

ROMANIA – FROM POINT OF ISSUE TO POINT OF DESTINATION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MIGRATIONS

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Abstract. At the same time with its integration into the European Union, Romania is not a starting point or not transit to the West but also will become a destination of international migration. With "the moment 1989", by the free movement of the people member of the EU, many Romanians have left the country. At the present, the situation is much more complicated, emigration remains at high ratings, combined with the decrease of population (23,21 millions Romanians in 1990 and 21,56 in 2007) and demographic aging.

Keywords: immigration, emigration, demographic aging, European Union.

Introduction

The integration of Romania to the European Union (EU) was a major objective of the Romanian politics, in the last years, besides the integration in the North-Atlantic Alliance. On 1st January 2007 Romania became member of EU having total rights, meaning also duties, which Romania seems to be willing to carry out only partly, may with some difficulties.

This is just the situation of things, generically named "Balkan", that persuades many Romanian people to emigrate in the developed states of Europe or on the other continents. In the same time, Romania wasn't a favorite destination for immigrants, their number being diminished – coming especially from Republic of Moldova, the Arabic countries, China, from same African countries, for learning.

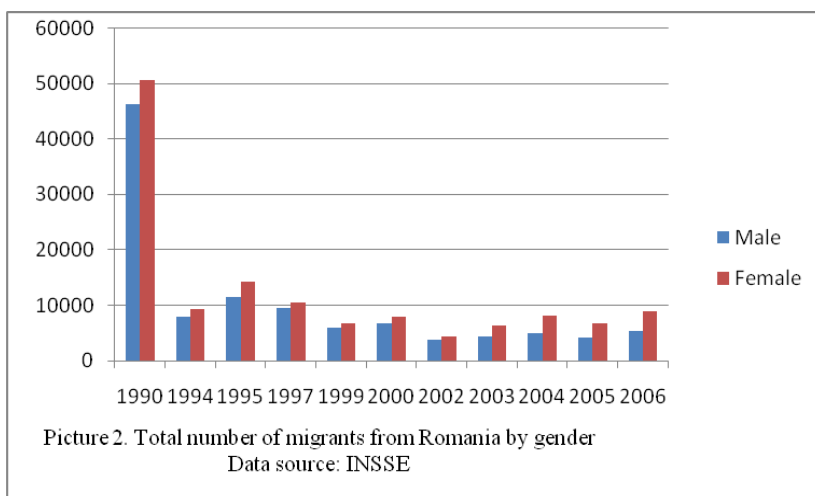
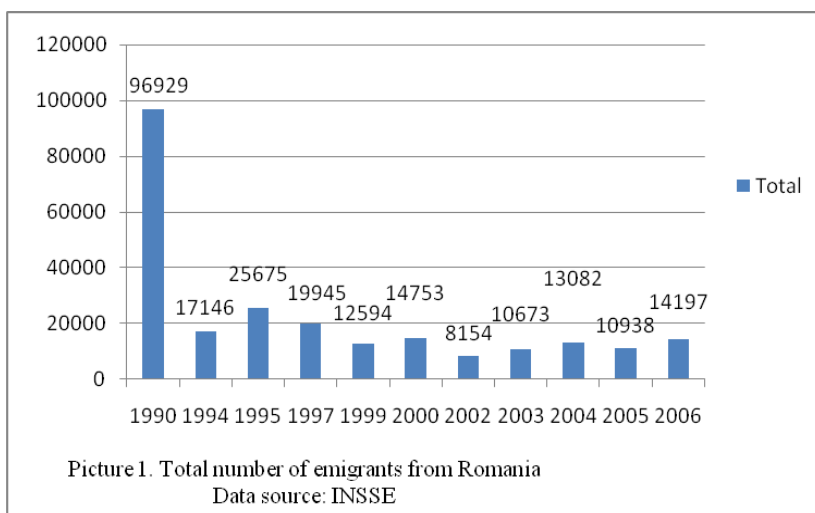
The mobility of people is something specific human, this mobility contributing inclusive at the present population distribution on Earth. For a displacement of population, it's necessary to exist an area of origin, some mobilizing factors, of which the most important is the economic one, then, we need a flow of people and, finally, a target zone, attractive from all the points of view, this attractive image being often exaggerate.

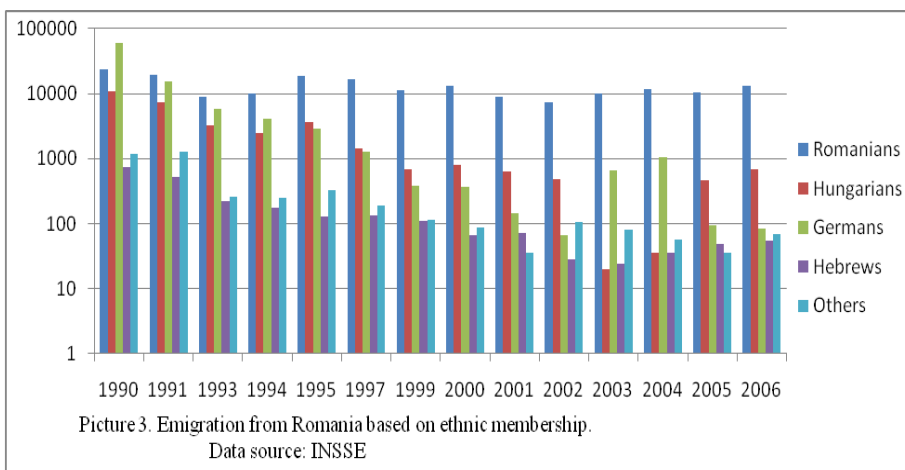
The emigration from Romania

The element that favor emigration are: the need of labor force in the European countries, dictated by the developed economy and also by the demographic aging (in the present rhythm of demographic aging also Romania will have to face the same problem in a not very far future, the low cost which employers bear for emigrants

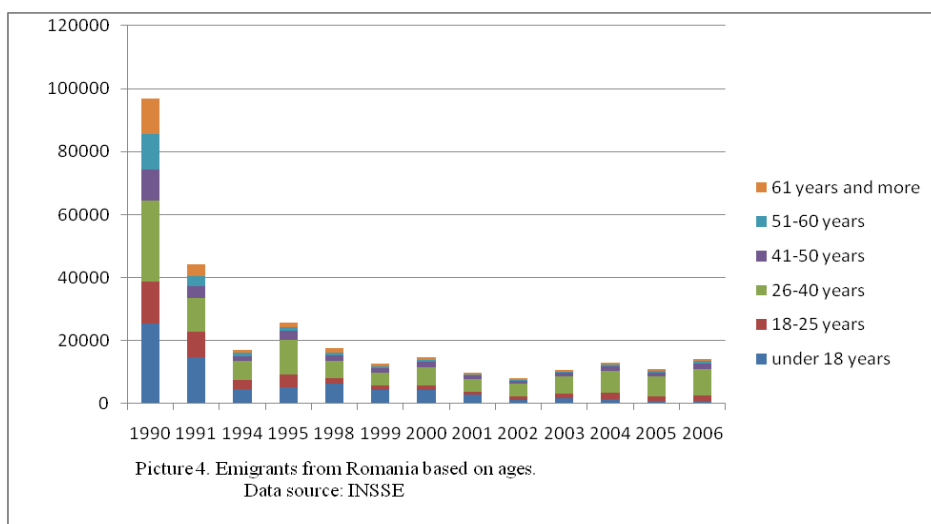
(which made them more profitable than the native labor force), the possibility to get engaged illegally, the high standard of living, the unemployment and the lack of perspectives in the country of origin.

We should not forget about the political factor, which is also important. Thus, the institution of some dictatorial polity, even in Romania till 1989, interrelated with the low standard of living and the abridgements, favor emigration. Right off revolution, in 1990, the number of Romanian emigrants was an important one – 96929, because there were simplified the conditions of procuring a travel abroad approval. Then, the hope of setting something on foot in the country, hope returned as a democratic regime came into power, it decreased the migratory stream. Because there were many objectives in the economic and social field that were not achieved, after 17 years of transition, in recent years the migratory stream increased again, in favor of emigration.





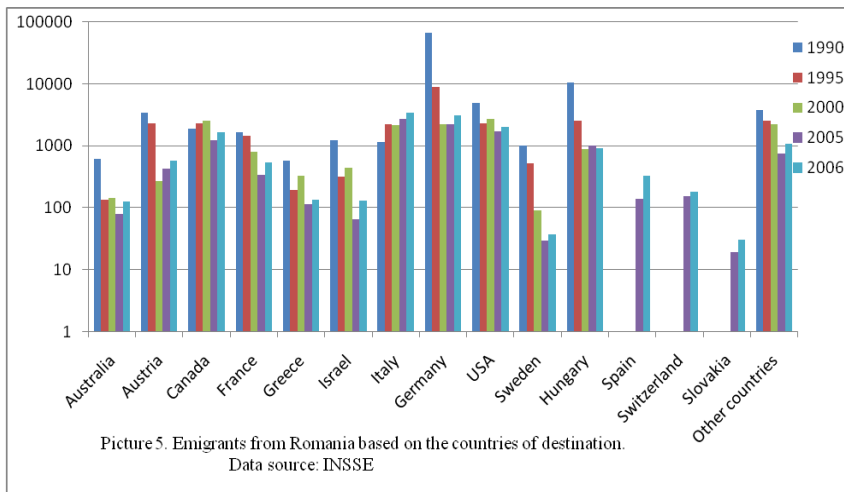
The emigrants from Romania are Romanians (210802), Germans (102800 – who left country after 1990, the abandoned villages of *săși* being known), Hungarians (39408), Hebrews (2876) and others (4710). The aging of population, pronounced in some western states, makes up one of the premises of the migratory stream well structured and marked, the accent being put on the professional quality of emigrants.



There are also two problems which are turning into danger for Romania and which already starts to feel a labor shortage (qualified and superqualified). It's about a labor force which has already been formed and which is attracted by the developed states with low costs, the bases being incurred also by the states which are giving labor force (usually it's about the underdeveloped states): on the one side it's about financial losses – the budgetary funds used for the training of labor force – and on the other side by the loss of labor force by itself.¹ As you can see, from this equation, all the

¹ Cf. C. Iașu – *Démographie et géographie du travail en Roumanie postdécembriste* – Iași, Edit. Sedcom Libris, 2006 p.184

developed states win because they attract with low costs a superqualified labor force, which they can pay with wages smaller than those of the local labor force, wages which however are bigger than those from the area of origin of the emigrants. Moreover, the developed states use neither time nor money to teach labor force.



The favorite destinations of Romanians are Germany, with 150262 Romanians emigrants, USA, Italy, Sweden, Greece, Austria, Hungary, Canada, etc. Both emigration and immigration are difficult to quantify because of the existence of an illegal network of emigration/immigration that can't be quantified. As you can see, Great Britain is not in this statistics as a destination of the emigrants, at least official, although it is the favorite destination of East-Europeans and of the emigrants from other continents, which arrive there illegally.

By Romanian departments, the emigration is more accentuated in Bucharest (2403 emigrants), Timiș (960), Brașov (831), Sibiu (768), Neamț (741), Bacău (654), Cluj (557), Iași (550), Mureș, Galați, Suceava, etc.

The important flows of people, capital, information, circulate towards and off the *Center*. The *Center* is associated with growth, pole, CBD. The center of the present world is constituted by the developed states from North America, Western Europe, Far East (Japan), Australia. Nowadays, Romania is not in the *Center* but not in the *Periphery* as well. The economical and social instability such as problems which our country is facing with as regard the labor force (Romania is teaching experts in all fields, in spite of all the problems which education is facing with, but it benefits of the trained experts contribution only to a small extent, these experts emigrating where they are paid at their fair value, it places Romania among secondary states ("pays du sud").

Once with the integration in EU this state of affairs might change, Romania being included in the *Center* formed by the entire European continent. Ten to one, the pressure of the immigration will increase after a while, because of Romania's statute of member of EU, which makes it attractive, although the reality from area is in present. Besides this, the imbalances mentioned before this as regards the labor market, because

of emigration and demographic aging will bring the need of having a functional labor market, and the solution might be overseen immigration. Sure that all problems as regards the labor force can be solved by Romanian experts and workers' return, temporarily or definitely gone in the developed western countries. The return of the Romanians who are gone and the selection of a superqualified labor force which will ask for residence visa in Romania, will lead our country to the real integration in the *Center*.

The immigration in Romania

"The phenomenon of return – the return migration – is peculiar only to those states which are integrated in EU (Spain, Greece, Portugal, Ireland), but even here not entirely. Importantly is that, in recent years, traditional countries which provided immigrants became attractive (Spain, Italy or Greece), phenomenon which tends to expand on more advanced states, recently integrated in EU (Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia).²

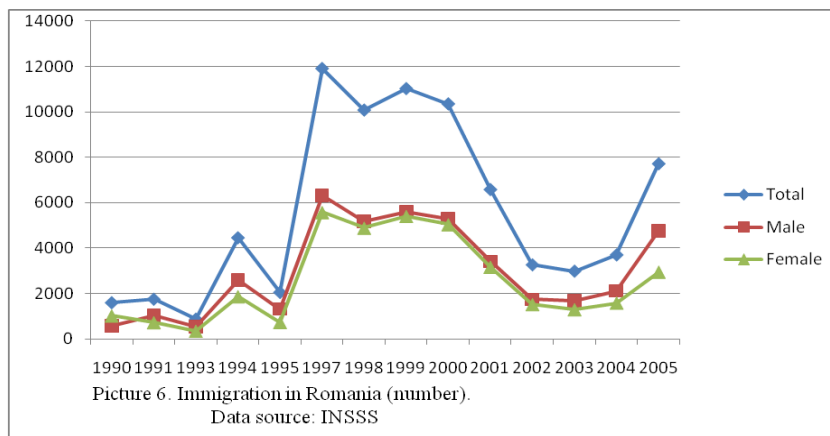
Immigration is real but has not the same intensity of emigration, because of the reasons listed above; comparative, immigration represents 1/5 of emigration. As if emigration, there are reasons for which Romania is attractive, the major reason being our country's development level which is superior than the one from immigrants' country of origin. We must also mention about the linguistic affinity. That is why we can see that an important percent of immigration is formed by people from Republic of Moldova; so, when their number oscillates, the entire number of immigrants oscillating. Now, the official immigration is decreasing because Romania is a state of EU and it represents EU eastern border. ; consequently, the access in Romania (at least the legal access) has decreased lately.

The National Immigration Office from the Interior and Administrative Reform Ministry (the former *National Office for Refugees* of M.A.I.) published a report in 2008: in Romania, from 1991 until August 2008, 16914 strangers sought asylum, of which 2919 received a form of protection. In August 2008, there were 1050 strangers who obtained a form of protection and who are still living in Romania, heaving all the rights of Romanian citizens.

In term of country of origin, the most came from Irak (52,33% of adults). The majority is formed by men. In August 2007-August 2008 223 strangers were given a form of protection (in term of country of origin, on the first places are Irak – 167, Somalia – 15 and Serbia – 9) of which 138 participated at integration programs. The accommodation centers of strangers, subordinated to National Office of Immigrants of M.A.I., are situated at Șomcuta Mare (Maramureș), Rădăuți (Suceava), Galați, Timișoara, Bucharest.

As regards the country of origin of immigrants, the situation is next one: Austria, France, Italy, Israel, Germany, USA< Canada, Hungary, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, other countries.

² Al. Ungureanu, I.Muntele (2006) – *Geografia populației*, Iași, Edit. Sedcom Libris p.295



We can see a lack of information in the population as regards the strangers (almost one third think that there are living over one million strangers in Romania – in fact, in August 2008 there were registered 53164 strangers having legal residence) and the refugees (almost one third of responders (29,3%) think that in this moment there are living in Romania over 100000 refugees in fact there are only 1050 people).

The illegal immigration, more difficult to detected and quantified, turns out to be a phenomenon which will be a major challenge for Romania, in its capacity as EU state border.

By recording the growth of long/short stay visa application in Romania, transit visas and the increase of the number of illegal immigrants, we can say that Romania tends to become a destination country of immigrants (although to date, the migratory balance is thoroughly negative).

Conclusion

Once with the integration in EU, Romania will certainly turn from exporting labor and “gray matter” center into a importer, this thing leading to the economical development of state because there will be selected only experts, proceeding which is furthermore used by all developed Western states (this thing contributing in a great extent to their development).

Making a comparison with other states, which have recently integrated to EU (1997/2004), we can presume and hope that even Romania will become, in about 5-10 years, an attractive country, not only for Moldavian and African citizens, but also for its own citizens.

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