

## ***MIGRATION***

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### **DAILY LABOUR MIGRATION – TOOL FOR FLEXIBLE EMPLOYMENT AND DEMOGRAPHIC SUPPORT OF THE SMALL SETTLEMENTS**

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**Abstract:** *Daily interaction between the neighboring small settlements covers over 400 000 labour migrants from all municipalities and affects most of the settlements. The time spent in traveling is over 500,000 hours per day.*

*The demographic and economic crises, structural changes in the economy caused strong territorial imbalance in available jobs and the supply of labour in small depopulated settlements and municipalities. They are without any investments to create jobs. The only realistic alternative for unemployed person in such places is to seeking job outside of the settlement.*

*The change of place of residence needed additional finance costs for housing. It is too hard for most of the job seekers and the daily labour migration is the only realistic alternative for them. The application of daily migration, however, is difficult because of the low pay of migrants and relatively high transport costs.*

*It is necessary to subsidy daily labour migration on the principle of shared social responsibility by the corporations, local government and state administration.*

*Development and optimization of daily labour migration require adequate policies to reduce the time and cost of travel, and to improve the conditions of travel. These policies should be shared social responsibility of the corporations, local government and public administration.*

*Every day labour migration is necessary, though it is not sufficient condition for a flexible and efficient functioning of the labour market. It increases employment and reduces the structural deficit of the workforce. In the same time it reduces unwanted emigration and supports the small settlements.*

**Keywords:** demographic, daily, migration, alternative, employment, social

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## DAILY LABOUR MIGRATION: GENESIS AND SCOPE

Daily labour migration (DLM) is a specific phenomenon where employed people's place of work is in a settlement does not coincide with their place of residence, which is in another settlement.

This type of migration covers over 400,000 people in the country. (Population and Housing Census of the Republic of Bulgaria, 2011, National Statistical Institute). It features a huge structural diversity among migrants and affects all municipalities and most settlements.

The time spent every day on DLM comes to over 500 thousand hours. Its importance for the state and development of the labour market and for the economy is indisputable.

Daily labour migration was first observed in our country during the census of population and housing in 1975.

In 1975, more than 620 thousand people or 14% of the economically active population were daily commuters travelling from the place where lived to their place of their employment. While nearly a quarter (26.2%) of them were town/city residents, the rest (73.8%) were village inhabitants.

Over the period to follow, the result of the industrialisation of Bulgaria's economy and setting up a number of large industrial hubs was the development of intensive daily labour migration.

The 1985 census data show that the number of labour migrants that year was 751 thousand economically active individuals, that is, their number increased by nearly 21%. The same year, labour migrants made 16.3% from the economically active population in the country, with 30.7% being residents of towns and cities and 69.3% being from the villages, i.e., DLM rise was predominantly generated by the urban population, mainly from smaller townships across Bulgaria.

Data from the 2011 census show a new increment in the number of daily labour commuters and showed a rise of 22.3% if compared to the previous period. Today, 402,119 people are involved in daily commuting to do their jobs from one locality to another, according to their respective work schedules.

The transition from centralised planned economy to market economy, along with the shut-downs of some of the large industrial clusters, the emergence of unemployment, the abrogation of any restrictions typical of the so-called "residence permit", as well as the opportunities to work abroad caused a massive plunge in the labour commuting practices. The 2001 census's account showed a reduction in labour-related commuting by 66.3% in comparison with the precedent period. The number of daily commuters that year came to 329 thousand people, or 12.7% of the employed people. The reduction was even more significant if the picture in villages alone is taken into consideration: around 74%. Towns/cities suffered a reduction of 39.4%.

If the year of the census is taken, 42.6% of labour migrants lived in towns, while 57.4% were village inhabitants. These made 12.1% of the economically active population. There is a noteworthy particularity and it is that the labour migrant flow was generated in approximately equal shares in villages and towns. The relative shares of daily commuters from towns and villages made 48.4% and 51.5%, respectively.

**Table 1**  
Daily labour migration by years of censuses

Place of residence	Years	Number of DLM	Growth rates <sup>1</sup>
Total	1975	622716	100
	1985	751654	120.7
	2001	328762	43.7
	2011	402119	122.3
In towns/cities	1975	162959	100
	1985	230528	141.5
	2001	140055	60.6
	2011	195019	139.2
In villages	1975	459757	100
	1985	521126	113.3
	2001	188707	36.2
	2011	207100	109.7

*Source:* NSI, Census of population and housing, 2001, Sofia

The demographic and economic crises together with the structural changes in economy caused a massive disequilibrium in the territorial location of workplaces and labour demand in small communities and municipalities. A substantial part of these fell into an economic and social depression and the lack of employment triggered an intensive labour emigration.

The distribution of population by municipalities shows that 117 out of a total of 264 municipalities had very little population, less than 10 thousand people. These municipalities are very short of labour potential and this strongly reduced their opportunities to be involved in any kind of investment activities in their areas or opening quality workplaces. Population in such municipalities would typically suffer high unemployment levels. Population is forced to emigrate in search of jobs, either temporary or permanent, across the country or abroad. Parts of Bulgaria's territory suffer a process of depopulation. This process of depopulation started precisely from such small municipalities and from their communities dying out demographically and economically.

181 settlements were closed for total lack of population, but there is another 1120 settlements with fewer than 50 inhabitants, which are in fact depopulated. Their available labour potential would be hard to be involved in any serious investments or starting and developing any kinds of production there. (Table 2). Such localities are generators of irrational and in many cases panic emigration as the remaining population would be inclined to panic emigration.

Realistically, this group should be joined by the majority of the next group of localities, the one with less than 100 residents. 1647 localities or almost 1/3 of all settlements have fallen into a hard demographic and socio-economic situation. All of them have employment problems and employment is of strategic significance to