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Recent Trends in Immigration into Romania: The Case of Asian Migrants

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Abstract

Romania has always been a country of emigration. This thesis tries to shift this perspective and analyze Romania through the lens of immigration. In this sense, a general view of immigration in the communist period up until Romania's ascension to the EU will be given. The focus will fall on its legislation surrounding immigrants, and a broad perspective will be given in relation to the shift that we saw once Romania became an EU member state. The period between 2007 and 2022 will be the main focus of this thesis. A detailed perspective in relation to Asian immigrants in-flow into Romania will be given. Moreover, a brief overview of the reception of said Asian immigrants by the Romanian population will be presented through the analysis of several media outlets. An analysis of questionnaire answers by the Asian immigrant community in Romania will be given in order to determine the reasoning behind their mobility. A media analysis split in two important parts will represent an important chapter of this thesis. The purposes of this thesis are to understand why and how Romania started to become a country of immigration, to search for the main reasons for Asian migrants to choose Romania as a country of destination, to understand the way in which the media paints the immigration phenomenon, and more importantly, how it chooses to present Asian migrants.

Abbreviations

GII- General Inspectorate for Immigration

GEO- Governmental Emergency Ordinance

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INTRODUCTION

Historically Romania has been seen as an emigration country. It is well established that Romanians make up some of the largest immigrant communities in countries such as Italy, Spain, Germany, France and the UK. It could seem somewhat odd to discuss Asian immigration in an Eastern European country, but recent trends show us an increasing number of these migrants arriving in Romania. This thesis wants to prove the changing status of Romania and be a witness to it. Moreover, the central part of this thesis will be the Asian migrants in Romania. When choosing the subject of this thesis, it was incredibly important to us to present the new reality in which Romania is now in regards to immigration. Slowly, it transcended its role as an emigration country and it is beginning to acquire a new role, that of an immigration country. It is this thesis's purpose to understand why we can see an increase in the number of Asian migrants that are coming into Romania and how the Romanian media perceives them. For the latter part, a media analysis will be given in which we will understand Romania's standpoint in regards to the new immigration phenomenon.

This thesis will aim to present a multi-layered perspective on the Asian migration to Romania. As such it combines multiple methodologies in order to extract the best possible analysis. Thus, we will use several databases such as the one found at data.gov, which is the official website for the GII. This database will offer us the possibility to create graphs and tables that represent the influx of Asian migrants on a specific time frame, the gender distribution and the reasons for migrating. Moreover, national censuses will be analyzed and presented in a statistical manner for the periods in which statistical reports were not available. Activity reports from GII will be another source for statistical data which will give us the number of immigrants coming into Romania and other data, such as asylum seeker data, illegal migrants data and so on. An analysis of specific laws that were defintory for the legislation regarding immigrants will be made. Due to the fact that Asian migration in Romania is still a somewhat niche area of study, the state of the art presented in each chapter is intertwined with the research in itself.

The thesis is structured in four main chapters. Each chapter will be a look into the most important parts of immigration in Romania. As we cannot understand the present without understanding the past, the first chapter dwells into the immigration history in Romania. The aim of the first chapter is to give a political overview of Romania before its accession to the EU, to dwell in Romania's status as an

emigration country and to understand and analyze the migration policies that existed from the period between the fall of communism and 2007.

Moreover, it discusses the migrant situation that existed during the communist period. It touches upon one of the most defining moments and the hardest period in Romania's history. A general overview of the communist regime and what that meant for migration will be given. Even though an Asian migration in the communist period was almost non-existent, statistical data made through the analysis of the censuses between 1956 and 1977 proves that there were at least some non-European migrants. What interests us for this period, is the immigration as a process and what the specific laws and regulations existed in that time frame. As such, we will touch upon the liberalization of the policies that happened in 1965, the law number 25 from 1969, the reinstating of the political alliance with Federal Germany (which meant a massive repatriation of ethnic Germans from Romania in exchange for financial benefits) and the 1989 revolution and what it meant for the migration policies.

In order to have a clearer view on the immigration phenomenon that has happened in the communist period and until 2007, we will analyze censuses pertaining to that time frame. Statistical data will be made by the author from the raw data that already exists. For this, the 1948, 1956, 1966, 1977 censuses will be used. Additionally, for the next time-frame, that is, from the fall of communism until 2007, data from the statistical reports from the National Institute of Statistic, the National migration strategy and several government ordinances will be used. The National migration strategy will be pivotal in understanding not only what the situation of Romania concerning migrants was, but also what exactly will be their concerns in the coming future. A short overview of the asylum regime legislation will also be given in order to have a complete perspective on the situation of foreigners in Romania before 2008. Additionally, a Romania in need of workers will be presented as this time frame represents the beginning of the problem Romania faces even now, labor shortage.

The second chapter is concerned with Romania's accession to the EU and the changes this brought with it. A big focus on this chapter will be the National Migration Strategies that will be presented in a chronological order. We will not only analyze the text of the national strategies and the changes it wants to bring to the immigration system, but also the changes it actually brought. After each National Migration Strategy presented, we will look at the qualitative, quantitative and statistical results that the implementation of that specific National migration Strategy had. As such, the 2007 National Migration

strategy will be presented using its text as a starting point. Additionally, for the statistical and quantitative section we will use the Romanian Statistical Yearbook and the Activity Report. For the qualitative part for this particular time frame we will look at two case studies, one done by the Soros Foundation and the other by the European Social Fund. It is crucial for the better understanding of the effect of the migration strategies in Romania, to take a look not only at the statistical and quantitative results but also at the qualitative. For all the parts that will be presented, the central scope will be the Asian migrants.

Next, the GEO 194/2002 will be presented as it suffered significant changes after Romania's accession to the EU. An in-depth text analysis will prove useful for understanding what are the rights and obligations of foreigners and how they are presented.

The national Migration Strategy from 2011 will be also analyzed in the same in-depth way as the previous one. As for the quantitative and statistical data, we will use the 2011 census, the “Analysis of the Romanian Immigration Office in 2011” and the “Activity Report for the Year 2014” which presents the 2011-time frame as well. A combination of graphs and tables made by the author will help us visualize the situation of Asian immigrants in Romania.

For the 2015 National migration Strategy we will first need to understand the context of it. As such, a small background on the position of Romania in the context of the 2015 refugee crisis will be given. The change in the way National migration Strategies are written will happen with this one. We will see how the Romanian government will try and promote a legal migration through the projects that they will implement. Moreover, we will see a focus on the idea of educating the Romanian population with the new phenomenon of immigration. For the quantitative and statistical part, the Annual Activity reports delivered by the General Immigration Inspectorate will be analyzed and graphs will be produced for a better visualization. Additionally, a survey by the Center of Comparative Migration Studies will be analyzed.

The years 2019 and 2020 will also be reported in this chapter, as they signify an important part of the recent times. We will see the effect that the pandemic had on the immigration process in Romania as well as how it affected the influxes of foreign migrants. In this part we will also discuss several projects that the Romanian Government implemented in order to help migrants integrate.

Lastly, the National Migration Strategy for the period 2021 to 2024 will be presented in great detail as it is the one that is still affecting us in the present times. Moreover, a brief overview of the way the Romanian government reacted to the Russian-Ukrainian war will also be presented. As for the quantitative and statistical data, we will use the Activity reports produced by the General Inspectorate for Immigration and the data base for the year 2021 that can be found on the official website of the GII. For the qualitative section, the study done by EWL Migration Platform, Foundation For The Support Of Migrants On The Labour Market 'EWL', and The Centre For East European Studies At The University Of Warsaw (2022) on Asian workers in Romania will be central to our research.

The third chapter will present the recent trends in Asian immigration with a section on the state of the art. It will also touch upon an important part of the Asian immigration in Romania, that being the subject of intermediary firms. We will discuss their general role in the migration flux and how it translates in the Romanian case.

The last chapter will be a media analysis and it will be split into two parts. The first part will be an analysis of the reaction of three big online news outlets in regards to an incident that took place in Ditrau in 2020. We will analyze the incident in a chronological order through the news articles written by the three news outlets: Antena 3 CNN, ProTV online and Digi 24. This part will help us understand not only the reaction of the news outlets to a show of racism but also the reaction of the Romanian population to it.

The second part will be an analysis of several news outlets through the period 2008 to 2023 on their reception of Asian migrants. A selection of the articles were analyzed for each period. They were carefully selected to include, on the one hand, prolific news outlets, but on the other hand, a diverse perspective on the immigration phenomenon. The selection of the articles to be analyzed will be explained more in depth later on.

Why do people migrate and what is migration? These have been the central questions in migration studies. Researchers of migration debate on the final definition of migration. Alan Simmons defines migration in three ways: the first one is a change in residence, the third one is a shift in employment and lastly, a shift in social relations (Piché and Dutreuilh 2013). Understandably, the changed residence has usually been the preferred definition of migration due to the fact that it irrefutable implies a movement

or mobility. For this thesis, we will combine all the three definitions of migration as it is this thesis purpose to see all the three dimensions.

The main two types of migration are internal and international migration. Internal means a movement from a part of the country to another part, usually it is from the rural area to the more industrialized urban areas. We will be concerned with international migration.

One of the pioneers of migration research was geographer E. G. Ravenstein. Over a period of a few years he established some of the pivotal laws of migration. Some of the laws are still applicable today and others are outdated. Depending on the researcher, there are 11 or 14 laws that Ravenstein established. D. B. Grigg has summarized them and agreed upon 11 laws. It is important to understand these laws and see if they are still relevant today and to the specific case that this thesis studies.

As such, the 11 laws of migration established by Ravenstein and summarized by D. B. Grigg are :

1. Most of the migrants migrate on short distances (Grigg 1977)
2. Migration is a step-by-step process (Grigg 1977)
3. The migrant who does go for long distance migration, goes for the more industrialized cities (Grigg 1977)
4. For each current of migration there is a counter current (Grigg 1977)
5. People from cities are less migratory than people from rural areas (Grigg 1977)
6. Females more often migrate internally and men, externally (Grigg 1977)
7. There are more adult migrants than some of these migrating (Grigg 1977)
8. Immigration is a defining factor of urban growth in a city (Grigg 1977)
9. There is a direct link between transporting improvements, economic growth and migration, as migration increases when they increase. (Grigg 1977)
10. Migration mostly occurs from rural areas to urban areas. (Grigg 1977)
11. The economy plays a major role in causing migration (Grigg 1977)

For this thesis only some of the laws are relevant. In the case of Asian migrants we witness a long distance migration where migrants choose to migrate in the more industrialized parts of Romania. As we will see

in the coming chapters most of the migrants do vocalize in the more industrialized cities such as Bucharest or Cluj.

The fourth law is also important for our research because it states the fact that for each out migration, there is an in migration. This phenomenon will be proven throughout this thesis as we will see that one of the biggest problems that Romania is facing is a labor deficiency. This labor deficiency is created by years of out migration. But in recent years, this labor deficiency is supplemented by migrant workers.

The seventh law is also applicable to our thesis due to the fact that the majority of Asian migrants that come into Romania are not coming with their family but they are coming alone in order to provide money for their family in their origin country.

The 9th and 11th theory is also relevant for our thesis due to the fact that in recent years we saw that due to the economic growth that Romania had, the migration also increased.

CHAPTER I - MIGRATION AS SEEN THROUGH THE COMMUNIST PERIOD AND A FEW YEARS AFTER THE REVOLUTION

Introduction

It is important to start by saying that in this chapter we will only talk briefly about the Asian immigrants in Romania. Even though the central part of this thesis is the Asian immigration into Romania, it is necessary to give a detailed overview of the migration history of Romania and its history of labor. What we need to understand is that regardless of whether we can talk about Asian immigrants in the communist period, we have to touch upon the labor structure, the social changes that happened, and the fall of communism in order to accurately understand the present. It is useless to talk and analyze the present without understanding the past of immigration as a process, as we cannot start to comprehend the present of immigration into Romania. As such, the first chapter talks about the communist party in Romania and the different policies toward migrants that they each had during their time. Moreover, a focus on the existing migrant society will help us understand the difficulties that they encountered and how those difficulties changed or didn't change after the fall of communism.

1.1. Background on the communist party and policies related to immigrants

The years between 1947 and 1989 are commonly known as the communist era in Romania. Almost immediately after the end of World War II and after the abdication of King Mihai, Romania became a socialist state. In the years between 1947 and 1965, Romania was under heavy Soviet influence. One important factor is that this period is characterized by nationalist ideals. It was in this time frame that industrial nationalization started.

As for the minorities living in this socialist state, the Institute for the Investigation of the Crimes of Communism and the Memory of the Romanian Exile states that at first the policies were not too restrictive. The internationalist image the socialist party initially sought to project can help to explain this. But this pro-internationalism coupled with the nationalism that the socialist party had, soon resulted in restrictive measures for the minorities, such as unifying the Hungarian University in Cluj with the Romanian University, closing certain dedicated schools, minorities not being able to have their own publications etc. Due to these restrictive measures that the party had taken, by the middle of the

communist period, a great number of German, Hungarian, and Jewish people were forced to emigrate (Vlad Georgescu 1991).

In 1965, Nicolae Ceausescu became the leader of Romania, and with him, we entered the nation-communist period. His politics were slowly shifting from the soviet-centered regime to the occidental centered one. This is not to say that his policies were also occident-centered. We can divide his time as Romania's ruler into two parts. The first part is characterized by an attempt at liberalization. We see how some policies, especially those related to immigrants and minorities, are softening. An example of the softening policies can be the new passport regulation taken between 1978-1970 which made it easier for Romanians to travel abroad (Vlad Georgescu 1991). But this ended in 1971, when we saw a shift in Ceausescu's politics, which became more and more of a cult of personality. (Vlad Georgescu 1991)

In order to assess the number of immigrants that were residing in Romania at the beginning of the communist/socialist period, the only viable option was to take a look at the 1948 provisory census. Unfortunately , there was no official statistic on the number of foreign citizens that were residing in Romania at that time, but there was a statistic on the number of people that were speaking foreign languages, and as such, even though it will not be 100% conclusive data, we can at least have an idea regarding the number of foreigners. As such, it is reported that out of 15,872,624 people (the population number of Romania in 1948), 13,597,613 had their mother tongue Romanian, 1,499,851 Hungarian, 343,913 German, 39,332 Russian and 37,582 Ukrainian (Institutul Central de Statistică 1948).

It is not a surprise to see that the largest group of minorities is represented by the Hungarian people. Given the fact that in the census, the number of foreigners is given by the number of people whose mother tongue is different from Romanian, we cannot identify exactly the number of another important minority, the Jewish people. In the census, the number of people who speak Yiddish, which is one of the languages spoken by some parts of the Jewish people, was 138,795. (Achim 2008)

One important factor that we need to understand is that, in this time frame, we can mostly talk about immigrants coming from Europe(Germans, Hungarian, Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Greeks etc.) We can deduce this by looking at the 2011 census, or more accurately, at the table that shows the population of Romania by ethnic groups. Our interest at the moment lies with the numbers pertaining to the years 1956, 1966, and 1977.

YEAR	TOTAL POPULATION	ETHNICITY																		YEAR
		Romanians	Hungarians	Romani	Ukrainians	Germans	Turks	Lipovian Russians	Tatars	Serbians, Croatians, Slovenians	Slovakians	Bulgarians	Greeks	Jews	Czechs	Polish	Armenians	Other ethnicity	No data available	
B	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	B
1930	14280729	11118170	1423459	242666	45875	633488	26080	50725	15580	50310	50772	66348	23161	451892	-	15804	12175	49182	5052	1930
1956	17489450	14996114	1587675	104216	60479	384708	14329	38731	20469	46517	23331	12040	11166	146264	11821	7627	6441	13357	4165	1956
1966	19103163	16746510	1619592	64197	54705	382595	18040	39483	22151	44236	22221	11193	9088	42888	9978	5860	3436	4681	2309	1966
1977	21559910	18999565	1713928	227398	55510	359109	23422	32696	23369	43180	21286	10372	6262	24667	7683	4641	2342	4028	452	1977
1992	22810035	20408542	1624959	401087	65472	119462	29832	38606	24596	33769	19594	9851	3940	8955	5797	4232	1957	8618	766	1992
2002	21680974	19399597	1431807	535140	61098	59764	32098	35791	23935	29570	17226	8025	6472	5785	3941	3559	1780	23445	1941	2002
2011	20121641	16792868	1227623	621573	50920	36042	27698	23487	20282	23484	13654	7336	3668	3271	2477	2543	1361	26544	1236810	2011

Table done by the author using data from the 2011 census

If we were to exclude the Romanian population and the Hungarian population, we would get this chart.

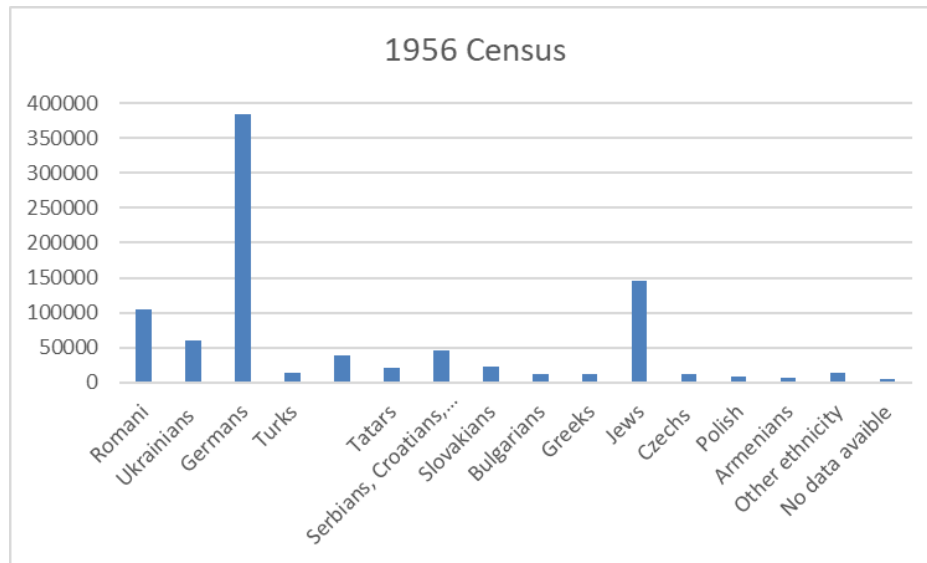


Chart done by the author (Census, 2011)

We can see that the biggest minority after the Hungarians was the German population, followed by Jews and Romani people. We can also see that for non European minorities, the data shows that we had a considerable number of Turks and a few Armenians. But the data is unreliable due to the fact that any other ethnicity than an European one, was thrown into the “other ethnicity” or “no data” category. We can only assume that these two categories represent, in fact, either an Asian or African population.

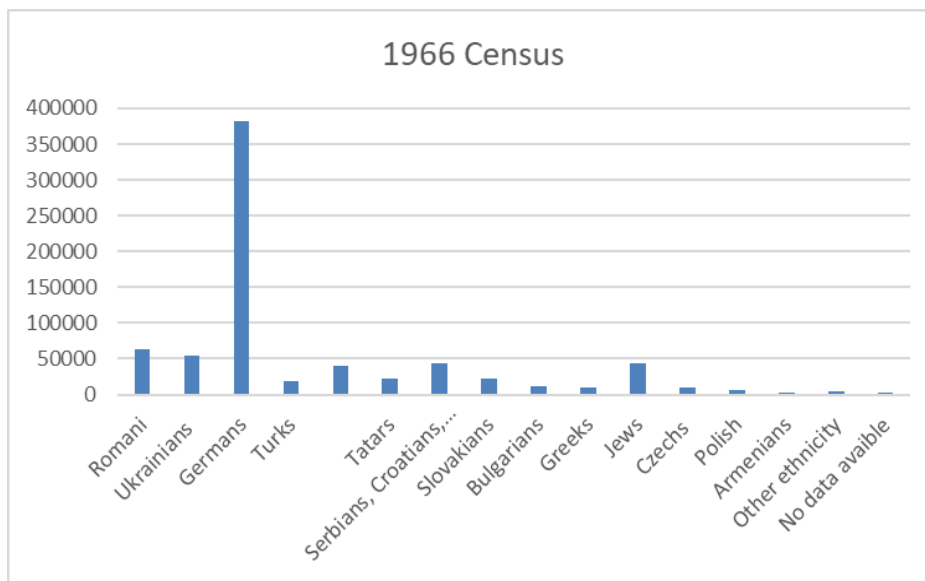


Chart done by the author (Census, 2011)

We do not see a big change 10 years later. Germans are still the second biggest minority in Romania. It is from the 1977 census that we see a spike in the number of Romani minorities and a slight decrease for the German minority. It would prove interesting to talk about why we see a decrease in the German minority because it will prove useful in understanding the policies and intentions that the communist party had.

As such, in 1978, socialist Romania reinstated their political alliance with Federal Germany and has agreed to repatriate a number of ethnic Germans each year, in return for financial benefits. Anneli Ute Gabany, in his book about the Exodus of the Germans, talks about how the liberties that the 1969 law regarding foreigners brought, were quickly forgotten and minorities started suffering from the nationalization of the population (in other terms, assimilation). As such, by the end of the communist period, the number of ethnic Germans residing in Romania had dropped drastically, from 384,708 in 1959, to 119,462 in 1992 roughly 31% of the original number and 59,764 in 2002. (“Rezultate 2011 – Recensământul Populației Si Locuitorilor,” n.d.)

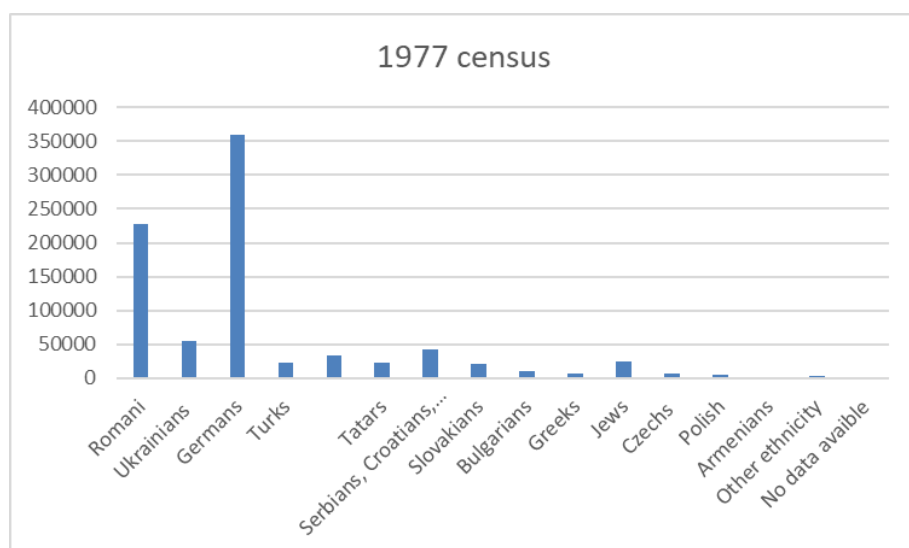


Chart done by the author (Census, 2011)

The Great National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Romania adopted Law Number 25 on the 17th of December 1969, which regulated foreigners stays in Romania. First of all, it is important to understand what the term “foreigner” means in this particular law due to the changing understanding of it. As such, foreigner in this instance meant “persons who do not have Romanian citizenship, either they have another citizenship or they have no citizenship” (“LAW 25 17/12/1969 - Portal Legislativ” n.d.). In the 2001 law related to foreigners staying in Romania, a foreigner was a person who did not have Romanian citizenship (“LAW 123 02/04/2001 - Portal Legislativ” n.d.). The final definition and the one that is applied today is more complex. It differentiates foreigners (a person who does not have Romanian citizenship, nor the citizenship of any other state that is a member of the European Union, the European Economic Space, or the citizenship of the Swiss Confederation) from stateless. The main difference is that in the communist period we would refer to a foreigner as a person who does not have Romanian citizenship, and after Romania’s ascent to the EU, the definition of a foreigner drastically changed. (“LAW 123 02/04/2001 - Portal Legislativ” n.d.)

Coming back to the 1968 law, we see that most of the basic rights are, in theory, respected. They have the same rights as a Romanian citizen, and they need to obey the same law as a Romanian citizen. Almost all foreigners need a Romanian visa to enter. Article 18 states that the Ministry of Internal Affairs can limit foreigners movement throughout the country and also change their domicile to some designated area. Further down, Article 38 states that foreigners coming into the Socialist Republic of Romania who

already have their own means of accommodation, can only settle with them in the designated areas. (“LAW 25 17/12/1969 - Portal Legislativ” n.d.)

Article 23 is another important part that gives us an idea of the policies regarding foreigners being able to work in Romania. Thus, it states that foreigners cannot have state jobs such as being employed by the “Ministry of Armed Forces, Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Security Council and other organs of state administration; they may not be elected or employed in judicial or prosecutorial bodies” (“LAW 25 17/12/1969 - Portal Legislativ” n.d.). Consequently, they can be employed in institutions or economic organizations, but they cannot hold leader-positions. It is in the hands of the ministries and obstinate organizations to decide where exactly foreigners are allowed or not to work. As we can see, the private and state companies were autonomous in deciding who can be employed.

It is interesting to note that at the beginning of the law, we can read the reasons for which the law had to be changed (until 1969, the law regarding strangers was decree number 260 from 1957). It states that the 1957 decree had some restrictive measures that, as of then, were not a reflection of their politics and were incomplete in the sense that they did not cover all the rights and obligations that a foreigner has while entering the Socialist Republic of Romania, nor the conditions for employment, and as such, they saw fit to alter the law. (“LAW 25 17/12/1969 - Portal Legislativ” n.d.)

In an attempt to see if this law had any effect on the in-flow of immigrants, a comparison between the 1966 and the 1977 census will be made. We already agreed upon the fact that the biggest minorities in Romania were of European descent and that we can only talk about Asian immigrants such as Turks, Armenians, and the group that both of the censuses use, “other ethnicities”, as such, in the 1966 census, we had a great total of 2,356,653 immigrants, out of which 26,157 were of other ethnicities than European (this calculation was made by adding the numbers of Turkish, Armenian, and “other ethnicities” groups). In the 1977 census, there were a total of 2,560,345 immigrants, out of which 29,792 were of other ethnicities than European (this calculation was made by adding the numbers of Turkish, Armenian, and “other ethnicities” groups). This calculation does not truly reflect the correct number of Asian immigrants, but it is the only viable option that we had. When we compare the numbers of immigrants between 1966 and 1977, we can see that there has been a slight increase in the immigrant flow. This rise can be explained by the increasing number of Romani immigrants, from 64,195 in 1966 to 227,398 in

1977, as well as Turks, from 18,040 in 1966 to 23,422 in 1977. (“Rezultate 2011 – Recensământul Populației Si Locuintelor,” n.d.)

The asylum system was not ideal during the communist era. Several decrees were meant to regulate the entry and stay of asylum seekers. Article 35 of the Popular Republic of Romania (1948) states that “the Popular Republic of Romania grants the right to seek refugee to all the aliens that are persecuted for their democratic activity, fight for national freedom, for their scientific and cultural activity”¹. The same ideal is found in the 1952 Constitution, with the difference that the aliens that were persecuted for protecting workers can and will be protected by the Romanian state. We find the same ideals in the 1965 Constitution, especially the one related to the protection of workers. As such, we understand that asylum refugee status in communist Romania was granted mostly to those who had the same work mentality as the Romanian state. (Pristavu 2008)

According to Cristina and Dragos Petrescu (2005), there were two distinct periods that shaped the Romanian worker. The first was between 1958 and 1977, when the working-class Romanian had a “tacit deal” with the communist party; in other words, it was a kind of quid-pro-quo (the laborer works for the state, and the state gives certain benefits to the worker). The second period is characterized by the frustration of the worker, between 1977 and 1989. It, of course, ended with the 1989 revolution (Petrescu and Petrescu 2005). This attempt at socialist industrialization, did more harm than good. Vlad Georgescu correctly points out to the fact that even if Romania looked rich on paper, the reality was that its population was increasingly becoming poorer. (Vlad Georgescu 1991)

The labor structure in communist Romania was restructured in 1980, when two very different categories of workers emerged. The first ones were called “peasant-workers” and the second ones, “genuine workers” (Petrescu and Petrescu 2005).

In the 1980s, when Romania experienced an economic crisis, the communist party seized the opportunity to revive “the revolutionary spirit of young people” (Mitulescu n.d.). What this revival did was bring back the working camps, now called youth yards. Sorin Mitulescu states that this youth yard had just a couple of notable differences from the work camps, one of which was the propagandist and “rewarding”

¹ Original text: “Republica Populară Română acorda drept de refugiu tuturor străinilor urmăriți pentru activitatea lor democratică, pentru lupta de eliberare națională, pentru activitate știintifică sau culturală.” (1948 Constitution)

style that they had. This means that the youth that went there to work, did so voluntarily, due to the fact that they were rewarded with titles such as “brigadieri” and also with festivities done to honor their work.

1.2. The 1989 revolution

On December 15, 1989, Timișoara, the capital of a heavily industrialized region, witnessed a series of anti-Ceaușescu demonstrations. At first, they were disregarded due to the fact that in the years before, there had been other demonstrations against the regime that were easily but fatally abolished(see the 1987 Brasov revolt). As such, no great importance was given to them. Things changed when, in a matter of days, people in Bucharest came together and successfully overthrew the communist regime that had ruled the country for 45 years. It was a violent and non-negotiated overthrow of the regime (Petrescu and Petrescu 2005). This was a population that, just two years before, had undergone new reductions in electricity and gasoline consumption rates.

Bread, sugar, milk, flour, and eggs were rationed throughout the country except in Bucharest in 1983. Laborers' frustration reached its peak and could not be continuously ignored. The last few years before the revolution were extremely damaging to the mental and physical health of the Romanian population. Food was scarce (food was only given by a system of cards, which would limit the consumption of the items the system encompassed, which were already available in a very limited supply), as well as pharmaceutical products being almost nowhere to be found. The 1989 revolution in Romania was the only revolution in Eastern Europe's revolutionary process to record deaths and injuries (1,104 dead) (“RAPORT FINAL” 2006).

It is documented that migrants have also played an important role in the Romanian revolution. For example, in the city of Timișoara, long-distance migrants played an important role in organizing the rallies. In the aftermath of the revolution, people recount how the Moldavian migrants helped them make a lasting change. (Petrescu and Petrescu 2005)

An important aspect of long-distance migration trends when talking about the pre-revolution revolts, reveals that there were four main regions where there was a high likelihood of protest by workers, these being: Constanta, Brasov, Hunedoara, and Timis. 25% of the total population in these four counties was made up of immigrants. (Petrescu and Petrescu 2005)

Aside from the tragic means which were used to abolish the Communist regime , we also need to look at what changes the 1989 revolution produced in Romanian society. An important change we see in the mentality of labor, or more accurately, how people should work. In the above subchapter, we describe the way in which the communist labor market was structured. This structure changed once the new “democratic” party replaced the communist one. These changes will be presented in a structural manner, starting from changes in society (the freedom of mobility) to changes in the labor market.

1.3. Emigration processes in the post-revolution Romania

The fall of communism in 1989 brought with it major sociological and economic changes. More importantly, it changed the migration system (Sandu 2005). From a closed country to a free one, Romania entered a new chapter with the fall of communism. Sandu Dumitru, in his paper “Dynamics of Romanian Emigration After 1989: From a Macro- to a Micro-Level Approach”, perfectly describes the change happening within Romanian society, stating that after the fall of communism, Romanian people witnessed a “compensation migration” . It is well known that before 1989, immigrants living in Romania accounted for the majority of those who emigrated. That said, we have the emigration of Jewish people, also known as “alya” if they emigrated to Israel; of Germans, and of Hungarian people (Baldwin-Edwards 2008). The Romanian population didn’t emigrate almost at all due to the restrictive measures that the communist regime inflicted on them. But things changed with the fall of communism. This “compensation migration” that Sandu Dumitru talks about, has indeed started in 1989. We see a spike in the out-migration and in-migration flows. It is recorded that in 1990, 96,919 Romanians permanently resettled abroad. (“Migration and Asylum in Central and Eastern Europe: Romania” n.d.).

Due to the economic turmoil that resulted from the fall of communism, the economic uncertainty that resulted after that, and the heavy fluctuation of the Romanian LEU (“Romania Inflation Rate MoM” n.d.), many people sought the opportunity to immigrate in order to have a better livelihood, thus creating an employment shortage, which only worsened the situation. When so many citizens leave, one has to pose the question of who is left to work. But instead of a pay raise, local employers preferred to bring in people from other areas/countries in order to pay them less (Silași and Simina 2009). The results of the 2002 census state that 360,000 Romanian citizens have temporarily resettled abroad, which is 17% of the

entire population at the time. As Sandu Dumitru correctly assumes, this number is quite high given the fact that just 13 years ago, Romania was a closed country with restrictive measures towards emigration.

Most researchers agree upon the fact that Romanian migration flow after the 1990`s is a result of labor force mobility. That said, we identify that wage differences are one of the push factors. A Romanian worker is much more inclined to leave the job he or she has in Romania for exactly the same job in Italy, with the only difference being that in Italy, he or she is paid double. (Vădăsan and Cismaș 2008).

We can identify four phases of Romanian immigration after the 1998 revolution. Understanding these phases is crucial because only by doing so will we be able to understand why Romania entered a phase of a labor shortage that ultimately crossed over into a labor need. As such, the first phase was during the years 1990-1993 when we had the permanent emigration of minorities such as Germans, Jews, and Hungarians. Moreover, the start of a political and economic crisis plunges Romania into a state of poverty and unrest. The second phase is between 1994 and 1996, when we have some “low levels of Romanian economic migration to western Europe” (Baldwin-Edwards 2008). The third phase(1996-2001) is a phase of development in emigration trends. This is the phase when Romanian migration is characterized by the term “illegal work migration”. The last phase, identified in the article, is known to be a circular migration that focuses primarily on countries such as Spain or Italy (Baldwin-Edwards 2008).

For Romanians, after the fall of communism, migration became a life strategy (Sandu 2005). Moreover, it also generated a rise in urban unemployment that caused in its change an rural to urban internal migration. The labor shortage brought on by the opening of the gates in 1989 forced an increasing number of people from the rural area to seek employment in the city. Moreover, when the borders opened, it estimated that 96,929 people left in 1990 (“Migration in Romania: A Country Profile 2008 Migration in Romania: A Country Profile 2008” 2008). Additionally, 2002 brought with it a fundamental change. It was the turning point for Romania when it became a source for European migration because of the fact that the EU had lifted the visa requirement for Romanians traveling inside the Schengen Area (Mircea and Pristavu 2008).

For Romanians, the year 2002 meant the year when “circulatory migration began”. This meant that generally, the Romanian migrants would leave to work for a determined period of time in a European member state, would return to Romania for no more than a few months, and then leave again. In the article “Romania, Part Of The European Area Of Freedom, Security And Justice. Legal Aspects” by Alexandru Mircea and Cristina Pristavu, the authors state that a very important mechanism without which

the circulatory migration of Romanians would not have been possible is the migration network. With the existence of this migration network, Romanian migrants could leave their work abroad, come back to Romania, in which time, a relative or friend would replace them abroad and then go back to work (Mircea and Pristavu 2008).

In “Romania, Part Of The European Area Of Freedom, Security And Justice. Legal Aspects”, Mircea and Pristavu identify three phases of migration. The first one is the illegal transit migration, which is characterized by the fact that Romania, along with other eastern and central European countries, became a transit area for the immigrants who wanted to emigrate further into the EU. This phase will be further detailed in the coming chapters. The next phase is Romania's migration to the EU. Legally leaving Romania, legally entering the EU, and then illegally staying inside the EU can all be used to characterize this phase. The third and final phase is the circulatory migration. This phase coincides with the last phase identified by Edwards-Baldwin(2008). It is the phase that entails switching back and forth between the country of origin and one or more of the destination countries (Mircea and Pristavu 2008).

Going to Vădăsan and Cismaș (2008) there are negative aspects related to Romanian immigration. The most important and the one that is relevant for our discussion is the lack of labor force in some areas. It is interesting how the authors correctly assume that soon Romania will have to attract immigrants in order to complete the “lake of labour fource” (Vădăsan and Cismaș 2008).

1.4. Immigration into Romania after 1989

Following 1989, and the 2002 opening of the gates to the Schengen area, we observe the emergence of a new phenomenon in immigration that includes undocumented transit migrants, a small but growing number of asylum seekers, and immigrants with temporary visas (Baldwin-Edwards 2008). This meant that Romania had to also begin strengthening its borders to prevent illegal immigration from happening (Mircea and Pristavu, 2008).

Before 1991, we did not have any data on immigration to Romania. About 3,000 foreign citizens were recorded as permanent residents in the 1992 Census (Tompea and Năstuță, n.d.). In 1999 the number of foreigners with permanent and temporary residence permits jumped to 63,200. We see an increase in the migration flow in 2000, with 70,700 foreigners. The numbers slowly decreased from 2001 to 2005. In 2006 we had an increase in the number of foreigners, the total being 53,606. (Tompea and Năstuță, n.d.).

The data was extracted from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The numbers should be taken with reservations due to the fact that they only represent the foreigners that were staying legally in Romania.

As opposed to these findings, the National Institute of Statistics, in their annual statistics reports, states that for the year 2000, the total number of foreign citizens who settled their permanent residence in Romania was 11,024. Again, we see how the numbers decreased until 2005 when we have 3,704 foreigners. Moreover, this report also gives the country of origin of the foreigners that arrived in Romania between 2000-2005. Thus, most foreigners come from the Republic of Moldavia (“Romanian Statistical Yearbook” 2006). This statistic does not provide a comprehensive understanding of the actual citizenship of the immigrants due to the fact that it shows the country of origin and not their nationality. This enormous difference between the two reports in terms of numbers is not easy to understand.

If we were to combine the two statistical reports from 2006 and 2009, we would see that the total number of immigrants that came into Romania between 2000 and 2007 decreased until 2004, after which it increased up to 2007. We can assume that the increase that we notice after 2004 is an effect of the 2002 opening of the Shengahen Gate to Romanians.

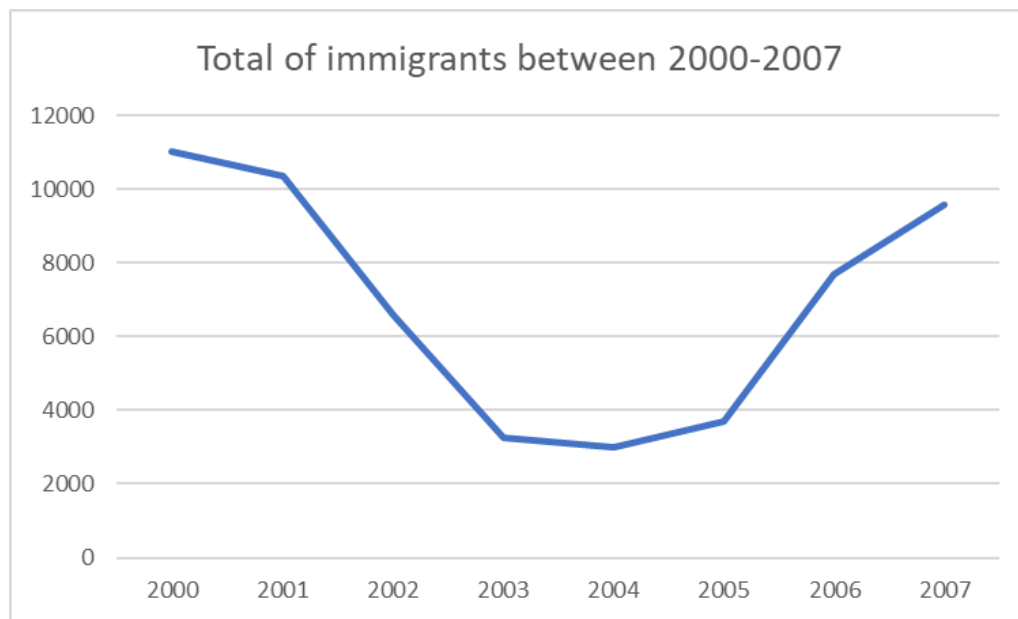


Chart done by the author by combining the results of the statistical reports of 2006 and 2009 done by the National Institute of Statistics(INS)

One of the reasons for these discrepancies could be the different methodologies used by the two institutes for extracting the number of foreigners. Moreover, illegal migrants are not accounted for in either of the

two data sets. Additionally, the definition of “immigrant” may have changed during this period. An example is that in the 2014 Statistical Report, immigrants were “persons with foreign, *Romanian*, and without citizenship who settled their usual residence in Romania during the reference year” (“Romanian Statistical Yearbook” 2014). Regardless, in the 2002 census, 25,645 other nationalities other than Romanian were recorded as living in the country. The top five citizenships were as follows: citizens of the Republic of Moldova, Turkey, P. R. China, Italy, Greece, and Syria. (“Census” 2002).

1.5. Romanian immigration policies

When the National Immigration Strategy of 2004 was implemented, it introduced a new way of conducting affairs into the Romanian system. The first change was introducing interinstitutional cooperation, meaning that if before the Immigration Office, the frontier police, and the rest of the organizations concerning immigrants were autonomous, beginning with 2004, they will become interconnected. This national cooperation meant the use of a common database that would help the organizations to better manage the influx of migrants and the development of certain programs in order to educate the Romanian society in regards to the changes that would eventually follow due to the emerging migration phenomena. Moreover, this interconnectedness would also affect international collaboration, not just the national. As such, the Romanian state had to anticipate adopting the Dublin II regulations, the EURODAC system, and the Schengen Information System (“National Migration Strategy ” 2004).

The Government decision number 1.708 from 14th of October 2004, states that in order to implement the National migration strategy, certain government groups need to be made. As such, the Coordination and Implementation of the strategy group were completed. It was made up of representatives from all the institutions that were related to the migration issue. Its main attributions were: to coordinate the unitary implementation of the immigration policies; to adapt these policies in relation to the diversity found regionally; and to propose legislative measures.

The action plan found in this Government decision helps us better understand the starting point of the Romanian government in relation to the new phenomenon of controlled migration. Their first step was to introduce the group mentioned above that would be in charge of the implementation of the National strategy. The adequate implementation of the legal measures that are in alignment with the EU legislation

is another important objective. This means that the APS and the Ministry of Interior will have to modify the GEO no. 194/2002 in order to better facilitate the post EU accession framework.

Moreover APS(Foreigners Authority) will need to modify its internal measures to also be in alignment with the new legislation. All the institutions that appear in this action plan will need to train their employees by organizing seminars on migration. Moreover, one of the most important objectives of this action plan is to attract foreign investors in order to help the economy through the creation of work-places. Additionally, the registration of foreigners seeking work at local agencies was also an objective. This meant a better record of foreigners coming into Romania for work related reasons, and it also meant a better organization of the help the Romanian government gives foreigners. The promotion of the Romanian educational system in order to attract foreign students was also an objective (“HG 1708 14/10/2004” 2004).

Another prime objective was finding viable solutions in order to prevent the mass migration of people from developing countries. In this aspect, a focus falls on interinstitutional cooperation, both national and European. An accent on strengthening the security around immigration is another important aspect present in the action plan. To achieve better security, some of the actions taken by the government were to create within the APS a specialized division of competent employees who would analyze the immigration flow; to periodically evaluate the illegal immigration in Romania; to start operative-activities; more control over the ways of communication in order to find illegal migrants; to conduct more check-ups at the companies that have employed immigrants; to have better security protocols at the borders and so on (“HG 1708 14/10/2004” 2004).

Another important aspect is the objective of social integration of foreigners in the Romanian society. In this sense, the Romanian government facilitates the access of foreigners to the labor market, to the insurance system, to a fixed domicile, to education (“HG 1708 14/10/2004” 2004).

Interestingly enough, the Romanian government also focused on its personnel, in the sense that one of the objectives in the action plan was to train its employees in order for them to be better equipped for handling the new emerging immigration phenomenon. Moreover, APS employees need to become specialized in migration issues by organizing different activities and fake-situations that would teach them how to react in this new frame-work. Language seminars, security related seminars are one of the ways the Romanian Government seeks to train its employees. The better organization of statistical reports about immigration is another objective of this action plan (“HG 1708 14/10/2004” 2004).

In other words, the action plan made by the Romanian government had several objectives, all of them being around the sole objective of being able to handle this new emerging phenomenon. We see how not only does the Romanian government create new institutions that would be equipped to handle different immigration issues, but it also devotes some resources to better specialize and train the already existing institutes. How this translates from the action plan to the actual changes that they made we will see in the coming chapters. It is important to stress that even though Romania was not an EU member as of 2006, it started to adapt to EU legislation beginning in 2004 (“HG 1708 14/10/2004” 2004).

We come back to the idea that before the 1989 revolution, Romania did not encounter immigration as a phenomenon; more correctly, it saw immigration as a rare event. But after 1989, and more predominantly after 2004, we switched the narrative to an immigration phenomenon. When talking about immigration in Romania in such high terms, we need to understand that even though compared to other EU member states, Romania has fewer immigrants, if we were to focus only on the historical background of Romania, we would understand that immigration meant an important change in the Romanian legislation (“HG 1708 14/10/2004” 2004).

1.6. Legislation regarding immigrants from the year 2000 to the year 2007

Romania changed its laws to conform to those of the European Union as part of its effort to become a member. One of the most important changes that the Romanian government made was to reform its police and border guard systems (Mircea and Pristavu, 2008). Beginning with the year 2003, we see how the Ministry of Administration and Interior starts implementing the changes that they promised. First and foremost, they ensure the upholding of the Romanian border regime, meaning that much greater importance will be given to the regime of aliens, to the documents needed for entry or exit, and so on.

The “fight” to enter the EU meant that Romania indeed had to change much more than a couple of laws in order to be accepted by them. As such, in 2003, the Romanian government republished the constitution in order to guarantee the right of free movement in and out of the country, for the Romanian citizen. Moreover, GEO no.144/2001, regulated the way in which Romanian citizens can enjoy the right to enter the Schengen area without a visa for tourism purposes. Aps (*Autoritatea pentru straini*/the authority of aliens) was created in order to manage the entering and exiting of foreigners. More importantly, GEO 194/2002 was implemented, a law that regulated the admission of foreigners into the Romanian state. This is a law that we will analyze in detail due to its relevance in the present. And lastly, the Romanian

National Strategy on Migration was also adopted in order to, on the one hand, satisfy the requirements of the European Union and, on the other hand, strengthen the security around its borders (Mircea and Pristavu, 2008).

It is necessary to explain in detail the laws or the Government ordinances to understand the trajectory of the foreigner's stay as regulated by the Romanian state. As such, GEO No. 194/2002 was the means by which the Romanian government regulated the entrance, stay, and exit of foreigners. Moreover, it stated their rights and obligations and the manner in which Romania controlled its immigration flow (*GEO no 194/2002*). In this part, we will be focusing on the original version of the ordinance, the one rectified by 2003 Law No. 357. As such, an organization was created in order to fight illegal immigration and regulate the long-term and temporary stays of foreigners in Romania. This organization, Autoritatea pentru straini(ApS/the Authority of Aliens), was directly subordinate to the Ministry of Administration and Interior(a mix between the former Ministry of Interior and the former Ministry of Public Administration) (Mircea and Pristavu, 2008).

Article no. 3 states the rights of foreigners, which include: foreigners that are legally in Romania can create their residency wherever in the Romanian territory; they can be beneficiaries of the social protection of the state; and foreigners that are within the educational system have the right to have access to all the educational or social activities (*GEO no. 194/2002*).

Article No. 4 talks about the obligations that a foreigner has when entering Romania. It states that the foreigner is obliged to respect the Romanian legislation; that they cannot organize political parties or organizations that might harm national security; they can't finance parties or organizations that can harm national security; and that they are forced to respect the purpose for which they entered Romania (*GEO no. 194/2002*).

Article no. 6 regulates the conditions for entering Romania. As such, foreigners can enter Romania if they have the proper documentation(document accepted by the Romanian state that can be used for passing the frontier; the proper visa given by the Romanian state; documentation that states the purpose/purposes for entering; and so on). It is in this article that we first see a clear separation between the foreigners and the strangers coming from the economic European space and the EU. In the case of EU citizens, Art. 6(1) does not apply.

To stay in Romania, foreigners had to present a type of visa that reflected the reasons for which they wished to enter. As such, the general requirements for being given the Romanian visa are: the conditions

from Article 6 are respected, there is no reason to refuse the entry of the foreigner, and the foreigner is not accused of criminal activities. Moreover, to request the Romanian visa, the foreigners needed proof that they have means of support during their stay in Romania and for leaving the territory of Romania (GEO no 194/2002).

In order for strangers to stay for a longer period of time, they need to request a long stay visa. Depending on the purpose for requesting the long-stay visa, foreigners need to provide the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with different kinds of documentation. Just to name a few, for the long-stay visa for professional activities, the foreigner needs to provide proof that they can legally practice the profession; proof that they practice the same profession in their origin country; proof that they have medical insurance for the entire period that the visa is valid; and proof that they present a criminal record or a certificate that can legally replace the criminal record (GEO no. 194/2002).

For the long-stay visa for employment, the employer needs to provide the necessary documentation: proof that they practice legally in Romania, that they do not have any debts to the state or to others, and documentation related to the foreigner they employ. After these requirements are fulfilled, they can request the long stay visa for the foreigner, for which the following documentation needs to be provided: the written notice of the Office for Labour Migration, proof that they have maintenance means (three salaries), insurance for the entire period that the visa is valid, and that they present a criminal record or a certificate that can legally replace the criminal record (GEO no. 194/2002).

Article 50(1) states that strangers who were granted long-stay visas and those whose visa requirements do not apply can be granted a temporary stay permit, which can be extended for periods up to a year. In order to extend their temporary stay for foreigners employed, they need to have a valid work permit given by the Office for Labor Migration, present the work contract, and prove that the salary that they receive is at least equal to the national average wage salary (GEO No. 194/2002).

The right to take residence in Romania is granted by ApS. The conditions for having residence in Romania are: to have had a legal temporary stay for at least 3 years (for foreigners married to a Romanian citizen) or 6 years (for the other categories); have proof that they are self-sufficient; have legal proof that they can leave at the place they want to become their residence; know Romanian at a conversational level; the conditions for entry are still fulfilled; and no reasons for refusal of entry in Romania have appeared (GEO no. 194/2002).

For foreigners coming into Romania for work related reasons, they need to obtain a long stay visa through the work authorization given by the Romanian Immigration Office. This work authorization is given to the stranger only if his employer has requested it from the Romanian Immigration Office. There are a few requirements that the foreigner and the employer need to meet in order to be granted the work permit. As an example, the employer needs to give proof that he has legal activity in Romania, that he does not have any debt. As for the foreigner, he/she needs to give proof of his professional skills, his good health status, that he is not wanted for crimes in other states, and so on (GEO no. 194/2002).

The form that is explained above of GEO no 194/2002 is not the final form that is applied today. As we are talking about the years before Romania's accession to the European Union, it is important to understand how the ordinance was in its original form and how, after 2007, it transformed. We will see in the coming chapter how Romania's ascension to the EU has greatly shaped and changed Romanian legislation

1.7. National Migration Strategy from 21st of April 2004

The National Migration Strategy was adopted for a lot of different reasons. As of 2007, Romania became a member of the European Union. In this sense, the Romanian state understood that with its ascension to the EU came a series of necessary changes to its legislation. As such, the migration strategy reiterates the need to strengthen its border security and consolidate the entry, stay, and exit regimes for foreigners (especially foreigners from developing world states). Immigration into Romania is seen as beneficial for the state's economy, but with the specification that it has to be controlled. This controlled immigration is not only accepted but also encouraged by the Romanian state.

The lack of skilled and unskilled workers in several departments, pushed the Romanian government to feel the need to create this strategy. In the first part of it, we clearly see the need that the government has to compensate for the lack of workers. In addition, we see how the Romanian state begins to focus more on the asylum problem and tries to be in accordance with the requirements that the EU has. There is a clear and irrefutable openness to a more tight relationship with the Romanian diaspora and any other ethnicities in order to facilitate national interests ("National Migration Strategy " 2004).

The primary purposes that the National Migration Strategy had were to harmonize the domestic legislative framework in line with international law and the EU acquis, to develop the institutional framework, and to overall modernize sections such as HR. Taking a look at the main principles that govern the national strategy, *the principle of sovereignty* (the Romanian state has the right to regulate the admission, stay and exit of foreigners for the purpose of economic, political and social growth), *the principle of active cooperation with the EU* (process of negotiation for the ascension to the EU, and the assurance that after 2007, the European Union will give Romania the opportunity to elaborate policies for asylum and migration control), *the principle of non-discrimination* (applying this strategy with consideration on the equality and equity), *the principle of transparency* (the implementation of an active policy regarding information), and lastly *the principle of international cooperation* (the development and tightening of relationships with different foreign state authorities) (“National Migration Strategy ” 2004).

The National Migration Strategy had several objectives. Promoting the admission and legal stay of foreigners in Romania by implementing legal requirements that are in line with European and international standards, was one of them. In this period, the Romanian state focused on attracting foreign investors who were capable of contributing to the economic development of Romania. Moreover, the lack of workers was also an important problem that they needed to solve. As such, the idea of attracting foreign workers was one of the solutions that they found. In the several objectives that we can find in the National Strategy, most of them have a common denominator, which is the need to be in accordance with the requirements given by the European Union. As this national strategy was written before 2007, before the accession of Romania to the European Union, we can definitely see a struggling Romania to be at the standard that the European Union required it to be. In addition, we also see the fact that Romania started to strengthen its border control and solidify its legislation regarding immigrants (“National Migration Strategy ” 2004).

In this sense, Romania adopted an active and flexible policy in order to control immigration. As we saw in the governance ordinance number 44/2004, European citizens and citizens of the European Economic Space have a different status than the nationals of developing countries.

The social integration of foreigners was an important objective of the National Migration Strategy. Romania did not only need foreigners to compensate for the lack of workers in certain areas; it also needed foreigners to be able to actively participate in Romanian society. As such, great importance was

given to the integration of foreigners, with different activities such as language and culture courses being available for them. Moreover, the Romanian state grants foreigners the possibility of being able to apply for Romanian citizenship.

The government ordinance *GEO No. 102/2005* was implemented in order to regulate the entry, stay, and Exit of the citizens of the EU and the European Economic Space. These citizens, upon entering Romania, benefit from the same rights as a Romanian citizen would. They can enter from whatever border they want by just presenting the necessary documents (passport of a member state or Id document of a member state). Their family members also benefit from the same rights, no matter if they are also EU citizens or not. If they are not EU citizens but are the family members of an EU citizen, then they can enter Romania by presenting the residence permit that they have been given by the member state.

For EU citizens and their family members, in order to legally stay in Romania, they need to present themselves to the nearest territorial unit of the Romanian Police, the Romanian Border Police, or the Aliens Authority to declare their presence in Romania (*GEO no. 102/2005*)

1.8. Asylum regime legislation

Even though the focus of this thesis is immigrants who migrated due to mostly pull factors (Romania becoming an attractive destination to migrants due to its position as an EU member; the lack of work force in Romania and the promotion campaign done by the Romanian state in order to attract foreign workers, etc), we also need to talk about the asylum seeking regime that Romania had before and after its accession to the European Union.

Strangers can be given three forms of protection: refugee status, conditional humanitarian protection, and temporary humanitarian protection. The refugee status is given to the stranger who proves “that he was persecuted because of his race, religion, nationality, or political alliances” (*GEO no. 102/2000*). Refugee status is not given to foreigners who have committed actions against peace and humanity, have committed acts that go against the principles stated in the ONU Carta, and so on.

Conditional humanitarian protection is given to the stranger if he can also be given the refugee status, and if he has committed an act that would be punishable by death in his origin country, he would be

tortured if he returned to his origin country, and if due to his membership in a defavorized group, he would risk being treated inhumanely (GEO no. 102/2000).

The government ordinance 44 had as its purpose to integrate in social life, the foreigners that were given protection by the Romanian state. The rights that are discussed in this ordinance are: the right to be employed, the right to have residence, the right to have medical and social assistance, the right to social insurance; the right to education, and also the right to participate in educational activities such as language courses in order to facilitate the swift integration of foreigners in Romanian society (GEO No. 44/2004). The strangers that were referred to in this ordinance are strangers that have refugee status and need conditional humanitarian protection (GEO No. 102/2000).

Moreover, strangers who were given a form of protection by the Romanian state, had the right to be integrated into the labor market, as was the law for the Romanian citizens. As we can see by the articles that follow, the foreigner who was given any kind of protection had the same status and rights as the Romanian citizen. Articles 7, 8, 9, and 10 are explicit on this. For the rapid integration of foreigners in Romania, a couple of organizations have been formed in order to facilitate it. As such, one of the organizations is the National Institute for Refugees, which organizes sessions on cultural accommodation for foreigners. In collaboration with the National Institute for Refugees, the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth organizes free courses of Romanian language learning. As for their integration in the labor market, the National Employment Agency is obligated to identify employers that have vacancies in order to introduce to them the foreigners that are integrated in the program (GEO No. 44/2004).

Interestingly enough, Article 27(1) states that foreigners who are included in the above mentioned program, cannot refuse the work that they are given by the National Employment Agency, without having a good reason to do so. If Article 27(1) is not followed, the Romanian state's protection will be revoked.

As previously stated, Government Ordinance No. 44/2004 addresses issues concerning foreigners who have been granted some form of protection by the Romanian state. 2004 was the year when Romania consolidated its legislation related to refugee status.

1.9. Romania in need of workers

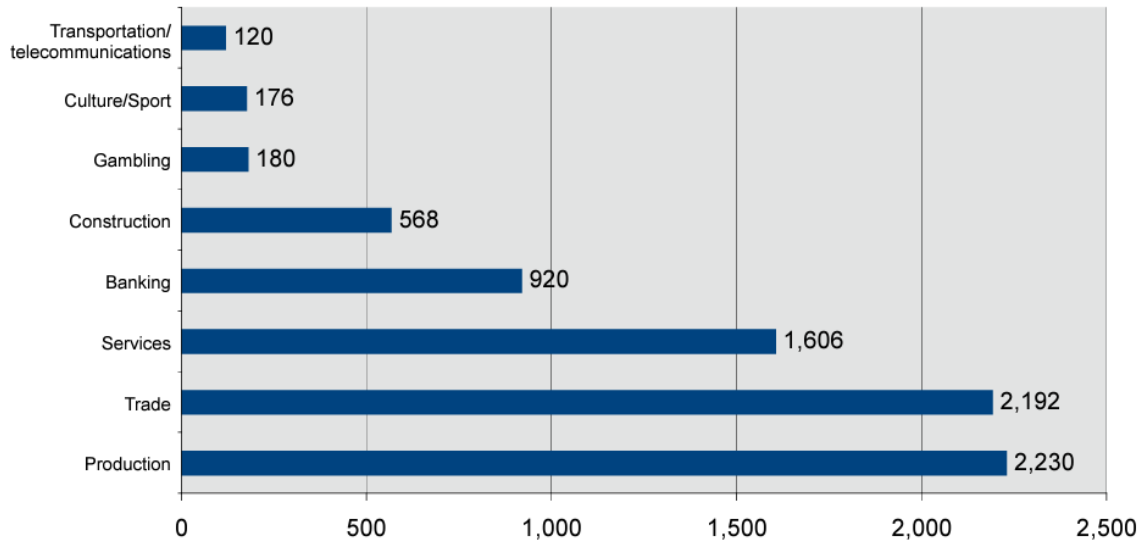
The lack of labor in a series of industries such as construction and confections forced the Romanian state to rapidly find a solution. One of the solutions they found was to import foreign laborers from countries such as Turkey and China (Petrescu, Bâc, and Zgură n.d.). Just before the EU accession of Romania, in 2006, it was recorded that, even though the highest number of immigrants came from the Republic of Moldavia (4,349) the second highest was China with 362 people (“Romanian Statistical Yearbook” 2009). Moreover, looking at the statistics of the total number of immigrants divided into genders, we see that in 2006, out of 7,714 immigrants, 4,762 were males and 2,952 were females (“Romanian Statistical Yearbook” 2009). In this sense, we can apply the dual market theory, in the sense that international migration into Romania is caused by the structural demand for migrant labor in the secondary sector. This is to say that the migrants that work in this particular sector have lower wages that appear to be higher than they would have received in their country of origin for the same type of work.

In “Talent Abroad: A Review of Romanian Emigrants”, published by the OECD, we may observe that from 2000 to 2007, emigration flows from Romania to countries such as Spain and Italy grew. Spain and Italy are the preferred countries for the Romanian diaspora. We can see that from 2000 to 2007, in Spain, the number of Romanian immigrants per year was multiplied by 10, from 17,500 to 200,000. The same can be said about emigration flows into Italy. We see a peak in emigration in 2007 with almost 270,000 per year (“Talent Abroad: A Review of Romanian Emigrants,” n.d.).

In their paper “Romania, a Country in Need of Workers? The Bitter Taste of “Strawberry Jam”, Grigore Silași and Ovidiu Simina focus on the way in which the Romanian government, confronted with the labor shortage, chooses to import mainly non-EU citizens to compensate for the lack of workers. Moreover, the fact that the immigrants are from non-EU countries means that their travel is restricted. But they agree to work in Romania due to several factors, one of which being the proximity to the Schengen area. Additionally, one of the most developing areas after 2000 was the real estate area. Even though this was one of the fastest developing economic areas in Romania, what it lacked most was manpower, most of whom emigrated to Spain or Italy. Some of the construction companies reported shortages as high as 50% (Silași and Simina 2009). Thus, immigrant workers were welcomed in the Romanian labor market, in order to ease this worker shortage.

If we were to look at “Migration in Romania: A Country Profile ” (2008), we see a general increase in the number of foreign citizens that were given a temporary and permanent residence permit from 2005

to 2006. Most notably, immigrants coming from Moldova, Turkey, China, Ukraine, and Lebanon have seen an increase of up to 24%. Moreover, in 2005, a total of 3,678 work permits were issued. In 2006, the number jumped to 7,992. The top 5 countries from which these workers originated were Turkey, Moldova, China, France, and Germany. As for the top 5 sectors in which these immigrants were employed, these were production, trade, services, banking, and construction.



Source: “Migration in Romania: A Country Profile ” (2008), page 15

A year prior to Romania's ascension to the EU, a study called “Immigration and asylum in Romania-year 2006” was made. This study helps this thesis by giving some well-founded and interesting conclusions before passing to the post 2007 considerations.

The search for the official conclusions unearthed the official web archive of the Romanian government. As such, the Romanian government seems to look at the migration issue as a “process that has to be managed, not a problem that needs to be solved”²(Government 2006). One of the conclusions stated that for the year 2006, foreigners began to come into Romania to visit their relatives, to work, and to for tourist purposes. There has been an increase in the number of short stay and long stay visa requests as compared to a year prior. The Republic of Moldova, China, and Turkey being the three origin countries

² Original text: “Migrația - un proces care trebuie gestionat și nu o problemă ce trebuie rezolvată”(Government 2006)

from which the most immigrants came. Around 17% of the total number of immigrants coming into Romania in 2006 requested temporary stay permits in order to reunite with their Romanian spouse.

Interestingly enough, the report warns of the possibility that after Romania's ascension to the EU, immigrants might resort to marrying Romanian citizens in order to enter the European Union(a process known as fake marriages). The report shows that 42.3% of the Syrians coming into Romania are married to Romanian citizens. The same is relevant to the Lebanese immigrants (28,9%), Turkish immigrants (23,9%), Ukrainian immigrants (20,5%) and Moldovan immigrants (18,1%) (Government 2006).

We can also see a rise in the number of foreigners requesting long stay visas for work related reasons (+27% from 2005) and a rise in the number of immigrants who were granted long stay visa for work related reasons (+57% from 2005). The number of foreigners in Romania in 2006 represented only 0.2% of the total Romanian population, but it is reported that because of the national labor shortage that Romania experienced before and will experience after its accession to the EU, a number between 200,000 and 300,000 foreigners will enter the labor force. It is in this context that the report states that the Romanian government needs to start implementing different approaches in order to maintain its overall security and, at the same time, respect EU legislation towards migrants (Government 2006).

The below chart shows the top ten source countries of temporary foreign workers coming into Romania in 2005 and 2006. We can see that for almost all of them, the numbers increased from 2005 to 2006.

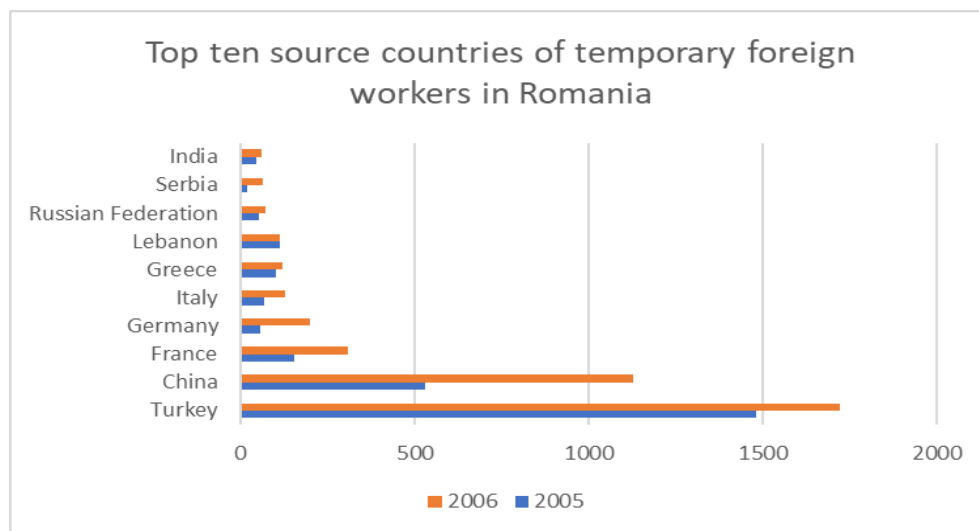


Chart made by the author using the table from Migration in Romania: A country Profile, page 16

In the research “Tendințe Și Politici Migraționiste În Regiunea Mării Negre: Cazurile R. Moldova, României Și Ucrainei”(2008), the authors correctly predict that Romania will change its status from a transit country to a destination country. The authors believed that the EU accession will give Romania the possibility to become a destination country. Indeed, statistical reports show that this had happened. Romania did not change its status from a transit country to a destination country, but it added to its already existing status, the status of a destination country. In the chapters that follow, we will see this reflected in the statistical reports of several government institutes. Moreover, the above research also states that by 2013, 200,000-300,000 foreigners will be active in the Romanian work-force.

Conclusions

The years between 1949 and 1965 were years of heavy soviet influence for Romania. We didn't see much movement in or out of the country during this period. There are no clear statistics for this particular time frame. For the first years we have looked at the 1948 provisory census that has reported that there were 1,499,851 Hungarian people and 343,913 Germans, this two groups representing the majority of the minorities living in Romania.

During this particular time frame we can only talk about immigrants or minorities that were coming from countries within Europe such as Germany, Hungary, Ukraine, Bulgaria and so on. We have also looked at the data extracted from the 2011 census that was related to the past censuses that were done between 1956 and 1977. We have seen that in all of the censuses the top two highest number of non-European immigrants were from Turkey and Armenia. Due to the fact that there was not a very good reporting on other nationalities coming into the country (as proof we have the fact that they chose to report any other nationalities by putting them in a category called "other ethnicity") it would be impossible to conclude that we had a considerable or any Asian immigration in Romania during the Communist period.

The policies concerning migration have changed a few times during the Communist period. In 1965, when Nicolae Ceausescu became the general secretary of the communist party in Romania, we saw a liberalization or softening of policies, an example being the new passport regulation. We saw the importance of law number 25 from the 17th of December 1969, the law that regulated the foreigner's stay in Romania.

We have seen that the term foreigner has developed during the years, from it referring to a person who does not have Romanian citizenship(law 25), to the complex definition that it has nowadays due to the international diplomatic relations that Romania has developed. One important aspect that we have analyzed was the fact that generally, the refugee status was granted mostly to the foreigner who happened to be in a circumstance that was similar to the ideology that they had.

But this changed after 1971. We saw that in the first part of the communist period, Hungarians and Germans were the top minorities in Romania. After 1978, when Romania reinstated their political alliance with federal Germany and as a result, has agreed to repatriate a number of ethnic Germans residing in Romania in return for financial benefits. As such, after 1978 we see a drastic drop in the number of ethnic Germans residing in Romania.

During the Communist period we did not have a significant Asian migration but this is not to say that we didn't have it at all. We saw in the 1977 census that 29,792 immigrants were of other ethnicities than European. Understandably this calculation cannot be 100% accurate because we do not have a proper definition of what nationalities that are called in this group by the terms "other ethnicities".

After briefly talking about the position of the Romanian worker in the communist period in order to later understand the way in which the Romanian labor market has developed, an important part was the period during and after the 1989 revolution. The section helped us understand the reasons behind the 1989 revolution and how in some cases immigrants such as Moldovans have helped the falling of the regime.

The fact that Romania is seen as an immigration and a transit country by other scholars has also been discussed. We saw that after the fall of communism and even a bit before, Romanians have started immigrating to other countries as the doors have opened. As falling pieces of domino, Romanian immigration has resulted in an unemployment shortage in Romania that was hard to be filled by anyone.

2002 was the year that Romania first encountered a new phenomenon such as immigration. With the opening of the Schengen area we observed an increasing number of asylum seekers and immigrants with temporary visas coming into Romania. The 2002 census gives us the top five citizenships that immigrants had, them being citizens of the Republic of Moldova, Turkey, China, Italy, Greece and Syria. We can see here that we have an increase in the number of Asian migrants coming into Romania and moreover we have this delimitation between the nationalities that are not of European descent. We have previously seen that institutes have shown the data regarding immigrants that were not of European descent in a

same category "other ethnicities". As we said, here we have a delimitation of the nationalities that make this particular group.

We saw that for the years 2000 until 2005 the biggest number of immigrants was represented by foreigners coming from the Republic of Moldavia. We saw through the chart done for the years 2000 until 2007 regarding the total number of immigrants coming into Romania, that the 2002 opening of the Schengen gate has had an effect on the number of foreigners coming.

One of the constants that we saw throughout the data extracted was that we could not rely 100% on it due to the fact that we saw discrepancies regarding the different methodologies that all the institutions have used in order to calculate the number of foreigners coming into Romania.

The introduction of the National immigration strategy of 2004 has been a pivotal change in the way in which Romanian immigration system worked. A greater importance was given to the frontier police, and the cooperation between all of the concerning organizations. This cooperation meant that we started having a common database that would interconnect organizations and make it easier for them to keep track of the inflow and outflow of immigrants. We saw that the Romanian government also focused on instructing its personnel in order to better be equipped to the new emerging phenomena of immigration. We need to keep in mind that Romania's focus after 1989, was to be a part of the European Union and as such, had implemented all of the changes required.

The fight to enter the EU, forced the Romanian government to not only change the policies regarding immigrants but also the policies regarding the free movement of its own citizens out of the country. As we saw, one of the most important laws that was implemented was GEO no. 194/2002 The regulated the entrance, stay, and exit of foreigners into Romania. This law remained pivotal to the foreigners rights and obligations even today.

The fact that Romania, in this time period, had become an emigration country, had meant that several industries such as construction had experienced a lack of laborers. One of the solutions that had been found for this particular problem was to attract foreign laborers from countries such as Turkey or China. We saw that from the Romanian statistical yearbook of 2009, a number of 362 people came from China in 2006. Moreover, an increasing number of non-EU citizens were recorded as entering Romania such as Moldova, Turkey, China, Ukraine, and Lebanon. The idea to import foreign laborers in the industries that were lacking laborers has been one of the most popular solutions. We saw that for 2006 the top five

sectors in which immigrants were employed were production, trade, services, banking and construction. We will see that these five sectors remain the most popular sectors in which immigrants are employed.

Immigration as a "process that has to be managed, not the problem that needs to be solved"³ has been the motto of the Romanian government since 2006. Indeed, all the policies that were taken during this time frame were taken under the banner of this particular motto.

As such, immigration as a phenomenon truly emerged in Romania after the fall of the Communist party. Even though we had instances of immigration into Romania during that period, it was not that significant as to be able to talk about an immigration phenomenon. But after 1989, we see an increasing outflow and inflow of immigrants and Romanian migrants. We can clearly see that just a couple of years before Romania's ascension into the EU, immigration as a phenomenon emerged.

³ Original text: "Migrația - un proces care trebuie gestionat și nu o problemă ce trebuie rezolvată"(Government 2006)

CHAPTER II - ENTERING THE EU

Introduction

Entering the EU meant a series of changes for Romania. It had to modernize and adjust to the new requirements of the European Union. Martin Baldwin states that, applied to the area of migration, these adjustments meant stricter border controls and different political asylum laws and practices (Baldwin-Edwards 2008). Moreover, Romania planned to be part of the Schengen area by 2011, which meant that it had to quickly adhere to European standards. The position of Romania as a border country with non-EU countries (Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova) meant that it had to deepen its diplomatic relations with these above-mentioned countries. Also, the risks this position as a border country comes with had to be not only contained, but also prevented (“Tendințe Și Politici Migraționiste În Regiunea Mării Negre: Cazurile R. Moldova, României Și Ucrainei” 2008). As such, the first part of this chapter will be dedicated to the policies that Romania has implemented since 2007 and how they are reflected in the qualitative and quantitative reports found for that time-frame.

Upon entering the EU, Romania was quick to implement the *National Strategy for Immigration*, a document that overlooks the actions taken by the Romanian institutions that are related to the immigration area (Alexe 2015). This strategy was aimed for a three-year period (2007-2010). This national strategy starts by saying that “migration is a process that has to be managed, not a problem that has to be solved” (“National Migration Strategy ” 2007).

Additionally, the Romanian state has reformed the legislation surrounding immigration and has started numerous projects such as *Visa online*, the *Informatic system for Foreigners processing*, *EURODAC*, etc. It was thought that, due to the accession to EU, Romania will become a favorable state for immigrants. It is specifically written that this will boost the Romanian economy and will help in the cultural exchange between countries (“National Migration Strategy ” 2007). The prime objective of the strategy was to maximize the positive aspect of immigration and minimize the negative effects it might have on the country. Ensuring the best administrative framework that is necessary for the exercise of the right of free movement and residence for the citizens of the EU, was also a priority. Another important objective was promoting the admission of nationals of developing countries into the Romanian labor market, wherever it was needed. Heavier restrictions are implemented for what concerns illegal immigration (“National Migration Strategy ” 2007).

The Government Emergency Ordinance (GEO) 194/2002 on foreigners' regime in Romania republished on 12th of December 2007, regulated the entries, stays, and exits to and from the Romanian territory as well as their rights and obligations. ("GEO 194 12/12/2002 " 2007). In this Emergency Ordinance the term "foreigner" is defined as a person that does not possess Romanian or EU/EEA citizenship and it also categorized the types of support that the foreigners are entitled to while residing legally in Romania. Among the most important aspects that are written in the GEO is the fact that foreigners with legal documents have all the rights of a Romanian citizen; they can move freely within the country and have their residence anywhere in Romania. Moreover, it also established a comprehensive list of the required documents for border crossing and acceptance into Romania. We will need to analyze in depth each of this Governmental ordinances or national strategies in order to fully understand the situation of immigrants in Romania after 2007.

2.1. National Migration Strategy from the 3rd of October 2007 for the period 2007-2010

The previous National Migration Strategy of 2004 has paved the way for a better understanding for the Romanian Government of this new emerging phenomena of immigration. Upon its new acquired status of a border country, it was fundamentally important for Romania to adapt to its new role. This said, the country needed to first assess the existing policies regarding immigration and then to actualize them. The National Migration strategy of 2004 correctly predicts Romania's transformation into a destination country after its ascension to the EU. In the National Migration Strategy of 2007, we see how Romania begins to see itself as a destination country for potential migrants due to its membership to the EU and to the economic development that it was predicted to have. Again, a great importance is given to the fact that immigration should not be seen as a negative phenomenon due to the fact that it can promote cultural exchange and economic development. Moreover, a prime objective is educating the Romanian population in regards to the immigration phenomenon, which will be done through mediatization. The lack of laborers in some industries is seen as a reason for attracting foreign workers in order to level this uneven workforce ("National Migration Strategy " 2007).

The main four objectives of the National Migration Strategy for 2007-2010 were to have a controlled immigration, to prevent and combat illegal immigration, to restructure the asylum policies and to socially integrate foreigners in the Romanian society ("National Migration Strategy " 2007). The objective of having a controlled immigration is given on the background of the new status of the migrants that are

also EU citizens. Moreover, migrants coming from developing countries are also the focus of the controlled migration that the Romanian government wishes to have. As it is stated above, EU migrants now have a new status in regards to the rights and laws that are applied to them in Romania. One of the first changes that the Romanian government did upon becoming a member of the EU was to assure the administrative framework in order for the EU migrants to move freely in the country (“National Migration Strategy ” 2007).

Article 2.1.2 refers to the admission of nationals of developing countries into Romania as possible workers. It is stated that only a certain number of workers per year will be able to come to Romania. Additionally, the competent authorities will help the companies wishing to employ migrant workers. Bilateral agreements will be made with developing countries in order to facilitate the movement of migrants. (“National Migration Strategy ” 2007)

Article 2.1.3 states that the government will encourage migrants to carry out commercial activities due to the fact that it will help the Romanian economy. In this sense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will conduct, through its diplomatic missions, campaigns to inform potential migrants of the possibility of immigrating to Romania.(“National Migration Strategy ” 2007)

In order to prevent and combat illegal immigration, one of the strategies is to correctly inform migrants of the legal ways to immigrate into Romania. Stronger border control and better cooperation between institutions is also a priority. (“National Migration Strategy ” 2007)

As for the subject of asylum, the Romanian government is set to assure the correct and legal framework set by the European Union. In this sense, the asylum system will be updated and Romania will take part of the *Dublin II* and *EURODAC* mechanisms, which in return will increase the number of requests for assistance and the return capacity. A change in the national legislation is needed in order to accommodate the standard that the EU requires (“National Migration Strategy ” 2007).

The social integration of foreigners in Romanian society was also a priority. In this sense, the Romanian Immigration Office provided immigrants with integration programs which were done with cooperation with NGOs. Additionally, appropriate training will be provided to the employees of the Romanian institutions in order to provide the best help they can (“National Migration Strategy ” 2007).

The Action Plan for the implementation of the National Migration Strategy (2007) has several objectives. The first objective is to increase interinstitutional cooperation in order to better handle legal migration.

It is due to this objective that we have the first modification of the GEO no. 194/2002. We will go into greater detail later in relation to the changes made to GEO 194 due to its importance in immigration legislation today. Moreover, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs started an informational campaign in order to encourage migrant workers to come to Romania. We also see a restructuralization of the institutions related to migration issues in the sense that, beginning with 2007 we now have the National Immigration Office (also known as Romanian Immigration Office or the General Inspectorate for Immigration) (“National Migration Strategy ” 2007).

GEO no. 55 from 20th of June 2007 is relevant for the establishment of the General Inspectorate for Immigration (GII), “a specialized body of the central public administration, with legal personality, under the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform, by reorganizing the Authority for Foreigners and the National Office for Refugees, which is abolished”⁴(GEO no. 55 20/09/2007). Interestingly enough, we see the narrative begin to shift in regards to immigrants, in the sense that a great importance is given not only to properly inform immigrants but also to educate the Romanian citizens on the new emerging phenomena. This need to educate the Romanian citizens is important for two reasons.

The first is undoubtedly the need to meet the standards that the European Union had in order to later be able to enter the Schengen area. We will see in the coming chapter that Romanian population is somewhat unpredictable in their assessment of foreigners. This unpredictability will be revealed through a media analysis. Another reason is related to the benefits that an immigrant workforce would mean for Romania. As we said before, Romania is best known as an emigration country, with the EU accession having brought a peak in Romanian emigration with 560,000 in 2007 (OECD 2019). Which in turn meant that the Romanian work force started having shortages of employees, and as such one solution was to attract foreign workers.

Additionally, companies prefer having immigrant workers instead of Romanian ones due to the fact that in most cases, immigrant workers are paid less than Romanian ones, thus making it more profitable for them (Silași, Grigore, Simina 2009). In this sense, it is worth analyzing GEO No. 56 from the 20th of June 2007 which regulated the employment of foreign citizens in the Romanian labor market. Article 3 is relevant to our discussion because it states that foreigners can be employed in Romania if the positions cannot be occupied by Romanian or EU/EEA citizens; if they have the required skills; if they have proof

⁴ Original text: “organ de specialitate al administrației publice centrale, cu personalitate juridică, în subordinea Ministerului Internelor și Reformei Administrative, prin reorganizarea Autorității pentru străini și a Oficiului Național pentru Refugiați, care se desființează” (GEO no. 55 20/09/2007)

of having a health insurance; if they fall within the annual quota decided by the Government and if the employers have no debts (GEO no. 56 20/09/2007).

Stated above is that one objective of the National Migration Strategy (2007) was to socially integrate immigrants into Romanian society. The Romanian government has provided immigrants with specific classes of Romanian language in order to help them integrate. Additionally, an important help was also given by the European Integration Fund which acted between 2007 and 2013. Between 2007 and 2011 it organized 23 projects with an estimated value of 3,457,231 euros. Its main objective was to help developing country citizens, no matter their cultural, linguistic and religious differences, to integrate into the EU society. To achieve this, the European Integration Fund invested in educating immigrants on the legal aspects of immigrating into the EU; in programs and activities meant to provide the necessary knowledge for immigrants to integrate in the host-society; in offering them better public services and so on. As a result, in 2007, the European Integration Fund had 1 project, in 2008, 7 projects, in 2009, 4 projects, in 2010, 6 projects and in 2011, 5 projects (“FED 2007-2013” 2013).

2.2. Qualitative, quantitative and statistical results after the implementation of the 2007 National Migration Strategy

As reflected in the statistical reports regarding immigration flow after 2007 and after the National Migration Strategy (2007) was applied, we can see some changes. Looking at the year 2006, we have a number of 7,714 immigrants that have settled permanently in Romania. The number jumps to 9,575 the following year and to 10,030 for the year 2008 (“Romanian Statistical Yearbook” 2009). Unfortunately, beginning with the year 2009, the National Institute of Statistics changed their methodology on reporting the number of immigrants coming into Romania, in the sense that “immigrants” became “persons with foreign, Romanian, and without citizenship who settled their usual residence in Romania during the reference year” (“Romanian Statistical Yearbook” 2014), while before they were “foreign citizens who settled their permanent residence in Romania” (“Romanian Statistical Yearbook” 2009). As such, this data source will no longer be used in this thesis due to the unreliability of it and lack of relevance after 2010.

However, for the year 2010, which was the end of the National Migration Strategy (2007), there is the annual report provided by the Romanian Immigration Office, which stated that 10,124 immigrants were granted permanent residence. We see that during these years there is a slight increase in the number of

foreigners getting permanent residence in Romania. Additionally, in the year 2010, 2,528 work authorizations were given, with the three main origin countries being Turkey (528), China (444), and the Philippines (210) (“Activity Report for the Year 2010” 2011).

It is important to also look at the qualitative research that has been done in regards to the reference years (2007–2010) in order to have a more comprehensive view of the immigration phenomenon. This said, we take a look at two case studies, one done by the Soros Foundation in 2008 and the other one done by the European Social Fund (Fondul Social European) analyzing the situation of Chinese and Vietnamese immigrants at the end of 2010.

In the report done by the Soros foundation called "Immigrant in Romania. Perspectives and risks" there is reported an overall perspective of the immigrant situation in Romania at the beginning of its membership into the EU. What was valuable for this thesis was the well done listing of reasons for immigration into Romania. The researchers have conducted a series of interviews with Asian migrants in order to have a more clear view on their reasons for immigration. This qualitative perspective helps us see the way in which the immigrant perspective of living in Romania has progressed through the years. An important aspect is the fact that the respondents are mostly Asian immigrants.

Through the interviews that they have conducted, the researchers have identified a series of reasons for immigration. One of them is economic motivation which can be identified as being the most common reason. Some of the immigrants that have been interviewed stated that it came to Romania specifically for starting a business or working. The economic reason for immigrating appears mainly because of push factors from the origin country, in the sense that most of the immigrants coming into Romania to work, do that because in their origin country they are not able to find a job (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008).

And another pull factor can be the network migration, the idea that immigrants create a network in the country of destination and as such, help other immigrants to come. The researchers state that this type of network migration functions in Romania through investors or small entrepreneurs that employ their family members or search for workers in their origin country (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008).

Previous experience can also be another motivator in the sense that immigrants who have immigrated before are more inclined to immigrate again than immigrants coming for the first time. Family reunification and studies are also other common reasons for immigrating (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008).

A very important part of the study dwells into the way in which immigrants integrate into the Romanian labor market. At the end of 2008 there were two main ways to be able to work in Romania. The first was networking. The migrant would know somebody from Romania and through own forces, would be able to immigrate and start working. The second was to resort to a third party company that would act as the intermediary between the migrant and the potential employer. This was one of the most common means of immigrating for work into Romania. It is stated that migrants would call upon these firms in their origin country. Some of the interview responses confirm the fact that some immigrants did not know much about Romania before becoming migrant workers “ Before arriving in Romania we didn't know anything about it. We signed up for a recruitment program to work abroad and so we were asked to come to Romania”⁵ (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008).

If we were to look at some of the problems that immigrants had in 2008, most of them revolved around their interaction with Romanian institutions. The main reason for these existing problems was the fact that most of the information (required documents or any kind of legal information necessary for the proper integration of the migrant) was in Romanian, which meant that only a small number of immigrants could understand (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008).

We can argue that, being the first year of Romania's official membership in the EU, it is understandable to have some deficiencies. The study shows the unpreparedness of the Romanian government in regards to receiving migrants. The ambiguous required documents and the multiple step process of receiving a permit makes it incredibly difficult for migrants to properly integrate, some of them even needing a translator to help them communicate with the institutions.

Although the Romanian government seems unprepared, respondents have appreciated the fact that in recent years (2006-2008) the migration process has become easier (“Lately it began to be easier. Before it was very...it was chaos, you couldn't do anything if you didn't know somebody if you didn't have contacts.. ”⁶) (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008). The majority of respondents concurred that after 2007, there have been some changes in the bureaucratic process as well as how they are received by Romanian institutions. When talking about the change they see in the way they are treated by these institutions, the respondents say that five or six years ago, they were not that welcoming (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008).

⁵ Original text: “Până să ajungem în România nu știam nimic despre această țară. Noi ne înscriesem într-un program de recrutare pentru a munci în străinătate și așa am fost solicitate pentru a veni în România” (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008)

⁶ Original text: “În ultima perioadă a început să fie mai simplu. Înainte a fost foarte... Era un haos mare, nu puteai să faci ceva decât dacă știai pe cineva, aveai contacte...” (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008)

Another series of problems identified by the researchers were those related to the status of migrant workers in relation to their employers. They state that being an outsider can be a fuel for employers to be not welcoming towards migrants. An interesting perspective is given by the researchers when they state that because migrants do not know the Romanian language, most of the employers perceive it as not knowing also their legal rights. As such, most employers do not respect the national work norms in terms of hours of work, hours of leisure and so on (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008).

Another problem identified was the discriminatory aspect of being employed as a migrant worker. Even though there are anti-discrimination laws, in 2008 there was not a control on the application of this laws. And as such, immigrants were exposed to this type of discrimination (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008).

An interesting part of the report talks about Asian migrants in the textile industry in Romania. The case study detailed in the report is related to the exploitation of migrants done by the Romanian employers. Due to the lack of labor force in industries such as textile, a solution was to employ migrant workers, the majority of which were Asian. The researchers identified a link between the lack of labor force in some industries in Romania, the employers wanting to have a cheap labor force and the recruiting firms that were the intermediary between immigrants and employers (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008).

The relation between the immigrant and these intermediary firms is developed in the report due to the important significance of it. In this sense, the intermediary firms get from the migrant the specific documentation that is required for them to be able to transmit it to the employer. If the employer considers that the qualifications of the specific migrant match with their need, then the migrant is employed. Additionally, after being employed the migrant has to pay this specific intermediary firm its commission (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008).

We can argue that these intermediary firms can be, on the one hand, helpful for migrants who want to immigrate for work into Romania and that are not capable single handedly of properly understanding the bureaucracy and documents in order to move. They usually handle everything from the transport of migrants from the origin country to Romania, their accommodation in Romania, their salary and so on. On the other hand, these intermediary firms can sometimes scam migrants into paying for specific conditions and getting less than they bargained for (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008).

In 2008 migrants experienced issues when signing the work contract because of the fact that they were in other languages than their mother tongue, which made it very difficult for them to understand it. Another important aspect related to the intermediary firms, is the fact that when arriving in Romania,

some of the immigrants noticed a discrepancy between the salary that was written in the contract and the actual salary that they received ("Only after arriving in Romania and getting to know the employers did I understand that from the \$400 that we would receive we needed to also pay for our food and accommodation. In the first month, I worked a lot of extra hours. ⁷")(Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008).

To conclude the first year after Romania's accession to the EU, we can state that in relation to migrant reception, the Romanian Institutions were in an underdeveloped state. We could argue that due to the novelty of the immigration phenomenon, Romanian institutions did not have the time to properly train their staff and adopt the correct legislation. The fact that most of the information provided by the institutions was in Romanian forced migrants to either request the help of a translator (which required them to pay out from their own pockets) or, if they were lucky enough to have a friend who was a Romanian speaker at their side. We can see in the responses of the immigrants in the above report, that there is a noticeable positive development in the relations between Romanian institutions and migrants as compared to previous years.

A recurring problem has to be the intermediary firms. Even though we identified some positive aspects of resorting to an intermediary firm, the negative aspects are far too numerous to ignore. We will have a dedicated section later on in regards to these intermediary firms due to the fact that they are even more present today. We will analyze if the same positive and negative aspects can be said for today's firms and how exactly they differ from the firms in 2008. Consequently, a part will be dedicated to the employer's perspective on migrant workers. We have seen that in 2008, some employers were not respecting the contracts signed with migrants (abusive working hours for example). We will see how and if the situation changes for the period 2019-2022.

In the case study done at the end of 2010, some employers were also questioned, which proves to be relevant to our discussion. The study has both a quantitative analysis as well as a qualitative analysis. The quantitative analysis has been done by having 98 Chinese immigrants respond to a series of questions (Toader et al. 2010).

70 of them were posted workers, and 28 of them were employed. Most of the immigrants that have responded to the questionnaire found out of the possibility of working in Romania through third party agencies that usually requested a commission of approximately 10,000 euros. Some of the relevant

⁷ Original text: "Doar când am ajuns în România și i-am cunoscut pe angajatori, am înțeles că din cei 400\$ trebuie să plătim mâncarea și cazarea. [...] În prima lună am lucrat multe ore suplimentare" (Voicu, Toth, and Guga 2008)

results from the quantitative study shows that 69 of them want to go back to their origin country, 26 of them wishing to continue working in Romania. 71 of them were content with their accommodations. 52 of them have chosen “institutions that are trained in managing migration” as the place to go for if they needed more information about their working place (Toader et al. 2010).

Some of the answers to the question “What were the problems that they faced upon entering Romania?” were: the inability to properly communicate due to the language barrier; problems related to the accommodation not being good; companies going bankrupt after hiring them; the police controls after requiring bribery; corrupt policemen; and employers not respecting their contracts (Toader et al. 2010).

For the qualitative analysis it is worth mentioning the view that the employers had in regards to the immigrant workers that they employed. In this sense, the companies stated that employing foreign workers has its advantages and disadvantages. Some disadvantages mentioned by the employers were the fact that there will be an increase in the number of nationals that will be looking for a job; (Romanians') jobs are being filled. Some of the advantages stated were that they work over-time and for little remuneration; they do not need a better salary, and so on (Toader et al. 2010). This result confirms the theory that after 2007, companies employed immigrant workers due to the low salaries that they were given and the longer work hours that they provided.

To conclude the analysis of the National Migration Strategy (2007) it is important to state that although much thought and preparation have been given by the Romanian government on the issue of migration, in reality, the progress has not been that striking. Indeed, the country's new-found membership in the European Union opened the doors to emigration and immigration, which in turn meant a shortage of national labor and a solution for this problem through migrant workers. Moreover, a major problem was the implementation of the legislation and programs proposed by the National Migration Strategy. In this sense, we have the qualitative research carried out by the European Social Fund, which proves that in reality, the institutions that were supposed to help migrants integrate into Romanian society still have a long way to go.

Undeniably, the Romanian Institutions do begin to provide help to immigrants. For example, in the study “A Study on the Immigration Phenomenon in Romania. The Integration of Foreigners in the Romanian Society”⁸, the authors report a constant increase in the number of foreigners that were assisted by the

⁸Original title: “Studiu Asupra Fenomenului Imigrației În România. Integrarea Străinilor În Societatea Românească .”

General Inspectorate for Immigration in order to integrate into Romanian society, from 693 in 2008 to 3,311 in 2010. Additionally, the study also reports that IOM Romania has also opened 15 information centers in order to help the integration of foreigners.

In the implementation of these programs, Daniela Cervinshi identifies three main problems. On the one hand, there was a reluctance on the part of immigrant communities and the same reluctance on the part of public institutions towards immigrant communities. On the other hand, the visibility of these services is not optimal due to the short implementation period (Cervinschi n.d.).

2.3. GEO 194/2002

It is relevant to talk about this government ordinance in this specific context due to the fact that most of the modifications it suffered, were done in 2011. GEO 194, as it was stated before, is the law that dictates the entry, stay and exit of foreigners in Romania. As such, in this ordinance we identify all the rights and obligations of immigrants when entering Romanian territory.

The rights that foreigners have in Romania are multiple:

- Foreigners with legal stay in Romania enjoy the general protection of people and property
- Foreigners can freely move and can attain their residents anywhere on the territory of Romania
- For all the period that the residence permit is valid they can exit and come back freely in Romania
- The benefits from social assistance
- They have access to any type of education

These are just a few of the rights that foreigners have in Romania. As for the obligations that foreigners have, the most important ones are:

- They need to respect the Romanian legislation for the duration of their stay
- They cannot organize political parties or any other organizations that would be a threat to national security
- They need to respect the purpose for which they were granted the residence permit
- They cannot finance, initiate or organize demonstrations or gatherings that can disturb the public order or can pose a threat to national security

The focus for this thesis falls on the second section of GEO 194 which talks about the stay of foreigners in Romania. Generally, foreigners can legally stay in Romania until their visa or residence permit expires. It is relevant to state that foreigners who had been granted legal temporary stay in Romania are obligated to inform the authorities of their entry and any changes that could occur during their stay, such as changes in their employment status, legal status, or their intent to extend their stay (“GEO 194/2002”, 2011).

Another important aspect is related to the types of visas immigrants can apply for and what are the requirements for each of them. There are exempted from needing a visa to enter Romania some specific countries with whom the government has agreements. The types of visas that concern us are the short stay and the long stay visas. An immigrant, in order to be able to request residence permit, they need to first have a long stay visa. The types of long stay visas differ in accordance to the reasons for requesting it. As such, we have long stay visas for economic activities, for professional activities, for commercial activities, for employment, for detachment, for studies, for family reunification, for religious activities, for scientific activities, for diplomatic missions and for other purposes. For Asian migrants, usually they apply for long stay visas for economic activities, professional activities, commercial activities, employment, detachment, and for studies.

For almost all the types of long stay visas the requirements are the same. The Romanian visa has to be requested from the diplomatic missions. In order to be able to request a visa, the immigrant needs to provide certain documents and to comply to the following requirements:

- No visa refusal alerts have been identified in the Integrated Visa Information System on the name of the migrant
- The migrant has not been denied entry in member states
- There are no reasons to suspect the migrant requests the visa for illegal migration
- The foreigner does not have any kind of criminal record

In order to be granted a long stay visa for employment purposes, the migrant needs to have the following documents: the copy of the notice of employment, the proof that they have the means to support themselves(at least the national minimum brut salary), the criminal record certificate and the medical insurance.

In order to be able to extend their temporary stay and be granted permanent stay in Romania, migrants had to fulfill some conditions such as during their stay no reason for not permitting them to enter Romania have appeared, they still have a valid travel document, he has previously respected the reason for

immigrating, has proof that he has a place to stay, presents proof that he has paid the taxes for the extension of his stay and so on.

If we were to look at the way in which work authorizations can be granted, much of the responsibility is given to the employer as well as the migrant. For a migrant to be granted work authorization, the employer needs to send several documents to the GII. It is not a process that can be done only by the migrant as it requires the assistance of the company that employs the migrant. The company takes the responsibility of the migrant, in the sense that whatever changes that could occur in their contract or with the migrant, the company and then the migrant needs to give notice to the General Inspectorate for Immigration.

As stated before, a migrant is obliged to respect the reason for which he/she entered Romania. As such, if a migrant decides to leave a specific employer and has found another one, he/she needs to immediately give notice to GII and the whole process will restart with the new employer now taking responsibility for the migrant. If the migrant is not able to find another employer and just resigns from the previous one, he needs to leave Romania as soon as possible due to the fact that the reason for which he entered is not respected anymore (“GEO 194/2002”, 2011). But the action of leaving the place of work is also related to the type of contract the migrant has with the employer. In order for companies to be able to employ migrant workers, contracts are for a determined period of time.

Section 4 of the GEO is relevant for our research due to the fact that it talks about the integration of migrants into the economic, cultural and social life. In this sense, activities such as Romanian language courses, professional courses, information campaigns on the rights and obligations of foreigners, history and culture courses will be provided.

Article 80 is relevant because it talks about the equal treatment that foreigners have while being in Romania. This includes access to the labor market, to economical activities, to any type of education, to medical assistance and so on.

2.4. National Migration Strategy from the 18th of May 2011 for the period 2011-2014

The National Migration Strategy (2011) continues with the same principles as the National Migration Strategy (2007) had, with only a few changes. As prime objectives, we still have the idea of correctly

informing immigrants on the legal aspects of their migration process in Romania. Moreover, an emphasis is put on having programs in order to better and quicker integrate immigrants into Romanian society. For this, the Romanian government will identify the developing countries from which there is the biggest potential for migration and will update the list of the identified states annually. Additionally, the diplomatic missions from these developing countries will need to take part in the process of informing potential migrants. Lastly, the promotion of the EU Immigration Portal as a resource of information in regards to legal immigration is also a priority (National Migration Strategy, 2011).

Much greater importance is given to the admission of nationals of developing countries into the Romanian labor market. In the migration strategy, it is stipulated that the Romanian society is being confronted with a lack of personnel in the labor market. In order to address this lack of workers, the Romanian government will need to actively identify the areas where workers are needed and also be more vigilant in relation to the admission of labor migrants. In this sense, some directions for action that are written in the strategy are to identify the annual quota for admission of labor migrants, to encourage the admission of highly skilled laborers and consequently to release the blue cards in order to provide better mobility inside the European Union, and to finalize bilateral agreements between developing countries in order to make it easier for migrants to come to Romania (National Migration Strategy, 2011).

Article 1.3 talks about facilitating the admission and stay of foreign investors in order to encourage investments in Romania. Article 1.4 talks about promoting higher education and facilitating the future stay of immigrants in Romania. In this sense, the Romanian government will create ways in which immigrants who have studied at a Romanian University, will have a plethora of options in order to remain in Romania for work (National Migration Strategy, 2011).

At the same time, the Romanian government will strengthen the control system in order to prevent illegal immigration. For this objective, the Romanian authorities will ensure proper information for foreigners in order to legally migrate (National Migration Strategy, 2011).

The inter institutional cooperation we identified in the National Migration Strategy of 2011, was previously identified in the National Migration Strategy of 2007. Another common objective identified in both strategies is the social integration of foreigners in Romanian society. The National Migration Strategy of 2011 states unequivocally that cooperation between Romanian institutions and immigrant communities is required for better integration of immigrants. Moreover, the Romanian government will

organize classes in Romanian language, cultural orientation, and counseling sessions, with the target group being the newly arrived foreigners (National Migration Strategy, 2011).

Chapter 8 of the National Migration Strategy (2011) presents the risk factors. It talks about factors that could appear in the exterior plan but also in the internal plan. Immigration is still a somewhat new phenomenon in Romania, but it is beginning to become more and more present. As such, some of the risk factors that could appear in the external plan could be the sudden modification of migration influxes and the lack of cooperation between Romania and other developing countries. In the internal plan, some risk factors include not being able to respect the deadlines for the action plans because of limited funds or limited manpower (National Migration Strategy, 2011).

2.5. Qualitative, quantitative and statistical data as a result of the National Migration Strategy (2011)

In the 2011 trial census, 36,026 foreigners were registered in Romania. The top five positions were taken by the citizens of the Republic of Moldavia (6,775), Turkey (3,306), Italy (2,676), China (2,214), and Germany (1,597). (Trial Census 2011). Additionally, in the same census, we find that the number of foreigners that were already in Romania for at least 12 months was 34,252. Out of all of them, 15,432, were active persons, meaning that they were part of the labor market.

Looking at the “Analysis of the Romanian Immigration Office in 2011”, we can see that they reported 57,211 foreigners from third-world countries residing legally in Romania. Again, the top three countries of origin are the Republic of Moldavia, Turkey and China. On top of that, we add the number of EU citizens residing in Romania (40,862), which include Italians(9,169), Germans(6,721), French(5,006), etc. This discrepancy between the numbers reported by the General Inspectorate of Immigration and the Official trial census of 2011 can be explained by the fact that the 2011 census was a trial census, meaning that the data they collected cannot be reliable.

Below, we have a graph that shows the increase in the migration flow between 2010 and 2014 of foreigners from developing countries. We see an average of 57,485 per year. Moreover, we have an average of 2,476 work permits issued between 2010-2013 (there is no data for 2014) (average done by the author with data from the analysis of the Romanian Immigration Office from 2011 to 2014).

Number of Foreigners from developing countries that entered Romania



Graph made by the author

Source: data was extracted from the analysis of the Romanian Immigration Office from 2011 to 2015

During the economic boom, that is to say, the period between 2006 and 2008, labor immigration had an ascending trend. Moreover, among all the purposes of immigration, immigration for study purposes is always present as a constant (Alexe 2015).

In an attempt to have a clearer overview of the number of immigrants that came into Romania between 2010 and 2014, we will calculate the number of third-country immigrants plus the number of EU immigrants plus the number of illegal stays that the GII recorded in their annual analysis. This is an attempt to have a more correct and fuller view of the situation of immigrant inflow during this period of time. As such, we have the table below. We see that the average is 100,000 people not taking into consideration 2010 due to lack of data for foreigners coming from the EU and EEA.

The immigrants are usually young (less than 35 years old) and mostly men (60%). We see how a pull factor is the cities that are known to be university cities such as Cluj, Iași, Constanța or the capital city, Bucharest (Alexe 2015). Moreover, cities that have a developed labor market or where there is a clear need for laborers are also pull factors.

As a result, we have an increase in the number of immigrants coming into Romania after the integration into the EU. The emigration post-communism and post-EU ascension has left Romania in desperate need of workers. Thus, the incentives done to promote either workplaces or universities have resulted in an increase in immigration.

Year	Number of third-world country foreigners	Number of EU and EEA foreigners	Illegal stays	Total Number of Foreigners
2010	58424		3783	62207
2011	57211	40862	3452	101525
2012	55823	46936	3453	106212
2013	58497	40478	2318	101293
2014	57471	41115	2496	101082

Table made by the author

Source: data was extracted from the analysis of the Romanian Immigration Office from 2011 to 2015

We have seen above the statistical results of the National Migration Strategy of 2011. In order to have a more comprehensive view of this results, we should also take a look at the Activity Analysis of the General Inspectorate for Immigration that was published in 2014.

In the section talking about the achievements of the General Inspectorate of Immigration, it is stated that they have organized 3,094 actions and controls in order to combat the legal stay of foreigners. Additionally, 777 actions and controls were made in order to combat the undeclared work of foreigners. In the area of asylum seekers they had helped 116 migrants through the project "Effective voluntary return and integration in the country of origin". 1,620 asylum applications have been registered, which continues to trend on an upward slope ("Activity Report for the Year 2014" 2014).

Concerning the inter-institutional cooperation mentioned in the National Migration Strategy, the General Inspectorate for Immigration states that they met with representatives from institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the External Information Service, the Romanian Intelligence Service, and others. This meetings had the objective of solving the problem of giving the visas for foreigners ("Activity Report for the Year 2014" 2014).

Furthermore, the General Inspectorate for Immigration has promoted Romania's position in the EU Council and has carried out activities within FRONTEX ("Activity Report for the Year 2014" 2014).

2.6. The National Migration Strategy for the years 2015-2018

The international context of this National Migration Strategy was the 2015 refugee crisis. Because of this a lot of pressure was put on the member states in order to push them to act. One of the decisions made by the European Union was to introduce a compulsory quota of refugees that each member state was obligated to receive. It is important to talk about Romania's reaction to the refugee crisis of 2015 in order to better understand the context in which the National Migration Strategy was adopted (Sebe 2016).

In this sense, Romania's reaction to the compulsory quota of refugees that each member state was obliged to receive was to bring the idea of voluntary quotas due to the fact that it was the opinion of Romania's president that each member state should establish on its own how many refugees it can take. In the paper "Romania stands in the issue of the refugee crisis" by Mihai Sebe, it is written that Romania voted against the compulsory quota at the JAI council. Additionally, some of the actions that the Romanian government did in regards to the refugee crisis was to strongly discourage any anti-refugee speech and to adopt the National Migration Strategy for the period 2015 to 2018 (Sebe 2016).

In the text of the 2015 strategy it is stated that it is vital that the actions of the member states are in line with the actions of the European Union. Another interesting section is dedicated to the idea that the EU has to maximize the opportunities that legal immigration comes with but also to be mindful of the security threats that it could bring. It is in this international context that the strategy was written (National Migration Strategy, 2015).

In regards to the national context it is stated that in 2015 the legal migration influxes were coming from states that Romania had agreements with. It is also stated that beginning with 2005 the Republic of Moldova, the Republic of China and Turkey were the main three countries from which legal migrants came. Asian countries have begun to be the most common origin countries, especially after Romania's accession to the EU. It is important to state that the economic crisis has also played a role in the increase in immigration. In 2011, the Arab spring revolt took place and it produced a great increase in the number of immigrants coming to Romania from those regions, namely Tunisia and Egypt (National Migration Strategy, 2015).

Interestingly enough in the 2007 migration strategy, it is stated that Romania is quickly transitioning from a transit country to a destination country for immigrants. If we were to look at the 2015 Migration strategy it is said that Romania is still a transit country for illegal immigrants and asylum seekers (National Migration Strategy, 2015).

The general objectives of this strategy is to promote legal migration for all three implicated parts the Romanian society, the immigrants and their origin states. The specific objectives of the strategy are multiple. The growing lack of manpower makes promoting Romania as a destination country for developing country citizens a primary objective. Not only does the Romanian government want to occupy the labor force, but also promote its educational system. In this regard, Romanian universities are encouraged to promote their multi-language courses in order to attract immigrants (National Migration Strategy, 2015).

The same objective of correctly informing the immigrant community in regards to legal migration that is found in all three previous strategies, is found in this one as well. The strengthening of regular controls in order to prevent illegal migration or illegal stay is another objective. This objective can be reached by a strong information campaign that would provide immigrants with information about sanctions that they would receive if they are found as being illegal migrants (National Migration Strategy, 2015).

It is also stated that the migratory instability that is experienced by the whole European Union due to big migratory influxes from the Middle East, has generated illegal migration in Romania. In this sense, the government has multiple ways of action, some of which include adopting the specific legislation in order to decrease the risks and to assess the situation, to prepare the administrative personnel for unexpected situations and so on (National Migration Strategy, 2015).

Another prime objective is the active participation of Romania to the international efforts of the members of the European Union in order to identify solutions for the citizens of developing countries trying to immigrate into the EU (National Migration Strategy, 2015).

We again have the objective of integrating immigrants into Romanian society. It is stated that it's an obligation for the institutions of Romania to provide immigrants with the best integration programs that they can. In this sense, some actions that would help obtain this objective or to attract migrant representative organizations of developing countries citizens in order to promote their culture, to continue the integration programs that are already in motion, to continue the training of the staff, to properly

inform the world citizens of their writing obligation that they have while they are in Romania (National Migration Strategy, 2015).

An important objective is to create an environment that would benefit the integration of immigrants into Romanian society. In this sense, the Romanian government urges proper documentation on the situation of immigrants in Romania, the promotion of intercultural dialogues and the creation of a positive image in the Romanian society of immigrants (National Migration Strategy, 2015).

2.7. Qualitative and quantitative data as a result of the National Migration Strategy (2015)

The annual activity report that the General Immigration Inspectorate delivers is relevant to our discussion due to the statistical data that it provides for the years 2015-2018. As such, it is important to look at each of the Annual Activity reports to determine whether the National Migration Strategy (2015) has indeed helped the immigration process for third-country nationals, more importantly for Asian immigrants.

Below we have a chart that shows the progression of visa requests that the diplomatic missions have received from 2015 to 2018. For the year 2015, diplomatic missions have received 13,487 visa requests, 10,425 of which have been finalized and 10,112 have been favorably accepted. Out of the 10,112 that have been favorably accepted, 7,697 were long stay visas and 2,415 short stay visas (“Activity Report for the Year 2015” 2016).

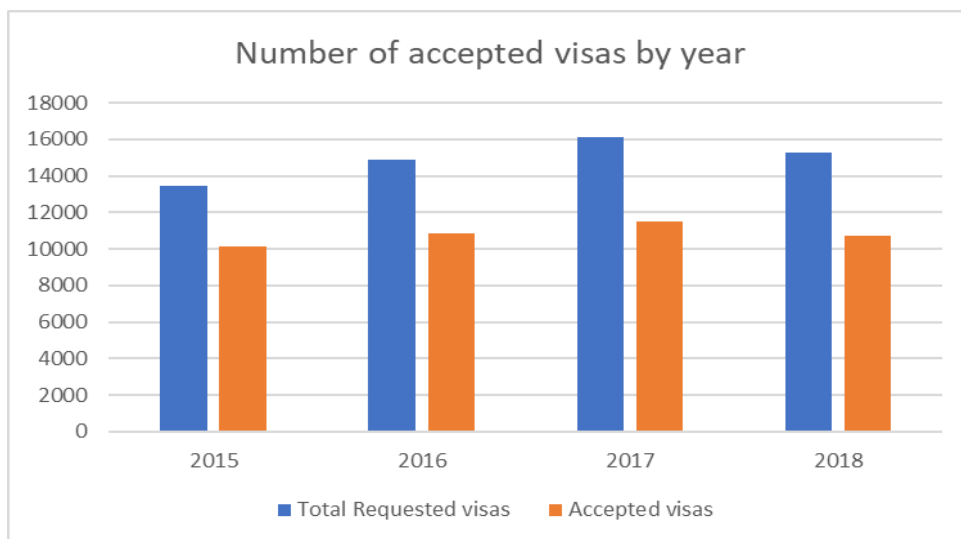


Chart made by the author by combining the data from the annual activity reports done by the General Inspectorate of Immigration for the years 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018.

For the year 2016 we have a total of 14,864 visa requests out of which 10,837 have been accepted. From the 10,837 visas 7,456 were long stay visas and 3,381 were short stay visas (“Activity Report for the Year 2016” 2017). For the next year we had the number of 16,103 visa requests out of which 11,535 were accepted. As for the number of long stay visas we had 7,456 and 3,381 short stay visas (“Activity Report for the Year 2017” 2018). And lastly for the year 2018 we had a total number of 15,284 visas out of which 10,741 were accepted. Moreover, we had 10,527 work visas given by the diplomatic missions (“Activity Report for the Year 2018” 2019)

As we can see in the above chart, there has been a slight increase in the number of accepted visas. We can also see how the number of long stay visas remains constant throughout the period. For the year 2018 we also have data on the percentage of permanent workers coming into Romania. 69.8% of the 10,527 work permits given by the diplomatic missions were for permanent workers. 26.8% of them were for seconded workers (“Activity Report for the Year 2018” 2019).

The table below shows us the number of developing country nationals and of citizens of the EU and EEA that have a legal stay in the years 2015 to 2018. Interestingly enough, we can see a general increase in both groups. From 2015 to 2018 the number of developing country nationals increased with almost 9,000 people.

For the year 2015, 15.39% of the developing country nationals that immigrated into Romania were Moldovans, 14.74% of them were Turks, 12.52% of them were Chinese and 7.48% of them were Syrians. The top four origin countries for EU and EEA Nationals were Italy, Germany, France and Hungary. It is also written that in order to prevent illegal immigration, 2,324 actions were done by the immigration office. As a result of those actions 2,159 strangers were found as illegal immigrants (“Activity Report for the Year 2015” 2016).

Year	Developing -country nationals	Citizens of EU/EEA	Total
2015	60257	43882	104139
2016	64903	47211	112114
2017	62212	49697	116830*
2018	69141	51217	120358

Table made by the author by combining the data from the annual activity reports done by the General Inspectorate of Immigration for the years 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018.

* for the year 2017 the total number of foreigners include also the foreigners who were granted a form of protection, which do not appear in the table

For the year 2016, Moldova, Turkey, China, Syria, are still the four main origin countries of developing country immigrants. For immigrants coming from Turkey we see an increase of 2.3% from 2015 to 2016, and 2.5% increase for Chinese immigrants and 7.7% for Syrian immigrants. For both the years 2015 and 2016 the number of developing country nationals is higher than the number of citizens of EU and EEA coming into Romania (“Activity Report for the Year 2016” 2017).

For the year 2017 the General Inspectorate of Immigration has provided more data than for previous year. Out of the 116,830 immigrants coming into Romania, 62,212 were developing country nationals. Out of the total number of developing country immigrants, 50,968 had temporary stay and 12,244 had long stay. For this particular year the total number of foreigners is composed of the developing country nationals, the citizens of EU and EEA, and foreigners who were granted any form of protection (“Activity Report for the Year 2017” 2018).

Additionally, 26,922 requests for a stay extension were received. The main reasons for this extension were: being related to Romanian citizens, for studies or for employment. The main three countries of origin were Turkey, Moldova, and China. The number of illegal immigrants that were found residing in Romania remained somewhat constant at 3,580 (“Activity Report for the Year 2017” 2018).

For the year 2018, we had a number of 120,358 foreigners with legal stay. 69,141 developing country nationals were reported out of which 35.4% of them came in order to reunite with relatives, 22.8% came for study and 17.8% of them had permanent stay. Out of the 51,217 immigrants coming from the EU and EEA, 40.2% came for work and 14.6% of them came for studies (“Activity Report for the Year 2018” 2019).

The four activity analyses provided by the General Inspectorate of Immigration have data regarding the results of the projects that they have implemented during the time period stated in the National Immigration Strategy (2015). It is important to look at this data because it shows us how exactly the National Immigration Strategy was implemented and what objectives were actually reached.

As such, for the year 2015 the main objectives were to change the national legislation in order to abide by the European legislation, to combat illegal migration, to have good inter institutional cooperation and to assure access to the asylum procedure. 12 projects of Normative Acts were initiated by the GII, most of them being related with asylum laws and illegal migration. The inter institutional corporation was done by having 686 training sessions for 16,041 employees. They also reported having international cooperation, which was done by promoting the position of Romania in the European council and other such activities. 2015 being the year when the migrant crisis happened, GII has also elaborated an action plan that would be used if there was a high influx of migrants (“Activity Report for the Year 2015” 2016).

In general, we have the same objectives stated in the 2016 activity analysis, with the changes being that the GII was more focused on controlling the legal stays, applying the proper removal measures in modernizing its systems (“Activity Report for the Year 2016” 2017).

For the Year 2017, GII focused more on ensuring proper management in the area of the regimentation of legal migration, the promotion of Romania in EU groups in order to help it take the EU presidency (“Activity Report for the Year 2017” 2018).

Lastly, for the year 2018 the main objectives were to continue modernizing the GII and increasing the accommodation capacity for the asylum seekers (“Activity Report for the Year 2018” 2019).

For all the Activity Analyses of the GII, we can see that a common denominator is the importance given to the asylum processes. Having the legislation regarding asylum seekers be in accordance with European legislation was the primary target. It is why most of the objectives stated in the national strategies and the activity reports relate to asylum seekers. Before, most of the legislative changes were done in order

to become a state member of the European Union, in the period after Romania's accession, the focus shifted to Schengen integration.

If we were to look at the study done by Coșciug et al. (2019), we could identify the preferred regions of immigrants in the periods 2016 to 2018. The data shows that the tendency is for immigrants to choose a more developed region of Romania. 50% of them have chosen to reside in the cities that are economically developed such as Bucharest, Brasov, Prahova, Buzau etc (Coșciug et al. 2019).

Additionally, the immigrants coming into Romania during the time period 2016 to 2018 are an active population, in the sense that most of them are between the ages 15 and 64. The study also specifies the fact that we have an increasing trend of immigrants, especially those coming from developing countries. Data shows that for 2018, the number of Moldovan immigrants is decreasing and the number of immigrants coming from the Middle East and Asia is increasing compared to 2017 (Coșciug et al. 2019).

Moreover, for 2018, a survey done by the center of comparative migration studies shows that out of all the respondents, most of the migrant workers are active in the restaurant and hotel industry. We see a diverse immigration, in the sense that we have migrants working in a plethora of industries instead of being concentrated in a single one. In the same survey, respondents have declared that their average monthly net income is situated above the national average. The study shows that it is not totally true, seeing how 43.7% of the respondents actually have monthly salaries below 2000 RON.

In the same national survey conducted by the Center of Comparative Migration Studies in 2018, the immigrant respondents identified the few situations where they felt discriminated against. 18.7% of them felt discriminated in the means of transport, 19.2% of them fell discriminated in relations to the local authorities, 13.7% of the in relations to the police, 20.4% of them in restaurants or bars, 18.1% of them when looking for a job (Coșciug et al. 2019).

2.8. The years 2019 and 2020

It is important for this research to also look at the data for the years 2019 to 2021. We cannot talk about this specific time frame without talking about the impact The COVID-19 global pandemic had on it. In the study “Immigrants inclusion in the workplace in Romania. The impact of COVID-19”, the author states that COVID-19 had a disproportionate impact on immigrants and refugees. The fact that the pandemic had an incredibly negative effect on sectors such as hospitality and construction, which are the

sectors in which we have an overwhelming number of immigrants, makes migrant workers one of the most vulnerable position in the labor market (Alexe, 2021).

The theory presented by the author is that migration influxes grow at the same time as the economy. Covid-19 had plunged the economy into a freefall, and as such, we see a drop in the number of migrants coming into Romania for the period 2019 to 2020. Due to sanitary constraints, new applications for work permits have been put on hold and current applications have been put on standby (Alexe, 2021).

In retrospect, an effect that the pandemic had on the Romanian institutions was to digitalize at least the part of the bureaucracy needed in order for migrants to immigrate into Romania. Moreover, the Romanian institutions provided immigrants with all the essential information concerning the virus and the way in which to protect themselves from it (Alexe, 2021).

Among the labor sectors that had suffered greatly from the virus was the economic one. Immigrants working in this particular sector have lost their job or had their work-contract suspended due to the COVID-19 restrictions. As such, migrant workers had to rely either on their savings or try to make ends meet in some other way. This meant that some of them were unable to pay for their accommodation, meals and so on, the only solution being to go back home where they would have been met with other obstacles. An unfortunate example given by the author was of the immigrants who had their accommodation and meals included in the wage package. As such, when they were fired, they also lost their right of residence, which again forced them to relocate (Alexe, 2021).

An analysis of the open data published by the General Inspectorate for Immigration was made in order to provide a clearer and more detailed view of immigration influxes for the year 2019. Thus, three data charts were made by combining the two databases provided by GII for the first and second semester of 2019.

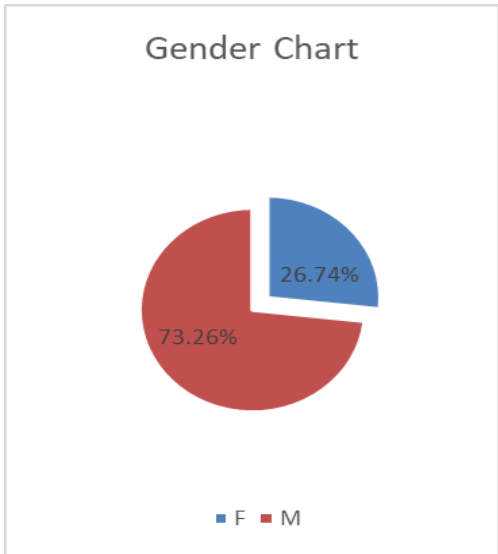


Chart made by the author by combining the two databases from the first and second semester of 2019, that can be found on data.gov

We see that the majority of migrants that came into Romania in 2019 were males. Out of the total number of 7,356 women, the majority came for studies (2,313) and for family reunification (2,476). Only 1,919 of them came for employment reasons.

Sex	Other purposes	Employment	Family reunification	Studies	Grand total
F	648	1919	2476	2313	7356
M	958	14665	1726	2802	20151
Grand Total	1606	16584	4202	5115	27507

Table made by the author by combining the two databases from the first and second semester of 2019, that can be found on data.gov

Moreover, a grand majority of migrants work in construction, HoReCa industries and so on. We can see in the chart below the top reasons for migrants to immigrate.

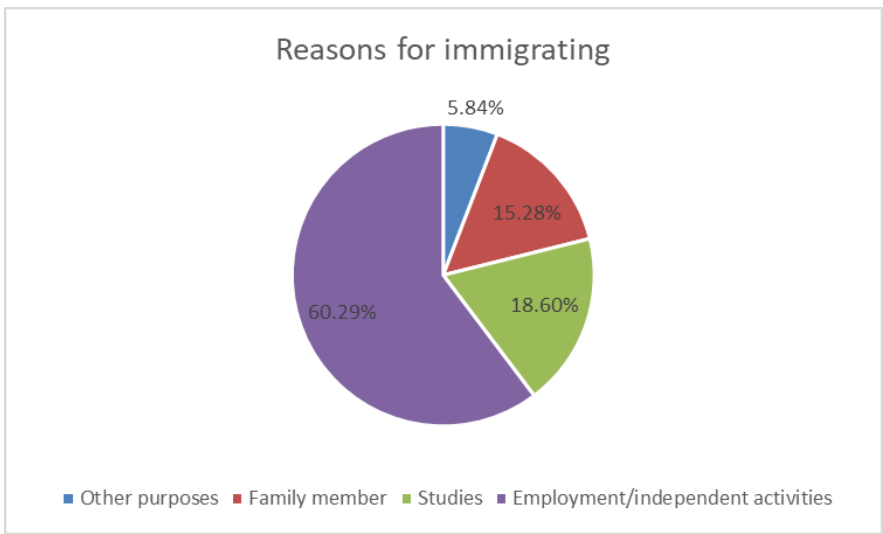


Chart made by the author by combining the two databases from the first and second semester of 2019, that can be found on data.gov

In the above chart we see that more than 60% of immigrants that came in the first and second semester of 2019, immigrated for employment or independent activities. The following chart presents the top origin countries.

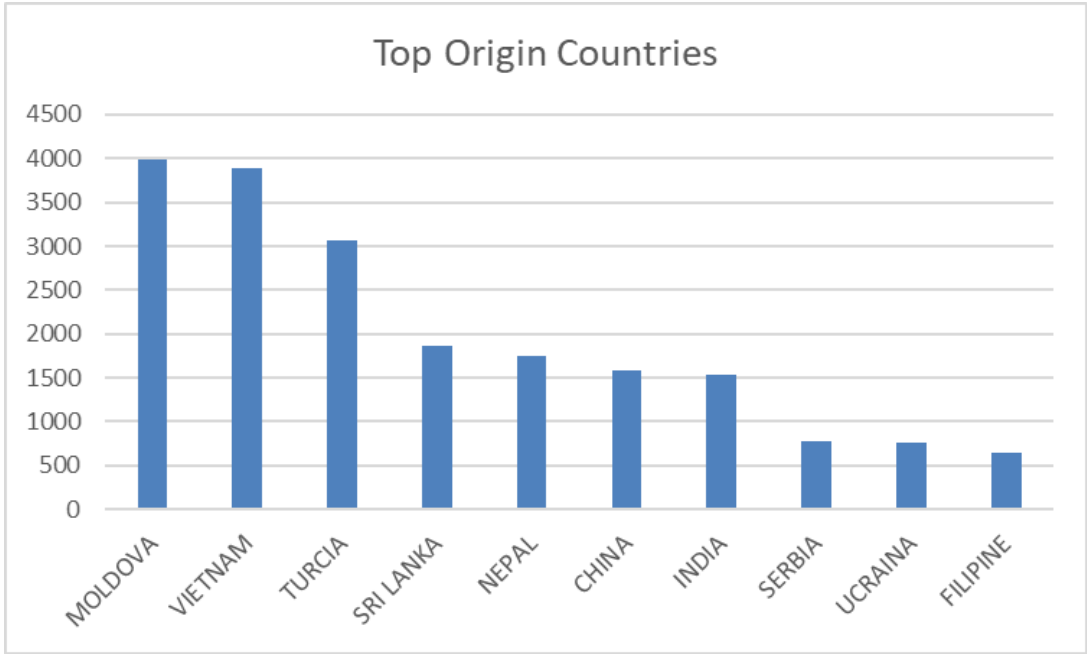


Chart made by the author by combining the two databases from the first and second semester of 2019, that can be found on data.gov

We can see that among the top origin countries most of them are Asian countries. This confirms our theory that in order to level the labor force deficit, one solution found was to attract immigrants from developing countries. This theory has been confirmed time and time again throughout this thesis.

An examination of the activity analysis for GII for the year 2019 was made. In regards to requests for entry visas we had an increase of 1.2% in 2019 compared to 2018. We also had an increase in the number of employment visas of 177.5% compared to 2018, with a number of 33,634 requests. The majority of requests were made for the city of Bucharest with 10,603 immigrants, being one of the most industrialized cities in Romania (“Activity Report for the Year 2019 ” 2020).

The top three countries of origin for work migrants coming into Romania in 2019 were Vietnam (6282), Nepal (4324) and India (4100). Most of them have a permanent worker visa (31,169) and 4.3% of them are detached to workers (1460) (“Activity Report for the Year 2019 ” 2020).

We have an increase in the number of immigrants who had legal stay in 2019 with 137,619 people. Out of all of them 84,228 are developing country immigrants and the rest are citizens of EU and EEA states (“Activity Report for the Year 2019 ” 2020).

For this particular year, 3,155 immigrants were found as staying illegally in Romania, which indeed represents an increase of 16.3% compared to 2018. There was also an increase in return decisions that have been given in the year 2019. A 48.7% increase in comparison to 2018 with 2,554 return decisions.

At the end of 2019, IOM published a country report. IOM has been one of the top organizations that have helped countless migrants all over the world. Founded in 1951, IOM has collaborated with governmental, intra-governmental and non-governmental partners in order to provide the best possible assistance for migrants that could not help themselves, to promote knowledge of the migration aspects, encourage social and economic development through migration, and to assure migrants that their human rights are being respected (IOM 2019).

In this country report, the migration issue is thoroughly analyzed; moreover, a list of projects done for the integration of migrants is provided. It is one of the objectives of this thesis to see if the national strategies have indeed had a positive effect on the immigrant community. As such, we can look at this list of projects and determine whether or not they helped the migrants (IOM 2019).

One of the first projects reported was *INTERACT Plus*, project which was active between July 2017 until July 2019 that provided integration services for migrants and social and intercultural dialogue. It was useful for the migrant communities due to the fact that it implicated them into a dialogue with the receiving community, which in this case was Romania. Moreover it gave them a guide into the Romanian labor market and also its private sector. The results reported by the IOM where that there was an increase in the number of migrants interested in Romanian language courses and in cultural activities. Additionally, it raised awareness in the migrant community about the fact that if they indeed want to make their home Romania they have to try and integrate into its culture. From this project a number of 685 people have benefited (IOM 2019).

Another interesting project that activated between July 2017 until January 2019 was *REACT_RO*. It was a project that promoted educational resources in order to integrate into society. In this sense, Romanian language courses were provided to all immigrants. In preparation for the courses, the project developed a curriculum for foreigners learning Romanian in order for them to quickly learn it. Some of the partners that made this possible were also the ministry of education and other foreign experts (IOM 2019).

ADMIN4ALL is another interesting project that promoted the inclusion of immigrants at a disadvantage in Europe. This was a longer project in the sense that the first stage started in March of 2016 and ended in December 2017, and the second stage started in June 2018 and ended in June 2020. Being an international centered project, some of the partners were IOM Italy, IOM Austria, IOM Poland for the first stage and IOM Greece, IOM Spain, and IOM Malta for the second stage. This project helped consolidate the experience of managers and personnel in the social assistance domain. It also helped promote inclusion and diversity in regards to institutional cooperation (IOM 2019).

LINK-IT was a project that connected the stages of pre and post relocation of migrants and facilitated the social and economic integration of refugees. This project was specifically for Syrian refugees that have been relocated. In this sense, they have organized sessions of information for host countries and produced video-materials relating the experience of relocation for other states (IOM 2019).

Looking at MIPEX(Migrant Integration Policy Index), we see that Romania's score has remained constant for almost all determinants except education which has seen a rise from 2009 to 2011. The overall MIPEX score is 49. If we were to look at the score of individual tournaments we will see that for anti-discrimination we have a value of 96, for labor market mobility we have a score of 46, for family reunification 67, for access to nationality 38 and for permanent residents 56 (“Romania MIPEX ” 2019).

It is interesting that the MIPEX indicators do not see any positive changes or negative changes from 2007 to 2019. The rank given by MIPEX for Romania is "equality on paper" due to the fact that only between 2010 to 2014 did Romania make some improvements but between 2014 and 2019 there were no important changes ("Romania MIPEX " 2019). Just as a comparison, Bulgaria, a country that entered the EU at the same time as Romania, has a score of 40 but it has improved by 3 points between 2014 to 2019. We also see positive changes and negative changes on MIPEX indicators ("Bulgaria MIPEX " 2019).

For the year 2020 it is reported that for entry visas, there has been a slight decrease in the number of requests from 2019 to 2020. For 2019, we had 9,638 long stay visa requests and 5,832 short stay visa requests. In 2020, the number of long stay visa requests was 8,089 and for short stay visas 1003. Undeniably, this decrease was a result of a global pandemic and the restrictive measures that have been imposed by the European Union in regards to traveling ("Activity Report for the Year 2020" 2021).

We also saw a decrease in the number of work visas requested. In 2020, there were 28,742 requests for work visas which represents 14.5% less than in 2019 ("Activity Report for the Year 2020" 2021).

It is worth mentioning in regards to the asylum process that in 2020 there was a record number of asylum requests, 6,158, which represented an increase of 137.5% compared to 2019 ("Activity Report for the Year 2020" 2021).

Again, we take a look at the database provided by the General Inspectorate for Immigration for the first and second semester of 2020. We need to keep in mind that this data set is for a period of time which was affected greatly by the Covid-19 virus. We can see this effect through the decreasing number of immigrants coming into Romania. The top Asian countries of origin remain India, Sri-Lanka, Nepal and Vietnam, but we can see a difference in the number. For 2019, immigrants coming from Vietnam were 3,895. This number decreased to 1,218 in 2020. The same decrease we can see for Turkey, India, Sri Lanka and all the other countries.

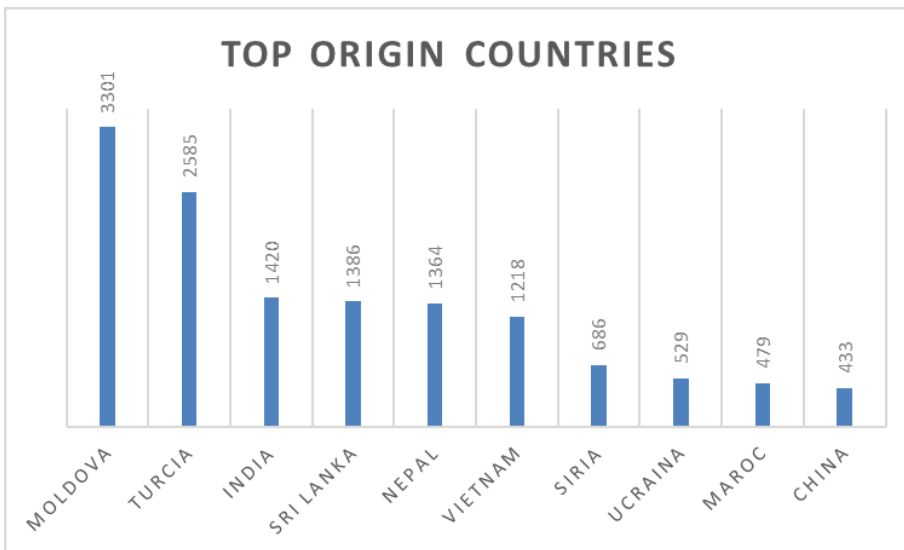


Chart made by the author by combining the two databases from the first and second semester of 2020, that can be found on data.gov

For the gender distribution we do not see almost any difference if we were to compare 2019 with 2020. Male immigrants are still representing the majority of immigrants that are coming into Romania.

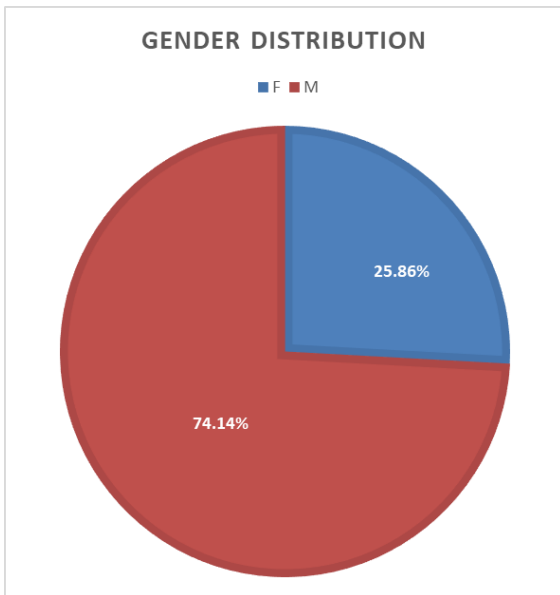


Chart made by the author by combining the two databases from the first and second semester of 2020, that can be found on data.gov

In what concerns the reasons for immigrating, in 2020 immigrants came to Romania mostly for employment which represented 59.13% of the total of reasons for immigrating. As opposed to 2019, we see that the reunification of the family as a reason for immigrating has slightly increased and studies and

other purposes have slightly decreased. Overall we see a decrease in almost all of the reasons for immigrating.

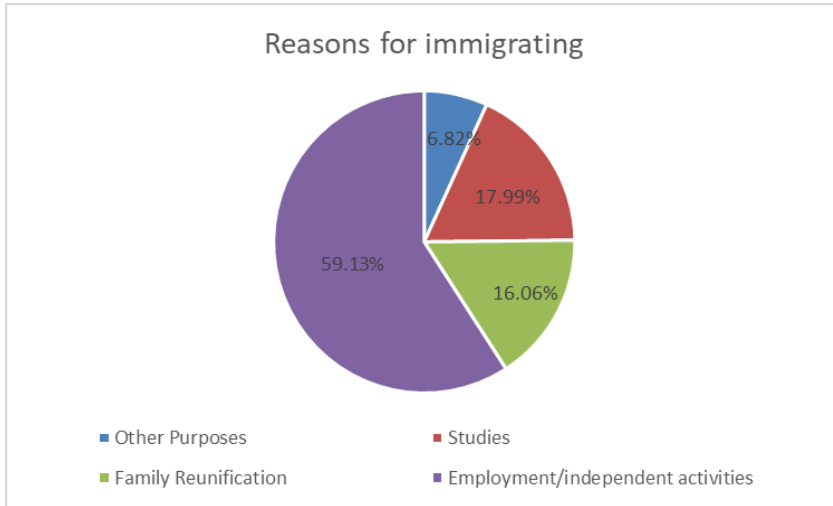


Chart made by the author by combining the two databases from the first and second semester of 2020, that can be found on data.gov

As we can see below, the main reason for female immigration into Romania was family reunification, followed by studies and employment. There is an exponential difference in the number of female immigrants coming into Romania in 2020 as opposed to 2019. The same can be said about the male immigrants. The reason for such differences is related to the restrictions imposed by all governments of the EU members in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. As such these differences are in a sense, normal.

Sex	Other purposes	Employment	Family reunification	Studies	Grand total
F	432	1164	1772	1460	4828
M	841	9874	1226	1899	13840
Grand Total	1273	11038	2998	3359	18668

Table made by the author by combining the two databases from the first and second semester of 2020, that can be found on data.gov

2.9. National Migration Strategy for the period 2021-2024

For the period 2019 to 2020 the plan for the national migration strategy has not been put into action. In this sense, the Romanian government needed to elaborate a new action plan for the period 2021 to 2024. For the reference time period, we see that the migration influx has intensified in the last couple of years. In chapter two of the National Migration strategy (2021) it is specified that Romania is confronted by a shortage in the labor market which in turn would mean a higher influx of migrant workers. It is also specified that each year the Romanian government accepts only a specific number of migrant workers but, in recent years that number had to be increased depending on the situation (National Migration Strategy, 2021).

In statistics made in this migration strategy, we see how the number of migrant workers increased by 545.50% in 2020 in regards to 2016. On the one hand, the Romanian government admits the fact that this high migratory influx had economic benefits for the country. On the other hand, it also specifies the fact that due to this high migratory influx it created a lot of pressure on the institutions that manage the judicial regime of strangers in Romania (National Migration Strategy, 2021).

Additionally, the progress made by GII as we have seen it in the past national migration strategies, has been the same from 2016 until 2020. In order to have a more complete view on the period in which this migration strategy has been applied we need to mention the COVID pandemic that has encapsulated the world from the year 2020 (National Migration Strategy, 2021).

In the 2021 migration strategy it is also specified how this global pandemic has changed the way in which the institutions managed migration. It is said that migration was affected directly by the pandemic, especially the work migration. In this sense, GII has reported a smaller number of work requests in 2020 as opposed to 2019. Moreover, the 2020 contingent for work migrants has occupied only 74.4% as opposed to 97.8% in 2019. In this time frame, the top three original countries for immigrants change. If we look at the previous time period, the top three were Turkey, China, and Moldova, in 2020 the top three countries were Turkey, Nepal and Sri Lanka (National Migration Strategy, 2021).

Migration as a security threat is also discussed in this strategy. It is also stated that annually, tens of foreigners are identified as being part of terrorist groups, with a large number of them coming from Moldova, Turkey, China, Syria, Italy, Germany or France. The government has also reported an increase of 11.6% in the number of illegal migrants in 2020 as compared to 2019 (National Migration Strategy, 2021).

In regards to the asylum issue, Romania promotes a course of action that is in accordance with European standards. In this sense, it helps the efforts made by FRONTEX and any other European missions that manage migration (National Migration Strategy, 2021).

At the national level, the Romanian government ensures better diplomatic relations with the states that surround it. Chapter 4 of the national migration Strategy is incredibly useful for understanding the way in which the Romanian government sees migration (National Migration Strategy, 2021).

First of all, it is the first time that the Romanian government talks about migration as a potential problem. If before the motto of the strategies was "migration is not a problem that should be solved but a phenomena that has to be managed", we now have migration as a source of potential problems. In this sense, the Romanian government talks about a migratory pressure that Romania is beginning to have. There has been a noticeable increase in illegal immigration and an increase in the number of legal migrants that have not left Romania after their visas have expired (National Migration Strategy, 2021).

It is interesting that it also points out to the fact that even if we have seen an increase in the number of foreigners coming into Romania, we have not seen modernization of the institutions that deal with migration in Romania. Moreover, the strategy points out that even if migrant workers have occupied the positions that were vacant, it was not enough to solve the labor shortage Romania was experiencing at that time. Another problem identified was the poor information campaign done in order to promote to the Romanian population the advantages of having immigrants in the country. It is said that due to some incidents that have happened in that time frame it is clear that better focus should be put on educating the Romanian people (National Migration Strategy, 2021). The incidents that they refer to will be analyzed in the next chapter of this thesis.

As for the specific objectives that this national strategy has for the period 2021 to 2024, we see that managing the conditions for entry, stay and exit in Romania is one of the first. Another objective is to simplify the bureaucratic part of the immigration process for migrant workers and to develop the relations with developing countries. In order to achieve this objective, a permanent analysis of the labor market is needed. Moreover, it is necessary to make agreements with developing countries in order to promote to their citizens the labor market in Romania. Additionally, another action would be to stimulate employers in Romania to employ migrant workers. It is relevant to also develop and modernize the methods in which the Romanian institutions are able to prevent illegal migration. This includes inter institutional cooperation in order to provide the best means of action (National Migration Strategy, 2021).

As we have seen in the previous strategies, a great importance is given to asylum processes and modernizing them. In this strategy, a focus falls on assuring better communication between the institutions and the asylum seekers, which would be done by providing better language interpreters. Additionally, adopting the best legal course of action is important in managing the asylum process (National Migration Strategy, 2021).

Another important objective is related to offering the best integration process for legal migrants and migrants who have been offered a type of protection. As we have seen in the previous strategy, integration is seen on the one hand as a way to help migrants learn the Romanian language and culture and on the other hand, as a way to promote interculturality. As before, a focus on informational campaigns for the Romanian population is needed (National Migration Strategy, 2021).

Due to the increasing influx of immigrants, a better capacity of responses is needed. In this sense, the Romanian government will improve the knowledge on crisis management in regards to migration influxes. Additionally, the term hybrid threat appears for the first time in a national migration strategy. This term is used in the context of national security (National Migration Strategy, 2021). The official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania defines hybrid threat as a concept meaning any conventional or unconventional activity such as diplomatic, military, economic or technological that can be used by any state or non-state actors in order to reach a specific objective (“International Security. Hybrid Threats.” 2021).

In the last part of the national strategy, it is stated that the objectives that appear in this text will be met by you using the two action plans, the action plan for the period 2021–2022, and the action plan for the period 2023–2024, (National Migration Strategy, 2021).

2.10. Qualitative and quantitative data as a result of the National Migration Strategy (2021)

Even though the time frame for the strategy has not ended yet, we can analyze the statistical data available until 2023. Thus, the activity reports of GII and any other statistical data provided by them will be analyzed.

2020 was the year when we saw a big decrease in migration related to data. This changes with 2021, when we begin to see an increase. As stated before, the global pandemic has halted most of the mobility

within states. Beginning with 2021, the data starts to normalize again. We have an increase of 102.6% of visa requests as compared to 2020. 2,208 of them were for short stay visas and 16,211 for long stay visas. We also have a record for the past 5 years of the number of work visas received in 2021, the number being 59,557. The annual quota was also realized 84.58% of it (“Activity Report for the Year 2021” 2022).

An increase was recorded in the number of foreign citizens residing legally in Romania, 148,153. Out of all of them 93,094 are citizens of developing countries, 52,041 are citizens of the EU and EEA, and 3018 are citizens of the UK. Moreover, there has been recorded 55,836 requests of stay extensions from developing country citizens (“Activity Report for the Year 2021” 2022).

For this particular year, we had 4,683 foreigners found with illegal stay, which represents a record for the past 5 years. It was also a record for people taken in public custody (1,327 of immigrants). The number of asylum seekers has also increased with 55.7% (“Activity Report for the Year 2021” 2022).

Looking at the data set provided by GII for the first and second semesters of the year 2021, we can see that we still have an overwhelming majority of male immigrants.

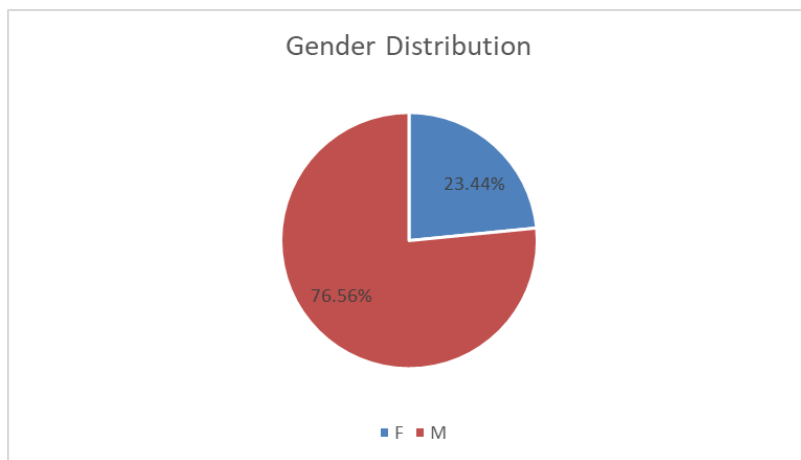


Chart made by the author by combining the two databases from the first and second semester of 2021, that can be found on data.gov

The gender distribution has remained the same throughout the three years we have gathered data from the GII database. As for the reasons for immigrating, we still have employment as the most common reason with 63,6% of the total.

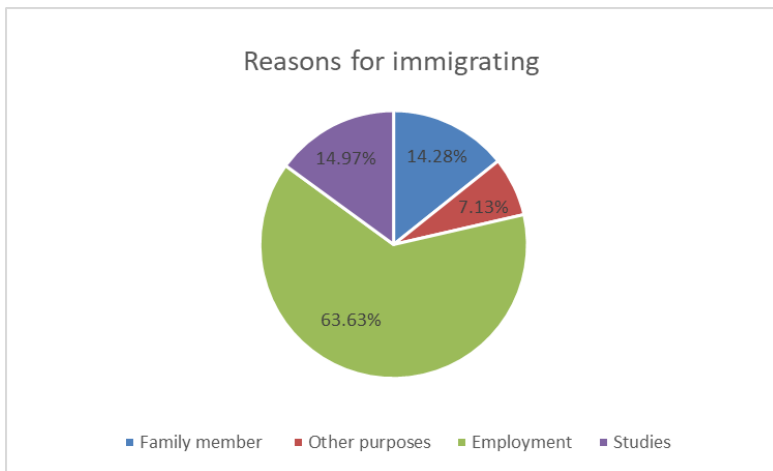


Chart made by the author by combining the two databases from the first and second semester of 2021, that can be found on data.gov

We even see an increase of 4.5% of immigrants coming into Romania in 2021 for employment reasons, compared to the previous year. This can be explained by the fact that, slowly, Romania and other European countries, started to lift the travel sanctions, which reopened the possibility for migrant workers to come.

Sex	Other purposes	Employment	Family Reunification	Studies	Grand Total
F	807	1824	2384	1670	6685
M	1227	16326	1688	2599	21840
Grand Total	2034	18150	4072	4269	28525

Table made by the author by combining the two databases from the first and second semester of 2021, that can be found on data.gov

We can see the effects of the lifting of the Covid-19 Pandemic through the increasing numbers of immigrants coming to Romania. 28,525 immigrants came into Romania in 2021 as opposed to 18,668 in 2020. An important increase we see in the number of males coming into Romania for employment reasons, it almost doubled since 2020. As for female migration into Romania, family reunification is still the most common reason, followed by studies and employment.

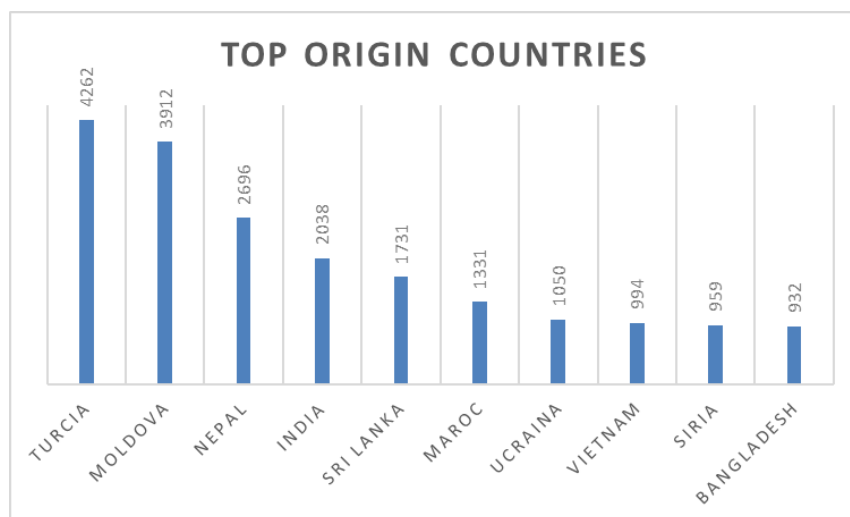


Chart made by the author by combining the two databases from the first and second semester of 2021, that can be found on data.gov

For the first time in the three year period that we analyzed data from, the number of Turkish immigrants has surpassed the number of Moldavian immigrants. Moreover, seven of the top origin countries are in Asia, which proves that the majority of immigrants that came to Romania in 2021 were Asian.

For the year 2022 we have a general increase in the number of visa requests. For short stay visas we have 4,731 requests as opposed to 2,208 in 2021, and 18,218 long stay visa requests as opposed to 16,211 in 2021.

There was reported a doubling in the number of requests for work visas, 138,350 in 2022 as opposed to 59,587 in 2021. The actual number of granted work visas was 108,930 You're still almost double that of the previous year. Again, we have an increase in the number of requests for stay extension (80,662).

During the year 2022 the GII has multiplied their control activities, having 22,202 activities in the year 2022 as opposed to 5,543 activities in 2021. These control activities have resulted in finding 5,214 illegal migrants. We can also see an increase in the return decisions from 2021-2022 but the decrease in the number of people held under public custody (938 in 2022).

As for the situation in Ukraine, it has indeed caused an effect in the way the GII managed the migration process in the sense that they have also helped the proper management of the issue. Meaning that asylum requests made from Ukraine were 4,398 and they were granted a number of 101,077 stay permits. In order to be better equipped for the situation in Ukraine, on the second of September 2022, the Government decision no 1077/2022 was put into force. This government decision made amendments to

the Government decision number 367 from the 18th of March 2022, which regulated the conditions for granting temporary protection.

Thus, temporary protection will be give to:

- Ukrainian citizens and their family members, no matter the way in which they entered Romania
- Non-Ukrainian nationals or stateless persons that had benefited from a form of international protection in Ukraine before 24.02.2022
- Non-Ukrainian nationals or stateless persons that can prove that before 24.03.2022 they were granted a permanent stay permit

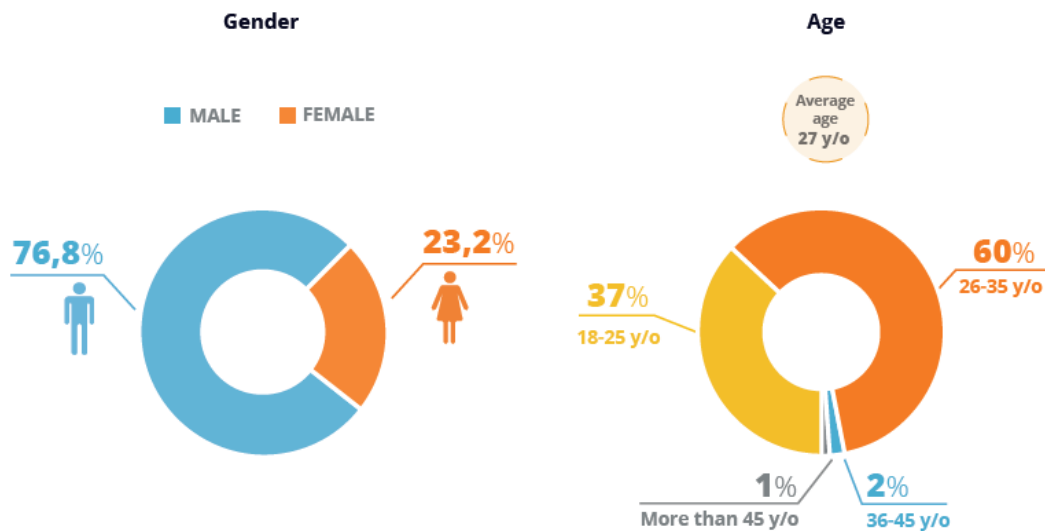
Looking at the conditions and mechanism of support that the Romanian Government grants Ukrainian refugees, found on the official website of the General Inspectorate for Immigration, we can see that for the first four months after the submission of application, a certain amount of money will be given to the refugees. For a single person the amount is 750 lei (155.27 euros⁹) per month , for a family it is 2000 lei (414.07 euros) a month and 600 lei (124.22 euros) for each person for food. Starting with the fifth month the amount is the same but without the 600 lei for food.

The only condition to be granted this support for the first month is to offer proof that they have a type of protection and to register at the town hall. For the next three months the solicitor and its family members need to fulfill the conditions in order to be employed in Romania, and as for their children, they need to be registered to an educational establishment. For the fifth month and until the end of the year, in order to benefit from the amount granted, they need to be employed in Romania and for the children to be registered in an educational establishment.

It is interesting to look at the study done by EWL Migration Platform, Foundation For The Support Of Migrants On The Labour Market 'EWL', and The Centre For East European Studies At The University Of Warsaw (2022) on Asian workers in Romania, because it paints a clear picture on Asian migrant specifically. The respondents, 400 of them, were 76.8% male and 23.2% female, with the average age being 27 years old. Their countries of origin were Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Vietnam, Nepal, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Philippines. Most of the respondents had a secondary education level with only 6% having higher education. 39% of them were employed in

⁹ Exchange rate 1 euro =4,83 lei, communicated by the National Bank of Romania on the 9th of September 2022

industries such as construction, services, logistics, transport and warehouse management, IT and communication and so on (EWL, 2022).



Source: EWL Migration Platform, Foundation For The Support Of Migrants On The Labour Market 'EWL', and The Centre For East European Studies At The University Of Warsaw. 2022. "Workers from Asia - Solution for the Labour Shortage in Romania." EWL Migration Platform.

When asked about what languages they know at the communication level 40% of them said Romanian and 96% of them said English. One of the questions of interest for this thesis is "what had the greatest influence on choosing Romania as a country of emigration?". For this particular question, the majority of respondents said that they immigrated here because it was easier to find a job in Romania, that it was a recommendation from family and friends, that they heard that in Romania there are many facilities for immigrants, they had friends in Romania and the fact that Romania belongs to the European Union (EWL, 2022).

Interestingly enough, 52% of immigrants said that they attend Romanian language courses and lessons. It would have been interesting to see what type of language courses they attend, if they were the language courses provided by the Romanian government or a non-governmental organization (EWL, 2022).

When asked about how did they find their current employment in Romania 39% of the responded said that it was a recommendation from friends or family, 21% of them said that they found the employer by themselves, 16% of them said that they found it through the state employment office, 13% of them said through a private employment agency from the original country, 13% of them thrown on governmental

organization and 2% of them were contacted by the employer directly. We see here that intermediary agencies are still one of the top means of getting employed by companies in Romania (EWL, 2022).

As opposed to the results of the study done in 2008, respondents of the 2022 study have said that the hiring process took one to two months and sometimes even less than in a month. Moreover 54% of them said that the information that they have received during the recruitment process had corresponded to the actual duties at work. This is an important difference if we were to look at the 2008 study where one of the problems that immigrants encountered in Romania was the fact that they have been promised by the intermediary agencies to do a certain type of job but in reality they were doing something completely different. As for the average monthly salary they receive, 29% of them said that they receive between 501 to 599 USD, 30% of them up to 500 USD, 22% of them between 600- 699 USD (EWL, 2022).

Only 7% of them have said that they plan to stay Romania for an undetermined period of time, 20% of them have said that they want to stay 1 year at most, 29% of them 1 to 2 years and 24% of them more than two years but not forever (EWL, 2022).

We previously stated that one of the reasons for migration is due to migrant networks, we can now see that the responders of the study have become the link for other immigrants to come to Romania. Meaning that, when asked if anyone from their family is planning to join them in Romania, 30% of them have said yes, 36% of them have said that they don't know yet and only 34% of them have said no (EWL, 2022).

The problems that they have faced so far in Romania are different from the problems identified in the 2008 study. In this study, 44% of them have said that they encounter no difficulties in living in Romania, 21% of them have said that the language barrier has been the biggest issue, 16% of them identify the cultural difference as being a problem and 11% of them have said that the recruitment process was long (EWL, 2022).

In all of the national migration strategies that we have analyzed so far, one common denominator what's the fact that the Romanian government has had countless initiatives in order to provide migrants with help integrating. We can see in the study that the respondents have said that 88% of them have received a type of help. 67% of them have said that they received help in legalizing their stay in Romania, 49% of them received help with accommodation, 46% of them received help in finding a job and 18% of them had received help with training and courses (EWL, 2022).

We can argue that compared to 2008, in 2022 Romanian institutions have indeed experienced an upgrade. The fact that most of the migrants have had positive experiences with Romanian institutions tells us that some of the objectives of the national strategies have been met. In the 2008 study, most of the immigrants said that they have had negative experiences with the Romanian institutions due to the fact that most of the information was in Romanian, as such they were not able to properly understand without having a translator. If you were to look now on the general inspectorate of immigration website we will see that we also have an English version of the website. Moreover, only 9% of the respondents said that one of their concerns was the fear of the discrimination on the nationality basis as opposed to the 2008 study when most of the respondents have experienced a type of discrimination.

It will be interesting to also analyze the way in which the Romanian media perceives Asian immigrants. The next chapter of this thesis will be dedicated to the media analysis, the Asian migrant perspective for immigrating into the EU and into Romania and lastly to the case study.

Conclusions

Upon Romania's entry into the EU we see a change of perspective in the sense that if before the purpose was to become a member of the European Union, from 2007 the purpose was to be compliant to all of the regulations in order to become a part of the Schengen area. This change of perspective was also seen through the fact that slowly, Romania transcended from a country of emigration in 2007 to a country of transit and immigration in 2023. We have seen this through all the national migration strategies presented in this time period.

The first national migration strategy from 2007 was the first strategy applied as a member state of the EU, in which it was first mentioned Romania as a destination country. We saw that one of the first actions that it did was to take part in the Dublin II and EURODAC. Additionally, a very important part of the national migration strategy was to socially integrate the foreigners into Romanian society. It was also mentioned that foreigners will be able to help the Romanian economy that was this destabilized due to the economical crisis and the fact that more and more people were emigrating to other countries for work. Moreover, upon entering the you the number of immigrants from Romania grew exponentially, which meant in turn that shortly, Romania experienced a labor shortage.

It was interesting to see the Soros Foundation report which revealed deeper insights in the situation of immigrants in Romania immediately after the accession to the EU. In the sense that we also encounter the somewhat new phenomena for Romania of third party contributors such as intermediary firms that would connect migrants to workplaces in Romania. Through this report we also saw the unpreparedness of the Romanian government in relation to receiving migrants. Through the interviews conducted by the foundation we saw that generally, the Romanian institutions were not properly equipped and prepared for the receivable of migrants, the lack of English speaking personnel being an example.

The rectification of the GEO number 194 was indeed needed in order to be compliant with the European Union regulations. We can see a change in the national migration strategy of 2011, in the sense that there was a focus on informing migrants on how to legally migrate due to the fact that we see an increase of illegal migration in Romania. Another important aspect was inter institutional cooperation between international institutions and also national institutions. From 2011 we see that immigration is not such a new phenomena anymore, Moldovan, Turkish and Chinese migrants being the top three immigrants coming into Romania.

For the year 2015 we see an influx of illegal migration from the Middle East due to the refugee crisis. In the national migration strategy of 2015, a clear objective was to provide immigrants with the best integration programs, to increase the number of visa requests, to initiate a series of projects meant to help migrants integrate, to improve resiliun seeker legislation. In the report done by Coșciug et al.(2019), we see that the immigrants coming into Romania usually choose to settle in the most industrialized cities, HORECA industry being the preferred area of work. As stated above, due to the high influx of Middle Eastern immigrants, we see a decrease in the usual immigrants that were coming to Romania such as Moldovan.

The global pandemic affected the flow of migrants into Romania due to the restricting measures for travel. For immigrants it meant to stop and work permits applications. Looking with another perspective, the Google pandemic brought to the Romanian institutions an increased process of digitization and a series of projects that promoted the integration of immigrants.

As for the national migration strategy of 2021, we saw that it analyzed the shortage in the labor market and we saw for the first time migration being looked at through the lens of a potential problem. Even though the pandemic brought digitalization to the Romanian institutions, we saw that we had an increasing number of people coming into Romania but the institutions are incredibly slow to modernize.

An important aspect that we touched upon was the fact that most of the national migration strategies talked about educating on the one hand migrants in order for them to legally enter Romania, but also educating the Romanian population towards the changes that immigrants will bring.

We saw in the questionnaire done by EWL that we have some similarities between immigrant experience in Romania in 2022 as compared to 2007, but we also see an improvement in the way in which the bureaucratic part of the immigration process is dealt with by the Romanian institutions.

CHAPTER III -THE RECENT TRENDS OF ASIAN MIGRATION AND INTERMEDIARY RECRUITMENT AGENCIES IN ROMANIA

Introduction

In this chapter the focus will fall on two main aspects. In the first part we will touch upon the literature review related to Asian immigrants in Europe. We will see a more international perspective on the way in which Asian immigrants are seen throughout Europe. We will use two important migration theories, the push and pull migration theory and the dual market theory to explain the migration patterns of Asian migrants.

The second part will be a general overview of intermediary firms and what they mean for migrants. We will not only see the way in which they influence migrants in Romania but also the theory behind intermediary firms and how they operate. Pivotal articles such as the one written by Jones and Sha (2020) will give us an interesting perspective on the influence that intermediary firms have on migration as a phenomenal.

3.1. Asian immigrants in Europe as seen through the appropriate literature

Asian migration studies have always been a focus point of researchers of migration. The push and pull factors that determine Asian migrants to immigrate into Europe have been thoroughly analyzed. Countless migration theories have been applied in the case of Asian migrants in Europe. In this chapter we will analyze the most common of them and we will see if they can also be applied in regards to Asian immigration in Romania.

It is in the view of researchers that the year 2010 can be described as "The age of Asian migration" (Chan 2020). After the 2010 increase in Asian migration, countless scholars have dedicated their research to understanding the reasons behind it and the transformation that it produced in the European frame.

This is not to say that before 2010, we did not have an Asian diaspora. Even during the Cold War, we had bilateral agreements between Communist Asia and Communist Europe, which promoted the exchange of laborers. This Asian diaspora that has been created would continue to be an important pull factor for other such immigrants. (Chan 2020).

In the book chapter "Landscapes of Asian migrant labor in Europe", the authors state that this century has seen a shift in the migration patterns of Asian migrants. They want to change the narrative that used to talk about Asian immigration, focusing on the former colonial bonds that Asian migrants had with destination countries and on the bilateral agreements made between European countries and Asian countries in order to exchange laborers. With the economic development that happened to almost all Asian countries after the '90s, the authors point at the existing migration industry that has developed. (Spaan, Hillmann, and Ton van Naerssen 2007).

They theorize that the reasons for which Asian migrants migrate today, are almost entirely different from the reasons that they did so before the '70s; economic, political, and the social development of their origin country are one of the reasons for this change. Moreover, we see a diversity in the gender, age, and nationality of people that are coming into the EU, as an example we can look at the Asian female domestic workers that are active in certain EU countries. (Spaan, Hillmann, and Ton van Naerssen 2007).

Looking at the report published by IOM in 2022, the United States of America and Germany are the top two destinations for international migrants. Germany is closely followed by Saudi Arabia, the Russian Federation, and the United Kingdom. The international migration has increased from 1970 which is the year IOM had data on the number of international migrants from 84 million to 280 million in 2020 (IOM 2022).

The Push and Pull migration theory has been used countless times in this thesis in order to explain the main reasons for which Asian immigrants leave their origin country and come to countries such as Romania. Other relevant theories that can further examine the reasons for which Asian migrants come into Europe can be the Dual market Theory.

First theorized in the 60's and 70', it focuses on the idea that in a labor market exists at the same time two types of sectors. The primary sector or "the core" is represented by employers who have an incredible amount of market power and that can pay fairly and generously its workers. It is represented also by stable jobs and skilled workers. Jobs in this sector provide workers with the possibility of advancing in the company step by step (Harrison and Sum 1979).

The secondary sector is represented by employers who do not have market power, try to have the lowest cost of production possible and cannot pay high wages to its workers. It makes for an unstable and low paying job that is usually sought after by unskilled or low skilled workers. The nature of the job is usually

somewhat repetitive and generally, it does not give the possibility for the worker to advance to another position (Harrison and Sum 1979).

In 2019, there were roughly around 169 million migrant workers in the world out of 272 million total number of migrants. An interesting statistics was given by IOM in regards to the number of migrant workers compared to the number of migrants of working age, which brought the estimation that 68.8% of migrants off working age were actually migrant workers. As for the distribution of migrants, the top two destinations were Northern America and Northern Southern and western Europe (IOM 2022). It is important to note that migrant workers in the EU come from on the one hand from Non EU countries and on the other hand, from EU countries such as Romania, Poland, Italy, Portugal and Bulgaria (Hammer et al. 2020).

Studies show that migrants from underdeveloped countries have a higher chance than EU migrants to work in a job that has a higher automation potential (Hammer et al. 2020). Looking at the case of Asian migrants in Romania, we can see that most of the Asian migrants are employed in industries that require low to medium skilled workers such as the hotel industry, commerce, client relations, but at the same time we also have some migrants working in high skilled jobs such as management. But indeed we can see a bigger number of immigrants working in low or medium skilled jobs than on high skilled ones. Given this, we can argue that in Romania we can see a mix between the type of workers. (Coșciug et al. 2019).

3.2. General overview on the role of intermediary firms in migration influxes

In migration studies, intermediaries have always been present. Whether we are talking about agencies who facilitate labor migration or family or friends who encourage other people to migrate, some migrant experiences are done through these intermediaries. A lot of research has been done in relation to the experience of mobility through migrants who single handedly decide to move. But, we need to also look at the external factors, such as intermediary firms which shape the migration flow. In the first part of the study about intermediaries, researchers have focused extensively on the relationships between migrants and their network. Moreover, intermediaries can also refer to recruitment agencies, individual brokers, money lenders, travel agents, lawyers or contractors. In recent years, the focus has shifted to other forms of intermediaries such as placement agencies and on the "commodification of migrant networks" and also on the term "migration industry" (Jones and Sha 2020).

Jones and Sha (2020) argue that these intermediary firms can even influence if individuals choose to migrate. The way in which this firm recruits migrants and even their publicity can influence people who would not think of the possibility to migrate for work, to do it. We can argue that, in some instances, these firms are an enabler of migration. Moreover, they can influence the choosing of the destination country for the migrant, in the sense that they can promote a specific country at the expense of another.

Intermediary firms or placement agency are a bridge between the migrant and their potential place of work or one of the “international tentacles of labour recruitment systems” as Findlay et al. (2013) stated in their paper “The role of recruitment agencies in imagining and producing the ‘good’ migrant.” The way in which they operate depends on what each company wishes to provide. Usually, intermediary firms offer services on the one hand for the migrant and on the other hand for the potential employer. For the migrant, this intermediary firms usually provide services such as means of transport from their origin country to the placement country, help in the bureaucratic part of migrating (a guide to what type of documents they need, where to go with the documents, sometimes even doing it for them), or accommodation in the receiving country. As stated before, each intermediary firm decides what exactly to offer the migrant worker.

The roles of intermediary firms are important to understand due to the fact that they are more nuanced than they first appear to be (Jones and Sha 2020). We can argue that these intermediary firms can help migrants in the bureaucratic part of migrating, offer them a temporary and somewhat stable job and guide them throughout the entire process. But at the same time, they can extort migrants of money, a clear example being the survey done in 2008 where several migrants said that they were tricked by these intermediary companies. Their contract was not respected and they were given less than they bargained for.

As such, a fine line exists between the positive and negative aspects of such firms. Moreover, these firms can exploit migrants as was the case for domestic workers recruited from Ghana. They were recruited for jobs in a precarious work environment with a high risk of abuse and sexual exploitation (Jones and Sha 2020).

We have seen some of the positive sides of intermediary firms such as the fact that they are an enabler of mobility for migrants, they can help them find well suited jobs designed for their skills, they can introduce migrants to countries that otherwise they would not have traveled to (here we have the example of one of the respondents of the 2008 questionnaires where he said that before coming to

Romania he didn't know anything about it). Additionally, intermediary firms help expand and develop the economy in the country of origin by providing employers with laborers that they need. At the same time, intermediary firms can also help migrants have a collective experience, in the sense that it can help communities of people to have a better job than in their country of origin.

But, as Jones and Sha (2020) theorize in their paper, intermediaries are also able to perpetuate and create power asymmetries and social inequalities. An interesting example can be seen when talking about any one of the intermediary firms we will analyze. All of the firms have a preselection where they select potential candidates. It would have been interesting to see the way in which they pre-select their migrant workers. But the idea that women or men are usually selected for the traditional type of job clearly shows us that intermediaries do create social inequalities and power asymmetries.

It is interesting to see why migrants choose to have an intermediary in order for them to migrate. One of the reasons identified by Jones and Sha (2020) is that it has become increasingly difficult to migrate without such an intermediary. The changes that happened frequently in terms of laws and their origin country and the country of destination makes it hard for some migrants to keep up and, as such, they choose to have an intermediary who would be in charge of having every document up to date and so on.

Another factor could be the high demand of cheap labor in the destination countries. In the previous chapter we saw how many Romanian employers choose to have migrant workers instead of maybe Romanian workers just because they would have paid less for the migrant worker. And this idea that in this globalized economy, employers seek cheap labor made it possible for intermediary firms to become a profitable business. Additionally, the fact that the Romanian government and other member state governments have increased yearly the annual quota of migrant workers is also a reason for which intermediary firms have become one of the main means of migrating.

CHAPTER IV- ASIAN IMMIGRATION IN ROMANIA AS SEEN THROUGH A MEDIA ANALYSIS LENS.

Introduction

An in-depth analysis of media outlets will be made. Firstly, an analysis of an incident that happened in 2020 will be conducted in order to give three perspectives of three important news outlets in Romania. We will see how the media outlets chose to present the incident, what were the most use terms to describe migrants and the type of language these outlets used.

Secondly, we will analyze Asian migration as seen through media outlets from the years 2007 until 2023. We will see the main way in which migrants are framed in the Romanian media. Additionally, a small comparison between the years 2007-2014, 2014-2019 and 2020-2023 will be made in order to see what were the changes and the mentality and the way the media framed migrants.

4.1. Methodology of the media analysis

It is one of these thesis purposes to analyze the Romanian media outlets and how they report on Asian immigrants. This will have two parts. The first one will be a comparison of three media outlets and how they presented an incident that took place in 2020. And the second one will be an overview of some of the online articles that were written between 2008 and 2023. For the first part, out of all of the articles, a total of seven articles were chosen and for the second part, ten articles were chosen.

Fairclough believes that in a discourse analysis there are three steps that progress from one another. The first one is analysis of discourse practices that focuses more on the intertextuality and interdiscursivity. The second one relates to the analysis of the text and the third one is the analysis of the social practice of which the discourse is a part of. (Fairclough, 1992). It is his belief that the three parts intertwine in a proper discourse analysis. For this particular thesis, a focus will fall on the first and latter step, due to the fact that the analysis of the text will be touched upon inevitably. A thorough read of each article will be made and words that are important for this research will be pointed out.

4.2. Where did the data come from?

"The choice of data should be structured according to the research question posed and the researcher's ontological and epistemological assumptions." (Dunn and Neumann, 2016). The main purpose of this chapter is to see how immigrants are framed by the Romanian media and how they are seen by the Romanian population. What we need to take into account is the background of this research. Since entering the EU, Romania has experienced a labor shortage. We will see that some of the articles analyzed refer to Asian immigrants as a solution to this problem. It is important to note that the media chooses to present in a specific manner and order stories, and it is this manner that this thesis tries to understand and analyze. Moreover, through the analysis of the text we will also describe the reaction of the Romanian population in relation to the increasing number of immigrants coming into the country.

As said above, the media analysis part is split into two. First, the focus will fall on three news outlets presenting the same incident that happened in 2020 in Romania. Second, a short analysis of media outlets presenting the immigration phenomena from the year 2008 until 2023. A focus will fall on the articles written in 2023, as they reflect the present times. The reason for which the media analysis was divided into two parts is to have a multiple perspective on the case of Asian migrants in Romania. The first part will give us an idea on how media outlets present the same story in different manners. We will then understand how the media is biased in the way it chooses to present the information. Moreover, it will give us the opportunity to see how three big media outlets in Romania are handling the new phenomenon of immigration. It will be interesting to see how they adjusted.

The second part is important for two reasons. First of all, through the articles that will be analyzed for the selected period we will see how the framing of the migrant changed through the years. Second of all, the focus falling on the year 2023 will help us understand where Romanian media presently stands on the topic of immigration.

In choosing what type of media to analyze, there were two trails of thoughts. Firstly, due to the fact that now we live in a world where information is incredibly easy to access and also it is distributed in various ways, the most useful one was written online. Secondly, it would have been interesting to also analyze media through video and audio, but it was in our game to focus more on the online written media as it was the easiest to access and trace back.

In what concerns the first part of the media analysis, as stated above, the three media outlets were chosen: Antena 3 CNN, PROTV and Digi 24. They are among the most used sources of information in Romania,

along Adevărul, Antena 1, Romania Tv and so on. Seven articles were analyzed in regards to this specific subject. For Digi 24 and Antena 3 CNN, two articles were analyzed and for ProTV, three articles were analyzed. These articles were found and chosen through their official website. In order to have a complete list of everything each news outlet has published on the subject, we have introduced in their search bar terms such as "Ditrau" and "Immigrants in Ditrau" .

After doing this for each of the news outlets, lists with all the articles published by them appeared from which we have chosen the first articles ever published about this subject, articles published about the people's lawyer or political figures' reactions, and opinion articles. The reason for choosing such specific articles is related to the purpose of giving a chronological and complete perspective on the incident that happened in 2020.

For the second part of the media analysis, a number of 10 articles were chosen. The choice of the articles was done by following a few key terms such as "immigrant", "worker", "Asian" in Romanian and inserting them in the Google search bar with the filter to "news". For this part, three periods were analyzed: the period between 2007 and 2014, the period between 2015 to 2019 and the period from 2020 to 2023. For the first two periods three articles were analyzed, and four articles for the last period. If for the first part of the media analysis we have chosen the articles through the official news outlets, for this part the articles were chosen in a random manner, the focus falling on the content of the article not the producer.

For both of the media analysis sections, the number of articles chosen was not high, due to several reasons. The very first reason is that we tried to focus on credible media sources. As such, we tried to focus on media sources with as little political influence as possible. In regards to Antena 3 CNN, PRO TV and Digi 24, the reasons for choosing them will be thoroughly explained in the next subchapter. As for the other media outlets, there were various reasons for choosing them.

Veredica is a media outlet which specializes in monitoring, debunking and analyzing fake news across Romanian media. Most of their articles present the fake news in question, provide the context behind the piece of news, and then provide factual information for the event as well as an analysis of the misinformation. These goals make this source of particular use for this thesis, as they try not only to remain as apolitical as possible, but they also provide factual information for viewers ("Despre Noi, Veridica" n.d.).

Bursa.ro and Profit.ro are both media sites focusing on economic articles, or articles which are written from an economical perspective, which helps our thesis by broadening the points of view available. Bursa.ro is owned by the Bucharest Stock Exchange, while Profit.ro is an independent outlet focused on news which have an underlying background in economics. They also offer news related to investments. They will often try to focus on news which pose some importance, over “breaking news” type of articles (“Despre Noi BURSA.RO” n.d.) (“Despre Noi, Profit.ro” n.d.).

Antena 3 CNN, is an important source of information for Romanians. It is also known for a very right wing position in what concerns external affairs but a left wing position in relation to internal affairs. Pro TV is both a television station and an online news site. It is known for a different approach in its news format, choosing to simply present the news rather than commenting on it. The same can be said for Digi24, which tries to have no political leaning when it comes to presenting their news. These three news outlets have some of the highest viewership numbers out of all Romanian media outlets. Further details and analysis of each of these three media outlets will be provided later in this chapter.

Libertatea is a daily newspaper which first appeared in the heat of the Romanian revolution of 1989. It evolved from its original form of a tabloid to general news form. It is one of the most read newspapers in the country (“Despre Libertatea” n.d.).

Adevărul is one of the oldest publications în România, first appearing in 1871. The online version of the newspaper has the highest number of unique visits, thus ranking it among the most visited online newspapers.(“„Adevărul”, La Aniversară ” 2014) Realitatea was the very first news-only TV station in Romania, starting in 2001. On their about you page they state that they mention that their aim is to present news that are relevant, actual and diverse (“Despre Noi - REALITATEA .NET” 2008). Observer news is a daily TV news broadcast which also has an online version. They cover a broad range of topics, from social and political to economics and technology. This media outlet also offers the viewers the option to submit news from their area, in order to raise awareness to smaller issues (“Observer News” n.d.).

4.3. Theoretical background

The main tool used in this thesis for analyzing media outlets is discourse analysis. Why discourse analysis? Discourse analysis represents a qualitative type of research. This thesis will continue the trend of combining the quantitative and the qualitative research method in order to provide the complete perspective on the situation of Asian migrants in Romania. Moreover, a quantitative analysis of the media outlets would offer only a partial result. It would require an enormous amount of data in order to properly determine the situation of Asian migrants in Romania through the media lens. As such, this qualitative type of research has been chosen.

This type of research method has become popular in recent years due to its large plethora of uses. It can be used in political research, social sciences research and so on. A discourse, in general terms “entails the representational practices through which meanings are generated” (Dunn and Neumann 2016). Foundational work on discourse analysis was done by Michel Foucault. Through his works and other researchers we have come to understand that discourse analysis is a way for us, researchers, to give a meaning to the world and act upon it (Dunn and Neumann 2016).

One of the most important parts of a discourse is the language. Dunn and Neumann theorized that language does not explain the world, it produces it. Language as being the link between the object, subject, material and reality (Dunn and Neumann 2016). An interesting perspective related to language and its role in discourse analysis, is given by Foucault. He states that discourse analysts need to stop treating discourses as a group of signs and start referring to them as practices that continuously form the object of which they speak (Dunn and Neumann 2016).

Discourse analysis is an in depth research in the “how and why things appear the way they form, and how certain actions become possible (Dunn and Neumann 2016). It can also be understood more broadly as images or performances. What is important to stress is that language or text is used as a vehicle of study in discourse analysis as it gives us information about the political, social and cultural phenomena. For this thesis discourse analysis will entail also the extraction of certain tropes or linguistic signs that are repeated in the work, thus creating an effect towards the reader. It is the purpose of this thesis to understand what are the common tropes and phrases used by the Romanian media outlets to describe the Asian immigrants.

What Dunn and Neumann explain about tropes in discourse analysis, is that they became representations that happen continuously and that have become “normalized”. They give the examples of the "dove"

and "hawk" tropes used by the USA during the Cold war period, in order to refer to either a person who was more inclined to a more diplomatic approach towards the communist parties for the opposite, a person who wanted them more aggressive approach in dealing with them. What is important to note from this is that this type of representations are more accurately, through this categorization some of the individuals can be marginalized and others may become dominant or over them. In what concerns immigrants and immigration as a phenomena, common tropes can include seeing immigration as a security threat and immigrants as either victims or perpetrators. In what concerns this thesis we will see that throughout our media analysis the common tropes related to immigrants will be immigrants as a solution and immigrants as victims.

4.4. Discourse analysis or critical discourse analysis?

In the creation of this thesis it was important to choose a way of analyzing the media outlets in order to provide the best possible analysis of the way in which Asian immigrants are portrayed in the Romanian media. This analysis focuses on the broad area of communication. It is intrinsically related to the construction of language, narratives and linguistics. It concentrates more on the structure of the language used in the text analyzed. Whereas critical discourse analysis is more focused on the way in which the language was used and for what purpose.

Van Dijk theorize that CDA (critical discourse analysis) "should deal primarily with the discourse dimensions of power abuse and they injustice and inequality that results from it" and "it requires true multidisciplinary, and an account of intricate relationships between text, talk, social cognition, power, society and culture" (Van Dijk 1993).

Another notion theorized by Van Dijk is manipulation as a crucial notion of CDA. This notion was chosen to be included in this thesis due to the fact that through the content and the language used by media outlets they influence people in seeing different perspectives. In his article "Discourse and manipulation", the author sees manipulation as a type of social power abuse, a discursive interaction and a cognitive mind control (Van Dijk 2006). It is incredibly related to the way in which immigrants are framed in the media due to the fact that usually we see this split between "us" and "them" or "the other". In the same line we also see manipulation as an emphasis on "our good things" and "their bad things".

4.5. Immigration in media

According to King and Wood (2013) media and immigration influences each other in three pivotal ways. The first way identified by the authors is related to the images that are transmitted from the destination countries. What this means is that the perception of the destination countries to the migrants is closely related to the way in which the destination countries choose to present themselves. Images of wealth or a better overall lifestyle that are transmitted by the destination countries, represent a pull factor for migrants.

The second way identified is by the manner in which the media portrays migrants. In the sense that, the media is directly responsible for the way in which the population of the destination country perceives migrants. This part is extremely important due to the fact that it represents the way in which the receiving population perceives migrants. It is in this part that we talk about the notions of migrants as "others" or "criminals" or "undesirables". We will see in the coming sub chapter that in the Romanian media, migrants are seen as a "solution". Moreover, the media is also responsible for the way in which immigration as a process is perceived by the destination country's population (King and Wood 2013).

The third way in which the media influences migrants is related to the media from the sending countries. What this means is that the media from the sending countries influences the diaspora population in ways such as defining their cultural identity and politics (King and Wood 2013).

Overall, the media is extremely pivotal to the decision-making process of migrants and of the way in which the destination country's population receives them.

The same three ways of influence we find according to McAuliffe, Weeks, and Koser (2017), but with a few differences. For them, how migration is covered in the media is extremely important. The first reason is related to the fact that the media "can influence, and be influenced by, popular opinion and political agendas"(McAuliffe, Weeks, and Koser 2017) . The second reason is related to the fact that the media can influence the way in which migrants are perceived by the receiving population. And lastly, due to the fact that the media has an extremely wide reach throughout the world, it can influence the decision-making process of other migrants (McAuliffe, Weeks, and Koser 2017).

One of the most used theories used to study media and immigration is framing theory. This theory it's pivotal in such research because it draws attention to the way in which journalists frame a specific topic and how this choice of framing influences the readers in the way in which they perceive that said topic. It states that the media has the power to influence the way in which the readers perceive a said issue. In the article “Crossing the Border: The Framing of Global Migration by National News Media” by Emily Dzilenski, a very important and interesting aspect related by the author says that journalists and broadcasters tell the audience what to think about and also how to think about it, as such, having in their hands an extremely great power of influence (Dzilenski 2017).

As we said above, framing theory also influences the political choices that people could make, how locals perceive migrants, how they understand the migration phenomena and so on. Robert Entman talks about frames as :”Frames . . . define problems—determine what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits; diagnose causes—identify the forces creating the problem; make moral judgments—evaluate causal agents and their effects; and suggest remedies—offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects” (Entman, 1993) In the coming pages a great focus will fall on the framing theory.

4.6. The Ditrău incident seen through three media outlets: Antena 3 CNN, Digi24 and ProTV.

In 2020, in a small village called Ditrau, 200 people led by the Catholic priest Bíró Károly, began protesting the employment of two migrant workers from Sri-lanka to the local bakery. This incident has opened the long-needed discussion about the poor reception of migrants in Romania. The village Ditrau is situated in Harghita county, which is one of the counties where there exists a big community of Hungarian people. Most of the news outlets in Romania had picked up the story and had delivered it in different ways or more accurately, have focused on different aspects of the story. We will analyze how the three most popular media outlets in Romania have investigated and presented this particular incident. All three of them are predominantly TV broadcast stations, however we will analyze their online articles pertaining to the Ditrau incident and how it unfolded.

When analyzing the three media outlets we will look at several determinants. Firstly, we will analyze the content of the articles and extract the overall perspective that they offer.

Guiding questions for this particular extraction are:

1. How did the media outlet choose to present the incident?
2. Did they interview the migrants affected by the protest?
3. What type of article titles did they have(are they exaggerated or not)?
4. What were the most used phrases when talking about the migrants?

These questions are meant to help us find the starting point of the news outlet's perspective on the entire situation.

Secondly, we will also look at the reaction of political figures and how they are presented in these three media outlets. We will analyze their discourse and how they frame migrants.

Below we have a table with the title of the news articles in their original form and the translated version.

Media Outlet	Original Title	Translated Title
Antena 3 CNN	"Au venit tocmai din Sri-Lanka și s-au angajat într-o comună din România. E incredibil ce a urmat - tot satul s-a revoltat!"	"They came all the way from Sri-Lanka and were employed in a village in Romania. It is incredible what followed- all the village protested!"
	"Ministrul Muncii reacționează în cazul de la Ditrău: <<Mă surprinde atitudinea comunității față de cei doi srilankezi>>"	"The Minister of Labor has reacted in regards to the Ditrău case:<<The communities attitude towards the two people from Sri-Lanka, surprises me>>"
ProTV	"Revoltă împotriva asiaticilor, într-un sat din Harghita. <<Să nu vină cu cultura din Nepal aici>>"	"Protest against Asians, in a village in Harghita.<<Do not come with the culture from Nepal>>"
	"Scandalul de la Ditrău. ITM face verificări. Recomandările ECRI pentru România"	"The scandal at Ditrău. ITM is verifying. ECRI's recommendations for Romania"
	"Avocatul Poporului, anchetă în cazul Ditrău. Ce s-a descoperit despre brutărie"	"The people's lawyer, investigation in the Ditrău case. What was found about the bakery"
Digi 24	"Globalizarea la români. O comună din Harghita a expulzat doi brutari din Sri Lanka. <<Vrem Ditrău fără migranți>>"	"Globalization at Romanians. A village in Romania banished 2 bakers from Sri-Lanka.<<We want a Ditrău without migrants>>"
	"Avocatul Poporului, concluzii despre cazul Ditrău: Conflictul era mai vechi. Acum, situația s-a calmat"	"The people's lawyer, conclusions in the Ditrău case: the conflict was older. Now, the situation has died down."

Antena 3 CNN, previously just Antena 3, has been, since 2005, an important source of information for Romanians. It became popular through shows such as "In Gura Presei" and "Sinteza zilei", both shows that their primary action was to comment on the political framework happening in the present. It is also known for a very right wing position in what concerns external affairs but a left wing position in relation to internal affairs. In 2017, in the report by Reuters Institute the data showed that most of the audience were left wing.

Our focus for this thesis will fall on the online news outlets pertaining to Antena 3, more precisely, Antena 3 online. In the same report mentioned above, 15% of the respondents in 2020 stated that they use Antena 3 online weekly, which represents an increase from 2019(14%), a decrease from 2018(18%) and 2017(21%). In 2023, Antena 3 online was used by only 11% of the respondents (Newman et al .2018, 2019, 2020, 2023).

In 2020, Antena 3 scored a 35% do not trust and a 47% trust, which represents the lowest percent out of the total news outlets analyzed in the report.

For 2020, the two most trusted news outlets were ProTv with 76% and Digi 24 with 71%. ProTV online was the most used platform with 32% of the respondents using it weekly. As for Digi 24 online, it was used by 30% of the respondents on a weekly basis.

We can see below the percentages of trust in these three news outlets in 2023.

Brand	Trust	Neither	Don't Trust
Adevărul	54%	26%	20%
Antena 1	57%	21%	22%
Antena 3 CNN	50%	23%	27%
Digi 24	62%	21%	17%
Evenimentul Zilei	52%	27%	22%
HotNews	50%	27%	22%
Kanal D	53%	25%	22%
Libertatea	52%	27%	21%
Pro TV	67%	17%	16%
Radio Europa FM	63%	22%	15%
Radio România News	62%	21%	17%
Regional or local newspaper	53%	28%	19%
România TV	48%	22%	30%
Știri pe surse	51%	26%	23%
TVR	60%	22%	19%

Table taken from Reuters Institute report 2023

Pro TV is a TV channel that has launched on the 1st of December 1995 with its first transmission being "Știrile ProTV" with Andreea Esca. As Antena 3, ProTV is one of the most popular TV channels in Romania. What differentiates it, is the fact that they are more focused on simply presenting the news, rather than commenting on them. In 2023, ProTV news online were the most used online news outlets in Romania with 29% of the respondents saying that they use it more than 3 days per week. We can see in

the chart above that it also had the highest trust percentage of the entire list of news channels. Additionally, it is known that this particular news channel tries to constantly keep balance between the investigative reporting and breaking the news (2018 report).

Digi 24 is a newer TV channel that reports the news first appearing on the 1st of March 2012 known for repeatedly trying to not take sides on the political arena. As ProTV, it is more focused on presenting the news, rather than news commentary. In 2019, Digi 24 was the second most used online platform for following the news in Romania and the third most trusted. In 2020 it was the 3rd most used online platform and the second most trusted.

As stated before, the focus will fall on the online platforms of these three news outlets. It is important to know that most of the news that are presented in the TV format, are also presented in a more detailed way on the online platforms.

The event that happened in Ditrau will be presented in a chronological order, through the perspectives of the three news outlets chosen.

All of the news outlets present on the one hand, the perspective of the Romanian community and what exactly their problem with the two immigrants is. In this sense, they interviewed several protestants that were outraged because they were afraid that they (the immigrants) will “wash” the Romanian culture.

Moreover, we identify several comments that perpetuate the stereotypization of Asian migrants such as “It is not racism, but we are afraid of the actions they might do, we would like to prevent what is happening in Europe, because we would not be able to let our children outside to play anymore, they will begin to feel offended by the church cross” ¹⁰(Antena 3 CNN, 2020) Additionally, all three of the news outlets present the protest of the Romanian people being fueled by the fear that they feel for a “wave of migration” that would force them to change their culture.

Overall, at least for the first post about this particular incident, the three news anchors have an undeniable unbiased perspective. The only difference we can identify is between Antena 3 and the other two news anchors, in relation to the title chosen. Antena 3, chose a more eye-catching title “ They came all the way from Sri-Lanka and they got employed in a Romanian village. It is incredible what came after- the entire

¹⁰ Original text: “Nu este rasism, dar ne este frică de acțiunile pe care ar putea să le facă, am vrea să prevenim ceea ce se întâmplă prin Europa, că nu o să mai putem lăsa copiii pe afară, o să ajungem că o să fie deranjați și de crucea de pe biserică”

village protested”¹¹. It is obviously done in order to attract more viewers, but it is by using an distortate truth in their title. Not all the village protested, but only about 200 people in front with the priest. It is a very used tactic of news outlets in order to attract viewers.

We can see that all of the news anchors present the perspective of the villagers in the same way. They emphasize the idea that the Romanian villagers compare what is happening with the two migrant workers, to the immigrant situation in Germany or France that they hear from the TV. (ProTV, 2020; Antena 3 CNN, 2020; Digi24, 2020)

What we need to understand is that the media shapes the perspective of a population towards a subject. In this case, the way in which this type of news was presented has shaped the way in which the Romanian population perceives immigrants. As we can see in the three news outlets, all of them present the fact that this discriminatory view that the villagers have is due to the news that they have watched on TV going as far as creating a Facebook group called "we want a Ditrau without immigrants".

At the same time, all three of the news outlets presented the perspective of the owner of the bakery that stated that the only reason for employing foreign workers was that they couldn't find anyone from the village to work for the bakery. They also said that they really enjoy working with these two migrants due to the fact that they're very well prepared, sincere, serious and understanding. They also say that they will employ another five immigrants from Nepal and Sri Lanka due to the fact that there is a need for workers in that area. None of the news outlets interviewed the two migrants Piumal and Amahinda (ProTV, 2020; Antena 3 CNN, 2020; Digi24, 2020).

The reactions of political figures in light of this event were thoroughly presented by the news outlets. ProTV posted a single article with every political figure's reaction and also a report done by The European commission against racism and intolerance published in 2019. They also present this perspective that Romania has had a very interesting progress in the past 5 years in regards to measures implemented against racism or intolerance.

But, recent events have begun to be a motive for worry. The incident presented in this thesis is not the only incident that had happened against Asian migrants. Additionally, other incidents were reported also

¹¹ Original text: “Au venit tocmai din Sri-Lanka și s-au angajat într-o comună din România. E incredibil ce a urmat - tot satul s-a revoltat! “

against the Hungarian community in Romania, the Jewish community and the LGBT+ community. This all represents cause for concern for ECRI.

The reactions of political figures were all in light of respecting the rights of people, anti discriminatory and anti-racism. Prominent figures such as the President of PNL Harghita, Sebastian Buzila, has stated that those manifestations were not normal for an Europe of the 21st century but also stated that a solution for Romanian firms to stop using four in workers are investments or a friendly economic environment (ProTV 2020). Other political figures from parties such as PSD Harghita has also condemned the actions of the people stating that the leaders of the county needs to immediately have a position in order for such incidents of racism and xenophobia to never happen again.

They also presented the reaction of authorities in the sense that they stated that the Harghita county police inspectorate has opened a criminal proceeding in REM for incitement to hatred and discrimination against the approximately 200 locals that had gathered in front of the City Hall.

This incident has sparked a well-needed conversation about the racism and xenophobia shown by the Romanian population towards the immigrant communities. As stated above, this is not the first time that something like this has happened. We will see throughout the news articles that will be analyzed in the following chapter, how incidents such as this one has happened and how exactly the media has chosen to present it.

What there is to note is that all three of the news outlets have chosen to present the facts of the incident through the perspective of the authorities, the political figures, the instigators and the owners of the bakery. There is no article in which the two immigrants were interviewed. We cannot know if the media didn't interview them because they refused to or the media didn't even try to do it. The only account that we have on their view of the situation is a second-hand account in which their Romanian colleagues have talked on their behalf saying that they were somewhat ashamed of the whole situation. It would have been extremely interesting to see their perspective on the matter.

As such, after analyzing the media articles written by the three news outlets, we can say that the Romanian media has chosen a very unbiased position, being able to present the situation in a very leveled way. Nevertheless, we saw that one of the news outlets has chosen to use titles that would catch the viewer's eye by giving a half truth. As we said above, this is a tactic used by news outlets to attract viewers and it should not be held against them but at the same time, in this type of situation, it should be a priority to present the facts in a truthful way.

We need to state that it was extremely important in the analysis what exactly the three news outlets chose to present. And we have seen that they presented more the aftermath reactions of political figures, the minister of labor, the authorities and the protestants. Again, we state that it would have been interesting to see the perspective of the two immigrants who were targeted. In follow up articles, Digi 24 has published some articles that include the perspective of the migrants but only after a few months after the incident. What is to note is that out of the three news outlets, only Digi 24 has continued reporting on this issue even after the situation has been resolved, commenting on the need for a type of social education that Romanians require.

Another interesting fact was that some of the news outlets also published articles that painted a more vivid picture of the reason behind the protest. This was done through linking this outburst to an incident that happened years ago with a Romani person that had affected the community. We need to state that the news outlets have not taken any sides and just presented the facts. The only major problem that we identified was that none of the news outlets, in the time frame of the incident, interviewed the two migrant workers. But, we cannot know if they did not interview them due to the fact that they did not consent to it or if it was a conscious decision that the news outlets made.

What is important to note is that public opinion focused on the fact that this incident happened in a region of the country in which the majority of residents were of Hungarian descent. This meant that we saw some news articles in which this delimitation between the Romanian inhabitants and the Hungarian inhabitants was not taken as a whole. It would be extremely interesting for further research to analyze the Hungarian media around this specific incident and compare it to the Romanian media.

4.7. Asian Migration as seen through media outlets for the period 2007-2023.

For this part 11 articles were analyzed. As we said in the methodology part, in this section the focus falls more on the text itself than the producer of the text. As such, we have several media outlets, some of them being popular and some that are not so popular. The choice to include both popular and less popular news outlets was made in order to emphasize the analysis on the text and not on the producer. Some of the known and popular news outlets that produced the texts analyzed were Antena 3 CNN, Realitatea.net, Observator news, Adevărul, Libertatea and ProTV. The lesser known news outlets are: Bursa.ro, Profit.ro, Veridica.ro. In order to paint a better picture of immigration in Romania, it was important to include text that upon reading them, stood out as being relevant for this research. Whether there was the

title or some specific tropes that stood out, it became relevant there inclusion in order to understand better the situation.

Period	Media outlet	Original title	Translated title
2007-2014	Bursa.ro	"România, față cu muncitorii asiatici"	"Romania, faced with Asian workers"
	Antena 3 CNN	"Studiu: Cum sunt păcăliți imigranții asiatici să lucreze în România"	"Study: How Immigrants are fooled into working in Romania"
	Realitatea.net	"Sute de muncitori chinezi, neplătiți de angajatori, au protestat în fața ambasadei Chinei"	"Thousand of Chinese workers, unpaid by employers, protested in front of the Chinese embassy"
2015-2019	Observator news	"România se pregătește pentru imigranți"	"Romania is preparing itself for migrants"
	Digi 24	"România, căutată de angajații din șase țări asiatice"	"Romania, searched by workers from six Asian countries"
	Adevărul.ro	"De unde vin cei mai mulți imigranți și ce fac ei în România"	"From where do most of the migrants come from and what are they doing in Romania"
	Profit.ro	"Fenomenul atragerii de personal din țări exotice, pe fondul lipsei forței de muncă locală, ia amploare. România aduce muncitori din Filipine, Nepal, Vietnam, India, Indonezia, Thailanda. <<În 50 de ani, importul forței de muncă va fi o necesitate>>"	"The phenomena of attracting workers from exotic countries is increasing on the background of labor shortage. Romania brings workers from Fillippines, Nepal, Vietnam, India, Indonezia, Thailand. <<In 50 years, the import of workers will be a necessity>>"
2020-2023	Veridica.ro	"FAKE NEWS: România este invadată de asiatici"	"Fake News: Romania is invaded by Asian people"
	Libertatea	Un nou derapaj al unui influencer. Cristina Ich, despre imigranții care vin în România: „Nu e niciun avantaj că intră în țară. Iau locurile de muncă ale românilor”	"Another slip for an influencer. Cristina Ich, about the migrants coming into Romania:"There is no advantage for them to come. They steal the jobs from Romanians"
	ProTV	România, „tărâmul făgăduinței” pentru tot mai mulți asiatici. Ce salarii au în construcții	" Romania, <<the promised land>> for more and more Asians. What salary do they have in the construction area"
	Libertatea	ORDONANȚĂ SECRETĂ. Cum au reușit politicienii și patronatele să îi lege pe muncitorii străini de angajatorii lor din România. „Sclavagism modern”	"Secret Ordinance. How politicians and patronages managed to tie immigrant workers to employers in Romania. <<Modern slavery>>"

Table made by the author

4.7.1. Asian migration as seen through media outlets for the years 2007 to 2014 .

Upon entering the European Union, Romania was faced with a new phenomenon of immigration. It is the purpose of the section to analyze the way in which the Romanian population has perceived this phenomenon through several news outlets. The background for this time frame is strongly related to the Ascension into the European Union and the need for Romania to be compliant with the laws of the union.

The new goal was for Romania to enter the Schengen area and as such, changing the legislation related to immigrants was vital.

We have seen in almost all of the National Migration Strategies that were analyzed in this thesis, that a very important part of them was dedicated to educating the Romanian population in order for it to understand the phenomena.

Through this news articles we will not only see the way in which Asian migrants are portrayed by the media, but also the way in which the Romanian population reacts and perceives migrants. Above, we discussed the Ditrau incident where we touched upon sensible, but extremely important and relevant topics such as discrimination based on ethnicity. We have seen the reaction of a small part of the Romanian population that were first confronted with immigrants working at a local bakery. The reasoning behind their outrage comes from a lack in their social education, education that the Romanian institutions should have provided at least from 2007 onward.

Many news outlets have written on immigration in Romania after the publication of the study by the Soros Foundation, a study that we also analyzed in previous chapters. It is clear that the news outlets talk about the fact that Romania was going through a labor shortage and solutions were needed. Interestingly enough, one news , Bursa.ro, also published quotes made by Colm Foy, OCDE official, that stated that this lack of laborers in the Romanian labor market is a temporary situation and as such a temporary solution is needed, the import of foreign laborers. It is interesting to see that as this thesis shows, Romania continues to have a labor shortage that is indeed supplemented by foreign laborers. The language used portrays an urgency in the situations with terms such as “the problem of the labor shortage” or “the crisis of labour force”¹².

Moreover, after a thorough analysis of this particular article, quotes written by the author stand out. For example, close to the end of the article the author states that

“ <<The holistic approach>> proposed by Foy is not a long term solution, but the spokesperson for OECD is certain that Romanians settled abroad will come back, thus ending the labor shortage, a temporary problem.”¹³

¹² Original text: “problemei forței de muncă” and “criza de forță de muncă”.

¹³ Original text: “<<Abordarea holistică>> propusă de Foy nu este o soluție pe termen lung, dar purtătorul de cuvânt al OCDE este sigur că românii de peste hotare vor reveni în țară, punând capăt deficitului de pe piața muncii, care este doar o problemă temporară”. (Bursa.ro, 2008).

It is clear that this media outlet perpetuates the idea that a higher number of immigrants will only help the labor shortage up to a point. The article was written in 2008, after Romania's ascension to the EU which brought even more possibilities of long term or permanent residence in member states for Romanians than the opening of the borders in 2002, when Romanians could more easily legally immigrate (Horváth and Anghel 2009). As such, we can understand the perspective that the author and the spokesperson for OECD has, of returning Romanian migrants to their country in a short amount of time, thus eliminating the labor shortage,

The fact that Romania did transcend its role of being an emigration country thus becoming a destination country is still difficult to comprehend. Decades of being one of the top origin countries of immigrants in Southern and Western Europe, makes it difficult for Romania to be seen as a destination country. Migrants as a temporary solution, it is not that temporary anymore if we take into account the emerging economy of Romania. As we know, when the economy is well, it becomes a pull factor for immigrants and as such, due to the economic boom that Romania is currently experiencing, it is logical to estimate that a greater number of immigrants will come. We discussed in the above chapters the main reasons for the lack of laborers in Romania. It is needless to say that in current years, the same reasons are still of note.

Another news outlet, Antena 3 CNN, posted after the publishing of the study done by the Soros Foundation, a news titled "Study: The way in which Asian immigrants are scammed into working in Romania"¹⁴ It is interesting the way in which Antena 3 CNN framed the Asian immigrant situation as of 2008. In this particular news article they touch upon the fact that most often than not, immigrants are scammed into signing the contract, a contract that is usually not in their native language. Additionally, the article talks about the lack of representation in the migrant community. We have seen this type of manipulation reported in the previous analyzed reports. Immigrants are depicted in this article as being exploited by the Romanian employers in the background of the economic gain that they will have (Safta, 2008). The terminology used by the media outlet is descriptive of the horrendous situation of the migrants. As an example, one of the parts of the article is called "How immigrants are <<bought>>"¹⁵. It goes to say that the article comments freely and critically on the way in which the migrants are exploited by the Romanian employers.

¹⁴ Original text: "Studiu: Cum sunt păcăliți imigranții asiatici să lucreze în România"

¹⁵ Original text: "Cum se <<cumpără>> imigranți"

Abusive measures taken by employers can be also found in several news articles that touched upon the situation in 2008 where hundreds of Chinese immigrants have not been paid for several months and were protesting in front of the Chinese Embassy. We can see how the media reported in a very clear and concise way the situation. At the same time, the language used and the intention behind it is to alert readers and even state persons, to the injustices happening to the Chinese immigrant. Additionally, we can also see the way in which the Romanian media seems to need to validate itself through mentioning that the story or event has also “caught the attention of the international media”¹⁶. (Realitatea.net, 2009).

What is interesting to see is the fact that in all of the news articles the Asian immigrants are presented as victims. They are seen as victims of the employers who do not respect their contracts or as people that are scammed into working a certain job.

4.7.2. Asian migration as seen through media outlets for the years 2014 to 2019 .

In the light of the refugee crisis that happened in 2015, we saw several articles who talked about the way in which Romania will contribute to it. One of the articles analyzed published by Observator news, talked about the fact that Romania was expecting to accommodate a number of 2,632 immigrants but didn't have enough available spots for them. It also talks about the way in which Romania wants to expand its reception center capacity and also increase its support in food and clothing allowances for asylum seekers (“Observator News”, 2015). “ Our country will build new welcoming centers and has prepared a new legislation for refugees”¹⁷, is a quote found in the article which shows that Romania has started to accommodate the new situation regarding the Crisis refugees. We can see that in this particular media article immigrants are framed in a very neutral way and do not appear to have any kind of negative connotation to the term.

Moreover, the article presents the inability of Romania to accommodate the coming migrants in a critical way focusing on the weakness points of Romania as a receiving country of immigrants:” in this moment, our country has in the 6 welcoming centers , only 950 places”¹⁸. We have included this particular article in the analysis due to the fact that it was important to touch upon Romania's standpoint and preparedness

¹⁶ Original text : “a ajuns chiar și în atenția presei internaționale”

¹⁷ Original text:”Țara noastră va construi noi centre de primire și a pregătit o legislație nouă pentru refugiați.”

¹⁸ Original text: “în acest moment, țara noastră dispune, în cele șase centre de primire, doar de 950 de locuri.”

regarding the refugee crisis. Another reason for which we included this article is related to the terminology used to describe the asylum seekers. When referring to asylum seekers they use three words interchangeably: “refugees”, “asylum seekers”, “migrants”¹⁹. But we do see a tendency to only use the term “migrants”, it also being in the title, which can cause a somewhat confusion when reading it. “Romania is preparing itself for migrants”²⁰, reads the title of the article. As we said above, it leaves room to interpretation, when in reality, the news article exclusively talks about asylum seekers.

Another article published by Digi 24, talked about the solution that Romania found in order to not have a labor shortage in industries such as the HORECA sector. It discusses its reliance on the import of foreign laborers, mostly from non EU countries. We have previously discussed the fact that more and more Romanian companies choose to import foreign laborers instead of Romanian laborers due to several factors. In this article the challenges and the advantages of importing foreign labor were thoroughly discussed, some of the advantages being the fact that Romania will become a more diverse and multicultural country. In this article we see the immigrant being framed as a solution to the problem of labor shortages that Romania is facing. It discusses the multilayered topic of foreign labor import in Romania with considerations to the advantages and complications that it will bring.

“There are also advantages for the countries where a large foreign population lives and works. They [the countries] transform themselves into multicultural, cosmopolitan centers, with a large series of new formed abilities, which can contribute to the societies progress through innovation and creativity”²¹

The above quote shows an interesting and open perspective that this particular news outlet has. What is interesting and of note is that when the migrants are seen as a solution to the labor shortage by the media, it is also accompanied by some complications that it will bring to the process: “ the high costs associated with international employment and the long waiting time for the conclusion of the projects, represent the most important disadvantages”²²(“Digi 24” 2018).

In another article published by Adevărul, about migrants in Romania we can see that the focus falls on the fact that more and more migrants from Asian countries are coming into Romania. This shift is clearly

¹⁹ Original text: “refugiați”, “azilanți”, “imigranți”

²⁰ Original text: “România se pregătește pentru imigranți”

²¹ Există, însă, și avantaje pentru țările în care trăiesc și lucrează o foarte mare populație străină. Acestea se transformă treptat în centre multiculturale, cosmopolite, cu o serie largă de abilități nou formate, care pot contribui la progresul societății prin inovație și creativitate.”

²² Original text: “În schimb, costurile ridicate asociate procedurii de angajare internațională, concomitent cu durata relativ mare de închidere a proiectelor, reprezintă cele mai importante dezavantaje”

defined in the article. A section is dedicated to the reasons for immigrating that were defined as being different from country to country. The higher number of Asian immigrants coming into Romania in 2018 was seen as a “big surprise”²³. Additionally, in the article we have seen a comment in which migrants are seen as replacements from Romanian workers that have emigrated for work “ The Chinese and Vietnamese are replacing Romanians who have left for work”²⁴. The framing of migrants in this particular article is fairly neutral, the migrant being a person who is seeking opportunities for various reasons and Romania such as studying or work (“Adevărul” 2018).

In none of the articles that we analyzed up until now and that we will analyze from now on, use any kind of derogatory language to talk about migrants or the immigration process. A commonality identified in most of the articles chosen that were talking about the need of foreign laborers to solve the issue of the labor shortages in Romania, is the fact that migrants are framed as a solution.

In another article published by Profit.ro, talking about the way in which migrants became the solution for the labor shortages, we can see that it has the same structure as most of the other articles on the same theme. It talks about the sectors that are in need of foreign workers, the reasons for which this sectors are lacking workers, the fact that Asian countries are the countries of origin of this foreign laborers and the fact that the government chooses to increase the number of the maximum foreign workers allowed to enter the Romanian labor market, as a response to the labor shortage (“Profit.ro” 2018).

4.7.3. Asian migration as seen through media outlets for the years 2020 to 2023 .

Due to the fact that in recent years we saw an increase in the number of foreigners coming into Romania, many news outlets have adopted a false narrative concerning the immigrants.

We also have a number of news outlets that have tried to contradict with factual information the fake news that was starting to spread. The fake news that concerns us was the fact that Romania is being invaded by Asian migrants and that they will somehow colonize the country.

One news outlet, Veridica.ro, has been able to contradict this false narrative with factual information such as providing the context and the labor shortage that Romania was facing. We see again the migrant

²³ Original text: “Marea surpriză”

²⁴ Original text: “Chinezii și vietnamezii îi înlocuiesc pe românii care au plecat la muncă în afară”

being framed as a solution for the labor shortage. Moreover, the text also talks about the fact that immigration is legally controlled by the institutions and such there is a strict control on the number of foreigners who come into the country. Another important fact that has been pointed out by the news outlet is related to the statistical evidence that proves the falls information given by other fake news outlets. As we can see, this article differs from the other articles analyzed up until now, mainly due to the fact that it has a stronger overall opinion. (“Veridica.ro” 2023).

“Even though it seems obvious, we are obliged to reiterate the ridiculous hypothesis which says that <<sea side owners>>[owners of sea side businesses] have arranged an Asian invasion of Romania”²⁵. This quote is descriptive to the type of news outlet it is. Its overall theme is to debunk fake news and as such, a more personal and opinionated approach is understandable.

There are instances in the media that we see that influencers do perpetuate the negative stereotypes associated with migrants. For example, one news outlet, Libertatea.ro, presented the fact that an influencer made discriminatory comments in regards to immigrants from Pakistan and also expressed her concern in relation to the fact that they are coming into Romania to steal Romanian's jobs. This is exactly the false information that we mentioned above. The news outlet who presented the story is indeed trying to remain neutral, but the story in itself frames migrants in a very negative and discriminatory manner. It is important to also present this part of the Romanian media in order to understand the fact that even though the Romanian media tries to be completely neutral, this doesn't mean that every type of media can be ocnrolled, as an example we have this above mentioned case (Dobrescu 2022).

“Given the conditions that Romanians choose to work in the 4 countries²⁶, more than 50 thousand Asians will come this year to work in our construction sites, hotels and factories.”²⁷

This is a quote from a news article published by ProTV. We see the way in which the news of an increase in the number of immigrants is delivered at the same time with the reiteration of the emigration of Romanians. It also talks about the fact that Asian migrant workers are extremely efficient and disciplined in their work.

²⁵ “ Deși pare evident, ne vedem nevoiți să insistăm pe ridicolul ipotezei în care <<patronii de pe litoral>> s-au organizat pentru a provoca o invadare asiatică a României.”

²⁶ The original article had used the word “zări” which translates to “horizons” which can be a metaphor to signify the 4 countries where Romanians migrate the most.

²⁷Original text: “ În condițiile în care românii merg să lucreze în cele 4 zări, peste 50 de mii de asiatici vor veni în acest an, pe șantierele, în hotelurile și fabricile noastre.”

“It is true that there were situations in which Indian or Vietnamese migrants were employed on a two year contract and they ran from work and tried to illegally pass the West frontier.”²⁸

They also present the situations in which immigrants fled their work and illegally entered other countries. It goes to say that the Romanian media always tends to present the positive and the negative side of employing Asian migrants.

“Up until several years ago, they[Asian migrants] were more of an exotic presence, now, Asians rehabilitate your apartment building, they are quiet and docile pawns in the factories from where food and beauty products come from, they cook your lunch and serve you with an innocent and untired smile, in the restaurant.”²⁹

In the same media article produced by ProTV we encounter this above quote. As we can see, the specific terms that are used to describe Asian migrants are “pawns”, “quiet” and “docile”. Moreover, the “exotic presence”, terms that used to describe them a few years ago in Romania, is not relevant anymore for the media articles. Indeed, we have seen in the previous, more statistical chapters of this thesis, that the number of Asian immigrants coming into Romania has increased in recent years and it is estimated to increase even more in the next few years. While reading this article we could see that the author tries to, on the one hand, present the new reality that the labor market has, and on the other hand, to make people aware of the new reality. It is clear that, at least on the media front, Asian immigration in Romania is still a somewhat new phenomenon that still needs to be accepted in order to become normal (“ProTV” 2020).

They interviewed employers who had only positive feedback to give in regards to migrant workers. Again, we see the migrant framed as a solution for the labor shortage that Romania continues to have. At the same time, in the news article they acknowledge the challenges that the employers face when employing migrant workers such as the language barrier (“ProTV” 2020).

As we have seen previously, media outlets use eye-catching titles in order to attract viewers. But in doing so, they also perpetuate either stereotypes or a type of message. As an example, the news outlet Libertatea, published an article called "The secret ordinance. How the politicians and the patrons have managed to tie foreign laborers to their employers in Romania.<<modern slavery>>"³⁰. The article

²⁸Original text: “ E drept că au fost și situații în care indienii sau vietnamezii angajați cu un contract de doi ani, au fugit de la serviciu și au încercat să treacă fraudulos frontiera spre Vest.”

²⁹ Original text: “Până acum câțiva ani, erau mai degrabă o prezență exotică, acum, asiaticii vă reabilitează blocul, sunt pioni tăcuți și docili în fabrici de unde vin alimente și produse cosmetice, vă gătesc prânzul și vă servesc, zâmbind inocent și neobosiți, în restaurant.”

³⁰ Original text: “Ordonanța secretă: Cum au reușit politicienii și patronatele să îi Law pe muncitorii străini de angajatorii lor din România. <<Sclavagism modern>>”

comments on the law introduced by the government in which foreigners from non EU countries can change their employer in Romania in their first year, only with their written approval. Moreover, the article provides a very critical perspective in relation to the way in which the government addresses the migration phenomena (Meseșan 2022).

“<<We work 10 hours, six days a week. Much more than our Romanian colleagues. We are treated like slaves here>> says in English a woman from Nepal that works in a fast-food restaurant in Bucharest. And what if you complain to the boss, we ask her. <<Bye bye>>[signifying getting fired] she answers in Romanian” .³¹

As we discussed above, it is important what the media outlets choose to present. This interview presented above is relevant to the way in which immigrants are treated in Romania. This is not a generalization because we have identified other articles above that present a different picture. But, in this situation we can see that some migrants are struggling, doing overtime and not being treated well. This comes on the background of the new Government ordinance that forces them to stay at their employer in Romania for at least an year until they can change workplaces. The consequence of this ordinance is presented by the media outlet as being “the foreign laborers will be even more vulnerable”.³²

In this situation, this particular media outlet chose to present all the important factors and interviews, either with political figures or with immigrants, that would paint a clearer picture of the abuse that they suffer at work.

Conclusion

As such, after analyzing several news outlets we can identify the three themes above mentioned. The theme of the labor shortage is present in mostly all of the news outlets. On the one hand, it shows concern for this particular problem that Romania is still facing, but on the other hand it also provides the solution. This being the second theme present in the news outlets being the immigrant worker as the solution for

³¹Original text: “<<Muncim 10 ore, șase zile pe săptămână. Mai mult decât colegii români. Suntem tratați ca sclavi aici>>, spune în engleză o tânără din Nepal, care lucrează într-un fast-food din București. Și dacă te plângi șefului?, o întrebăm. <<La revedere>>, răspunde ea în limba română.” (Meseșan 2022).

³² Original text: “vulnerabilizarea și mai mare a acestor muncitori străini.” (Meseșan 2022).

the labor shortage. We have seen that for this particular theme news outlets analyzed have given the advantages and also the disadvantages. The advantage comes as a result of the fact that they portray migrants as being efficient and disciplined, such as being good workers. On the other hand, the language barrier is a disadvantage.

We have seen that fake news is also present when talking about migrants. Cases such as the one presented above with the influencer who has made some xenophobic comments, are fueling disinformation among readers.

Lastly, we have seen how migrants are framed in these news articles analyzed. We have not encountered any negative framing of migrants. The idea that the migrant as the solution for the labor shortage in Romania has been perpetuated throughout all the news articles analyzed. Indeed we have seen even in the national migration strategies presented in the previous chapter that immigrants do represent a tangible solution for this problem and we can estimate that in the coming years the number of immigrant workers will continue to increase.

We have seen similarities between the way in which media outlets portrayed migrants in 2007 and 2023. As a constant, we have the fact that migrants are seen as a solution for the labor shortage. Moreover, another commonality can be the fact that migrants are still at risk to be framed by either intermediary firms or employers. Beginning with 2020 we saw that some news articles spread fake news that migrants are coming into Romania to steal Romanians' jobs. But out of all of the news articles that we have analyzed we saw that usually migrants are seen in a very positive manner, seen as a solution to a constant problem.

We have agreed upon the fact that migrants are seen as solutions to the labor shortage problem. But, at the same time, it begs the question if they are indeed seen as a solution or as a replacement. We have seen in several news articles that this topic of migrants as "replacements" is discussed. We need to return to the socio-economic background of this analysis. Even before Romania's ascension to the EU, it began to have a labor shortage. After entering the EU, this labor shortage began to grow. We have seen that in the articles from 2008 until 2014 we encounter the theme of labor shortage as a problem and migrants as either solutions or replacements. What we need to understand is, at least for the first period, this labor shortage was a new phenomenon. For the second and third period labor shortage is a reality. What every news article analyzed does is to first, comment critically on the lack of preparation of the Romanian government in regards to the coming immigrants, second discuss immigrants as being the solution for

this labor shortage, and third commenting on the possible difficulties that the import of foreign labor could have. In conclusion, migrants are seen interchangeably as solutions and as replacements to the ongoing problem of labor shortage.

CONCLUSIONS

The first chapter of this thesis, deals with the history and evolution of migration in Romania throughout the period 1949, during the very early years of the Communist period, all the way to Romania's entry in the European Union. We have seen how in the very beginning, migration in Romania was somewhat limited, and that throughout the Communist regime period, there were several changes to the migration policy and how that changed the term of a foreigner.

We have also seen how Asian migration changed in the period between the fall of communism and Romania joining the EU, where this migration phenomena really started to emerge. We saw that the biggest immigrant communities were Hungarian and German. We also witnessed a big rise in emigration after the fall of the communist regime. We have presented the way the labor market has suffered changes from the communist period to the post communist period. From the charts, we can see that, beginning with the 1956 census, the Jewish immigrant population slowly decreased, and at the same time, we are able to see an increase in the number of Turks and Romani.

In order to find out the approximate number of immigrants of other ethnicities, other than European, we have added the number of Turkish, Armenian and "Other ethnicity" groups found in the 1966 census, and we have reached 26,157. As for the 1977 census, 2,560,345 immigrants were present, other than Europeans. This was the result that we calculated, even though this is only an estimate. We saw the changes that the 1989 revolution brought both for the general population and immigrants. We have also discussed the compensation migration of the Romanian population. Here we have seen the effects, not only on the population, but also the economy of the labor shortage. These were the main results concerning this particular time frame.

The 2002 "Opening of the Gates" increased the labor shortage, which led to the beginning of the circulatory migration in this time period. As for the period between 2000 and 2007 the data shows that there is a decrease in the number of immigrants up to 2004, from which point it starts increasing again. Throughout this period we can see how the Romanian government is thinking about compensating for the lack of laborers. Moldova, Turkey and China were the top three countries from which immigrants came from during this period.

In the second chapter, the period starting with Romania's ascension to the European Union was covered. We firstly began by analyzing the way the Romanian laws and legislation had to adapt to the new European Standards, and how this, in turn, affected immigration into the country. We have analyzed the four National Migration Strategies in depth, and provided statistical and qualitative examples of their effects. In the implementation of the 2007 Migration Strategy, we see an increase in the number of immigrants arriving into the country.

The changes made to GEO 194/2002 were incredibly important to the way immigrants were received in Romania. In this chapter we have discussed the requirements and the rights and obligations of the migrants in Romania. For the 2011 National Migration Strategy, immigration is still seen as a new phenomenon in the country. We have seen that for this year, Turkish and Chinese immigrants represented the top two biggest minorities. The number of foreigners that entered the country from developing countries remained constant, with an average of 57,485 people per year.

In the context of the 2015 refugee crisis, the national migration strategy had to follow the European standards. The average number of foreigners from developing countries has jumped to 64,128. For the years 2019 and 2020, the top four origin countries were Moldova, Vietnam, Turkey and Sri Lanka. After consulting the Immigration Office database, we have seen that for 2019, 60% of immigrants came seeking employment. For 2020, 59% of immigrants came seeking employment. It is normal that we see a drop in the number of immigrants due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As for recent years, we see a steady increase in the number of developing country nationals coming into Romania, 63% of them seeking employment.

The third chapter addresses the topic of Asian immigrants in Europe. We saw the main reasons for which they choose to migrate to Europe. An important topic discussed in the chapter is the role of intermediary firms in migration influxes. We have seen that they have the power to influence people's decision when it comes to the place and working position for which they apply. Moreover, we had analyzed the term "good migrant" which has been promoted by these firms.

Following this, in the next chapter we conducted an in depth media analysis, being split into two parts. The first part analyzed three media outlets which all reported on the same incident, that being the Ditrău

incident. Out of the three of them, we have seen that Antena 3 CNN chose to present it in a more eye-catching way, whereas the other two, Digi24 and PRO TV have opted for a more objective approach. What the media chooses to present is of vital importance, as it shows their stand in regards to the incident, which can be extrapolated to the whole concept of immigration in Romania.

For the second part of the fourth chapter, eleven articles were selected and they were analyzed through the lens of discourse analysis. They were selected from news outlets which have different target demographics, such as general media, media focused on debunking fake news and economic oriented news. This analysis was carried over three periods, 2007 to 2014, 2014-2019 and 2019 to 2023.

The results for 2019 to 2023 were that on the one hand we have the media presenting extensively on the injustice through which Asian migrants go through, and on the other hand they are described as “pawns”, “quiet” or “docile”. These three terms show us the way some media outlets present them, that is as replacing the lack of Romanian laborers. One common theme of all of the three periods analyzed was the increasing labor shortage which can be seen in the country.

This thesis is not without its weaknesses. One of the main weaknesses is the small number of articles analyzed in the media analysis. Even though the small number meant a more in depth analysis of the text, a higher number would have meant a more complex analysis. The methodology of choosing the articles for the second part of the media analysis gave us a multi disciplinary perspective on the way in which Asian migrants are seen. We have seen an economic perspective, political perspective and so on. But this method had its limitations. It would have been an even better analysis if the number of articles chosen for each category would have been higher.

Another weak point of the thesis is the sometimes conflicting statistical evidence. We have seen that for the 2009 period we used the statistical evidence provided by the National Institute of Statistics, but after this time frame we stopped using it due to the fact that they changed their methodology. It would have been interesting to be able to get in touch with the National Institute of Statistics and try and reconcile the existing differences.

While this thesis only covers a general overview of Asian immigration in Romania here are some further avenues which could be investigated. First of all, even though research of the past could prove to be

harder to conduct than research of the present, it would be interesting to see a more detailed analysis of the communist period and what it meant for immigrants in Romania. A further analysis on the German immigrants that were exchanged for financial benefits could be an interesting research path. Moreover, in what concerns Asian migrants in the communist period, it would be interesting to be able to conduct interviews with the second generation immigrants and understand why and how they immigrated.

Another interesting avenue worth exploring would be the intermediary firms that exist in Romania and how they operate. It is important to discuss and research them as they are pivotal to the understanding of Asian immigration in Romania. On this aspect, further research can be made by interviewing on the one hand, the owners and employers of aid companies and on the other hand, the migrants who work through these companies.

At the same time, another interesting avenue could be choosing one company that has employed a large number of Asian workers and making a comparison between the experiences of Asian workers and Romanian workers at this said company. It would give us a formidable insight into the reality lived by the Asian migrants in Romania.

As for the media analysis, a higher number of articles analyzed would have proven even more accurate and helpful for understanding the media portrayal of Asian migrants. As such, for further research a higher number of articles should be chosen from different or specific news outlets in order to better reflect their situation. In this regard, media outlets could be chosen by their political affiliation to present different perspectives.

As the research on the reasons for which Asian migrants choose Romania as a country of immigration is still in its early stages, a focus on this particular area will give tremendous benefits to the migration research as a whole.

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