

STUDII DE ATELIER. CERCETAREA MINORITĂȚILOR NAȚIONALE DIN ROMÂNIA  
WORKING PAPERS IN ROMANIAN MINORITY STUDIES  
MŰHELYTANULMÁNYOK A ROMÁNIAI KISEBBSÉGEKRŐL

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**Tamás Kiss**

# **ANALYSIS OF EXISTING MIGRATORY DATA PRODUCTION SYSTEMS AND MAJOR DATA SOURCES IN ROMANIA**



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## Rezumat

■ Studiul de față schițează caracteristicile principale ale sistemului de colectare și gestionare a datelor despre migrația și populația din România. Materialul face parte din raportul de țară pe România elaborat în cadrul proiectului transnațional SEEMIG - Managing Migration and its Effects in South-East Europe – Transnational Actions Towards Evidence Based Strategies [Gestionarea migrației și a efectelor sale în Europa de Sud-Est – Acțiuni transnaționale pentru strategii fundamentate]. Institutul de Cercetări Demografice al Institutului Central de Statistică din Ungaria și institutele de cercetare participante în proiect au elaborat în prealabil o metodologie comună pentru a produce descrieri comparabile pentru toate cele opt state participante în proiectul SEEMIG. Conform acestei metodologii comune, în lucrarea de față ne-am concentrat asupra surselor de date din sfera administrativă, respectiv pe cele statistice.

## Abstract

■ The study outlines the main features of the Romanian data production system on migration and population stock. The study is part of the country report on Romania elaborated for the following transnational project: SEEMIG Managing Migration and its Effects in South-East Europe – Transnational Actions Towards Evidence Based Strategies. Previously, a common methodology was elaborated by the Demographic Research Institute at the Hungarian Central Statistical Office and other participant research institutes in order to gain comparable descriptions for all eight SEEMIG countries. According to this methodology, we focused in this study both on administrative and statistical data sources.



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# ANALYSIS OF EXISTING MIGRATORY DATA PRODUCTION SYSTEMS AND MAJOR DATA SOURCES IN ROMANIA\*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

■ Our report outlines the main features of the Romanian data production system on migration and population stock. Previously, a common methodology was elaborated by the Demographic Research Institute at the Hungarian Central Statistical Office and other participant research institutes in order to gain comparable descriptions for all eight SEEMIG countries. According to this methodology, we focused both on administrative and statistical data sources.

The migration-related administrative data sources in Romania are the population register (*evidența persoanelor*), which is a comprehensive database maintained by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and various registers of foreigners. Immigrants (who arrived to Romania for a period of at least 3 months) from EEU/EEA and the Swiss Confederation are registered separately from third-country citizens. Yet another register is that of asylum seekers and aliens who gained some form of protection in Romania. It is important to highlight that the registers of immigrants are not integrated into the population register, as the latter contains the personal data only of Romanian citizens. The population register, however, contains data about all Romanian citizens, whether or not they reside in Romania. The citizens having legal domicile in Romania are registered in the locality where their addresses belong (and not at the place of their usual residence if this differs from the official address), whereas those who do not have legal domicile in Romania (for instance, those who live abroad) are registered at their last permanent address. New Romanian citizens who do not have residence in Romania (for instance, ethnic Romanians from neighboring countries who gained Romanian citizenship) are (at least theoretically) registered in the population register too (in Bucharest).

In the context of intensive out-migration, the number of persons registered in the population register considerably exceeds the size of the usual resident population. To illustrate this, at the time of

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\* The study is part of the country report on Romania elaborated for the following project: SEEMIG Managing Migration and its Effects in South-East Europe – Transnational Actions Towards Evidence Based Strategies. The project is funded under the third call for proposals of the South-East Europe Programme (SEEMIG - SEE/C/0006/4.1/X). The information published here reflects the author's views and the Managing Authority is not liable for any use that may be made of the information concerned.

The complete report also contains two case studies about the usage and accessibility of migration-related data sources on the local level (Harghita/Harghita county and the Municipality of Sfântu Gheorghe/Sepsiszentgyörgy). Contributors: Andrea Beke, Julianna Bodó. The complete report is available on the project's website: [www.seemig.eu](http://www.seemig.eu).

The data presented in the country report and implicitly this paper reflect the situation as of May 2013 (before the publication of the final results of the 2011 Romanian census).



the parliamentary elections in 2012, the official number of persons entitled to vote was 18.4 million, whereas the official number of the usual resident adult population – delivered by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) – was 17.4 million.

It has to be pointed out that there is a difference in definition between the legal population of Romania (the totality of citizens, whether or not they reside in Romania) and the usual population of Romania (which, in accordance with the United Nations' recommendations, is defined as the totality of persons residing usually in Romania, irrespective of their citizenship). While the population register (as well as the majority of administrative institutions, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, for example) deals with the legal population, NIS statistics use the definition of usual population. Thus, there is no consistently used definition for the term population behind the system of population registration in Romania.

This incoherence is closely related to the fact that the systems of registration are not (or are only partially) integrated. The registration of demographic events is closely linked to the administrative procedures, yet the National Institute of Statistics uses its own paper-based questionnaires in the registration of births, deaths, immigrants and emigrants. Moreover, the primary administrative institutions responsible for registration do not transfer data directly to the NIS.

Annual stock data on the Romanian population (delivered as official figures) are calculated by the NIS based on the last census results at the level of local administrative units by using the cohort component model. For these calculations, the NIS uses data from exhaustive surveys on immigrant and emigrant flows, carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). The responsible bodies for data collection are the Ministry for Internal Affairs, the General Inspectorate for Immigration (in the case of immigrants) and the Directorate for Persons' Record and Database Management (in the case of emigrants), respectively. The data collection is accomplished through a computerized interface designed by the MIA.

Whereas vital statistics are relatively accurate, flow statistics on immigration and emigration capture only a very tiny segment of the effective migration processes. This is partly due to the definitions used for the terms immigration and emigration. Immigrants are defined as foreign citizens who come to Romania in agreement with Romanian authorities to establish their residence in the country. Here, the problem is related to the condition that immigrants are foreign citizens. After 1990, Romanian authorities offered Romanian citizenship for ethnic Romanians residing in neighboring countries through a preferential treatment, primarily for Romanians from the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. According to this preferential treatment, ethnic Romanians could obtain Romanian citizenship even without fulfilling residence requirements. Therefore, if an ethnic Romanian from Moldova or Ukraine who formerly obtained Romanian citizenship establishes his/her residence in Romania, he/she will not appear in the migration statistics. According to the procedure of (re)acquiring<sup>1</sup> Romanian citizenship, new Romanian citizens have to register in the population register. In case they have permanent or temporary residence in Romania, they have to register at the local authority where their residence belongs. In case they do not have residence in Romania, they have to register in Bucharest (Sector 1, Public Services for Persons' Record), as Romanian citizens without residence in Romania. The problem is that the MIA does not deliver information to the NIS on new Romanian citizens, and as a consequence, they are not taken into account in the NIS annual data on population stock.

Emigrants are defined as Romanian citizens who establish their residence abroad in agreement with Romanian authorities. The major problem encountered here is that (similarly to other sending countries) Romanian authorities have little leverage to induce the (de)registration of emigrants. If we compare the Romanian emigration statistics with the immigration statistics of the main receiving countries, the results will be shocking. According to the statistics of the World Bank, in 2010, 2.8 million Romanian citizens resided abroad, but the number of emigrants registered by the Romanian authorities between 2001 and 2011 was only about 128,000 persons. In light of the flow statistics of the main receiving countries, one can realize that the Romanian emigration statistics capture less than 10 percent of the legal outflows from Romania.

These failures have further severe consequences concerning the annual calculations of population stock in the inter-census periods. NIS calculations systematically overestimate the country's stable

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1 According to the Romanian legislation, Romanians from the territories of interwar Greater Romania can reacquire the Romanian citizenship, which they lost following the annexation and subsequent incorporation of certain territories by neighboring states.

population and the extent of this overestimation has considerably increased over time (due to the intensification of out-migration of Romanians). Reported numbers show that the NIS overestimated the population by 1.7 percent in 1992, by 2.8 percent in 2002, and by 12.7 percent in 2011. Taking into account the last, rather severe overestimation, one can conclude that none of the human development and demographic indicators delivered by the NIS can be considered reliable.

Our most important recommendation towards the Romanian stakeholders is that an integrated system of registration should be elaborated. A precondition of this is to adopt coherent and operative definitions, and to register the population according to different categories (new citizens with and without residence in Romania, usual resident foreign and Romanian nationals, Romanian nationals without legal domicile, etc.). In order to achieve a well-functioning integrated system, a further important issue that should be tackled is the re-conceptualization and remodeling of the cooperation between different institutions engaged in population registration. As a final remark, we consider that for a better registration of effective outflows, Romanian authorities need international assistance and local scientific inputs.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the main features of the Romanian data production system on migration and population stock, covering both administrative and statistical data sources. The problem is related primarily to the changes occurred in the character of international migration in the last decades. During the period of state-socialism, the territorial mobility of Romanian citizens was controlled and drastically restrained by the state authorities. This was true not only for emigration, but for tourism as well. According to the legal norms of that period, passports were held by the police and an ordinary Romanian citizen had the right to get his/her passport and to cross the border only once each second year. In practice, the restraints were even more severe, as from the early 1980s the applications were more and more frequently rejected. In spite of the rigid control of territorial mobility (especially international migration), the number of emigrants was relatively high. Between 1960 and 1989, the number of emigrants registered by the Romanian authorities exceeded 700,000. This was due to the fact that the purpose of the restrictive exit policy was not to keep the emigration rate as low as possible, but to control the outflows and to decide selectively who could and who could not migrate (Horváth 2004: 63). It was a prevalent practice throughout Eastern Europe to encourage or force the emigration of the regime's political opponents. In Romania, however, the main selection criterion was the ethnic background of the migrant.

After the change of the political regime, in 1990, the restrictive exit policy ended. Thus, Romanian state authorities have no longer restricted the free movement of citizens. But the change of the migration regime/system had an (unexpected) byproduct: the Romanian state was not able to administer or even to register the process of international migration. This is why neither the stock, nor the flow data capture the international migration in Romania. It may sound harsh, but – because of the very intensive process of international migration – the system of population registration in Romania has practically collapsed.<sup>2</sup>

Two points have to be raised here. On the one hand, the problem caused by unregistered migration is not a specific Romanian phenomenon. Hence, our Romanian case study might be instructive for other sending countries too. It is a general phenomenon that the authorities of sending countries have little leverage to induce the registration of emigration. In fact, all sending countries (among the countries participating in the SEEMIG project see specifically Bulgaria and Serbia) have to face this problem, even if not quite to the same extent as Romania. On the other hand, unregistered migration is not a new phenomenon in our country. The 1992 and 2002 censuses already highlighted a significant unregistered population loss compared to the calculations of the National Institute of Statistics (NIS, *Institutul Național de Statistică*). However, the present situation of the Romanian statistical data production system (because of the huge amount of unregistered migrants) is qualitatively different from the situation in other countries or from the previous periods of Romania's migration history. In fact, currently we do not have even an approximate number regarding the size of the country's population. The figures of the main data sources (the population register, the official calculations made by the NIS and the preliminary results of the 2011 census) are entirely different. This situation affects the whole Romanian data production system. Since the final results of the 2011 census have not been published yet, we do not have accurate figures regarding the age structure of the Romanian population. Moreover, given the uncertainties regarding the reference population, all demographic and human development indicators are affected and distorted, from total fertility rate to infant mortality, for instance.

The above mentioned problems of statistical data production have, of course, severe policy and other politically relevant consequences. The lack of adequate data hinders the elaboration of policies regarding sectorial or regional development.

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2 In 2006, the author of this study, in collaboration with the Demographic Research Institute at the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, has conducted a survey in Transylvania (14 counties in Romania). The sample was based on the population register (more exactly, on publicly available electoral rolls). One of the shocking results of this survey was that 18% of 11,000 randomly selected respondents were no longer residing at their official permanent addresses. In fact, approximately two thirds of the absentees resided permanently abroad (see Kiss – Kapitány 2009).

## 2. DATA SOURCES AND RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES

### 2.1. Administrative (register-based) data sources

#### 2.1.1. The population register

The first and (administratively) most important data source on population stock is the population register (in Romanian: *evidența persoanelor*). This is a centralized and computerized database held by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) – Directorate for Persons' Record and Database Management (*Ministerul Afacerilor Interne – Direcția pentru Evidența Persoanelor și Administrarea Bazelor de Date*).<sup>3</sup> The Directorate of Persons' Record and Database Management functions according to Government Ordinance no. 84/2001 and Government Emergency Ordinance no. 97/2005. The actual methodological norms (currently in force) concerning its functioning were set down by the Government Decision no. 1375/2006. This directorate is coordinated by the MIA but has its own distinct legal personality.

In Romania, the population register was established in 1949, when (virtually) all Romanian citizens were registered and supplied with identity cards (*buletin de identitate*). Legal procedures for setting up a computerized system, the National Register of Persons' Record (*Registrului Național de Evidență a Persoanelor*), started in 1990, but actually the registration remained paper-based and was performed manually until 2006 (Tompea-Năstăuță 2009: 220). The system created after 2006 contains and stores the personal data of Romanian citizens in a single database. The population register stores the following personal data: the personal identification number (*cod numeric personal* – CNP), the date and place of birth, the parents' names and their dates of birth, marital status, permanent address, educational attainment, occupation, military status.

Another important change in the management of the population register occurred in 2005, when the duty of issuing identity cards and other official documents, as well as the registration of changes regarding one's status, were transferred to the local authorities (the mayor's office in case of towns and cities and the county councils for communes). Presently, the so-called Public Services for Persons' Record (*Servicii Publice Comunitare de Evidență a Persoanelor*) are functioning under the dual coordination of the local authorities and the MIA. The Public Services for Persons' Record collect data which are integrated into a common database held by the MIA. The Directorate for Persons' Record and Database Management has the duty to coordinate and check the activity of all Public Services for Persons' Record (which are otherwise subordinated to local authorities, among others financially). The integrated database is accessible only on the level of the MIA.

All Romanian citizens are registered in the population register, irrespectively of their country of residence (whether or not they reside in Romania). Romanian citizens with legal residence in Romania are registered at their official permanent addresses (and not at their usual residence, if this differs from the permanent address). Romanian citizens who reside abroad and do not have a permanent address in Romania are registered at their last permanent address.

It is very important to note that there is a difference in definition between:

- *the legal population of Romania* – the totality of citizens, whether or not they reside in Romania, and
- *the usual population of Romania* – which, in accordance with United Nations' recommendations, refers to the totality of persons residing usually in Romania, irrespectively of their citizenship).

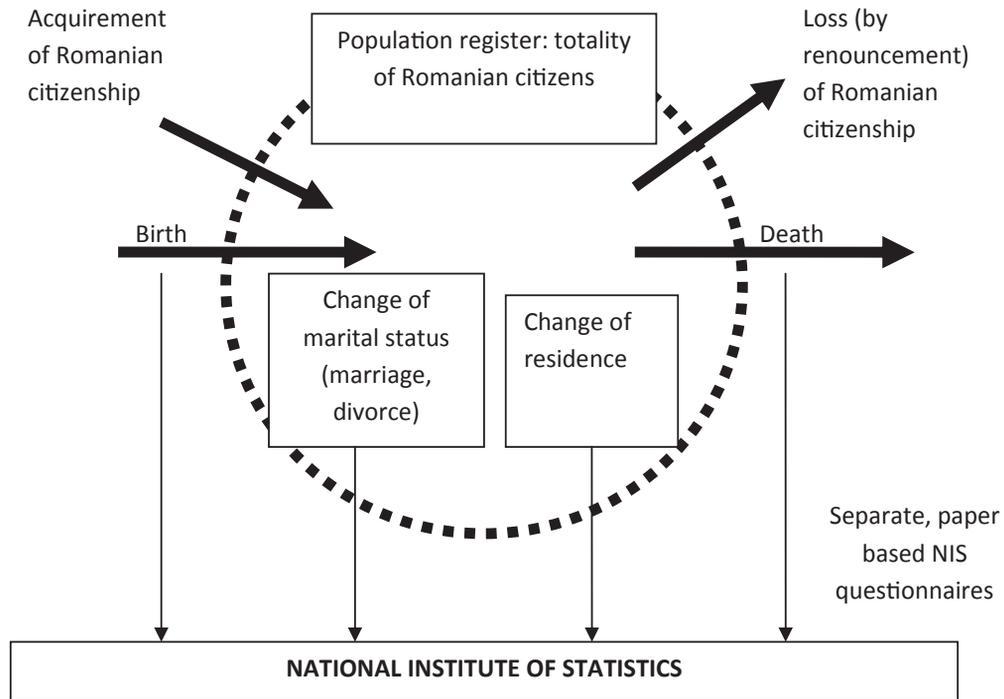
Based on the population register, one can estimate the emigrant stock of Romanian citizens. However, this estimation will contain only the number of those who emigrated in agreement with the Romanian authorities, in other words, those who deregistered when leaving the country.

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3 The website of this institute: <http://depabd.mai.gov.ro/>.

The MIA does not transfer data regarding the population stock to the NIS. Although the calculations on population stock (stable population) prepared by the NIS are performed independently from the population register, statistics on demographic events (vital statistics and migration statistics) are closely related to the functioning of the offices handling the population register.

1. Demographic events surveyed by the National Institute of Statistics through paper-based questionnaires



The registration of newborns, deaths, marriages and divorces is performed by the NIS separately from the activity of the relevant organs functioning under the MIA, through paper-based questionnaires. Data collection on change of residence and emigration is based on questionnaires designed by the NIS and the MIA and processed through a computerized interface (a different one from the population register). The Directorate for Persons' Record and Database Management does not transfer data directly from the population register to the NIS. The NIS has its own system of data collection and the statisticians are not involved in the design of data collection performed by the Directorate of Persons' Record and Database Management.

The population register is defined as the totality of Romanian citizens. As a consequence, one can enter the register by birth or by the acquisition of Romanian citizenship and one can be deregistered by death or by the loss (in practice, the renouncement) of Romanian citizenship. However, Romania allows dual (or multiple) citizenship, consequently, emigration (even if in agreement with Romanian authorities) does not imply deregistration. Furthermore, when a new Romanian citizen is introduced into the population register, this is not reported to the NIS.

The population register supplies first of all personal data required by the authorities (police etc.). According to our previous experiences (at the Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities), the population register is virtually inaccessible for scientific purposes. The sole publicly available and statistically useable form of the population register is the *electoral roll*. This consists of all adult Romanian citizens who have the right to vote. This means that voter turnout is calculated with reference to the legal (and not to the usual resident or stable) population.<sup>4</sup>

According to the electoral statistics, the number of persons entitled to vote at the parliamentary elections after 1989 was the following:

4 See the communiqué of the NIS on the request of the Constitutional Court, <http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/diferente%20INS%20vs%20DEPABD%20.pdf>.

## 2. Number of persons entitled to vote according to electoral rolls (and to population registers)

Parliamentary election	Official number of voters
1990	17,200,720
1992	16,380,663
1996	17,218,654
2000	17,699,727
2004	18,449,676
2008	18,464,274
2012	18,423,066

Source: Central Electoral Bureau (Biroul Electoral Central)

### 2.1.2. The registers of foreigners

Foreign citizens residing in Romania are registered separately from Romanian citizens. These registers are maintained by another department of the MIA, The General Inspectorate for Immigration (GII, *Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrări*).<sup>5</sup> The GII was set up through the reorganization of the Romanian Office for Immigration in 2007 and its main task is to implement Romania's policies in the fields of migration, asylum, and aliens' integration. The GII is divided into functional departments. At the territorial level it has its regional centers for accommodation and procedures for asylum seekers, accommodation centers for aliens under public custody, with their respective county departments. The GII functions based on Law no. 118/2012 and Government Emergency Ordinance no. 18/2012.

#### 2.1.2.1. The register of short-stay visa applicants

The first register of foreign citizens is that of short-stay visa holders. Short term visa is issued only for nationals of some non-EU and non-European Economic Area (EEA) countries. EU and EEA citizens staying for a short period of time (less than 3 months) in Romania are no longer registered by Romanian authorities. Short-stay visa allows the citizens of third countries to enter Romania and to stay for a duration that does not exceed 90 days within 6 months, counted from the day of the first entry. Short-stay visa holders are not considered immigrants by Romanian authorities. The number of visa applicants is not reported to the NIS, but it is published in the MIA's own publication.<sup>6</sup> The main aim of the data collection, however, is not statistical, but administrative: the Romanian authorities want to control the cross-border movement of third-country citizens. The short-stay visa, which entitles its holder to stay in Romania for a limited period of time, cannot be extended. If the holder wishes to stay for a longer period of time in Romania, he/she must obtain a long-stay visa and afterwards a residence permit.

#### 2.1.2.2. The registers of EU/EEA/Swiss Confederation citizens and of third-country nationals residing in Romania

Foreign citizens have to register as long term residents in Romania if they stay in the country for more than 3 months. If they meet this obligation, they will enter the register of foreigners/immigrants. Since the 29<sup>th</sup> of December, 2006, citizens of EU, EEA countries and the Swiss Confederation are registered separately from third-country citizens. In the case of both registers, the main aim of data collection regarding foreigners is administrative: the Romanian state is concerned to register each person who enters its territory for a long period of time. The MIA does not transfer data directly from these registers to the NIS, but it has its own annual publication on the stock and flow of immigrants.<sup>7</sup> A difference is made between foreigners as long term residents and foreigners as permanent residents. EU/

5 The website of the Inspectorate: <http://ori.mai.gov.ro>.

6 *Statistical Bulletin on Immigration and Asylum (Buletin statistic în domeniul imigrației și azilului)*. See the issue for the first semester from 2012 at: <http://ori.mai.gov.ro/api/media/userfiles/analiza%20statistica%20sem%20I.pdf>

7 See the footnote above.



EEA/Swiss Confederation citizens can apply for permanent resident status after 5 years, whereas third-country nationals after 10 years of continuous residence in Romania.

The register contains less information regarding EU, EEA and Swiss citizens, as compared to third-country nationals. In the first case the following data are registered:

- name (first name and last name)
- parents' names
- place and date of birth
- state of origin (citizenship)
- sex
- marital status
- address in Romania, and
- identification information regarding the passport or ID card.

In the case of third-country citizens the following information is registered additionally:

- educational attainment
- profession
- occupation<sup>8</sup>
- data regarding family members residing in Romania (date and place of birth, kinship relation, occupation and workplace, residence)
- data regarding first grade relatives residing abroad (with the same items)

To sum up, the registers contain data of foreign citizens who reside for more than three months in Romania. As mentioned already, EU/EEA/Swiss citizens are registered separately from third-country citizens, and likewise, a differentiation is made between long term and permanent residents. Foreigners whose residence permit expires are automatically deregistered. Asylum seekers enter into the register of foreigners if their application was accepted. Foreigners under public custody do not enter into the register. Based on these registers, the Ministry of Internal Affairs performs its own estimations on the flow and stock of immigrants.

#### ***2.1.2.3. The register of asylum seekers and persons who were granted protection in Romania***

Within the General Inspectorate for Immigration there is a special department responsible for issues of asylum and the integration of aliens into the Romanian society. The Directorate for Asylum and Integration (DAI,  *Direcția Azil și Integrare*) keeps a register of asylum seekers and persons who were granted a form of protection in Romania. The aim of the data collection is twofold, of administrative and humanitarian nature: to identify the asylum seekers and to solve their asylum application. The procedure of solving asylum applications (including the registration of applicants) is regulated, on the one hand, by the Dublin procedure (EU level), and on the other hand, through Law no. 122/2006 on asylum in Romania.

After the registration of their application, asylum seekers have to complete a questionnaire. This questionnaire was designed by the MIA (without consulting the NIS). The questionnaire collects information about the applicant's personal data (name, date of birth, place of birth, name of his/her parents, country of origin, educational attainment, occupation, marital status), data regarding the family of the applicant, the route travelled from the country of origin to Romania, data regarding previous asylum applications in EU member states or non EU countries, data regarding identity documents owned by the applicant. The questionnaire is filled out by the applicant in the presence of a DAI deputy and a translator. The questionnaire contributes with information for the evaluation of the asylum application. DAI does not transfer data on asylum applicants to NIS or other institutions. After the evaluation of the application, the resolution is registered: application refused or accepted (that is, a form of protection is granted). In Romania, there are three forms of alien's protection: (1) refugee status, (2) subsidiary protection, (3) temporary protection.

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8 Occupation refers to the usual work or business through which someone makes a living. Profession refers to a vocation that requires formal education and training in a certain field of expertise. Not all occupations qualify for a profession, and one's occupation can differ from his/her profession.

### 2.1.3. The register of applications for reacquiring the Romanian citizenship

Romania offers citizenship through preferential treatment for ethnic Romanians living in the territories which were part of the interwar Greater Romania.<sup>9</sup> The applications for the reacquisition of Romanian citizenship are treated separately from other citizenship applications. The National Agency for Citizenship (NAC, *Agenția Națională pentru Cetățenie*) is responsible for the registration and solution of citizenship applications. Regarding the reacquisition of Romanian citizenship, the following amendments are of key importance (see Panaite coord. 2012: 5):

- In 1991, the Law on Romanian Citizenship was adopted, which stipulated the right of former citizens and their descendants living in the territories annexed by the Soviet Union (and Bulgaria) to reacquire Romanian citizenship, without renouncing their foreign citizenship.
- Law no. 192/1999 abolished repatriation as a way of reacquiring Romanian citizenship and transformed the requirement into a simplified/preferential procedure of naturalization; yet the number of conditions imposed for naturalization has been increased. The main criteria are continuous residence for 7 years and the knowledge of the Romanian language.
- In 2007, the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 87/2007 reorganized the Commission for Citizenship into a single legal personality under the coordination of the Ministry of Justice.
- In 2010, the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 5/2010 established the NAC, which currently maintains the register of applications for the reacquisition of Romanian citizenship. The same GEO no. 5/2010 stipulates the procedure for the reacquisition of citizenship, and enlists the required documents. It also regulates the format of the application form, which has to be filled out by the applicants. This application form (and the register of applications) contains the following information:

- the name, birthplace and date of birth of the applicant
- the permanent residence of the applicant
- educational attainment, occupation and workplace
- (if relevant) the names of the minors, for whom the applicant would like to reacquire Romanian citizenship.

It is important to mention that a single file may contain the application of more than one person, so one solved file can mean more than one new Romanian citizen. The NAC does not publish or transfer data on the number of applications or new citizens.

Another institution involved in the procedure of reacquiring Romanian citizenship is the Public Services for Persons' Record of Bucharest, District 1 ( *Direcția Generală de Evidență a Persoanelor a Municipiului București, Sector 1*), and the Public Services for Persons' Record at the level of the counties. These institutions are responsible for issuing Romanian ID cards for new citizens. New citizens without a residence in Romania have to contact the above mentioned Public Service from Bucharest, District 1. Simultaneously with the issuing of their identity card, new citizens are integrated into the already discussed population register. Theoretically, the MIA has data on the stock of citizens who never had a residence in Romania. However, data have not been published yet and are not transferred to the NIS.

## 2.2. Statistical data sources, sample surveys

### 2.2.1. Exhaustive survey on immigration and emigration flow

Parallel with the registration of immigrants and deregistration of emigrants, an exhaustive survey on immigration and emigration flow is carried out. Through this survey, data are collected for statistical purposes. (1) Official figures on immigration and emigration delivered by the NIS are based on this survey. (2) The NIS uses the figures on immigration and emigration flow as input variables when calculating the annual stock of usual resident population. The annual data on population stock will be discussed in the next subchapter.

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9 See Iordachi (2012)



The exhaustive character of the survey means that the questionnaire is filled out by each immigrant and emigrant under consideration. The data collection is designed according to EC Regulation no. 862/2007 of the EP and EC. The national level legal framework consists of Government Emergency Ordinance no. 30/2006, Government Emergency Ordinance no. 102/2002 and Law no. 248/1996.

The institution responsible for data collection is the MIA, the GII (in the case of immigrants) and the Directorate for Persons' Record and Database Management (in the case of emigrants), respectively. Data collection is carried out through a computerized interface designed by the MIA. This is not similar to the exhaustive surveys on newborns, deaths, divorces and marriages, where paper-based questionnaires are used.

The questionnaires for immigrants and emigrants were designed by the NIS. Data are transmitted by the MIA to the NIS twice a year. The NIS questionnaires contain a relatively high number of questions. The NIS collects information on:

- country of destination (or origin)
- nationality (ethnic background of the migrant)
- educational attainment and occupation
- marital status
- (former) permanent address/locality of departure

Data are publicly available (though not free) through the Tempo-online database of the NIS for the 1990-2011 period as annual data on immigration and emigration flow. Frequencies for the country of destination, nationality, age groups, county and locality of departure are downloadable both for immigrants and emigrants. Data are transmitted to Eurostat too.

*Emigrants* are defined as Romanian citizens who leave the country in agreement with Romanian authorities, in order to settle abroad. The main problem (in what concerns reliability) is with the second part of this definition. The majority of effective out-migrants have little interest to declare the act of settling abroad to the Romanian local authorities. In the present, contrarily to the Communist era, the Romanian state (and the sending countries in general) has no effective control over the process of migration and, as a consequence, possesses no reliable statistics on out-migration. This is well illustrated by a comparison of Romanian emigration statistics with the immigration statistics of the main receiving countries of Romanian migration (see Annex 1.) As we can see, in our reference period, the Romanian emigration statistics captured less than 10 percent of the legal outflows from Romania, under circumstances when according to the World Bank the stock of emigrants of Romanian origin (in 2010) was around 2.8 million (Alexe *et alii* 2012).

Further (reliability) problems are generated by the definition of the term *immigrants*. *Immigrants* are defined as foreign citizens who come to Romania in agreement with Romanian authorities to establish their residence in the country. The complications here are due to the specification that immigrants are foreign citizens. As already mentioned, after 1990, Romanian authorities introduced a preferential procedure for the reacquisition of Romanian citizenship for ethnic Romanians residing in the neighboring countries, primarily for Romanians from the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. This enabled ethnic Romanians from these countries to obtain Romanian citizenship even without residing in Romania. If an ethnic Romanian from Moldova or Ukraine, who formerly obtained Romanian citizenship establishes his/her residence in Romania, he/she will not appear in migration statistics. Consequently, it seems founded to claim that the majority of effective in-migrants does not appear in NIS statistics as immigrants.

### 2.2.2. NIS data on population stock

As already mentioned, the number of persons included in the population register does not correspond at all with the (official) numbers concerning Romania's population delivered by the NIS. The population register contains information about the so called *legal population* of the country, while the NIS figures refer to the country's *usual population*.

Annual stock data on Romania's population (delivered as official figures) are calculated by the NIS based on the results of the latest census at the level of local administrative units (LAU 2 – communes, towns), according to the next formula:

$$SP_{-}(t) = SP_{-}(t-1) + n - d + e - i,$$

where  $SP_{-}(t)$  is the stable population of Romania on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January of the given inter-census year;  $SP_{-}(t-1)$  is the stable population on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January of the preceding year;  $n$  is the number of live-born children;  $d$  is the number of deaths,  $e$  is the number of emigrants;  $i$  is the number of immigrants.

As already mentioned, the registration of demographic events (livebirths, deaths, immigrants, emigrants) is closely related to administrative procedures, yet the NIS employs its separate, paper-based questionnaires to gather data on these.

The *stable* population of Romania differs from the *legal* population (contained in the population register): the former includes the foreigners residing in Romania, but excludes Romanian citizens residing abroad, while the latter is defined as the totality of Romanian citizens, regardless of their residence. Due to these conceptual differences, there are constantly discrepancies between the figures concerning the size of the adult population appearing in the two sources under inquiry.

**3. The number of persons entitled to vote according to the electoral rolls (based on the population register) at the time of parliamentary elections and the adult population of Romania according to NIS calculations**

Parliamentary election	Official number of voters	Adult population according to NIS	Difference
1990	17,200,720	16,576,328	624,392
1992	16,380,663	16,415,313	-34,650
1996	17,218,654	16,933,214	285,440
2000	17,699,727	17,347,395	352,332
2004	18,449,676	17,088,071	1,361,605
2008	18,464,274	17,449,417	1,014,857
2012	18,423,066	17,475,017	948,049

Source: Central Electoral Bureau; NIS

The difference in definitions creates further inconsistencies at the level of the administrative units. The *stable* population of a certain local administrative unit (1) excludes those whose permanent residence is in the concerned locality, but temporarily reside in another locality; (2) includes those whose permanent residence is in another locality, but temporarily reside in the concerned locality. We would like to remind the reader that the logic behind the definition of the *legal* population is exactly the opposite: (Romanian) citizens are recorded in the population register according to their official *permanent* residence.

These LAU2 level calculations relying on the cohort component method provide the reference population for most of the demographic and human development indices published by the NIS. It is important to note that the NIS does not perform separate calculations on Romanian nationals and foreigners; consequently, separate human development or demographic indices on foreign nationals do not exist.

Another problem highly relevant from the point of view of data reliability is that NIS uses administrative sources for emigration and immigration (the above mentioned exhaustive survey carried out in collaboration with the MIA). These sources cover only a very tiny segment of the entire phenomenon of migration, especially in the case of emigration. This means that both the population register and the NIS highly overestimate the stable population of the country. This problem will be discussed in detail in the subchapter regarding census data.

### 2.2.3. Household Labour Force Surveys

The Household Labour Force Survey (*Ancheta Forței de Muncă în Gospodărie – AMIGO*) plays a central role in the Romanian statistical data production system. Its main objective is to measure the shares of the active (employed and unemployed) and the inactive population, respectively.<sup>10</sup> As in other Euro-

<sup>10</sup> LFS methodological reports are available for the 2007-2011 surveys on the website of the National Institute of Statistics. The present description is based primarily on these reports. See: <http://www.insse.ro/cms/ro/content/rapoarte-de-calitate-anchete-statistice>



pean states too, the LFS is coordinated and carried out by the National Institute of Statistics. In the organization of the fieldwork, county level Statistical Institutes play a key role. Since in Romania there are no micro-censuses, the LFS is the most important data source regarding the labor force for inter-census periods.

The first LFS (as pilot) was carried out in 1992, then one annual LFS took place in 1994, and another in 1995. Since 1996, the LFS is carried out in four waves each year, so the survey represents a continuous research project.

The survey covers the members of selected households with permanent domicile in Romania, irrespectively of their citizenship. Thus, foreign nationals with permanent residence in Romania may enter the sample too. Persons who are living temporarily (for less than 6 month) elsewhere (in Romania or abroad) are considered members of the household too, as well as persons who moved elsewhere for a period longer than 6 months, but maintain close relationships with the household (children studying elsewhere, students, household members working elsewhere, convicts and prisoners, military personnel etc.).

The survey is carried out on a stratified random sample of dwellings, and is representative on the national level. Only private households are included into the sample, so foreigners who live in common households (public custody etc.) are left out. The sample is representative both for the households and for the population.

The theoretical size of the sample is 112,300 dwellings per year. A dwelling may contain one or more households. All households and persons older than 15 years from the selected dwellings are included into the LFS.

The data are collected through identical questionnaires in all four waves of the survey. The questionnaire is divided into two parts: one is dedicated to the dwelling and the households, while the other for the persons. The first part collects information regarding the dwelling (number of household etc.). There is a household table for each household into which the main demographic and social indicators of the household members are recorded.

The questionnaire concerning the persons is addressed to household members aged over 15 years. This part contains:

- general questions for all respondents
- questions addressed to persons who work: professional status, place of work, occupation, secondary activity, hours worked, willingness to change the job
- questions addressed to persons who do not work (unemployed and inactive) regarding their professional status, activity, occupation and place of work of their last job, willingness for a job, reasons for not seeking a job etc.;
- questions addressed to persons who are seeking a job (unemployed or employed who want to change their job), methods used for seeking a job, availability for work etc.

The main indicators computed based on the LFS are the following: the total employment and unemployment rate, the employment and unemployment rate by main demographic indicators (sex, age groups) and territorial units, youth unemployment, long term unemployment etc.

Just like the data collection, the publication of the results is performed on a quarterly basis. Data are usually collected in January, April, July and October. The publication of the results is performed six month after the fieldwork. Data are available through the Tempo-online database at national level and for certain indicators at NUTS 2 level. At NUTS 3 level (counties), however, there are no available data.

As it was already mentioned, foreigners with permanent residence in Romania are included in the survey too. For each household member there are questions (in the household table) regarding (1) the country of origin; (2) citizenship; (3) nationality. Nationality here means ethnic background and the response options consist of the largest ethnic groups from Romania (Romanian, Hungarian, Roma, German, other). In spite of the existence of questions regarding the immigrant status, data were not published separately for Romanian citizens and foreign nationals, or by country of origin. Micro-data are available upon request at the NIS or at Eurostat. The problem is that in a European comparison the proportion of immigrants in Romania is extremely low (0.1 percent), so only several hundred immigrants are included in one LFS database. This sample size is not large enough for an in-depth analysis of the foreigners' (or different foreigner groups') labor force status.

There is another possibility for migration-related secondary analyses. In the personal questionnaire of the LFS there is a question regarding the location of the unit where the concerned person works. One

of the response options is that the workplace is situated abroad. In this case, the country of the workplace is registered. Due to the fact that temporarily absent household members are included into the survey, LFS could be a valuable data source regarding short term labor force emigration. However, data on this issue have not been published yet.

In 2008 (following the initiative of Eurostat), an ad-hoc module was introduced into the LFS in all European countries. The ad-hoc module aimed to investigate the labor-force situation of the immigrants and their immediate descendants. The main aim of the 2008 ad-hoc module was to provide better identification of immigrants and their immediate descendants, and to obtain a dataset which allows for more flexibility in analysis and provides comparable data on the migrants' labor-market situation.<sup>11</sup>

However, in some participant countries not all ad-hoc module questions were included into the LFS questionnaire. In countries where the number of immigrants was relatively low (among them Romania too), a so-called "light module" was introduced. This contains only four additional questions: the year of citizenship acquisition, the country of birth of the father; the country of birth of the mother and the total number of years of residence in the host country. However, because of the low proportion of immigrants, it is problematic to analyze the labor force status of immigrants even along these variables.

As Romania is first of all an emigration country, for the purposes of analyzing Romanian migration not only the Romanian LFS can be interesting, but the LFS performed in the main receiving countries too. For instance, in Italy or in Spain a considerable part of the work-force is constituted by Romanians. These surveys are of special interest because the Romanian LFS do not contain any specific questions regarding migration (e.g. Have you ever worked abroad? Are you planning to work abroad?).

#### **2.2.4. "Community censuses"**

In Romania, there is a particular but relatively widely used form of empirical data collection, the so-called "community census". Community censuses are surveys carried out at the level of the local authorities. The first community census on (temporal)<sup>12</sup> emigrants was carried out precisely in the first year of our reference period (2001). The project was financed by the International Organization for Migration and coordinated by Dumitru Sandu. Based on the results of this survey, Sandu (2002; 2005) elaborated an interpretation of the migration process of the 1990s, which proved to be one of the most influential models on Romanian migration up to these days.

The questionnaires were transmitted by mail to the local (communal) police offices, as the researchers cooperated with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Then the questionnaires were forwarded to the local administrative units, which numbered 2,686 at the time of the survey. In Romania, the lowest level of territorial administrative units is represented by the communes (and towns). Usually (but not necessarily) a commune is composed by more villages. The number of villages was 12,700 at the time. The questionnaire referred to these 12,700 villages and, in addition, to 152 towns with less than 20,000 inhabitants. This implies that although the questionnaires were posted to the communes, the settlements were registered separately. Due to the collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the non-response rate was extremely low. Altogether, interpretable questionnaires have been returned from 2,661 communes (12,357 villages) and 148 towns, thus the investigation can be regarded as exhaustive (for settlements with less than 20,000 inhabitants). One can question, however, the validity of the investigation, at least in what concerns some of its aspects. One of the problems stems from the fact that the questionnaires were filled out by so called "key-informers", who, in a proportion of 60 percent, were employees of the mayor's office, but one can find among them also teachers and other representatives of the local intelligentsia. Therefore, it is hard to evaluate, for instance, how the different social strata were weighted on their "mental social map".<sup>13</sup> In spite of these problems, and taking into consideration the rigorous and well documented character of the survey, the investigation can be considered more informative than a simple personal survey.

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11 In more detail see Ramb (2008).

12 The survey did not define "temporal migration" precisely. In fact, all Romanian citizens working abroad were considered temporal migrants (Sandu 2002; 2005).

13 The respondents could report their own estimations, as local statistics on emigration did not exist.



At the level of the settlement, the questionnaire asked about:

- The number of households that, after 1989, had or have at least one person departed abroad, and within this, the number of households
  - o owning a car,
  - o owning a newly built house,
  - o running a private business.
  
- The number of persons who are currently departed and had left after 1989, whether or not they have their permanent residence abroad, also recording their
  - o sex
  - o age (under 30, 30+)
  - o religion (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Neo-Protestant)
  - o ethnicity (Romanian, Hungarian, German, Roma, others)
  - o country of destination
  - o field of occupation (construction, household services, agriculture, qualified worker, hotels/bars, departed for studies, other)
  
- The number of persons who used to live abroad after 1989, but currently are present in the locality, also recording their
  - o sex
  - o age (under 30, 30+)
  - o religion (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Neo-protestant)
  - o ethnicity (Romanian, Hungarian, German, Roma, others)
  - o Country of destination
  - o Field of occupation (construction, household services, agriculture, qualified worker, hotels/bars, departed for studies, other)

The results of the survey were first published in 2002, at the same time as the 2002 census results. According to the 2002 census, the number of the stable population in Romania was 21.67 million, which meant that the country's population dropped with almost 1.1 million in the 1992-2002 intercensus period. Although demographers had forecasted that the number of the population was going to fall (Ghețău 1996), the extent of the decrease was shocking not only for the Romanian wider public but for the scientific community too. Only slightly more than a quarter of the population loss was caused by negative natural growth, and only one third was foreseen by official NIS calculations. Sandu published his results in this context, and introduced the notion of "circular migration". According to his interpretation, the unregistered and unforeseen population loss should not be considered as being caused by definitive out-migration. In his interpretation, the majority of missing persons was only temporarily abroad and might return to Romania.

Since the community census of migrants coordinated by Dumitru Sandu many similar surveys have been carried out,<sup>14</sup> but none of them displayed the methodological rigor or the scientific impact of the first one.

### 2.2.5. "Living abroad on a temporary basis" (2006)

An important (partially) survey-based research on Romanian out-migration was financed by the Romanian branch of the Soros Foundation. The research project was entitled *Living abroad on a temporary basis. The economic migration of Romanians: 1990-2006*. The research team composed mainly of PhD candidates in sociology at the University of Bucharest was coordinated once again by Dumitru Sandu. The fieldwork for the surveys was carried out in August 2006. Not only the research report, but also the

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14 The *Inclusion 2007* (see Fleck-Rughinis 2008) and *Models of Ethnic Segregation 2008* (see ISPMN 2009) surveys focused primarily on the Roma population, whereas the *Access to Structural Funds of Local Administration* (see Toth-Dărășteanu-Tarnovschi coord. 2009) on the access of local communities to European funds. All these surveys contained questions regarding the number of persons living (temporarily) abroad.

research instruments (questionnaires) and SPSS databases are accessible on the site of the Romanian Open Society Institute.<sup>15</sup>

The research had a complex design. At the first level, a national survey was conducted with 1400 randomly selected respondents. Each respondent had to provide answers about him-/herself but also about his/her household members. This way, the researchers received information about 4791 persons. One of the results was that in total, these 4,791 household members left the country (for working or living abroad) 548 times since 1990. Thus, besides the intentions of migration, the researchers could also analyze the number of departures.

The “departures” were not defined precisely from the perspective of the minimum length of the stay. They were categorized, however, into three major groups: (1) working, (2) cross-border commercial activity, (3) other. The main focus was on work-migration. Regarding this topic, the following questions were asked for each departure:

- the year and month of the departure (and eventual return)
- the country of destination
- occupational status before and after departure
- whether the person was helped by someone to find a job or in any other sense during the departure; the relationship to this person
- the way of finding the job
- the character of the employment (legal or illegal)

Besides questions concerning departures, a relatively long questionnaire was filled out by each respondent. It contained the following sections: (1) satisfaction with living conditions, (2) household table, (3) questions about work-related migration and cross-border commercial activity, (4) internal migration, (5) intentions of migration (migration potential), (5) the ideology of migration, (6) values and lifestyle, (7) values regarding family and childbearing, (8) incomes and expenditures (9) intentions to become an entrepreneur.

Besides the national sample, at the second level, two regional samples were drawn, each having the size of 400 respondents. However, here the research targets were specifically the households with work-related migration experience (at least one household member was working abroad during the investigation period, or had worked abroad since 1990 for at least one month). The households were selected through a snowball sampling method with randomly selected starting points. The two regions were the area of Focșani (the capital of Vrancea county) and the area of Alexandria (the capital of Teleorman county). The micro-region of Focșani was characterized by intensive out-migration towards Italy, whereas the region of Alexandria by less intensive but significant out-migration towards Spain. As a consequence, in this latter region the population had less experience of migration.

The regional surveys were preceded by qualitative fieldwork in two villages from the investigated areas. After the quantitative research, qualitative fieldwork was carried out in the destination countries too. In Rome and in Madrid, respectively, interviews were conducted with migrants originating from the two micro-regions concerned; the subjects were selected through snowball sampling. Contacts of migrants were collected during the quantitative surveys carried out in the two micro-regions. The main aim of the quantitative phase was an in-depth analysis of the strategies and networks of the migrants.

A third region was also included into the project, the Serbian-Romanian border area of Orșova along the Danube, where only qualitative fieldwork was carried out. Here the phenomenon of cross-border migration was studied.

### **2.2.6. Surveying Romanian Migrants in Italy**

In 2011, a survey was carried out among Romanian migrants residing in Italy, as part of the project *Temporary Migration, Integration and the Role of Policies (TEMPO)*, funded by the NORFACE Research Program: *Migration in Europe – Social, Economic, Cultural and Policy Dynamics*. The survey was performed by ISMU, Milano (see Mara 2012).<sup>16</sup>

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15 [http://www.soros.ro/ro/fisier\\_acord\\_articole.php?document=693](http://www.soros.ro/ro/fisier_acord_articole.php?document=693)

16 No Romanian researchers were involved.



The survey was conducted between January and March 2011, on a sample of 1000 individuals. The research focused on migrants who arrived in Italy between 2004–2006, and in the 2007–2010 period, respectively. The sampling was based on quota and snowball methods. The quotas of the interviewers (region, sex and age) were defined based on the statistics of the Italian National Statistics Office about Romanian migrants. Based on these data, 208 interviews were conducted in Milan, 370 in Turin and 418 in Rome. In the second phase, interviewers went to the aggregation centers frequently visited by Romanian migrants, and randomly selected respondents there. In the third phase, a snowball sample was used.

The main aim of the survey was to examine the impact of the free visa regime and of Romania's EU accession on the migration plans of Romanians who arrived to Italy. These macro-political events do not have a direct effect, but influence the migration plans through their implications for employment and the access of Romanians to the Italian welfare system. The changes in these conditions could modify the intentions of migrants regarding the duration of staying in Italy.

The questionnaire contained items regarding the following topics (Mara 2012: 2, 126-131):

- Socio-demographic indicators of the Romanian migrants (age, gender, marital status, number of children, family composition, residence in the host country, areas of origin, potential migration of family members etc.)
- Migration history (how many times did the migrant live in Italy, if he/she lived in a third country, when did he/she arrive to Italy etc.)
- Position on the labor market (previous and current occupation, employment status, occupational switch from the country of origin to the host country, qualification level, satisfaction with the current occupation, level of earnings)
- Remittances (frequency, amount, share of savings or earnings, motives, recipients, means of delivery etc.)
- Access to the Italian welfare system
- Current and previous (at the arrival) migration plans
- Self-assessment concerning the migration experience, potential positive or negative outcomes

The survey is important because it investigates empirically the migration intentions of Romanians residing in Italy. As we could see, previous research considered the migration of Romanians as being temporary or circular, without substantiating these claims by serious empirical evidence. According to the results of the survey presented here, the majority of Romanian migrants in Italy do not have well-defined migration plans. The majority of those who claimed to have well-defined plans expressed a preference for permanent migration (remaining permanently in Italy), whereas short-term migration (that is, returning to Romania) was the less popular option among them. Romania's EU accession proved to considerably modify the migration plans of Romanian migrants. The stable employment situation and access to welfare facilities also encourage longer term and permanent staying.

## 2.3. Census databases

After the change of the political regime, the National Institute of Statistics has conducted three traditional censuses. The reference dates of these are included in the following table:

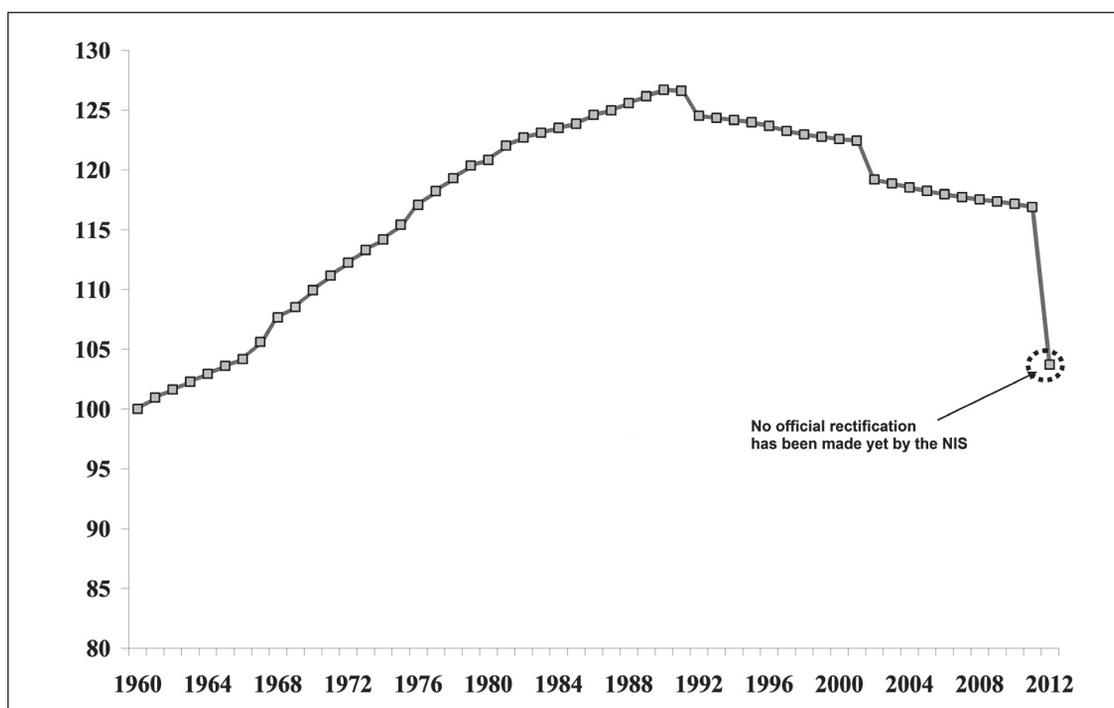
4. The reference date of censuses and the stable population according to them

	1992	2002	2011
Reference date	6 <sup>th</sup> of January, 1992	18 <sup>th</sup> of March, 2002	20 <sup>th</sup> of October, 2011
Stable population	22,810,035	21,680,974	19,042,936 <sup>a</sup>
Previous annual NIS forecast on population stock	23,192,274	22,430,457	21,413,815
Difference	Number	382,239	2,413,815
	%	<b>1.7</b>	<b>12.7</b>

<sup>a</sup> Preliminary result of the 2011 census.

One can immediately notice that the annual data on the population provided by the NIS systematically overestimate the country's population (primarily because of the under-registration of out-migration), and that the extent of this overestimation has considerably increased over time (which is due to the intensification of the out-migration of the Romanians). Comparing the census figures and the NIS annual data on population stock, it results that the NIS overestimated the population by 1.7 percent in 1992, by 2.8 percent in 2002, and by 12.7 percent in 2011. Taking into account the last, severe overestimation, one can conclude that none of the human development and demographic indicators delivered by the NIS can be considered reliable.

5. The evolution of Romania's population (1960=100%)



Furthermore, another important problem is represented by the fact that the final results of the 2011 census have not been published yet. Preliminary results published in February and August 2012 were not based on micro-data (processed household and personal questionnaires) but on cumulative tables (*centralizator*) filled out by census enumerators and forwarded to the NIS.

In each census sector, the following *cumulative tables* were filled out by the enumerators in the 2011 census:

- Cumulative table about the number of registered persons, grouped in the following categories:
  - o Persons present at the reference moment of the census
  - o Persons temporarily absent (for a period of less than 12 months)
  - o Persons temporarily present
  - o Persons away for a long period of time (for a period of at least 12 months)

The data on the above mentioned categories is further detailed according to sex and citizenship (Romanian nationals, foreigners).

- Cumulative table about persons residing abroad (in the case of temporary absentees and persons away for a long period of time).
- Cumulative table about the population recorded in each census sector, according to
  - o ethnicity
  - o mother tongue
  - o religion

The NIS communiqués concerning the 2011 census were based on these cumulative tables. As there are no data concerning age, we do not have census data regarding the age structure of the Romanian



population. As the younger cohorts were affected the most by out-migration, in the case of the most affected 20-30 age group the unregistered deficit most probably exceeds 20 percent. (Ghețău 2012)

Besides the discrepancy between the NIS calculations on the annual population stock and the census results, another problem stems from the fact that the definition of the “Romanian population” has changed over time. The 1992 census defined the Romanian population as *the totality of Romanian citizens with legal residence in Romania, whether or not they live abroad for years*. One can note that this definition corresponds to the definition of the “legal population”, still used by the population register. In the context of EU integration and the international standardization of the Romanian statistical system, the 2002 and 2011 censuses changed the definition. In 2002, in accordance with the United Nations’ recommendations, the Romanian “usual population” was redefined as *the totality of residents in Romania, whether or not they are Romanian nationals*. In other words, Romanian citizens who had left the country (for more than a year) were excluded, while foreign citizens and stateless persons who had been living for more than a year in Romania were registered. The problem is that Romania, under the pressure of European and international institutions, changed the census and statistical definition of its own population, but did not change the logic and the system of population registration, and did not restructure and integrate the different registers. This implies, actually, that there is no coherently used definition of the population behind the Romanian system of registration and data production.

Nevertheless, changing the definition of the “stable population” had positive consequences too. First, due to the broadening of the concept in a way to cover foreign citizens too, the 2002 and 2011 censuses provide relatively rich data on immigrants.

In the case of (1) foreign born and (2) foreign citizens who had arrived to Romania for more than 12 months, the standard census questionnaire was used. All immigrants who arrived to Romania for more than 12 month were registered, including asylum seekers, and persons who were granted a form of protection in Romania. The questions regarding citizenship and place of birth are reproduced in Annex 2.

Standard personal census questionnaires provide information regarding a wide range of demographic and human development related issues:

- Main demographic indicators: sex, date of birth, legal and effective marital status, number of children ever born (in the case of women)
- Data on internal and international migration: situation of the person on the census day, (if temporarily absent) the reason of absence, place of birth, previous residence, date of settling in Romania,
- Ethnic and cultural characteristics: religion, ethnicity, mother tongue
- Educational characteristics: the highest educational institution from which the person graduated, educational institution presently attended
- Economic characteristics: current economic status, hours worked, occupation, workplace, location of workplace, sector in which the person works, form of social protection for unemployed persons,
- Difficulties in performing the current activity: vision and hearing impairments, physical impairments (difficulty to walk and to climb the stairs), memory or concentration difficulties, self-care difficulties, communication difficulties

According to the 2011 census, the usual population of Romania was 19 million. However, the census registered a total of 20.25 million people.

#### 6. Different categories of persons registered by the 2011 census

Resident population according to NIS statistics in January 2012:		
21.35 million		
Number of all persons registered by the 2011 census:		
20.25 million		
Stable population of Romania:	Persons away for a long period of time:	Persons temporarily present:
19 million	0.91 million	0.30 million

Besides the 19 million present and temporarily absent persons counted, 0.91 million persons have been away for a long period of time (at least 1 year). At the reference moment of the census, 728,494 of them were abroad. Furthermore, 386,592 persons of the group of temporary absentees were abroad too. Preliminary data on these categories are available at the level of towns and communes.

### 7. Different categories registered by the 2011 census

	Total	Abroad at the reference moment of the census	
Present	18,384,778		
Temporarily absent	658,989	386,592	58.7%
Away for a long period of time	910,425	728,494	80.0%
Temporarily present	302,286		
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,256,478</b>	<b>1,115,086</b>	<b>5.5%</b>

A special questionnaire was elaborated for persons aged 15 or above living abroad (regardless of whether they have been absent for a long period of time or just temporarily). This type of census questionnaire, - used for the first time in 2011 - was filled out by a present household member, or in their absence (if possible) by neighbors. It is possible that in many cases household members registered the emigrant persons in their household as if they were present. This means that the number of persons away for a long period of time was underestimated by the census, while the size of the usual population was overestimated.

The items in this special questionnaire were the following:

- The country where the person lives
- When did the person leave the locality of enumeration to go abroad?
- Does the person living abroad work there?
- The field the person works in (agriculture, industry, construction, restaurants, hotel, transport, computers/IT, household services, health care, other fields)
- Does the person send money to household members in Romania?
- How often does the person living abroad send money to the household members? (on monthly basis, every 3 months, every 6 months, yearly, occasionally)

Besides this special questionnaire, if the person in question was absent only temporarily, a standard personal questionnaire had to be filled out too. If the person has been away for a long time period, another special questionnaire was required to be filled out (in addition to that administered for all persons living abroad), but not the standard personal questionnaire.

This latter questionnaire (among others) collected data on the:

- educational attainment,
- legal marital status,
- ethnicity, and
- citizenship of the migrant.

Yet another special questionnaire had to be filled out in the case of persons who were present temporarily (for less than 12 months). This questionnaire contained only very few items:

- the permanent residence of the person
- citizenship
- the date of arrival, and
- the reason of arrival.

The last issue to note is that by using census figures, one can calculate the net migration for inter-census periods. According to official migration statistics delivered by the NIS, between 2001 and 2009, the most severe population loss caused by migration occurred in 2004, when a 0.5 per thousand negative net migration was registered. However, in 2007 and 2008, the NIS registered positive figures on net migration. The natural growth of Romania's population in the 2002-2011 inter-census period was -416,146, which amounts to an average of -1.9 per thousand annual growth rate. This means that the 2011 census highlighted a 2.22 million loss caused by net migration (10.3 percent of the 2002 population). According to these calculations, the average annual net migration in the inter-census period was -11.4 per thousand. This figure is certainly much more consistent with the immigration statistics of receiving countries, although probably it still underestimates the outflows. The official data on net migration and the result of the calculations based on census figures are presented in Annex 3.



### 3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In our country report we focused on the main internal sources of data on population stock and international migration. Among the administrative data sources we discussed the population register and the registers of foreigners. Then we presented the calculations provided by the NIS on the annual population stock, and compared them to the census results.

One of the main problems that affect the entire Romanian system of statistical data production is the lack of a consistently used definition for the country's population. During the period of state socialism there was a steadily used definition which was applied by all institutions involved in population registration. In this era, the Romanian population was defined as the totality of Romanian citizens with legal residence/address in Romania. The 1992 census (and previous similar events) still used this definition of the population.

In 2002, the NIS (according to UN recommendations) changed the (census) definition of the Romanian population. The long-term resident foreign citizens were included, whereas Romanian citizens who were staying abroad for a long period of time (at least 1 year) were excluded. As a consequence, after the 2002 census, NIS calculations on the annual population stock refer to the stable population defined in accordance with the United Nations' recommendations.

Although changing the definition had positive effects from the perspective of international comparability, and offered new possibilities of migration-related analysis, it created serious inconsistencies within the Romanian data production system. These were caused by the fact that the logic of the population register was not modified, despite transferring registration to local authorities in 2005 and setting up a computerized system in 2006. The population register contains all Romanian citizens irrespective of whether they reside in Romania or not. Furthermore, the registers of foreign citizens residing in Romania were not integrated into the population register. As a consequence, there is a duality in the definitions applied to the Romanian population. On the one hand, the population register (and the entire Romanian administration except for the NIS) still operates with the concept of *legal population*, which is a definition elaborated during the state socialist period. On the other hand, the NIS operates with the concept of *usual population*, for which the definition was put down by international statistical institutions. This duality represents many times the source of confusions.

Another problem is that the administrative registers and the data collection process of the NIS is not (or in the best case is only partially) integrated. The NIS has its own system of data production, which is independent to a great extent from the primary institutions responsible for registration. This is true not only in the case of population statistics, but also in the case of educational statistics, for instance. Here the NIS and the Ministry of Education have parallel systems of data production and both deliver data on the educational system (which are, of course, are highly inconsistent). We consider the working of these parallel and non-integrated systems ineffective and a waste of resources.

The second problem regarding the data production system is related to the characteristics of international migration after the change of the political regime in 1989. During state socialism, the administrative definition used for the term "migration" was to a great extent in line with the actual processes. Emigration (as it is depicted in the classical demographic models too) in the biography of migrants was a singular event through which the migrant lost his/her status as a member of the sending society and received (or started to take over) membership in the host society.<sup>17</sup> After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the real migration processes no longer fit this model. Migration is no longer a one-time event, but a long process with undetermined outcomes. This new characteristic of migration was described in Romania by the term of *circular migration*. Romanian sociologists and demographers suggested (and often overemphasized) through this concept that out-migrants are absent from the country only temporarily and they will return in time. Recent studies highlighted, however, that the intentions and decisions of migrants can change over time and are seriously affected by the labor market and other institutional contexts of the host society.

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17 See Kovács–Melegh (2000).

Besides the inadequacy of the demographic model of migration, a more serious problem has appeared on administrative level. Post-socialist emigration countries proved unable to administer or to register the out-migration. Romanian emigration statistics (which were relatively reliable during state socialism) now capture only a tiny segment of international migration. According to the World Bank, 2.8 million Romanian citizens settled abroad, mostly in Western Europe, North America and Israel. By a comparison, according to the official NIS statistics on migration, only 121,000 emigrants left the country after 2001. This means that the NIS highly overestimates the annual population stock of Romania. The difference in the case of the group aged 20-35, the group mostly affected by out-migration, can reach even 20 percent. As a consequence, all demographic indicators and calculations based on this reference population are unreliable.

Another particular problem occurred due to the changes in the citizenship acquisition possibilities. From 1991, Romania offers citizenship for ethnic Romanians from neighboring countries in a preferential procedure. According to the new legislation, ethnic Romanians and their descendants who lost Romanian citizenship due to the Soviet (or Bulgarian) annexation of territories that formerly belonged to Romania, could receive Romanian citizenship without residing in Romania. In spite of the fact that many persons applied to benefit from this entitlement, there are no transparent, publicly available statistics regarding ethnic Romanians who received Romanian citizenship.

In the NIS statistics immigrants are defined as foreign nationals who reside in Romania in agreement with Romanian authorities. Consequently, the majority of effective in-migrants (ethnic Romanians from Moldova and Ukraine, and returning migrants, respectively) do not appear in Romanian statistics as immigrants. They (might) appear only in the population register.

To sum up, Romania can produce data in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 862/2007 only partially. On the one hand, an integrated system of registration, where both foreigners and nationals would be included, does not exist. Data published by Eurostat on the usual resident population of receiving countries having foreign (Romanian) citizenship does not correspond with data published by the Romanian Ministry of Internal Affairs. On the other hand, the data on emigration and population stock are highly inaccurate in Romania.

Our recommendations concerning the data production system on migration are the following:

- (1) Redesigning and integrating the population register and the registers of foreigners. It would be useful to have an integrated database not only on the legal population, but on the usual population too.
- (2) The elaboration of a transparent data production system on new Romanian citizens.
- (3) The integration of data concerning new Romanian citizens into the NIS annual data on population stock.



## ANNEXES

### Annex 1. Emigration flow registered in Romania and immigration flow from Romania registered in some of the main receiving countries

#### 1. Emigration to Spain registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Spain (2001-2009)

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

Source: Eurostat, NIS

#### 2. Emigration to Italy registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Italy (2001-2009)

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

Source: Eurostat, NIS

**3. Emigration to Germany registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Germany (2001-2008)**

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

Source: Eurostat, NIS

**4. Emigration to Hungary registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Hungary (2001-2009)**

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

Source: Eurostat, NIS



### Annex 2. 2011 census questions regarding citizenship and place of birth

#### 1. 2011 Romanian census question on citizenship

**22 CITIZENSHIP** (country of citizenship)

22.1 Romania  642

Another citizenship .....

*Question 22.2 applies only to persons who declare they have more than one citizenship.*

22.2 Second citizenship .....

#### 2. 2011 Romanian census question on place of birth

**14 PLACE OF BIRTH** (the mother's residence at the moment of the enumerated person's birth)

900  In the enumeration locality

In another locality of .....

.....County

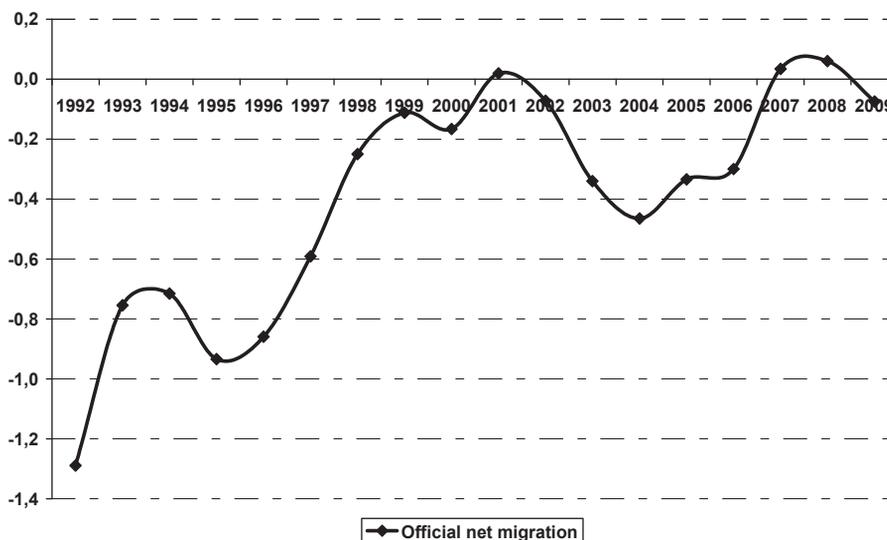
Municipality/City/Commune .....

.....

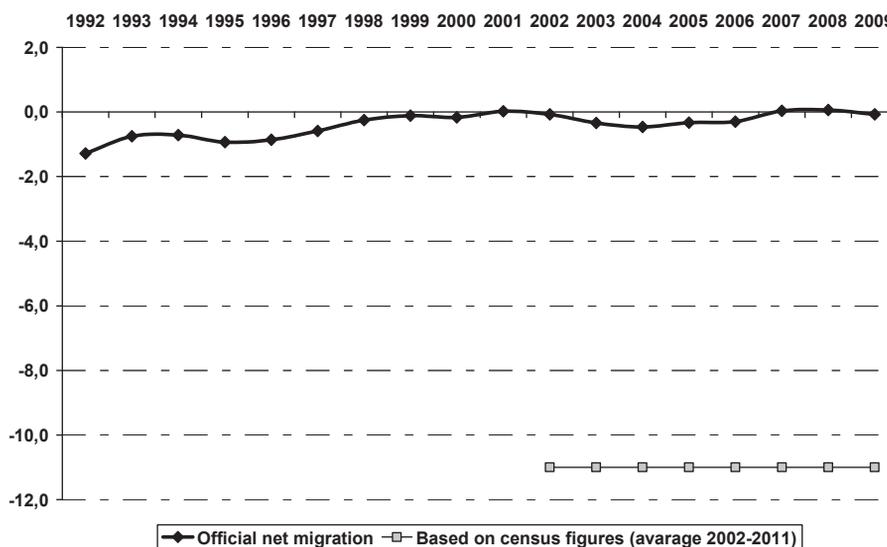
In another country .....

### Annex 3. Net migration according to official data and calculations based on census figures

#### 1. Official net migration in Romania (1992-2009)



#### 2. Official net migration and calculations based on census figures



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#### List of acronyms and abbreviations<sup>+</sup>

DAI – Directorate for Asylum and Integration (*Direcția Azil și Integrare*)

GII – General Inspectorate for Immigration (*Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrări*)

MIA – Ministry of Internal Affairs (*Ministerul Afacerilor Interne*)

NAC – National Agency for Citizenship (*Agentia Națională pentru Cetățenie*)

NIS – National Institute of Statistics (*Institutul Național de Statistică*)

Ministry of Internal Affairs – Directorate for Persons' Record and Database Management (*Ministerul Afacerilor Interne – Direcția pentru Evidența Persoanelor și Administrarea Bazelor de Date*)

National Register of Persons' Record (*Registrului Național de Evidență a Persoanelor*)

Public Services for Persons' Record (*Servicii Publice Comunitare de Evidență a Persoanelor*)

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## **SEEMIG – Managing Migration and its Effects in SEE – Transnational Actions Towards Evidence Based Strategies**

SEEMIG is a strategic project funded under the 3<sup>rd</sup> call of the European Union’s South-East Europe Programme, and carried out between June 2012 and November 2014. The project aims to better understand and address longer term migratory, human capital and demographic processes of South-East Europe, as well as their effects on labour markets, national and regional economies. The main goal of the project is to empower public administrations to develop and implement policies and strategies by using enhanced datasets and empirical evidence. SEEMIG is managed by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (Lead Partner of the project) and the partnership includes research institutes, statistical offices and local governments from eight countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia) and observers from further three countries (Albania, Georgia, Ukraine).

The thematic project activities are carried out in four work packages:

- Conceptual framework for modelling longer term migratory, labour market and human capital processes;
- Enhancing data production systems of migration and human capital in the SEE area;
- Developing scenarios of demographic, migratory and labour market processes;
- Strategies, capacity building and transnational dialogue.

Research results are available on the project’s web page: [www.seemig.eu](http://www.seemig.eu)



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