

## **Dynamic Historical Analysis of Longer Term Migratory, Labour Market and Human Capital Processes in Romania**

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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

EU – European Union

*GDP – Gross Domestic Product*

GEO - Governmental Emergency Ordinance

HoRaCa – Hotels, Restaurants and Catering

INE – Instituto Nacional de Estadística (Spanish Statistical Office)

IOM – International Organization for Migration

LAU – Local Administrative Unit

LFS – Household Labor Force Survey

MTOs – Money Transfer Operators

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NIS – National Institute of Statistics

NUTS - Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics

SOPEMI – Système d'observation permanente des migrations

T&C – Textile and Clothing

TFR – Total Fertility Rate

UK – United Kingdom

UN – United Nations

UNCHR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

## Executive Summary

Our study analyses the main features of migratory, labor market and human capital processes in Romania. We tried to highlight the interrelation between these processes through an analysis of the time period spanning from 1950 to 2011.

We rely primarily on data provided by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS). Our major methodological difficulty was caused precisely by the unreliability of official data regarding the migration processes. After the regime change of 1989, the ability of Eastern European states to control migration outflows has decreased considerably. Consequently, to obtain more adequate figures on Romanian emigration, we used as mirror statistics the immigration statistics of the main receiving countries of Romanian emigrants, and also relied on the data sources of the World Bank and Eurostat.

Between 1950 and 2011 Romania faced several major macro-political, economic and social changes which had a great impact on the demographic, migration and labor-market processes of the country. The changes in the geopolitical position of the country are of particular importance here. One can identify two such shifts: the pro-Soviet orientation after the onset of state socialism, and then the pro-Western orientation after the collapse of the state socialist regime.

Within the state socialist period there were some major turning points as well. The most important shift occurred when – after the withdrawal of the Red Army in 1958, and the rise to power of Ceaușescu in 1965 – Romania moved towards a specific nationalist “Third way”. This shift determined to a great extent all the processes that we focus on. From the perspective of the general economic trends, a major shift occurred after 1979. Between 1950 and 1979, the Romanian economy was growing dynamically and the relative (global) economic position of the country has considerably improved. In 1980, however, a two-decade-long economic stagnation and recession began. The main cause of this negative shift was the energy crisis of the 1970s, which considerably reduced the competitiveness of the Romanian economy.

After the change of the regime, 1999 and 2009 should be mentioned as major turning points. In 1999 the Romanian government led by Mugur Isărescu signed an agreement with the European Commission according to which Romania’s EU accession had to be completed until January 2007. The EU accession process became the major legal and political framework of the migratory, labor market and human capital processes. The pre-accession period was characterized by rapid economic growth. However, this growth came to an end with the global economic and financial crisis in 2009. The financial crisis put an end also to the expectations shared by the majority of the population, namely that Romania could reach the Western standards of social development and living conditions in a relatively short time.

The regime change of 1989 represents a major turning point in the demographic development of the country. Until 1989, Romania’s population grew dynamically, which was due primarily to the pro-natalist policies enforced from 1967 on. In 1989, the country’s population exceeded 23 million persons. After 1989, a radical population loss occurred, which can be considered a drastic decline even in the Eastern European context. According to the 2011 census, the population has fallen to 20.1 million, which means a population loss of 13 percent compared to figures from 1989. Though such a comparison may seem too dramatic at first sight, this population decrease exceeds the population loss suffered by Romania during either World War I or World War II. While the decline in the total fertility rate (and in the number of newborns) certainly contributed to this radical decrease in population size, the most important factor was undoubtedly the negative net migration.

Immediately after the regime change the provisional authorities liberalized the regime of passports. This led to a rapid increase of the number of emigrants. However, the process of emigration from Romania intensified only after the turn of the millennium. As mentioned above, in October 1999, the European Commission recommended the starting of the accession negotiations with Romania. Part

of the integration process, in 2002, Romanian citizens have been exempted from visa in the majority of the EU countries. At the beginning of 2007, Romania became an EU member. The new legal status of Romanian citizens within the EU resulted in an increase in what concerns both the volume of emigration and of relevant regulatory measures. Now, according to the immigration statistics of the main receiving countries, an approximate number of 3 million Romanian citizens live abroad. As we shall see, the main contextual determinants of these outflows were the intensive deindustrialization process and the growing numbers of individuals who had to resort to subsistence farming, finding themselves sidelined on the changed labor market.

## Rezumat (Romanian)

Studiul nostru analizează principalele caracteristici ale proceselor de migrație, a dinamicii forței de muncă și capitalului uman din România. În această analiză încercăm să evidențiem relațiile dintre procesele amintite, așa cum apar ele în perioada 1950-2011.

În demersul nostru utilizăm în primul rând datele furnizate de Institutul Național de Statistică (INS). Ne-am confruntat cu o dificultate metodologică majoră cauzată de lipsa de fiabilitate a datelor oficiale despre procesele de migrație. După schimbarea de regim din 1989, a scăzut substanțial capacitatea statelor est-europene de a controla fluxurile de migrație în străinătate. În consecință, pentru a obține valori mai adecvate despre emigrația din România, am utilizat statisticile în oglindă date de statisticile de imigrare ale principalelor țări de destinație ale emigranților români. Totodată, am utilizat și sursele de date ale Băncii Mondiale și Eurostat.

Între 1950 și 2001 România s-a confruntat cu mai multe schimbări majore în domeniul politic, economic și social. Aceste schimbări au avut un impact considerabil asupra dinamicii demografice, de migrație și a forței de muncă din țară. De maximă importanță sunt schimbările survenite în poziția geopolitică a țării. Putem identifica două asemenea schimbări: orientarea pro-sovietică după instaurarea socialismului de stat și orientarea pro-occidentală apărută după colapsul regimului socialist.

Au existat câteva momente de cotitură majoră și în perioada regimului socialist. Cea mai importantă schimbare a apărut chiar după retragerea Armatei Roșii din 1958 și instaurarea la putere a lui Ceaușescu în 1965 când România a pășit pe "O cale a treia" a unui naționalism particular. Această schimbare a determinat în mare măsură toate procesele pe care le abordăm. Din perspectiva tendințelor economice generale, schimbarea majoră a survenit după 1979. Între 1950 și 1979, economia României a cunoscut o dezvoltare dinamică iar poziția ei relativă în economia globală s-a îmbunătățit considerabil. Însă, anul 1980 a însemnat începutul stagnării și recesiunii economice, care a durat două decenii. Cauza principală a acestei tendințe negative a fost criza de energie din anii 1970. Această criză a redus mult competitivitatea economiei românești.

După schimbarea de regim, trebuie să amintim două momente care au reprezentat momente de cotitură majoră, și anume anii 1999 și 2009. În 1999 Guvernul României condus de Mugur Isărescu a semnat un acord cu Comisia Europeană conform căruia aderarea României la UE trebuie finalizată până în ianuarie 2007. Procesul de aderare la UE a devenit cadrul legal și politic primordial pentru procesele de migrație, dinamica forței de muncă și a capitalului uman. Perioada de pre-aderare a fost caracterizată de creștere economică rapidă. Însă criza economică și financiară globală din 2009 a pus capăt acestei creșteri economice. Mai mult, criza financiară a spulberat și așteptările majorității populației, și anume speranța că România va atinge standardele de viață și dezvoltarea socială din occident într-un timp relativ scurt.

Schimbările din 1989 reprezintă de asemenea o cotitură majoră în evoluția demografică a țării. Până în 1989, populația României a crescut într-un ritm accelerat mai ales datorită politicilor pro-nataliste adoptate în 1967. În 1989 populația României a trecut de 23 de milioane de persoane. După 1989, a apărut o pierdere radicală în rândul populației care poate fi văzută ca un declin drastic chiar și în context est-european. Conform recensământului din 2011, populația a scăzut la 20.1 milioane ceea ce înseamnă o pierdere de 13 procente raportată la cifrele din 1989. Chiar dacă la prima vedere comparația poate părea prea dramatică, notăm că descreșterea este mai substanțială decât pierderile suferite de România în primul sau al doilea război mondial. Deși declinul ratei totale de fertilitate (și numărul nou-născuților) a contribuit în mod evident la această scădere radicală a populației, factorul cel mai important a fost fără îndoială balanța migratorie negativă.

Autoritățile provizorii au liberalizat regimul pașapoartelor imediat după schimbarea de regim. Drept consecință, a crescut rapid numărul emigranților. Totuși, procesul de emigrație din România s-a intensificat abia în mileniul trei. După cum am menționat deja, Comisia Europeană a recomandat

Începerea negocierilor de aderare cu România în octombrie 1999. În 2002 s-a ridicat obligativitatea vizei pentru cetățenii români în majoritatea țărilor UE, ca etapă a procesului de integrare. România a devenit stat membru al UE la începutul anului 2007. Noul statut legal al cetățenilor români în cadrul UE a condus la creșterea emigrației atât ca volum cât și ca măsuri relevante care o reglementează. Conform statisticilor de imigrație a principalelor țări de destinație, circa 3 milioane de cetățeni români trăiesc în străinătate în prezent. După cum vedea, cele mai importante cauze ale acestor fluxuri de emigrație sunt dezindustrializarea intensă și numărul tot mai mare de persoane nevoite să recurgă la agricultura de subzistență, odată ce s-au văzut marginalizați în noua piață a forței de muncă.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Our study provides information about historical trends in migration, labor market processes and human capital in Romania. We focus on the time period between 1950 and 2011, trying to capture the political and socio-economic factors which influenced the international migration processes. The major political turning points are of particular importance but labor market and demographic processes also constitute an important framework of the migration processes. In our analysis (where possible) we discuss separately the processes under and after the period of state socialism. The main focus of the report is the current state of international migration, labor market and human capital in Romania. As a consequence, we discuss in more detail the time period 2001-2011.

### 1.1. Methodology

The country report has been elaborated by the Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities. The working team consisted of István Horváth and Tamás Kiss.

We relied primarily on data provided by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS). Data on demographic processes (vital statistics) are based on an exhaustive survey carried out by the National Institute of Statistics. Demographic indicators are calculated based on these data. Additional important data sources were the censuses. In the analyzed time period (traditional questionnaire based) censuses were carried out in 1956, 1966, 1977, 1992, 2002 and 2011. Regarding labor market processes we used primarily the Household Labor Force Surveys (LFS) carried out also by the NIS.

Beside NIS data we also used other internal data sources:

- Directorate for Asylum and Integration (*Direcția Azil și Integrare*) – for data on asylum seekers and refugees;
- General Inspectorate for Immigration (*Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrări*) – for data on immigrant stock;
- National Agency for Citizenship (*Agentia Națională pentru Cetățenie*) – for data on new Romanian citizens;
- Ministry of Finances (*Ministerul Finanțelor*) – for data on public debt.

Although we tried to use primarily internal (Romanian) data sources, some indicators were found only in international databases. For the *share of population at risk of poverty* or for the *expenditure on social protection in % of GDP* we used Eurostat data. It was primarily because of international and temporal comparability that we used the updated version of Maddison GDP/capita database and the World Bank annual data on remittances.

One major methodological difficulty was caused precisely by the unreliability of official data regarding the migration processes. In the state-socialist period, Romanian migration statistics were relatively reliable: the Romanian authorities succeeded to control the outflows and inflows to a great extent. This situation has gradually changed in the late 1980s with the *en-masse* emigration of ethnic Hungarians. The process emerged spontaneously (most persons crossing the border illegally) and the Romanian state (in spite of all attempts to guard the border) proved to be unable to control it.

Following the regime changes of 1989, the ability of Eastern European states to control the outflows has decreased considerably. The main problem (in what concerns reliability) is that the majority of out-migrants have little interest in declaring the act of settling abroad to Romanian authorities. Presently, as opposed to the state-socialist era, the Romanian state (and the sending countries in general) has no effective control over the process of migration and, as a consequence, it possesses no reliable statistics on out-migration. To have more adequate figures on Romanian emigration we used as mirror statistics the immigration statistics of the main receiving countries of Romanian

emigrants, as they appear in the data sources of the World Bank and Eurostat. As we shall see, these two major data sources are inconsistent regarding the emigrants from Romania.

Because of the under-registration of emigration, Romania has serious reliability problems with statistical data beyond migration too. The official annual data on the country's resident population delivered by the National Institute of Statistics differ to a great extent from census figures. Given the uncertainties regarding the reference population, all demographic and human development indicators are affected and distorted, from total fertility rate to infant mortality, for instance.

## **1.2. Definitions**

The main terms and definitions used in the Country Report correspond in general to the definitions given in the Glossary. However, the national definitions regarding international migration are not completely in line with these definitions in all respects. We faced difficulties because of the definition of emigrants and immigrants used by the Romanian authorities. Emigrants are defined as Romanian citizens who establish their residence abroad in agreement with Romanian authorities. This definition does not cover all Romanian residents who leave the country.

On the other hand the definition of the immigrants creates even more serious reliability problems. Immigrants are defined as foreign citizens who come to Romania in agreement with Romanian authorities to establish their residence in the country. The complications here are due to the specification that immigrants are foreign citizens. Following 1991 Romanian authorities offered through a preferential procedure Romanian citizenship for ethnic Romanians residing in neighboring countries, primarily for Romanians from the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. Ethnic Romanians could obtain Romanian citizenship even without having Romanian residence. If an ethnic Romanian from Moldova or Ukraine, who formerly obtained Romanian citizenship establishes his/her residence in Romania, he/she will not appear in migration statistics. So, it seems well-founded to claim that the majority of the effective in-migrants do not appear in NIS statistics as immigrants. The second problem is that the definition of immigrants used by Romanian authorities renders impossible the study of return migration based on official statistics.

## 2. HISTORICAL-DYNAMIC ANALYSIS OF LABOUR MARKET, HUMAN CAPITAL AND MIGRATION DEVELOPMENTS

During the time period between 1950 and 2011 Romania faced several major macro-political, economic and social changes which exerted a great impact on the demographic, migration and labor-market processes of the country.

### 2.1. Political and Socio-Economic Overview

The changes in the *geopolitical position* of the country are of particular importance here. One can identify two such shifts, the pro-Soviet orientation, then the pro-Western orientation after the collapse of the state socialist regime.

After World War II Romania was occupied by Soviet forces; consequently, the country became part of the Eastern Bloc. This affected not only the geopolitical orientation of the country, but it has also led to a new political, social and economic order. It is well known that the Eastern European states became single-party systems, whereas in the domain of economy the planned economy became dominant, where the redistribution was the principal way of coordination instead of market mechanisms.

Within the state socialist period there were some major turning points as well. The first major shift occurred when – after the withdrawal of the Red Army in 1958, and the rise to power of Ceaușescu in 1965 – Romania moved toward a specific nationalist “Third way”. Shortly after assuming power, Ceaușescu initiated the following policies with important consequences:

(1) First of all, there was a radical change in population policies. In 1966, for the first time in Romanian history, certain explicitly pro-natalist measures were taken. The repressive character of these measures (operating primarily through the interdiction of abortion) is common knowledge and it was thoroughly discussed in the international literature too (Kligman 1998).

(2) Secondly, during the second part of the 1960s, the priorities in the domain of industrial development have changed. In the early stage of socialist industrialization top priority has been given to investments in the heavy industry, afterwards the chemical industry became equally important. The territorial structure of the industrialization and the investments were changed too. In 1968, an administrative reform was carried out in accordance with the new priorities of economic development policies. The administrative structure established in 1968 has not been changed until now.

Map 1: The counties and Historical Regions in Romania



(3) Thirdly, starting from the late 1960s, the national rhetoric impregnated more and more heavily the official ideology (Verdery 1991). This was of particular importance with regard to the migration processes of the period. As it is going to be presented in the next sections, it effected primarily the emigration of ethnic minorities.

From the perspective of the general economic trends, a major shift has been induced by events from 1979. In the time period between 1950 and 1979, the Romanian economy grew dynamically and the relative (global) economic position of the country has improved considerably. In 1980, however, a two-decade-long economic stagnation and downturn began. As we will see, the main cause of this negative shift was the energy crisis of the 1970s, which considerably reduced the competitiveness of the Romanian economy.

As for the entire 1950-2011 period, the most important turning point is definitely represented by the collapse of state socialism in December 1989. This event radically altered Romania's geopolitical orientation again. In the early 1990s, it became clear that the Western (European) orientation had no real alternatives. This was reflected by the fact that a strong consensus has been formed among the Romanian elites regarding EU and NATO integration.

In a broader perspective, one can claim that, in the 1990s, a new *consensus on modernization*<sup>1</sup> has emerged, which designated the Westernization ("Europeanization") of different social structures as the desired pathway of social development. This new consensus was, of course, strongly interlinked

<sup>1</sup> We used the concept of *consensus on modernization* in one of our previous studies. (Kiss 2009) *Consensus on modernization* is a teleological concept, which implies reaching an agreement with regard to the desired pathways for the future development of a society. The consensus (the fact that the vast majority of actors considers a developmental pathway legitimate and as a matter of course) always depends on the power relations in the given society. We would like to emphasize a couple of points here. First of all, the *consensus on modernization* is obviously a teleological construct or, put it simply, a project, in which the future and the related plans are of particular significance. In our case, the core element of the new consensus on modernization was that the models that can and should be followed are represented by Western societies.

Second, it has to be emphasized that if a developmental project becomes consensual its significance and ability to influence the social structures will considerably increase. Once they became consensual, the subjective character of the projects is no longer obvious, and the social actors start to perceive them as objective, inevitable historical pathways. In other words, the subjective (more precisely, inter-subjective) teleology is seen as objective teleology.

with the geopolitical orientation to be pursued. In agreement with the analysts of the *developmental idealism paradigm*,<sup>2</sup> we consider that the newly emerged consensus on modernization was one of the main factors that triggered profound social and demographic changes in Romania and elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

Despite the fact that – as our report will reveal later – the relative economic positions and the demographic prospects of the country have considerably deteriorated during the last two decades, the bases of the pro-Western (pro-EU, neo-liberal etc.) consensus have not begun to erode. In Romania, for instance, there are still no Euro-skeptic political formations, and only a few Euro-critical voices can be heard within the Romanian intellectual arena.

Given the importance of European integration, 1999 is also a major turning point in the country's recent history. In this year commenced the negotiation process for the Romanian EU accession. The Romanian government led by Mugur Isărescu and the European Commission signed an agreement according to which the process of negotiations on Romania's EU accession had to be completed until the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2007. Under these circumstances the main context of further institutional change was the process of EU accession. The most important factor lying behind the reform measures was to fulfill the EU eligibility requirements. This led to neo-liberal economic reforms such as the proportional tax system, or the acceleration of the privatization process.

The pre-accession period was characterized by a high rate of economic growth. This trend, however, was drastically interrupted by the general financial crisis in 2009, only two years after Romania became an EU member. The financial crisis put an end also to the expectations shared by the majority of the population, namely that Romania could reach the Western standards of social development and living conditions in a relatively short time.

## 2.2. Development of international migration

The regime change of 1989 represents a major turning point in the demographic development of the country. Until 1989, the Romanian population grew dynamically, which was due primarily to the pro-natalist policies enforced from 1967 on. The changes in population policies will be discussed in greater detail in the chapter dealing with demographic processes. In 1989, the country's population exceeded 23 million persons. After 1989, a radical population loss occurred, which can be considered a drastic decline even in the broader Eastern European context. According to the 2011 census, the population has fallen to 20.1 million, which means a population loss of 13 percent compared to figures from 1989. Though such a comparison may seem too dramatic at first sight, this population decrease exceeds the population loss suffered by Romania during either World War I or World War II.

One of the factors causing this radical decrease in population size was the decline in the total fertility rate (and in the number of newborns). This will be also presented in detail in *Chapter 4.3.1* dealing with demographic processes. In what follows, we will discuss shortly the most important factor, namely, negative net migration.

In spite of closed borders, the phenomenon of emigration existed during the times of state socialism too: between 1948 and 1989, a relatively high net migration loss (783,578 persons) was officially registered in Romania. A comparison with the immigration statistics of receiving countries reveals, however, that the Romanian emigration statistics did not capture the entire flow of emigration; therefore, the number of those who had left the country actually was even higher. In the first decades of the state socialist period, the members of the Romanian Jewish community migrated *en masse*. After the late 1970s, the mass migration of Germans (Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians) had begun too. Furthermore, during the time period between 1988 and 1992, a number of

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<sup>2</sup> The concept of *developmental idealism paradigm* was elaborated by Arland Thornton (2005).

about 100,000 Hungarians left Transylvania, the majority of them to Hungary. Hungarians were highly overrepresented among the emigrants in the time period between 1992 and 2002 too.

Immediately after the regime change, the provisional authorities liberalized the regime of passports. This led to a rapid increase of the number of emigrants. However the process of emigration from Romania intensified only after the turn of the millennium. As mentioned above, in October 1999, the European Commission recommended the starting of the accession negotiations with Romania. Part of the integration process, in 2002, Romanian citizens have been exempted from visa in the majority of the EU countries. At the beginning of 2007, Romania became an EU member. The new legal status of Romanian citizens within the EU resulted in an increase in what concerns both the volume of emigration and of relevant regulatory measures. In the present, according to the immigration statistics of the main receiving countries an approximate number of 3 million Romanian citizens live abroad. As we shall see, the main contextual determinants of these outflows were the intensive deindustrialization and the growing numbers of individuals who had to resort to subsistence farming, finding themselves sidelined on the changed labor market.

### **2.3. The Evolution of Migration Policies and the Legal Framework**

During the period of state-socialism, the territorial mobility of Romanian citizens was controlled and drastically restrained by the state authorities. This was true not only for emigration, but for tourism as well. According to the legal norms of that period, passports were held by the police and an ordinary Romanian citizen had the right to get his/her passport and to cross the border only once in two years. In practice, the restraints were even more severe, as from the early 1980s the applications were more and more frequently rejected. The restrictive exit policy ended after the change of the political regime, since 1990 Romanian state authorities have not restricted the free movement of the citizens anymore. But the change of the migration regime/system had another (unexpected) by-product: the Romanian state was not able to administer or even to register the process of international migration. This is why neither the stock, nor the flow data capture the international migration in Romania. It may sound harsh, but – because of the very intensive process of international migration – the system of population registration in Romania has practically collapsed.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See the Romanian country report on existing data production systems and major data sources (Kiss 2013).

### 3. NATIONAL POLICIES AND PERSPECTIVES REGARDING INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

#### 3.1. The Legal and Policy Framework of International Migration

##### 3.1.1. Migration policies during state socialism

The migratory regimes during and after state socialism differ significantly in terms of the control exercised by the state authorities on the international mobility of the citizens. Romanian authorities considered that a liberalized regime of international traveling involves the risk of a large increase in the number of asylum applications submitted by Romanian citizens, which would have discredited the regime and threatened its legitimacy as a functioning political system both in front of foreign governments and citizens remaining in the country (Mueller, 1999). Under these circumstances, access to passports was limited. To possess a passport and to travel abroad was a limited right (passports being issued only periodically and strictly for the period of traveling) and a privilege discretionarily administered by authorities. Traveling for touristic purposes was limited, it was only allowed each second year. In all cases the authorities decided whether the applicant is sufficiently trustworthy (or undesirable<sup>4</sup>) before approving the issuing of the passport.

The main features of the migratory regime (with emphasis on emigration) of Romania during the state socialist period can be summarized as follows:

- (1) A general and rather severe limitation on exits;
- (2) Strict control of Romanian citizens' traveling abroad;
- (3) Selective emigration policy.

This latter characteristic is of particular importance. As it was mentioned above, in spite of the control of international mobility, the number of officially registered emigrants was not insignificant at all. In the time period between 1950 and 1989, almost 800,000 persons emigrated. The main goal of state authorities was not to keep out-migration at the lowest possible level, but to select the emigrants. It was a common practice throughout Eastern Europe to let or force the undesirable persons (for instance, the dissidents) to emigrate. This tactic was used by the Romanian authorities too against the political opponents of the regime. However, in Romania, the main criterion of the selection of emigrants was the ethnic belonging.

First the persons belonging to the Jewish community were allowed to leave the country and move to Israel, and then the Germans followed. While Jews and Germans were allowed to leave, the emigration of persons belonging to other ethnic categories was obstructed. Although the migration of Jews and Germans cannot be considered forced migration, selecting migrants according to ethnic background establishes a strong link between the Romanian migration policies and the concept of *ethnic cleansing*. It has to be observed, however, that not only Romanian authorities promoted the *en masse* migration of Jews and Germans, but the Israeli and German authorities too. The Israeli and German selective immigration policy, more precisely the ethnic selection of immigrants, has been analyzed by Brubaker (1998). Ethnic Germans moving to Germany and persons of Jewish origins moving to Israel could acquire full citizenship immediately after arrival. In these cases, ethnicity was a capital that could be converted through a bureaucratic process into citizenship and benefits related to it.

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<sup>4</sup> Passports and (indirectly) the possibility to definitively leave the country were offered for uncomfortable categories (dissident intellectuals).

### **3.1.2. Migration policies following 1989**

This approach to international migration changed radically right after the fall of the state socialist regime. One of the first legislative amendments adopted by the provisional authorities was to liberalize the regime of the passports.<sup>5</sup> The passport became indeed a personal document, and the authorities ceased to restrict the international traveling of Romanian citizens.<sup>6</sup> These measures reflected a radical change in the authorities' attitudes regarding migration. On the one hand, after 1990, the possibility to travel and migrate was conceived as a basic human right. On the other, after 2000, as the volume of the emigrant stock of Romanian origin has increased in different countries, the protection of the Romanian citizens working abroad became a matter of concern to the Romanian authorities. Starting with 2007-2008 specific measures were initiated to facilitate the return and reintegration of returnees into the Romanian society.

We would like to stress that this quick shift does not mean that emigration did not represent an issue of concern (on various grounds) for the post-communist Romanian authorities. The measures taken can be thematically and chronologically grouped as follows:

- 1990-2002, administering aspects of irregular migration. Under the circumstances of irregular emigration, Romanian authorities had to face the reaction of different states targeted by Romanian emigrants, and different international organizations monitoring various aspects related to migration (human trafficking for example).
- From 2002, managing emigration and addressing the legal and social conditions of emigrant Romanian citizens.
- From 2002, harmonizing legislation on immigration and asylum with EU regulations.

#### **3.1.2.1. Confronting irregularity**

Immediately after 1990, a massive flux of Romanian asylum seekers entered different Western European states (the bulk of them Germany). The rather restrictive entry policies induced irregular migration. This implied various forms of violation of immigration regulation and other relevant legal norms, from not having a residence permit or overstaying the time-limited permit to human smuggling and trafficking, migration of unaccompanied minors etc. These aspects, which represented a matter of concern for many destination countries, international organizations and for Romanian authorities as well, were addressed during the period between 1990 and 2002.

In order to curb the flow of Romanian asylum seekers, many western European states, especially Germany (starting from 1992), amended the law on asylum and reconsidered living conditions in Romania, qualifying it as a "safe country of origin". This rendered further demands for asylum considerably more difficult to justify. Furthermore, a bilateral agreement between Germany and Romania stipulated the repatriation of Romanian citizens failing to obtain the refugee status (Reermann, 1997, p. 127). As a result of these policy measures, the number of Romanian asylum seekers abruptly decreased, this strategy of emigration was employed less and less by Romanian citizens.

During the 1990's and the very beginning of the new millennium, readmission agreements with other states (France for example) were signed too. According to these, each year a fixed number of

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<sup>5</sup> The relevant legal document (*Decret-Lege privind regimul pașapoartelor și al călătoriilor în străinătate*) was issued on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January, 1990, less than three weeks after the fall of Ceaușescu's regime.

<sup>6</sup> During the 1990's some forms of moderate restrictions on the exit from the country were still practiced, for example, asking for a valid return travel document, proving the existence of a given amount of money necessary for staying abroad etc. Nevertheless, none of these were meant to considerably limit the possibility of leaving the country.

Romanian citizens in irregular situation were repatriated. These measures increased the risks of irregular staying; nevertheless, they did not limit the influx of irregular Romanian immigrants to various Western European countries.

The measures taken by destination countries were not exclusively coercive however. Germany and Romania signed in 1992 a bilateral treaty stipulating the controlled labor migration of seasonal workers. There was a yearly quota established, which increased from a few hundred persons to 17-18 thousand persons by the end of the decade (Diminescu, 2005 p. 66). Other states too, such as Spain or Italy, confronted with an increasing volume of irregular migration of Romanian citizens from the mid-1990s, adopted regularization policies, which offered the chance to become legal immigrants for tens of thousands of Romanians (SOPEMI, 2004, p. 71).

To sum up, in this period the major policy developments were two-folded. On the one hand, Romania was pushed to assume more responsibilities in handling the irregular migration of its citizens. On the other hand, receiving states started to address irregularity both coercively and in positive terms, by offering the chance for regularization.

### ***3.1.2.2. Managing emigration and addressing the condition of emigrant Romanian citizens***

The new millennium opened the perspective of Romania's EU integration. One of the major steps in this direction was the exemption of Romanian citizens from visa requirements starting in 2002. Though as a transitory measure (between 2002 and 2005) a system of strengthened exit control was imposed by the Romanian border authorities (Tchorbadjiyska, 2010, p. 173), this did not affect significantly the emigration of Romanian citizens. The number of those engaging in migration boosted.

Alongside the restrictive measures, steps to promote a system of managed migration (forms of periodic, circular migration) were taken too.<sup>7</sup> At the turn of the millennium and in the pre-accession period, Romania signed bilateral agreements regulating the migration of labor force with Switzerland (2000), Hungary (2001), Portugal (2001, 2002), Luxembourg (2001), Spain (2002), France (2004), Germany (1991, 1992, 2005) and Italy (1996, 2006, 2007).

In 2002, the Labor Force Migration Office, an authority in charge with both the recruitment and mediation of Romanian labor force, was set up. This office initiated bilateral contracts with relevant state agencies from receiving countries (Germany or Spain) or private employers intending to promote a more organized and controlled form of short term, possibly circular migration of the Romanian workforce.

The initiative was partially successful. For example, in 2006, it provided foreign jobs to 53,029 Romanian workers, while in the same years private companies hired only 14,742 (Horváth, 2007). However, this channel proves to be unsatisfactory if compared to the needs of potential migrants and the working of the existing (private) networks assisting persons in fulfilling their ambitions to work abroad and become long term immigrants (for the case of Spain see Bleahu, 2005; Elrick & Ciobanu, 2009). Moreover, since the labor markets of Italy and Spain were in expansion and opened for foreign labor, the individual migration strategies were successful; therefore, only a relatively small segment of the migrants made use of the previously sketched schemes of managed labor migration.

In the pre-accession period (2002-2007), the Romanian authorities (the Ministry of Labor, the National Employment Agency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, assisted by specialized international

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<sup>7</sup> Amongst the provisions with relevance for the labor emigration we mention the Law 156/2000 concerning the protection of the Romanian citizens working abroad modified through the government ordinance 43/2002 and the Law 248/2005 on the free movement of the Romanians abroad that stipulates the conditions for the travelling documents issued for the Romanians having residence in Romania or abroad.

organizations (such as IOM)) implemented projects and ran campaigns to inform the potential migrants about their rights and the legal conditions of working abroad, as well as about institutions that could offer support to emigrants.

Romania's EU integration and the subsequently materialized free movement of labor force were limited to a certain degree. Belgium, Germany, Ireland, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, the UK and Malta kept transitory restrictions on access to labor markets in force.<sup>8</sup> It should also be mentioned that in July 2011, due to the economic crisis and high unemployment rates, Spain reintroduced transitory restrictions regarding the access to its labor market for the newly-arriving Romanian immigrants. At the end of 2011, Germany lifted restrictions for several economic sectors and occupations, targeting especially the highly-skilled potential Romanian immigrants. Moreover, Germany, in order to encourage circular migration, gradually increased the quota for seasonal workers.

From 2006 (and markedly after 2007), the Romanian authorities started to offer primarily cultural assistance to Romanian emigrant communities via a special structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs responsible for the Romanian Diaspora, the Department for Romanians Living Abroad.

After 2007, measures to promote return migration and reintegration of returnees were undertaken. The *2008-2010 Action Plan* concerning the return of Romanian citizens working abroad was adopted<sup>9</sup>, and concrete actions were undertaken in this sense, for instance, information campaigns on the labor opportunities in Romania. Further measures for promoting circular migration and measures to assist integration include educational support, support for initiating economic activities etc.. Even a bilateral agreement, stipulating the collaboration in the field of return and reintegration of the Romanian immigrants, was signed between Romania and Spain in 2009.

### **3.1.2.3. Harmonizing legislation on immigration and asylum with EU regulations**

From the period before 2002 two major policy aspects affecting immigration to Romania have to be mentioned. One is related to asylum, the other to facilitating the immigration of the Romanians living in the neighboring countries (especially the Republic of Moldova) and of Romanians who left the country before 1989.<sup>10</sup> After 2002, a process of aligning the Romanian legislation with the relevant EU regulations started. The two most important legal norms in this sense are the Governmental Emergency Ordinance (GEO) 194/2002, which was significantly modified by the GEO 55/2007 on foreigners, and the National Strategy on Immigration 2007-2010 adopted as a Governmental Decision (1122/2007).

## **3.2. Perceptions of International Migration**

Despite the significant out-migration, up until 1989, the populations of the Eastern bloc countries were defined (both by state authorities and demographers) as *closed populations*. In Romania, for example, population projections did not calculate either with emigration or with immigration. It is a peculiarity of the Romanian case that leading Romanian demographers and sociologists (Trebici 1994 or Sandu 2000b for example) claimed even in the 1990s that the phenomenon of international

<sup>8</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=508&langId=en> retrieved 03/04/2013

<sup>9</sup> Government Decision 187/2008, Published in the Official Bulletin nr. 163/03.03.2008.

<http://www.mmuncii.ro/pub/imagemanager/images/file/Legislatie/HOTARARI-DE-GUVERN/HG187-2008.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> With regard to the immigration of the Romanians living in the neighboring countries and the Romanians who emigrated before 1989, the Citizenship Law (21/1991) has to be mentioned. This legal possibility resulted, at least for the period 1991-2001, in a massive (re)naturalization process (Iordachi, 2009). This was not necessarily followed by immigration, since in the case of Romanians living abroad the citizenship was obtainable without having residence in Romania. Yet, possessing Romanian citizenship facilitated the immigration of a considerable number of people from Moldova to Romania

migration was inexistent during the state socialist period. A possible explanation for upholding this erroneous opinion is that the majority of emigrants belonged to the ethnic (and religious) minorities. The Romanian majority was indeed less affected by the process of emigration, though channels of emigration for the majority ethnic group existed too.

Migration became a relevant issue in Romania both from scientific and political perspective only by the turn of the Millennium. Although research on migration has intensified in the second half of the 1990s, its results have not been integrated into demographic modeling and forecasting until recently. As it was already mentioned (Chapter 3.1.1.), in the 1990s the Romanian policies on emigration (if there were any) were strongly influenced by the receiving countries. In this period, from the perspective of the Romanian political class, emigration appeared as an issue related to the country's image. The main concern was that the Romanian emigrants might deteriorate Romania's image in front of Western European countries. This voice is emphatically present these days too; however, it is increasingly associated with the migration of Roma people.

The first sign showing that emigration cannot be ignored was the 2002 census. According to the 2002 census, the size of the resident population in Romania was 21.67 million, which meant that the country's population dropped by almost 1.1 million in the 1992-2002 inter-census period. Although demographers had forecasted that the number of the population was going to fall (Ghețău 1996), the extent of the decrease was shocking not only for the Romanian wider public but for the scientific community too. Only slightly more than a quarter of the population loss was caused by negative natural growth, and only about one third was foreseen by the official calculations of the National Institute of Statistics.

After the 2002 census, the concept of *circular migration* – introduced by Dumitru Sandu (2000a) – became very popular in Romania. According to this approach, the unregistered and unforeseen population loss highlighted by the 2002 census should not be considered as being caused by definitive out-migration. The majority of missing persons were only temporarily abroad and might return to Romania. This interpretation was steadily accepted by Romanian demographers up until recently. For instance, in his demographic projection published in 2007, Ghețău not only calculates with 0 net-migration, but argues that (e)migrants unregistered by Romanian authorities will return to the country: *“The 700,000 Romanians being temporarily away form a very specific population, and its existence has little-known demographic consequences. De jure, they are not part of the Romanian population (this being defined as persons with permanent address in Romania who are present or temporarily absent), hence, they were not registered by the census. De facto, however, they are part of the population because they might anytime return. The majority of them is only temporarily abroad and will return in time, but we do not have any statistical instrument to re-include them into the country's population. Nevertheless, they will certainly continue to be part of the country's de facto population ...”* (Ghețău 2007: 4; translation by the authors of this study)

Until recently, the dominant approach to Romanian emigrants, supported both by Romanian social scientist and policy makers, was to define them as circular migrants. Romanian authorities took even certain measures to encourage “circular migration” (see. Alexe at alii 2012: 31). Another important element linked to this perception is that the Romanian scientific and political elite emphasized the positive aspects of emigration (the benefic impact of remittances, or the labor market experience of migrants). This perspective proved, however, to be unsustainable. (see Ghețău 2012)

## 4. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ON LABOUR MARKET, HUMAN CAPITAL AND INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

### 4.1. Social and Economic Development

#### 4.1.1. Economic development

The state socialist regime had stabilized itself politically by 1947, or at least the single-party system was fully established by that time, which paved the way for huge transformations. The primary goal of the regime was economic restructuring. First of all, the structure of ownership based on the dominance of private property was changed, and then centralized economic control mechanisms and the system of planned economy were established. By 1950, the nationalization of industrial units was nearly completed.

The nationalization of industrial units was followed by the restructuring of agricultural production (collectivization).<sup>11</sup> This was of particular importance because in 1950, 73 percent of the active work force was employed in agriculture. The collectivization was a relatively long process that lasted from 1949 to 1962, and it was implemented in several waves. In 1950, only 9.2 percent of the cultivated lands were owned by the state and 2.9 percent by collective farms, whereas 88 percent of the land was in private ownership. By 1964, the picture radically changed: 75.3 percent of the cultivated lands were owned by collective farms, which were operated by the government, 20 percent were owned directly by the state, and only 4.6 percent remained in private ownership (Hunya et al. 1990: 977).

The restructuring of agriculture was an essential step in the implementation of the regime's most important economic goal: the industrialization of the country. In order to achieve this, both material resources and the necessary labor force had to be redirected from agriculture to industrial development. The relatively high level of economic growth between 1950 and 1980 was driven by two main factors: the high level of investments and the redirection of labor force toward industrial production.

The size of investments is illustrated by the composition of the GDP: between 1950 and 1955, 24.3 percent of the GDP was turned into investments and this grew to 36 percent in the time period between 1976 and 1980. The amount of investments started to fall only in the 1980s under the circumstances of a deepening economic crisis (Murgescu 2010: 337). The main focus of the investments was industrial production: its share was higher than 40 percent for the total discussed period, and between 1980 and 1985 it exceeded 50 percent. Within the industry sector particular attention has been paid to heavy industry (metallurgy, manufacturing of industrial machinery) and chemical industry (particularly oil processing), while the light industry and consumer oriented production received far less funds.<sup>12</sup> This also implies that the financing of education or the health care system, for instance, remained relatively low.

The focus on industrial investments was a general characteristic of Eastern European development strategies, yet the heavy emphasis on production-oriented industry was not (Ronnas 1984; Hunya et al. 1990; Murgescu 2010). In Hungary, for instance, a more consumer oriented industrial structure was developed.

The second main driving force of economic growth was the redirection of agricultural (and female) working force towards industrial production. As Table 1 shows, the share of active work force employed in agriculture fell from 73.8 percent in 1950 to 27.9 percent in 1989.

<sup>11</sup> See on this topic Kligman–Verdery (2012).

<sup>12</sup> 80 percent of industrial investments were received by production oriented industries (Murgescu 2010: 338).

**Table 1: The total number of employees and share of sectors**

	<b>Total employees (million)</b>	<b>Agriculture (%)</b>	<b>Industry (%)</b>	<b>Services (%)</b>
1950	8.4	73.8	14.3	11.9
1960	9.5	65.3	20.0	14.7
1970	9.9	49.5	30.3	20.2
1980	10.4	30.8	43.3	26.0
1989	10.9	27.9	45.1	27.0

Source: Statistical Yearbook 1990: 102–10; Murgescu 2010: 340

The period of the late 1960s and early 1970s constituted a turning point in industrial development. Before, the main priority of the investments was heavy industry; afterwards the chemical industry became equally important. Meanwhile, the territorial structure of industrialization and of the investments has changed too. In the time period between 1947 and 1968, the administrative structure of the country followed the Soviet model. The country was composed of 16 regions (in 1967), and below the level of regions raions were established. The territorial reform of 1968 replaced this two-level structure with the actual county-based territorial division, with 41 counties. As Ronnas (1984) highlights it, the administrative reform was not the cause of the territorial restructuring of industrial investments, but the administrative structure was redesigned in accordance with the new priorities of industrial development. It is important to observe that in the 1970s and 1980s the new county center cities received the largest share of the industrial investments. The growth of population was also more intensive in the new county centers. As we shall see in the case study presented in Section 6, the municipality of Sfântu Gheorghe, one of the partners in the SEEMIG project, is the capital of Covasna county, which has been established in 1968. Harghita county (the other Romanian SEEMIG partner) was also a newly established county.

As for the economic growth rate, 1980 can be considered a major turning point, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: The economic growth rate in Romania between 1950 and 2010**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Economic growth (annual average)</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Economic growth (annual average)</b>
1950-1954	6.1	1985-1989	-1.1
1955-1959	3.6	1990-1994	-5.2
1960-1964	4.8	1995-1999	0.1
1965-1969	4.6	2000-2004	5.6
1970-1974	5.3	2005-2008	6.6
1975-1979	2.7	2009-2010	-3.9
1980-1984	0.8		

Source: Updated version of Maddison GDP/capita database:

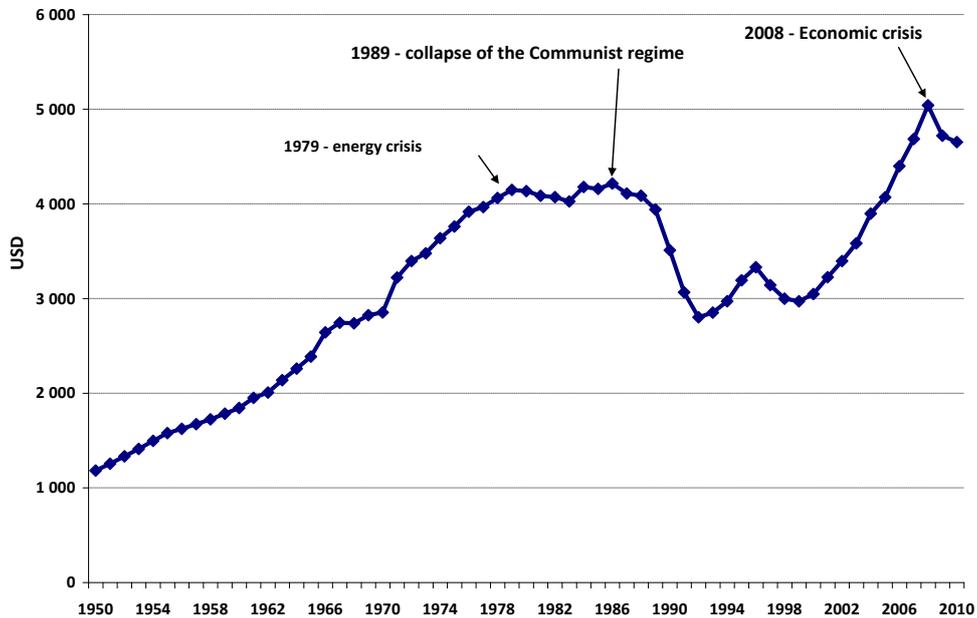
[http://www.ggdc.net/maddison/maddison-project/data/mpd\\_2013-01.xlsx](http://www.ggdc.net/maddison/maddison-project/data/mpd_2013-01.xlsx)

Whereas between 1950 and 1979 one can witness a dynamic economic growth, in 1980 a two-decade-long economic stagnation and downturn started.

The main cause of the emerging economic crisis was obviously the general energy crisis of the 1970s. The oil crisis hit the Romanian economy particularly hard because the industrial production was based on high levels of energy consumption, assuming low energy prices. Due to the oil crisis, in 1973, Romania increased domestic oil extraction, which peaked between 1975 and 1977 with 15 million tons of crude oil (covering 80 percent of the total consumption). After 1977, however, the accessible oil stock began to be depleted and internal oil production began to decline. Consequently,

the second oil crisis in 1979 the Romanian economy hit particularly hard, especially because Iran was the main external crude oil supplier of the Romanian economy<sup>13</sup> (Părean 2012).

**Figure 1: GDP per capita in Romania between 1950 and 2010**



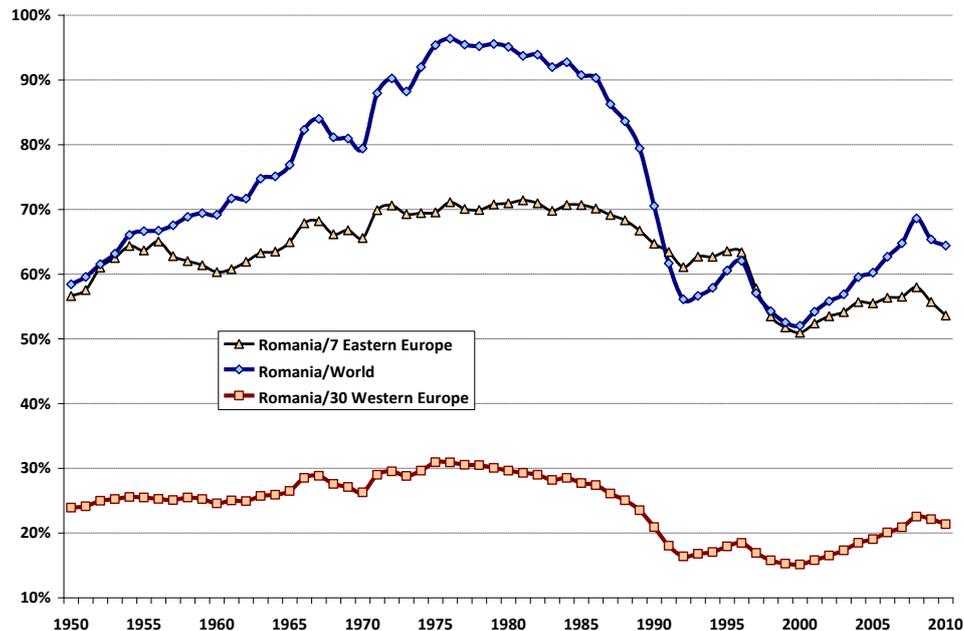
Source: Updated version of Maddison GDP/capita database:

[http://www.ggd.net/maddison/maddison-project/data/mpd\\_2013-01.xlsx](http://www.ggd.net/maddison/maddison-project/data/mpd_2013-01.xlsx)

After the major shift induced by the installation of the state socialist order, the next major economic turning point was obviously the fall of the state socialist regime in 1989. Between 1989 and 1992, the Romanian GDP per capita dropped with 29 percent. The contraction of the Romanian economy was (in relative terms) more accentuated than the decline experienced during the World War II.

<sup>13</sup> The second oil crisis was caused by the reduction of oil extraction in Iran after the Islamic Revolution.

**Figure 2: GDP per capita in Romania compared to the world average and to the GDP/capita of 7 Eastern-European\* and 30 Western-European\*\* countries (1950-2010)**



Source: Updated version of Maddison GDP/capita database: [http://www.qqdc.net/maddison/maddison-project/data/mpd\\_2013-01.xlsx](http://www.qqdc.net/maddison/maddison-project/data/mpd_2013-01.xlsx) \* Albania, Bulgaria, (former) Czechoslovakia (later Czech Republic and Slovakia), Hungary, Yugoslavia (later the successor countries), Poland and Romania. \*\* Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Channel Island, Cyprus, Denmark, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Greenland, Iceland, Isle of Man, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Liechtenstein, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom

The GDP per capita climbed back to the 1989 level only in 2005. However, the deterioration of Romania's relative global economic positions was even more salient. The Romanian GDP per capita was 96 percent of the world average in 1976, and 79 percent in 1989. This value fell to 52 percent in 2000 and reached only 68 percent in 2008. So, the global position of the Romanian economy is much more unfavorable now than it was in the 1970s or 1980s. One can see the same trend if the Romanian GDP per capita is compared to the average of the Eastern European and Western European countries. Compared to the Western European states, Romania's relative economic position is more unfavorable than it was in 1950s.

The economic development of the country after the change of the regime can be divided into three periods: (1) between 1990 and 2000, (2) between 2001 and 2008, and (3) after 2009.

(1) The 1990s are characterized by a deep economic crisis, and not only because of the sharp decrease of GDP per capita. The main problem of the period was the sudden collapse of industrial production. The number of people employed in the industrial sector fell from 4.169 million in 1989 to 2.004 million in 2000 (Murgescu 2010: 469). It is important to note that the recovery of the economy began later than in the majority of Eastern European countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia or Poland for instance). The *mainstream* (neo-liberal) economic explanation for this fact is that in Romania the process of privatization began too late and that in the early 1990s the Romanian state sustained with governmental funds many of the deficit producing industrial units (Smith 2001, 127-128).

(2) The next period, the one between 2000 and 2008, was characterized by an intensive growth of the Romanian economy. As it was already mentioned, this rapid growth came after a two-decade-long period of stagnation and decline. The GDP/capita reached its 1989 (or 1979) level in 2005. The comparison to the world average shows, however, that even at its peak point in 2008, the relative

economic position of the country was significantly worse than it was in the last decades of state socialism.

With regard to the economic growth, one should emphasize several important factors. First, the decision of the European Commission in 1999 to open negotiations with Romania about EU accession was of particular importance. According to the agreement between the European Commission and the Romanian Government led by Mugur Isărescu, the negotiation process had to reach its end by the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, 2007. Evidently, the context of the economic reforms from the pre-accession period was represented by the set of EU requirements. The reforms initiated by the Isărescu Government, continued under prime ministers Adrian Năstase and Călin Popescu Tăriceanu, were evidently directed towards a neo-liberal order. First, the governments introduced a strict fiscal policy to conform to the EU criteria. Second, the process of privatization was accelerated and became more open to foreign actors. The participation of foreign capital has substantially grown in the Romanian bank system, the energetic system and in telecommunications (Murgescu 2010: 473). The amount of foreign direct investment also grew considerably.

(3) The rapid economic growth was interrupted by the global financial crisis that hit Romania in 2009. In that year, the Romanian economy decreased with 6.4 percentage points and with 1.4 percentage points in the next year. The financial crisis obviously determined the evolution of other main economic indicators too. For instance, as Ene and Ștefănescu (2011) estimated, the size of the informal economy has noticeably grown (34.9 percent in 2007 and 36.7 percent in 2010).

Another important consequence of the economic crisis and the negative economic growth in 2009 and 2010 is the acute increase of public debt. Public debt was at the very low level of 13 percent compared to the real GDP in 2008, but this increased to 36 percent in 2011. Although this is a significant increase, the debt-to-GDP ratio is still very low compared to other EU member states. According to Eurostat, in 2012, the average government debt-to-GDP ratio in the EU was 85 percent. Among the EU member states only Estonia, Bulgaria and Luxemburg had lower values than Romania<sup>14</sup>.

**Table 3: The share of informal economy, the volume of foreign direct investment and the evolution of public debt between 2001 and 2011**

	Informal economy (% of GDP)*	Foreign direct investment flow (million EUR)**	Public debt (% of GDP)**
2001	34.7	-	24.9
2002	34.8	-	21.5
2003	35.1	1.946	18.7
2004	34.7	5.183	23.6
2005	34.9	5.213	15.8
2006	34.8	9.059	12.4
2007	34.9	7.250	12.6
2008	35.7	9.496	13.4
2009	36.2	3.488	23.6
2010	36.7	2.220	30.8
2011	-	1.815	36.0

Source: \* Ene – Ștefănescu 2011: 9; \*\* Ministry of Public Finances

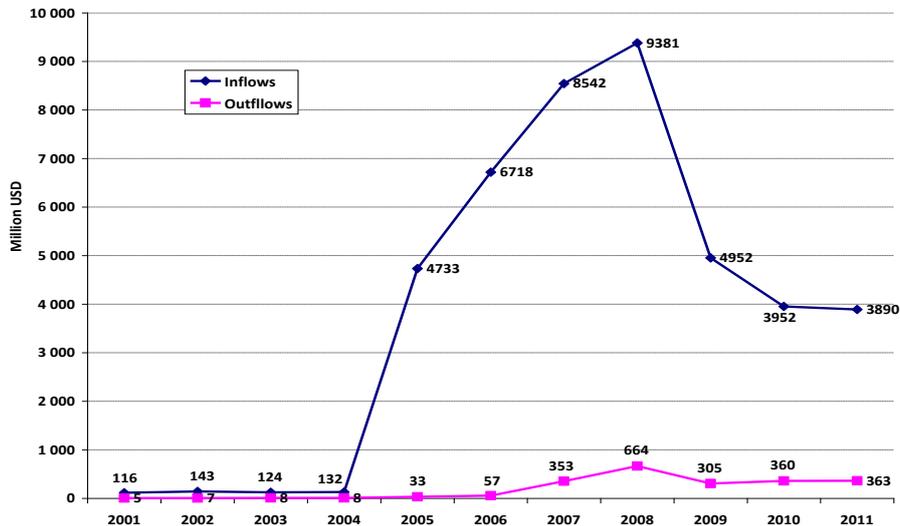
The financial crisis interrupted the growing trends in foreign direct investment flows too. The foreign investment reached its highest value in 2008 with 9.496 million Euros. Personal remittances of emigrants had also appreciably dropped, however, there is no evidence that this would be due to the massive return of emigrants.

<sup>14</sup> On the evolution of public debt in Romania see Dincă–Dincă (2013).

#### 4.1.1.1. Personal remittances of emigrants

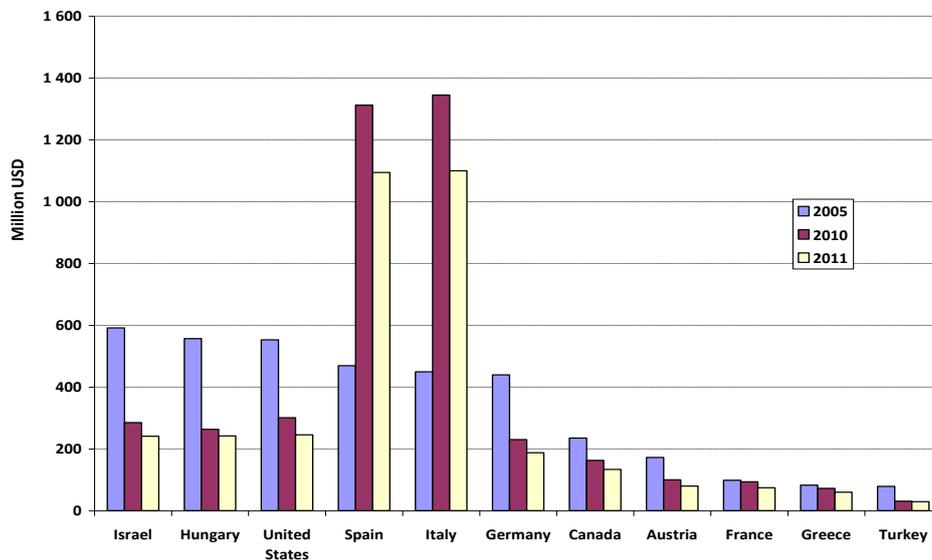
International migration, more precisely, the personal remittances of the emigrants were one of the main factors contributing to Romania’s economic growth. After 2002, the number of emigrants significantly grew and the total value of their personal remittances increased constantly, reaching 9.381 million USD, that is, 5.4 percent of the Romanian GDP in 2008.

Figure 3: Inflows and outflows of remittances between 2001 and 2011



Source: World Bank annual data on remittances inflows and outflows  
<http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTDECPROSPECTS/0,,contentMDK:22759429~pagePK:64165401~piPK:64165026~theSitePK:476883,00.html>

Figure 4: The main countries sending remittances to Romania in 2005, 2010 and 2011



Source: World Bank bilateral matrix of remittances  
<http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTDECPROSPECTS/0,,contentMDK:22759429~pagePK:64165401~piPK:64165026~theSitePK:476883,00.html>

In 2005, the countries from where the highest amounts of remittances have been sent to Romania were Israel, Hungary and the United States. In 2010 and 2011, Spain and Italy became the most important countries in this respect.

Remittances exerted a major effect not only on the macro-economic indicators, but also had a strong impact on micro level too, for instance, they improved considerably the standard of living. Various national representative surveys estimate that about 60 percent of the Romanian emigrants sent money regularly to their relatives living in Romania (Metro Media Transilvania, 2008; FSR and IASCI, 2011; Alexe et al., 2011a). A survey conducted in 2010 allows for a more detailed analysis regarding the migrants' propensity to remit. It was found that 60 percent of all migrant households transferred money (including cash transfers) over the preceding 12 months, yet only 40 percent of the migrants outside the EU (particularly in the USA) engaged in these activities over the same period. Many of the migrants who did not transfer money left Romania before 2000, targeting primarily countries outside EU (FSR and IASCI, 2011). The same research highlighted that the preferred transfer channels for Romanian migrants are money transfer operators (MTOs), 55 percent making use of them, followed by cash transfers (36%). Concerning the destination of remittances, an annual average of 29 percent was transferred with the specific purpose of being saved or invested in Romania, and contrarily to the common perception, only two-thirds of the money is sent home with the expressed purpose of being consumed, including home investments (FSR and IASCI, 2011).

Remittances represent the major source of subsistence for the migrants' families. The money is usually spent for enhancing the standards of their household (durable goods like household appliances, cars etc.), refurbishing or even building new houses (Grigoraş, 2006). Economists calculated that approximately 10 percent of the expenditure for consumer durables at the national level was financed from remittances (Roman and Voicu, 2010, p. 61-62). Of course, not all the money goes for consumption. Empirical data suggest that there is a high propensity of returnees or households with migrants abroad to engage in entrepreneurial activities. According to a national representative survey carried out in 2006, over the last five years only 3 percent of the Romanian population made entrepreneurial investments, whereas 10 percent of (former and actual) migrants' households invested in businesses (Toth and Toth, 2007, p. 50). Moreover, besides being responsible remitters, migrants are successful savers, too. They accumulate wealth to build a home (23%), secure a pension (18%), educate their children (13%), start or support a business (6%) (FSR and IASCI, 2011).

Of course, the other side of the coin, the negative aspect of remittances also has to be addressed. Remittances might create a culture of dependency and, unfortunately, this is not just a theoretical possibility: there are reports (especially from rural areas or small cities) about households becoming increasingly dependent on the money received from their emigrated relatives.

#### **4.1.2. Social development**

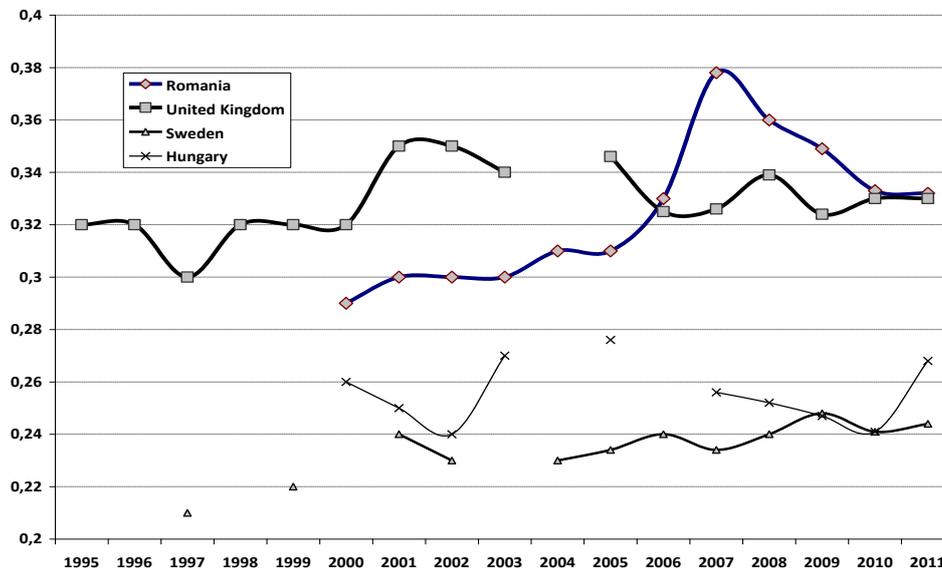
Another significant consequence of the social and economic developments of the last two decades was an increase in social inequalities. This can be measured through various variables, among them the *Gini-index* and the *at risk of poverty rate*.

The Gini-index shows the inequality of the income distribution between households. If there were no income inequality among households, the value of the Gini-index would be 0. If all sources were possessed by a single household, the value of the Gini-index would be 1. Generally, the values below 0.2 show a very low, the values above 0.4 a very high level of income inequalities.

Low income inequalities can be found in the Scandinavian countries for example. Among Western European countries the United Kingdom is one of the countries with the highest level of inequalities. Prior to 1989, the Eastern European countries were characterized by very low levels of income differences. After the collapse of state socialist regimes, income inequalities have considerably increased. In spite of this trend, however, one can distinguish between countries with relatively low and relatively high levels of income inequalities. Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and above all Slovenia are among the countries where income inequalities are relatively low. On the opposite end, the former Soviet Republics are characterized by extreme income differences. Romania is somewhere between these two opposite ends, around the middle of the continuum.

Particularly the rapid economic growth registered between 2000 and 2008 led to a sharp increase of inequalities in income. If compared to other EU member states, Romania is one of the countries with the highest level of inequalities. Figure 5 compares the Romanian scores to that of countries with high and low income inequalities (the UK, respectively Sweden), and a former socialist state (Hungary).

Figure 5: The value of the Gini index in Romania, United Kingdom, Sweden and Hungary



Source: Eurostat

With the onset of the financial crisis, the income inequalities have decreased. This claim can also be substantiated by presenting the dropping values of *at risk of poverty rate*. This is a relative index of poverty that measures the share of those who have earned less than 60 percent of the (equivalent) national average income.

Table 4: The at risk of poverty rate in Romania and in EU between 2007 and 2011

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
EU	24.4	23.6	23.1	23.6	24.2
Romania	45.9	44.2	43.1	41.4	40.3

Source: Eurostat

#### 4.1.3. Social Policy

Without entering into details, we have to highlight that Romania is one of the EU countries that spends relatively little on social policies. In 2007, when Romania joined the EU, the member states spent 26 percent of their GDP on average to social protection. At the same time, in Romania, the expenditures on social protection reached only 14 percent of the GDP. After the financial crisis, the expenditure on social protection increased, however, it still remained at a very low level compared to other EU members.

Table 5: Expenditure on social protection in % of GDP in Romania and the EU

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU (27 countries)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	27	30	29
Romania	13	13	14	13	13	13	13	14	14	17	18

Source: Eurostat

## 4.2. Main international migration trends and the main characteristics of migrants

During the time period between 1950 and 2011, Romania was primarily an emigration country; however, in the last two decades the number of effective immigrants has become (most possibly) significant too. Emigration had a major effect on the demographic evolution and prospects of the country. The number of emigrants was particularly high in the last two decades. If we take into account the census data and the data on natural growth, we can estimate a negative net migration of 825,000 persons for the time period between 1992 and 2002 and of 2.22 million for the time period between 2002 and 2011. This means that (in spite of the significant negative natural growth) the principal factor causing the dramatic population loss of the post-socialist period was emigration.

### 4.2.1. The general trend and periods of migration during state socialism

As already mentioned, in spite of the closed borders, the history of the Romanian state socialist regime is by far not one of a complete stoppage of emigration. Between 1948-1989, a relatively high net migration loss (783,578 persons) was officially registered (Muntele, 2003, p. 36). The bulk of emigrants for this period belonged to various minorities: Jews (Bines, 1998; Ioanid, 2005) Germans (Fassmann & Münz, 1994; Münz & Ohliger, 2001) and Hungarians (Horváth, 2005). However, emigration was not exclusively reduced to ethnic minorities; some other channels were still accessible for other categories of citizens too. Such channels were represented by family reunification and asylum.

The state socialist period was characterized by a significant oscillation in terms of emigration opportunities. In this respect, the following five distinct periods can be identified (based on Muntele, 2003, pp. 36-37):

(1) The time period between 1945 and 1953 was characterized by relative large number of emigrants, many of them belonging to the economic and intellectual elites of the interwar regime. Furthermore, the first wave of mass-migration of the Jewish community from Romania took place in this period, about 116,000 Jewish people leaving the country.

(2) The time period between 1953 and 1956 was characterized by limited outflows and considerable inflows/remigration of Romanian citizens. Remigration included many persons formerly deported to the USSR, who were released after Stalin's death.

(3) In the time period between 1957 and 1965, there was a significant increase in emigration. This consists primarily of the second wave of the Jewish mass-migration.

(4) Between 1966 and 1978, the emigration rate fluctuated considerably. After Ceaușescu's rise to power, according to the new lines in demographic policies, the limitation of exists is readily observable. However, from the early 1970s, the out-migration of ethnic minorities (primarily Jews) is permitted again, and by the end of the period the Germans started to migrate too. Moreover, at the beginning of this period, there were more liberal policies with regard to migration for study purposes, thus, the international mobility of the Romanian academia and that of highly skilled labor force was allowed.

(5) Between 1978 and 1989, the number of officially registered emigrants sharply increased. This was due, first of all, to the mass migration of Germans (Saxons and Swabians) to Germany. According to 1977 census data, 358,373 persons declared themselves as belonging to the German minority. According to an agreement between Romania and Western Germany, in the time period between 1978 and 1989 12,000 of Germans could leave the country annually. The number of asylum applications submitted by Romanian citizens in various Western European countries and overseas increased too. During the last years of the regime, the (mostly irregular) emigration of the ethnic Hungarians of Romania to Hungary started too.

**Table 6: Asylum requests submitted by Romanian citizens between 1980-1989 in OECD countries**

Year	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Asylum requests	2,864	4,327	4,643	2,479	2,445	3,303	5,570	5,360	8,284	14,864

Source: UNCHR (2001)

During state socialism, temporary labor migration was exclusively state-managed, and not very significant in terms of its volume. A large majority of Romanian workers headed to the Middle East, particularly to the Persian Gulf area, where their labor activities were tightly regulated and family reunification was forbidden (Salt, 1989).

Let us now turn to issues of immigration from this time period. The inflow of foreign immigrants was rather limited. All foreign citizens were perceived by the authorities to represent a potential threat to the regime. Visitors were closely monitored, even in the case when these foreigners came to meet their friends and family members. Romanian nationals had the legal responsibility to report to the authorities all non-Romanian citizens they hosted. There were some exceptions to this mistrustful attitude, however. Foreign students (especially from the Middle East and African countries) were well represented at Romanian universities from the 1970s onwards. At its peak, the annual stock of foreign students rose to 16,900, representing 7-8 percent of all students registered at Romanian universities in 1981 (SOPEMI, 1994).

#### ***4.2.2. Statistics on migration flows during state socialism***

In the state-socialist period, Romanian migration statistics were relatively reliable. This is due to the fact that the definition of immigration and emigration employed by the Romanian authorities (mostly) fitted to the real migration processes of the time. Furthermore, the Romanian state had the institutional power to effectively control the outflows. As already mentioned, out-migration was characterized by a high overrepresentation of ethnic minorities. Brubaker (1998) described how the interference between the preferential immigration policies of Germany and Israel, and the selection on ethnic criteria of the out-migrants by Romania, respectively, led to an almost integral exodus of the German and Jewish community from Romania. Table 7 proves that in the state-socialist period, the emigration of Romania's ethnic Germans toward Germany was captured to a large extent by Romanian statistics:

**Table 7: Ethnic German emigrants (de)registered in Romania and ethnic German immigrants from Romania registered in Germany (1975-1989)**

	Ethnic German emigrants (de)registered in Romania	Ethnic German immigrants from Romania registered in Germany	% covered by Romanian emigration statistics
1975	4,292	5,077	84.5
1976	3,200	3,766	85.0
1977	9,809	10,989	89.3
1978	10,993	12,120	90.7
1979	8,617	9,663	89.2
1980	13,608	15,767	86.3
1981	9,948	12,031	82.7
1982	10,954	12,972	84.4
1983	13,441	15,501	86.7
1984	14,425	16,553	87.1
1985	12,809	14,924	85.8
1986	11,034	13,130	84.0
1987	11,369	13,994	81.2
1988	10,738	12,902	83.2
1989	14,598	23,387	62.4
1975-1989	159,835	192,776	82.9

Source: Tompea-Nastuta 2009: 221 (National Institute of Statistics, German Federal Administration Office)

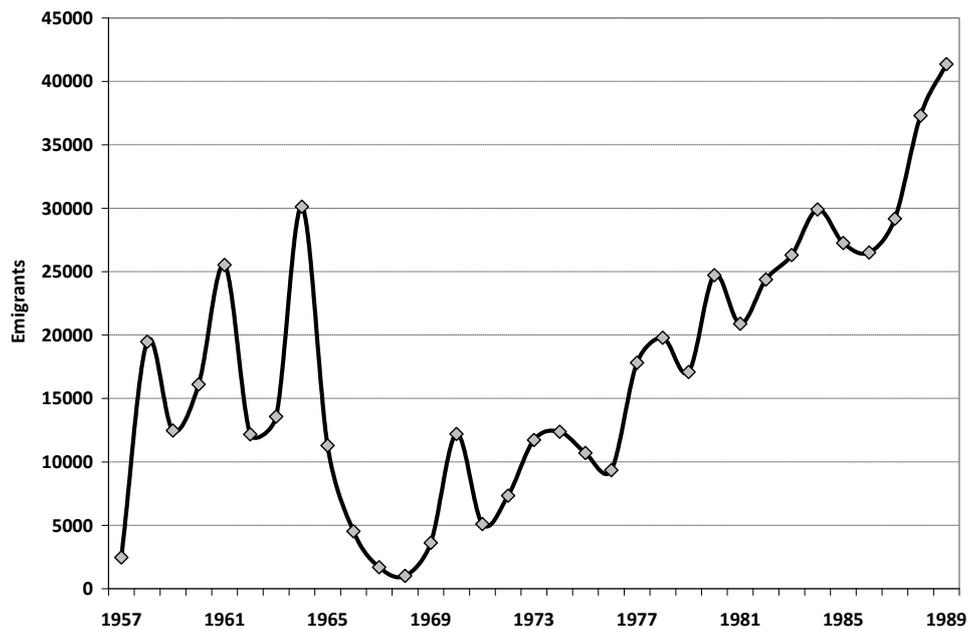
This situation has gradually changed in the late 1980s with the beginning of *en-masse* emigration of ethnic Hungarians. Contrarily to the case of the Jews and Germans, with regard to the out-migration of the Hungarian community, there was neither a coherent policy enforced by Romanian authorities nor a clear-cut agreement between Romania and Hungary. The wave of Hungarian migrants appeared spontaneously (most of them crossing the border illegally) and the Romanian state (in spite of all attempts to guard the border) proved to be unable to control the outflows. The failure is well illustrated in Table 8:

**Table 8: Emigration to Hungary registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Hungary**

	Emigration to Hungary registered in Romania	Immigration from Romania registered in Hungary	% covered by Romanian emigration statistics
1981	289	232	124.6
1982	494	365	135.3
1983	457	422	108.3
1984	773	770	100.4
1985	761	778	97.8
1986	1,184	1,261	93.9
1987	1,262	2,087	60.5
1988	10,529	17,818	59.1
1989	11,163	26,605	42.0
1981-1989	<b>26,912</b>	<b>50,338</b>	53.5

Source: Gödri 2004: 129 (NIS; Hungarian Central Statistical Office)

So, the real magnitude of emigration was considerably higher than what was captured by (both of) the official statistics. In the second half of the 1980s, Romania highly underestimated the outflows of Hungarians.

**Figure 6: Number of officially registered migrants in Romania between 1957 and 1989**

Source: SOPEMI. 1994. "Trends in International Migration. Continuous Reporting System on Migration Annual Report 1993." Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris. (based on reports of the Romanian Ministry of Internal Affairs)

#### 4.2.3. General trends and periods after 1989

After 1989, several markedly distinct phases of the Romanian international emigration can be identified (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005; Diminescu, 2009; Horváth & Anghel, 2009; Lăzăroiu, 2004; Sandu, 2006).

**Table 9: Synthetic table of the main characteristics of Romanian emigration since 1990**

Period	Time horizon for migration	Major countries of destination	Main characteristic
1990-1993	Definitive settlement	Germany, Hungary, France, Belgium	Ethnic migration; Asylum seekers; Legal emigrants (mostly highly skilled).
1994-1996	Short term	Israel, Hungary, Turkey	Short term labor migration, frequently irregular and circular
1997-2001	Short term and some prospects for long term residence	Italy, Spain, Hungary	Labor migration, mostly irregular; prolonged residence in the destination countries; regularization programs in Spain and Italy.
2002-2006	Prospects for long term legal residence.	Italy, Spain	Continuing processes of regularization involving a large number of Romanians.
2007 -	Long term residence	Spain, Italy (growing importance of Germany and UK)	Large Romanian communities in Spain and Italy; legal residence and formal employment; labor migration continues, though at lower levels; limited return migration and change in what concerns the major destination countries.

\*Modified version of the typology developed by Horváth and Anghel (2009, p. 390)

(1) The first phase lasts roughly from 1990 to 1993, and is characterized by the migration of ethnic minorities and asylum seeking. As a consequence of the liberalization of the regime of international travels, hundreds of thousands of Romanian citizens traveled abroad, many of them looking to temporarily or definitively relocate westwards from Romania. Only a few categories were successful in finding regular emigration options: those having relatives abroad and persons belonging to the German and Hungarian minority communities. Germany actively supported, Hungary welcomed and offered some assistance for their ethnic kin willing to settle down (Brubaker, 1998; Horváth, 2005). Apart from these categories, many used the asylum system as a way to achieve at least a temporary regular stay. In the first half of the 1990s, about 350,000 Romanian citizens applied for asylum in various Western European countries. The most important country of destination was Germany (with about 75 percent of asylum applications), other important destinations being Austria, France and Belgium. During this period, Romanians were (right after the citizens of the former Yugoslavia) the second largest group applying for asylum in Europe (UNCHR, 2001, pp. IX, 78, 82). Among the Romanian asylum seekers the Romanian Roma were represented in high numbers. Estimates speak about 140,000 persons of Roma origin submitting refugee claims in Germany (Bade, 2003, p. 311). However, this status was granted only in a few cases and many of the asylum seekers were repatriated to Romania.

(2) Between 1993 and 1996, EU countries introduced a restrictive visa regime for Romanian citizens; consequently, in the mid-1990s, westward migration remained at relatively low levels. Hungary, Turkey and Israel became the most important target countries for shorter or longer term labor migration. Israeli firms set up even labor recruitment companies in Romania. Romania's ethnic Hungarians were able to enter the Hungarian (informal) labor market (Fox, 2003; Horváth, 2005; Sik, 2006). In spite of the difficulties to penetrate the boundaries of the EU states, migration (primarily to Germany and France) continued, mostly in a circular way: relatively short episodes of working abroad (frequently involving irregular employment) were followed by shorter or longer episodes of staying at home (Diminescu, 2003; Sandu, 2000a).

(3) Between 1997 and 2001, the importance of emigration towards non EU-countries decreased while emigration to EU countries considerably increased. The importance of Germany and France as countries of destination declined, and new countries of destination for Romanian labor migration started to emerge. These were Italy and Spain, and to somewhat lesser degree Ireland and the United Kingdom. The outflows towards Canada and the United States increased too: official emigration, family reunification, application to different schemes for obtaining visa (Visa Lottery<sup>15</sup>, student work-and-travel programs etc.) made emigration possible mostly for highly qualified professionals. In terms of the volume of the outflows, the overseas destinations were far less important than the EU countries. Specific for this period is a change of the patterns of Romanian labor migration. At the mid-1990s, labor migration was mostly irregular, short term and circular, and destination countries were not necessarily regarded as countries of possible settlement (Sandu, 2000b). In this period an increasing number of persons developed strategies for a prolonged (though still mostly irregular) staying and considerably large immigrant stocks of Romanian origin started to emerge (especially in Italy). In parallel with this process, as Romanian citizens still needed visa to enter the EU countries, human smuggling and trafficking became rather widespread, raising serious domestic and international concern (Kane, 2005; Lăzăroiu, 2000). From 1999, attempts to regularize the flows have been undertaken and officially endorsed recruitment policies were commenced (firstly by Spain and Germany).

(4) The most important moments of the time period between 2002-2007 are that in October 1999 the European Commission recommended starting accession negotiations with Romania, and as

<sup>15</sup> In the United States, about 50,000 visas are made available yearly through the Diversity Visa Lottery Program. "According to Section 203(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) mandated by the U.S. Congress, such Visas are made available to persons from countries that have historically low rates of immigration to the United States. A random and computer-generated drawing determines who can enter through the program." ([www.visalottery.com](http://www.visalottery.com))

a part of the integration process, in 2002, Romanian citizens have been exempted from visa in the majority of the EU countries. The costs and risks of emigration were reduced and, as a consequence, significantly more people engaged in migration. In parallel, various destination countries initiated programs of regularization of irregular immigration (Italy in 2002, Spain in 2005), and prospects of long-term legal residence became achievable for a considerable number of Romanian migrants. As a new development it can be added that whereas in the 1990s emigrants were originating mostly from urban areas and from the wealthier (western) regions of Romania, after 2002, the eastern (less developed) part of the country became the major region of origin for Romanian emigration, and the population originating from rural areas became increasingly connected with various streams of emigration (Sandu, 2006, pp. 19, 24).

(5) At the beginning of 2007, Romania became an EU member. The result of the new legal status of Romanian citizens within the EU was both an increase in volume and the regularization of Romanian emigration. In Spain, the number of legally registered residents of Romanian citizenship almost tripled in 2007 compared to 2006, the number of immigrants rising from 211,325 to 603,889.<sup>16</sup> In Italy the number of those staying with a valid residence permit rose likewise, from 278,582 in 2006 to 625,278 in 2007 (Ricci, 2010, p. 20).

#### 4.2.4. Data on emigration flows

Regarding the available national data on emigration it is important to note first that after the fall of the Iron Curtain, both the character of the migration processes and the ability of Eastern European states to control the outflows have changed. Although the regime of international migration has radically changed, the definitions used by the Romanian data production system remained the same. *Emigrants* are defined as Romanian citizens who leave the country in agreement with Romanian authorities, in order to settle abroad. The main problem (in what concerns reliability) is with the second part of this definition. The majority of effective out-migrants have little interest in declaring the act of settling abroad to Romanian local authorities. Now, in opposition to the state-socialist era, the Romanian state (and the sending countries in general) has no effective control over the process of migration and, as a consequence, it possesses no reliable statistics on out-migration. This is well illustrated by the comparison of Romanian emigration statistics with the immigration statistics of the main receiving countries of Romanian migration:

**Table 10: Emigration to Spain registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Spain (2001-2011)**

	Emigration to Spain registered in Romania	Immigration from Romania registered in Spain	% covered by Romanian registration
2001	616	23,295	2.6
2002	172	48,330	0.4
2003	186	69,942	0.3
2004	162	103,572	0.2
2005	139	108,294	0.1
2006	330	131,457	0.3
2007	138	197,642	0.1
2008	238	71,482	0.3
2009	547	52,440	1.0
2010	-	60,306	-
2011	-	58,327	-
Total: 2001-2009	2,528	806,454	0.3

Source: Eurostat, NIS

<sup>16</sup> Data source INE base / Demography and population / Migrations

[http://www.ine.es/en/inebmenu/mnu\\_migrac\\_en.htm#1](http://www.ine.es/en/inebmenu/mnu_migrac_en.htm#1) accessed on 24 April 2011

**Table 11: Emigration to Italy registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Italy (2001-2011)**

	Emigration to Italy registered in Romania	Immigration from Romania registered in Italy	% covered by Romanian registration
2001	-	-	-
2002	1,486	16,465	8.0
2003	1,317	78,385	2.5
2004	1,993	66,098	3.9
2005	2,603	45,338	6.0
2006	2,731	39,715	8.5
2007	3,393	271,443	0.5
2008	1,401	174,554	0.6
2009	1,098	105,597	0.9
2010	984	92,116	1.1
2011	-	90,096	-
Total: 2002-2009	15,520	797,595	1.9

Source: Eurostat, NIS

**Table 12: Emigration to Germany registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Germany (2001-2008)**

	Emigration to Germany registered in Romania	Immigration from Romania registered in Germany	% covered by Romanian registration
2001	854	20,142	4.2
2002	1,305	23,953	5.4
2003	1,938	23,780	8.1
2004	2,707	23,545	11.5
2005	2,196	23,274	9.4
2006	3,110	23,743	13.1
2007	1,902	43,894	4.3
2008	1,788	48,225	3.7
2009	1,938	-	-
2010	-	-	-
2011	-	-	-
Total 2001-2008	15,800	230,556	6.9

Source: Eurostat, NIS

**Table 13: Emigration to Hungary registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Hungary (2001-2009)**

	Emigration to Hungary registered in Romania	Immigration from Romania registered in Hungary	Covered by Romanian registration
2001	680	10,648	6.4
2002	903	10,307	8.8
2003	984	9,599	10.3
2004	1,553	12,129	12.8
2005	1,013	8,895	11.4
2006	900	7,872	11.4
2007	266	6,735	3.9
2008	354	9,987	3.5
2009	331	7,104	4.7
2010	-	-	-
2011	-	-	-
Total 2001-2009	6,984	83,276	8.4

Source: Eurostat, NIS

As we can see, for the last decade roughly, the Romanian emigration statistics captured less than 10 percent of the legal outflows from Romania, under circumstances when according to the World Bank the stock of emigrants of Romanian origin was nearly 2.8 million in 2010.

We have to add that, because of the under-registration of emigration, Romania has serious reliability problems with statistical data beyond migration too. The official annual data on the country's resident population delivered by the National Institute of Statistics differs to a great degree from census figures. Officially (that is, according to calculations based on the 2002 census), Romania has a population above 21 million. However, the census figures from 2011 show that the number of residents was only 20.1 million. Given the uncertainties regarding the reference population, all demographic and human development indicators are affected and distorted, from total fertility rate to infant mortality, for instance.

#### 4.2.5. Data on emigrant stock

Regarding the Romanian emigrant stock, two types of data are available: (1) the immigration statistics of the main receiving countries and (2) the results of the 2011 census.

(1) The most important data sources are the immigration statistics of the receiving countries. For 2010 these data are available in the World Bank's database under the form of bilateral migration matrix.<sup>17</sup> According to the World Bank's bilateral migration matrix, in 2010, 2,769,053 Romanian emigrants resided abroad. Yet World Bank data are not consistent with the statistics published by Eurostat. There is a huge difference, for instance, in the case of Romanian emigrants residing in Hungary. According to the World Bank, the number of Romanian emigrants in Hungary was 189,055, while according to Eurostat it was 72,781. The table below shows the main destination countries of Romanian emigration according to World Bank and (where available) the number of Romanian residents according to Eurostat.

**Table 14: The number of Romanian emigrants according to World Bank and Eurostat in 2010**

	World Bank	Eurostat
Italy	813,037	887,763
Spain	810,471	823,111
Hungary	189,055	72,781
Israel	182,099	-
United States	171,253	-
Germany	134,911	112,230
Canada	96,209	-
Austria	56,932	-
France	54,305	-
United Kingdom	53,081	-
Greece	45,289	-
Turkey	23,232	-
Belgium	21,634	26,383
Australia	17,449	-
Sweden	16,184	7,661
Ireland	12,682	11,846

Source: World Bank, Eurostat

Despite these inconsistencies, *Eurostat* data are very useful because they present the number of Romanian citizens residing in different European countries on an annual basis. By analyzing these

<sup>17</sup><http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTDECPROSPECTS/0,,contentMDK:22803131~pagePK:64165401~piPK:64165026~theSitePK:476883,00.html>

data, we can affirm that the recent financial and economic crisis diminished the number of new emigrants without inducing considerable return migration of the Romanians living abroad. As Table 14 shows, the emigrant stock in the main European destination countries did not decrease between 2009 and 2012; in countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom or Belgium the numbers even increased dynamically. Interpreting these data one could forecast that a geographic relocation of the main destination places of Romanian migrants from the Mediterranean Area to (North)-Western Europe is highly possible.

**Table 15: The number of Romanian citizens residing in selected EU countries**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Italy	177,812	248,849	297,570	342,200	625,278	796,477	887,763	968,576	1,072,342
Spain	189,979	287,087	388,422	539,507	734,764	799,225	823,111	843,775	865,572
Germany	89,104	73,365	73,043	78,452	90,614	100,429	112,230	135,707	171,475
United Kingdom	7,481	17,619						75,572	94,825
Hungary	55,676	67,608	66,250	66,951	65,903	66,435	72,781	76,878	73,520
Belgium					15,310	21,403	26,383	34,178	42,927
Ireland						15,473	11,846	11,648	17,525
Sweden	2,343	2,360	2,371	2,252	4,442	6,536	7,661	8,807	10,150
Denmark	1,329	1,405	1,563	1,672	2,386	3,744	5,076	6,934	9,453
Netherlands	2,735	3,020	3,006	3,225	4,894	6,256	7,118	8,289	9,115
Greece									
France		23,638							
Austria	20,483	21,314	21,942	21,882	27,646	32,341			
Portugal				11,877	19,280	27,769	32,457	36,830	

Source: Eurostat;

(2) Another possible data source on emigrant stock is the 2011 Romanian census. In 2002, a change in the definition of *Romanian population* occurred (in order to meet the UN recommendations). Before 2002, Romanian censuses defined the country's population as the totality of Romanian citizens, who have legal domicile in Romania (whether or not they reside effectively in the country). After 2002, the country's population was redefined as the totality of residents in Romania, irrespective of citizenship. So, the new definition included the immigrants, but excluded the Romanian citizens who have been away for a long period of time (that is, according to the definition utilized by the census, have been absent for at least 12 months).

Thus, Romanian citizens residing abroad were not considered part of the country's population. However, emigrants were (or could be) registered by the census takers if somebody – a household member, neighbor etc. – was found who was able to provide information about them. For persons who have left for a long period of time a special questionnaire was filled out. According to the preliminary results of the census, 910,303 persons were registered as having been away for at least 12 months, 728,319 of them residing abroad. To stress it again, this is far less than the Romanian emigrant stock according to the data of the receiving countries. One can notice that only approximately one third of the effective emigrant stock was captured by the 2011 census. Most possibly, in the majority of cases, there was nobody to give information about the emigrants.

As data on persons being abroad for a long period of time are available on the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of Local Administrative Units (LAU 2 – communes, towns), we compiled a database and then aggregated the data for different categories of settlements. Table 15 below provides data about the persons who have been away for a long period of time (expressed in percentages of the 2002 population), broken down to different types of settlements and historical regions.

**Table 16: Natural growth, internal migration and (estimated) net migration for the time period between 2002 and 2011, and the number of persons being abroad according to the 2011 census**

		Persons being abroad for a long period of time
Type of settlement	Rural areas (communes)	3.4%
	Communes in metropolitan areas	3.7%
	Towns below 10 thousand inhabitants	3.9%
	Towns with 10-30 inhabitants	3.8%
	Towns with 30-100 thousand inhabitants	4.0%
	Towns above 100 thousand inhabitants	3.5%
	Bucharest	1.3%
Historical region	Moldova	6.1%
	Muntenia	1.9%
	Oltenia	2.6%
	Dobruja	3.4%
	Banat	2.6%
	Transylvania	3.8%
	Székelyland	1.4%
	Crişana-Maramureş	2.8%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3.4%</b>

Source: Authors' calculations based on 2011 census data

According to the census, the capital (Bucharest) and the major cities of the country were less affected by the process of emigration: only 1.3 and 3.5 percent of the 2002 population was registered as residing abroad. Regarding regional differences, Moldova, Dobruja, Banat and Transylvania seem to be the most affected by emigration, while Székelyland and Crişana (the regions populated massively by Hungarians) less affected. Transylvania and Banat, however, gained significant numbers of persons by internal migration.

#### **4.2.6. The possibility of return**

Regarding return migration we have to highlight two important aspects. (1) There are no official Romanian data on return migration and this is due to the official definition of emigrants. (2) Until recently, Romanian emigration was conceived both by Romanian social scientists and policy makers as circular migration. In other words, the main assumption regarding migration was that the majority of the migrants will return sooner or later to Romania.

(1) Immigrants are defined by the Romanian authorities and by the National Institute of statistics as foreign citizens who reside in Romania in agreement with Romanian authorities to establish their residence in the country. They are recorded in the register of immigrants, unlike the Romanian citizens, who are recorded in the population register.

The definition of immigrants as foreign citizens has the consequence that the majority of effective immigrants, which is represented by Romanian citizens, do not appear in immigration statistics. The first important category is that of ethnic Romanians from neighboring countries (Republic of Moldova and Ukraine). Ethnic Romanians have the possibility to obtain Romanian citizenship without

residing in Romania. In case they move to Romania (following the acquisition of Romanian citizenship), they will not appear in statistics as immigrants. The second category is that of returnees. Emigrants (even if they emigrate in agreement with Romanian authorities) are not deregistered from the population register.<sup>18</sup> Hence, in case they choose to return, they do not have to register, therefore, there will be no traces left concerning their migration.

(2) The second issue that has to be addressed again is that Romanian social scientists and the political class presupposed until recently that the overwhelming majority of the emigrants will return sooner or later to Romania. This assumption, however, proved to be very unrealistic. Consider that the economic crisis hit particularly hard the Mediterranean countries (Spain and Italy), which were the most important destination countries of Romanian emigrants. Yet, contrarily to the expectations, the crisis did not generate significant waves of return migration, but the migrant stock in these countries actually increased. Contrarily to the “circular migration” approach, a more plausible scenario is that the crisis could initiate the relocation of the destination countries.

None of the surveys conducted among Romanian residents from Italy (Metro Media Transilvania, 2007; Mara 2012) and Spain (Metro Media Transilvania, 2008) support the presupposition lying behind the concept of “circular migration”. These surveys showed that the immigrant stock of Romanian origin was rather differentiated in terms of preferences concerning return. According to the results of these surveys, the majority of Romanian migrants in Italy did not have well defined migration plans. The majority of those who claimed to have such plans expressed a preference for permanent migration, whereas short-term migration proved to be the less popular option. Romania’s EU accession proved to have considerably modified the migration plans of the Romanians. The stable employment situation and access to welfare facilities also encourages longer term and permanent staying.

#### **4.2.7. (Re)acquisition of Romanian citizenship**

To repeat, a major problem concerning immigration statistics is that a large number of persons who (re)acquire Romanian citizenship and relocate to Romania do not appear as immigrants. Problems are aggravated by the lack of transparent data on the acquirement of Romanian citizenship. In this subchapter, we will briefly present the main changes that occurred in Romanian legislation on citizenship, based on a recently published analysis by Iordachi (2012). Then we turn to describe available data on the acquirement of Romanian citizenship.

The constant characteristic of the Romanian post-World War citizenship legislation is that the principle of *ius sanguinis* has priority over *ius soli*. Romanian citizenship is granted for those whose parents were (or one of the parents was) Romanian citizen(s). During the state-socialist period, there were two alternative ways of acquiring Romanian citizenship: through naturalization and through marriage with Romanian citizens. Foreign citizens could be naturalized if they have lived for 5 years in Romania. In addition, the naturalized foreigners had to prove their loyalty to the Romanian state and the socialist society, and had to resign their former citizenship. This latter criterion is particularly important: during the state-socialist period double citizenship was forbidden. Those who married a Romanian citizen had to fulfill similar criteria with the exception that in their case only 3 years of continuous residence was required. The interdiction of dual citizenship was also mirrored in the legislation regarding the loss of citizenship. The Romanian state could unilaterally withdraw the Romanian citizenship of persons who had illegally crossed the border or who had acquired foreign citizenship (Iordachi 2012: 321-326).

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<sup>18</sup> The population register contains (virtually) all Romanian citizens. Persons who emigrate in agreement with Romanian authorities are registered in the population register at their last official Romanian domicile. See for details the Romanian country report on existing data production systems and major data sources (Kiss 2013).

After the change of the political regime, the naturalization of “ordinary” (non ethnic Romanian) foreigners became even harder. In 1999, the duration of continuous residence required for naturalization was raised to 7 years, then to 8 years in 2003. In addition, taxes had to be paid in Romania for 6 years, and Romanian language knowledge was required too (Iordachi 2012: 343).

Another important change in legal norms concerning citizenship was that, in 1991, the new constitution stipulated that the citizenship of those who had acquired it through birth cannot be withdrawn unilaterally by the Romanian state.

Previously, in December 1989, the new government guaranteed the right to repatriate and reacquire Romanian citizenship to those who had left the country during the state socialist period. In 1990, application became possible even without repatriation to Romania and without giving up the foreign citizenship. This meant that Romanian legislation practically allowed double citizenship. In 1991, the possibility of (re)acquiring Romanian citizenship was extended to those who had lived on Romanian territories lost before and after World War II.<sup>19</sup> This practically implies that the Romanian state offered citizenship to ethnic Romanians living in neighboring countries, the majority of them living in the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

Let us now turn to the concrete data concerning the number of approved applications for Romanian citizenship. There are two institutions holding relevant data: the National Institute of Statistics and National Agency for Citizenship (Agentia Națională pentru Cetățenie).

The National Institute of Statistics has never published data on the acquirement of Romanian citizenship. However, NIS has the obligation to submit these data to the Eurostat. On the Eurostat website, data are available for the time period between 2002 and 2009. According to the Eurostat database, in this time period, a total number of 16,474 foreigners received Romanian citizenship, the vast majority in the last two years (5,585 and 9,399 persons, respectively).

The National Agency for Citizenship is responsible for the registration and solution of citizenship applications. When Iordachi claims that, according to official sources, the total number of applications for re-acquirement of Romanian citizenships was about 108,000 between 1991 and 2001, he refers precisely to this Agency (Iordachi 2012: 360). Table 16 is based on data published by Iordachi for the 2002-2011 period:

**Table 17: Data on the acquirement of Romanian citizenship (2002-2011)**

	Applications for re-acquirement of Romanian citizenship		Number of new citizens			
	Applications registered*	Applications processed	Restitution citizens of Rep. Moldova*	Restitution to citizens of Ukraine*	Total number of naturalized persons*	Naturalization according to Eurostat**
2002	3,126	0	1	3	318	242
2003	16,975	6	8	0	281	139
2004	5,379	263	258	6	751	282
2005	2,895	1,603	1,592	13	1,789	767
2006	3,438	489	487	3	740	29
2007	2,077	664	736	54	1,150	31
2008	3,883	4,599	4,324	189	5,435	5,585
2009	21,759	21,999	-	-	-	9,399
2010	94,391	41,843	-	-	-	-
2011	51,449	47,128	-	-	-	-

Source: \* Iordachi 2012: 361-362, \*\* Eurostat

<sup>19</sup> In the interwar period, the territory of Greater Romania was of 295,049 km<sup>2</sup>. The territory of the Moldovan Republic (except for Transnistria), Southern Dobruja (now part of Bulgaria), Northern Bukovina and Southern Bessarabia (now both part of the Ukraine) were ruled by Romania.

The legal possibility for ethnic Romanians from neighboring countries to apply for Romanian citizenship resulted in a massive (re)naturalization process. This was not necessarily followed by immigration, since in the case of Romanians living abroad citizenship was obtainable without having residence in Romania. Yet, possessing Romanian citizenship facilitated the immigration of a considerable number of people from Moldova to Romania.

An important channel of immigration was represented by the migration of ethnic Romanian students living in the neighboring countries (especially Moldova). Romania started collaboration with the Moldovan authorities in the field of education in 1990.<sup>20</sup> The Romanian partner offered to cover the costs of studying and staying in Romania for 2000 Moldavian high-school and university students (IMEDIA DOSAR, 2010). Though the willingness of the Moldovan authorities to cooperate fluctuated, Romanian educational authorities continued to offer a substantial number of scholarships for youngsters coming from Moldova on a yearly basis. In 2010, the number of scholarships offered by the Romanian Government reached 5,000 (Alexe & Păunescu, 2011, p. 27).

#### 4.2.8. Asylum seekers and refugees

Romania ratified the 1951 UN *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* and its 1967 *Protocol* on the 7<sup>th</sup> of August, 1991.

**Table 18: The number of asylum application submitted in Romania in the 1991-2010 period\***

Year	Asylum application	Year	Asylum application
1991	315	2001	2,431
1992	426	2002	1,151
1993	928	2003	1,077
1994	647	2004	662
1995	634	2005	485
1996	584	2006	460
1997	1,424	2007	659
1998	1,236	2008	1,080
1999	1,667	2009	995
2000	1,366	2010	887

\*Compiled by the authors based on *Autoritatea pentru Străini* (2006), UNHCR (2009, 2011)

From 1991 to 2010, more than 19,100 asylum applications were submitted in Romania, yet a form of protection was granted only for approximately 3,100 persons; thus, the recognition rate was around 16 percent. Compared to the 25.1 percent average of the EU27 in 2011,<sup>21</sup> the Romanian rate can be considered relatively low. The most prevalent countries of origin of asylum seekers in 2011 were Algeria (436 persons; 29 percent), Morocco (251 persons, 17 percent), Afghanistan (127 persons, 9 percent), Pakistan (122 persons, 8 percent) and Syria (88 persons, 6 percent). The bulk of the applicants were men (90 percent), with a rather low share of the 65 and plus age groups (around 2.5 percent), and slightly more than one fifth were minors (Alexe & Păunescu, 2011, p. 31). At the end of 2009, authorities kept evidence of 1,117 persons who have received a form of protection and still lived in Romania, three-quarters of them in the capital city Bucharest (Alexe & Păunescu, 2011, p. 30). As a conclusion, one can claim that the influx of immigrants to Romania via the system of asylum is rather limited, in quantitative terms it is insignificant.

<sup>20</sup> At that time the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic was still part of the Soviet Union.

<sup>21</sup> EUROSTAT NEWS RELEASE (96/2012) *Asylum decisions in the EU27* retrieved from [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_PUBLIC/3-19062012-BP/EN/3-19062012-BP-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-19062012-BP/EN/3-19062012-BP-EN.PDF) (accessed 29/04/2013)

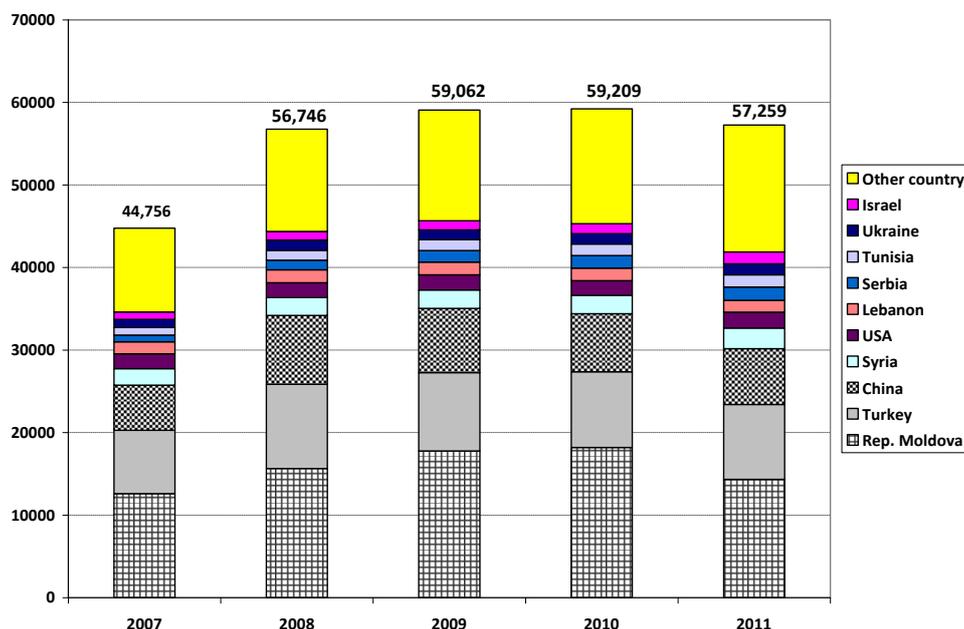
#### 4.2.9. Foreign national residents

The number of registered immigrants is extremely low in Romania compared to the other European countries. In 2006, one year before Romania's accession to the EU, the total number of foreign residents in Romania was 53,606, the majority of them from Moldova, Turkey, China, Italy and Germany. Less than one third of the foreign residents were from the EU area. Only 10 percent of the foreign residents possessed a permanent residence permit (Autoritatea pentru Străini, 2006, p. 37). Out of the 48,177 residents with temporary residence permits, 29% were staying for studies, 18% were family members of Romanian citizens, 17% were entrepreneurs, and only 12% were labor migrants.

After 2007, intra-community mobility increased. According to data published by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the stock of EU citizens residing in Romania increased from 15,817 in 2007 to 38,971 in 2010 (Alexe & Păunescu, 2011, p. 25).

The stock of third country nationals (in which EU and EEA nationals are not included since 2007) also increased. In 2011, there were 57,259 legal residents, 49,282 of them having temporary residence permits. Most of these residents (50.5 percent) were family members of Romanian citizens or family members of other immigrants. 25.5 percent of the third country nationals were students, and only 17.5% of the registered foreigners were here for labor-related (employment or commercial) activities (Alexe & Păunescu, 2011, p. 26). The bulk of the immigrants are concentrated in the capital city or its metropolitan area. Moldova, Turkey and China are the foremost countries of origin (accounting for more than 60% of the legally residing third country nationals).

Figure 7: The stock of third country foreign nationals having a valid residence permit at the end of the year, by country of origin, between 2007 and 2011



Source: The General Inspectorate for Immigration

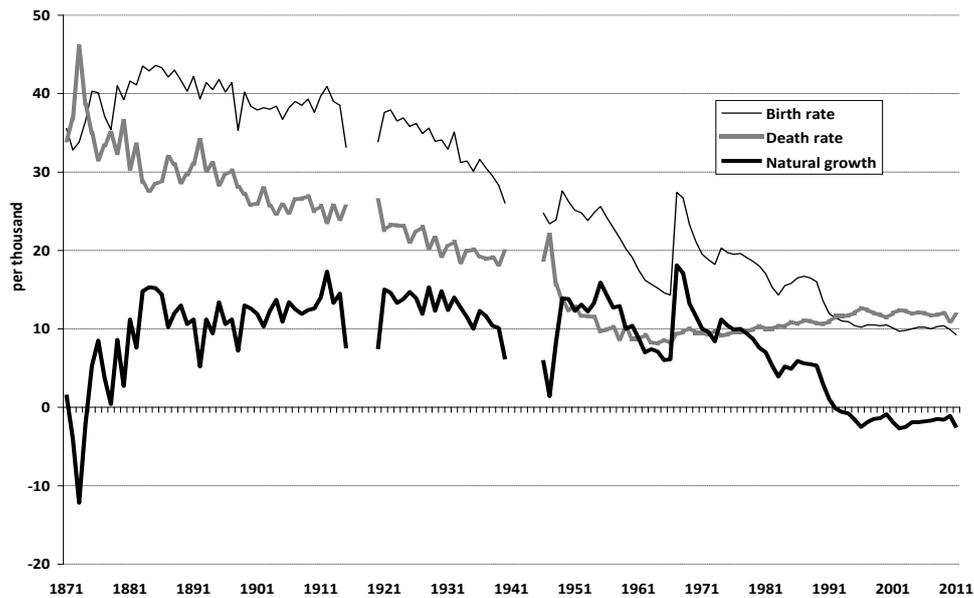
### 4.3. Demography and Human Capital

#### 4.3.1. Population change

This chapter provides a review of the main demographic processes of the time period between 1950 and 2012 with a special focus on the demographic indicators and the macro-political factors behind the changes occurred.

The state socialist regime kept the population policies on the top of its agenda. To understand the rationale and significance of particular measures, we have to trace their roots back to the interwar period.

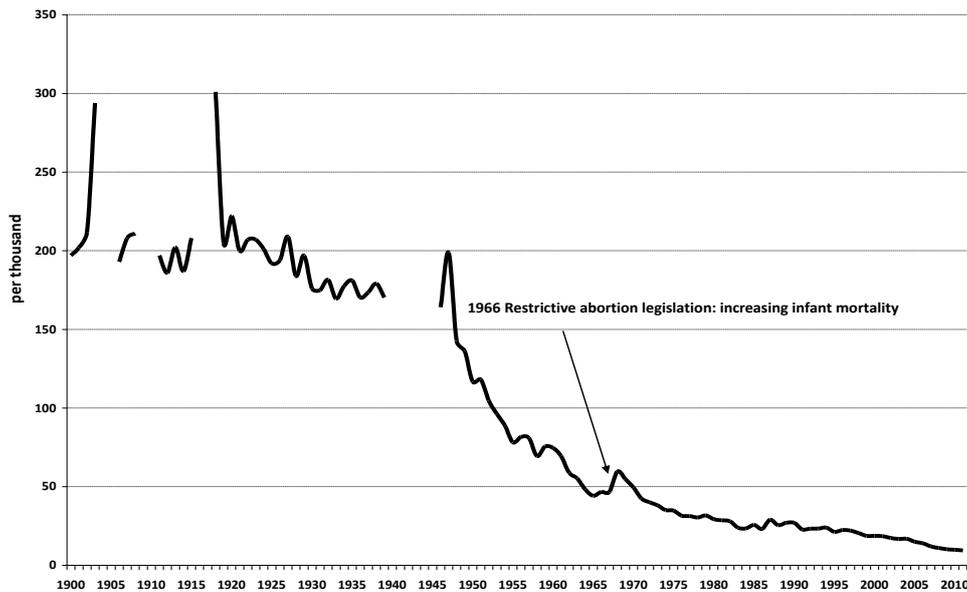
Figure 8: The crude birth rate, death rate, and natural growth in Romania between 1871 and 2011



Source: National Institute of Statistics, Ghețău 1997

During the interwar period (after the creation of Greater Romania in 1920) both mortality and fertility started to decrease, but both were still at a very high level in European comparison. Life expectancy at birth was 41.6 years for the male and 42.6 years for the female population. The difference was enormous compared to Western European states or even to other Eastern European countries, such as Hungary.<sup>22</sup> The high level of infant mortality (around 200 per thousand) was even more striking.

<sup>22</sup> In 1930, life expectancy at birth in Hungary was 50 years, in Sweden 63.3 years, in Germany 61.3 years.

**Figure 9: Infant mortality rate in Romania (1900–2011)**

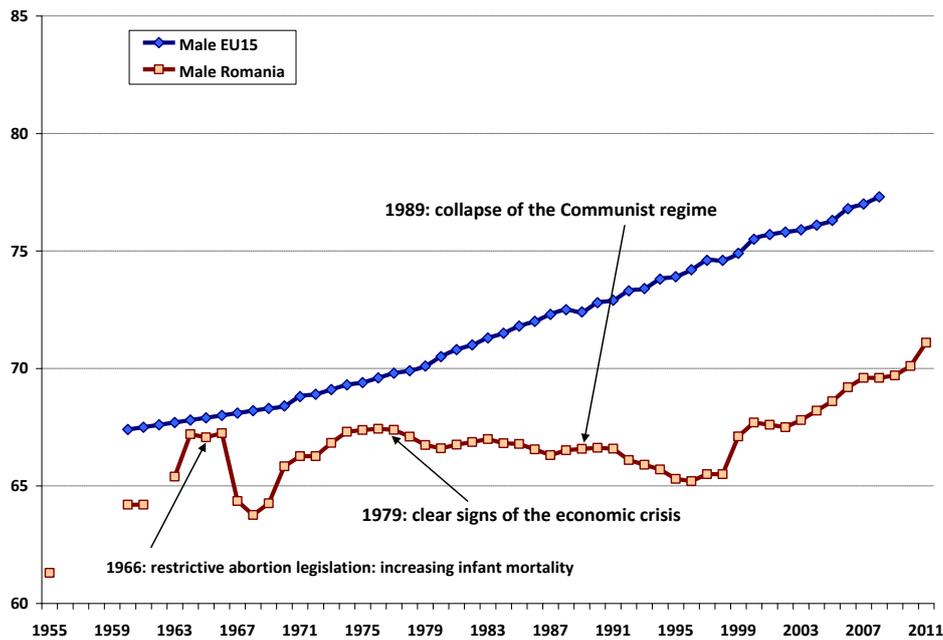
Source: National Institute of Statistics, Mureşan 2000

Given this demographic context, it is not surprising that in the interwar period the main focus of demographic discourses and population policies was on mortality. The high level of mortality (and especially of infant mortality) was discussed by the two most influential groups in population discourse and policy.<sup>23</sup> Romanian intellectuals considered the high infant mortality (especially in rural areas) a “national tragedy”. After World War II, the emerging regime undertook and successfully brought into effect the population policies claimed by the interwar Romanian intelligentsia. In the 1950s and 1960s, a modern health-care system was established and the state (through different institutions) penetrated into rural society and effectively re-organized it. In the given context, these policy measures had a great legitimacy.

In the early decades of state socialism, there was a significant increase in life expectancy at birth too. This was also due to the fact that Romania managed to establish its modern health care system and eventually left behind the pre-modern mortality-regime in a relatively short period. As concerning the causes of death, the increase in life expectancy (beside the decrease of infant mortality) was due to the successful reduction of the total number of death cases for respiratory and contagious diseases. In the late 1960s, life expectancy at birth in Romania did approach the figures of Western European countries.

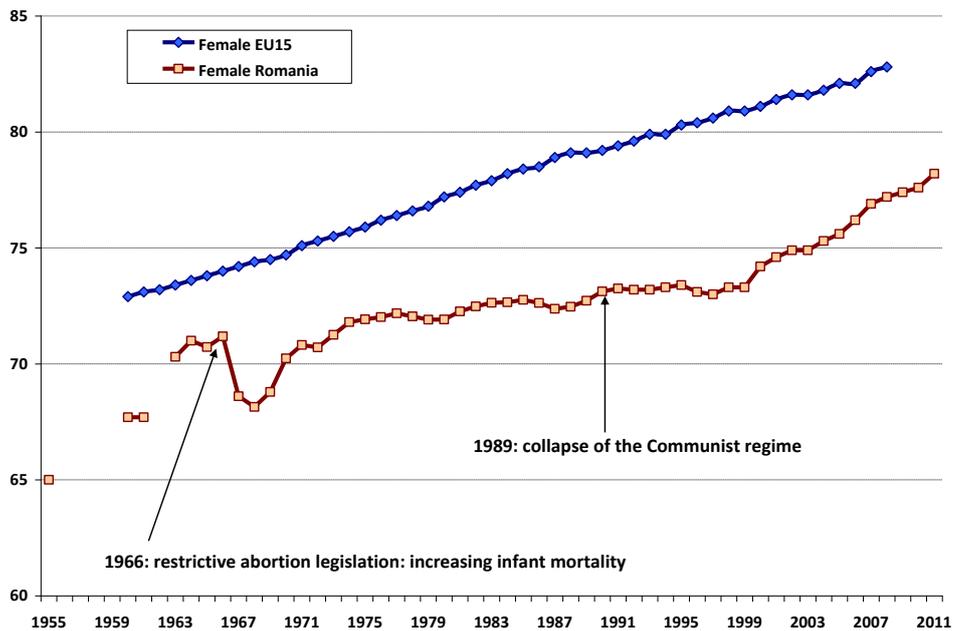
<sup>23</sup> The sociologists of the Bucharest School (Dimitrie Gusti, Henry Stahl, Anton Golopenția etc.) and the physicians engaged in eugenics (Iuliu Moldovan, Petre Râmneamțu etc.) produced particularly influential population discourses during the interwar period.

Figure 10: Life expectancy at birth for the male population in Romania and in the EU15\* – 1955-2011



Source: NIS, Eurostat. \* Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom

Figure 11: Life expectancy at birth for the female population in Romania and in the EU15\*– 1955-2011



Source: NIS, Eurostat. \* Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom

The tendency of increase in life expectancy at birth was broken by the restrictive abortion legislation from 1966, which led to an unexpected increase in infant mortality. This latter phenomenon was a Romanian specificity, but the stagnation of life expectancy at birth and the increasing gap in this respect in comparison to Western Europe were general throughout Eastern Europe (Meslé 2004). It is important to highlight that after a rapid improvement during the first period of state socialism, life expectancy approached the levels of Western Europe. Later (from the 1970s) there was a mortality

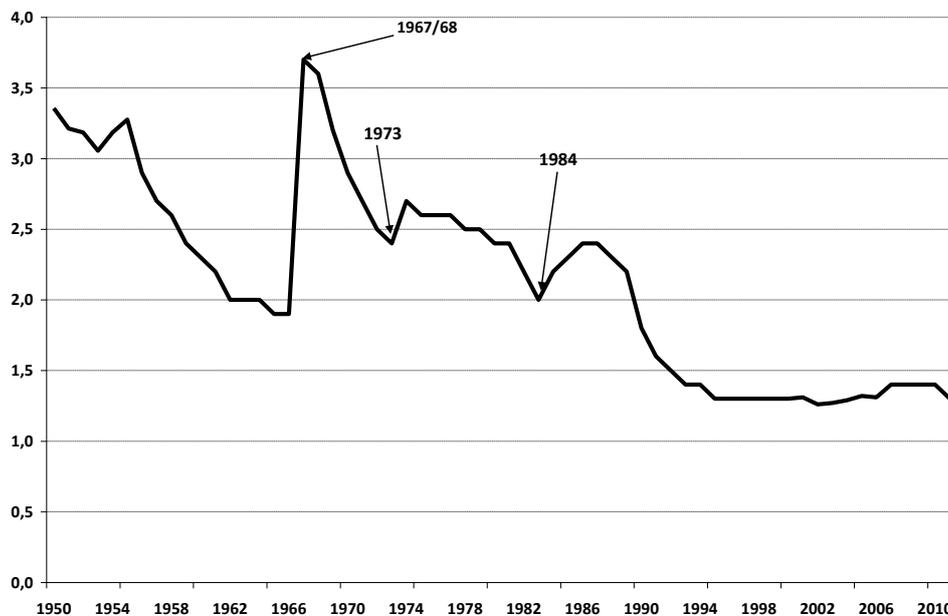
crisis, which pushed the development to a lower level. This can evidently be linked to the general economic performance of the country.

Until 1966, population policies were focused on mortality and no explicit pro-natalist measures were taken. By this moment, legislation on abortion followed the Soviet model. In the Soviet Union, abortion was banned in 1935. In 1948, the interdiction was extended to the Eastern European states, among them Romania too. In 1955, abortion legislation was liberalized in the Soviet Union, then in 1956 in the Eastern block as well. The liberal abortion policy was part of the de-Stalinization campaign. Given the absence of pro-natalist or anti-natalist population discourses,<sup>24</sup> one can safely claim that the main aims of abortion legislation in the 1950s were not part of the population policies and were not related to the regularization of fertility.

Explicitly pro-natalist population policies and discourses in Romania emerged in 1966. It is important to note that almost all countries of the Eastern block promoted higher fertility, but the measures adopted for this purpose were very different. In some countries (such as Czechoslovakia or Hungary) the main emphasis was on allowances granted to families having children. Romania, however, was on the opposite end. The main instrument for implementing the population policy was the restrictive abortion legislation. Note that this was introduced under such circumstances, that in the absence of effective modern contraceptive tools, abortion was the main method of birth control.

According to Gail Kligman (1998), there were three major turning points in Romanian pro-natalist population policy. The first (establishing) legislative event was Ordinance 770/1966, which banned abortion. At first glance, the legislation on abortion appeared to be effective. In 1967 and 1968, the total fertility rate (TFR) rose to 3.7, which was almost double compared to the 1966 level. This meant, of course, that the number of newborns also doubled. However, from 1969 the TFR began to fall. In 1973, the decline was one third compared to the 1967 level. The main explanatory factor is that the population started to gain experience with other birth control methods than abortion and networks attending illegal abortion were established.

Figure 12: Total fertility rate in Romania in the time period between 195 and 2011



Source: NIS

<sup>24</sup> For a detailed analysis see Kiss (2010).

The second major turning point was 1973, when Ceausescu openly criticized the medical personnel claimed to be guilty of the failure of pro-natalist measures. Consequently, the control over the medical personnel was tightened. Kligman interpreted this control measure as the “*medicalization of repression*”.

In the early 1980s, under the circumstances of the beginning economic crisis, the TFR considerably decreased again. In 1984, it fell below the replacement level. As an answer, the party state put increased pressure on the medical personnel. Medical zones were established and, according to the ordinances, the crude birth rate had to reach 20 per thousand in each zone.

Due to the population policies outlined earlier, the total fertility rate remained above the replacement level and the population grew in size in spite of the relatively high level of emigration.

After 1989, in Romania (as throughout all Eastern Europe), dramatic shifts occurred in demographic processes. As a consequence of these demographic processes, the population fell from 23.1 million in 1989 to 20.1 million in 2011. This means a population loss of 13 percent.

**Table 19: Population change in Romania between 1956 and 2011**

1956	17,489,450
1966	19,103,163
1977	21,559,910
1989	23,111,521
1992	22,810,035
2002	21,680,974
2011	20,121,641

Source: NIS

The preliminary results of the 2011 census showed an even more accentuated population decline. According to the preliminary results (based on the cumulative tables submitted by the enumerators) the resident population of the country was 19,042,936. One can notice that there is a difference of 1.08 million between the preliminary and the definitive results of the census. In 2011, Romania carried out a traditional questionnaire-based census. However, before the publication of the definitive results, the number of the population directly registered during the census was supplemented by almost 1.1 million additional persons, whose data were retrieved from the population register. We have to highlight that the preliminary results of the census were more consistent with the immigration statistics of the main receiving countries (according to which 2.7–3 million of Romanian citizens reside abroad) than the definitive results. As a consequence, it is quite possible that in reality the resident population of the country is below the number of 19 million. This means that the population loss of the time period between 1989 and 2011 could be above 17 percent.

As it was explained in *Chapter 4.2.* the main cause of the population loss was emigration. However, following 1989, one has to consider the significant negative natural growth as well. As Figure 9 shows, 1992 was the first year (after the demographic transition that begun in Romania in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) when a negative natural growth was registered.

The negative natural growth is due to a less extent to the stagnating (and in the case of the male population decreasing) life expectancy at birth. Regarding life expectancy at birth, Eastern European countries can be divided into two groups. In the so called Central European states,<sup>25</sup> life expectancy

<sup>25</sup> We dislike the term “Central Europe”, because we consider it a geo-political metaphor invented by Czech (Kundera 1984) Polish (Czeslaw 1983) and Hungarian (Szűcs 1983) intellectuals to legitimate the Western orientation of their country. The dark side of the Central Europe discourse, however, is the “Orientalizing” of non-Central European countries (Balkans, Eastern Europe, Eastern Orthodoxy, Byzantine heritage, Post-Soviet societies, Post-Yugoslav area, Russia etc.), including Romania.

at birth even increased, whereas in the post-Soviet states a sharp decrease was registered in the 1990s. Romania is again an intermediary case, because the trend changed by the middle of the decade. As one can observe in Figure 11 and 12, between 1989 and 1996 a significant decrease (especially in the case of the male population) occurred, whereas after 1996 a relatively rapid increase was registered.

The decrease of fertility, however, had far more severe consequences. The total fertility rate dropped with 40 percent between 1989 and 1992 in Romania. This pattern of change is observable in each Eastern European country, and by the mid-1990s the TFR stabilized well below the replacement level (commonly at 1.2-1.4 children per woman) in all countries.<sup>26</sup> Regarding this process, we would like to highlight the following aspects:

(1) First, the change of the regime brought a radical change in population policies in Romania. Understandably, one of the first legislative measures taken by the post-Communist authorities was the abolishment of Ordinance 770/1966, so much hated by the Romanian population. However, after the collapse of the state socialist regime, the population issues (concerns to keep the fertility above the replacement level) were not a priority for the emerging political class. We consider this last statement valid in spite of the fact that some important incentives were introduced to promote childbearing.<sup>27</sup>

(2) Second, a profound change in reproductive health has taken place after 1989. The significance of abortion (which represented the most important birth control method in early 1990s) gradually decreased, as modern techniques of contraception became widespread. This is also mirrored in the decline of the total abortion rate: 3.4 abortions per women in 1993, 2 in 1999 and 0.8 in 2004, respectively. Concerning this topic, one might mention that in spite of the spread of modern contraceptive techniques, in 2004 48.9 percent of pregnancies were unwanted and a further 7.6 percent of them were mistimed. The share of planned pregnancies was only 43.5 percent. As a consequence, 38 percent of the pregnancies ended in induced abortion.

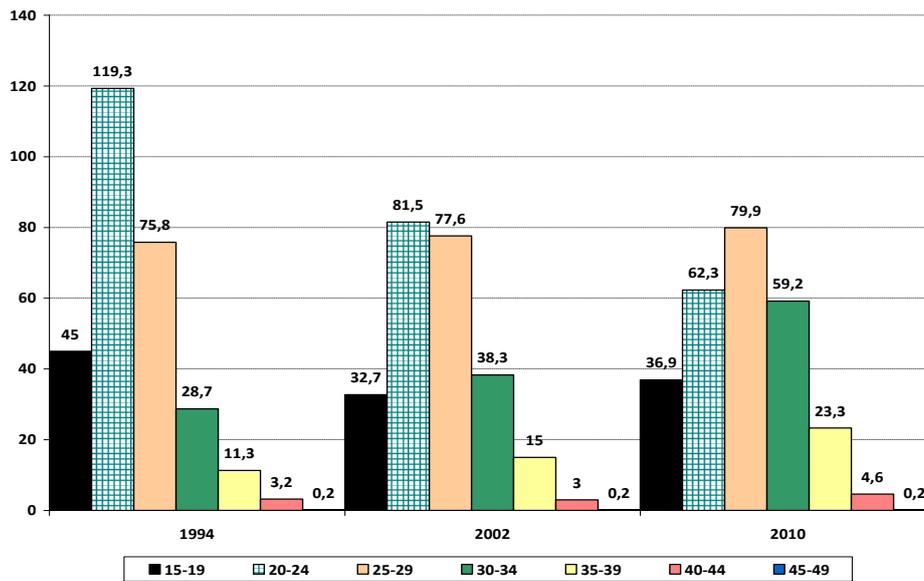
(3) Third, the reproductive behavior of the Eastern European societies came closer to the Western patterns. This is observable primarily in family formation and the timing of childbearing. This can be traced back to the 1950s again. We can assess that, at that time, women used to marry at a relatively early age and gave birth to (usually two) children shortly after the marriage, and afterwards did not have any more children. This decrease in the fertility rates in the second half of the reproductive period led to a special reproductive model, which became widespread throughout Eastern Europe. In short, according to this model, marriage takes place at an early age and parenthood is undertaken shortly after marriage (Ghețău 1981, 1987; Trebici–Ghinoiu 1986). This model was undermined after the change of the regime.

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<sup>26</sup> Among the former state socialist regimes, Albania is an exception. The Albanian TFR decreased too, however, not right after the change of the regime. Currently, the TFR in Albania is 1.5.

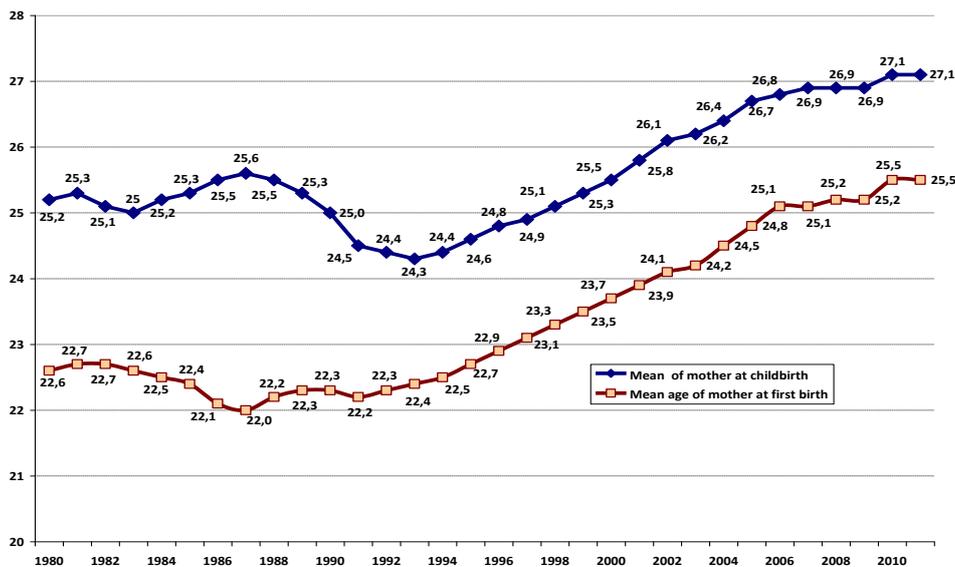
<sup>27</sup> In Romania, until 1989, there were no child subsidies. These were introduced in 1990. On the change of the legislation see Mureșan et alii (2008) and Ghețău (2008).

Figure 13: Fertility rates by age groups in 1994, 2002 and 2010



Source: NIS

Figure 14: Mean age of mother at childbirth, respectively at first child in Romania



Source: NIS

After 1989, the drop of the total fertility rate was due to the decrease in the fertility rates in the first half of the reproductive period. In the second half of the reproductive period fertility rates even increased. In the demographics literature this process is called the *postponement of childbearing*. This means that in Eastern Europe the timing of childbearing and the model of family formation became more similar to the Western patterns. The changes in the model are the main cause of the very low (lower than in Western European countries) TFR.

The postponement of childbearing can be explained by several factors. First, it is important to note that the decline in fertility and the postponement of childbearing are intimately linked to the economic changes presented in Chapter 4.1. The macro-political and economic changes undermined the prevalent biographical orders and life strategies. The model of family formation during state socialism was sustained not only by the repressive (or supportive) measures of the population policy but by the entire institutional configuration of the former regime, which shaped individual

biographies very effectively. During state socialism, institutions and resources were controlled and harmonized by the state. This control made possible for virtually all members of a birth-cohort to experience the similar biographical event at the same time, for instance, to begin and finish school, to get a job etc. Housing was also administered by state authorities, and receiving a (larger) flat was conditioned by marriage and childbearing. This led to the standardization of biographical events linked to reproduction too. On the one hand, the system standardized life and conferred a conventional character to the biographic events; on the other hand, however, it contributed to making them more calculable and secure.

From this perspective, the postponement of family formation and childbearing is a response to the institutional insecurity emerging after 1989. The most important risk carried with the economic transformation was the unemployment. As we will present in Chapter 4.4, the unemployment rate in Romania was not particularly high, because of emigration and the withdrawal of an important segment of the population to subsistence farming. These alternative strategies, however, did not support family formation and undertaking parenthood. They only helped people in “getting by”.<sup>28</sup>

The second important factor affecting the postponement of childbearing was the expansion of higher education. In subchapter 4.3.3 we will show that in comparative terms, enrollment in higher education was at a low level in Romania. Still, on its peak in 2007, one third of the 20-24 age group were enrolled in some form of higher education.

Besides the actual population losses, delayed marriages and births induced by emigration, one can also observe the snow-ball effect emigration has on demography. Eurostat informs that, by 2010, there were around 40,000 Romanian children born in Italy and approximately 57,000 in Spain.

### **4.3.2. The structure and spatial distribution of the population**

#### **4.3.2.1. Age structure**

Emigration and fertility decline led not only to a population loss but also to an accelerated ageing of the Romanian population. Due to the population policy of the former regime, in the early 1990s, the country had a relatively young population. According to the 1992 census, 23 percent of the total population was below 15 years and 10 percent above 65.

**Table 20: Age groups in 1992 and 2011**

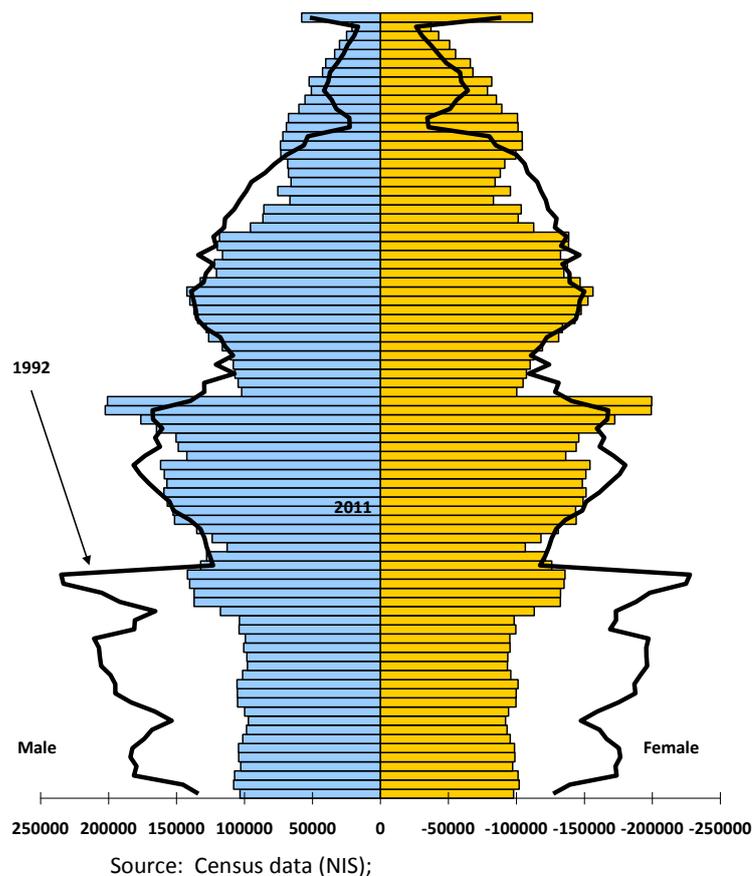
	1992	2011	Change
0-14	5,181,902	3,189,646	-38.4
15-64	15,117,874	13,684,251	-9.4
65+	2,507,511	3,247,744	29.5
Total	22,807,287	20,121,641	-12.9

Source: Census data (NIS);

This positive picture changed radically, however. According to 2011 census data, the age structure of the Romanian population is more unfavorable than the most pessimistic scenarios of previous demographic forecasts. The number of those below 15 years decreased by 38.4 percent, of those between 15 and 64 by 9.4 percent, while the number of those above 65 years increased by 29.5 percent.

<sup>28</sup> “Getting by” is an expression frequently used by David Kideckel (1999) who conducted fieldwork in the industrial (mining) area of Valea Jiului and Făgăraș after the collapse of industrial production.

Figure 15: Age structure in 1992 and 2011



#### 4.3.2.2. Regional disparities

The population loss was more intensive in the last inter-census period (2002-2011). In this subchapter we will discuss the regional disparities of the population loss in this period, based on the results of the 2011 census.

Of the 8 development regions (NUTS 2), the only one where no population loss occurred was the Bucharest-Ilfov region. In Cluj, Bihor, Maramureş and Bihor counties (belonging to the NV Region), the population decline remained well below the national average. In the Western, Central, and Southern regions, the population loss was around the national average. In the Western Region, the population of Timiş county proved to be relatively stable, whereas in Caraş-Severin and Hunedoara the decrease was well above the average. In the Central Region (as already mentioned), more precisely in Harghita and Covasna counties, the population loss was relatively less intense than nationally. The regions mostly affected by depopulation are North-East, South-East and South-West.

**Table 21: The evolution of the usual resident population by regions (1992-2002 and 2002-2011)**

Regions (NUTS2)	Usual resident population			Population change (number)		Population change (percentage)	
	1992	2002	2011	Change	Change	Change	Change
				1992–2002	2002–2011	1992–2002	2002–2011
Bucharest–Ilfov	2,354,510	2,226,457	2,272,163	-82,347	45,706	-3.5%	2.1%
North-West	2,909,669	2,740,064	2,60,0132	-309,537	-139,932	-10.6%	-5.1%
Central	2,701,697	2,523,021	2,360,805	-340,892	-162,216	-12.6%	-6.4%
South – Muntenia	3,559,737	3,379,406	3,136,446	-423,291	-242,960	-11.9%	-7.2%
West	2,111,947	1,958,648	1,828,313	-283,634	-130,335	-13.4%	-6.7%
North-East	3,751,783	3,674,367	3,302,217	-449,566	-372,150	-12.0%	-10.1%
South-West – Oltenia	2,457,515	2,330,792	2,075,642	-381,873	-255,150	-15.5%	-10.9%
South-East	2,963,177	2,848,219	2,545,923	-417,254	-302,296	-14.1%	-10.6%
<b>Romania</b>	<b>22,810,035</b>	<b>21,680,974</b>	<b>20,121,641</b>	<b>-2,688,394</b>	<b>-1,559,333</b>	<b>-11.8%</b>	<b>-7.2%</b>

Source: NIS, census results

In what concerns the historical regions, there was a significant difference across them. In the former Hungarian territories of the Habsburg Monarchy (Transylvania, including Banat, Maramureş and Crişana) the population decrease was less pronounced.

**Table 22: The evolution of usual resident population by historical regions (1992-2002 and 2002-2011 respectively)**

Regions	Usual resident population			Change, absolute number		Change: %	
	1992	2002	2011	Change	Change	Change	Change
				1992–2002	2002–2011	1992–2002	2002–2011
Old Kingdom*	15,086,722	14,459,241	13,332,391	-1,754,331	-1,126,850	-11.6%	-7.8%
Transylvania**	7,723,313	7,221,733	6,789,250	-934,063	-432,483	-12.1%	-6.0%
<b>Romania</b>	<b>22,810,035</b>	<b>21,680,974</b>	<b>20,121,641</b>	<b>-2,688,394</b>	<b>-1,559,333</b>	<b>-11.8%</b>	<b>-7.2%</b>

Source: NIS, census results

\* The territory covered by the first independent Romanian state.

\*\* Banat, Maramureş and Crişana

#### 4.3.2.3. Ethnic structure

The migratory and demographic processes changed the country's ethnic composition too. The most important factor lying behind the change of ethnic structure is the selective character of migration processes. As it was outlined in Chapters 3.1 and 4.2, after World War II, the Jewish and the German community emigrated *en masse*. The emigration of Jews began earlier. Between 1948 and 1951 116,500, while between 1958 and 1966, 106,200 Romanian citizens left to Israel (Ethnobarometer 2004). Actually, the number of Jews leaving the country was higher, as many of them left to North America or Western Europe. With this exodus, the Jewish community from Romania practically ceased to exist.

The emigration of Germans began later. According to the 1977 census, 358,732 persons declared to belong to the German minority. In the time period between 1978 and 1989, according to an agreement between Romania and Western Germany, 12,000 Germans emigrated annually. According to official statistics, an additional number of 75,000 Germans left the country. Their real numbers are possibly even higher. The 1992 census registered 119,462, the 2002 census 59,764, whereas the 2011 census only 36,884 persons as belonging to the German community. The age structure of the German population from Romania is very unfavorable, which leaves little room for the demographic reproduction of this community.

In the time period between 1950 and 1985, Hungarians were not over-represented among the emigrants. Their proportional decline was due primarily to their lower fertility rate (see Gyurgyik – Kiss 2010). However, the emigration of Hungarians intensified in the late 1980s. Between 1988 and 1992, over 100,000 Hungarians left Romania (the majority of them for Hungary). This wave of emigration affected primarily the Hungarians living in the major urban centers of Transylvania. In the 1990s, the Hungarians were still overrepresented among migrants. Nevertheless, this trend changed after the turn of the millennium, as the emigration of the Romanian majority intensified. According to one of our previous analyses, Hungarians were underrepresented among the emigrants of the 2002-2011 period (See Kiss–Barna 2012).

Another process that affected the ethnic structure of the country was the demographic expansion of the Roma people, which took place after the end of the demographic transition in Romania.<sup>29</sup> According to our previous calculations based on the 1992 and 2002 census data, the fertility of Roma during the last six decades exceeded that of non Roma. It seems that the ethnic groups reacted differently to the pro-natalist measures of the state socialist period. Hungarians were the less affected by the abortion legislation, perhaps because they employed other tools of birth control as well. On the other end of the continuum, the Roma population proved to be the most exposed to pro-natalist measures. The TFR of the Roma population reached 5-6 children per woman following the major turning points of the population policy. In the 1990, the TFR of Roma women was around 3 (See Gyurgyik–Kiss 2010).

**Table 23: The change of the ethnic structure in Romania in the time period between 1956 and 2011**

	Total	Romanian		Hungarian		German		Roma		Other	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1956	17,489,450	14,996,114	85.7	1,587,657	9.1	384,708	2.2	104,216	0.6	416,755	2.4
1966	19,103,163	16,746,510	87.7	1,619,592	8.5	382,595	2.0	64,197	0.3	290,269	1.5
1977	21,559,910	18,999,565	88.1	1,713,928	7.9	359,109	1.7	227,398	1.1	259,910	1.2
1992	22,810,035	20,408,542	89.5	1,624,959	7.1	119,462	0.5	401,087	1.8	255,985	1.1
2002	21,680,974	19,399,597	89.5	1,431,807	6.6	59,764	0.3	535,140	2.5	254,666	1.2
2011	19,042,936	16,869,816	88.6	1,237,746	6.5	36,884	0.2	619,007	3.3	279,483	1.5

Source: NIS, census results (for 2011, preliminary results)

We have to add that the social construction of the Roma ethnicity differs from that of the Romanian or Hungarian. The Romanian and Hungarian ethnicities are defined primarily by subjective self identification and linguistic practices. These are intimately linked to practices of categorization used by modern nation states and thus the ethnic construction can be relatively easily measured by censuses. The case of Roma ethnicity is different in that identification by others has a far greater role than subjective identification in determining who is a Roma and who is not. Additionally, categorization by others in many cases (perhaps in the majority of cases) does not take into account language competences, culture or subjective identification. In other words, Roma ethnicity is constructed by the perceptions, observations performed by the non-Roma. Furthermore, this is done to a large extent based on “racial characteristics” and particularities in their way of life, as the relevant literature aptly demonstrates it. Ladányi and Szelényi (2006: 40) asked interviewers in the framework of a sociological survey to categorize respondents as Roma or non-Roma, and then asked them about the cues used in categorization. In Romania, 52 percent of the interviewers said that the color of the skin is very important, and 32 asserted that it is important. The data suggest that phenotypic markers are responsible for the impossibility of denying Roma origin even if some persons would opt for this. The second equally important cue was the way of life. Forty-seven

<sup>29</sup> See Zamfir – Zamfir (2003); Ghețău (1996); Berevoiescu (2002).

percent of Romanian interviewers declared that the way of life is very important when they categorize people, and another 33 percent considered the same criterion important. For that matter, 47 percent of the Romanian interviewers did not attach any relevance to self-identification, to the categorized persons' own opinion.

According to the estimates based on hetero-identification, census figures on Roma population are far from being reliable. According to these estimates, the number of Roma living in Romania, was 540,000 in 1976, and 1.8 million in 1998.<sup>30</sup> Even before 1989, the majority of Roma were situated in the lowest strata of the society; yet, their situation was incomparably better than nowadays. After the change of regime, processes of extreme marginalization of the Roma got under way. Some authors investigating the issue of Roma marginalization use even the concept of the formation of a Roma underclass (Emigh et alii 2002; Ladányi-Szelényi 2006).

### **4.3.3. Education**

At the beginning of the state socialist era, the significance of the educational system as a mechanism producing social inequalities has radically increased. After the regime abolished almost entirely the institution of private propriety, education became the most important factor (beside the position in the redistributive hierarchy) generating differences in the system of social stratification. From the 1960s, just like in the other Eastern European countries, Romania put an end to the selection based on family background.<sup>31</sup> Afterwards, the Romanian educational system was successfully built up and propagated principles of meritocracy. The thesis that social mobility is possible primarily through education was accepted by the overwhelming majority of the society. As a comparison, nowadays many people think that the key to success are proper informal relations (networks) or qualities that are ambiguous from a moral perspective, to put it mildly.

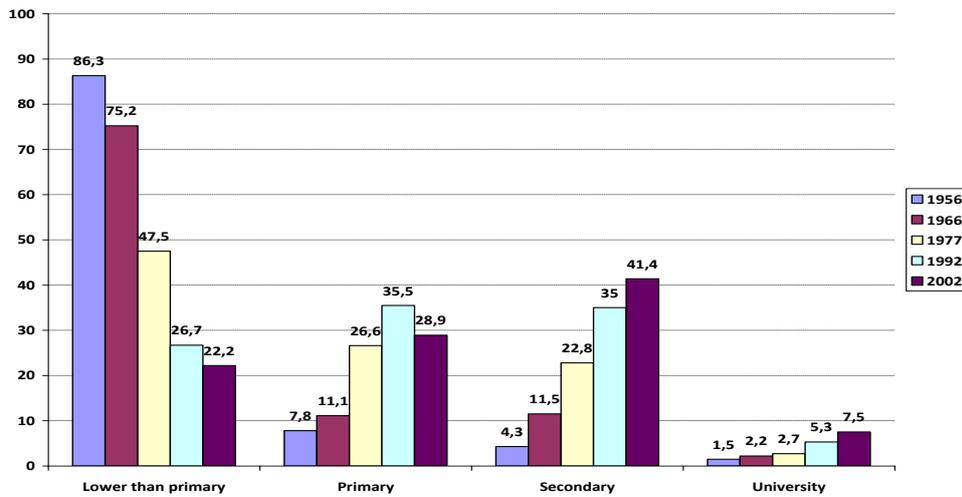
The educational attainment of the population older than 15 years changed radically after World War II. The share of those with less than primary education dropped from 86.3 percent in 1956 to 22.2 percent in 2002, but the decrease was more moderate after the change of the regime. Besides, the share of those with secondary education constantly grew. University graduates constituted a relatively narrow segment even at the turn of millennium.

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<sup>30</sup> In 1976, the Ministry of Internal Affairs counted the Roma (Achim 2002). The data from 1998 are based on a survey research (Zamfir–Preda eds. 2002).

<sup>31</sup> In the 1950s, only those with “healthy origins” (for instance, working class or peasant background) could be enrolled in higher education.

**Figure 16: The highest level of education attained, population aged above 15 years, in 2011**



Source: NIS, census data

The proportion of university students among the 20 years old and among the population aged 20-24 are expressive indicators of the expansion of higher education. Regarding these proportions, we have census data from 1977, 1992 and 2002, and the annual data delivered by the National Institute of Statistics for the period between 1995 and 2011, respectively. Table 24 is based on census data. As one can notice, in the 1980s, the share of university students declined; yet, the overall tendency from 1977 to 2002 is one of growth.

**Table 24: The proportion of university students among the 20 years old and among the population aged 20-24 in 1977, 1992 and 2002**

	20 years old	Aged 20-24 years
1977	13.8	11.5
1992	11.2	8.2
2002	22.8	19.1

Source: Census data (IPUMS International 10% sample)

Beginning with the 1990s, higher education expanded considerably in Romania. In 1995, the number of university students was 336,141, but it increased rapidly and reached 907,353 in 2007. From this peak point the number of students dropped remarkably, and in 2011 it amounted to only 59 percent of the 2007 value. The decrease of the total number of students was linked to the economic crisis and to the introduction of the Bologna-system, which reduced the length of BA level education from 4 to 3 years.

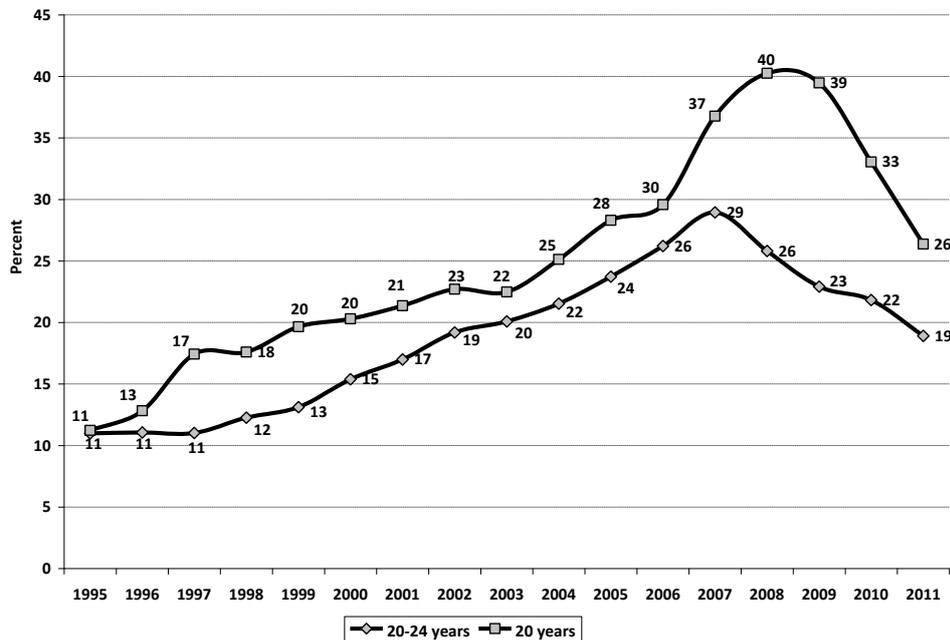
**Table 25: The number of the university students between 1995 and 2011**

1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
336,141	533,152	716,464	785,506	907,353	891,098	775,319	673,001	539,852

Source: NIS

The decline of Romanian higher education in the last decade can be grasped by the proportion of university students among the 20 years old and among the population aged 20-24 too. The proportion of university students among the 20 years old was at its peak in 2008, when 40 percent of this generation was enrolled. The decrease was spectacular: in 2011, only 26 percent of the 20 years old studied at universities.

**Figure 17: The proportion of the university students among the 20 years and 20-24 years aged population in the time period between 1995 and 2011**



Source: NIS

We have to emphasize that attending university is determined to a great extent by characteristics of ascribed nature (which are unchangeable through individual efforts). Investigations revealed that the chances of university graduation are related to ethnic background, for instance (Kiss 2009). The proportion of graduates is lower in minority groups than among ethnic Romanians. This is true in the case of the Hungarians too; however, differences in educational attainment are more salient in the case of the Roma minority. According to the 2002 census, less than 1 percent of the Roma attained university level education. The educational attainment of the parents also determines the chance to graduate, likewise the place of birth (rural or urban).

In what follows, we will discuss the changing opportunities of different cohorts. These opportunities were determined by two major factors: (1) the educational infrastructure (the maximum number of students who could be enrolled), which was determined by trends in the expansion of the education; and (2) the size of different birth cohorts. Here, the demographic processes have a particular significance. As we discussed in Chapter 4.3.1, due to the ban on abortion from 1967 on, the number of newborns doubled and the next birth cohorts were all more numerous than they have been ever before. In the 1980s, however, the educational infrastructure did not keep up with the increasing size of birth cohorts. Moreover, the number of university students even decreased in the second half of the decade.

**Table 26: The proportion of graduates by birth cohorts according to the 2002 census**

Birth cohorts	Aged 20 years between:	Proportion of graduates
1930-1939	1950-1959	5.3
1940-1949	1960-1969	9.1
1950-1959	1970-1979	11.0
1960-1966	1980-1986	10.9
1967-1973	1987-1993	8.8
1974-1977	1994-1997	13.9

Source: Census data (IPUMS International 10% sample)

(1) Our first investigated birth cohort is that of persons born between 1930 and 1939. They became 20 years old (so possible undergraduates) between 1950 and 1959. The members of this cohort could have graduated in the 1950s. According to the 2002 census, 5.3 percent of them attained university level education.

(2) The next cohort was born between 1940 and 1949 and could have graduated between 1960 and 1969. Their chances to graduate considerably improved relative to the preceding cohort. According to the 2002 census, 9.1 percent of them attained university level education.

(3) The cohort born between 1950 and 1960 was the last whose educational chances improved, though to a lesser extent, reaching 11 percent of university level education.

(4) The cohort born in the 1960s has to be divided in two. The cohort born between 1960 and 1966 was not affected by the notorious 770/1966 Ordinance, which restricted abortion. The chances of this generation to graduate were very similar to those born in the 1950s.

(5) The educational chances of the very large 1967-1973 birth cohort, however, had considerably deteriorated as compared that of former birth cohorts. As a consequence, only 8.8 percent of them graduated university.

(6) Our last cohort was born between 1974 and 1977. They could start university studies between 1994 and 1997. Their improved graduation rate (13.9%) is due to the expansion of the higher education system, which began in the 1990s.

In the 1980s and early 1990s the relatively low chances to attend university was a motivation for emigration for many young people. This was true especially in the case of ethnic Hungarians who could easily enter the universities of Hungary. Although the emigration of highly skilled professionals has been present to some extent throughout the last three decades, brain drain (the migration of the skilled workforce) is a recent trend in what concerns Romanian emigration. The following major categories of emigrating high skilled workers should be highlighted: IT sector specialists, engineers, researchers and other professionals in the technical sector, health care sector specialists (both physicians and nurses), and teachers and other professionals in education.

Interestingly, though many Romanian IT specialists emigrated, the process did not necessarily hinder the development of the IT sector in Romania. Many of them returned; moreover, universities made significant investments in this field. Therefore, the migration of IT specialists had positive effects too: brain drain actually fueled the development of the IT sector in the sending regions (Baga, 2007; Ferro, 2004).

Conversely, the emigration of Romanian health care specialists has generated serious problems. Compared to the EU average, Romania has rather poor indicators regarding the health care sector. In 2006, the EU average was 321 physicians per 100,000 inhabitants, whereas in Romania the ratio was 214 physicians per 100,000 inhabitants. The discrepancies were even higher in the case of nurses: 397 nurses in Romania and 746 nurses per 100,000 inhabitants in the EU (Galan et al., 2011). A major

cause of this stagnant situation is thought to be the rather high fluctuation of personnel. Yearly exits from the health care system range between 10-30%, many of them leaving the system in order to work abroad (Astărăstoiaie et al., 2008, p. 53-54). A similar development can be observed in the case of nurses and midwives. Romanian official sources report on 2,896 foreign applications of nurses and midwives in 2007, which is equals to 3.4% of the workforce in these professions. However, information from the destination countries suggests that out-migration is higher than it is reflected by official Romanian data (Galan et al., 2011; p. 452 f.).

#### **4.4. Labor Market**

##### **4.4.1. General characteristics of the labor market**

As it was briefly mentioned in Chapter 4.1, the main problem of the 1990s was the rapid collapse of industrial production. The number of people employed in the industrial sector fell from 4.169 million in 1989 to 2.004 million in 2000 (Murgescu 2010: 469).

Szelényi (1996) remarked that the Eastern European state socialist social structure, compared to other parts of the world, was characterized by severe under-urbanization. This meant that the demand for labor force of urban/industrial workplaces exceeded by far the number of those moving from rural to urban areas. In the 1970s and 1980s, the phenomenon of commuting was widespread in Romania, and a significant part of the rural population was employed in urban units of production. Table 1 shows that in 1989 “only” 28 percent of the total labor force was employed in agriculture, though the proportion of the rural population was 45 percent. After 1990, the first victims of deindustrialization were precisely the commuters.

Following the sharp decrease in the size of the commuting population, a remarkable change occurred concerning the patterns of Romanian internal migration. From the 1950s until the 1990s, the prevailing direction of migration was from the rural to the urban. From 1992, the direction changed: the number of those moving from rural areas (villages) to urban centers (cities) started to decrease, conversely, the mobility in the opposite direction (from urban to rural) increased. In 1997, the migrants from urban to rural outnumbered those moving from rural to urban centers.

This change in pattern of internal migration is considered to be a phenomenon determined by the process of deindustrialization. One of the first reactions of the population to the shrinking labor market was to return to the villages. These were primarily those persons (or their children) who moved to urban areas in the previous decades. The bulk of these returnees became active in agriculture, but mostly engaged in subsistence farming (Ghețău, 2007, p. 36-37; Ronnas, 1995). A major consequence of the (re-)migration to rural areas was a further decrease in the economic opportunities in the villages, which were already severely affected by the decrease of the job opportunities in the nearby urban centers. Under these circumstances, more and more villagers started to emigrate after 2000 (Sandu, 2004).

The above mentioned processes are reflected in the changing structure of the Romanian economy too. In 1990, the value added to GDP by the industrial sector was 50 percent and 43.5 of the labor force was employed in industry. In 2000, the value added by the industry to the Romanian GDP was only 36 percent and only 26.2 percent of the total labor force was employed in this sector. For the same indicators, in 2010, the values are 40 percent and 28.7 percent, respectively.

**Table 27: The percentage of the value added to GDP by each economic sector and the percentage of employees in each sector (1990-2000)**

		1990	1995	2000	2005	2010
Agriculture	% value added to GDP	24	21	13	10	7
	% employed in agriculture	29	40	42	32	30
Industry	% value added to GDP	50	43	36	35	40
	% employed in industry	43	31	26	30	28
Services	% value added to GDP	26	36	51	55	53
	% employed in services	27	28	31	37	41

Source: National Institute of Statistics, World Bank

During the 1990s, employment in agriculture grew not only in relative but in absolute terms too. In 1990, 3 million people were employed in agriculture and this number grew to 3.5 million until 2000 (Murgescu 2010: 470). After the turn of the millennium, the number of employees in agriculture began to fall. This process was determined by two factors: the economic recovery, which led to an increasing demand of labor force primarily in construction and certain service sectors, and the intensification of emigration, respectively. Table 26 above shows that the value added to the Romanian GDP by agriculture has been declining continuously in spite of the growing share of those working in agriculture. In 1990, the value added by agriculture was 24 percent, but only 7 percent in 2010. Those who were forced by the structural changes of Romanian economy to withdraw to subsistence farming feed rural poverty and enduring marginalization.

The sharp decline of the productivity of Romanian agriculture was caused primarily by the agrarian policies. The collective farms were abolished shortly after the change of the regime. In 1990, the restitution of land properties began too. This resulted in hundreds of thousands of farms well below the optimal size. The restitution of land properties was actually used by the Romanian political class as a substitute to social policies. For a significant part of the population, subsistence farming proved to lead to enduring poverty and marginalization.

The existence of a large group of subsistence farmers, along with the collapse of the industry, can be considered the main push factor in the emigration of Romanians. Due to the possibility of emigration and the high prevalence of subsistence farming, the unemployment rate did not reach very high levels in spite of the massive deindustrialization.

**Table 28: The participation rate, occupation rate and unemployment in Romania between 1996 and 2011**

	1996	2000	2005	2008	2011
Participation rate	70.8	68.8	62.4	62.9	63.3
Occupation rate	65.8	63.6	57.7	59	58.5
Unemployment	6.5	6.9	7.2	5.8	7.4
Unemployment among 15-19 years old	27.8	23	24.9	29.6	30
Unemployment among 20-24 years old	16.4	16.7	18	15.8	22.6

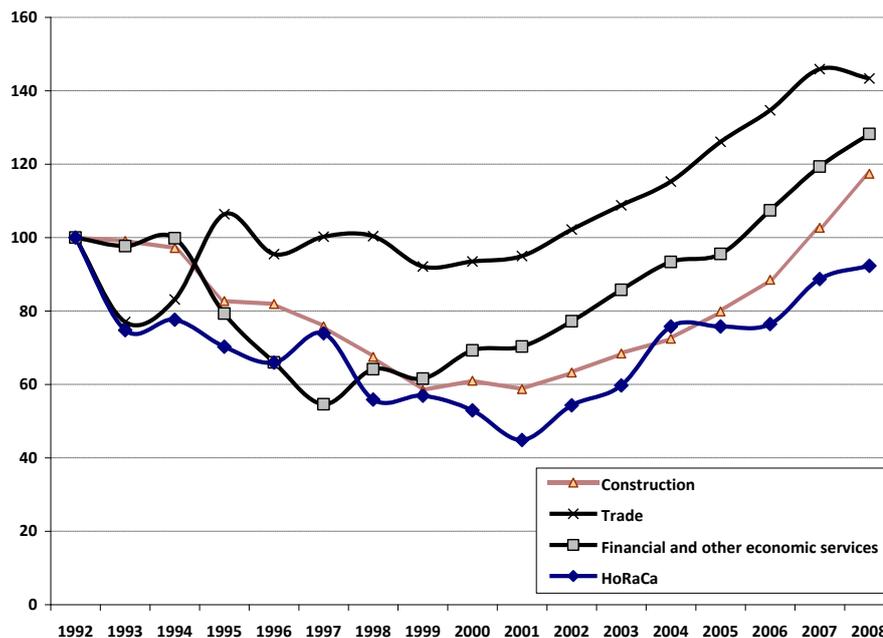
Source: NIS (Household Labor Force Survey)

#### 4.4.2. The impact of emigration on the labor market

With regard to the impact of emigration on the labor market, two periods can be distinguished: the first consists of the 1990s and the very beginning of 2000s, whereas the second starts by the mid-2000s. In the first period, due to the economic transition, the number of available workplaces radically dropped in Romania and migration emerged as a reaction to the incapacity of the Romanian economy to create jobs and absorb the existing labor force. Seen from the perspective of the state, migration functioned as a safety valve, because significant strata of the population who were at the risk of becoming beneficiaries of social assistance left the country. Therefore, migration lowered the social costs of the transition and reduced the risks of social tensions (Horváth and Anghel, 2009, p. 395).

From 2001 to 2008, the Romanian economy grew with an impressive average rate of 6.2% annually, which situated Romania at the top in the region. The dynamic economic growth was fuelled by increased levels of investments and domestic consumption, the latter being, on its own turn, the result of strong wage raises, the increased volume of remittances and the rapid expansion of credit systems. The structure of the Romanian economy went through important changes, one of the basic transformations consisting of the transfer of activities from industry and agriculture to services, and subsequently to constructions.

**Figure 18: The evolution of the number of employees in the three economic sectors, which caused the economic recovery in Romania after 2000 (1992=100%)**



Source: NIS (Household Labor Force Survey)

The growth in these sectors was accompanied by a raise in the demand for qualified workforce. The most affected sectors were the T&C (textile and clothing) industry, constructions, trade, the financial and other services, and HoReCa (hotels, restaurants and catering) sectors, respectively. According to a survey taken in 2007, approximately 15% of the companies active in these fields reported personnel deficit, the most severe problems being reported by the firms active in the T&C sector (Șerban and Toth, 2007, p.6). These labor shortages were also directly linked to the emigration of Romanian labor. Romanians preferred to work abroad in constructions, commerce, hotel trade, domestic and care services (including women who previously worked in the textile industry) and earned at least twice they could get doing the same job at home.

Under the conditions of economic growth, but with an internal labor market profoundly affected by emigration, with several sectors facing labor shortages which could not be filled in by local workers transferred from other economic sectors or by returned emigrants, Romania resorted to immigration as the best solution to respond to this immediate need. In this sense, there were 15,000 work authorizations issued for foreign citizens in 2008, the year when the economic boom was at its peak.

In 2009, the Romanian economy experienced a sharp contraction. The GDP fell by 6.4 percent after going up by the same magnitude a year before, later, in 2010, the economy dropped by 1.4 percent. In 2011, there was a small recovery, an economic growth of 2 percent. Even in the crisis context, the Romanian labor market failed to meet the needs of employers, and the shortage was above the average both in a European and a global perspective. For example, in 2010, 36 percent of the companies in Romania declared having difficulties filling the job vacancies, facing particular difficulties in the following domains: engineers, skilled traders, sales representatives etc. (Manpower, 2009, 2010). Analysts consider that the causes of the deficiency are structural, mostly related to emigration, and forecast an absolute shortage in roughly 20 years (Ghețău, 2009; Șerban and Toth, 2007).

#### ***4.4.3. Immigrants on the Romanian labor market***

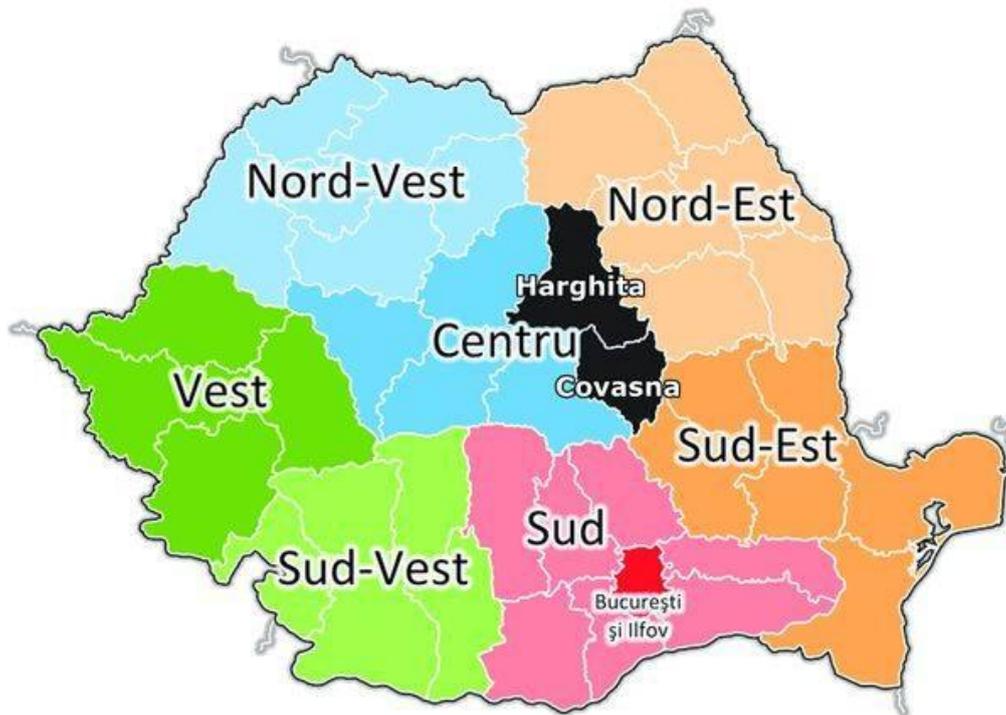
The number of annually emitted work permits is at a low level too. Although in 2008 the yearly quota of work permits issued for third country nationals had to be supplemented, legal authorizations issued in that year represented the peak with only 15 thousand permits (Toader, Smirna, Jurca, & Cernat, 2010). The economic dynamics of the 2000s conjoined with the amplified emigration of the Romanians (after 2002 and 2007) lead to a workforce shortage in some economic sectors, especially in constructions (both in infrastructure and housing). Under these circumstances, immigrant labor seemed to be a mid-term solution for addressing the problem. However, the predictions made in 2008, which assumed a considerable increase in labor-motivated immigration up to a stock of 200-300,000 persons (1.1-1.4% of the population) until 2013-2015 (Cervinschi, 2011, p. 46), proved to be unsubstantiated. The global economic crisis curbed the ascending curve of immigration to Romania.

Nevertheless, the short period in which immigration grew relatively rapidly provided some important lessons, as it is revealed by a recently published comprehensive study on Chinese labor migrants (Xiao 2010). According to this analysis, neither the authorities nor the hiring entrepreneurs were prepared to manage the influx of Chinese workers. The slow procedures and the direct and indirect administrative costs hindered the access of the Chinese people willing to work in Romania. If they eventually started to work, they received considerably lower salaries than had been contractually promised, the accommodation conditions and other related aspects were often improper and, in general, the employers (except for the work performed) paid little or no attention to assist immigrants in their integration to society, or to meet their specific cultural needs. In some cases tensions escalated to conflicts and the entrepreneurs unilaterally abrogated the contracts, leading to the repatriation of the workers.

## 5. CASE STUDY: DYNAMIC HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF LONGER TERM MIGRATORY, LABOR MARKET AND HUMAN CAPITAL PROCESSES IN HARGHITA AND COVASNA COUNTIES

The Romanian local partners involved in the SEEMIG project are the Municipality of Sfântu Gheorghe and the Harghita County Council. Sfântu Gheorghe is the administrative center of Covasna county, a neighboring administrative unit to Harghita county. In this section we are going to describe the migration characteristics of these two counties.

Map 2: Harghita and Covasna counties in Romania



Both Harghita and Covasna are part of the historical and ethno-cultural region of Székelyland. Székelyland is the sole compact region in Romania populated in majority by ethnic Hungarians. According to the 2011 census the share of the Hungarian native speakers was 86.4 percent in Harghita and 75.3 percent in Covasna, respectively. In Sfântu Gheorghe 77.8 percent of the total population was Hungarian-speaking. Given this specific ethno-cultural character of the region, we will discuss in greater detail the relation between ethnicity and migration.

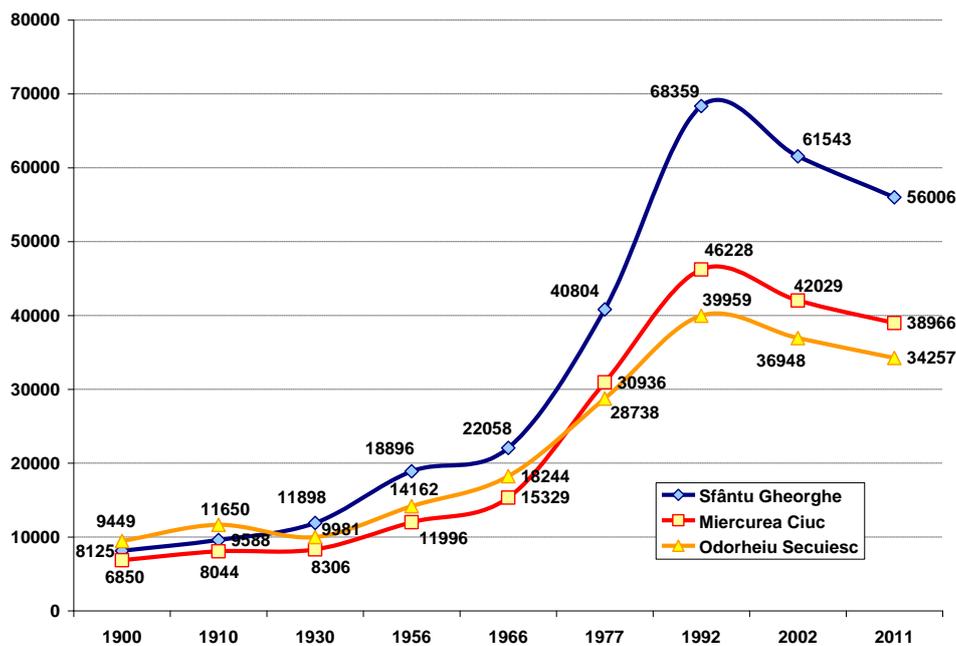
Beside the common ethnic background, Harghita and Covasna share several important socio-economic characteristics too. First, both are predominantly rural counties, without major urban centers. In a historical perspective, the rural character of these administrative units can be considered even more accentuated. Following World War II (according to the 1948 census), the share of urban population in the two counties was 11.1 percent and the population of major town centers barely exceeded the number of 10,000.

**Table 29: The total population and the share of urban population in Harghita and Covasna counties**

	Harghita		Covasna	Harghita and Covasna		
	Total population	Urban population (%)	Total population	Urban population (%)	Total population	Urban population (%)
1948	258,495	10.3	157,166	12.5	415,661	11.1
1956	273,964	22.9	172,509	24.9	446,473	23.7
1966	282,392	31.7	176,858	31.3	459,250	31.5
1977	326,310	37.4	199,017	41.3	525,327	38.9
1992	348,335	45.7	233,256	52.7	581,591	48.5
2002	326,222	44.2	222,449	50.3	548,671	46.7
2011	310,867	42.6	210,177	48.0	521,044	44.8

Source: NIS (Census Data)

As we mentioned already, in 1968 a territorial reorganization of the country took place. Before 1968 the country was composed of 16 regions. Harghita and Covasna counties were both established in 1968. After the territorial reorganization a relatively rapid process of industrialization and urbanization commenced. The population of the three main towns (Sfântu Gheorghe, Miercurea Ciuc and Odorheiu Secuiesc) tripled in the time period between 1966 and 1992.

**Figure 19: Population growth in the three main urban centers in Harghita and Covasna counties**

Source: NIS (census data)

Given the fact that the region of Székelyland had an accentuated rural and an economically peripheral character, out-migration from the area was predominant. Until 1989, the internal migration towards major Romanian (and especially Transylvanian) urban centers was of primary importance. Following the establishment of Harghita and Covasna counties in 1968, this process of internal out-migration has decreased considerably due to the industrial development of the main cities, Sfântu Gheorghe, Miercurea Ciuc and Odorheiu Secuiesc; however, it was not insignificant at all afterwards either.

As mentioned already, during the state socialist period the ethnic minorities (especially Jews and Germans) were highly overrepresented among emigrants. Until the mid-1980s the share of ethnic

Hungarians among emigrants did not exceed their proportion in the overall population. However, the ethnic composition of the emigrants changed radically from the second part of the 1980s. This change was interrelated with a shift in the migration policy of Hungary. During state socialism the Hungarian official policy toward asylum seekers was based on Article 67 of the 1949 Constitution of the Hungarian People's Republic. According to this, "*asylum can be given to those persecuted for their democratic behavior, for their activities to promote social progress, the liberation of people and the defense of peace*" (quoted by Szőke 1992: 307). The article meant that Hungary selected the refugees on political criteria and was closed to asylum seekers from the Eastern bloc.

After 1986, great numbers of asylum seekers from Romania entered Hungary. At the beginning Hungary was a transit country. The majority of the asylum seekers tried to reach the Western countries. Beginning with 1987, however, more and more Romanian citizens entered Hungary with tourist passports without the intention of returning to Romania. At the same time, illegal border crossing became widespread. Officially, new asylum legislation came into force only in 1989, yet, beginning with 1987, Hungary did not extradite asylum seekers from Romania. Their number reached 20,000 in 1988 and 36,000 in 1989. During the late 1980s the number of those emigrating officially from Romania to Hungary increased too (Szőke 1992: 308). The *en masse* emigration to Hungary continued even after 1990 and the share of ethnic Hungarians among this group of emigrants reached 97 percent in 1990 (Szőke 1992: 312). If we take into account both legal and illegal emigration, a total number of 97,000 ethnic Hungarians left Romania between 1986 and 1991. According to social investigations, those originating from Székelyland were underrepresented among emigrants (the majority of them were from major town centers of Transylvania, such as Cluj, Oradea and Târgu Mureş).

In the 1990s, Hungarians continued to be heavily overrepresented within the migrant population. If we take into consideration the data on natural growth, the total population loss caused by net migration could be appreciated to 825,233 between 1992-2002, which corresponds to an average of -3.6 per thousand annual net migration. After controlling for the loss of population due to negative natural growth and change of ethnic self-identification between the two censuses, we estimate the population loss of the Hungarian community to be around -110 thousand. This amounts to an average annual net migration rate of -6.6 per thousand. That also means that in 1992, roughly 13 percent of Romania's entire migration loss affected the Hungarian population making up 7.2 percent of the total population. In this period the migration of working force from Harghita and Covasna counties to Hungary was particularly intensive.

After the turn of the millennium, however, the Romanian migration context was profoundly transformed as a result of the country's extremely intensive participation in the international migration movements. According to migration statistics of the main receiving countries, 2.7-3 million Romanian citizens reside abroad, mainly in Western Europe. Out-migration has the greatest impact on the Moldovan region and Southern Transylvania, while the least affected are the areas inhabited by the highest proportion of Hungarians: Székelyland, Partium, Central Transylvania, but also the Banat Region where Hungarians represent a lower proportion of the population.

## 6. OUTLOOK AND CONCLUSIONS

Throughout the 1950-2011 period, Romania was a country characterized by an intensive process of emigration. Although this is true for the whole period, one can distinguish several periods and turning points.

First, the characteristics of the migration process were radically different during state socialism and after its collapse in 1989. During state socialism, Romanian migration policies had a particular importance. The main features of the migratory regime of Romania during this period were the following: (1) a general and rather severe limitation on exits; (2) strict control of Romanian citizens' traveling abroad; (3) a selective emigration policy. This latter characteristic is of particular importance. In the time period between 1950 and 1989, almost 800 thousand persons emigrated. The main goal of state authorities was not to keep out-migration at the lowest possible level, but to select the emigrants. In Romania, the main criterion of the selection of emigrants was their ethnic belonging. First the persons belonging to the Jewish community were allowed to leave the country and move to Israel, and then the Germans followed. While Jews and Germans were allowed to leave, the emigration of persons belonging to other ethnic categories was obstructed. Although the migration of Jews and Germans cannot be considered forced migration, selecting migrants according to their ethnic background establishes a strong link between the Romanian migration policies and the concept of *ethnic cleansing*. It has to be emphasized, however, that not only Romanian authorities promoted the *en masse* migration of Jew and Germans, but the Israeli and the German authorities too. The Israeli and German selective immigration policy, more precisely the ethnic selection of immigrants, was analyzed by Brubaker (1998). Ethnic Germans moving to Germany and persons of Jewish origins moving to Israel could acquire full citizenship immediately after arrival. In these cases, ethnicity was a capital that could be converted through a bureaucratic process into citizenship and benefits related to it.

This approach to international migration radically changed right after the fall of the state socialist regime. After 1990, the possibility to travel and migrate was conceived as a basic human right. Currently, in opposition to the state-socialist era, the Romanian state (and the sending countries in general) has no effective control over the process of migration and, as a consequence, it possesses no reliable statistics on out-migration.

After 1989, there were several markedly distinct phases of the Romanian out-migration:

(1) The period between 1990 and 1993 is characterized primarily by the migration of ethnic minorities and asylum seeking. In the context of liberalized exit policies hundreds of thousands of Romanian citizens tried to relocate westward from Romania. However, only a few categories were successful: among them ethnic Germans (who were supported by Germany) and ethnic Hungarians (who were welcomed and granted some assistance in Hungary). Beside them 350,000 Romanian citizens applied for asylum in different Western European countries, a majority of them in Germany. However, this status was granted only in a few cases and many of the asylum seekers were repatriated to Romania.

(2) In the period between 1993 and 1996, EU countries introduced a restrictive visa regime for Romanian citizens. As a consequence, Hungary, Turkey and Israel became the most important target countries for labor migration.

(3) Between 1997 and 2001, the importance of emigration towards non-EU countries decreased, while emigration to EU countries considerably increased. The importance of Germany and France as countries of destination declined, and new countries of destination for Romanian labor migration started to emerge. These were Italy and Spain. The outflows towards Canada and the United States increased too. Specific for this period is a change of the patterns of Romanian labor migration. By the mid-1990s labor migration was mostly irregular, short term and circular, and destination countries were not necessarily considered as countries of possible settlement.

Conversely, after 1997, an increasing number of persons developed strategies for a prolonged staying and considerably large immigrant stocks of Romanian origin started to emerge, especially in Italy.

(4) The period between 2002-2007: In October 1999, the European Commission recommended starting accession negotiations with Romania, and as a part of the integration process, Romanian citizens have been exempted from visa requirements in the majority of the EU countries in 2002. The costs and risks of emigration were reduced and, as a consequence, significantly more people engaged in migration. In parallel, various destination countries initiated programs of regularization of irregular immigration (Italy in 2002, Spain in 2005)

(5) At the beginning of 2007, Romania became an EU member. The new legal status of Romanian citizens within the EU resulted both in an increase in the volume of emigration and in the regularization of Romanian emigration. In Spain, the number of legally registered residents of Romanian citizenship almost tripled in 2007 as compared to 2006, the number of immigrants rising from 211,325 to 603,889.<sup>32</sup> In Italy, the number of those staying with a valid residence permit rose likewise, from 278,582 in 2006 to 625,278 in 2007.

(6) The financial crisis considerably modified the patterns of Romanian emigration. We can affirm that the recent financial and economic crisis diminished the number of new emigrants without inducing considerable return migration of the Romanians living abroad. In the formerly main destination countries of Romanian emigration (Spain and Italy) the dynamic growth of the Romanian migrant stock has stopped (however, the number of residents with Romanian citizenship did not decrease), but in countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom or Belgium it even increased dynamically. Interpreting these data one could forecast that a geographic relocation of the main destination places of Romanian migrants from the Mediterranean Area to (North)-Western Europe is highly possible.

There are some economic, demographic and labor market processes that are intimately interlinked with the processes of international migration. The economic consequences of the collapse of state socialism are of a particular importance. Between 1989 and 1992, the Romanian GDP per capita dropped by 29 percent. The contraction of the Romanian economy was (in relative terms) more accentuated than the decline during the World War II. The GDP per capita climbed back to the 1989 level only in 2005. However, the deterioration of Romania's relative global economic positions is even more salient. The Romanian GDP per capita was 96 percent of the world average in 1976, and 79 percent in 1989. This value fell to 52 percent in 2000 and reached only 68 percent in 2008. So, the global position of the Romanian economy is much more unfavorable in the present than it used to be in the 1970s or 1980s. One can notice the same trend by comparing the Romanian GDP per capita to the average of the Eastern European and Western European countries. Compared to the Western European states, Romania's relative economic position is less favorable than it used to be in the 1950s.

A second factor which facilitates emigration is the high level of inequality and relative poverty. Following the collapse of state socialism, Romania has become one of the EU countries with the highest level of inequality.

The most important factor, however, should be considered the massive process of deindustrialization (and the labor market processes following it). In 1990, the value added to GDP by the industrial sector was 50 percent and 43.5 of the labor force was employed in industry. In 2000, the value added by the industry to the Romanian GDP was only 36 percent and only 26.2 percent of the total labor force was employed in this sector. For the same indicators, in 2010, the values are 40 percent and 28.7 percent, respectively. During the 1990s, employment in agriculture grew not only in relative, but

<sup>32</sup> Data source INE base / Demography and population / Migrations  
[http://www.ine.es/en/inebmenu/mnu\\_migrac\\_en.htm#1](http://www.ine.es/en/inebmenu/mnu_migrac_en.htm#1) accessed on 24 April 2011

in absolute terms too. In 1990, 3 million people were employed in agriculture and this number grew to 3.5 million until 2000 (Murgescu 2010: 470). After the turn of the millennium, the number of employees in agriculture began to fall. This process was determined by two factors: the economic recovery, which led to an increasing demand of labor force primarily in construction and certain service sectors, and the intensification of emigration, respectively. The value added to the Romanian GDP by the agriculture has been declining continuously in spite of the growing share of those working in agriculture. In 1990, the value added by the agriculture was 24 percent, and only 7 percent in 2010. Those who were forced by the structural changes of Romanian economy to withdraw to subsistence farming feed rural poverty and enduring marginalization. The existence of a large group of subsistence farmers, along with the collapse of the industry, can be considered the main push factor for the emigration of Romanians. Due to the possibility of emigration and the high prevalence of subsistence farming, the unemployment rate did not reach very high levels in spite of the massive deindustrialization.

Immigration, as defined officially, is a very low level phenomenon in Romania. The emigrant stock in Romania does not pass the number of 60,000. Preceding the financial crisis, however, there were signs that (in the context of acute labor force shortage) the proportion of the foreign-born labor force could increase. Although in 2008 the yearly quota of work permits issued for third country nationals had to be supplemented, legal authorizations issued in that year represented the peak with only 15 thousand permits. The economic dynamics of the 2000s, conjoined with the amplified emigration of Romanians (after 2002 and 2007) lead to a workforce shortage in some economic sectors, especially in constructions (both in infrastructure and housing). Under these circumstances, immigrant labor seemed to be a mid-term solution for addressing the problem. However, the predictions made in 2008, which assumed a considerable increase in labor-motivated immigration up to a stock of 200-300,000 persons (1.1-1.4% of the population) until 2013-2015 (Cervinschi, 2011, p. 46), proved to be unsubstantiated. The global economic crisis curbed the ascending curve of immigration.

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