

ELENA CAME FROM BASARABIA IN 1944 AT AGE 4. SHE BECAME A MATHS TEACHER. NOW SHE IS 77, WITH 2 CHILDREN AND 3 GRANDCHILDREN

1. What was the reason that made you/ your family leave your country of birth?

It was during world war two and Soviet Union occupies Basarabia(which was part of Romania)

2. Was it only you/your family that left country at that time or were there more people in the same situation?

A lot of people were in my situation. I left the country with my mother, my sister and my mother's sisters(7).

3. Did you ever return to visit your country of birth? The place where you were born? Do you want to? If yes, why don't you go? If no, why not?

I was 5 years ago for a short visit to see the place where I was born.I would like to go back next year to meet some of my relatives that I discover on facebook.

4. Do you have any memories from the past regarding that period?

I have nice memories about life in a village, family reunions, nice events organized by the community.

5. What do you find good about your new country?

We speak the same language and it was very easy for us to adapt from this point of view. It was hard to leave our home, all that we own and to start everything again from the beginning.

6. How were you treated/ received at first?

Very well. People were very helpful.

7. Was it easy to find somewhere to stay?

My parents were teachers and we had to go in a remote mountain village. But there we had some rooms near school and accommodation was not a problem.People in the village were very helpful.

8. Did you receive any help? What type of help and by whom?

People helped us for food, furniture, woods for heating. When we decided to build a new house we got help to raise it.

9. Was it difficult to integrate in the new country/ place? → What was the most difficult for you when you were trying to fit into your new society.

I didn't have any difficulty to integrate in the new country.

10. Would you ever consider returning to your country of birth to live there?

No, never. I have my life here now. My kids and my grandchildren.

11. What do you think about the new waves of migration happening in Europe and other places in the world?

It is not very easy for that people. I can understand the ones that have to leave their country because of the war.

ROBERT LEFT ROMANIA FOR GERMANY IN 1985 AT AGE 14. HE BECAME AN ECONOMIST AND MARRIED A ROMANIAN WOMAN. HE IS 48 AND LIVE IN CELLE.

1. What was the reason that made you/ your family leave your country of birth?

The official reason was family reunification(my grandparents left for Germany in 1978) but the main reason was the political and economical situation in that years in Romania.(we were not allowed to visit my relatives in Germany, my parents have problems in school because they have relatives in Germany)

2. Was it only you/your family that left country at that time or were there more people in the same situation?

At that time a lot of German ethnics from Romania left the country.

3. Did you ever return to visit your country of birth? The place where you were born? Do you want to? If yes, why don't you go? If no, why not?

I visit Romania every year, I still have relatives there. Also my wifes family is there. I have a lot of friends there and I love my hometown Timisoara.

4. Do you have any memories from the past regarding that period?

I have a lot memories from that time. Beautiful ones with friends, places, family.

5. What do you find good about your new country?

New country after more then 30 years.....a lot of things. Germans are serious and if you are honest and do your job you can have a peaceful and nice life.I appreciate my new country when I compare it to other places in this world.

6. How were you treated/ received at first?

We were in a refugee camp in Nurenberg for only one day. After this my grandparents take over us.

7. Was it easy to find somewhere to stay?

We stayed at the beginning with my grandparents. It was a big help for us my father family.

8. Did you receive any help? What type of help and by whom?

My father family helped a lot.

9. Was it difficult to integrate in the new country/ place? → What was the most difficult for you when you were trying to fit into your new society

For me it was difficult although I spoke German from my childhood. But it was a completely different mentality, factually a new world. You have to learn how people think in the new country, what is different... food, relations, sense of humor.

10. Would you ever consider returning to your country of birth to live there?

Hard to imagine but never say never. Maybe one day I'll return to live in Romania.

11. What do you think about the new waves of migration happening in Europe and other places in the world?

It's a not very easy discussion. Too complex for a few lines.