

HUMAN RESOURCES MOBILITY – A SLIGHTLY CONTROVERSIAL CONCEPT

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Abstract: *Mobility is a multidimensional concept, with many understandings. From internal mobilities to the external ones, outside the origin country, mobilities can be found in terms of visits in another centers of a company, delegates, Erasmus programmes, etc. The duration and other circumstances (the purpose of the mobility, time, activities made in mobility) differ depending on the field of activity. In this paper are analyzed several related concepts to mobility and are discussed the differences between them, there are explained the differences between factors and determinants of mobility, and are pointed out future possible topic research. Also, some mobility data from Romania are analyzed.*

Keywords: *Mobility, Factors, Determinants, Romania*

JEL classification: *J60, J61, J69*

1. Introduction

In the Dictionary of the Romanian Language (DEX) (2019), the mobility of the population (fr. Mobilité; lat. Mobilitas) refers to changes that occur through a specific time, and referred to: job, domicile, social class etc., through the influence of several socio-economic factors (DEX, 2019).

Analyzing the literature of the mobility area, we have found that mobility of human resources considers factors or determinants, different words in what concerns the consistence of them. A factor mens a circumstance that influences an activity, going through a process or being at the evidence of an phenomenon (DEX, 2019). A determiner has a decisive role for an action, process or phenomenon, indicating a clear cause for the latter.

While determinants are more precise, factors cand only appear in an activity, process, or phenomenon. Factors are associated with a weaker connection between variables, while determinants explain significant causalities. For instance, a factor of the mobility of human resources among companies is the age of the employees. If it is near to the retirement age, employees will probably not want to continue their career abroad. A determinant can be the lack of money for a family. Parents who want secure incomes and more than a decent life for their family will aspire to gain better wages in other countries, because in the origin country they will not reach the desired financial comfort.

2. Literature review

The mobility of employees it is associated with the following concepts: emigrant, immigrant, expatriate, expat, factors that attract human resources, factors that push human resources, staff turnover, migration of human resources, mobility of human resources, active population, employed population. In the following, these terms are briefly defined, for a better clarification of the links between them:

- An emigrant is a person who temporarily or permanently leaves the origin country and goes to live in another country. Usually, the term appears accompanied by nationality (DEX, 2019);
- An immigrant is a person who has emigrated and has already arrived in the country where she/he wants temporarily or permanently to settle. The quality of "immigrant" appears only in the new country. Basically, a person who emigrates automatically becomes an immigrant later;

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- An expatriate is the equivalent of an emigrant (DEX, 2019);
- The expat is the person who does not have the citizenship of a state member of the European Union (EU), the European Economic Area or the Swiss Confederation, and who can work based on Romanian legislation, without any differentiation from Romanian employees (HR Club, 2019). In practice, however, especially in the corporate environment, the concept is often confused with the name of any employee sent by a company abroad to another subsidiary, branch, work point, etc.;
- The factors that attract human resources are represented by reasons that make countries more attractive for people who want to leave their origin countries because of: more higher education systems, well-organized and safe systems in organizations, higher wages, the existence of desired job work vacancies, etc.;
- The factors that push human resources are those that influence people to want to leave their country of origin abroad: low wages, lack of non-financial rewards at work, low quality life, unsafe health systems in companies, etc. (Akhtar et al., 2015; Armstrong, 2007; Boswell et al., 2011; Tornikoski, 2011);
- Staff turnover is calculated as the ratio between the number of employees leaving the organization and the total number of employees. In Human Resources Management, an employee resignation rate of 25% is considered satisfactory (Prodan and Aruștei, 2019);
- Migration of human resources is the mass movement of the population from the area of origin to another territory (DEX, 2019);
- Mobility of human resources is a broader concept than migration. It can be associated with visitors, students, teachers, researchers, tourists, businessmen, employees, etc. (EUR-Lex, 2019);
- The active population includes the unemployed and the employed population, that is, people who can work for the production of goods and services (INSSE, 2019);
- The employed population refers to people who performed activities in a specific period, to obtain goods and services, based on an individual employment contracts or on their own account, in order to earn an income in money or in kind; the civilian employed population includes the same people, with the exception of military personnel and people assimilated to them (INSSE, 2019).

Analyzing the main concepts related to the mobility of human resources, we can distinguish some observations. First of all, mobility is often confused with the migration of people and the fluctuation of human resources. Second of all, mobility is analyzed especially for the international space, in the conditions in which it also exists at the level of states, inter-organizations. Thirdly, the expat employee is the one from outside the EU space, and not from the EU. Fourthly, the sum of all EU immigrants is equal to the sum of emigrants from all countries of the world who have chosen an EU country as destination. Mobility of human resources can also be analyzed from the perspective of the exchange programs (the case of students and teachers who go to other countries with the Erasmus programs). Obviously, there is no equality between the factors that attract human resources and those that push human resources (their intensity and importance are quite important for going in mobilities).

Stark and Bloom (2013) are of the opinion that there are four themes that empirical research on mobility has addressed, and which should continue to be debated in future studies:

- Macroeconomic estimates of the effects of migration, which can be made from several points of view (for example, for skilled and unskilled labor). Wage estimates could be also analyzed and the effects of labor migration commented in the context of labor market equilibria or imbalances (Stark and Bloom, 2013);
- Microeconomic and macroeconomic relations between labor force migration and the degree of population aging, age being one of the variables increasingly debated in mobility research. The results of most research indicate that older employees are less mobile compared to others (Stark and Bloom, 2013);
- Study of migration behaviors of families in which there are at least two monthly incomes (Stark and Bloom, 2013);

- New ideas about employee mobility are of great interest. The deficit in such analyzes may be due to the fact that much of the inspiration for theoretical work on labor migration is provided by developing economies, for which there are no data to analyze, or data that have a questionable quality (Stark and Bloom, 2013).

There is a tendency in the specialized literature to interpenetrate the concepts of migration and mobility. Also, the focus is particularly on the mobility of the employees at the international level, rather than nationally. The phenomenon of migration is analyzed at the population level, taking into account especially the variable of interest – age.

3. Data and methodology

This research is based on the results found in the literature review and on a short descriptive analyze made on the number of available jobs in Romania from the period between 2017 and 2019. The source of this data is Eurostat portal (Eurostat, 2019).

4. Results

The number of the romanian active population, with the age between 20 – 64 years who left Romania, increased in the last decade (European Commission, 2019). For the analyzed period, Romania recorded the highest percentage of active population that is currently working in another european country (Romanian Diaspora, 2019).

The mobility of health workers has significantly increased in the last period and in this way, the health systems performance was improved across the national borders (Kuhlmann et al., 2018). According to Kovács et al. (2017), despite the existence of Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications in five health professions (doctors, dentists, pharmacists, nurses and midwives), there is evidence that professionals from this field of activity work below their skills (Kovács et al., 2017).

When Romanian interns that work in the psychiatry field were asked if they intend to go for work in another state, 38% responded “Yes”, 30% “No” and 32% were not yet decided (Giurgiuca et al., 2018). The first three determinants mentioned by psychiatric trainees to stay in Romania were personal reasons (70.7%), lifestyle (37.7%), and academic reasons (21.7%), while the determinants for leaving Romania were financial causes (79%), social reasons (49%), and academic reasons (39%) (Giurgiuca et al., 2018).

In what concerns the IT industry in Romania, the turnover percent is big enough, with a mean of 20-30% (Juncu, 2018). Moreover, an employee’ request for resignation it is associated with losses of up to 20 times his/ her monthly wage (Stanciu, 2015). In Romania, the IT field of activity brings to the national GDP more than the European mean, 5.9% of GDP being associated by 2.2% IT workers (Paraschivoiu, 2019).

Tabel 1. The number of available jobs in Romania between 2017 - 2019

Macro region/ Year and quarter	2017T1	2017T2	2017T3	2017T4	2018T1	2018T2	2018T3	2018T4	2019T1	2019T2
Macroregion 1	15484	15877	15359	14576	15161	16313	16944	15296	14773	13669
Northwest	9242	9475	9241	8894	8854	9080	9936	8735	8359	7915
Center	6242	6402	6118	5682	6307	7233	7008	6561	6414	5754
Macroregion 2	10054	10669	9520	8356	8870	9861	9258	8893	9875	10331
North East	5810	5740	5523	4727	5056	5400	5259	5263	5539	5238
South East	4244	4929	3997	3629	3814	4461	3999	3630	4336	5093
Macroregion 3	24800	26171	22358	20429	22377	22653	23975	22764	23348	22060
South - Muntenia	8179	7150	7496	6202	5846	6380	7091	6377	6078	5482
Bucharest - Ilfov	16621	19021	14862	14227	16531	16273	16884	16387	17270	16578
Macroregion 4	11198	10835	10988	10725	11276	11995	12857	11313	9418	8171
Southwest Oltenia	2002	2245	2494	2749	2281	2343	2221	2086	1763	1742
West	9196	8590	8494	7976	8995	9652	10636	9227	7655	6429
Romania - total	61536	63552	58225	54086	57684	60822	63034	58266	57414	54231

Source: Eurostat, 2019.

If we exclude the number of vacant jobs in the Bucharest-Ilfov area, for the second quarter of 2019, in Romania, the most available jobs were registered in the Macroregion one (with the North-West and Center areas), and the fewest vacancies were in the Macroregion three (with the South-Muntenia area). For the same period, Macroregion 2 recorded 10331 vacancies.

In Bucharest-Ilfov area are the majority of the vacancies, because, it is the best grown in Romania. At the same time, in the Center and the North-West infrastructure is more developed compared to the North-East and the South-East areas. These significant differences between regions can be explained by several reasons: mobility of the employees abroad, the lack of human resources to add value to companies and implicitly to the Romania's GDP, poor road infrastructure, not enough developed skills, low salaries, etc.

5. Discussion and conclusions

Mobility of human resources it is often confused with population migration, but it is a much more comprehensive concept than this, being the result of a long decision-making process. Mobility of human resources it is closely related to the following concepts: emigrant, immigrant, expatriate, expat, factors that attract human resources, factors that push human resources, staff turnover, migration of human resources, active population, employed population. This phenomenon is analyzed especially for the international space, as it also exists at the national level, between organizations. Mobility can also be analyzed from the perspective of exchange programs, such as the Erasmus programs.

Mobility of human resources can be influenced by factors or it can occur due to determinants. If the factor represents a condition that can influence/ explain an action, a process or a phenomenon, the determinant has a decisive role, indicating a clear cause for mobility. Thus, factors indicate a weaker link between independent and dependent variables, and determinants confirm strong links.

According to European Commission (2019), the percent of the active population in Romania with the age between 20 and 64 years who left the country significantly increased, from 7.5% (2007) to 19.7% (2017) (European Commission, 2019). Our country recorded the highest active population that works in another European country (Romanian Diaspora, 2019).

Mobility has multiple ways of being analyzed. On the one hand, can bring advantages at the individual level (employees can improve their skills and gain experience), while several disadvantages can appear at the national level (the lack of qualified workforce and increasings in human resource fluctuation). However, the concept still needs further research through original analysis.

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