

POLISH MINORITY OF ROMANIA. SOME GEO-DEMOGRAPHIC EVOLUTIONS

Silviu COSTACHIE

Research Center for Regional Development and European Integration,
University of Bucharest, Faculty of Geography,
1st N. Bălcescu Blvd., Sector 1, Bucharest, Romania, e-mail: Silviu_C@yahoo.com

Ionica SOARE

Research Center for Regional Development and European Integration,
University of Bucharest, Faculty of Geography,
1st N. Bălcescu Blvd., Sector 1, Bucharest, Romania, e-mail: ionica.soare@yahoo.com

Ioana-Elena IPATE

Research Center for Regional Development and European Integration,
University of Bucharest, Faculty of Geography,
1st N. Bălcescu Blvd., Sector 1, Bucharest, Romania, e-mail: ipate.ioana@yahoo.com

Abstract: This article purpose is to obtain a cross section of life of Poles in Romania using methods of historical analysis. To achieve this we used a series of scientific data and various materials. A very important part of the study are the conversations with the Polish community. In the first part of this study, at the background of the short history of the Romanian state, are discussed first Polish-Romanian relations and the history of emigration over the centuries. The theme of the second part is the distribution and a number of Polish community in Romania in the twentieth and twenty-first century.

Key words: polish population, minority, emmigration, demography, Romanians

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INTRODUCTION

National minority is a group of people which is distinguished by a lower population number from the rest of the inhabitants of the particular country. Members of the national minority have, or not, the status of the citizen. In addition, they have long and strong bonds with this country and the ethnical, cultural, religious and linguistic features distinctive from the rest of the population. At the same time they express their desire to recognize them as a minority. These criteria are fully characterizing minority of Poles in Romania¹.

¹ International laws protecting the rights of minorities (the definition of national minorities) [in:] society [in:] Eesti, http://www.eesti.pl/index.php?dzial=spoleczenstwo&strona=regulacje_prawne

Currently Poles community reaches about 4,000 people. The main concentration of the Polish population is at the south of Bukovina, others that are not so numerous, are in Bucharest, Hunedoara and other cities. For many generations Poles in Romania have maintained an awareness of belonging to the Polish nation, as well as knowledge of Polish language and traditions.

DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY

Discussing this topic, "the Polish minority of Romania," we will refer to the territories that were at the time of the World War 1 and 2 within the borders of Romania, because they represent important new chapters in the history of the presence of Poles in Romania.

Aim of this study is to obtain a cross section of life of Poles in Romania up to the present times using the methods of historical analysis. At this work were used various materials like those from the scientific symposium held in Suceava, studies of the Polish community by publishing house "Bezdroża", websites run by the most important Polish community organizations in Romania. Very important part of the study were the conversations with the Polish community and the possibility of using the MA thesis of Matei Catargiu under the title "The Poles in Romania until 1939". The changes of the number of poles were taken from the National Statistic Office in Bucharest.

This work is divided in two parts. In the first part, at the background of the short history of the Romanian state, are discussed first Polish-Romanian relations and the history of emigration over the centuries. The theme of the second part is the distribution and a number of Polish community in Romania in the twentieth and twenty-first century.

HISTORY OF THE POLISH EMIGRATION TO ROMANIA

Romania is a country situated on the Carpathian and Danube land, has a rich history of many centuries of which any European country would not be embarrassed. The history of Romania is not the focus of this work; nevertheless we find it important to outline it as it forms the basis of our argument. Thus, we will briefly describe Romanian international relations and influence of other countries as well as describe transformations which the country had overcome.

We can date back the origins of Romanian state from 13th and 14th centuries. This is when Wallachia and Moldova have emerged. Over the 15th century this pre-Romanian lands were under the threat from Turks, Poles and Hungarians. In the 18th century the threat was Russia and Austria. Transylvanian lands were mainly influenced by the Hungarians and Turks. In the 17th century Transylvania was controlled by Habsburgs².

Eighteenth century was a period of growing influence of Russia and Austria (Habsburg Empire). Habsburg, have managed to take control over Wallachia - Oltenia. In 1775, the Austrian Empire occupied the north-western part of Moldavia (Bukovina), while the eastern part of the principality - Bessarabia in 1812, was occupied by Russia³.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Treaty of Paris (1854) granted the Turkey the control over Moldavia and Wallachia. In 1859 Aleksandru Joan Cuza became the prince of Moldova and later of Wallachia.

² History of Romania [in:] The Romanian Community of WA INC, <http://www.romwa.org/history.php>

³ History of Romania, p.1.

This was recognized by Turkey and Cuza was able to announce national unification⁴, “in this way, a state which has started using the name of Romania was created”⁵.

In 1877, Russia declared war against Turkey; this had prompted Romanian politicians to join the struggle against Ottoman Empire. As a result Romania gained its independence in 1878 that was confirmed by the Congress of Berlin. The same year Romania had received the lands of northern Dobrudja. In 1881 Romania became a Kingdom, headed by King Carol I. Nevertheless, Transylvania and Banat had remained under the control of Habsburgs⁶.

Another important moment for the Romanian people was the end of the World War 1. The territory of the country has expanded, Banat, Transylvania, Bukovina, the southern part of Dobrudja and Bessarabia were joint. Great Romania was established with twice bigger territory and population than of the Kingdom that existed before the war⁷.

The end of the World War 2 was not as beneficial for Romania in terms of territory. On the basis of the Treaty of Paris of 1947, Romania lost Bessarabia, northern Bukovina, and southern Dobrudja. In the coming years Romania was under the influence of the Soviet Union, creating the Socialist Republic of Romania (1947-1989). Since the 1960s, the Romanian government managed to escape from the Soviet Union’s direct influence. Nicolae Ceaușescu became the head of the Romanian Communist Party in 1965 and became the head of state in 1967. The year 1989 brought the end of the communist regime in Romania without any changes to its territory national. Today, Romania is a republic with parliamentary-presidential system (semi-presidential)⁸.

First traces of Poles in Romania

The first Polish – Romanian cultural contacts can be track back to the creation of the first units of the state on the lands of Romania - Moldavia and Wallachia, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Romania for the first time is mentioned in Polish writings in the early fourteenth century, when Poland was ruled by King Casimir the Great (1333-1370) who in 1366 moved border of Poland up to Moldova⁹. This is when political and military ties between Poland and Moldova are starting to emerge with some regional differentiations. Weaker contacts occurred between Poland and Wallachia, while stronger between Poland and Transylvania. These ties have developed over centuries¹⁰.

Close neighborhood meant political influence: the Polish kings intervened in the affairs of the Moldovan principality. These interventions part of the political program of the Jagiellonian dynasty, who wanted to gain control over the trade

⁴ History of Romania, p.1.

⁵ Catargiu M., Outline of the history of the Romanian state [in:] Chapter 1. History of emigration Poles [in:] Poles in Romania up to 1939 year, University of Adam Mickiewicz, Teology Faculty, Poznan 2003, page 12.

⁶ History of Romania, p.1.

⁷ History of Romania, p.1.

⁸ History of Romania, p.1.

⁹ Rezachevici C., Polish Crown Relationship with Moldovan. Where the battle took place under "Plonini" (July 1368)? [in:] Closer together. Poles and Romania and the history and cultural heritage of Europe. Materials from the symposium. Wyd. Grup Musatinii, Suceava 2007, page 155.

¹⁰ Catargiu M., Polish - Romanian Reactions [in:] Chapter 1. History of emigration Poles [in:] Poles in Romania up to 1939 year, University of Adam Mickiewicz, Teology Facultate, Poznan 2003, page 15.

route, which linked the North Europe with the South, from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea¹¹. The aim was to export Polish cereal crops from: Gdansk, Cracow, Lvov, Hotina, Suceava, Galați or Cetatea Albă to Constantinopol and Pery¹².

Border fighting and an expedition into Moldova occurred from 17th century. It should be emphasized that despite the wars, Moldovan-Polish relations were not always negative. From the beginning, Moldavian rulers were interested in the Polish craft, as at that time it was respected for its quality. Privileges were being granted to Polish magnates in order to enable them creating trading houses in important cities. Sometimes Poles received lands from influential rulers in exchange for different favours. At that time cross Polish-Moldavian marriages was very common¹³.

Frequent political and cultural contacts created convenient conditions for the diffusion of Catholicism. The first Catholic diocese at the area of Moldova was created on 9th of March 1371 in the Siret. The first bishop was a Franciscan monk Andrzej Wassilo from Jastrzębica, called as "Andrzej from Cracow"¹⁴. The later period the bishopric was transferred first to the Suceava, and then to Bacău where survived up to the 18th century. Most of the bishops at that territory were Poles¹⁵.

When it comes to Transylvania - the Polish Brothers or so called Arian Brothers, a religious community which was separated from the Evangelic - Refomists church, had come to this area to spread their religion. In 1658 the Polish Government motivated by Catholic principles has issued legal acts binding Polish Brothers to leave Poland. The Majority of them settled in Transylvania¹⁶.

To sum up, Polish-Romanian relations began with the Polish-Moldovan neighborhood. This relationship had politico-military and economic (trade, crafts) character. There was also some religious influence of Polish Catholicism on Romania as well as influx of Polish Protestants. In the area of Transylvania, the first traces of Poles were associated with a group of Aryan (Polish Brothers), who were expelled from the country.

History of emigration of the Polish people to Romania

The first trace of Poles in the lands of Romanians goes back to the beginning of the thirteenth century - their character was military, political, economic, cultural and also linked to the development of the Catholic religion. However, emigration that is in the focus of this essay- that is the permanent settlement- had begun in the late eighteen century. We can distinguish two types of Polish emigration to the Romanian lands. The first group includes political emigration, the second is economic emigration.

Political emigration to Romania has been relatively small and it is not possible to determine how many of the immigrants settled permanently. Economic immigration presents a completely different picture - in terms of

¹¹ Catargiu M., p.15.

¹² Petrică I., History of Polish community in Romania[in;] *History*.[in;] Union of Poles in Romania. Polish House in Bucharest, , http://www.dompolskibukareszt.ro/istoric_pol.html

¹³ Petrică I., p.1.

¹⁴ Catargiu M., p.18.

¹⁵ Pieszczoich F., Moldovan-Polish relations in the second half of the nineteenth century [in;] Closer together. In the circle of Polish-Romanian relations. Materials from the symposium,Wyd. Grup Musatinii, Suceava 2005, p.135.

¹⁶ Petrică I., p.1.

quantity and in terms of permanent settlement. While political emigration included mainly political intelligence, we can talk of economic emigration of mainly peasants, people without possession and seasonal workers¹⁷.

In 1669 Austria attached Transylvania and Banat areas to its Empire. In 1775 also north Moldavia was joined and since then the name Bukovina was given to the region. In this period the Republic of Poland was after the first Partition land (1772) in which Austria grabbed the area of Polish Galicia to its territory. Bukovina and Galicia constituted one state ruled by one emperor. The Habsburg Empire had grown in power starting an intensive processes of changes of the new lands. This was particularly convenient in Bukovina - area sparsely populated with many areas for settlement¹⁸.

The first actions taken by Austrian authorities on newly gained territory were concerning the exploitation of natural resources - mainly salt deposits. In 1784 salt mines built in Solca, Cacica, Slatina Mare, Slătioara, Trestioara and Pleșa. In 1792, authorities of the Austria officially brought to Cacica 20 Polish mining families from Bochnia in Galicia and later on from Wieliczka (Galicia) as well. The salt mine Cacica was developed rapidly under the guidance of Polish specialists. They contributed to the development of the whole village. In 1810 the numbers of inhabitants in Cacica village was 305 and in 1818 the village was almost entirely Polish¹⁹. Despite the salt mine, the important role in the life of the village was played also by the school and by the church. During this period school classes were lead in four languages: Polish, Romanian, German and Ukrainian. The church was built in 1807-1810 mainly from the efforts of Father James Bogdanowicz, employee in the salt mine²⁰.

In the early nineteenth century the first wave of emigration of Polish highlanders to Bukovina took place; it was followed by waves in 1860-1880 and 1900-1910. Most of the highlanders came from the northern part of the Silesian Beskid, Beskid Zywiecki and Kisucy River, from the area Czadeckiej. Since the year 1803 due to overpopulation in Polish villages the migration was mainly made of highlanders czadeckich whose destination were Cernăuți, Cacica, Siret and Huta Veche²¹.

The rapid influx of Polish settlers was the reason of emergence of new villages and towns. In the year 1834 mining families created a new village called Solonețu Nou. Two years later the highlander families from Caliceanca moved to the south of Bukovina and this had started Pleșa village. Residents from Tereblești and Huta Veche had joined them later. In 1842 the other group Poles from Tereblești and Huta Veche in cooperation with the German families founded the Poiana Micului village²².

In 1850-1870 the migration of Polish settlers from the area of Rzeszow and Tarnow took part²³. This group of people came into the Bucovina and settled in

¹⁷ Catargiu M., History of emigration Poles in Romania [in:] Chapter 1. History of emigration Poles [in:] Poles in Romania up to 1939 year, University of Adam Mickiewicz, Teology Facultate, Poznan 2003, page 25.

¹⁸ Catargiu M., pp.26-27.

¹⁹ History [in:] Polonia in Romania. Association of Poles in Cacica, <http://www.cacica.eu/>

²⁰ Petrică I., p.1.

²¹ Catargiu M., pp.28-29.

²² Ostrowski T., Polonia in Bucovina [in:] Bukovina region of gentleness, Tourist Guide, wyd. Bezdroza, Krakow 2001, p.81.

²³ Catargiu M., p.32.

villages such as Ruda (today is Vicșani), Bulai (Moar) and Mihoweni near Suceava. They had emigrated from their fatherland due to natural disasters: epidemic outbreaks and locusts plague²⁴.

The second most important destination of Polish immigrants was Moldova, and particularly Bessarabia. Most Poles in Bessarabia started arriving in there in 1840 from the Duchy of Warsaw; among them were farmers, craftsmen, and soldiers of the former Russian army. A large group of immigrants joined host country's intelligence circles: they became officials, doctors, teachers, but also attracted other persons²⁵.

At the end of the nineteenth century Poles were coming to the lands of Romanian looking for work in the oil industry. They mainly came from Galicia, and as respected engineers, quickly found work in Ploiești, Brazi, Câmpina and Buștenari²⁶.

At the turn of the century emigration of Poles into Transylvania took place. It included mostly miners from the area of Rzeszow, Tarnobrzeg, Kolbuszowa²⁷. Migrants were finding work in the coal basin, in cities such as: Valea Jiului, Petroșani, Lupeni²⁸. At the same time, the glass industry developed on the lands of Romania (an example of glass factory is Turda) – this gave Polish workers more employment opportunities²⁹.

Labour migration has resulted mainly in the settlement of Polish population in Romania. Nevertheless, this process can be simply called a 'movement' as Galicia and Bukovina formed one state in years 1849-1918. Emigration was caused by overcrowding of villages in Galicia, which was leading to famine and very high unemployment. Thus, labor migrants were mainly peasants, although there were some mine workers, steel workers who due to unemployment in Galicia were looking for opportunities in other parts of Habsburg Empire. Emigration occurred first of all to the area of Bukovina, secondly to Moldova. This group consisted mainly from peasant farmers. Another group of emigration, they were workers-miners, steel workers, they settled in different towns in Romania, depending on job opportunities.

Political emigration occurred mainly after uprisings in Poland in the nineteenth century. The main group of immigrants was formed by soldiers, refugees and the intelligent group of Polish. The first of this kind of migration took place after the Kosciuszko's Uprising in 1794 and third partition of Poland in 1795, when Poland disappeared from the map of Europe. Insurgents emigrated following the motto: "Who loves the homeland lets hurry to Wallachia". Many Poles sought refuge in Moldavia and Wallachia³⁰.

Further political emigration took place after the events of the November Uprising in 1830. Then, about 3,000 military soldiers escaped to Transylvania and Moldavia. The strongest group of Polish political emigration was concentrated in Moldavia, as Moldovan boyars were providing assistance for Poles³¹.

²⁴ Ostrowski Tomasz , p.81.

²⁵ Catargiu M., pp.33-34.

²⁶ Catargiu M., p.34.

²⁷ Catargiu M., p.34.

²⁸ Poles in Romania [in:] Consular Information, Polish Embassy, <http://www.bukareszt.polemb.net/index.php?document=93>

²⁹ Catargiu M., p.34.

³⁰ Petrică I., p.1.

³¹ Petrică I., p.1.

In 1863 in Poland the January Uprising took place. Despite the initial successes it was ended with a defeat of the Polish Kingdom. Another wave of refugees moved to Romania: "the country which is most friendly and helpful". The largest Polish colony was in Bucharest (București). In 1883 it was estimated that around 1,000 migrants from Poland lived in there and in 1898 the number grew to about 3,000 people³².

The end of the World War 1 brought the independence to Poland while Romania regained the area of Bukovina, Bessarabia, Transylvania and the southern part of Dobrudja³³. For both countries this meant many changes and transformation in the pattern of migration. Romania has expanded its territory twice, which also meant increase in population and ethnic groups. For Poles it meant the possibility of going back the country and for those who decided to stay in Romania had to fight for the preservation of their national identity. Emigration of Poles after World War 1 to Romania was weak, nevertheless it had occurred³⁴.

Many Poles who returned to Poland, were primarily intellectuals, students and graduates. As a consequence Polish population disappeared from Iași, Suceava, Botoșani, Bucharest and the Bukovina area. Due to the loss of important societal group the social structure from the nineteenth century was disrupted³⁵.

In the years 1922-1924 Poles, largely workers coming from Malopolska were migrating mainly to Mediaș, where they were founding work in the glass industry. Another significant, but relatively migration group were Poles from Lodz and Bialystok looking for employment in textile factories³⁶.

The period of the World War 2 was the time of emigration of a large group of Poles to Romanian land. This emigration did not have settlement character. Most of the arriving people were refugees escaping the harsh reality of war and early post-war years.

According to statistics available from the Polish Embassy in Bucharest, in September 1939 approximately 26,000 Polish civilian refugees arrived to Romania. But by the end of 1939 most of them (about 11,000) left this country, followed in 1940 by approximately another 12,000 people. During the war, the number of refugees varied and by the end of the war in Romania there were about 5,000 of them³⁷.

The first years after World War 2 brought significant changes in the structure of the Polish community in Romania. During years 1948 - 1950 few re-migration transports to Poland and Czech-Slovaks Republic were organized. Poles who decided to go back to Poland were arriving and settling in the west part of Poland, from Silesia up to Pomorze, as this newly gained by Poland territory offered them many opportunities. Many had decided to stay as they did not know what to expect from the post-war reality in Poland³⁸.

People who decided to departure to Czechoslovakia encountered many problems. Among them the most important ones was first of all the language and secondly large Hungarian settlement taking place at the same time. It is proven that, the Polish language despite its similarities with Czech and Slovak, possess

³² Petrică I., p.1.

³³ History of Romania, p.1.

³⁴ Catargiu M., p.34.

³⁵ Catargiu M., p.34.

³⁶ Catargiu M., p.34.

³⁷ Poles in Romania, p.1.

³⁸ Ostrowski T., p.86.

many differences – particularly when we take into consideration that very often arriving Poles had to learn existing dialects. At that time Hungarians who were expelled from areas of Slovakia, were hostile to the Poles settling in their homesteads. The issue of national identity came up - a lot of people decided to admit to different nationality as a result of pressure from their families or for the political reasons³⁹.

Despite different doubts many Polish people went back to Poland. In the period from 1946 to 1950 about 9,000 Poles re-emigrated (according to data from the Polish Embassy in Bucharest). From this number, we can identify three groups of Poles; Poles with Romanian citizenship mainly from Bukovina region (4,858 people), Polish citizens who arrived to Romania before War World 2 (169 people), Polish citizens who arrived after the events of September 1939 (4,198 people)⁴⁰.

After the re-migration at the Romanian territory in 1950 there were more than 6,000 former settlers mainly in the region of Bukovina and about 1,000 refugees left. Groups of refugees settled mainly in Bucharest, Craiova, Râmnicu-Vâlcea, Constanța, Ploiești and Pitești where today live their descendants⁴¹.

During the communism period the number of the Polish minority was steadily decreasing due to the difficult living conditions⁴². After the political changes in Romania in 1989 there was a small increase in Polish population due to the re-organisation of the structure of the minority which very quickly became active in all important fields for them⁴³. As it was outlined in the history of Romanian lands, the largest group of Polish community still lives in the southern Bukovina (province Suceava), another region with high number of Poles is Bucharest, Timiș, Hunedoara and others⁴⁴. Currently many Polish families are coming to Romania from various reasons and many students are staying temporarily for scholarship programs or internships. On the other hand many young people from the regions of Bukovina decide to go to Poland to study.

DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE OF THE POLISH MINORITY IN ROMANIA

Changes in the number and distribution of Polish people in Romania are related to the history of the Polish and Romanian states. Determining the precise changes in the number of Poles within the boundaries of Romania can be prove very difficult, as we cannot give reliable numbers of Poles, as there are many sources stating different numbers. This chapter describes the demographic changes of the Polish minority in the XX century based on data from the National Statistic Office in Bucharest. The Office draws its data from population censuses conducted in years 1930, 1956, 1992, 2002 carried out in regions (provinces); censuses conducted in municipalities and cities in 1930, 1966, 1977, and 1930 census conducted in regions and cities (data analysis was performed using program ArcMap and Excel).

In order to explain changes in the number of Polish minority in Romania in the first half of the 20th century we used available, although sometimes biased, academic sources.

³⁹ Ostrowski T., p.87.

⁴⁰ Nowak K., Polish diplomacy and Poles in Romania after 1945 [in:] Closer together. Poles and Romanians and the historical and cultural heritage of Europe. Materials from the symposium, Wyd. Grup Musatinii, Suceava 2007, p.272.

⁴¹ Poles in Romania, p.1.

⁴² Data from National Statistic Office in Bucharest.

⁴³ Ostrowski T., pp.88-89.

⁴⁴ Data from National Statistic Office in Bucharest.

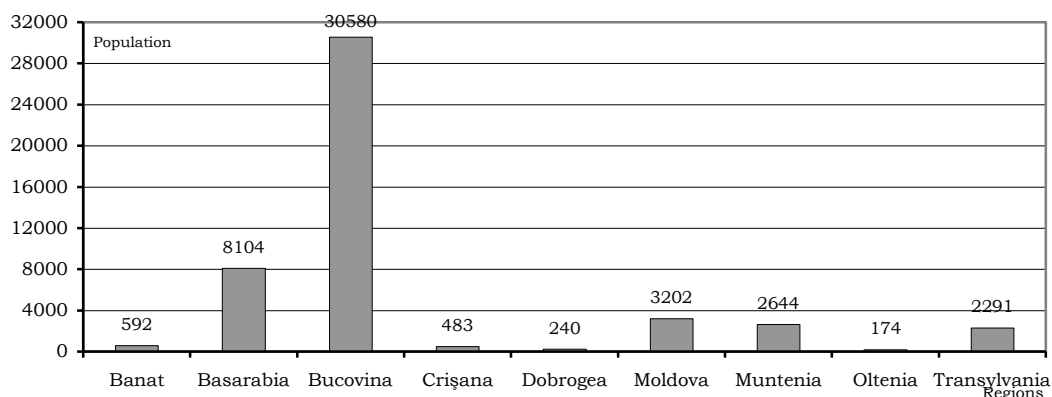


Figure 1. Number of Polish people in Romanian regions in 1930
(Source: Own research based on data from The National Statistical Office in Bucharest)

The above graph shows the number of the Polish population in the interwar period. In these years, Bukovina and Bessarabia belonged to the Romanian Principality. These were the regions where majority of Poles lived since they immigrated in the 19th century motivated by economic and social factors (overcrowding, natural hunger, disease). In other regions the number of Poles did not exceed the threshold of 4,000, the largest number of Poles were in regions where the industry was developed. Also, in Muntenia significant role was played by the country's capital, where during the war and during the interwar period there were created by Polish emigrants organizations.

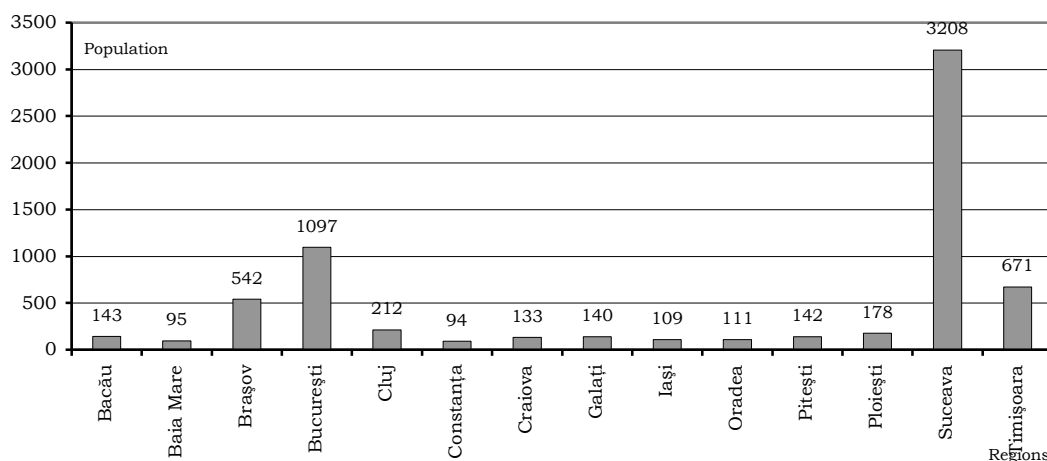


Figure 2. Number of Polish people in Romanian regions in 1956
(Source: Own research based on data from The National Statistical Office in Bucharest)

The above graph shows the Polish population in 1956. We can see that after World War 2 Romania lost the north part of Bukovina, Bessarabia and the southern part of Dobruđa. The largest decline of the Polish population was in the province Suceava – from 30,580 people in 1930 to 3,208 people in 1956. The decrease in population was caused by different factors: changes in state borders, emigration of Poles in their country, reduction of the population during the war.

Another area of the high decrease was Moldova. Before the war in this area lived over three thousand Poles but after the war only about 250 was left and they resided mainly in the provinces Iași and Bacău. This was caused by the same factors as in the area of Bukovina. Before the World War 2, in Muntenia, the Polish population had amounted to over 2,600 people, but after the war the number dropped by more than 1,000, this change possibly being based mainly on re-emigration. Changes in the number of Poles in Transylvania, and Crișana were due mainly to the repatriation in the years 1946-1950. In the area of the former land of historical Oltenia and Banat, the number of Polish population decreased slightly. In Dobruđja the state of the Polish population has not changed. An additional reason for the change of the number of Polish people was a change of nationality after the war, to Romanian, Hungarian, or German and others⁴⁵.

To sum up, in the first half of the twentieth century, changes in the number of Polish population occurred mainly due to the war, changes in state borders, organized re-emigration, and adopting other nationality.

The tables above show the number of population in selected cities and municipalities. We can see that between 1930 and 1960 there have been major changes in the number of Polish population in Moldova, Wallachia and Transylvania, caused by the war, re-emigration, change of nationality.

Only in Cacica, Poiana Micului and Suceava (Table 1) Polish population remained large as of 1966, and also in Suceava in 1977. In our opinion this is the result of a nostalgia and attachment to the region.

Table 1. The number of Polish people in Moldova, in cities and municipalities, in 1930, 1966 and 1977

(Source: Own research based on data from The National Statistical Office in Bucharest)

Cities	1930	1966	1977
Bacău	210	13	16
Bârlad	29	1	-
Botoșani	137	13	9
Cacica	-	377	-
Buhuși	222	4	-
Câmpulung	97	35	-
Focșani	54	9	-
Galăț	330	30	6
Gura-Humorului	161	39	-
Iași	505	40	27
Pașcani	210	10	-
Piatra-Neamț	130	11	6
Poiana Micului	-	333	-
Rădăuți	184	74	-
Roman	148	14	-
Suceava	433	220	221
Vatra Dornei	153	24	-
Vaslui	-	2	1

In the area of Wallachia, the greatest changes have occurred in the capital, and in the cities of Ploiești and Brăila. In the capital remained a group of Poles who were linked to the organizational activities of the Polish community during the war. However, in 1977 we can see new places of settlement of the Poles, which may be due to the change work, for example, from the Craiova to Mehedinți and others.

⁴⁵ Poles in Romania, p.1.

Table 2. The number of Polish people in Wallachia, in cities and municipalities, in 1930, 1966 and 1977

(Source: Own research based on data from The National Statistical Office in Bucharest)

Cities	1930	1966	1977
Brăila	139	14	5
București	1650	655	319
Buzău	29	6	1
Craiova	73	24	8
Dolj	-	-	30
Gorj	-	-	4
Ialomița	-	-	6
Mehedinți	-	-	7
Olt	-	-	7
Pitești	34	9	-
Ploiești	200	31	-
Prahova	-	-	19
Târgu Jiu	7	2	-

There were less Poles in Transylvania than in Moldavia and Wallachia. The biggest change in population number had occurred in Oradea, Satu Mare, and Mediaș, between 1930-1966. The effect of the change in population in these first two cities, can be explained by their close to border location - parts of the population could settle in Hungary. Lupeni, Mediaș and Hunedoara are cities which were developed because of the glass and coal industry, where many Poles could find work, and this argument can explain such large numbers. Sibiu, Brașov, Cluj Napoca are also well-developed cities where the Polish minority could find work in other industries.

Table 3. The number of Polish people in Transylvania, in cities and municipalities, in 1930, 1966 and 1977

(Source: Own research based on data from The National Statistical Office in Bucharest)

Cities	1930	1966	1977
Alba	15	6	13
Bihor	-	-	17
Brașov	53	97	67
Cluj	76	72	42
Hunedoara	-	-	170
Lupeni	-	282	-
Mediaș	144	75	-
Mureș	-	-	36
Oradea	69	37	-
Petroșani	35	53	-
Satu Mare	54	4	3
Sibiu	62	-	96

Table 4. The number of Polish people in Banat, in cities and municipalities, in 1930, 1966 and 1977

(Source: Own research based on data from The National Statistical Office in Bucharest)

Cities	1930	1966	1977
Arad	106	101	49
Timișoara	101	149	90

In the area of Banat, there were no major changes in the population of Poles. The reason for this could had been good living conditions and also the distance from re-emigration centers in Bukovina and in Wallachia that were spreading re-emigration ideas; as the result the Polish group tied to this land and did not think about returning to their country.

In Dobruja, we can see a 50% reduction from 1933 to 1977, which might be due to the change citizenship after the war, a change of residence, or return to the home country.

Table 5. The number of Polish people in Dobrogea, in cities and municipalities, in 1930, 1966 and 1977

(Source: Own research based on data from The National Statistical Office in Bucharest)

Cities	1930	1966	1977
Constanța	82	-	43
Tulcea	10	9	6

These maps represent provinces inhabited by Poles. In Moldova the Polish did not change their residence during the analyzed decades. In Transylvania minor changes occurred: in 2002 the Poles no longer live in Bistrița-Năsăud county. The situation changed in the region of Banat; in 2002 Poles lived only in Timiș county. The reason might be the greater development in the northern part of Banat. The southern part of the country have changed more, the Poles live in the provinces Buzau and Gorj. This could be explained by employment migration.

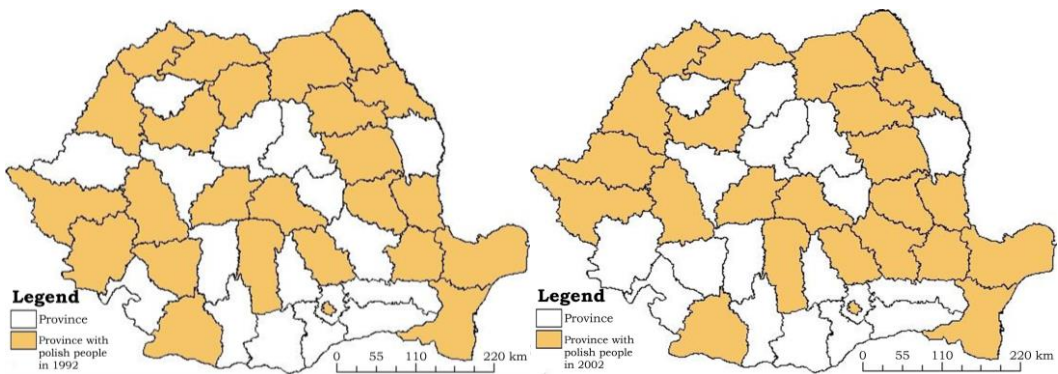


Figure 3. Poles living in the different provinces in 1992 and 2002

(Source: Own research based on data from The National Statistical Office in Bucharest – in program ArcMap)

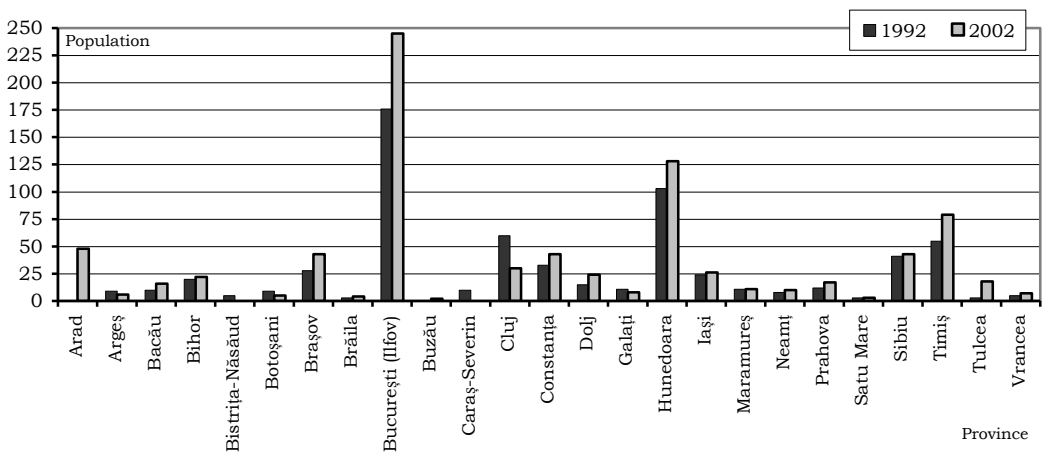


Figure 4. Number of Polish people in Romanian provinces in 1992 and 2002

(Source: Own research based on data from The National Statistical Office in Bucharest)

The above chart shows changes in the number of Poles between 1992-2002 (excluding the province of Suceava, which has been discussed in the Figure 5). In the capital, the number of Polish population increased by almost 100 people, which is due to the arrival of new families and the development of the Polish capital. Also the reason for the increased number of Poles in the province of Hunedoara may be finding work in mining and metallurgy factories. The reason for the increased number of Poles in Constanța, may be the possibility to work in the tourism industry. A significant increase in the number of Poles has also appeared in Timișoara and Brașov; a smaller increase in Iași, Vrancea, Prahova, Dolj, Brăila, Bihor. These may be related to the development of these cities in the 90s. Population decline occurred in Cluj Napoca, Argeș, Botoșani.

Summarizing, the main increase in the number of Poles in the cities is due to better living conditions, the possibility of finding work, the development of cities and towns and active organization of the Polish community.

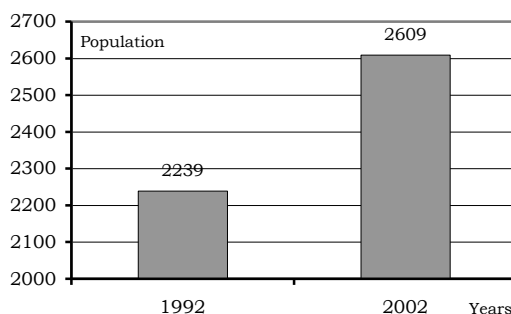


Figure 5. Number of Polish people in Suceava county

(Source: Own research based on data from The National Statistical Office in Bucharest)

This figure shows the number of Polish people in the Suceava county between 1992 and 2002. Significant population growth is due to activation and joint action of the Polish community in the direction of the rebuilding of their life in Romania, as well as the improvement of living conditions.

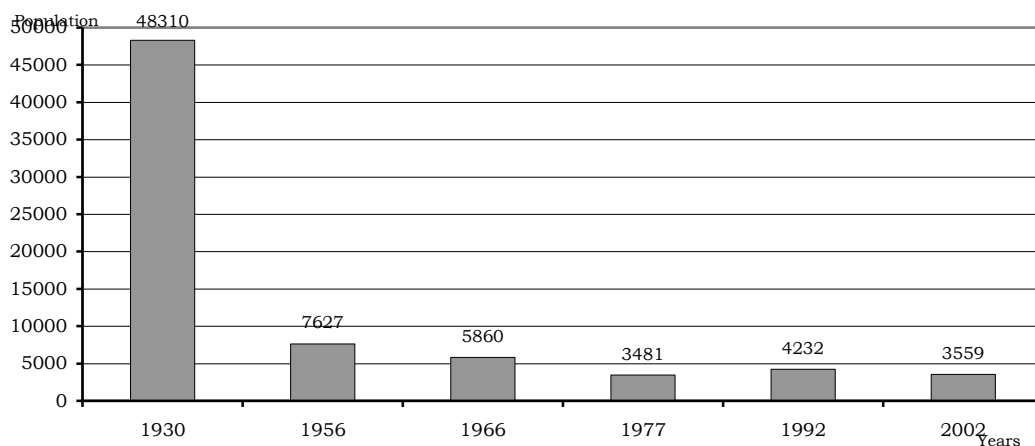


Figure 6. Changes of number Polish people in Romania in the years 1930-2002

(Source: Own research based on data from The National Statistical Office in Bucharest)

The above chart applies to the overall change in the number of Polish population in Romania in the twentieth century. After the World War 1 the Polish minority was the largest in the Romanian Principality – the high numbers were especially in Bukovina and Bessarabia. After World War 2 the situation reversed. The number of the Polish population has declined several times, the reason being the change of borders, organized re-emigration to Poland, the change of the national identity, a time of war and human loses.

Under communism the Polish community steadily decreased. This was caused by restricted rights for minorities and poor living conditions. Since 1992, a slight increase in population can be noted. It is linked to the political changes and the activity led by minorities. A slight decrease in population appeared in 2002, caused by few families' relocation to Poland. The Polish minority can be expected to grow because of the attachment to the region (particularly to Bukovina, and Bucharest region) and also because of the arrival of new families from Poland, due to the development of the capital and other regions.

CONCLUSIONS

Polish - Romanian contacts started at the beginning of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Initially they had mainly political and military character. With the time flow mutual economical, cultural and everyday life relations continued to deepen. Parallel Catholic religion was developing on the Moldovan territory, which as well resulted in the presence of Poles. To the Transylvania's lands came group of Polish Brothers (Arian), Protestant followers which were expeled from Poland.

Polish immigration began with the joining Bukovina to the Habsburg Empire in 1775. First group of Poles came to Bukovina within the settlement policy pursued by the Austrians (forced emigration of miners to Cacica). Subsequent emigrations of the Polish population had mainly livelihood character. Beginning of the nineteenth century was a time of a settlements of highlanders from the Czadecki area. Successive waves of emigration of Polish highlanders had reached the land of Bukovina in years 1850-1870. In the mid-nineteenth century many Poles settled in Bessarabia. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century emigration of Poles have occurred in the area of Transylvania, where they settled mainly in the cities with developed mining and glass industry. Labour migration has resulted that mainly Polish people settled in the lands of Romania and the place of settlements was mainly Bukovina.

However, political emigration took place mostly after the events of the uprising in Poland in 1830 and in 1863. But it did not caused major settlements of the Polish population in Romania. After World War 1, when Poland regained its independence, part of the Poles decided to return to their country. They were mostly refugees and a group of intellectuals. However, the most numerous returns to the Poland took place after World War 2. At that time, more than half of Poles have returned to the Poland or Slovakia. During communism, there were no emigration or remigration of Polish population.

The largest polish concentration until the present time is the Bukovina (today Suceava region within the boundaries of Romania). The second region of polish settlements was Bessarabia, represented by Republic of Moldova today. Beside of these regions there are few and scattered Polish centers throughout Romania which are mainly associated with the possibility of work in different industry branches.

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