

THE ROLE OF DIASPORAS IN PROMOTING FOREIGN POLICY

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SUMMARY

By conducting this study, the role of the diaspora of the Republic of Moldova on the foreign policy of the state was highlighted. They were also highlighted the problems faced by the citizens who went abroad and the ways to solve them, correlated to the foreign policy actions of our country. In achieving this goal, the following objectives were proposed: systematization of theoretical concepts regarding the diaspora and foreign policy; analysis of historiographical sources that were concerned with researching the role of the Moldovan diaspora in promoting the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova; researching the role of the Moldovan diaspora in promoting the favorable image of the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: Republic of Moldova, diaspora, foreign policy, emigrants, people, image, jobs.

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Introduction. The numerous political, economic and social mutations of the last decades of the 20th century - beginning of the 21st century have fundamentally changed the picture of the world and have been the basis for obvious transformations in international relations.

Carefully pursuing the global transformations, we are witnessing a multitude of political phenomena present on the international arena, such as: integralist/disintegrational processes present in different areas of the world, the democratization process and the socio-economic reforms in the newly published states, the fight against corruption and terrorism, migration waves.

Major changes in the hierarchy of the international system result from internal failures than from interstate contradictions. To the same extent, the change of international relations occurs due to the different processes, which develop both inside and outside the states.

Appeared on the international arena three decades ago, the Republic of Moldova since 1991 until now, has not only been noted for its tendencies of democratization and European integration, but also by the exodus of its citizens. The exodus of Moldovan citizens has already conditioned the formation of „diaspora” abroad.

The correlation „diaspora” – „foreign policy”. In specialized literature, the term „diaspora” can be defined from a political, economic, religious, sociological or historical point of view. Therefore, we can define the „diaspora” in relation to the country of origin. Few know that at its core, the diaspora designates all Jewish communities scattered and later settled outside Palestine after the destruction of Jerusalem and the expulsion of the population

by Nebuchadnezzar II, king of Babylon. Today, by extension, the term in question designates any ethnic group outside the borders of the country of origin. The term came to us in French. The French also took it from Greek and in the Greek vocabulary the word consists of „dia”, which means „around”, and „spora”, a word meaning „scatter” [1].

The concept of diaspora is also used to refer to the dispersion of people living as the people to whom they belong, where it is accompanied by the maintenance of ties and symbols, cultural, political or charitable order between dispersed groups - usually as minorities - and therefore not only with a certain place of origin, where forms of cultural, sentimental or political solidarity, more or less active, between the different settlements of people are maintained.

For a better understanding of the role of the diaspora in promoting the country's foreign policy, there is a need to examine the concept of foreign policy. Nowadays, more and more often the problem is related to the type correlation: foreign policy-diaspora. For a better understanding of the nature of this report, it is necessary, first of all, to determine the significance of the concepts of „foreign policy” and „diaspora”. The content of these concepts does not remain unchanged, because the situation in the world is in a continuous transformation.

Thus, according to Dan Năstase's statements in the paper „Diplomatic and Consular Law”, foreign policy is an instrument through which to act on external circumstances, their own external relations, but also the foreign relations of foreigners. Foreign policy can also be an instrument, which works monotonously, inertly, under the constraint of overwhelming factors such as national identity expressed by „historical destiny” and „national interest” [2].

Foreign policy means the activity of the state in international affairs or the activity of the state on the international arena that regulates the relations with other subjects of the foreign political activity: states, parties, international and regional public organizations [3]. The foreign policy of the state must be understood as a concrete historical category - it does not exist outside space and time. The essence of the spatial factor consists in the fact that the external world is the material world, which occupies a certain space, the characteristics of which often create the limits of the political behavior of the given state. And the time factor is determined by those that foreign policy is the activity of the state in a certain period of time. It has a concrete character, it is realized as possible during that time, and it is determined by the fact that the state, during this time, proposes its goals and the problems it has to solve.

State structures have specialized bodies, competent in carrying out political activity and control over this activity: the ministry of foreign affairs or foreign relations, parliamentary departments or committees competent in carrying out foreign policy, embassies and representations which include specialists in military and economic matters (representatives of the chambers), cultural, scientific attachés who work under the control of embassies and representations abroad, based on official or semi-official programs, missions. The foreign policy, through the advanced goals, by choosing the means and methods to achieve these goals reflects the internal situation of the state. It is based on the resources at its disposal, the professional potential [4].

At the same time, foreign policy also involves the activity of the state in the system of international relations. This activity is of undeniable importance. It is here that the interests

of states related to the issue of disarmament, ensuring state security, disaster prevention, combating terrorism and crime, as well as issues related to the diaspora, meet. The state defends its interests through political activity which is quite varied, and is in itself a necessary attribute.

The political activity of the state can be understood not only in a narrow, limited sense, as an activity in one field or another. Any social activity is a goal-oriented activity. It includes not only the practical actions of the subjects, but also determines, elaborates the aims and the content of its activity. In specialized literature these aspects differ and are analyzed separately: 1. as a process of forming the goals and content of political activity; 2. as a policy implementation process. The directions and goals of political activity do not require a differentiation (in this case they form a whole) and here the political activity of states is researched as a whole. It is in this capacity that it becomes an „agent”, both of the interdependence between internal political and socio-economic relations, and of the system of interstate relations [5]. In the opinion of the Romanian political scientist Silviu Brucan, the foreign political activity constitutes reactions to a series of internal and external incentives, regarding the nations as systems with input, output and feedback in constant interaction with the international environment. In his vision, the primary sources of foreign policy are included in five variable sets: the natural-material bases, the social structure and the social forces of the conjuncture, the state system, the governance [6].

The first criterion, that of natural-material bases, includes the size of the territory, the geographical location and the forces of production. The social structure and social forces comprise the social classes and groups, the main relations between them, the nationalities and the nation, each with its consciousness and ideology, with its cultural and historical traditions, with the psychic impulses and moods that make them act inside and outside the country. Economic and political crises, coups, elections, mass strikes, widespread violence, military hostilities and war are all included in the economic situation. The state system includes the national decision-making mechanism, the state apparatus and the government, that is, the instruments of their power.

The foreign policy, elaborated by those who came to make state policy, is applied by the state services. The institutions responsible for the elaboration and implementation of the foreign policy put into action the state policies: economic policy, health policy, education policy, pension policy. The foreign policy of the state is the activity through which the government establishes, defines and regulates the relations with foreign governments and the state's participation in international relations.

If we were to relate the two concepts theoretically, we would not be able to highlight a direct connection between them. At a practical level, however, the diaspora and the foreign policy of a state are closely linked, because foreign policy involves the unification of the interests of the population, and the diaspora is part of the country's population. Moreover, the diaspora can contribute to the formation and promotion of the foreign policy of the state from which it comes.

Mapping the Moldovan diaspora and foreign policy promotion. Becoming an independent and sovereign state on August 27, 1991, the Republic of Moldova pays special attention to the protection of the rights and interests of its population. Thus, according to the constitutional provisions, the citizens of the Republic of Moldova enjoy freedom of expression, freedom to travel and get to know the world. But a large number of citizens left their

homeland in search of a better destiny. During the 30 years of independence, about half of the population was forced to leave the country for political, economic or social, spiritual or religious reasons. In recent years, the number of fellow citizens in the Moldovan diaspora has visibly increased, with Moldovans from different social categories on the list of those who left. The massive migration of Moldovans (there are no exact statistics that would reflect the number of those who left the country, often circulating the figure of one million citizens) has made today the Moldovan diaspora to grow substantially, both in the West and in the East.

Being abroad, Moldovans feel the need to create organizations designed to bring together and unite the Moldovan diaspora, to strengthen its spiritual and economic potential, to contribute to the effective integration of its members in society. Currently, the Moldovan diaspora has about 64 associations in 31 countries of the world: Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Switzerland, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Great Britain, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Czech Republic, Romania, Russia, Spain, USA, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine and Hungary.

The public associations established by Moldovans abroad aim at a better organization of the diaspora from a structural point of view, in order to be able to support at a new qualitative level the integration of newcomers, but also of those who have arrived earlier. The area of these concerns also includes the strengthening of relations between community members, through mutual aid, by initiating various activities, maintaining spiritual ties with the homeland. The adequate representation of Moldovans in the relations with the governmental and non-governmental bodies from the countries of residence or from the Republic of Moldova is also of great importance.

The Diaspora has an important role to play in promoting a favorable image of Moldova abroad. In this context, the effort to institutionalize the Moldovan diaspora becomes particularly important, which has a potential capable of contributing to the consolidation of bilateral relations in multiple fields, to finding ways to support the country with all the experience gained abroad. Although there is no public debate on the Moldovan diaspora yet, the problems of the Moldovan diaspora are primarily the problems of the Republic of Moldova. We live today in a world full of globalization, in constant change and at the same time with the integration in the western society it is absolutely necessary for the Moldovans to preserve and promote their national values, their cultural and spiritual heritage [7].

According to some studies, the Moldovan diaspora is one of the most educated in Eastern Europe and the CIS, which means that an important part of the population with advanced vocational training and which could contribute to the development of the labor market, does not actually contribute directly to it. [8]. In addition, their transfers only lead to quantitative, not qualitative, economic growth.

Emigration is continuously fueled by the large number of young people who fail to find (well paid) jobs in the country. The large number of young emigrants with higher education should raise concerns about the departure of highly qualified specialists. It is often said that although poor countries waste their human resources through emigration - an essential factor for development - the income sent to the country would instead cover the deficit of financial resources. But, in essence, these factors are not mutually substitutable. Moreover, the quality of the human factor gone abroad often deteriorates because emigrants work in jobs for which they are overqualified (most often, construction for men or domestic work for women).

In some countries there is concern that workers' emigration and remittances could cause the so-called „Dutch disease” [9]. The countries dependent on emigration affected by this syndrome become exposed to external shocks, being excessively stimulated imports and compromised exports. Cheap labor becomes the main export, as the export of advanced processing products requires consistent efforts to create the necessary institutions and infrastructure. Regarding the Republic of Moldova, the concerns about contracting the „Dutch disease” are not unfounded at all. Emigration also generates a serious problem of moral hazard that manifests itself at the level of the government and households.

The fact that labor flows ensure constant income flows makes members of families dependent on migrants become much more inert in their search for jobs or in opening individual businesses. In the Republic of Moldova, a culture of diaspora dependence is being formed. At the same time, the microeconomic effects of emigration are ambivalent. The material well-being of every third family in Moldova depends almost entirely on the money earned by working abroad. Households with foreign incomes are rapidly reaching higher living standards than those without such incomes.

Although the impact of income remitted by migrant workers on the country's economic situation is considerable, the long-term effects should not be underestimated, as transitional poverty is a serious obstacle to the development of human capital. Due to the income provided by emigrants, their children are able to enroll in universities and pay tuition fees, which are likely to be employed in various sectors of the economy in the future.

On the other hand, the labor movement process creates favorable conditions for trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labor. Although there are quite a few statistics, in South-Eastern Europe, the Republic of Moldova is considered the country most affected by trafficking in human beings, whose main victims are women and children. Emigration has generated a culture of dependence on young people from immigrant families. According to some reports, their interest in education and integration into the domestic labor market is visibly declining. Although statistical data are missing, media sources report that the majority of young people who emigrate already have at least one relative established abroad [10].

The Moldovan diaspora considerably simplifies finding a place to live and work and reduces the risks associated with emigration. Over 70% of Moldovan emigrants work illegally, without having basic salary and social rights in the recipient countries [11].

They do not contribute to social security policies either in the Republic of Moldova or in the host country. This state threatens the stability of the pension system in the Republic of Moldova in the future, when some emigrants will return to their homeland. Poor economic conditions in Moldova have led to a massive displacement of labor in Western countries. Failure to provide smaller pay gaps that would motivate people to stay here has made the exodus very massive. We go so much to Western Europe, precisely because wages are very high compared to what we earn here [12].

Although several actions are being taken to stop the illegal exodus of labor, it has not been stopped, and the number of those returning to the country is very small. If the current trends on the labor market will be maintained, the question is what will the population of Moldova look like in 2050?

More than one million people from the current territory of the country now live in countries not bordering the Republic of Moldova. Most of them send money to the country. Ac-

According to the share in the GDP of the incomes coming from the activity of the citizens who went abroad, the Republic of Moldova occupies the second place in the world.

According to some studies, over 80% of Moldovan emigrants send financial means to the country, and about 70% of them transfer more than half of their earnings. These transfers are compensatory and countercyclical in nature. Being a major source of foreign currency, transfers have fundamental implications for economic growth, the balance of payments and the labor market. Transfers partially finance the trade deficit and favor the rapid increase of wages in some branches of the national economy where there is already a shortage of labor. These foreign exchange flows have also reduced the government's dependence on conditional lending, giving it some leeway in macroeconomic policy [13].

The money sent from abroad was the main factor in increasing the disposable income of the population and was spent mainly on consumer goods (about 15% of the total) or sustainable (13%, including education and health). About 15% are invested in households (for the purchase or repair of housing). Revenues transferred from abroad increased in parallel with final consumption and conditioned the pace of GDP growth [14].

In **conclusion**, Moldovan fellow citizens in the diaspora must have a voice, including a political influence in the Republic of Moldova. We must admit that migration has a positive role for adoptive European countries, but it can also have it for the country. The millions of Moldovans working abroad send money to the country, but also contribute to the development of economies in the countries in which they work.

The Moldovan diaspora can be an important vector of the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova, as well as an essential support in the development of other sectors in the country. The Republic of Moldova has a human potential, which, unfortunately, does not use it sufficient. Refugee on forums is often beneficial, but, as a rule, it does not solve personal frustration, to be honest, the impact is not the expected one. The traumatic experiences following many initiatives started with great love, make some Moldovans more isolated from his country - the Republic of Moldova.

Involvement in politics is a necessity when you feel that things do not go properly and that there are good solutions that are worth trying. Being in a permanent interaction with simple citizens, a political party decides what kind of messages are important and what are the best ways to transmit, and – theoretically - in case of victory in electoral confrontations, the winning coalitions must apply the promises in practice. Only by involving the Moldovans from the diaspora in politics it is possible to define their role in creating the country image, in supporting the departed compatriots.

There is a need for a real political debate in the Republic of Moldova, focusing on the potential of the Moldovan diaspora and its impact on both the economic and human levels. Moldovans in the diaspora are a link between the host country and the Republic of Moldova. This right is an enormous opportunity to stand out, to say what they have to say, and through their actions they will be able to contribute to the improvement of the country image of the Republic of Moldova and to the development of fruitful bilateral relations.

Finally, the governmental authorities of the Republic of Moldova should direct their actions towards:

- signing social security agreements with the main countries of destination of Moldovan migrants;
- supporting circular migration programs for Moldovans;

- developing programs for the Moldovan diaspora to maintain relations with migrants and to contribute to the preservation of national traditions and customs, including the promotion of Moldovan culture abroad;
- creating the conditions for the development of the business environment;
- implementation of several programs to attract remittances to the economy to stimulate the return of Moldovan migrants to their country of origin, etc.

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