

Bank and official documents of the National Commission of Statistics were taken into consideration.

Apparently easy to read, the book is addressed both to students and academic researchers, but also to a wide range of readers, from politicians to historians, sociologists, economists or other professionals, as well as to all those interested in Romania's economic and political development during the last century.



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**Romanian Transnational Families:  
Gender, Family Practices and Difference**  
London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018

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**A**CCORDING TO official estimates, between three and four million Romanians live abroad, making transnational families an increasingly present reality in the Romanian social and demographic landscape. Transnational families are those families with at least one member living in another country.

In this context, the volume is an important contribution to a better understanding of the mechanisms and consequences of this phenomenon. The book is built around concepts such as transnationalism, gender in migration, transnational families, family practice, and temporary transnational suspension.

The book is composed of six chapters, references and an index. The first part contains a detailed presentation of the scholarly research on transnationalism, survey-

ing an impressive number of papers. The author shows how transnationalism has developed mainly because of the need to study international migration. Transnationalism has been defined as the process in which migrants develop and support complex social relationships that bring together their country of origin and their destination. These interactions cross geographic, cultural and political boundaries, the borders of nation-states, hence the name of this phenomenon. The books and articles written on this topic have taken into account its many aspects: the integration of migrants in the countries of destination, the effect of the money sent by them to their families left at home, the migrant children, the situation of the children left behind (in the care of the other parent, or of relatives), the status of migrant women and of those left at home, the various ways of maintaining the feeling of belonging to the family in spite of the distance. Cheap transport and the ever-evolving communication technology have made the relationships between the migrants and their families from their country of origin easier than ever.

This book is based on a large number of interviews conducted in transnational families from several areas of the country: rural (Dorna-Arini, Prundul Bârgăului, Jidoșița) and urban (Drobeta-Turnu-Severin, Brașov, Cluj-Napoca, Turda); Romanian migrants living in London and in the small Belgian city of Mons were also interviewed. During the interviews, the author came across information on transnationalism in Moldova (Chișinău) and Hungary (Debrecen). The methodology for conducting these interviews is briefly presented.

A distinct chapter analyzes how the occupational status of migrants impacts their

families. Migrants working in high-skilled and better paid jobs have more resources than those working in low-skilled, less well-paid jobs. People in the former category enjoy better living conditions in their host countries; those in the latter often live in much worse circumstances. The migrants with a higher status and income can afford more visits to Romania, and are able more often to bring their relatives to visit them; those with a lower income rarely visit their families left at home, in order to save as much money as possible. The situation of migrant women in this context is also analyzed.

Another topic addressed in this book is the way in which migrants communicate with their families in Romania, and manage to maintain a sense of belonging. The most common are calls by phone or via another applications (Skype, Whats App, Facebook, etc.) and reciprocal visits. In this context, the role of women is emphasized, and their major contribution to maintaining the open communication between family members from Romania and abroad. In many situations, elderly members of the family develop new skills by using the modern communication technology, or even by learning a foreign language, in the case of frequent visits to relatives abroad. In addition to these there are meetings at family events, or holidays spent together. This chapter also mentions

the formation of new couples, between Romanians living abroad, or between Romanians and citizens of other nationalities.

The last chapter of the book addresses the situation of the children from transnational families. Often, children live with their parents abroad, go to school there, and sometimes grow apart from their country of origin, a situation that becomes difficult if their parents decide, at some point, to return to Romania. If one of the parents is of another nationality and the family is permanently settled abroad, the children will most likely gradually lose their Romanian identity inherited from the Romanian parent. If migrants do not have enough money to bring their children with them, they remain home in the care of their relatives, which may alter their psychological well-being, school performance, or behavior.

As shown above, the topic of this book is a matter of importance and concern for Romanian society. Until now, the government has unsuccessfully tried in various ways to reduce the massive migration of Romanians, and also to improve the situation of the children from transnational families left behind. Such research may provide a better understanding of this phenomenon, and possible solutions to limit its negative effects.



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