water taps are of great help to families who do not have the financial possibility for various reasons to connect with the network in the stable. The number of bathrooms in the house increased with the construction of new homes. Unfortunately, the location of the Multifunctional Center in another locality than the one in which they are enrolled at the school being in the neighboring locality Hidisel where the number of Roma children enrolled is 0. Thus, the beneficiaries being completely different students than the ones they address. The advantages that had to be brought were zero. If all projects are respected as this part of the project especially for educational purposes, the learning and education stage of the Roma would remain the same.

After school was well received by the children from the Roma colony, because they had access to well-trained people who had the ability to prepare students for the next day of school. Because many students have parents with little schooling and who were unable to help them. But, unfortunately once the program ended the poor results began to reappear.

Recourse to parental counseling did not have the expected impact of improving and raising awareness of community development education. The mentality is very difficult to change, most of them dealing with the performance of various jobs or appealing to the mercy of people both in the country and abroad.

In conclusion, the project had a long-term vision in terms of improving living conditions, water being needed daily. But in the context of education, as long as the requirements on paper are not implemented and in reality, there will be no big changes. The project should have been a start for a sustainable development only that the need for an after school is continuous, only carrying out an activity for a long time can see the results in the future.

## CONCLUSIONS

Migration has had a positive impact on the Roma community in the locality because through education and different concepts obtained from the West has led to the collapse of the geographical barrier through the purchase of property and the construction of houses in the vicinity of other inhabitants. at various happy or less happy events he built a united and unprejudiced community in terms of language, ethnicity or skin color. The elimination of separate classes at the national level and with the help of the school affair project managed for a while not to notice the difference in environment and standard of living at home because there are still families living in adobe houses with only one room, who take care of the day from tomorrow, whose children do not attend school regularly because they cannot afford it financially and consider themselves discriminated against by their Romanian and Roma colleagues due to their lack of learning skills.

In any change brings both positive and negative changes, the exchange of habits with other Roma brought short-term problems that did not exist until then even though minors were married and before the age decreased from 15-17 years to 11-13 years , most of them married out of love, in a short time their parents married them in exchange for money and valuables. Through the firm intervention of both the other locals and the authorities, the custom did not take root in the area. I believe that the final establishment of some of them is still not worrying, but in the future it may cause not only a local and national problem, although it is a community that is difficult to integrate, but through migration to other countries reintegration into the country has been easier. the money they invest at home will disappear and become an economic problem. In the end, the migration and the accessed projects had a favorable result for the whole locality, through economic, social and cultural diversity of the area.

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