

Relația dintre guvern și diasporă

Relationship between government and diaspora

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SUMMARY

Diaspora's contributions and potential contributions to the development of their homelands are increasingly recognized by beneficiary communities, homeland governments. Although the diaspora disposes of a large organizational resources the main role is played by the homeland government and its policies towards diaspora. There is a strong connection between the quality of government and migration, and the diaspora, the impact of the last tend to be seen particularly through remittances, the political impact is neglected. By developing strong partnerships with government and private sector in the home country, the diaspora's efforts can maximize the potential welfare.

Keywords: diaspora, government, migration, country of origin, country of destination, cooperation, remittances, migration governance.

REZUMAT

Contribuțiile diasporei și contribuțiile potențiale la dezvoltarea țărilor lor de origine sunt recunoscute din ce în ce mai mult de către comunitățile beneficiare, guvernele țărilor de origine. Deși diaspora dispune de mari resurse organizaționale, rolul principal îl joacă guvernul național și politicile acestuia față de diasporă. Există o legătură puternică între calitatea guvernării și migrațiune și diasporă, impactul ultimei fiind văzut, mai ales, prin remitențe, impactul politic fiind neglijat. Prin dezvoltarea de parteneriate puternice cu guvernul și sectorul privat din țara de origine, eforturile diasporei pot maximaliza potențialul bunăstării generale.

Cuvinte-cheie: diasporă, guvern, migrație, țară de origine, țară de destinație, cooperare, remitențe, guvernanta migrației.

Over the past two decades, Moldova experienced increased emigration flows (especially among young people) representing around a quarter of the workforce, and it is estimated that between 340,000 and 1million Moldovan citizens are now working abroad [3], the main destination

countries are Italy and Russian Federation, Germany, United States, Canada and Israel. Moldova is also a destination for migrants from Russia, Ukraine, Armenia and Azerbaijan, among others.

The definition of diaspora includes temporary and permanent migrants and is

adapted from G. Sheffer's classic work on modern diasporas, defined as "ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin - their homelands" [11, p. 3]. Diaspora population may consist of people living permanently in the country of origin or country of destination, and migrants who work abroad temporary, people who hold double citizenship, ethnic diaspora, citizens of the host country or second-generation groups. In the contemporary context, with the acceleration in international mobility, the term diaspora has been used more broadly to encompass expatriate populations who are living outside of their home countries or contemporary diaspora linked with issues of transnationalism and globalization. Ethnic diaspora communities are now recognized by scholars as "inevitable" and "endemic" features of the international system [7, p. 103-110].

The national Strategy "Diaspora 2025", define "diaspora" as "the citizens of the Republic of Moldova settled temporarily or permanently abroad, the persons originating from the Republic of Moldova and their descendants, as well as the communities established by them" [15, p. 44].

Diasporas are intergenerational phenomena. They encompass not only the first, migrating generation but also their children as well. Individuals belong to a diaspora as long they identify with that ethnic community. Members of diasporas hold multiple identities, reflecting their occupational, political, ideological and cultural backgrounds, interests and loyalties. Each diaspora has a unique set of needs and capabilities based on its historical experience and the present realities of its countries of origin and destination.

The phenomenon of diaspora poses challenges but also offers potential benefits to communities in both the homeland and the diaspora. Diaspora communities

face the dual challenge of integration into host communities and maintaining strong personal and cultural ties with their families and homeland. Countries of origin face the dual challenge of how to address issues such as brain drain and separated families, but also realize the full potential of financial remittances, business ties and other benefits of expatriate communities. Diasporas and home countries alike are realizing that both can benefit in important ways from strong partnerships addressing areas of mutual concern, ranging from identity in the diaspora to development of the homeland [8, p. 73-84].

Diaspora engagement is a growing trend and many governments, international organizations and policy makers are increasingly focusing on the role of diaspora in development strategies for the homelands. Such policies are predominantly critical to small countries as Republic of Moldova, that have suffered high rates of emigration.

Attention to economic remittances and brain drain has overshadowed the growing impact of diasporas related to social and political contributions. According World Bank data, Republic of Moldova is the fifth country in the world among 10 remittance recipients in 2014 (percentage of GDP): Tajikistan (41.7 percent), the Kyrgyz Republic (30.3 percent), Nepal (29.2 percent), Tonga (27.9 percent), Moldova (26.2 percent), Liberia (24.6 percent), Bermuda (23.1 percent), Haiti (22.7 percent), Comoros (20.2 percent), The Gambia (20.0 percent) [4, p. 21].

The Global Commission on International Migration [12, p. 3] highlights three Cs with respect to migration policy: coherence, cooperation and capacity. Institutional capacity assesses countries' institutional frameworks, the existence of migration strategies, the existence of inward and outward migration governance legislation, and data availability and transparency [3, p.15]. According 2016 Migration Governance Index, [3], Mol-

dova has a developed institutional capacity. There are several institutions concerning

Chancellery. The main laws regulating migration processes are the Law on Labor Mi-

Table 1 Key findings on migration governance

	Institutional capacity	Migrant rights	Safe and orderly migration	Labour migration management	Regional and international cooperation
Bahrain	Emerging	Emerging	Developed	Emerging	Developed
Bangladesh	Emerging	Emerging	Emerging	Developed	Mature
Canada	Mature	Developed	Developed	Developed	Mature
Costa Rica	Developed	Developed	Developed	Emerging	Mature
Germany	Mature	Developed	Mature	Developed	Mature
Ghana	Developed	Emerging	Mature	Nascent	Mature
Italy	Developed	Developed	Emerging	Developed	Mature
Mexico	Developed	Emerging	Emerging	Developed	Developed
Moldova	Developed	Developed	Mature	Developed	Mature
Monaco	Developed	Emerging	Emerging	Emerging	Developed
Philippines	Mature	Mature	Mature	Developed	Mature
South Africa	Mature	Developed	Developed	Developed	Mature
South Korea	Mature	Developed	Mature	Developed	Mature
Sweden	Developed	Mature	Developed	Developed	Mature
Turkey	Mature	Developed	Emerging	Developed	Developed

Source: Measuring well-governed migration. The 2016 Migration Governance Index. The Economist Intelligence Unit. London, 2016. Available online at: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migration_governance_index_2016.pdf, p. 19.

migration: Moldovan Ministry of Information Technology and Communications is in charge of issues associated with emigration and departure for permanent residence abroad. Non-governmental organizations, both local and foreign ones, are involved along with national institutions in rendering intermediary services in emigration to Canada and other countries; in attracting and organizing temporary migration for Moldovan citizens, especially students. The Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family and National Agency of Workforce Employment oversee issues associated with temporary labor emigration. The management of various aspects of migration is entrusted to the Ministry of Interior (Bureau of Migration and Asylum), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family etc.).

In order to improve the quality of management, was created in 2012 the Bureau for Diaspora Relations under the State

gration (2008), Law on Asylum (2008), Law on Integration of Foreigners in the Republic of Moldova (2011). But the first national document mainstreaming migration and development into the national policy documents is the National Development Strategy “Moldova 2020” [14]. The Activity Program of the Government (2015-2018), approved via the Parliament Decision No. 161 dated July 30, 2015, contains a chapter dedicated to diaspora, with 16 priority activity areas, while the Activity Program of the Government “European Integration: Freedom, Democracy, Wellbeing” (2013-2014) included for the first time the diaspora area from the perspective of social, economic and cultural development of the country, developing an ample state policy for diaspora support. The mainstreaming of diaspora, migration and development into the national policies is a complex process, involving ministries, central public authorities, and institutions. The National Strategy “Diaspora-2025” is

focused on developing the relations with diaspora members, promoting and observing the rights of the citizens of the country, regardless of their place of residence [15].

The National Strategy on Migration and Asylum (2011-2020), and The Strategy Diaspora 2025 and the Action Plan for its implementation during 2016-2018 are designed to increase the cooperation between the Government, local public authorities, civil society in the country, and diaspora, by enhancing and extending the transversal approach to diaspora, migration, and development, as well as by diaspora's engagement and collaboration for the development of the Republic of Moldova [9, p. 133-136].

Despite the fact that the institutional capacity is considered to be developed, the state failed to ensure the right to vote for Moldovan diaspora during the last parliamentary elections (2014) and presidential elections from 2016. After the elections, the insufficient mechanisms for out-of-country voting and clear criteria for number of polling stations and quantity of ballots were observed. This situation can be approached as the fact as many of the governments of countries of origin seems to be threatened by their diasporas. After all, a key reason that some countries remain very poor is that they have not developed functioning democratic institutions, including accountability to electorates, respect for the rights of minorities and individuals, the rule of law, and checks and balances on arbitrary power. Many polities that have the superficial trappings of a proper democracy, such as contested elections and political parties, are in fact a sham. As a result, these countries continue to be misgoverned. Once living in high-income host countries, migrants are witnesses of what decent governance looks like, they know that their countries of origin lack it, and they want to pressure for change. Although migration builds a diaspora that brings external pressure, it may drain the stock of educated people.

This matter because the greater the proportion of the population that is educated, the stronger the pressure for democracy.

The recent researches discovered that it matters where migrants have gained their exposure to foreign political norms. The better governed and more democratic the host society is, the more significant the transfer of the norms of democracy: Germany and the United States are better seedbeds than Russia and Turkey.

Immigrants neither wholly accept their host country culture nor automatically embrace their homeland culture to the exclusion of other influences. Many diaspora members may come to share civic and other values of the host country, learned through exposure and/or social pressure, or consciously sought (sometimes through elective migration). US-based diasporas are believed to embrace US values of pluralism, democracy, and human rights. Based on the integrationist pluralist model, it is anticipated that such diasporas "prefer, express, and adhere to the same democratic values when allowed to flourish and attain the best that is in them"; and they are expected to "extend to others the same rights they themselves claim" [10, p. 26].

Although many Moldovans living abroad still harbor a strong desire to return to Moldova, their long stay in countries like United States have inadvertently generated new social realities that have reshaped their social and economic aspirations. Many of them have started families and made significant investments in the United States, raising children who have never seen – or barely remember – Moldova. While many sincerely want to invest in their homeland and assist in the recovery of their communities most remain understandably wary about the future political stability and are concerned about rampant corruption and the woeful economic and living conditions they would confront if they did return to Moldova. Moldovans in the United States

are keenly aware of how their homeland's precarious health and education environment could affect the life chances of their children and families.

Brain drain could be approached in a positive manner, as few key people come back, having gained vital experience while abroad. The Bureau for relations with Diaspora in cooperation with Organization for Migration in Moldova launched Diaspora Engagement Hub – a program which includes some initiatives – one of them – professional return for diaspora professional and highly-skilled migrants, encouraging the transfer of human capital and professional experience oriented towards the academic, social and economic development of the Republic of Moldova, via short-term professional returns (2 weeks – 2 months) [2]. Although skilled Moldovans are keen to help in the development of their home country, there are several necessary determinants: information about institutional initiatives, political stability, improved socio-economic prospects and an adequate infrastructure, a shared vision of the diaspora role, as well as specific instruments for engagement. The important thing is that a suitable environment to validate the knowledge and resources transferred within the local socio-economic context needs to be secured, and this should include political stability and governability [13]. Again, this stresses the relationship between the quality of governance and the diaspora.

As a result, the associations of migrants are quite active, especially in dealing with philanthropic goals at the local level of migrant settlements. Their activities are often organized without the involvement of the Moldovan authorities. If the activity is coordinated, it does not get much publicity. Basically, it is reflected at the local level, on the websites of the migrants' organizations. Organizations of migrants often seek to distance themselves from the government agencies because they do not want to be

“cash cows” of the government, to be used in the party goals of power or opposition [6, p.163].

There is an interdependence between migration and the government, while migration may affect the quality of governance, the quality of governance most surely affects migration. A badly governed country is likely to experience a lot of emigration representing a push factor: people vote with their feet expressing the distrust towards the government. Compounding the potential for confusion, many characteristics of a society are liable to affect both migration and governance. A country is poor as the brain drain occurs, and to govern becomes more difficult. Is migration causing governance to deteriorate, is bad governance driving people out, or is poverty causing both? Unfortunately, so many factors could potentially influence governance that in practice this approach has not yet generated convincing solutions.

A form of dialog between the Moldovan Government and diaspora is established through The Congresses of Diaspora. Last year it was organized on August 19-21 and was marked by often criticism from the behalf of the Moldovan diaspora to the Government, who didn't take any actions to facilitate their returning or their investment back in Moldova. The perception of the Moldovans from abroad is that they are mainly used for electoral purposes and as money pumps for the economy. The participants were enraged that the Prime-Minister Pavel Filip left the Diaspora Congress after the introductory stage, thus ignoring the voices of hundreds of Moldovans. One of the participants from the USA, Elena Dragalin, emphasized on the political side of the Diaspora Bureau and that it intends to use diaspora for promoting the ruling Democratic Party [5]. This fact denotes a defective relationship and misunderstanding between the Government and Diaspora.

However, not all diaspora activity, may

be directed to the homeland, and not all migrants mobilize based on a homeland identity (or even consider themselves to be a part of a diaspora). Diaspora groups and members may be more or less inclined to concern themselves with quality of life and policies vis-à-vis their home countries. Organizational resources affect the ability to mobilize for political action and for independent development activities, such as hometown associations, and the ability to access host country and international decision-making structures [10]. The importance of organizational resources also depends on the size and diversity of the diaspora community. The most commonly identified factor necessary for effective mobilization is the creation of a sense of solidarity and community identity [10].

We consider that Moldovan diaspora process of consolidation is influenced particularly by political events and elections organized in home country. After such events were created initiatives groups like "Adoptă un vot", pretending to have 100,000 members and which had organized in March 2017 in Venice, Italy a diaspora offline expressing their disagreement toward the change of the electoral system, switching to uninominal / mixed voting system [1].

Not entire diaspora supports this initiative, for example Vlad Spânu, the president of the foundation Moldova in Washington considers that "the uninominal vote is an important step for the Republic of Moldova

towards the establishment of a representative democracy, as it is in the Western countries.... the US is the best example ... because this system has shown for hundreds of years in America that it works best and makes the division of power in the state more balanced" [16].

Conclusions. The Diaspora represents a huge resource for homeland encompassing economic, social, political development potential which can be explored for mutual benefit. Migration has both favorable effects on governance and adverse effects, so a reliable estimate of the net effect would be decisive for an overall assessment of the impact of migration on countries of origin. While migration may affect the quality of governance, the quality of governance most surely affects migration. Establishing a well-developed legal (and institutional) framework for diaspora is not sufficient. The government should be interested more in benefiting and accepting diaspora's political remittances showing a real interest in cooperation.

Concerning electoral process, the government must decide about locations for polling stations abroad in a transparent manner and well in advance of an election. Also, could be considered other voting options like e-vote in order to ensure the migrants' right to vote. This fact will express the jointly objective to develop the homeland country.

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