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## **Romania, a Country in Need of Workers? The Bitter Taste of “Strawberry Jam”**

Silasi, Grigore and Simina, Ovidiu Laurian  
Jean Monnet European Centre of Excellence, West  
University of Timisoara, Romania

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# Romania, a Country in Need of Workers? The Bitter Taste of “Strawberry Jam” \*

**Grigore Silași**

Jean Monnet European Centre of Excellence,  
West University of Timisoara

**Ovidiu Laurian Simina**

PhD Student, Faculty of Economic Sciences,  
West University of Timisoara

## **Abstract:**

The paper is a contribution at the scientific debate of migration and mobility issues in the context of an enlarged European Union (EU-27). We consider that Romania, a country with a labour market that faces distortions, will benefit from migration on short term, but will need to import labour force in order to maintain the development trend. Remittances, as result of Romanians emigration after 2002, helped the economic development of the country in the last years (remittances' inflow doubled the FDI). As a response to the media debate regarding Romania's emigration, we consider that the fear of mass migration from Romania following the year 2007 is not justified. While the European (and mostly British) media cries on the threat of Bulgarians and Romanians' emigration, as following to the 2007 accession, the scientific reports say that the A8 countries' migration benefits to economy of the EU15 countries. In the same time, the Romanian media and the Romanian entrepreneurs announce the '*Chinese invasion*' and the lack of labour in construction, industry and even agriculture. We see *labour as goods*: the economic theory say that goods are moving with the prices, the highest price attracts (more) goods. Romania is not only a gateway for the East-West international migration (like Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece for the South-North direction), but a labour market in need of workers. While a big part of the labour force is already migrated, mostly to the SE Europe (some 2.5m workers are cited to be abroad, with both legal and illegal/irregular status), the Romanian companies could not find local workers to use them in order to benefit

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from the money inflow targeting Romania in the light of its new membership to the European Union (foreign investments and European post accession funds). Instead of increasing the salaries, the local employers rather prefer to 'import' workers from poorer countries (Moldavians, Chinese, Ukrainians, who still accept a lower wage as compared to the medium wage in Romania, but bigger enough as compared to those from their countries of origin).

**Keywords:** labour migration, labour market distortions, decision making, need for esteem

**JEL classification:** F22, F24, J11, J22, J61, J70, O15, O52, R23

## Introduction

When the ten new EU Member States celebrated the accession with the sound of car horns, toasts and the symbolic removal of border barriers between "the East" and "the West" on May 1<sup>st</sup> 2004, it was a historical moment for the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). But the removal of barriers remained symbolic since then, because the old Member States [the so-called EU15/old or core Member States], have imposed restrictions (transition period) on the free movement of citizens from A8 states as according to the rule "2 + 3 + 2" (the term "A8" is used to describe the workers of the new Member States [EU10], with the exception of Cyprus and Malta). The free movement of labour allows a worker from one Member State to look for employment in another Member State on same basis as a national, without any restrictions or discrimination. These restrictions were put in place as some EU Member States feared a substantial influx of immigrants from the CEE countries, due to their economies' characteristics.

On the other hand, huge celebrations are planned in Bucharest, marking a historic New Year for this country at the beginning of the year 2007, when it will be Romania's turn to celebrate the entry into the European Union [and to face labour movement restrictions for its citizens for at least 2 years]. While most EU nations have already placed restrictions on workers from both new member states, it is expected that free trade and movement will help Romania rise to higher levels of prosperity, as exemplified by the Eastern European countries that joined the EU in 2004. The year 2007 could be seen as a turning point both for the European Union and for Romania, one of the newest Member States which join the European family just before its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. With 27 members, the European Union faces with a new stage of development and needs new institutions and new rules.

We believe that our paper bring an important contribution at the debates on European migration, having in mind the issues we propose. We chose Romania as case study because we consider it as the best example for proving that the *history is cycling* and *we do not need to reinvent the wheel*<sup>1</sup>: we could analyse the migration phenomena at a small scale and to extend the previsions to the European Union as a whole. Romania could be seen as an experimental country and a laboratory for analysing the policies and links between migration and development. Even if the population decreased year after year in the last decade<sup>2</sup>, Romania is a big country from the demographical point of view, the second large country in the Central and Eastern Europe after Poland. In this way is an important source for economical migration. Being a borderline country for European Union, is a transit space for migration flows too. From an important source for European migration in the last decade, Romania tends to

<sup>1</sup> To understand the reasons why it is no need to discover what was already happened, was said or even wrote in the field of migration, see van Krieken (2004).

<sup>2</sup> According to the 2002 Population and Housing Census data, Romania had 21.6 million inhabitants, being the ninth among the European countries (21,680,974 inhabitants as of March 18, 2002, while the 1992 Census registered 22,810,035 inhabitants, a decrease of 1.1 million people during a period of ten years, an average decline of -0.5% per annum, due to the lower birth rate and negative balance of emigration). Source: Census of Population and Dwellings, March 18-27, 2002, Romanian National Institute of Statistics (INS); available at: [http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/RPL2002INS/index\\_eng.htm](http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/RPL2002INS/index_eng.htm)

become a target for labour migration from non-EU countries. Taking in account the fact that 45% of the Romanian population [still] lives in rural areas<sup>3</sup>, where the rural workers could hardly find jobs nowadays (the males are agriculture workers, while the females are home-keepers), Romania acts as a major actor both on the seasonal agricultural market and on the illegal prostitution market within the European Union. People from rural areas or with an agricultural background have a higher propensity to migrate (they may accept easily the so-called 'dirty' or 'degrading' activities and hard jobs). Analyzing the dynamics and structural mutations in Romania for the period 1977-2002, at the level of the major groups of occupations, the officials of the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family mention that,

*'in the context of the general decline in the employment population, there was a substantial decrease in the size of the groups; "skilled workers in agriculture, forestry and fishery" (of 1559.4 thousand persons) and "skilled workers" (a group which includes generically, according to the 2002 classification both "craftsmen and skilled workers in handicrafts, in setting and maintaining machines and equipment" and "machine and equipment operators and machine, equipments and other products fitters" which decreased by 1553.9 thousand persons). The size of the group of "unskilled workers" also decreased (by 403.1 thousand persons) and so did the group of 'technicians and related workers' (by 106.7 thousand persons)' (MMSSF 2006).*

In the same time, Romania is changing the status of *accession country* which still implements the *European acquis*; nowadays Romania tries to build proper post-accession strategies in order to benefit from the experiences of the previous waves of enlargement, to apply the implemented pieces of legislation and to continue to reform the economy. *After the 2007 accession, Romania will be a member state, and the present movement of workers from Romania to the other member states will become 'mobility within the European Union', will be no more 'European migration'.*

Our study aims to analyse the enlargement consequences beyond the celebration moment. Romania is not only a source of emigrants and a gateway for East-West international migration (in the same way likes Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece for the South-North direction), but a labour market in need of workers. Romania faces new challenges as soon as our country joins the European club. With a labour market already confronted with distortions, Romania is twice more tempting for migrant workers' flows. As result of Romanians emigration after 2002, remittances have sustained the economic development of the country in the last years (remittances' inflow have doubled the FDI last years; unfortunately, the remittances are mostly seen as compensatory measures for helping the family for bad economy or bad luck, not generally acting as source of capital for economic development). We consider that Romania benefits from migration on short term, but needs to 'import' labour force in order to maintain the present development trend.

We did comparative analysis and a wide, complex approach of the problem in discussion. We studied the experience of countries that accessed to the European Union in the previous waves of accession, to compare the evolution of migration phenomena from that period with the migration of the CEE countries within the last decade. Some studies carried out before the 2004 accession expressed the aware of the mass migration from the eight CEE countries (so-called A8 countries) to the EU15 Member States as following the date of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004. The situation is quite different that it was forecasted some years ago. With the exception of the case of Great Britain (one of the three states which allowed free movement of labours from the A8 states), the number of migrants is much less significant than has been portrayed in much of the media. The experience of previous enlargements of the European Union shows that initial scepticism and fear of being "flooded" by migrants from the

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<sup>3</sup> Almost half of the Romanian population lives in rural areas: 45.1% on July 2005 (according to the *Statistical Yearbook 2006, Chapter 2. 'Population', Graph. 2.G2*), as compared to 47.3% in 2002 and 45.7% in 1992 (*Census of Population and Dwellings 2002, Vol.5, Population, Households and Dwellings, Structure of population by areas, Graph. 3*), Source: National Institute of Statistics



new members, with resulting attempts to restrict migration, have been unfounded. At the present, after less than three years of membership with the EU, the figures shows that Poland was the major “threat” for the EU labour market and the welfare system at a whole, in the condition that UK was a country which directly attracted the Polish workers<sup>4</sup>.

Due to the lack of data and of scientific research as regarding the effects (both financial and non financial) of migration and of remittances on the Romanian economy, the scientists and decision makers could hardly design economic policies to manage the migration issues: there are no migration trends available, as resulted from generally certified data<sup>5</sup>, nor predictions beyond the Romania’s accession to the European Union<sup>6</sup>. According to our observations, we consider that Romanian labour market faces specific phenomena, distortions, and some problems and difficulties occur as following the 2007 accession to the EU. In our research we use the theory of distortions of the labour market and the ‘new’ economy of migration. The migration decision is taken after the would-be migrant analyse for himself the costs and benefits of migration (regardless of its form, legal or illegal). We used microeconomic analysis on the basis of functions of utility (maximisation of utility of migration), costs (minimisation of costs incurred, from the point of economic and social costs, and maximisation of benefits; the cost of opportunity). For data processing, we used synthesis (international press survey and synthesis of the major theories regarding the international migration, benefits, remittances and development), classification, static and dynamic comparative analysis, induction and deduction.

## Romania, a country in need of workers? The bitter taste of “*Strawberry Jam*”

Especially after the biggest wave of European Union enlargement, we noted that the economic literature, both at the global/European level and in Romania, widely targets the migration issue. The 2004 enlargement of the EU with 10 new Member States has opened up the societal and policy debate in many EU countries, debates being centred on whether or not borders should be opened to allow the free movement of workers, and also on the effects of this core freedom of the European Union. Migrants’ quota, financial flows/remittances, development and fear of Eastern immigrants were preferred subjects for media. More and more events deal with migration and mobility matters. The European Commission celebrates the *European Year of Workers’ Mobility 2006*, in order to raise the awareness on mobility consequences at European level, to promote the exchange of good practices, and to inform about the benefits and costs of both geographical mobility and job or labour market mobility, the realities of working in another country and the rights of the migrant workers. The current EU labour market policy agenda encourages more mobility of the European workforce,

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<sup>4</sup> For detailed comments or figures regarding the Polish migration to the UK and *the myth of Polish Plumbers*, see Reichlová (2004: Ch.7 and 8), CNTR (2006: Ch.6), Saleheen and Shadforth (2006: 378, Table A), Portes and French (2005), ippr (2006a and 2005), Gilpin et al (2006) and Salt (2006: 22-25).

<sup>5</sup> Due to the fact the governmental institution do not use standard criteria when collecting data regarding the migration from/to Romania, the national statistics could hardly be recognised/certified by the researchers from abroad.

<sup>6</sup> The migration studies are rather new on the Romanian ‘scientific market’: mostly with sociological background, the Romanian authors would hardly join their efforts to promote the launching of a dedicated migration centre and/or to prepare a comprehensive scientific publication, covering all areas of research. The studies of the scientists from abroad uses the few data available at the local level, maybe revealed during international academic conferences or meetings, and those communicated to the international institution by governmental bodies. Romania seems to be the sole state within the EU25+2 without a specialised institution to prepare/deliver specialised scientific research/education/training/publications on mobility and migration. In the framework of the Jean Monnet European Centre or Excellence within the West University of Timisoara, the authors propose the including of the *migration and mobility studies* [legal, economical and sociological approach] into the academic curricula at the national level and the creating of a *migration centre* and a dedicated *web-based e-library on Romanian migration* [www.migratie.ro].

specifically across [internal] borders. The academic research debates the way the remittances [money resulted from migration] are used, in order to increase the economic development, both at local/national scale in the origin and destination countries, and at the European level.

During the 20th century, Europeans were no strangers to social, economic, and political change, but their major challenges focused mainly on the intra-European construction of stable, prosperous and capitalist democracies. Nowadays, one of the major challenges is flows of people across borders. Immigration consistently occupies the headlines. Connected to demographic change, economic growth and welfare state reform, immigration – usually connected to slowing economies, high unemployment, loss of nationals' jobs, anti-immigration sentiments, crime, and terrorism – is often presented by politicians as having mostly negative effects. Both academic researchers and the European media are wondering that Europe's future will largely turn on how to admit and integrate the new immigrants, especially the non-Europeans.

Starting with the year 2005, and most pregnant after the first semester of the year 2006, when the European Commission requested the official positions from the Member States as regarding the free access to the labour market for the new members, the European media chose migration as a core issue for the public debate. Massive immigration has long troubled the Western Europeans who tend to blame the rise of crime and drugs in their cities on illegal immigrants – accusations not entirely without justification, but at the same time accusations that have frequently been exaggerated.

*An especially frightening aspect is a surge in official and public associations of migrants and migration with criminality. These include frequent news reports that attribute both particular incidences and rising general crime rates to foreigners or immigrants, putting immigration control in the same category as crime, arms and drug control, and the generalized use of the terminology of illegal migrant or illegal alien. [...] It is now commonly said that xenophobia and racism against migrants are caused by immigration, or sometimes more specifically, by irregular "illegal" migration. By extension of demagogic logic, the victims are the cause, and by removing or stopping these causes, the problem can be resolved. Draconian measures, and violence against foreigners, can only be encouraged by the combination of language of illegality, the terminology of combating illegal migration – as if it were an enemy in military confrontation – and the banal association of irregular migration with crime, arms, drug trafficking and terrorism.*

(Taran and Geronimi 2003:10)

The European Union single market implies the existence of *the four freedoms*, and in this way the freedom of movement of peoples [workers] is the core of the European Union project. '*Wir riefen Arbeitskräfte und es kamen Menschen*'<sup>7</sup>, said Swiss writer Max Frisch (1965): people in movement mean fundamental human rights to protect. '*Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country*', is wrote in the Article 13(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But no legal document offers the migrant the right **to enter** any country!

One can see scary news into printed media all over the Europe (and especially in the UK). We noted that, suddenly, they 'chose' Romanians [all Romanians were seen as would-be emigrants] as being the '*public enemy*' for the European Union welfare and its social protection system, as soon as Romania joins the European Union in 2007. The EU citizens were warned of a flood of benefit-hungry Romanian immigrants. Nobody knows how many Romanians are living in the Great Britain (we believe that the majority of British hardly know where Romania is on the map!), but we consider that most who want to work in the UK have already been there for years (mostly with illegal/irregular status)<sup>8</sup>. Of course, after accession, Romanians already on the British territory will prefer to stay there

<sup>7</sup> We asked for manpower and we got human beings / We called for labour, and human beings came.

<sup>8</sup> Krieger (2005: 9) reports that 40 to 45% of newly registered migrants from the new Member States in the second half of 2004 lived already in the UK before the 1 May 2004. As Romanians do not have strong Diaspora in UK, is hardly to imagine that the figures will show bigger amount of immigrants soon after Romania's accession to the EU on 1 January 2007.

and maybe some relatives/friends will join them. As Reichlová (2004) reveals, *'barriers to labour mobility may discourage workers already resident in the EU from their return to home country, because they would typically lose residence and employment rights in the destination state'* (Reichlová 2004: 51). The Romanians will chose to move to places where they feel welcomed and where migration networks are already well established. Deliberate or not, application of restrictive policies corresponds to increasing vilification of migrants [foreigners] in press, political discourse or public sentiments (Taran and Geronimi 2003:1). *'Unfortunately, the debate is often hijacked by negative, populist slogans, which can inhibit the formulation of sound and balanced migration policies'* (Ghosh 2005: 163). On the other had, *'due to restrictions on the free access to employment for nationals of the new Member States, the founding idea of the European Communities i.e. to unite people and not only economies seems to be only half-achieved'* (ECAS 2005: 30).

A very interesting portrait of the British environment regarding the pressure created by the media as regarding the migration phenomena could be seen at Berkeley, Khan and Ambikaipaker (2006): the fifth chapter of their study analyses the frequency of immigration reportages, presenting excerpts from the headlines that contributed to the 'moral panics in the media' between the late 1960s and the year 2004 (see Table 1). The general tone of the surveyed reportages were merely negative and *'contributed to a receiving social context where constructive debate is difficult'*, while the positive stories are generally infrequent, and the reaction from the counterpart journals is often represented by attacks on the credibility of such positive approaches (Berkeley, Khan and Ambikaipaker 2006: 24-30).

**Table 1 UK press coverage comparison on immigration and asylum seekers (year 2004)**

News	Times	Telegraph	Independent	Guardian	Mail
Immigration	340	144	243	226	234
Asylum seekers	195	83	161	173	117

No. of reportages

Source: Berkeley, Khan and Ambikaipaker (2006: 24, Table 6)

Immigration and asylum are key topic in the British media which maintain in the public perception the idea of a perpetual crisis about immigration, while opinion polls express the *increasing concern on such subjects* (immigration is seen up to 40 per cent most important issue facing Britain) and *evidence that newspapers have a great impact* on these sentiments (Berkeley, Khan and Ambikaipaker 2006: 33, Table 8). Within the last 30 years, the UK media coverage's attention was changed from *"nonwhite" Commonwealth* issues to the anxiety over asylum seekers and migration from the new Member States of the European Union and elsewhere (Table 2). If the subjects of immigration debates changed, the negative tone of the articles/discussion never changed, increasing panic about mass influxes of hungry workers, criminal behaviour, welfare state crisis and cultural differences (Berkeley, Khan and Ambikaipaker 2006: 25).

**Table 2 Historical perspective on moral panics in the media**

Moral panic	Period 1968–72	2004
Folk devils	'Bogus' dependants 'Sham' marriages 'Bogus' students TB carriers	'Bogus' asylum seekers Welfare 'cheats' HIV carriers
Mass influx	Kenyan Asians Ugandan Asians High birth rates of 'coloured' immigrants	<b>Eastern European Gypsies EU economic migrants</b> and students Asylum seekers in 'Middle England'
Cultural pathology and illiberal differences	Under-aged marriages – <i>Sikhs, Muslims</i> Polygamy – <i>Sikhs, Muslims</i> Turbans – <i>Sikhs</i> Sexual promiscuity – <i>West Indians</i>	Gang masters – <i>Chinese</i> Terrorism and flag burning – <i>Muslims</i> Hijab – <i>Muslims</i> Sexual promiscuity – <i>Africans</i> Indolence – <i>Gypsies</i>

Welfare state crisis	Housing, hospitals and schools	<b>Housing, hospitals and legal aid</b>
<i>Desirable immigrants</i>	<i>White Old Commonwealth with 'kith and kin' rights</i>	<i>White Zimbabweans with 'kith and kin' rights</i>

Source: Berkeley, Khan and Ambikaipaker (2006: 29, Table 7)

Anti-immigration sentiment has risen in Europe over the past few years, and many governments are under subsequent pressure to curb the growing problem. Aware of the general interest on anti-immigration headlines and stories, the political parties joined this media debate regarding immigration pressure, by proposing a sort of measures to increase their popularity among the sensitive British electors: immigration tribunal, immigration laws, detention camps, abolition of judicial review, annual quotas or even withdrawal from the 1951 convention on refugee and the European Convention on Human Rights (Berkeley, Khan and Ambikaipaker 2006: 25). Zaiceva (2006) mentions that the intensive political pressure, mostly created by the media, was the reason for imposing the transition periods for the free movement of labour like those requested by the UK in the framework of the new accession waves to the European Union: *'Experiences with previous European integration suggests that migration flows do not increase after opening up the borders. [...] In spite of income differentials, however, the flows of immigrants from these new members were small'* (Zaiceva 2006: 2-3). Strielkowski and O'Donoghue (2004) underline the fact that the EU accession doesn't mean uncontrolled immigration into the core EU Member States:

*The main factors leading to the international migration are economic, not the EU accession, or any other accession [...] the accession is in no way leading the increase/decrease in the flow of labour – there are other factors that explain this process (if occurs at all) and accession is not among them. The increase in labour migration which presupposed by the demographic and labour market factors will happen anyway, regardless to the accession process and tendencies.* (Strielkowski and O'Donoghue 2004:12)

On the other hand, what the European media missed in the public debate is the fact that, as starting with January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007, the workers from Romania could not *'migrate'* anymore, but become *'mobile'*. International migrant is a person who temporarily lives in a country of which he/she is not national. As the term *'migrant'* refers to cases where the decision to migrate has been taken freely by the individual concerned (without the intervention of external compelling factors), migrants are differentiated from refugee and asylum seekers. According to the Convention on Migrants' Rights, the term *'migrant worker'* refers to a person who is to engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he/she is not a national. This definition therefore encompasses both documented and undocumented migrants<sup>9</sup>.

Adding the European Union and the single labour market elements, we should understand the *'migrant'* from any of the Member States of EU25+2 as a *'mobile worker'* looking for better opportunities. In this way, the *'illegal'* issue shifts to *'irregular'* in the case the employment of a national of a new Member State faces restrictions within the period of transitional closing of the labour market (depending of the case). The external migration (across the external borders of the EU) is transformed in the Romania's case in an internal migration (Romania itself becomes an external border). As citizens of a Member State with full rights within the European Union, Romanians will be part of the common European labour market, and their movement for labour opportunities abroad will be considered as inter-European migration or rather *EU mobility*.

<sup>9</sup> Salt (2006: 32) reports that *'the geographical distribution of flows has become more complex as irregular migrants and their facilitators develop new routes in response to governmental measures against them [...] Formerly the largest group were from Romania and former Yugoslavia, but numbers of these have fallen'*.

*'The political context in both sending and receiving countries is crucial to the existence of irregular migration. While political instability in sending countries can also be a prime driver of irregular migration, it is the policies of receiving countries that create irregularity.'*

**Box no.1**

**Migration fuelled both the print and electronic media in the last years**  
Press articles excerpts from the international media survey on migration

Between January and September 2006, Italian border patrols have intercepted **16,000 illegal immigrants** (*Le Monde*, December 19, 2006)

**Nearly 30,000 undocumented immigrants** from Africa landed on Spain's Canary Islands during 2006, more than four times as many as during 2005 (*Workpermit.com*)

EU talks on immigration reform after **nearly 30,000 undocumented immigrants from Africa** have landed on Spain's Canary Islands this year, more than four times as many as during all of 2005 (*The Raw Story*).

New immigration plans top agenda of EU ministers meeting  
European Union justice and interior ministers opened day-long talks in Brussels today [12.05.2006] which are expected to focus on new immigration plans and efforts **to step up controls of the bloc's southern borders**. Plans include the creation of European job placement agencies in African nations, where well-educated locals workers can apply to obtain temporary work in an EU country for a restricted period of time and would return home with newly-acquired skills.

[http://rawstory.com/news/2006/New\\_immigration\\_plans\\_top\\_agenda\\_of\\_12052006.html](http://rawstory.com/news/2006/New_immigration_plans_top_agenda_of_12052006.html)

Against the popular belief, the majority of undocumented migrants to Italy do not arrive by sea but by land, overstaying their visas (*Financial Times*, Oct 2006) According to the FT, only 15% of the undocumented migrants arrive by sea. The agricultural sector provides numerous jobs for these migrants who unfortunately found themselves compelled to work in extremely poor working conditions.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/67a718cc-261d-11db-afa1-0000779e2340.html>

According to the National Institute for Statistics [from Spain], **1,010,404 foreigners live undocumented in Spain**. The two main countries of origin are Romania and Bolivia (*El Pais*, August 2006)

According to the Interior Ministry, **there would be between 200 and 400.000 undocumented immigrants in France** (*Liberation*, August 22, 2006)

**UK – Immigration from Eastern European countries 40 times more than expected in 2006**

In 2006, the UK has received 400,000 asylum and citizenship applications from citizens of Eastern European countries, while the government had predicted 13,000. (*Daily Mail*, UK – May 24, 2006)

**In 2005, more than \$230 billion was sent home by migrants worldwide**

Money sent home by migrants worldwide increased from \$102 billion in 1995 to an estimated \$232 billion in 2005. The share of global remittances going to developing countries has also increased from 57% in 1995 (\$58 billion) to 72% in 2005 (\$167 billion). (*United Nations General Assembly*, May 2006)

In 2005, **34% of the world migrant population lived in Europe**, 28% in Asia & 23% in Northern America (*United Nations General Assembly*, May 2006)

**In 2005, there were 190 million migrants in the world**

According to the UN, in 2005, 190.6 million people are considered to be migrants (154.8m in 1990). 115.6m of them settled in developed countries (82.4m in 1990) while 75.2m resettled in developing ones (72.5m in 1990) and 10.2m are now living in less-advanced regions (11m in 1990). (*United Nations General Assembly*, May 2006)

*In short, a migrant only becomes 'irregular' if they have been defined as such by immigration laws and regulations in receiving countries. Therefore, there is an intimate relationship between immigration regulation and irregular migration (ippr 2006b: 8). Table 3 shows the differences between the terms used in relation with [let's say] non regular migration: illegal, irregular, undocumented and unauthorised migration.*

We noted that more and more press articles analyse the Romanian accession vs. the European Union and Romanian labour market: Romania seems to need workers and in the following period

may even 'import' foreign workforce. The Romanian media and the Romanian entrepreneurs announce the 'Chinese invasion' and the lack of labour in construction and industry.

**Table 3 Terminology in migration debate: *Irregular vs. Illegal***

Term	Where it is used	Comments
<b>Irregular</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Labour Organisation</li> <li>• International Organisation for Migration</li> <li>• Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe</li> <li>• Global Commission for International Migration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irregular migration is a very complex concept that needs to be used in an informed way rather than as simply a euphemism/synonym for illegal migration.</li> <li>• The term is not commonly used in media and public debate.</li> </ul>
<b>Illegal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK Government</li> <li>• European Union</li> <li>• Much of the UK press</li> </ul>	<p>The term 'illegal' has associations with criminality, which is viewed as objectionable for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being liable to deportation is usually an administrative rather than criminal offence.</li> <li>• Defining someone as 'illegal' may undermine the protection of their human rights, some of which may be in jeopardy.</li> <li>• Defining those seeking asylum as 'illegal' on entry may jeopardise their claim.</li> </ul>
<b>Undocumented</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-governmental organisations (e.g. PICUM)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The term 'undocumented' is ambiguous. Undocumented has been used to describe both migrants who have not been recorded and those without documents.</li> <li>• This is not an accurate description of all migrants liable for deportation.</li> </ul>
<b>Unauthorised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home Office UK</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all migrants liable for deportation are unauthorised.</li> </ul>

Source: ippr (2006b: 6, Table 1 Terminology)

We rather have problem with finding available workers on the Romanian labour market. While a big part of the labour force is already migrated, mostly to the SW Europe (more than 2.5 m workers are believed to be abroad, with both legal and irregular status), the Romanian companies could not find local workers to use them in order to benefit from the money inflow targeting Romania in the light of its new membership to the European Union (foreign investments and European post accession funds).

The idea of this research rose from an empirical survey of the [economic] media, looking for information related to migration subjects<sup>10</sup>. We considered the following supposition: a *Romanian constructor* has migrated to an EU Member State some time ago<sup>11</sup>. As we know, since the visa lifting dated back to 2002, Romanians travel freely within the European Union, for the purpose of tourism. Our constructor could emigrate as a tourist who forgot to come back after the passing of the 90 days of 'tourism' period, or could be the beneficiary of a labour contract based on the intergovernmental agreement on workers' exchange [contingent workers]. As results of his hard work abroad, he/she earns money to send it home: most of the emigrants send money home, to support their families, wife and kids remained home.

<sup>10</sup> We carried out a survey of the (economic) media on migration, by collecting statements from certain on-line and printed media especially from Romania, UK, France, Spain and Belgium. The EU citizens seem to be scary of migration threat (or, at least, the media tries to influence us to believe this). In parallel, we noted that more and more news present new trends on the Romanian labour market: even is one of the major sources for the European labour migration, Romania seems to need workers and in the following period may 'import' foreign workforce. *Box no.1* and *Box no.2* presents the most significant excerpts from the media coverage and articles' titles collected during our research.

<sup>11</sup> We used this example having in mind that the European media have created the so-called *myth of Romanian constructor*, opposite to that of the *Polish Plumber*. The majority of empirical studies show that working in construction is the main employment for Romanians with both legal and illegal/irregular status within the EU Member States. For details on this issues, see FSD (2006). As talking about those emigrated in the last decade, Romanians rather use the pejorative syntagm "*căpșunar*" [strawberry-picker or strawberry-man] to describe all those emigrated to the EU for labour purposes. At the beginning of the labour migration through governmental bodies' mediation [based on bilateral labour agreements], Romanians were employed in farms to pick up strawberries [mainly in Spain]. Since then, the term was generally used both in the colloquial conversations and into the scientific papers. An interesting overview on the strawberry-pickers was delivered by Ana Bleahu during the international colloquium on migration and mobility held in Timisoara in May 2006, under the organisation of the Jean Monnet European Centre for Excellence, West University of Timisoara [on-line information available from [www.migratie.ro/conference2006.html](http://www.migratie.ro/conference2006.html)]. Until the final form of this study is available directly from the author, its abstract is available as part of the MPRA Paper 2793, hosted at <http://mpr.aub.uni-muenchen.de/2793/> For details or updates, please contact directly the author (contact data available on the conference's web page).

He would intend to invest his money too. In his opinion, building a house is a good investment, so he decides to build a house in his back home village. As the Romanian constructor [or farm-worker, house-keeper, or even student, researcher, engineer] is visiting Romania usually twice a year, generally for short vacations during Christmas and/or Eastern, he is not able to build this house by himself (even if building houses may be his job). The simplest option: hiring some neighbours/former colleagues/other worker from his village/region to build his new house, for the time he definitively return home. But usually the majority of the workers from the same villages migrate together, that means no workers were found [the migration throughout close relationship/networks supported the *myth of the Romanian constructor*, vs. the *myth of Polish plumbers* ‘flooding’ the UK after 2004]. Our constructor with residence in an EU state must find a construction company to replace his or his former colleagues’ work. But who could work for such a company, if the workers are already gone abroad, as supposed before? A solution for the construction company to solve the problem is to replace the missing labour force with immigrants (maybe from Moldova Republic, Ukraine or even the *far eastern China*).

**Box no.2****Does Romania need labour force?**

Press articles excerpts from Romanian media on the labour market and migration

ARIS tries to limit Asian labour immigration: The Romanian Agency for Foreign Investments (ARIS) will make efforts to temper the number of Asian workers brought by Asian investors in Romania, said ARIS representatives. They admitted that projects negotiated with Chinese investors usually included putting at their disposal land plots intended for the construction of housing for workers brought from China. The agency was trying to persuade them to limit labour imports to certain positions. He also claimed that the Chinese labour force would not cause any problems, especially if directed to certain areas of Romania, such as the Western part of the country. **“It seems that Romania is one of their favourite destination because is a gateway to Europe”**, commented the ARIS official. (*Bucharest Daily News* no.570, Saturday, October 14, 2006)

The exodus of two millions of Romanians to West European countries has the result the lack of labour force on the Romanian market. The Romanian companies are heavily able to find skilled employees, and this situation will become more difficult after the Romania’s accession to the EU. In order to attract specialists, the employers will be obliged to substantially increase the earnings or to ask for labour force from the former Soviet block or China. The National Agency for Occupation of Labour Force and Vocational Training currently looks for some 10,000 people **to cover the gap due to the migration of Romanians who work abroad**. (*Radio Romantic*, October 22, 2006)

The exodus of labour force is met in industry, textiles and constructions. There are some premises for an influx of cheap labour force originating from ex-Soviet or Asian space. The problems are admitted by the authorities too, after a long period they refused to issue work permits to Asian workers. (*Adevărul* no.5068, October 23, 2006)

**Migration and ageing of population, risks for the national security** (*Ziarul Financiar* nr.1824, 22/02/2006)  
Roumains et Bulgares malvenus. Les chiffres sur l’afflux de travailleurs de l’Est font peur (*Le Soir*, France, 24/08/2006)

**The Chinese take jobs from Romanians** in the country and abroad (*Gândul*, 08/12/2006)

Romania becomes the destination of **undesired migrants: the Chinese** (*Mediafax*, 13/10/2006)

The Chinatown Effect in Europe: the Chinese Map of Europe (*Cotidianul*, 27/10/2006)

2007, the year of invasion of Chinese investments (*Adevărul Financiar*, 19/10/2006)

**Romania, faced with workers’ crisis** (*Bloombiz.ro*, October 2006)

Romania looks for German workers. **We import even Chinese** (*Cotidianul*, 17/10/2006)

The salary in constructions will increase annually by one Euro per hour (*Ziarul Financiar*, 18/08/2006)

ARACO: The salary in construction should double (*Ziarul Financiar*, 02/11/2006)

Solectron to hire 800 in three months (*Ziarul Financiar*, 25/10/2006)

Solectron fire some 500 Scotchmen, after the announcement of recruiting 800 Romanians (*Bloombiz.ro*, 30/10/2006)

Producers of auto components **cannot find people to hire** (*Ziarul Financiar*, 13/09/2006)

Dacia hires 1,000 (*Evenimentul Zilei*, 06/11/2006)

Eastern Europe is the new Detroit for automobile producers (*Ziarul Financiar*, 18/10/2006)

IKEA, 400 hired before spring of 2007 (*Ziarul Financiar*, 07/11/2006)

**The Europe of immigrants** (*Business Magazin*, 10/11/2006)

It’s only a matter of time until **Romanians return home** (*Ziarul Financiar*, Romania, 13/02/2006)

Analyzing the present situation on the labour market, we noted that Romania is a country with a labour market that already faces distortions. There are some years since Romania is known as a country where there could be found engineers, call-centres, textiles and manual workers, at a very good price, with salaries defying all concurrence. On the other hand, Romania is in deep need of labour force (*Box no.2* presents the debate into the Romanian media on the lack of workers on the national market correlated with the Romanian labour migration to the European Union). The workers do not accept anymore low salaries and their demands are higher [the price of their work is increasing while the salaries increase slowly], and they rather prefer to migrate to countries where the salary [for basically the same job] is higher than the local income plus the costs of migration<sup>12</sup>. To replace the emigrated labour force, Romania should find workers from other labour markets.

The foreign workers 'imported' by the local companies are mainly non-EU citizens (considered as *third country nationals*) and therefore they could not travel freely to the European Union. However, they accept to come to Romania, maybe in their way to the most desirable wealthiest country from EU15 (like Germany and those from the northern Europe).

The lack of available well prepared workers would normally force the employers to rise the price of work – the salary – in order to attract the still existent workers from the local market, or to create such an environment that may offer to would-be employees the option to chose staying Romania and refusing the migration (i.e. higher earnings, better working conditions, other compensations etc.). Instead of increasing the salary and improving the work conditions in order to keep stable the present workers, the majority of Romanian employers rather prefer to keep very low the salary level and to hire personnel from the local black-market [without paying taxes] or from abroad. The immigrants still accept a lower wage as compared to the medium wage in Romania, but bigger enough as compared to those from their country of origin (in this way the Romanian employers obtain better financial results, paying less money for the same product, the work).

The Romanian labour market faces distortions and the labour will not be cheap for long time: while the managers of the foreign companies share the same hard work and huge financial benefits with their colleagues from western countries, both the high skilled, the un-skilled workers and the unemployed people don't accept any more small incomes or low-skill demanded work, they refuse the offered 'official' work places and they prefer to be employed in the 'shadow-economy' while receiving social benefits from the Government, or rather choose to migrate to a wealthier country of the European Union. Distortions on the Romanian labour market are caused by the migration of workers, but in the same time migration is cause of distortions on the labour market: Romania will hardly manage to surpass this *vicious circle*. More than 2m Romanian workers are recorded as working and living abroad, mostly skilled, well trained workers, with perhaps more than one million workers with *irregular* status that are eligible to register and work legally as starting with 2007 [the undocumented Romanian participants in the wide EU labour market could not be considered with illegal status, once Romania joins the EU]. The investments into the Romanian economy mainly involve the development of the construction field, well connected to the real estate industry. But the Romanian labour market is lacking just *the constructors*: most of them are in Spain and Italy, helping the growth of those countries' economy. The emigration of skilled labour migration from Romania to the labour markets of the European Union member states is a pressing topic on the agenda of Romanian trade unions. The situation is particularly acute in the construction sector, where labour shortages have been estimated by one employer organisation to be as much as 50%, corresponding to about 300,000 workers (Ciutacu 2006). Ironically, some Spain entrepreneurs announced the intention to develop some large projects in real estates in Transylvania (central Romania), to build houses for Romanians [see our case above], and Portuguese construction companies are involved into major infrastructure projects around Bucharest. But who builds those houses and for whom, if Romanians are working and living in Spain [or elsewhere]? *The constructions are the engine of the economic growth*. But now there are no more constructors to build new factories, new houses and to work in the

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<sup>12</sup> For a migration's costs analyse, see Schiff (2006: 9-14)



infrastructure projects, as probably financed by European post-accession funds [if Romania manages to prepare eligible projects]. So, we have *an engine without fuel* (workers). This is the reason we consider that for Romania the *Strawberry Jam* is not tasteful at all!

## Nothing new on the market: on the European migration after 2004

With the accession of ten new Member States and the forthcoming accession of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007, major concerns were raised with regard to unrestricted labour mobility in an enlarged EU. Therefore transition arrangements were agreed in order to restrict free labour mobility from these new member states and EU15 of up to seven years upon accession (Krieger 2005: 4). The restrictions on labour mobility and the fear of immigrants prove one more time that the removal of the border barriers on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004, was symbolic. The European world is still considered as being divided in two, as according to the economic development: *“the West”* and *“the Rest”* (Maddison 2002). That means *“the Rich”* and *“the Poor”*. *The West* is now a relatively homogeneous group in terms of living standards. This is not true of *the Rest*: they have ‘the cheap’ workforce [as long as it is cheap]. Two years after the largest accession wave, the European media and public opinion still use stereotypes: *‘East – West migration’* and *‘cheap labour vs. better living conditions’* need to be put in perspective. The enlargement and the workers’ mobility benefited for both EU15 and the A8 countries. ECAS (2006b) demonstrates the economic benefits of lifting such restrictions. As consequence of the fact that some 600,000 workers from the new Member States have moved to the UK following enlargement, *‘the benefits of having an open labour market to A8 nationals have been evident to the UK, as during the first eight month of accession. A8 contributed an estimate of GBP 240 million to the economy’* (ECAS 2006a: 15). In the same time, the economic performance of A8 improved (see Box no.3).

### Box no.3

#### **Stereotypes as ‘East – West migration’ and ‘cheap labour vs. better living conditions’ need to be put in perspective**

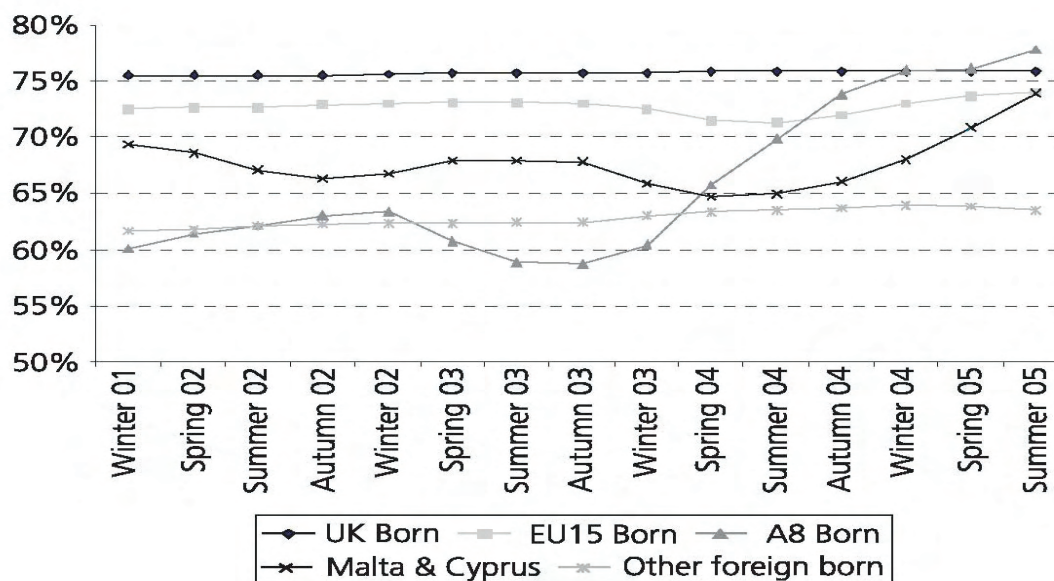
Since May 2004, the economic performance of the new Member States has significantly changed: accession has boosted trade between the EU-15 and A8. Western companies invested a total of 14 billion euros in the accession countries, of which 7 billion euros were after enlargement. GDP of the A8 countries rose by 5% in 2004 and a further increase of more than 4% is predicted for 2005. This rate is twice as high as in the EU-15. Among the eight accession countries, in 2004 Latvia’s economic growth was the highest (also in comparison to the EU15) with 8.5%. It is followed by Lithuania (6.7%), Estonia (6.2%), Slovakia (5.5%) and Poland (5.3%). The “income gap” – which allegedly should have resulted in a massive transfer of residence of the new Member State jobseekers to Western countries – might well lose its credibility as accession countries will achieve a level of income convergence within the EU economy. (ECAS 2005: 22-23)

An important trend of labour migration was the transition from a net-sending to net-receiving country. The continental and Northern Europe countries and UK experienced significant immigration in the second half of the 1950s or beginning of the 1960s, while Greece, Spain and Portugal were major source of emigration on the South-North direction. In the 1990s and the last decade, the Southern Member States and Ireland experienced an inflow of migrants coming from Northern Africa and respectively from UK and North America, as a significant return migration. Before the 5<sup>th</sup> and biggest wave of EU accession, all countries were recorded with a low proportion of labour migration of below

10%, the Southern European countries being the extremes with labour migration between 40 and 60% (Krieger 2005: 6).

The demographic problems (the fall of the fertility rate below the level needed to replace the population) and the ageing of the labour force strongly support the idea of opening the EU labour market to the new European citizens from the CEE. The workforce of the ten new Member States equals to one-third of the active population of the western countries. The EU15 Member States are obviously workforce-demanding, and the closest supply is just 'out there' (ECAS 2005: 33). On the other hand, the immigrants are seen as workers who take the jobs from nationals, even if the evidences prove, in the case of UK at least, the UK-born employment rate remained stable since the A8 accession (Figure 1). However, studies show the impact of immigrants on employment is weak or ambiguous (Ghosh 2005).

**Figure 1 Migrants and UK born employment rates on the British labour market (four quarter rolling average)**



Source: Gilpin et al (2006: 24, Figure 5.1), based on data from Labour Force Survey [UK]

As presented above, the core EU Member States announced restrictions for the newest Member States. Whittal (2006) considers that the full application of Article 18(1) of the EC Treaty without the transitional provision would allow Member States to address the considerable problem of the illegal labour market: such a move would increase taxes and social security revenues, as well as protect employees working under precarious conditions. The transitional measures were accepted by the accession states during the negotiations that preceded the signing of the Accession Treaty [Luxembourg, April 25, 2005, for the case of Romania and Bulgaria]. In the case of forthcoming accession of 2007, the restrictions for entering the labour markets of the EU25 Member States are applying if the states do not opt not to put it in force (UK and Ireland have changed the way to deal with labour mobility from the new Member States and have already announced restrictions and quotas for Romanian and Bulgarian workers, while France and Finland welcomed the Romanians as future EU workers)<sup>13</sup>. The restrictions are based in the public discourse on the threat of flooding of the

<sup>13</sup> In accordance with the '2+3+2' formula, before the end of the first 2 years after the accession of Bulgaria and Romania into the EU, the European Council shall review the functioning of transitional measures on the basis of a report from the European Commission. Existing Member States will then have the option to apply restrictions for the next 3 years. Only if the country is expecting serious disturbances to its labour market may it restrict the labour mobility of the 2007 accession countries for the final 2 years.

labour market by the hungry low-skilled immigrants, and the pressure on the welfare and social system. However, the previous experiences of the states that joined the EU in the 1980s do not provide any rational ground for the statement that the EU accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007 will cause mass migration of workers into the EU<sup>14</sup>. We consider that mass emigration from Romania will likely not be a concern, as it is now very easy to find work at home and the wages are rising. Table 4 summarises the main economic characteristics of the states that joined the European Union in different phases during its 50 years of existence.

**Table 4 The 'invisible threat' of EU enlargement phases**

Phases (waves)	Number of countries	Characteristics
FIRST	<b>6 member-states</b>	Founder countries
	Germany, France, The Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg	
SECOND	<b>9 member-states</b>	High income countries, regulated labour markets, labour force needs, smooth labour market restrictions, high qualification workforce, not income variations
	Great Britain, Denmark, Ireland	
THIRD	<b>12 member-states</b>	Low income, income variations, long distance countries (no borders), labour market restrictions, low qualification workforces, labour force needs
	Greece, Spain, Portugal	
FOURTH	<b>15 member-states</b>	High income countries, not income variations, high qualification workforce, long distance countries, smooth labour market restrictions
	Austria, Finland, Sweden	
FIFTH	<b>25 member-states</b>	Low income countries, high income variations, high unemployment rate, average qualification countries, good knowledge of foreign languages, rather young labour force, short distance countries (borders), restrictive EU immigration policy, dysfunctions in economic system, distortion on labour market: labour force needs
	Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia	
SIXTH	<b>27 member-states</b>	
	Bulgaria, Romania	

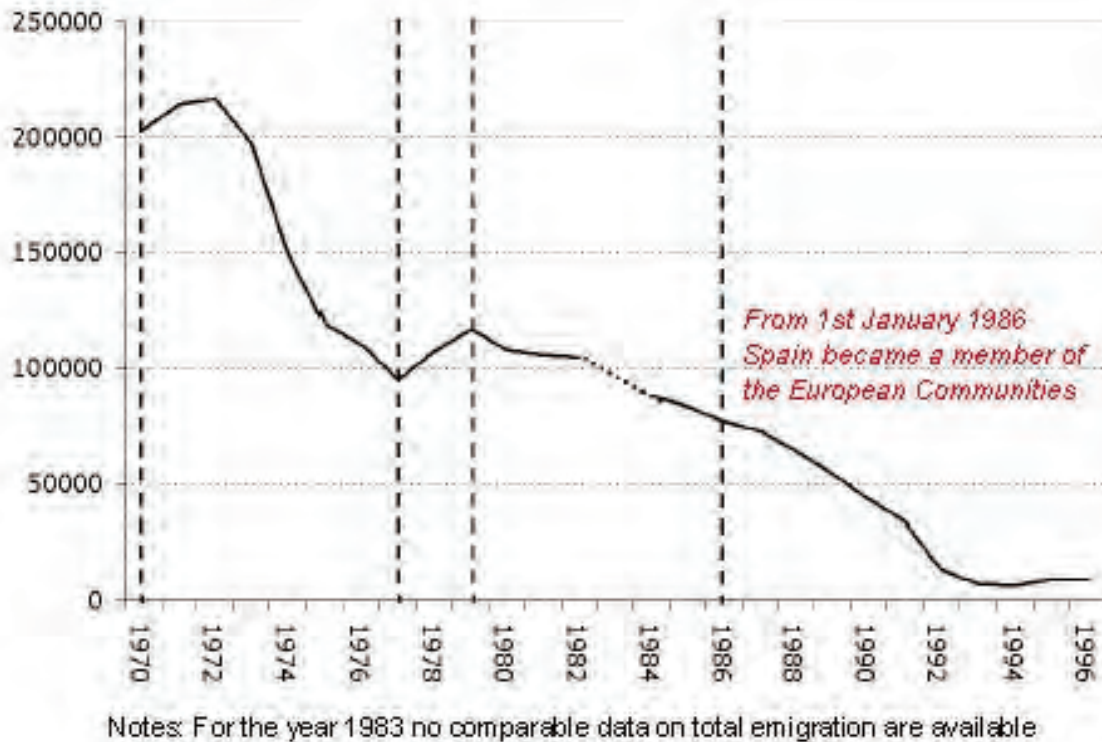
Source: Mary Geitona, University of Thessaly, Volos, and National School of Public Health, Department of Health Economics, Athens, Greece [*The 'Potential' Impact of Immigration on the EU Labour Market and Health Care Systems*, retrieved from [http://www.nsph.gr/oikonomika/euhealth2003/Presentations/Geitona\(present\).pdf](http://www.nsph.gr/oikonomika/euhealth2003/Presentations/Geitona(present).pdf) ]

It could be noticed that Romania and Bulgaria (along with the A8 countries) meet with almost the same economical and social difficulties as the two countries from South-Western Europe (namely Spain and Portugal). The accession of Greece, Spain and Portugal was not marked by the mass migration of workers from these countries. Even if many migrants were leaving the countries of origin in search of a job [better opportunity] in the core UE, the scale of immigrations was acceptable for the EU Member States, without any threat to their labour markets. *'As it appears from the case of Spain and Portugal, no direct increase of emigration has happened after two countries accession to the EU. [...] On the contrary, in the aftermath of their EU accession net emigration from all three Southern European states has substantially declined'* (Strielkowski and O'Donoghue 2004: 4). Reichlová (2004) backs this statement: *'We can see that the migration in general tends to decline over the period from 1970. In the early seventies over 200,000 people left Spain for some European states. In the nineties the number of emigrants reached hardly*

<sup>14</sup> For a detailed point of view on 2004 accession compared to the Spain-Portugal case, see Strielkowski and O'Donoghue (2004) and Reichlová (2004: Ch.6).

2,000 or 3,000 per year. The fears of huge migration after the introduction of free movement and accession to the European Union did not materialize' (Reichlová 2004: 49).

Figure 2 Migration flows from Spain to Europe [1970 – 1996]



Source: Reichlová (2004: 49, Figure 6.1)

On the other hand, immigration to the UK has been less permanent than is commonly thought: almost half (46 per cent) of all overseas-born immigrants left the UK within five years of arrival between 1981 and 2002 (UK Office for National Statistics data quoted in *ippr* (2006: 13)), and many accession country migrant workers, including Romanians, intend to work in the UK only temporarily in order to save money for their families or their studies. 'Within Europe, most migration is not permanent, but part of a process of mobility in which both return and serial migration are natural economic responses to a dynamic economy' (Piracha and Vickerman, 2001: 1). Analysis suggests that 'a significant proportion of migrants return to their country of origin within a few months of entering the UK' (Portes and French 2005: 21). 'Migration is likely to slow as economic conditions improve in the accession countries. Not only will this reduce the flow of migrants from the A8 to the UK, but the rate of return is also likely to rise' (*ippr* 2005: 28), and 'as the poorer of the accession states experience economic growth, the supply of migrant workers from the A8 is likely to diminish. Even the planned accession of Romania and Bulgaria, and in the long term, Turkey, may not supply sufficient numbers of migrants, certainly not to pre-empt undocumented flows in the immediate term' (*ippr* 2005: 29).

Many Romania with illegal/irregular status are already present in countries as Italy and Spain. In the past years, ad-hoc flights were organised by Spain authorities to send illegal immigrants back to Romania, stopping in France and Italy to pick up more. Thousands of immigrants had been attracted by Spain's liberal amnesty policy. Spain and Portugal in the 1980s were traditionally net emigration countries, with a lower level of economic development. The economic situation of Romania is the same, maybe better, and it is improving, while the country is an important source for European migration nowadays (Simina 2002). In the case of Spain,

*'we can identify these major causes of absence of migration wave after the introduction of free movement of workers from Spain to the European Union. First, the economic situation in Spain improved and optimistic expectations among people prevailed. Political stability was ensured by the membership in the EU. Second, economic situation in destination countries deteriorated especially with regard to unemployment. France and Germany were no more recruiting workers from Southern Europe and social tension has been present in relation to immigrants'.*  
(Reichlová 2004: 51)

Why the situation regarding the *migration threat* to the European Union labour market should be different in Romanian case than in the case of Spain, Portugal and Greece?

## Romania and the new economy of migration: costs, decision, networks, development

The economic analysis of migrations deals, mainly, with two problems: why people migrate and what the consequences both for host countries as well for origin countries concerning the functioning mechanism of labour market are. The costs and benefits for the migrant himself are not less important. The migration decision refers to a plurality of motives and causes, and generally is a result of a cost-benefit analysis, influenced by negative and positive factors (push-pull). We do not intent to summarise the all main theories of migration, having in mind there are largely known and extensively debated. We analyse the decision making process for Romanian workers, trying to outline their reasons for migration to certain destinations and not to others.

Various factors are seen as underlying forces of migration. The economic drivers of all migration are often divided into *push and pull factors*, the so-called "push-and-pull model". *'This identifies a number of negative (push) factors in the country of origin that cause people to move away, in combination with a number of positive (pull) factors that attracts migrants to a receiving country'* (Piracha and Vickerman, 2001: 10).

Pull factors are positive factors of the origin or the host countries: the geographic and cultural proximity and the comparative advantages of destination country (differences in wages or better working conditions). They are reason for people to stay in their home country or to be attracted to the receiving country. Well developed social security systems in the target countries are an important pull factor for migration. *'A slow transition speed may provoke migratory sentiments in the young, but a speedier transition can result in unemployment and a weak social security system can provoke mass movements'* (Piracha and Vickerman, 2001: 11).

*Pull factors include the fact that wages are higher in developed countries, and that there is persistent labour demand. In the UK, fertility rates are declining, the population is ageing, education levels are rising and there are increasingly negative attitudes to menial jobs among the native-born population. While the native born population appears to be increasingly reluctant to work in low paid, menial jobs, demand for low paid workers is growing (ippr 2006b: 8).*

The aliens will accept to deal with *'degrading'* or *'dirty'* activities, because they want to gain more material resources in order to return, richer, to their home country. The low paid jobs are filled by migrants, too. They cannot afford other opportunities, and those activities are traditionally filled with immigrants [usually in the framework of the informal economy].

Push factors are negative factors pushing people out of the home country or preventing them to move into the receiving country: demographic, political and economical situation in the country of origin. *'Lower rates of population growth in the EU could lead to a significant shortfall in labour supply over the next 20 years'*, while *'political factors are more complex and could possibly influence the migration decision more profoundly than the democratic factors. Impatience, particularly of educated youth, with the slow speed of transition to liberalised markets and the increase in ethnic tensions within a number of CEEC which remains masked during the communist period could both emerge as major push factor'* (Piracha and Vickerman, 2001: 10-11).

In the cost-benefits analysis more variables take part: the salary [wage] differences among different countries; differences in unemployment rates; the grade of social protection (social policies); an assembly of costs related to migration (information costs, transportation costs, costs of installation in a foreign country, psychological costs related with the moving off the birth place, the networking costs). The data show that migration rate is lowering as the medium income in the host countries grows up and the medium level of income in the origin country begins to lower and the migration costs begin to grow. Schiff (2006) adds financial constraints to migration costs as relevant features for migration. Migration costs include moving costs, cost of searching for a job and of housing and sustenance until a job is found, the time and money cost of obtaining a passport and visas, and payments to intermediaries in case of illegal migration. *'Assuming the ability to pay for migration as binding constraint, with heterogeneous migration costs, trade liberalisation in the source country that raises the country's wage rate enables more people to pay for migration, resulting a greater migration rate'* (Schiff 2006: 9-10). For the larger developing countries, where the transport costs are higher, migration costs may constitute a barrier to migration. From informal interviews at the Romanian border with illegal immigrants from China, some years ago, we noted the specificity of Chinese migration to Europe: the whole family pays for the costs of a member's migration<sup>15</sup>. As soon as finds a job, the Chinese migrant starts payments back home to return the loans to his relatives. The costs to migrate to Europe could rise up to 20-30,000 USD.

As previously stated, the economic conditions at home influence the chances of someone migrating. *'In poorer regions, potential migrants are less able to carry the costs of migration'* (Krieger 2004: 83). The unskilled individuals are constrained by their ability to pay for migration costs, while the skilled individuals can pay for migration and is able to choose between remaining in the source country or migrating, as depending on the equilibrium between the benefit from migration and the migration costs (Schiff 2006:12). A reduction in international migration costs implies an increase in skilled labour incentive to migrate and unskilled migrants to pay for migration costs, both types of labour mobility increase. As soon as the globalisation and trade without restrictions reduced the costs of transportation, migration increased in the same time with the increased incentive to leave home back of poorer or low-skilled would-be emigrants. Long-distance transportation and communication are within the reach of even relatively poor people now. Flying a low cost air company it is not a fortune at all in the last period, and migrants could travel easily between the host country and the country of origin. Some companies already flies from Romania carrying economic migrants, and some more are on the waiting list in their attempt to connect Romania on the other part of the European Union, as soon as the country join the EU and the 'open sky' agreement [which allows all European air companies to enter Romanian space without legal constraints<sup>16</sup>]. *BlueAir* [Romanian], *Skyeurope* [Czech], *MyAir* [Italian], *Wizzair* [Hungarian/Polish] and maybe *easyjet* [British] and *Ryanair* [Irish] are names of low-cost air transport companies which will be added soon on the preference list of Romanian migrants, if not already there. In the case of Romanian emigration after the moment the

<sup>15</sup> For other examples regarding the results of empirical studies at the Romanian border between 1998-2002, see Simina (2002)

<sup>16</sup> The ECAA Agreement (20 December 2005) COM(2006) 113 final - 2006/0036 (CNS) ensures open access to air routes within the ECAA for any ECAA Air Carrier. For detailed information regarding the European Common Aviation Area and the developments on the agenda of the European Union air transportation policy, see the European Commission DG Energy and Transport web page: [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air\\_portal/international/pillars/common\\_aviation\\_area/ecaa\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air_portal/international/pillars/common_aviation_area/ecaa_en.htm).

European Union Member States decided to lift the binding tourist visa [2002], the competition between the Romanian bus companies lowered the price of transportation to destination country of choice. In this way, 'waves' of Romanians decided easily to travel abroad for work (even working in irregular conditions), due to the fact that the migration costs decreased. As soon as some member of the families arrived in a certain place, they informed and helped the other members of the family or local community to take the decision to migrate. The better developed networks of migrants from their area of origin, the lower the costs and risks of migration, and higher the probability of migration into a certain area. Sandu (2000a and 2000b), Sandu et al (2004), Constantinescu (2003), Şerban and Grigoraş (2000) and Potot (2000) provide extensive analyses of Romanian circulatory migration phenomena and the formation networking process within Romania and European Union<sup>17</sup>, while Agunias (2006) review the international literature on circular migration.

From the perspective of *the 'new' economy of migration*, migrations are a result of collective decision [household decision] in the background of incertitude situations and market imperfections. The economy of the immigration vary by time and place, and immigration can be either beneficial or harmful (Borjas 1999: 1). Households accept diverse risks to their economic well-being by specific allocation strategies of labour within the family. Some family members are engaged in economic activities in the local community, often the head of household or the younger men is sent abroad to foreign labour markets with better employment conditions and higher wages.

The equilibrium wage on a regional labour market is driven by labour supply and labour demand. According to the *labour market dualism*, the migrations are explained by the labour force need originating from host organization (enterprises). '*Migration is in the first instance caused by geographical differences in labour supply and demand*' (Krieger 2004: 82). The higher the expected reduction of relative income deprivation related to the area of origin through migration, the higher the intention for migration.

Based on this theory, the salary hierarchies represent *the prestige hierarchies*<sup>18</sup>. Employers in EU countries may also face a general motivational problem to fill unattractive jobs at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy by local workers, as they are combined with a low societal status. Hence, employers may decide to look for employees, e.g. in the acceding and candidate countries, who have fewer considerations regarding status and prestige in their destination country. The aliens accept to deal with 'degrading' activities because they want to gain more material resources in order to return, richer, to their home country. '*This attitude of migrant workers is supported by relative deprivation, where the perception of the migrant is not determined by reference groups in the host country but solely by its status and well-being in the home country. A low status job in a receiving country may be a high status job in the country of origin*' (Krieger 2004: 86-87).

Demographic pressure (lower rate of population growth in the EU), wars, persecutions [political climate, among other types of persecutions] and environmental catastrophes [connected to economy crises that may follow the catastrophes] could be mentioned as important drivers for migration for both voluntary and forced migration (i.e. refugee, asylum seekers). Other theories allocate migrations to socio-historical factors: i.e. the final destinations of the labour force migration are countries with a *rich historical background*<sup>19</sup>. '*While economic push and pull factors are central to decisions to migrate, it is essential that social and political factors are considered*' (ippr 2006b: 8). Political factors are more complex and could influence the migration decision more profoundly than the demographic factors (Piracha and Vickerman 2001: 11). The environmental factors are rather new on the migration agenda.

<sup>17</sup> For more papers on circular migration of Prof. Dumitru Sandu from Bucharest University, please visit his on-line library at: <http://dumitru.sandu.googlepages.com>. We present our opinion on networking and the *network effect of migration* further on

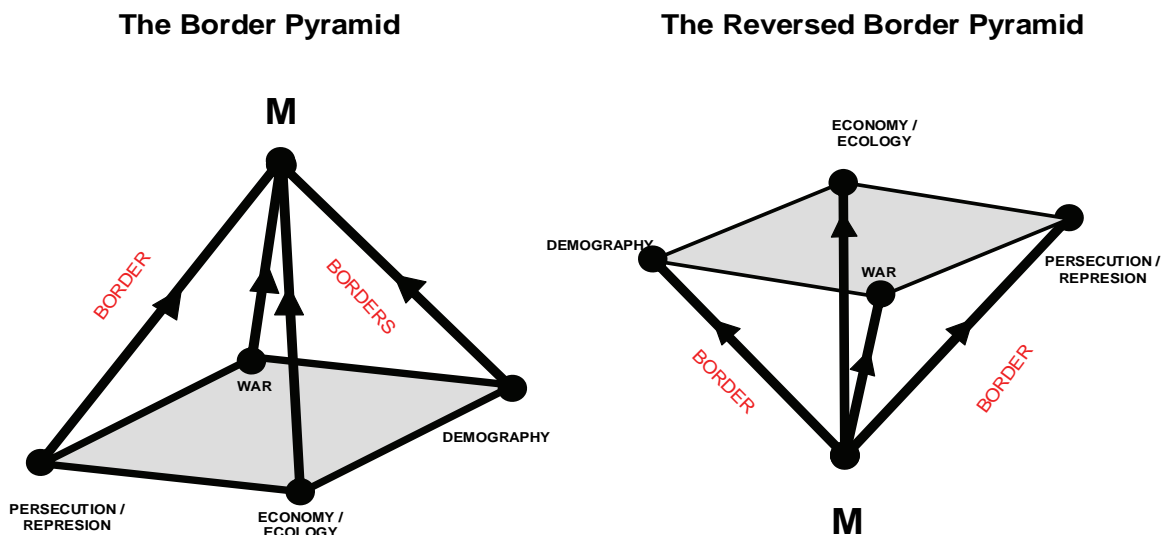
<sup>18</sup> Analyse of Romanian migration further on is based on a research done using the well-known Maslow's theory of basic needs.

<sup>19</sup> Spain and Italy were a major reservoir for the European migration between the 1950s and the 1980s. Nowadays, Romanians mostly migrate to Italy and Spain.

*Economics/ecology, war, persecution/repression and demography can all be causes for migratory movements. It is also of importance to emphasize that these four main causes are interrelated: war has an impact on the economy; demographic developments may have an impact on the ecological balance, and so on. Moreover, there is no need to explain that a gloomy economic situation may result in tensions between the population at large and the authorities, resulting in repression, or that a fight on the control of certain natural resources may result in war. It is also clear that an increasing population may put pressure on economic developments (a 3% population increase would need to be off-set by a 7% increase in GDP). It could be submitted that a decreasing fertility, combined with a slimming 'youth bulge' may create a situation in which peace may become more likely. (van Krieken 2004)*

Peter van Krieken mentions *Economics/ecology, war, persecution/repression and demography*. Simina (2005 b) proposes the *mentality* issue. In order to decide to migrate, one will cross a border. Or more borders: real, 'imagined' or 'imaginary' borders. Simina (2005b) includes the *BORDER* element and the 'Migration Pyramid' of van Krieken (2004) is renamed 'The Border Pyramid' (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3 The Border / Reversed Border Pyramid**



Source: The theory of the "Migration Pyramid", in Peter J. van KRIEKEN, *A need to reinvent the wheel?*, International Conference on Population and Development, UNECE + UNFPA, Session on Migration, Management and Integration, Geneva, 2004

In the same way, 'The Reversed Migration Pyramid', which deals with the fact that the migratory movements can also be the *cause* of problems like war, social repression, economic gap, demographic awareness, is renamed 'The Reversed Border Pyramid': migratory movements primary become elements for an increasingly conflicting situation when there is a lack of integration of immigrants and migration policies. And of course lack of education regarding acceptance of immigrants (mentality).

We consider that the economic factors are most significant push factors. The migration behaviour based on neo-classical labour market theory put great emphasis on income and income differentials as the main motivation for migration. In our research we emphasise the importance of personal needs and expectations on the decision to migrate. We agree that the differences in wage between the origin and the country of choice put a great pressure on the households, but the gap between the income



earned in the country of origin and the sum that could be obtained abroad it is not sufficient to leave your home and family/children back. Usually the migration's costs increase by adding the psychological costs of putting back family, social networks and position into the [local] society/community. There are many other variables to be taken into account when analysing the migration decision, and we consider that the economic theory based income differences should be improved. If the would-be emigrant manage to surpass his basic needs and is motivated by the fulfilling of the esteem-related needs, he/she easily decide to migrate. *'Majority of EU citizens is probably able to fulfil their physiological needs and feel safe within their current place of residence. Hence these reasons are no more the driving force of mobility as in past times when people moved to feed their family and escape from uncertain places and countries. We can say that extensive social security lowers motivation for migration'* (Reichlová 2004: 42).

Among other authors, *ippr* (2006a and 2006b) did independent analyses of the likely impact of Bulgarian and Romanian accession to the EU, paying particular attention to past enlargement experiences and examining the drivers for migration this time round. We used the Abraham Maslow's motivational theory to construct the argument for our theory: *the need for esteem is probably most important for a big part of the Romanians who continue to migrate to the EU, especially for those going to Italy and Spain*. Analysing the fourth scale of the 'motivation pyramid', Reichlová (2005) suggests that *'people will move if this step is followed by improved social status or attainment of fame'* (Reichlová 2005: 9). And this is not a reason to induce mass migration (Romanians are not as poor as they are pictured in some European [tabloid] media or in much of academic papers wrote using only data from curt statistics). It is true that there are Romanians for whom labour mobility [as mentioned above, after 2007 it's wrong to say 'migration' for Romanians] constitutes an escape from a poor situation. Maybe some scientists do not agree with us, but these poor workers could find jobs in Romania if they really wish and look for [of course, maybe with a lower salary that its expectations and/or maybe in other field, needing to acquire some new abilities or to change the profession]. At mid October 2006, the National Agency for Occupation of Labour Force and Vocational Training (within the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family) was looking for some 10,000 people<sup>20</sup>: Romania needs at least some 10,000 people to fill the gap on the labour market; Romania needs people, not working places! With other words, those 10,000 people who are missing were not migrated because they didn't find work. We should determine other reasons that drive Romanian migration, apart from the inequality in wages and shortages in labour on the local labour market.

As Maslow mentions, *'we have what we may call the desire for reputation or prestige (defining it as respect or esteem from other people), status, fame and glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity, or appreciation. [...] Satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy, of being useful and necessary in the world. But thwarting of these needs produces feelings of inferiority, of weakness, and of helplessness'*<sup>21</sup>. The model of Reichlová (2005) which try to find if the theory of motivation can explain the decision to migrate,

*'reflects the fact known and recognized by psychologists but scarcely used in economics. That is general preference for known, familiar and predictable environment. In case of migration we can express this psychological phenomenon as general preference of living in native country compared to life abroad. In comparison with other migration models we are able to explicitly work with preference for known, familiar environment and*

<sup>20</sup> Romania, on the threshold of the lack of workers crisis, as wrote on *HotNews.ro* (17/10/2006). See Box no.2 above for more headlines in the Romanian press on the crisis on the labour market.

<sup>21</sup> The text of Abraham (Harold) Maslow could be found easily in the virtual spaces, many web pages including excerpts of his famed theory, originally published as: Maslow, Abraham H. (1943): *A Theory of Human Motivation*, in *Psychological Review*, 50, 370-396. It was revised and updated with very little change when it was included in his 1954 book, *Motivation and Personality*, and again in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of the 1970 second edition as: Maslow, Abraham H. (1970): *Motivation and Personality*, 2nd. ed., New York: Harper & Row. The source of the text we used is: <http://www.xenodochy.org/ex/lists/maslow.html>. We cannot guaranty for its accuracy, we only used it to picture our ideas.

*appreciation of proximity of friends, family and other socially tied individuals. These factors are in majority of models hidden under the all inclusive term "barriers".'*

Reichlová (2005: 21)

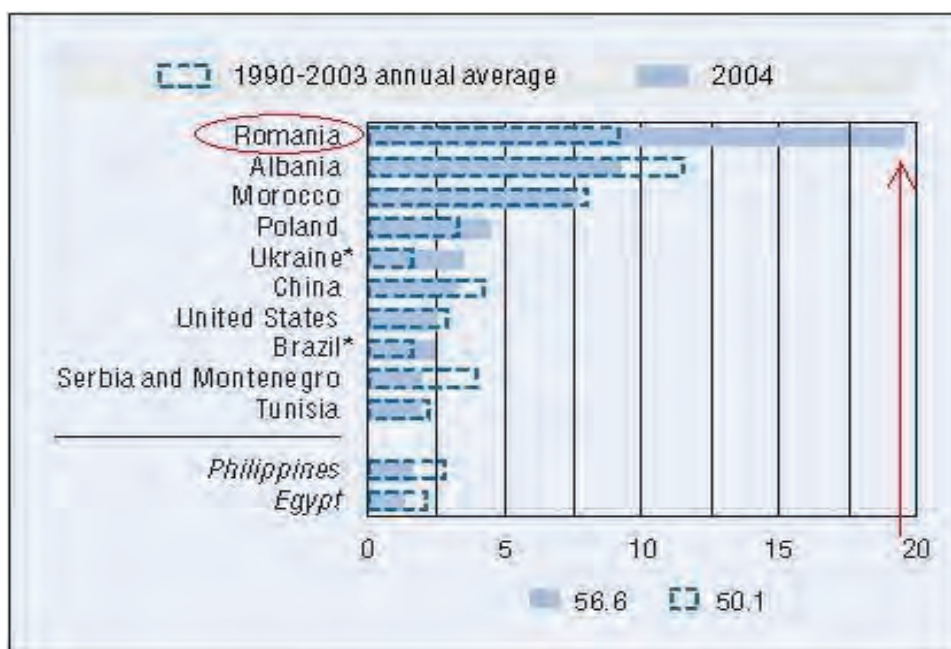
When we discussed the distortions on the Romanian labour market, we presented our opinion related to the fact that Romanian workers migration should not be compared with the Polish case in terms of destinations, flows and tendencies. The media influenced the previsions that suggest that Romanians will target UK as destination country after 2007, because the Polish did so soon after 2004. It is true that there are similarities among the labour flows from Romania and Poland, namely the age group, the unemployment rate in the source region, the average education/skilled individuals. But the language and the network effect of migration show that Romanians will be mainly attracted by the same destination countries, Italy and Spain, even if some of them will go to Britain (having in mind the labour stock of the countries is at a very low level, there are no migrants for a mass influx to UK, we believe that the migrants who will chose UK are those with former migration experiences and possible migrants that are already abroad at the time of accession and change their position within the labour market, moving from South-Eastern Europe to the UK). We launch the debate on the following subject: *UK does not fear of Romanians, it rather needs Romanians and use media debate to attract the interest of the labour workers!* Maybe the facts could show something else, but we would like to emphasise some specificities of migration to Britain. From our empirical research at the borders (see Simina 2002), we know that even before 2002 Romanians entered UK, staying there with irregular status<sup>22</sup> [overstaying the tourist visa and quite often entering with false passports, usually Portuguese: nobody heard Portuguese or Romanian in the UK before, so nobody was able to easily recognise a Latin language which is neither Italian, nor French or Spanish, but sometimes similar, as sounds strange Latin. Showing the false Portuguese passports, the Romanians were allowed to enter the country and then the labour market freely]. With other words, those who embraced the idea of living and working in the UK are already there, they don't need to wait for the Romania's accession to the EU to do this. We would underline our opinion: it is generally felt that that the majority of Romanians inclined to work outside of Romania are already doing so. As emphasised above, there are many reasons for migration, but the accession is not among them!

As a response to the media debate regarding Romania's emigration, we consider the reasons why Romanians do not face mass migration to the UK. We do not say the Romanians will not go to UK any more, but we consider that the first choice will be countries as Spain, Italy and maybe France (see Figures 4 a-c presenting the inflows of top 10 nationalities as a % of total inflows of foreigners in Italy and Spain, and Figure 5 mentioning the countries where those with intentions to leave would like to work). In a study which relates the intention to move into the another European country to the total population of each accession county (in the framework of the quality of life in Europe), the European Foundation for the Implement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin, found that 52.8% Romanians and Bulgarians expressed their willingness to live in another European country where the language is different from mother tongue as "not at all". All researchers agree that Italian, Spanish and French are more related to the Romanian (the mother tongue of Romanians) than English which is spoken in the United Kingdom.

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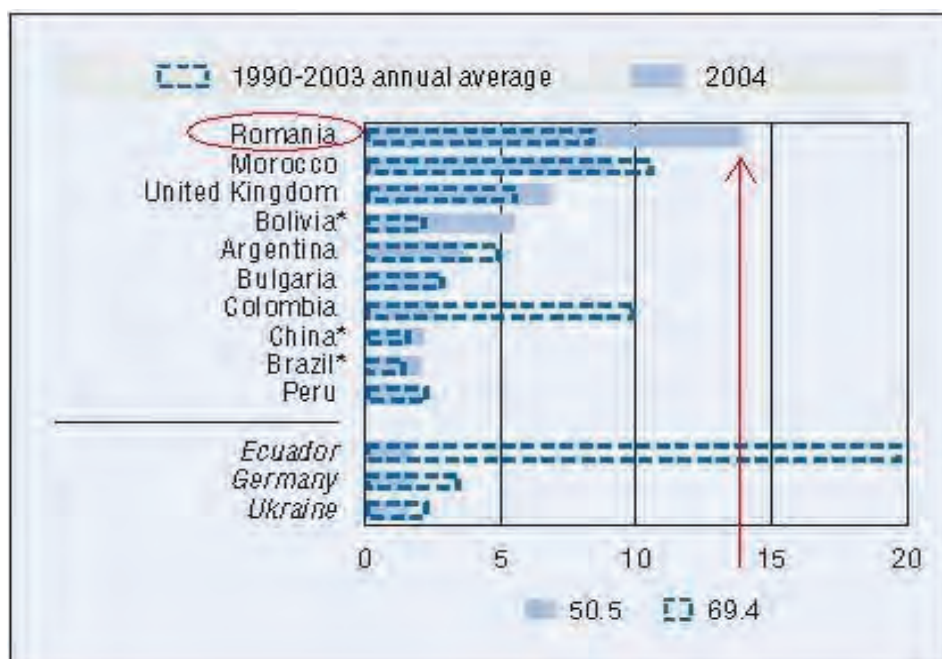
<sup>22</sup> According to ippr (2006b: 10), Romanians were the fourth largest European nationality group in detention, after Turkish, Serbians and from Montenegro. Analysing the irregular status of Romanians, one should have in mind the fact that as starting with January 1<sup>st</sup> 2007, when Romania joins the EU, the Romanian citizens could be irregular workers, but they cannot have irregular presence on the UK territory, regardless the ways of entrance and the period of journey.

**Figure 4a ITALY: Inflows of top 10 nationalities as a % of total inflows of foreigners**



Source: OECD 2006: 191, Statlink: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1786/663488602457>

**Figure 4b SPAIN: Inflows of top 10 nationalities as a % of total inflows of foreigners**



Source: OECD 2006: 215, Statlink: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1786/125324665132>

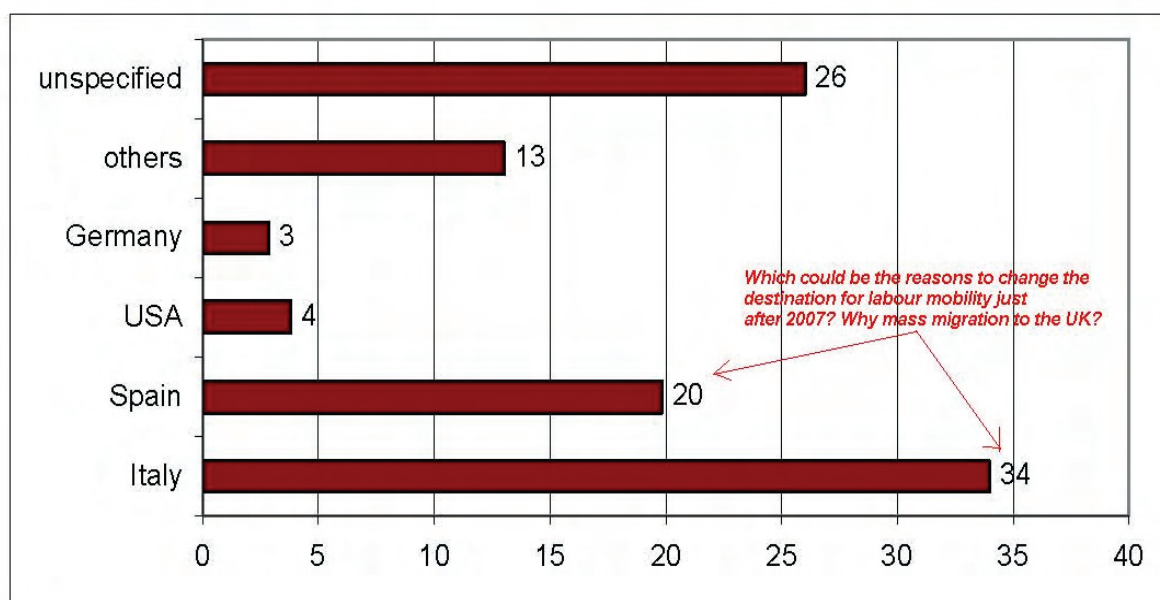
Figure 4c SPAIN: Inflows of foreign population by nationality

Thousands

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Romania	0.5	1.8	17.5	23.3	48.3	55.0	89.5
Morocco	10.6	14.9	38.3	39.5	40.2	40.9	58.8
United Kingdom	4.5	7.9	10.9	16.0	25.3	32.1	44.3
Bolivia	0.2	0.5	3.3	4.9	10.6	18.1	35.3
Argentina	1.2	1.9	6.7	16.0	35.4	24.8	23.2
Bulgaria	0.2	0.7	6.5	11.8	15.9	13.6	17.9
Colombia	2.3	7.5	46.1	71.2	34.2	10.9	16.6
China	1.0	1.6	4.8	5.2	5.7	7.3	14.4
Brazil	0.9	1.6	4.1	4.3	4.7	7.3	13.0
Peru	2.1	2.9	6.0	7.1	8.0	13.3	13.0
Ecuador	2.0	9.0	91.1	82.6	89.0	72.6	11.9
Germany	7.1	9.3	10.2	10.7	11.2	11.1	11.8
Ukraine	0.2	0.6	6.3	11.0	10.8	9.1	10.3
Venezuela	0.9	1.6	3.4	4.1	5.4	10.4	10.2
Uruguay	0.2	0.4	1.3	2.8	6.2	9.3	9.8
Other countries	23.4	37.0	74.3	83.5	92.2	93.7	265.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>57.2</b>	<b>99.1</b>	<b>330.9</b>	<b>394.0</b>	<b>443.1</b>	<b>429.5</b>	<b>645.8</b>

Source: OECD (2006: 246, Statistical Annex, Table B.1.1)

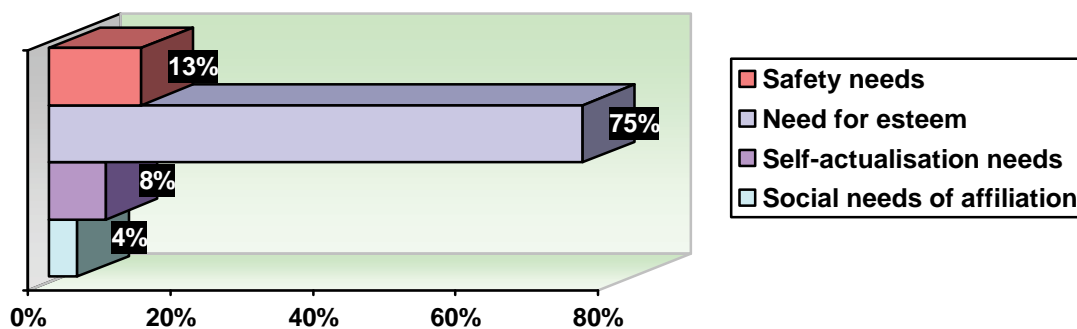
Figure 5 Countries where those with intentions to leave would like to work (%)



Source: FSD (2006), Figure 8, page 31. Countries where those with intentions to leave would like to work (%)  
 Data source: TLA Survey, basic sample, subsample of people with intention to leave to work abroad. N=106.  
 Example of reading: 20 % of the people aged 18 to 59, who would like to leave abroad to work, within the following year, target Spain as place of destination

If we relate to Maslow's theory, the research conducted by the Romanian National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux revealed that the reason most often put forward was the NEED FOR ESTEEM (the fourth level/step), that means 75% of the respondents (Figure 6). This is a superior reason, that means the emigrant had satisfied the other needs (levels I, II and III) in Romania (ANBCC 2005).

**Figure 6 Emigration reasons - Abraham Maslow's scale**



Source: ANBCC (2005: 13)

*The first situation is when physiological needs are not gratified. Then the only desire is to achieve additional sources of nourishment. Individual will move into another location provided that this step decreases hunger or thirst. Second, the individual has enough food but lives in unsafe, threatening surroundings where his life is endangered or the environment is chaotic and unpredictable. Then he or she will move to another location if the level of safety, predictability and order grows through such a step. Nevertheless, this move will not be done if the new safe place does not provide enough sources to guarantee gratification of physiological needs. On the other hand, safety needs are an important factor binding people to their native land. The territory they are living in is familiar, majority of people they are dealing with are known, they have social status that is connected with some duties and rights, they can communicate with other people using their native language, they are well oriented in cultural customs and they know their rights and acceptable ways of behaviour. Unfamiliar and sometimes hostile environment in destination country disturbs safety and stability requirement and thus decreases benefit from migration. Reichlová (2005: 9)*

## On the EU Enlargement Map: Romania and the Syndrome of South-Eastern Europe

With the "South-Eastern Europe Syndrome", we analyse the fact that Romania develops in the same way like the southern countries which joined the EU in previous waves of enlargement. The EU has no reasons to fear Romania maintains its undeveloped economy. During the transition of Romania, all economic mechanism suffered strong structural crisis: Romania had a very powerful industry sector and a cooperative based agriculture, with workers trained for steel industry and mechanized agriculture. After the failing of the communist regime, the industrial companies were privatized and then closed, the land was returned to the farmers and the cooperative farms were destroyed. Romanians were prepared for an industry based productive economy, nowadays Romania

is the land of the service industry, with investments in banks, distribution and selling industry. Soon after the changing of the regime, Romania met large unemployment and lot of people in need of identity. A solution: emigration for labour. Most of the former industrial areas are now transformed in investments for the real estate market. The agricultural land is used for developing large real estate projects. All major European retailers are 'landed' on the Romanian distribution market, with huge hypermarkets and entertainment areas [even considered the capital city of a 'poor country', with low income, a Bucharest based hypermarket of *Carrefour* is the third in the world as counting the transit of customers during the Christmas holidays, with more than 100,000 people visiting the site per day]. In the same time, alike in countries as Spain and Portugal before their accession to the EU, lots of investors have bought plenty of land and buildings, for speculation on the real estate market purposes (the price of real estate multiplied many times, as compared to the price just before the accession). The same situation is met mostly in western Romania, but even in Constanța county, south-eastern region: Italians and Greeks have bought almost all available agricultural and in-town land, with the purpose of eventually reselling it upon the Romania's accession to the EU. Nowadays, Spain is one of the main receiving countries of older emigrants in Europe, the main destination for European retirees (mainly thanks to its tourist tradition), due to the economic attraction of tourism factors (pensions, expenses at the place of destination). In the same time, the economy is growing. Before the EU: the Spain workers have migrated to the north of Europe for jobs, while the capital moved to Spain as investments in land and real estate. After the accession: Spain, Portugal and southern Italy benefited from the financial aid of the EU. Spain launched policies to help the families to raise the birth rate (the demographic growth), attracting immigrants with regularisation measures. Those migrants supported the Spain economic development. The same situation is met in Romania, but using the "fast forward" style. We already need workers!

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