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**Consequences of the Romanian Work Migration
over the EU's Countries**

Case Study: the Roma Minority

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Abstract

The aim of paper is to examine the impact of the Romanian labor force's migration over the UE's members. The post-communist transition of Romania to a market economy determined a decrease of salaries and also a raise of unemployment rate. Those factors contributed to a development of temporary migration for working which has increased since 2002 (when visas for the UE's countries were eliminated).

The migration of labor force is one of the most important phenomena in the context of the social transformations. 10% of the Romanian families have got at least one member who temporarily works abroad.

The paper is divided into two parts.

The first part analyses the particularities of the Romanian labor migration in connection with the orientation of the UE's members concerning that phenomenon.

The second part focuses on the migration of the Rroma minority, which had negative consequences not only over the destination countries but also over Romania.

The problem of Rroma minority is the result of four major factors:

- *very low quality of life; poverty ;*
- *lack of education (high rate of analphabetism);*
- *frequent conflicts between different Rroma communities.*

*Another problem concerns the real dimension of Rroma minority. There were over 400000 Rromas in 1992, while their number increased to 535000 in 2002. Anyway, at present, the real number is surpassing 2 millions. The approach of the problem should take into account two aspects: on one side, the social integration of the Rroma minority on the Romanian labor market, as a result of an effective implementation of **the Rroma's Status Improvement Governmental Strategy** and on the other side, the cooperation between the UE's members, with a view to manage the migration of the Rromas potentially criminal .*

Progress has been made in a number of small-scale initiatives, mostly funded through the EU'S Phare programs that helped some Roma to acquire identity papers, offered family planning advice, increased access to schools and provided job training.

The result of our study allowed the identification of several ways aimed to assure a better integration of the Roma minority on the UE's labor market.

Consequences of the Romanian Work Migration over the EU's Countries. Case Study: the Roma Minority

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Introduction

The post-communist Romanian transition towards the market economy has determined a de-industrialization process that has led to a reduction in real salaries, a diminishing of the life standard and an increasing unemployment level. This situation, to which we can add the visa elimination for those who traveled the states of the European Union in 2002, has contributed to development of the temporary work abroad. The analysis of the migration mechanism shows that after 1990 there have been changes concentrated into the following directions:

- the level of different migration forms has changed: thus, there has been a shift from mainly permanent migration to a temporary emigration.
- there have appeared new migration forms. Romania has become a passage for migrants who come from third countries and who want to go to a country belonging of the European Union.
- the main motivation of migration has changed. The main motivation for migration before 1990 was ethnical and political, but at present, the main motivation is economical, expressed by temporary work migration. It is thought that in future the temporary work migration will still prevail.

The work force migration to the exterior is an important phenomenon within the transformations in Romania and in the lives of the Romanian citizens.

The study done in 2005 by the Public Opinion Barometer (The Foundation for an Open Society)¹ over a representative number of Romanians, shows that 10% of the families have at least a member who works temporary abroad. The work abroad is, in most cases, a temporary strategy. Most studies show that only 37% of the interviewees have reported a permanent migration, 12 % being in favor of a temporary migration.

¹ *Public Opinion Barometer, The Foundation for an Open Society, 2005*

1. Particularities of migration during the transition time

1.1. Legislation

The legislation influencing migration can be found in three categories: migration laws, workforce market laws and laws accepting higher education diplomas and qualifications. During the last years (after 2000) Romania has made large progress into modification of the existing law system and the adoption of a new one compatible to that of the European Union.

The main progress has been made as concerns the foreigners in Romania:

- the European Union citizens do not need a visa to enter Romania, they don't have to justify the purpose of their stay, but the citizens from third countries need a visa and a green card;
- the refugee regime and their social protection is the field where real progress has been made from the legislative point of view, since it has started from zero. At present the Romanian state offers two forms of protection (refugee, humanitarian protection in certain conditions),
- prevention and repression of persons are regulated in order to prevent this phenomenon and to ensure protection and assistance of victims due to fact that this phenomenon has increased in Romania after 1990. At the same time collaboration with responsible organism, of the European Countries is regulated in order to avoid that people should be mistreated on the international level;
- delivery of work authorization necessary to all foreigners who work on the Romanian territory, with few exceptions (the citizens of European Union member countries and countries that Signed the Agreement concerning the Economic European space and their family members).

The analyses of the migration force by type of migration on flux shows at first, that the foreign migration have two components: the emigration and work migration.

1.2. Dimensions and emigration consequences

The emigration is moderated, with no significant flow changes and stays low enough (around 10-15 thousand people). The migration reasons, as well as the territorial map of the migration flow have changed. In general, there has been a shift from an emigration due to ethnic reasons to a migration due to different reasons, with a shift to favourite destinations.

1.2.1 The distribution of emigrants according to the reason of migration

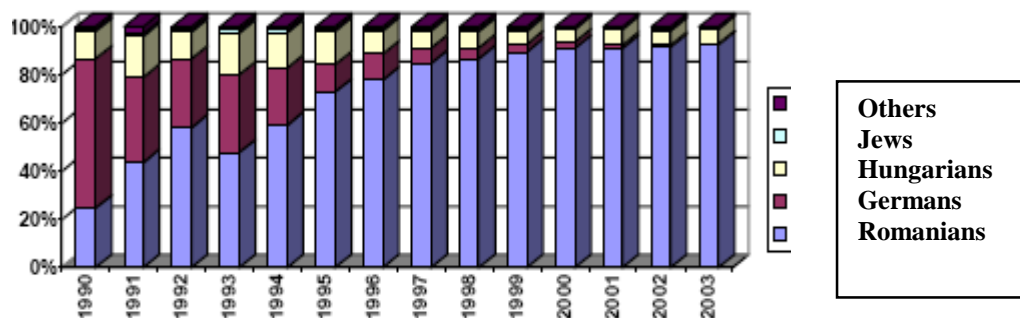
Following the above mentioned criteria the main steps of migration can be as follows (graph no 1):

- 1990-1993, when the departures were mainly the coming back of the Hungarian and German ethnics to the countries of origin and /or the refinding of their family. These flows started from zones with ethnical concentrating, as Transylvania, towards Germany and Hungary;
- after 1994, the main migration of the Romanians. The ethnic criterion changes, on the one hand due to considerable reduction of the ethnic population and on the other hand due to the fact that final migration was replaced by circulatory migration, of people who travel from and to Romania and their “mother-country”.

The motivation of the migrant Romanians has become much more diverse - economic, social, political, but most departures are due to revenue and professional opportunity reasons.

Graph. 1

Emigrant structure following their nationality



Source: Indicators following the National Institute of Statistics, Romania, 2004

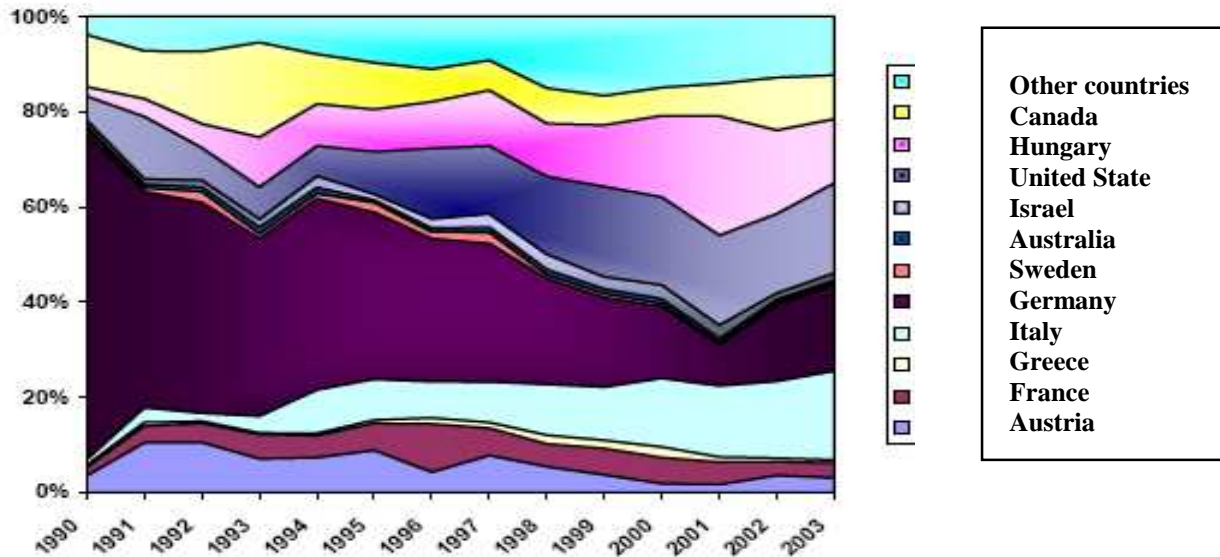
1.2.2. The favorite destinations have changed too.

During the first years of transition the flows were directed towards Germany (almost half), Hungary and Austria (around 10%), whereas after 2002 the favourite destinations are the U. S., Canada, Italy and Germany with 15-18% (graph no. 2). During 2002-2003 most of the Romanian citizens who emigrated to the European Union established in Italy (4233

people) and Germany (3646 people). In Austria and France there were less than 1000 people and less than 100 in Greece and Sweden (graph. no. 2)

Graph. 2

Emigration structure – following the destination country



Source: Indicators following the National Institute of Statistics, Romania, 2004

1.2.3. The distribution of emigrants according to age shows the propension of those who have the highest professional opportunities:

- a significant proportion of emigrants between 26-40 years of age (48.7% in 2002 and respectively 51% in 2003), people already highly trained, having a maximum of working and innovational potential and who can adapt and have large mobility);
- a decreasing percentage till 2001 of emigrants between 18-25 years of age (25% in 1992, about 16% in 16% in 1995-1996, about 10% in 1998-2000 and 9.4% in 2001), followed in the past two years by an increasing of 12% in 2002 and 13.4% in 2003. They are graduates or people who are about to graduate, who have a real working potential and perspectives²;
- we add the fact that emigrants between 41-50 years of age (11% in 2003) represent an active work force whose active potential can be used.

While as for Romania emigrants are considered to be a loss, fact attesting the low capacity of our economy and society to regenerate the work opportunities, they are a competitive work force for a long time from now on.

² Bleahu, Ana, (2004), External migration phenomenon at young people from Romania, Quality of Life, Review, no.3-4

1.2.4. The distribution of emigrants according to their professional skills

The graduates of higher education, represent about 10-12% of the emigrants. This work force category is higher because they won't be able to find a convenient job on the internal work market. Moreover, people feel a certain attraction for the "miracle" of migration towards a different civilization. More than a quarter of emigrants are high-school graduates and of professional schools³. The emigrants who graduate from professional schools are less numerous than the first category.

The highest number, around one third of all emigrants, according to the educational level and their professional formation, is held by people who graduated only the primary school or the gymnasium. Most of them are teenagers who haven't finished their professional formation and emigrants and their families.

However, it is clear that this "brain rush" for Romania is a loss and an important input for the human capital and the work force of the country that receives them. The formation taxes have been paid in Romania, but their activity on a macro and individual level are achieved in other countries.

Among professions, after 1995, engineers and architects obtained increasing values, of 8-9% in 1995-1996 to about 12-13% in 2002-2003. They are followed by teachers and economists (about 3-5%), technicians and pharmacists (2-3%). As compared to 1995-1999, the number of emigrants artists decreased (0.5-0.6%) in 2002-2003. The last evolutions confirm the fact that, at present, emigration is more influenced by professional criteria opportunities and by revenues rather than by "brain rush" phenomena that are present everywhere in the countries having a high research potential. Thus, in 2002 in the United States and in Canada most emigrants were higher education products and those between 30-40 years old were the best represented. In Germany, although high-school graduates were more numerous, the age decreased to 25-29 years of age, and this shows an emigration having in sight a pursuit of studies and/or a job in higher fields of activity like I.T. where values emerge when very young.

1.3. The external migration of work force

1.3.1. Dimensions

The external migration of work force has a temporary character, its duration varying largely (a few weeks/months, years) and it does not suppose changing residence.

³ Bleahu, A. (2004), *Romanian Migration to Spain. Motivation, Networks, and Strategies* in Daniel Pop *New Patterns of Labour Migration in CEE*, Amm Design, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Usually, the people implied in the migratory movement legal and/or contingent belong to three large categories of work force:

a) the work force highly specialized, with valid competencies in high fields of science and technology or in certain services such as education, health system. This category either directly recruited (sometimes towards the end of their studies) or by Romanian foreign specialized organisms, has the highest chances to get long term contracts. Moreover, they belong to the 25-40 category, considered the most creative and productive;

b) the middle level work force:

- constructors – traditional category in working abroad, well regarded on western markets (Germany, Israel);

- para-medics (medical nurses) who are highly demanded by foreign employers (Italy, United States, Canada, Switzerland etc);

- hotel and restaurant personnel, equally on demand on western work markets;

c) non qualified or semi qualified work force in agriculture (picking periods), salubrity, constructions (Spain, Portugal, Greece).

There is yet a strong migrating work force that is not submitted to any control, either in Romania or in the receiving country. A large number of those who work temporarily, at different times, most of times illegally, on the underground work market of the receiving country. The living conditions offered and accepted are not the best ones, and they are beyond the living standard offered to the work force at home. Firms agree with this form of occupation because salary costs are lower and the work of these people is significant.

1.3.2. Revenues. Money transfer

The main motivation of the work migration is an economic one: higher revenues than the person could get in Romania for equal work, and a little lower than the work force in the country they choose to do same work for. Salary in Romania is around 175€/month, much lower than the average in the European Union. Moreover, the fiscal system and poor social assistance make the motivation of the work migration stronger.

The revenues gotten from working abroad have multiple destinations:

- consuming on the internal market on the host country: food, housing, clothing, personal hygiene articles;
- current consuming: living costs, child education, medical care. These are consumption spending for housing, on the internal market. This money can be found in the final consumption of the population;

- economies and investments in long lasting goods: housing, land, others (house utilities, cars, devices, agricultural machines). Some of them (housing) contribute to the growth of national wealth;
- enterprise creation or the setting up of family associations (agritourism, cultural tourism, types of services in the rural and urban environment).

The money transferred to Romania depends on:

- the personal situation: the emigrant employers highly qualified with high revenues transfer only a small part of them. They earn more and (maybe) invest in their host country;
- the family situation: those who have a family/relatives, transfer large amounts of their revenues, but these amounts are temporary and they do solve the living standards problem only if they invest fruitfully on middle and long term periods.

Money transfer is a form of partly recuperating potential losses due to foreign migration (graph. 3). Transfers due to working abroad are higher if we think of the informal transfers. The lacks in the informational system and the “restrictions” in the banking system (a system not enough developed and non stimulating for money deposits/transfers done by persons) and fiscal (high fiscality for work revenues), discourage the whole revenues declaration. Thus, statistics take into account sums 2-3 times lower from the ones obtained actually. Even so, the total value of transfers has surpassed the volume of direct foreign investments (DFI). We can thus appreciate that in the short run, for the domestic economy and for the people involved, the temporary export of work force has proved its efficacy.

This situation is not particular for Romania, it can also be met in other countries, as well as in the countries in transition.

Secondly, in future, it is estimated to increase the flow of money due to work towards the home country. The new bilateral agreements will increase the importance of the work contracts concluded through the Romanian Work Force Migration Office.

Such a phenomenon, as it has been mentioned before, has social and economic effects that are both positive and negative for Romania: supplementary revenues for homes and the reestablishing of the internal market, an increase of the internal investment potential, but also a diminished productivity, a diminishing of the young and creative potential, a slowing down of the economic growth and of the technical and technological renewal⁴.

⁴ Daianu, D., L. Voinea, M. Tolici. (2001) *Balance of Payments in Romania. The Role of Remittances*, Romania Center for Economic Policy, Working Paper nr.28/2001

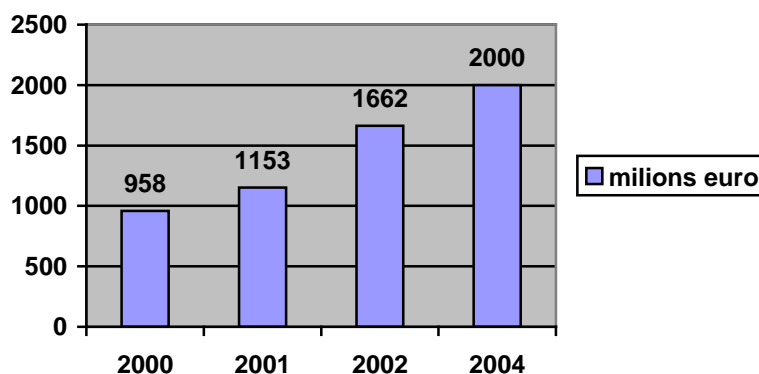
Recent estimations appreciate the legal money transfer to 1.5-2 billion € per year. The illegal transfers are comparable to the legal transfers. The developing potential of these sums is enormous. It is necessary to create the necessary instruments to stimulate the use of this bank transfer system, of the money placements in the long run and/or of the productive investments. Thus we will see positive effects important for the national economy: the cash flow will grow, the payment balance will ameliorate and the money supply will increase, the interest tax will decrease, the living standard will be improved.

1.4. Nowadays orientation of the member states of the European Union members regarding immigration. Possible effects for Romania

The reaction of the states and of the international community to administrate/regulate the migration has been dominated by ad hoc considerations. But the migration problem requires an efficient management. For other types of flow (goods, financial etc.), migration depends on individual decisions that often do not correspond to the collective strategies and cannot be controlled. At present, the states try to integrate the people flow problems in the global construction of the economically sustainable development and of social progress. Migration is nowadays a multinational process that cannot be managed (only) from one side or bilaterally⁵. However, migration remains a mainly political issue.

Graph. 3

Annual evolution of private money transfers of migrants



Source: Annual Report of the National Bank of Romania, 2005

Facing a diminution of qualifications, of decline and ageing of population, EU countries have to re-orient their positions due to the migration of the work force, by

⁵ Wener, H. (2003), *The Integration of Immigrants into the Labour Markets of the EU*, in IAB Topics, no. 52

promoting cautiously measures of accepting foreign workers, having for purpose simplicity and flexibility of actual schemes to access the EU work market. Most measures favor the access of the work force to the high fields of IT and those from the health protection (OCDE, 2006).

The actual concerns of the EU states are directed towards an efficient management of the work force migration. Supplementary problems appear when the workers migration is (temporarily) associated to their families, phenomenon met during long periods of work abroad (by long term contracts or renewed contracts).

The main reasons of the workers migration are those identified during the last years: occupation of a position with better financial perspectives and living conditions improvement. If the dominant motivation for workers from the Czech Republic, from Slovenia, Latvia is the desire of a “balance between the economic and social life”, for those from Romania (and Bulgaria) the perspectives of a substantial financial gain in the short run are dominating.

Two types of restrictions are present on the labor market in the EU states:

- on the state part (regulatory institutions/management of the labour market):
 - limited access of the migrant workers to the national system of social protection (Great Britain, Ireland);
 - restrictive occupation of certain posts that can also be required by citizens of countries of origin (Holland);
 - accomplishment of certain conditions like: appliance to the norms of collective labour contracts, the existing of a request for the jobs, housing ensured for workers (Sweden);
 - application of certain restrictive regulations for a period of 2-7 years (Denmark, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Austria).
- on the workers' part, who are already present on the labour market and/or of the EU citizens.

A study of the EC (published in March 2004) reveals that 40% of the European citizens who were interviewed believe that “immigrants are not needed to fill in the lack of labour force in certain economic fields”, the most recent being those from Greece, Germany and Belgium. Moreover, 14% of those oppose to the promotion of the equal chances of the labour market.

The intention to liberalization of the labour market within the EU members, has turned into a cautious position, concretized into the access restrictions. We can expect Romania to benefit from the same “treatment”. It is possible that the restrictions became more selective

and discriminatory, promoting access only “in view to complete the needs of the market”, thing that will include marginal specializations.

1.5. Perspectives on the Romanian labour force migration

The specialists’ evaluations regarding the evolution of migration during the two decades to come, regard three major phenomena (IOM Bucharest, 2004):

- The increase of the flow of labour force towards the EU space and a reorientation of the main directions. The destination countries in view are those of the western south of the EU – Spain, Portugal, France and Greece. Germany is, by tradition, a favorite destination for Romanian workers, but the flows have a stationary tendency. The migrants are oriented towards areas where their presence is accepted easily and where their previous experiences have been successful for themselves or for their friends/relatives.
- The option for regulated migration increases as compared to that for non regulated migration, as the first one ensures a greater security of gains, a higher level of these two (in a higher measure) and a certain degree of social protection.
- The coming back of the migrants on the national labour market has positive effects and contributes to the increase of economic performances, stimulating modern working relationships, competitiveness and contributing to the development of a labour culture compatible to that of Western Europe.
- The surveillance of these flows represents a process in full reformation, based nowadays on the implication of several agencies or institutions, fact that renders difficult the coordination of policies and the implementation of the most adequate procedures.

As possible objectives of policies adapted to everyday realities and perspectives we think it necessary:

- to encourage legal migration through specific services of assistance for potential migrants. “The effective protection of migrant workers can be accomplished best by their information and their preparation”, (UM, Report of the General Secretary, 2002). It is about three major elements: information concerning the demands on the labour market, preparation in view to action the new labour market and the insurance of the “social security package” (access to health services, old age insurance, etc).

- to stimulate the circulatory migration, especially in the EU space for the benefit of the two states implied, stimulation of the demand for qualified labour, remuneration accordingly and elimination of discrimination of migrant workers;
- to encourage the money transfer by banking system and to help (assistance, formation) the enterprise setting up, in view to invest productively. The ideal policy of investing money transfers is the coming back of the migrant workers and the setting up of an enterprise in which they use the most of the required experience and the professional experience acquired during the migration time.

Another solution would be perspective investments.

There are three major aspects regarding economic and social factors “favoring” migration:

- a) national economy is confronted to a reduction of the workers potential in the event of a living standard that is much lower than that of the EU states. Society cannot compensate this loss through other factors or mechanisms (use of performant technologies, immigration, brain immigration included etc);
- b) the national market cannot retain the necessary labour force, thus being competitively disadvantageous as compared to the EU, labour market that offers higher revenues;
- c) there is not yet a labour culture adapted to the new context; the labour habits are conservative instead of adapting to the western pattern that is more performant. The Romanian worker’s behavior is modelled according to the working environment, he is flexible/adaptable to labour abroad and too conservative in the case of activities on the national labour market. The efficiency comes from the imposed behavior usually by foreign or mixt firms); national exceptions exist but they are not enough to change the working style.

From this perspective, the potential Romanian migrant profile will be similar to the one defined by the study of the EC and by the European Foundation for Life Conditions Improvement (February, 2004): young, alone, no obligations, high professional qualification. Moreover, for Romania, we estimate an increase of the young graduates, thing that reduces the risk of social tensions and their implications in antisocial or criminal actions.

The main stimulation factors of migration in the next twenty years will be:

- a higher unemployment rate than the average, in certain regions;
- the desire of professional development of those with high potential (specialization or post graduate studies);
- the perspective to get a better paid job as compared to the one in Romania.

In this context, we have to mention that two tendencies of access on the labour market will stay valuable, with negative implications on the work potential of migrant workers:

- usually employment abroad is not at the level of the initial formation obtained by the migrant worker in his home country;
- the polarization tendency of the occupied post by the migrant workers continues; on the one hand the highly qualified, a phenomenon already usual for the country mother. On the other hand and this represents the majority of those having jobs, the small qualified posts with small wages, refused by the local labour force, associated to a poor or lack of social assistance.

For the external migration of Romanian to represent a stimulating factor of the domestic economy, it is necessary that the policies in this field be in the “balance zone” between using the labour force in the national market and the labour migration, taking into account costs, benefits and risks, national interests and those of the EU.

Although the population between 15-23 years of age will sensibly diminish (1,2 million till 2015-2020) Romania will stay an area of interest for transnational companies or for the international scientific research.

Without minimizing the advantages, we have to note that, in the long run, both emigration and migration can have undesired effects by:

- a significantly diminished national offer of the labour force, both quantitatively and qualitatively;
- limited possibilities to ensure highly qualified labour force;
- limited possibilities to reduce the revenue differences as compared to the EU countries that will encourage labour migration;
- appearance of qualification segments with deficits of the labour force on the national level;

If we take into account on the one hand the quantity and quality of the necessary labour force and of the human resources that Romania needs to meet the requirements as member of the EU, and on the other hand of the potential “ensured” by the demographic evolutions, then, the picture of the labour market becomes discouraging – the structural deficit of the labour force, already present on the national labour market will increase, being completed by the quantitative one.

2. Case Study: The Rroma minority

There were 400000 Rroma persons in 1992; in 2002 their number increased to 535000; anyway, at present, the real number surpasses 2 millions.

2.1. Situation of Rroma labour force employment main cause of external migration.

The process of excluding Rroma from the labour market has reached worrisome dimensions during the transition period, under circumstances of economic decline and structural adjustments undertaken by the Romanian economy at large. Thus, the dissolution of the agricultural cooperatives for production (CAP's) and the closure of certain productive units have deprived a significant part of the Rroma population from a source of employment, for Rroma individuals are generally the first to be dismissed in the case of closure of productive units.

The mechanisms that lead to the exclusion of Rroma from the official labour market are, in general, the following:

- formal education, below the levels required on the labour market;
- lack of qualification in general, especially in modern professions;
- decline of traditional crafts;
- existence of stereotyping and prejudice against Rroma, effecting discriminatory practices by employers;
- economic recession that accompanies the post-communist transition and the creation of a competitive economy.

The situation regarding employment in the labour force, in the case of the active Rroma population, indicates poor integration of this population into the labour market. The very low access of the Rroma to the official labour market has two main consequences:

- reorientation of the Rroma towards the grey/black labour market in the country;
- external Migration towards EU's country.

Research data show that the integration of Rroma on the labour market is very poor. Thus, analyses⁶ reveal that the degree of employment of the Rroma population in Romania is much lower than that of the population at large (47% comparing to 61.7%). Of the total employed population, almost 2/3 is represented by men (65%), while only 27.5% are receiving salaries from employers.

The percentage of retired persons from the Rroma population in Romania is significantly lower than at the national level (17.9% comparing to 49.2%).

⁶ S.Cace, Ionescu Mariea, *Labour policies for Rroma*, Editura Expert , 2006

The percentage of housewives is over 4 times bigger in the case of Rroma compared to the population at large, indicating a poor participation of Rroma women in the labour market.

An important part of the activities that they undertake for ensuring their income take place within the so-called grey or black economy. Although there are no quantitative data regarding Rroma participation in the informal economy, it is supposed that at least half of the Rroma individuals undertake such activities.

The most frequent activity of the Rroma within the informal economy is represented by day-work in agriculture or construction. Thus, almost half of the occupied Rroma population receives their incomes as day-labourers in the mentioned fields.

Out of the approximately one third of the employed Rroma who receive regular salaries, half of them undertake unskilled activities. The percentage of agricultural labourers is relatively small (12% of the occupied Rroma population), due to the fact that only a small number of Rroma have property rights on land. In frequency, this activity is followed by traders (10%) and workers in traditional crafts (6.4%).

Besides these declared activities, there are a series of marginal activities that contribute to the family incomes, and can be included in the category of labour. We refer here to the picking and selling of medicinal plants and mushrooms, begging, car-windows washing, housekeeping for other households (activity specific for women), small occasional services (such as loading or unloading of merchandise), and the like.

2.2. Causes of the present Rroma's situation on the internal labor market

The most important cause of the limited access of the Rroma on the market is the lack or low level of education and, in close connection, the lack of professional qualification. The incidence of lack of school education among the Rroma population is very high.

The Romanian education system is far from being able to cope with the situation, that is, with the education deficit the Rroma population has accumulated, generation after generation. The problem is neither new nor completely unknown, but we have not been able to solve it. And the Rroma population has been quitting school generation after generation and the deficit is getting bigger. Hence the vicious circle: no education, no employment opportunities on the labour market on a legal basis. We are stuck in this poverty circle.

Statistics reveal that only 5% of the Rroma community finish high school. Only 33% have a primary school education, and 23% do not have formal education at all. 19% of Rroma

children aged between 7 and 11 do not go to school, as compared of Romanian children within the same age bracket⁷.

Associated with the low level or absence of school education, illiteracy represents a major impediment in the integration of Rroma into the labour market, especially in obtaining qualified jobs.

Over 60% of the older generations are illiterate. In regards to the young and transition generation, it is noted the illiteracy tendency is increasing, when compared to the mature generation⁸.

As a result of the low level of school education, a sizeable part of the Rroma population has no professional qualification. There is a tendency to revive traditional crafts, on the one hand, due to the economic recession that led to the dismissal of Rroma from productive units and their return to traditional crafts, and on the other hand, due to initiatives of Rroma NGOs targeted at stimulating traditional crafts.

Professions of the Rroma population in Romania 1992-2002 (percentages)

Profession	Rroma at national level 1992	Rroma at national level 2002
No profession	79.4	52.4
Traditional crafts	3.9	10.3
Modern professions	16.1	37.3

Sources: *Rroma in Romania*, 2002, and Elena Zamfir, Cătălin Zamfir, “*Țiganii între îngrijorare și ignorare*” [Gypsies Between Ignorance and Concern]. Bucharest: Alternative, 1993.

2.3. Rroma’s External Migration

The political context following the entry of Bulgaria and Romania in the European Union, as of January 2007, underlines once again the need to acknowledge and address the new realities related to migration. Among them the trends of economic migration of some Rroma families and groups and their corresponding effect need be carefully analyzed. It is clear now that some persons/families/collectivities of Romania citizens, including Rroma, will continue to live for long periods of time in countries of the EU as migrant workers, residents and, eventually, as citizens of the respective states.

According the Romanian Social Barometer, over 10% of the Romanian migrant, are belonging to Rroma minority of Romanian citizenship⁹.

The most Rroma migrants are living in Italy and Spain.

⁷ The Rroma Population Inclusion Barometer (16.05.2007); The Foundation for An Open Society

⁸ Mihai Surdu, *Educația școlară a populației de rromi* [School Education of the Rroma population], Rromii in România, Editura Expert, 2002

⁹ Revista 22, *Rromii din afara granielor – Cine le apare interesele?*, 18 dec. 2007

For example, in Italy there are over 50000 Rroma (42000 officially); the number of Romanians working in Italy is over 1 million (500000 officially); 2500 Romanian delinquents are imprisoned in Italy (15% from the number of foreign delinquents).

There are situations where some individuals, families and groups, including those of Rroma persons become victims of networks of traffickers in human beings. These networks often take advantage of the need of cheap labor of the European Union member states and economical motivation of to-be immigrants thus exploiting individuals at risk – especially women, children and socially disadvantaged persons.

Social stigma associates with Rroma persons of Romanian citizenships, brings prejudices to the many Romanian employed, who have a decent home, are actively supporting the process of their children enrolled in local schools and succeed to integrate themselves in the local communities of the European Union countries they live in.

2. 4. Strategies for reduction the negative effects of Rroma migration

The strategy of the Romanian Government for the improvement of the situation of Rroma¹⁰ stipulates a set of active measures aimed at eliminating some of the causes of the exclusion of Rroma from the labor market:

- initiation and implementation of projects for professional formation or re-conversion of the Rroma;
- provision of facilities for the exercise and revival of traditional crafts that meet specific needs of the market;
- formulation and implementation of specific projects for funding income generating activities and small businesses for Rroma families and communities, including Rroma women;
- reduction of the unemployment rate amongst Romanian citizens of Rroma origin, through the creation of facilities for employers who employ Rroma and provisions against all forms of discrimination regarding the employment of Rroma;
- the formulation of programs meant to provide property rights and to stimulate agricultural activities for Rroma communities;
- support, according to the legislation in force, for small/or medium size enterprises owned by persons belonging to the Rroma ethnic group, through a system of advantageous credits;

¹⁰ Strategy of the Romanian Government for the Improvement of the Situation of Rroma, Bucharest, 2001, modified by GD 522/2006

- inclusion of the disadvantaged Roma communities in the provisions of the law on disadvantaged areas, followed by the formulation and implementation of programs to redress such communities;
- encouragement for the implementation of job creation projects targeted at Roma women.

The measures taken for the improvement of the Roma access to the labour market are rather fragmented and come in particular from the civil society. The state intervention has been limited, until now, to passive/reactive, universal measures, not focused on the Roma population, but reaching this segment only in a tangential manner. Such measures include the provision of unemployment benefits, support allowance and social support. In fact, these measures are targeted only in a small percentage to the Roma population, for a big part of the Roma work a written contract and are not hence eligible for support measures; thus, social support becomes a discretionary measure, being granted on a conjectural basis.

Another set of measures focuses on larger access to education of Roma minority.

The lack of education or insufficient education, associated with the absence of qualifications, turns the majority of the Roma into a marginal community, and makes them vulnerable in the labour market. Thus, educational policies regarding desegregation of schools, improving the quality of human resources or providing material support for the families with low incomes, could have positive effects on the improvement of the school situation of the Roma and implicitly, on their employment situation.

At present, you can see an advert promoting program encouraging young Roma high school graduates to register for the state-run universities all over Romania. The Ministry of Education has prepared 400 positions in the faculties throughout the country that can be attended by young Roma, on condition that they can produce the documents required for registration.

In the long term, solution of investing into capital represents, in case of Roma, the only solution for keeping them up to the requirements of a competitive economy. Such methods also reduce the social polarization between the Roma ethnic group and the majority population.

Romania is seeing a well-funded and carefully thought-out programme under the label “The 2005-2015 Roma inclusion decades”, meant to bridge the gap between the Roma’ and the rest of population’s standard of living. Thanks to this programme, Romania is seeing positive changes in terms of the issue of racial segregation. In a survey¹¹ made public in

¹¹ The Roma Population Inclusion Barometer, 16.05.2007

February by the Open Society Foundation, entitled “The Rroma Inclusion Barometer”, an improvement was noticed in terms of the acceptance of this minority by the majority population. Intolerance towards the Rroma population has diminished notably between 1993 and 2006. It has reduced to half. In 1993, 72% of Romanians said they’d refused to have Rroma neighbours, while in 2006 this fallen to 35%. The population’s degree of tolerance grew not only towards the Rroma, but we can say it is a widely-accepted trend.

The internal measures must be enhanced by efficient mechanism of co-operation between Romania and the European Union states, with respect to monitoring Rroma migrants. On the other side, coercion measures alone (such as visa restrictions and/or forced repatriation) have proven not to have any effects as long as there are no substantial changes in the migrants’ countries of origins.

2.5. Conclusions

In our opinion, the priority should be to set up a mechanism able to monitor and analyze the numerous and complex aspects related to migration and social inclusion of Rroma and the effects of anti-Gypsyism, by a large co-operation between the internal and external social actors involved.

Such a *mechanism* should:

- ensure that the right, needs and priorities of legal Rroma immigrants and migrants are properly addressed, particularly by creating opportunities for economic and social inclusion;
- advise the Rroma migrants about their existing options, and pragmatically help their possible integration and avoid possible criminal networks to profit of their ignorance;
- function as a facilitator of effective partnership between NGOs and the local and national authorities of the involved countries;
- facilitate interaction between Rroma experts, social workers or “cultural mediators” and authorities in view of improving the awareness about the real situation of the migrant Rroma families. This should lead to the identification of vulnerable persons (especially young women, children and disable persons) victims of criminal networks;
- use the predictable migration tendencies of Rroma to the purpose of improving their social and economic integration. Temporary exchange programs among different European Union states, which already proved to be a successful way to transfer know and avoid permanent or long term migration, could be applied for Rroma population in general and especially for Rroma youth.

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