VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN 2 SOUTH-EAST REGION AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LABOR FORCE

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Abstract

In this paper we aim to study the contribution of vocational and technical education to the development and growth of a competitive economy based on knowledge and innovation. The main goal of the development of vocational and technical education is the need for rapid adaptation to an efficient and competitive economy.

This article identifies the current and future situation of the following sectors, such as the economy, the labor market and vocational and technical education in 2 South-East Region, but especially in Galati County.

Following a demographic analysis, we see a general decline in the region's population, especially among young people.

We have included in this paper the state of demographic developments and forecasts, the analysis of the structure of vocational and technical education and the identification of the needs of 2 South-East Region, but also the current state of higher education and its contribution to regional development.

Keywords: *education, rural development, region, labor force, indicators*

1. INTRODUCTION

The present document makes an analysis of the current situation and of the forecasted one for the demographic, economic, labor market and vocational and technical education aspects of the South-East Region 2. Demographic analysis indicates a general population decline, especially for young age groups, accompanied by an ageing population. Also, the demographic analysis, the low level of education of the population, the ethnic diversity, the significant share of the rural population, the low standard of living are taken into account.

The decreases registered in recent years in the population aged between 0-14 and the forecasted decreases for the school-age population, in all age groups, at the horizon of 2030, require the optimization of the initial professional training offer by:

- Concentrating training in schools identified as viable in terms of the local and zonal potential of socio-economic development.
- Elimination of unjustified parallelism in the offer of initial professional training for nearby schools.
- Diversification of initial school vocational training offers to cover local and regional needs.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The South-East region is in the south-eastern part of Romania, covering 35,762 km², respectively 15% of the total area of the country, being the second largest region, out of the 8 of Romania.

The South-East region includes almost all forms of relief: the Danube floodplain, the Bărăgan plain, the Dobrogea plateau with the Măcin Mountains, and the north-western part of the region includes a part of the Carpathians and the Curvature Subcarpathians. At the same time, the region is crossed by the Danube River, includes the Danube Delta and is bordered to the east by the entire Romanian Black Sea coastline. But it is mainly the plain relief, with continental climate specific.

In Constanta County, the population aged between 10 and 14 years from the rural area increased in the analyzed period by 778 people. The shares of the rural population in this age group are between 65% in Vrancea County and 37.8% in Constanta County in 2016. Below the regional average in 2016, of 50.5%, are only the counties of Constanta (37.3%) and Braila (40.9%). The highest degree of urbanization in the age group of 10-14 years, in 2016, is recorded in the counties of Constanta (62,2%), Braila (59,1%), Galaţi (48,1%). At the opposite pole are the counties of Vrancea (35,0%), Buzau (38,9%) Tulcea (46,2%).

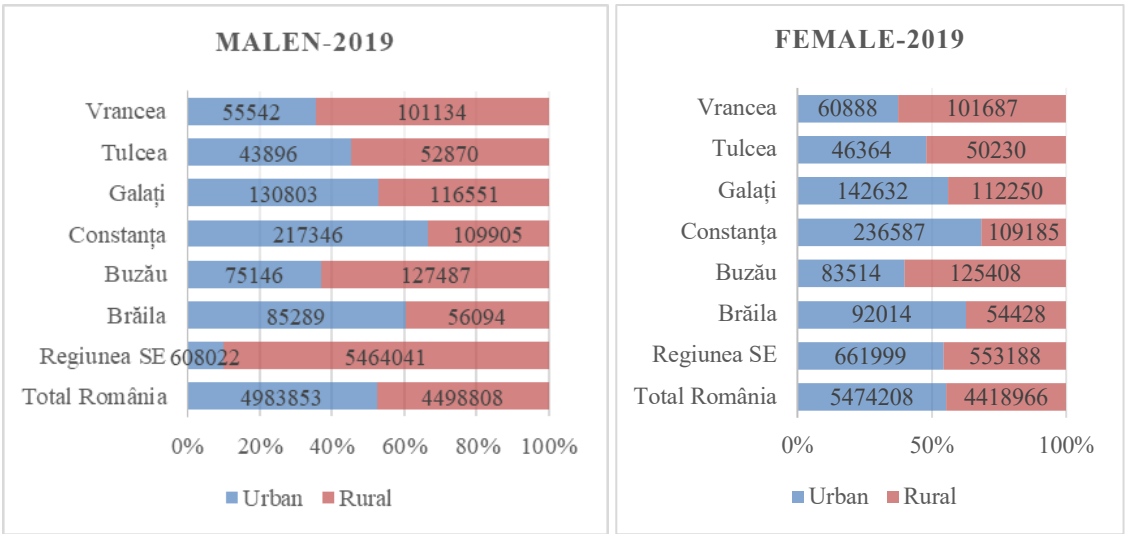


Figure 1. Resident population by residence and sex averages in 2019

Source: Own processed data from http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online/#/pages/tables/insse-table accessed on 29.04.2022

From the point of view of gender distribution, we note that the female sex is more prevalent in both residence environments, but also in the entire Population of Romania. The structure of the inhabitants of the region by age group is influenced by the continuous ageing of the population. In the figure below we will see the evolution of the rural population in the period 2018-2019 in the counties of the South-East Region.

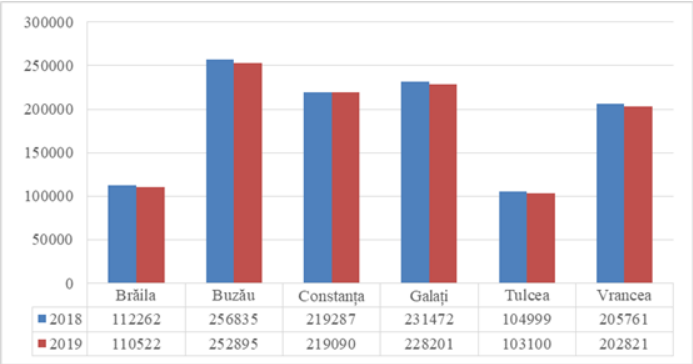
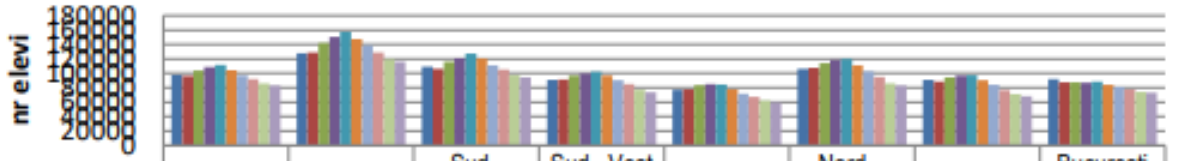


Figure 2. Evolution of rural population by counties, 2018-2019

Source: Own processed data from http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online/#/pages/tables/insse-table accessed on 29.04.20221

3. DISCUSSION

As shares, the largest decrease of the school population in high-school education in the analyzed period was recorded in the Center Region, a decrease of 24.6% in the school year 2016-2017 compared to the school year 2007-2008.



	Sud - Est	Nord - Est	Sud - Muntenia	Sud - Vest - Oltenia	Vest	Nord - Vest	Centru	Bucureşti - Ilfov
2007 2008	97949	127707	109114	90788	77331	106052	90722	91685
2008 2009	96270	128637	106266	91474	77840	107544	88653	87677
2009 2010	103859	142278	116012	96748	83307	113933	94270	87321
2010 2011	108479	150334	120920	99522	85193	118357	96664	87074
2011 2012	111455	157464	127412	102060	84743	119822	97341	88471
2012 2013	104066	147365	120447	96918	77772	111065	90243	83934
2013 2014	96735	138584	110953	90348	71889	102664	84229	81214
2014 2015	91876	128968	104981	84843	67102	94693	76782	77827
2015 2016	85939	119356	97527	77185	62328	86005	71331	73944
2016 2017	83069	115797	94104	73790	59584	82915	68432	73141

Figure 3. The evolution of the number of students in the high school cycle, at regional level

Source: Own process data from NIS

All the counties of the South-East Region recorded a decrease in the school population in high-school education between the school years 2007-2008 and 2016-2017.

The biggest decrease was registered in Constanta County, of 6321 students, which represents a decrease of 20.7%. Between the counties of the South-East Region there are significant disparities in terms of school population, disparities that are also registered at the level of the school population in high school education.

In vocational education, the school population has experienced an evolution with two important periods in the interval between the school years 2007-2008 and 2016-2017. A first period, between the school years 2007-2008 and 2011-2012, is characterized by the drastic decrease in the number of students enrolled in vocational education in all regions and in all counties.

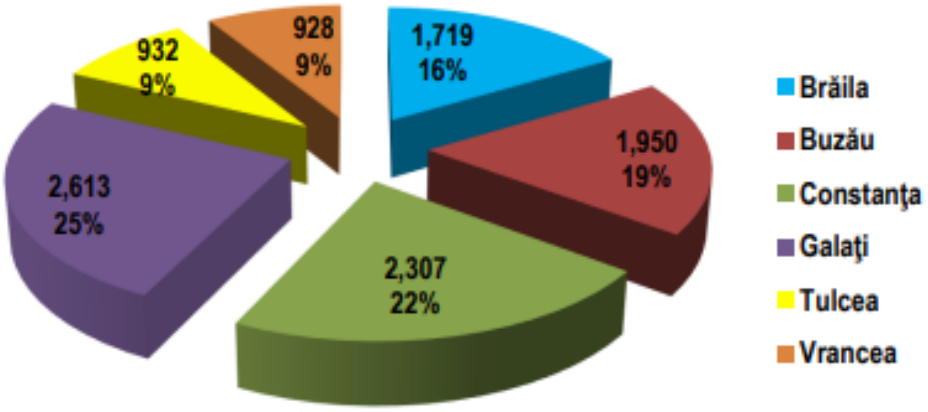


Figure 4. Distribution by counties of the South-East Region of the number of students enrolled in vocational education at the beginning of the school year 2017-2018

Source: Own process data from NIS

4. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the analyses detailed in this document was to draw conclusions and recommendations - summarized at the end of each chapter of analysis - to the attention of the responsible factors at different levels of decision-making in the education and training system and, finally, to propose a plan of measures. For this reason, this chapter is limited to summarizing some of the more important implications resulting from the analysis and introducing the detailed actions in the final chapter.

Demographic analysis indicates a general decline in population, especially for young age groups. Demographic analysis in the SE Region shows a decline of the population, especially among the young population. Since the standard of living is much lower in this region than in the rest of the country, school drop-out and the rather low level of education of the inhabitants is visible.

It is also recommended to collaborate between institutions in education and training, universities and specialized organizations for the design and application of adequate procedures for probing the opinion of graduates and employers - targeting employability, degree of use of competences and other useful information on the aims of the education and training system.

In order to support the rationalization of the school network and the optimization of the resources, it is recommended to evaluate the position in the future of each school in the current school network – by applying a set of objective criteria and indicators with reference to: demographic evolution, conditions of access to the area / nearby areas, quality services, relevance to qualification needs and students' options.

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