

## **The International Migration in the EU. A Descriptive Analysis Focused on Romania**

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**Abstract:** Migration represents one of the main means humans have chosen for improving their standards of living. Even though it is an important phenomenon manifested since ancient times, migration has never been so much in the attention of scholars and policy makers as it is in present times, especially for its implications in different areas such as demography, economy, sociology, politics, etc. As well, migration is a vital component of the contemporary society and in the same time plays a key role in the development of regions, from various perspectives such as economic, social, or cultural. Taking into consideration the previously outlined framework, the present paper aims at analyzing in a descriptive manner the international migration phenomenon in the European Union (EU) countries between 2006 and 2010, in order to highlight the frame in which Romania is placed from the perspective of the quantitative dimension of international migration.

**Keywords:** international migration; immigration; emigration; Romania; descriptive analysis.

**JEL Classification:** F22

### **Introduction**

Established following a series of treaties, the EU (named since 1993) was formed initially of six countries namely Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands (1952). Subsequently, the EU was enlarged with new members: Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom (1973); Greece (1981); Spain and Portugal (1986); Austria, Finland and Sweden (1995); the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia (2004); Romania and Bulgaria (2007) (Europa, 200-; Ministerul Afacerilor Externe și Integrării Europene al Republicii Moldova/ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Moldova, 200-).

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International migration has a both positive and negative impact on the EU as a whole and on the member states in particular. International migration plays a significant role in the structure and the size of the population of most EU countries; the total population growth of the member countries in recent years is due to the very high positive balance of the international migration (Oblak Flander, 2011). Also, migration involves the development of economic and social opportunities for host countries (Herm, 2008).

For example, after the fall of the communist regime in 1989, migration represented for Romania one of its most important socio-economic phenomena (Siar, 2008). Furthermore, once the communist regime has fall, the free movement of the population was guaranteed by the Constitution (Săseanu, Neagu & Petrescu, 2010). “During the communist regime, the migration policy in Romania was extremely strict; migration was only accomplished under the strict observation of the state. Furthermore, in case of emigration, only labour exchange, student visits, organized tourism, border traffic on short distances and the emigration of ethnic minorities, were allowed.” (Lăzăroiu & Alexandru, 2008, p. 215) In the same context, immigration was almost nonexistent. In what concerns the research in the area of the migration phenomenon in Romania, especially international migration, according to Constantin, Nicolescu and Goschin (2008), after 2004, an increase was noticeable. The investigation of remittances impact on local communities or of the causes for labour migration can be placed among the main research directions in the area. Even though, according to Lăzăroiu and Alexandru (2008), in recent times, there are very few researchers that investigate different issues related to migration in Romania; a leading factor to this situation can be represented by the difficulty in obtaining the statistical data, or in some cases, even their inexistence.

The paper aims at analyzing in a descriptive manner the international migration phenomenon in the EU countries between 2006 and 2010, in order to highlight the frame in which Romania is placed from the perspective of the quantitative dimension of international migration. Furthermore, with the aim to provide a better image of the quantitative dimension of international migration in Romania, its in-depth analysis is accomplished. In this sense, the paper is structured into two parts. The first one puts forward a series of methodological aspects, while the second one outlines the main findings of the analysis. The paper ends up with a series of final considerations.

## **1. Methodological Aspects**

For the descriptive analysis of the international migration phenomenon in the EU countries between 2006 and 2010, data concerning emigration and immigration flows identified on Eurostat (2012a, 2012b) were utilized. As the identified series of data were incomplete, in order to fill this gap, the webpage of the statistical

institutions in the member states where no data were identified on the Eurostat's webpage were consulted (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2008; Statistics Belgium, 2010; Central Statistical Office, Poland, 2011; National Institute of Statistics, 2011; Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2012; Hungarian Central Statistical Office, 2012; National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, France, 2012; National Statistical Institute, Bulgaria, 2012; Statistical Service, Cyprus, 2012; Statistics Netherlands, 2012). Thus, a series of data were updated and completely filled; however, the data series are incomplete in the case of Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, France, Cyprus, Hungary, and The Netherlands. For the in-depth descriptive analysis of the international migration flows in Romania, data identified in the "Statistical Yearbook of Romania" 2010 edition (National Institute of Statistics, 2011) were processed.

The period for the analysis was chosen mainly with the aim to investigate the migration phenomenon especially during the economic crisis, and in the particular case of Romania, after the EU accession. Thus, the period for the analysis captures a pre-accession period, one of negotiation for the EU accession (respectively 2006, the accession being accomplished in 2007), and according to Ailenei, Cristescu & Vişan (2012), the pick of the inflationary gap (2007) and the well-known period of economic crisis (2008-2010).

According to Eurostat (2011), the terms associated to international migration used in this paper in the part related to the analysis of the migration phenomenon in the EU are explained as follows: "Immigrants are people arriving or returning from abroad to take up residence in a country for a certain period, having previously been resident elsewhere. According to the 1998 United Nations recommendations on the statistics of international migration (Revision 1), an individual is a long-term immigrant if he/she stays in his/her country of destination for a period of 12 months or more, having previously been resident elsewhere for 12 months or more. On the other hand, emigrants are people leaving the country where they usually reside and effectively taking up residence in another country. According to the 1998 UN recommendations on the statistics of international migration (Revision 1), an individual is a long-term emigrant if he/she leaves his/her country of previous usual residence for a period of 12 months or more." Nevertheless, the terms associated to international migration used in the section of the paper dedicated to the analysis of the phenomenon in Romania, are differently defined by the National Institute of Statistics (2010, p.39): "International migration represents the change of permanent residence to another country or, from another country to Romania. Data on emigrants refer to Romanian citizens who settled their permanent residence abroad. Data on immigrants refer to citizens from another country who settled their permanent residence in Romania." Thus, it can be noticed that the statistical data utilized in the analysis of the international migration in Romania refers only to legal permanent migration.

## **2. International Migration in the EU, with Focus on Romania –Main Findings of the Descriptive Analysis**

The descriptive analysis of the international migration phenomenon in case of the EU members followed the investigation of its dynamics and evolution of the international migration balances, by using a series of statistical indicators on the identified data, such as absolute, relative, and average indicators.

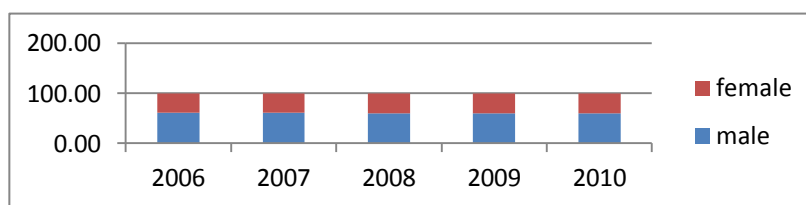
Analyzing the immigration dynamics in the EU members between 2006 and 2010, the results of the calculated indicators have shown a general oscillatory evolution of the number of immigrants in the reference period. In what concerns the dynamics trend, a relative equilibrium between the countries that registered a positive orientation and the ones that registered a negative orientation could be observed. Nevertheless, the balance tipped slightly in favor of the second category. Romania, along with the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Spain, Latvia, Lithuania, Austria, Portugal, and Slovenia, is one of the countries that registered an oscillatory evolution of the number of immigrants with a negatively oriented trend, which outlines a general tendency of decrease in the number of immigrants in the analyzed period.

On the other hand, between 2006 and 2010, the dynamics of the emigration in the EU members, in general, highlighted an oscillatory evolution with a positively oriented trend that leads to the idea of an increase in the number of emigrants in the analyzed period. The exceptions to the mentioned situation include Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Austria, Finland, the United Kingdom, and Romania that registered in the analyzed period an oscillatory evolution of emigration with a negatively oriented trend, which outlines the fact that the general tendency was of decrease in the number of emigrants. Different from the countries that registered oscillatory evolutions of emigration, Spain, Lithuania, and Hungary registered increasing evolutions of emigration, while Poland registered a decreased evolution of emigration.

Based on the available data and using the formula for obtaining the international migration balance, the results revealed that, in general, the EU members were host countries in the analyzed period. The exceptions to the outlined trend include Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania that represent the main providers of immigrants.

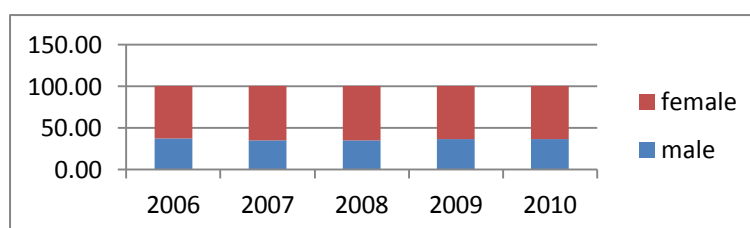
Important provider of immigrants, Romania needs to be paid a special attention in what concerns the structure of its international migration phenomenon. In this sense, further on, an in-depth analysis focused on the investigation of the phenomenon according to different criteria like sex, age, country of origin, nationality, or country of destination, is accomplished for the 2006-2010 period of time, using the data available at the National Institute of Statistics (2011).

In what concerns the structure of international migration flows according to sex, the image is different in case of immigration and emigration. Thus, in every year of the analyzed period, the vast majority of the immigrants were men (figure 1), their shares in the total number of immigrants being very close from one year to another. Nevertheless, in 2006, men registered the highest share in the total number of immigrants from the analyzed period, respectively 61.73%. One factor that can explain the situation can be the fact that in 2006, a series of branches (such as constructions) were confronted with lack of labor; in order to solve this issue, entrepreneurs sought immigrants (Horváth, 2007). Also, the fact that men represent the majority of immigrants in Romania in the analyzed period can be explained by the ethnic entrepreneurship. According to the Ministry of Administration and Interior (2007), immigrant entrepreneurs, especially Chinese and Turkish people, came to Romania for business purpose and after reaching a certain stability level they brought their family. In case of emigration, females had the highest share in the total of emigrants from Romania every year in the analyzed period (figure 2).



**Figure 1. The structure of the immigration flow, according to gender (%)**

*Source: Own representation based on data from the National Institute of Statistics (2011)*



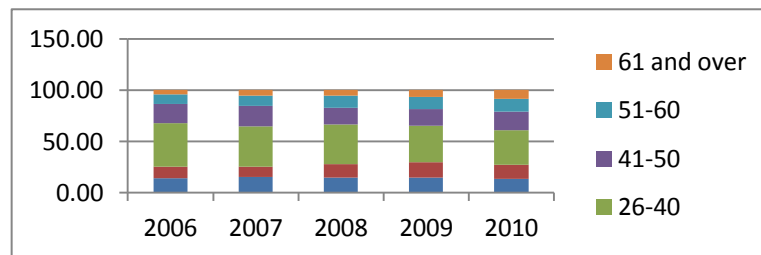
**Figure 2. The structure of the emigration flow, according to gender (%)**

*Source: Own representation based on data from the National Institute of Statistics (2011)*

By dividing the number of males and females that immigrated into Romania between 2006 and 2010 to the total number of males and females in Romania at the 1<sup>st</sup> of July of each year from the analyzed period, it was outlined the fact that male immigrants have a higher share in the total of males in Romania than the one females immigrants have. In case of emigration, females have a higher share. Thus, in the analyzed period, Romanian females emigrated more than Romanian males.

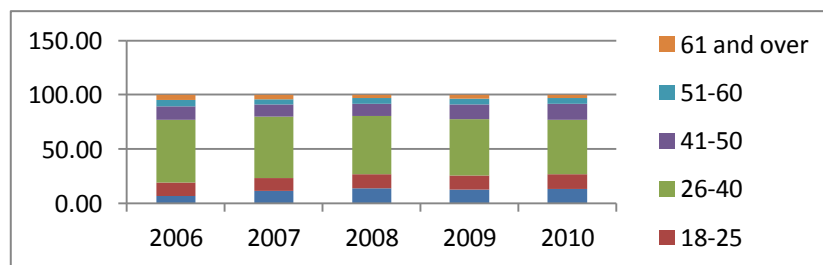
This situation can be similar to the one outlined by Constable (1997) cited in Curran, Shafer, Donato and Garip (2006), leading to the idea according to which Romanian females were more advantaged to migrate, thus facilitating subsequent migration of men.

Considering another criterion for the analysis of the international migration phenomenon in Romania, respectively age, figures 3 and 4 highlight the fact that in all the years afferent to the analyzed period, persons aged between 26 and 40 had the highest share in the total of immigrants in and emigrants from Romania. This is not a surprising fact as, according to Ravenstein (1889) cited in Constantin, Vasile, Preda & Nicolescu (2004), migration usually occurs in early working life, respectively between 20 and 49. Also, this category presents a special interest for the labour market (Ministerul Administrației și Internelor/ Ministry of the Interior and Administration, 2007) and, according to Constantin, Vasile, Preda & Nicolescu (2004) it represents a category of already trained persons, with high working and innovation potentials, easily adaptable, and extremely flexible.



**Figure 3. The structure of the immigration flow, according to age (%)**

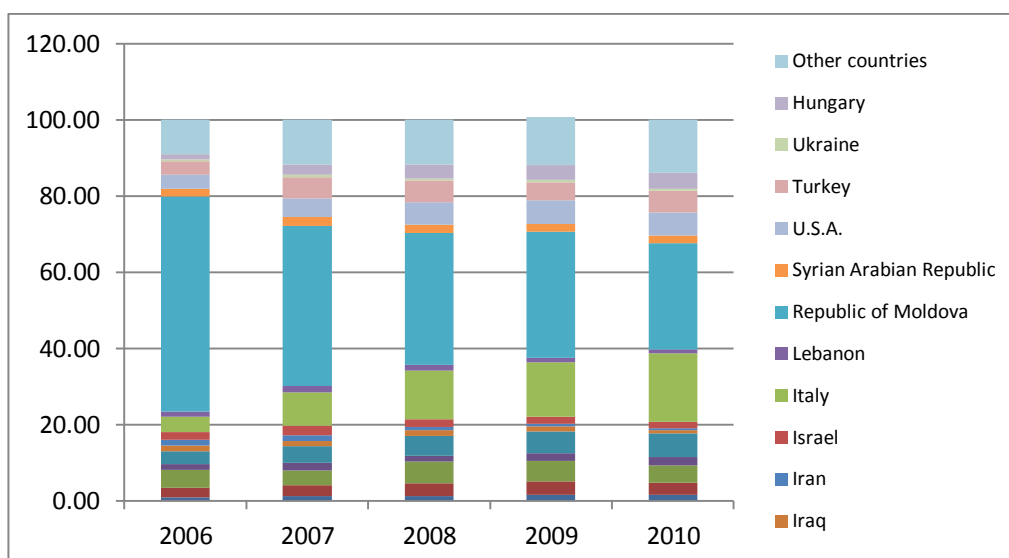
Source: Own representation based on data from the National Institute of Statistics (2011)



**Figure 4. The structure of the emigration flow, according to age (%)**

Source: Own representation based on data from the National Institute of Statistics (2011)

Taking into consideration another criterion for the analysis of the immigration flows into Romania in the analyzed period, respectively the country of origin, the results have outlined the fact that persons from the Republic of Moldova had the highest share in the total number of immigrants; in 2006 they represented 56.38% of the total of immigrants (figure 5). This situation can be explained by the fact that the mobility process between Romania and the Republic of Moldova were improved by adopting the Law of Romanian citizenship no. 21/1991 that defined the migration of Moldavian citizens as a form of repatriation, specifying that the descendants of ex-Romanian citizens can obtain the Romanian citizenship even without establishing their residence in Romania (Iordachi (2003) cited in Horváth, 2007).

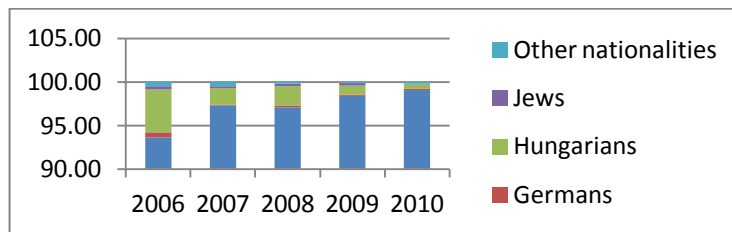


**Figure 5. The structure of the immigration flow, according to the country of origin (%)**

*Source: Own representation based on data from the National Institute of Statistics (2011)*

The descriptive analysis of emigration flows from Romania between 2006 and 2010 by the nationality of emigrants revealed the fact that in all the years of the analyzed period Romanians had the highest share in the total number of emigrants from Romania; annually, they represented over 93% out of the total of emigrants. Furthermore, in 2010, their share reached the level of 99.09% (figure 6). Another remarkable category in the total of emigrants from Romania in the analyzed period, are persons of Hungarian nationality that in 2006 represented almost 5%. They and the Germans had important shares in the total of emigrants from Romania in the period following the fall of the communist regime (Petrescu, Băc and Zgură, 2011). Nevertheless, in what concerns the flows of Hungarian emigrants from Romania

towards Hungary, according to Drbohlav, Hárs and Grabowska-Lusińska (2009) – even in recent times – the main migrants towards Hungary are represented by Hungarians coming from the neighbouring countries, especially from Romania; Romania represents the main source of immigrants for Hungary.

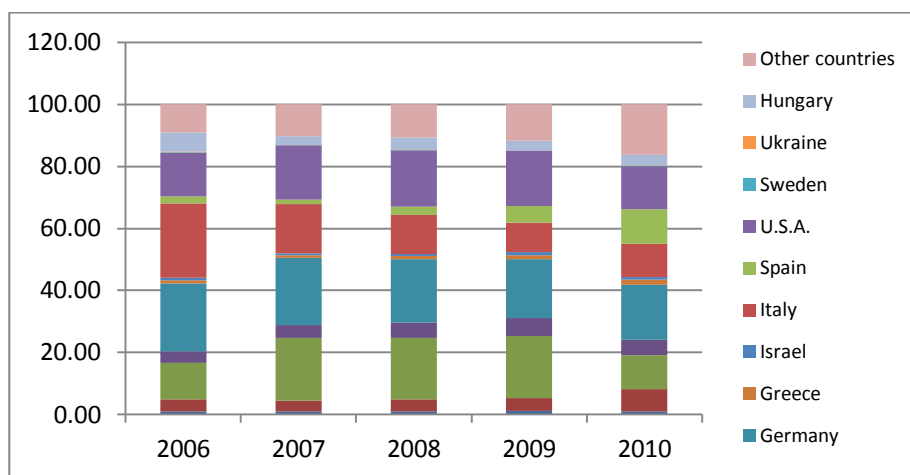


**Figure 6. The structure of the emigration flow, according to nationality (%)**

*Source: Own representation based on data from the National Institute of Statistics (2011)*

The in-depth analysis of the international migration phenomenon in Romania ended with the investigation of the emigration flows from Romania between 2006 and 2010, by the country of destination. The results illustrated in figure 7 reveal the fact that in the vast majority of the years associated to the analyzed period, Germany was the main country of destination preferred by Romanians. The exceptions to the mentioned situation include the years 2006 and 2009 when the main countries for destination were Italy and Canada. If until 2006, in general, Italy was the most preferred country of destination by Romanian emigrants (Petrescu, Bâc & Zgură, 2011), a reorientation towards other destination after 2007 is noticeable. A factor that can explain this situation could be represented by the campaigns and manifestations against immigrants from Italy (Constantin, Nicolescu & Goschin, 2008). Furthermore, the effects of the economic crisis in Italy could have contributed to the determination of Romanians decided to emigrate to reorient their decisions of emigration towards other countries less affected by the crisis.





**Figure 7. The structure of the emigration flow, by the country of destination (%)**

*Source: Own representation based on data from the National Institute of Statistics (2011)*

Even if Spain does not appear among the main destinations for permanent migration from Romania, it is important to mention the fact that it, along with Italy, represents the most important receiver of temporary emigration from Romania (OECD, 2006; Constantin, Nicolescu & Goschin, 2008; OECD, 2008a, 2008b). Furthermore, from another perspective, according to the data provided by the Instituto Nacional de Estadística (2011), in the analyzed period Romania represents the main provider of immigrants for Spain.

### 3. Main Conclusions and Limitations

The paper presented a descriptive analysis of the international migration phenomenon in the EU members, with a special focus on Romania, between 2006 and 2010. Romania, along with the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Spain, Latvia, Lithuania, Austria, Portugal, and Slovenia, represents one of the EU members that registered an oscillatory evolution of the number of immigrants with a negatively oriented trend that shows a decrease in the number of immigrants in the analyzed period. The same evolution was registered by Romania also in case of emigration showing that in the analyzed period the general trend was of decreasing in the number of emigrants from our country. However, in this situation, the EU members in the same category with Romania were Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Austria, Finland, and the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, according to the investigation of the international migration balances in the analyzed period, Romania, along with Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland, remains an important provider of immigrants among the EU members.

The in-depth analysis of the international migration phenomenon in Romania between 2006 and 2010 revealed a structure of emigration dominated by females, and one of immigration dominated by males. The age criterion did not create any differences between the structures of the two components of international migration. Thus, persons aged between 26 and 40 represented the vast majority among both immigrants in and emigrants from Romania. Considering the emigration from Romania, in the analyzed period, emigrants were mainly of Romanian nationality and they preferred Germany as main country of destination. On the other hand, the main provider of immigrants for Romania in the analyzed period was the Republic of Moldova. Thus, considering all the previously outlined aspects, a general profile of the legal and permanent immigrant in Romania in the analyzed period can be represented by male aged between 26 and 40, mainly coming from the Republic of Moldova. On the other hand, the general profile of the legal and permanent emigrant from Romania in the analyzed period refers to female of Romanian nationality aged between 26 and 40 that mainly preferred Germany as country of destination.

Nevertheless, it is mandatory to outline the fact that the descriptive analysis of the international migration phenomenon in Romania was based on data that referred only to legal permanent migration, resulting in an analysis that does not reflect the real dimension of the phenomenon. The same difficulty was also encountered in:

- Constantin, Nicolescu & Goschin (2008, p. 34): “The real amplitude of the migratory flows is difficult to be estimated in case of Romania; statistics are only available on permanent migration. The official data reflect only a small part of the real dimension of the phenomenon.”
- OECD (2008a, p. 274): “The data on the migratory flows in Romania are difficult to obtain. [...] As in all the countries with a powerful emigration character, the official data associated to the emigration from Romania underestimate the real phenomenon, especially because emigrants do not necessarily report their situation to the authorities.”
- Siar (2008, p.17): “The statistical office registers as emigrants only persons that permanently changed their residence abroad. Thus, the number of emigrants is underestimated.”

However, the developed analysis reveal significant phenomena and present a complex image on the quantitative dimension of the international migration in the EU members, especially in Romania, representing an important basis for future research in the area.

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