

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION. CASE STUDY: ROMANIA

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Abstract: *In the present paper we are discussing the peculiarities and the characteristics of people's migration. We think that this is a topical issue given the increasing rate of this phenomenon both in Romania and in the other European Union countries and not only. The literature and speciality studies conducted by the competent bodies in each country and at the level of the European Union helped us identify both the reasons that led people to make this decision and their impact on the individual and on the community of the origin as well as the destination country. The topic is comparatively approached within the whole community, offering the possibility of classification according to the age and sex of the persons, the level of qualification and the reason that determined the decision to emigrate. In the context of international migration, we identify three interdependent elements: immigration, emigration and re-emigration. These three elements have been influenced by various factors throughout history. These are among the most diverse: natural (natural catastrophes, earthquakes, floods, and landslides), political (deportations) and finally the economic ones. Migration in Romania has increased with the fall of the communist regime. The number of emigrants has grown year by year, and after the accession of Romania to the European Union and the free movement of Romanian citizens on the territory of the Union, the emigration rate rose even more. Starting from the neoclassical theory, which, at the microeconomic level, highlights that: "international migration is proportional to the global demand and supply of labour force", we notice the countries that received the largest number of Romanian emigrants. Among the most sought destination countries are Spain, Italy and Hungary, closely followed by USA, Israel and Germany. In the destination countries international migration is a tool used to adjust the labour shortage in the market. Emigrants are predominantly young, trained, prepared to offer skilled work in all areas. However, individual migration cannot change the evolution of the aging rate of the population, registered in most European Union countries.*

Keywords: *migration; types of migration; emigrants; immigrants; workforce; remittances.*

JEL Classification: *J61; F66.*

1. Introduction

Migration is a complex phenomenon that involves moving people from one territorial area to another, followed by changing home and / or engaging in a form of activity in the arrival area (Rotariu, Zamfir and Vlăsceanu, 1998:351-353).

In the context of international migration, we notice three interdependent elements: immigration (temporary or definitive reception of people from other countries), emigration (temporary or definitive exit of the population of the country of origin), re-emigration (return to the country of origin).

The factors that have caused migration are extremely diverse. In time, migration has been influenced by the following factors: social (wars, invasions, and diseases), natural (natural phenomena, earthquakes, and floods), political (deportations), and economic (low wages, high costs, high prices, etc.). The latter factor has influenced many people in our country – Romania - to make the emigration decision, which is not an easy one. The ones who leave the country, chooses a destination, and then seeks to make a better future for themselves and their families.

The identified factors determine different *types* of migration.

Depending on the reporting area, migration can be international (outside the state borders - when the person leaves the country where he / she is domiciled) or domestic (within the country – the person settles in another city, elsewhere in the country).

Migration can also be forced (caused by natural, political calamities) or voluntary. In some cases, migration can be mass (the decision belongs to large groups of people; e.g., the latest Syrian people migration to Europe) or individual (the decision belongs to one person)

One of the most important migration classifications is legal and illegal.

Legal migration occurs when migration regulations are respected, when the state receives these people, respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms (Anghel, 2009:25): legal migrants (migrant workers arriving through destination countries' workforce programs), former repatriated citizens, ethnic migrants (sometimes referred to as "return"), students, participants in different institutional mobilities and long-term experience exchanges, family migrants (marriage, adoption, family reunification), political refugees (Anghel, 2009:25).

The recruitment of migrant workers and humanitarian crises have been seen as legal large-scale migration.

Two of the most popular are:

- The *Gastarbeit* program in Germany, where legal migrants were received in Germany during different successive periods (Bade, 1987:644-656).
- The *Bracero* program in the United States, bringing Mexican workers to farm work (The *Bracero Program – the resettlement of the Mexican Workers from the US. The return of Mexicans could only be partially accomplished, and legal migrants often returned illegally*). (panoramamedia.informatia.ro/index.php.module) Sjaastad 1962; Todaro 1969, Available: <http://www.revision-notes.co.uk/revision/171.html> [23 March 2019]

These methods were used to cover the labour shortage in the market at that time.

Illegal migration: This kind of migration does not respect the legislation of the countries involved in migration.

2. The Neoclassical Theory of Migration

The neoclassical theory is a bifurcated theory:

- A macro level dimension when seeking explanations of migration in terms of variations in labour supply and demand related to the two areas (origin and destination of migration), and
- A micro level dimension when performing a comparative analysis of salaries, jobs, etc. "the neoclassical economic theory suggests that international migration is proportional to the supply and global demand for labour. Nations with poor labour supply and high labour demand will have high wages that will attract migrants from nations with surplus labour."(Sjaastad, 1962 and Todaro, 1969)

The neoclassical theory replaces the individual with the family as a decision-maker on the migration option. Revenues do not act in this new vision as absolute reference terms but through a reference community, i.e. by family positioning on the income scale within the community of membership.

The cause of migration, therefore, is not simply the gap in development and income at the international community level, but the deterioration of the position of the household in the home community. People are moving according to their economic and political context. "If Third World emigration is portrayed as the result of economic problems caused by the global economy, then such migration must be managed through better international agreements than through laws that restrict migration". (*Migration Theories of Migration*, <http://family.jrank.org/pages/1170/Migration-Theories-Migration.html>, accessed on March 25, 2019)

3. Migration Phenomena in Romania

With a population of 19.531 million inhabitants, in 2018 Romania ranked 7th in the current configuration of EU countries (EU28), after Germany (82.86 million people), France (66.97 million people), Italy (60.44 million people), Spain (46.76 million people) and Poland (38.41 million people). (EUROSTAT - *Population and employment [nama_10_pe]*, 2019)

According to the demographic statistics, Romania lost over 2.5 million people during the last 3 decades, mostly due to migration and emigration. There were two *migration* mechanisms in Romania before 1989: *permanent* migration that mainly resulted from the political and ethnic issues, and the *temporary* migration aiming to study or work abroad, based only on inter-governmental agreements of Romania with other countries. After 1989, the main reasons for migration have turned from political and ethnic problems to economic reasons. Therefore, temporary migration has increased both in figures and in the proportion of total migrants. With the fall of the communist regime, in 1989 the decline of the Romanian industry begun. If until then the population had a job that would bring the necessary incomes to the family maintenance, after that big factories underwent a continuous reengineering and privatization process, dismissing the staff, and then shutting down all the production. Nowadays, there are several migration mechanisms that make migration international. We will analyze those mechanisms to be found within the European Union (EU), namely those through which people residing in Romania migrate to the countries of the European Union.

Legal permanent migration represents migratory flows leaving Romania to other EU countries to settle there by different means:

- *By obtaining emigration visas as part of special programs to encourage emigration* of persons with qualifications that are scarce in the receiving country or other types of programs (such as visa lottery). The EU does not carry out such permanent emigration programs. The Romanian citizens who permanently emigrate go to countries that have such emigration policies and programs as Canada, USA, and Australia.
- *By marriage*: marriage to a citizen of an EU member state and permanently settling in the respective country or another country in which the two work.
- *As a refugee or asylum seeker* for political or war reasons. In Romania this has not been the case after 1989.

Legal temporary migration refers to people who travel to the territory of an EU country for a limited period (from a few months to several years).

- *Students*: we can talk here about students from Central and Eastern Europe enrolled in university studies in countries of the European Union and who will then return to their native country (those using the Erasmus Program included).
- *Workers (labourers)*: these are workers from Romania who leave the country to work holding labour contracts concluded based on bilateral agreements between states. Romania's Labour Migration Office helps citizens work legally in the EU countries.
- *Refugees and asylum seekers*: refugees who receive this right to temporary stay in an EU country or asylum seekers seeking asylum on political grounds; some people claim these rights without a legal basis - they try to obtain by any method the right to stay in that country (for Romanian citizens wishing to migrate to EU countries, these rights are almost null).

Illegal transit migration is the process by which people resident in other countries outside of Central and Eastern Europe emigrate to these countries, including Romania, with the specific purpose of arriving and emigrating to one of the countries of the European Union. This activity is new, and the most important features are the illegality and the involvement of criminal organizations of human trafficking, as well. *Illegal migration to those from Central and Eastern Europe (from Romania)* includes Romanian citizens who leave Romania and remain illegally in an EU country - after the expiration of their legal stay of max. 3 months. They are people who leave as tourists but once they arrive in the destination country, they carry out activities without legal forms of work or citizens entering and then illegally staying on the territory of an EU country.

Circulatory migration with the help of migrant networks (legal or illegal) is that movement between the country of origin and one or more destination countries. Migrants work in a member country, return to their native country, stay for a while, and then go back to work abroad. Thus, migratory networks appear, networks through which people who want to temporarily work in another country are helped and supported by others.

The countries they aimed at were well-developed, capitalist ones, where work was well-paid. The countries that received the largest number of Romanian emigrants after 1990 were Italy, Spain and Hungary.

Table 1 shows the countries according to the number of Romanian immigrants received:

Table 1. The number of emigrants from Romania according to the countries of residence in 2010

Country	Immigrants	
	Number	Percent (%)
TOTAL	2,769,053	100%
Italy	813,037	29.4
Spain	810,471	29.3
Hungary	189,055	6.8
Israel	182,099	6.6
United States	171,253	6.2
Germany	134,911	4.9
Canada	96,209	3.5
Austria	56,932	2.1
France	54,305	2.0
United Kingdom	53,081	1.9
Other countries	207,700	7.5

Source: Istvan Horvath, *International Migration of Romanian Citizens after 1989*, Traian Rotariu, Virgil Voineagu, *Inertia and Change - Social Dimensions of the Transition in Romania*, Polirom Publishing House, 2012, p.202-203

If at the beginning of the 1990s the age of those who decided to leave the country was mainly, in between 41-50, the situation has changed since 2002, when by abolishing visas, Romanian citizens could travel freely in the countries of the European Union. (European Commission, *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*,

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/documents/2014/SEC_2013_370_final_IV_en.pdf, accessed on March 18, 2019)

In 2013, most emigrants (29.0%) were aged between 25 and 34, a situation valid for both male (32.2%) and female (26.5%) population; the second highest percentage covers the 15-24 age group (24.1%), with 24.3% males and 24.0% females, followed by the group with ages between 35 and 44 – 18.0% (male - 17.9%, female - 18.1%). (http://media.hotnews.ro/media_server1/document-2015-08-28-20384907-0-19-migrarea-externa-anul-2014.pdf, 2019)

The unemployment rate was very high in Romania at that time.

As shown in Table 2, in 2017 the case is almost the same as it was in 2013, but with a slightly decrease of the percentages of the Romanian emigrants. Thus, most emigrants (28,95%) were aged between 25 and 34, a situation valid for both male (31.79%) and female (26.00%) population; like in 2013, the second highest percentage covers the 15-24 age group (20.41%), with 21.29% males and 20.41% females, followed by the group with ages between 35 and 44 – 17.71% (male - 19.19%, female - 16.18%).

Table 2. Long-term temporary international migration of the Romanian citizens by gender and age group in 2017

Age group	Immigrants				Emigrants (no. persons)					
	Male (no. persons)	Female (no. persons)	Total (no. persons)	% of TOTAL	Male		Female		Total	
					No. persons	% of Total	No. persons	% of Total	No. persons	% of TOTAL
0-4	3197	2780	5977	3,60	5593	5,01	4749	4,41	10342	4,72
5-9	5183	4656	9839	5,93	4928	4,41	4179	3,88	9107	4,15
10-14	3148	3278	6426	3,87	4298	3,85	3735	3,47	8033	3,66
15-19	2856	2821	5677	3,42	6945	6,22	6049	5,62	12994	5,92
20-24	7204	6024	13228	7,97	16827	15,07	14956	13,89	31783	14,49
25-29	13027	11348	24375	14,69	20286	18,17	17171	15,95	37457	17,08
30-34	12875	10255	23130	13,94	15206	13,62	10821	10,05	26027	11,87
35-39	12749	8071	20820	12,55	12206	10,93	8904	8,27	21110	9,62
40-44	9686	6708	16394	9,88	9223	8,26	8513	7,91	17736	8,09
45-49	7739	6747	14486	8,73	7413	6,64	9902	9,20	17315	7,89
50-54	3860	4179	8039	4,84	3322	2,98	6150	5,71	9472	4,32
55-59	3287	4568	7855	4,73	2485	2,23	5743	5,33	8228	3,75
60-64	2216	3224	5440	3,28	1474	1,32	3691	3,43	5165	2,35
65-69	1180	1590	2770	1,67	784	0,70	1693	1,57	2477	1,13
70-74	294	563	857	0,52	326	0,29	674	0,63	1000	0,46
75-79	176	248	424	0,26	207	0,19	435	0,40	642	0,29
80-84	54	80	134	0,08	100	0,09	193	0,18	293	0,13
85-89	23	34	57	0,03	27	0,02	75	0,07	102	0,05
90-94	8	10	18	0,01	12	0,01	30	0,03	42	0,02
95-99	0	0	0	0,00	0	0,00	2	0,00	2	0,00
100 and over	0	0	0	0,00	0	0,00	0	0,00	0	0,00
TOTAL	88762	77184	165946	100	111662	100	107665	100	219327	100

Source: own calculations based on data of the INS, *Populația rezidentă la 1 ianuarie 2018 și migrația internațională în anul 2017*, published by INS on 29.08.2018; press release archive: <http://www.insse.ro/cms/ro/content/popula%C5%A3ia-rezident%C4%83-la-1-ianuarie-2018-%C5%9Fi-migra%C5%A3ia-interna%C5%A3ional%C4%83-%C3%AEn-anul-2017>, accessed on February 25, 2019.

These people were operating outside the country's borders under legal conditions; thus, it thinned the ranks of the unemployed; moreover, they sent money to the country. This money provided the living for the family left home.

Remittances are those money transfers to the country of origin, and those associated with migrant labour as migrant flows to families, friends were compensation for the 'brain-drain' phenomenon and, in general, for human capital outflows. At microeconomic level, beneficiaries of remittances are the families remaining in the country. At macroeconomic level, the effects of remittances can be seen by increasing domestic consumption, while affecting the balance of payments, because there are also effects on inflation, exports and imports (Constantin, 2004), but also the social insurances budget, because the family left home (mainly children and the non-active elders) is putting pressure on the budgetary expenses due to the lack of contributions of the emigrants to the national budget.

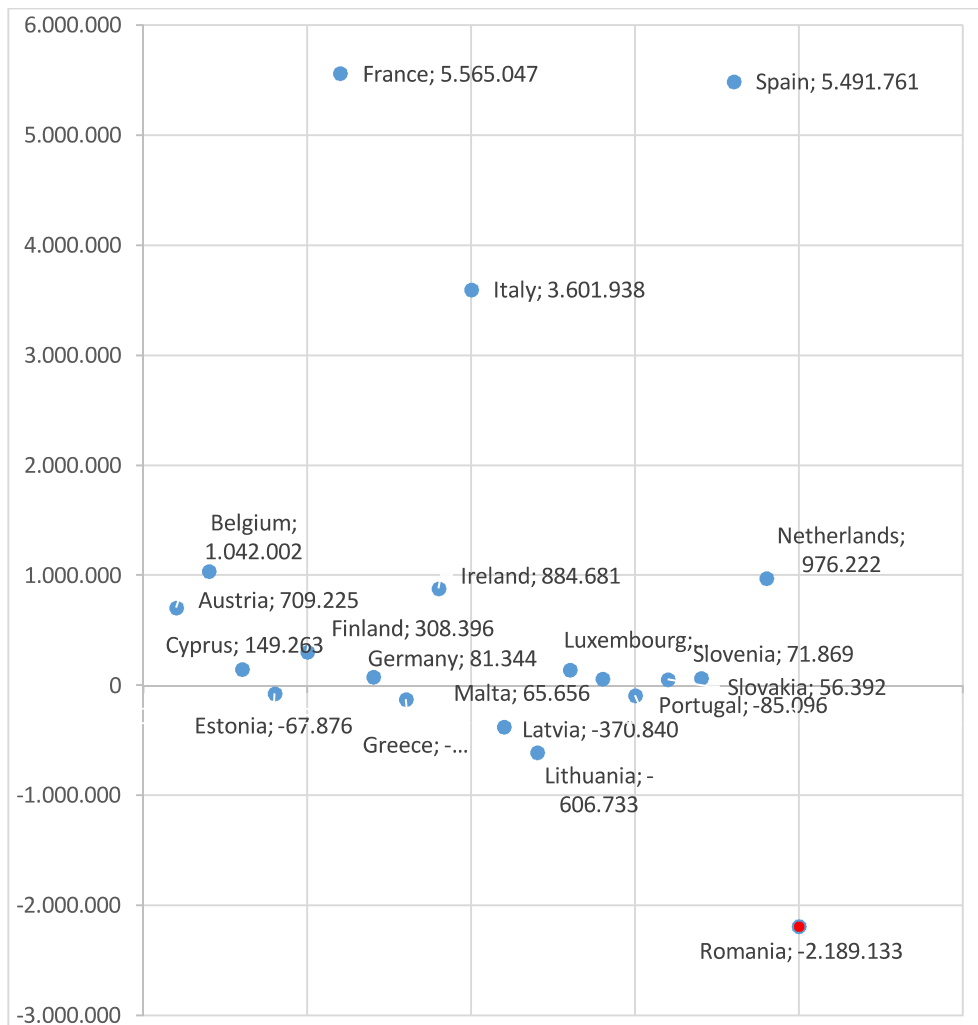


Chart 1: Change in the resident population in Romania compared to the most representatives of the EU member states, 2002-2017 (number of persons)

Source: own calculations based on the data released by INS and EUROSTAT – INS, *Populația rezidentă la 1 ianuarie 2018 și migrația internațională în anul 2017*, published by INS on 29.08.2018; press release archive: <http://www.insse.ro/cms/ro/content/popula%C5%A3ia-rezident%C4%83-la-1-ianuarie-2018-%C5%9Fi-migra%C5%A3ia-interna%C5%A3ional%C4%83-%C3%AE-n-anul-2017>, accessed on February 25, 2019; EUROSTAT - *Population and employment [nama_10_pe]*, link <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database> [18 March 2019].

The temporary settlement of one of the family members in a European Union country, led a few years later to the reunion of the family. Therefore, if at the beginning it was decided to migrate temporarily, with the reunification of the family, the enrolment of children in school, the migration became definitive.

The purpose of migration has turned from a pecuniary one to a cultural, educational, social- and health one.

According to the National Institute of Statistics (INS) and EUROSTAT, the population of Romania decreased by 2.2 million people in the last 15 years (2002-2017), about 10% (Chart 1), which differentiates it from the evolution of most other EU Member States.

In Romania, the average salary is approx. 530 euro / month. (INS, 2019) This is a few times lower than the EU average; the tax and social assistance systems are the main reasons why migration for work is very strong. Social and economic analysts mention that half of the poor Romanians are not socially excluded (unemployed, sick, chronic, disabled) or semi-clustered (retired); they are people who have stable jobs but so poorly paid that they can barely support their primary needs. Thus, although in recent years certain categories of household incomes (minimum wage and average wage, etc.) in Romania have experienced significant increases, they remain at a low level compared to the general level of income in the other EU Member States and are reflected in high levels of poverty and work poverty at national level, maintaining significant territorial disparities from this perspective, with the risk of depopulation of some areas and local financial imbalances, combined with high external migration and internal migration brakes.

In the context of these developments, Romania's demographic dependency ratio increased in the period 2002-2017, from 46.4% to 49.5%, and according to EUROSTAT forecast it will continue to grow to 52.3 % in 2025 and 58.1% in 2030 respectively. These trends are due to the decrease in the youth dependency rate from 25.8% in 2002 to 22.9% in 2017 and the estimate of a further reduction in the level this indicator to 23.5% in the year 2030 as well as an increase in the dependency ratio of the elderly from 20.6% in 2002 to 26.6% in 2017 and the estimation of the further increase of this indicator to 34.7% at the horizon of 2030. (EUROSTAT, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/population-demography-migration-projections/population-projections-data>, accessed on March 26, 2019)

The rate of demographic dependence is doubled by a rate of high economic dependency. Over the past years, in Romania, on average, an employed person has 1.2-1.3 inactive and unemployed people. (INS, http://www.insse.ro/old/sites/default/files/field/publicatii/labour_force_in_romania_2017.pdf, accessed on March 26, 2019) This level of economic dependence is reflected in challenges in terms of labor force replacement rates and the sustainability of social security, health and unemployment insurance balances.

4. Conclusion

Nowadays, Romania is facing a severe demographic decline, against the backdrop of negative natural growth and high and persistent external migration, generating imbalances in demo-economic structures (demographic and economic growth rates with a growth trend, the loss of important shares in the age group 15-44 years, demographic aging and increase in the average age of the employed population), with risks of adverse impact on macroeconomic balances.

Among the causes of this high and growing labor shortage are massive external migration of skilled and highly skilled workers, reduced domestic labor mobility, quantitative and qualitative discrepancies between the supply of the education system and real market needs labor, lack of cooperation between employers and

institutions with responsibilities in the field of employment and adult vocational training.

For Romania, emigrants are a real loss, but they show us the state of the Romanian economy and society as being incapable of generating appropriately paid jobs. As for the countries that receive these emigrants, they are a young, malleable, trained workforce capable of delivering high performances, being a competitive labour force on the European community labour market.

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