

THEMATIC ARTICLES – PATTERNS OF ROMANIANS’ MIGRATION

Transnational Labor Mobility of Romanians: Empirical Findings on Recent Migratory Trends

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Abstract. Over the past seventeen years, the level of out-migration from Romania has been constantly examined by national and international researchers. In particular, a growing interest has been noted following the accession of Romania to the European Union in January 2007. Drawing on IPP data collected in January 2007 on a representative sample (N = 1014) of the Romanian adult population, the present paper intends to assess the current level of potential temporary out-migration and compare it to international migratory tendencies registered in the country in the early 1990s. Multivariate analyses will be used to identify the factors more likely to predict short-term labor migration of Romanians.

1. European Migration: Brief Overview

Globalization and migration are two interconnected phenomena that dominate today’s world. The internationalization of capital, improvements in global corporate activities and trade liberalization, significant developments in transport and communication, the free and rapid flow of information all favored an increase in human mobility over the past two decades. A recent report of the Global Commission on International Migration (2005) showed that from 1970 to 2005 the number of international migrants increased rapidly from 82 million people to 200 million people, counting only those who have lived outside their country for more than one year and including 9.2 million refugees. However, international migrants represent today only 3% of the world’s population.

At the beginning of this century there were 56.1 million migrants in Europe (including the European part of the former USSR), compared to approximately 41 million migrants in North America. From 1990 to 2000, immigration accounted for

89% of population growth in Europe; without immigration, Europe's population would have declined by 4.4 million people (GCIM 2005).

The 27-state EU has now a population of more than 490 million. The EU's GDP of nearly \$14 trillion makes it the world's largest economic bloc — and a magnet for job-seekers. Based on recent trends, it appears that most European countries will continue to recruit migrants to fill out the labor and skills shortages that are more likely to raise in the near future (Boswell 2005). Over the past decade, some countries have actively recruited at the higher end of the job market and also at the lower end, hiring, usually on a short-term or seasonal basis, unskilled workers in agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and in services. The majority of these short-term labor migrants came from Eastern Europe and Africa (Stalker 2002, 161).

While since the 1990s, the annual number of asylum and family reunification approved applications remained fairly constant in Europe, the composition of migration flows has changed due to a steady increase in labor migration (OECD 2004). Also, most recent UN figures indicate a significant change in the gender composition of migrant populations. In 2000, the number of migrant women exceeded the number of men not only in Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, and Oceania, but in Europe as well (GCIM 2005).

Another important change that characterizes recent migratory phenomena, especially in Europe is the emergence of a new form of immigration — transnational migration — that no longer can use the nation-state as a reference frame. The recognition that some migrants maintain strong, enduring ties to their homelands even as they are incorporated into countries of resettlement called into question conventional assumptions about the direction and impacts of international migration. Transnational theorizing started in the early 1990s, when the traditional migration theory that treated migrants as “emigrants” or “immigrants” only, was found incomplete. Proponents of a transnational perspective argue that migrants often interact and identify with multiple nation-states and/or communities, and that their practices contribute to the development of transnational communities or new types of social formations within a transnational social space (Lewitt and Nyberg-Sørensen 2004). It is documented the ability of some immigrant communities in Europe to maintain connections and attachments to their country of origin. Developed transportation and communication technologies, a

more permissive legal framework, and an internationalized economy provide new opportunities for immigrants to move from one country to another and to live and work in a multitude of national contexts (Schmidtke 2001). The observed increase in short-term, circular migration is often a household's strategy for supplementing the income of families at home (Boswell 2005; Sandu 2005).

Analysts of human mobility within the European space also noted an increase in irregular migration, which can take the form of illegal entry or overstay, often organized by smugglers or people traffickers. Although data should be cautiously treated, some 500,000 irregular migrants appear to enter EU states annually. The stock of irregular migrants in Italy is estimated at 800,000, in Germany at 500,000, in France at 300,000, and in the UK at 200,000 (Boswell 2005).

The Commission of the European Communities (COM 2005) described the current situation and prospects of EU labor market as a "need" scenario, stressing the labor and skills shortages that affect certain sectors of the economy in many EU countries and cannot be filled with national workers. Also, the Commission's report underlined the importance of considering the effect of demographic trends (falling birth rates and an ageing population) on labor-force composition. Although economic migration and immigration in general are not considered long-term solutions to the problems experienced by most developed European countries, they appear to be available policy tools that have been successfully used in the past.

More recently an OECD (2007, 11) report also acknowledged that the European workforce is not mobile enough and that greater labor mobility is needed to strengthen the Union. Despite the fact that most policy obstacles to labor migration have been removed, cultural differences, language barriers, costs of migration, limited recognition of qualifications, relatively high transaction costs on housing sales, labor shortages, inappropriate job matching, and fluctuating demand for migrant labor in destination countries continue to undercut mobility. Currently, only 4% of the EU workforce has ever lived and worked in another member state (OECD 2007, 11). In particular, due to transitional restrictions on migrants from the new member states, the labor mobility of Romanians and Bulgarians will continue to be negatively affected for

an important period of time. Only in 2014, seven years after accession there will be complete freedom of movement for Bulgarian and Romanian workers.

2. Migratory trends in Romania over the past seventeen years

In the early 1990s, Romanians' inclination toward temporary migration was not different from that expressed by other countries in Central and Eastern Europe (IOM 1993; IOM 1994). Most of the former communist countries committed themselves to live up to the human rights standards of Western democracies and, except for some newly formed countries carved out of the former Yugoslavia and some of the Soviet successor states, they were considered "safe countries." As a consequence, in the majority of cases, asylum seekers from such countries were no longer eligible for refugee status (Kussbach 1992, 655). Also, the number of those who could receive approval to emigrate claiming "family reunification" was decreasing, because most of the persons, who had relatives abroad and wanted to join them, had already done so.

In the early 1990s, beside refugees, the majority of emigrants from Central and Eastern Europe, and the Commonwealth of Independent States were "ethnic migrants," most of them ethnic Germans and Jews. In the mid-1990s, in Romania, for instance (IOM 1994), the ethnic structure of migratory flows indicated a decrease in the number of emigrants belonging to minority ethnic groups, because most of those who wanted to emigrate for ethnic considerations had already left the country. Consequently, temporary migration seemed to be the most likely alternative for the majority of those who intended to emigrate legally.

During the communist regime, only a small number of Romanians were allowed to work abroad, and their short-term work contracts were mainly in African and Arab countries. Unlike Yugoslavs or Poles, Romanians did not have a tradition of temporarily migrating to Western developed countries. They therefore could not count on prior links with the receiving countries, or on social networks based on kinship or common area of origin that might have encouraged emigration and would have facilitated integration in the receiving country.

Only in the early 1990s, Romanian skilled workers, mostly employed in construction trades, signed temporary work contracts in Germany and Israel. In 1993, for instance, the number of placements for Romanian seasonal workers in Germany was 3,853. The number of Romanian occupational trainees in Germany in the same year was 562, and the quota established in June, 1994, between Germany and Romania concerning project workers was 4,360 (Werner 1995). This quota was only one fifth of the quota for Poland and a third of the quota for Hungary, a country whose population equals less than half of Romania's population. Romanians and workers from Thailand accounted for the majority of 72,000 foreign workers who have flooded Israel in the early 1990s to take low-paying jobs that Palestinians used to do before a rise in violence persuaded the Government to restrict the number of Arabs from occupied territories allowed to work in Israel (Andreescu, 1995).

Empirical research conducted in Romania showed that in 1993, 3.4% of the population intended to migrate permanently and 12% expressed a desire to migrate temporarily; in 1994, only a small percentage (0.8%) of the total population intended to resettle abroad and approximately 8.6% of the population expressed a willingness to migrate temporarily for work (Andreescu 1995). In the early 1990s, Romanians' willingness to migrate to another country was mainly motivated by economic pressures (IOM 1993).

Despite a much higher mobility of people from CEE countries in the early years of the present decade, the legal immigrants from the region represented only a small proportion of foreign-born residents in Western European countries. In 2000, citizens from eight countries that accessed EU in 2004 represented in most of EU15 countries less than 5% of the immigrant stock (Okolski 2007, 4). Based on 1999-2003 census data, it can be observed that Romanians' share of the foreign-born stock was no higher than 4% in any of the EU15 countries and was equally low in all CEE countries that recorded Romanian residents, except Hungary. The proportion of Romanian immigrants/non-naturalized citizens as percentage of total noncitizens in major destination countries is equally low. Only in Hungary, the Romanian immigrant community appears to be significantly higher than other immigrant communities in this country, but not so large in absolute figures. The total foreign-born population in this country represents less than 3% and non-

naturalized citizens account for less than one percent of the total population of approximately seven million residents (Table 1).

Table 1. Romanian communities in EU countries

EU country of resettlement	Romania -born pop. as % of foreign born population	Romanian noncitizens as % of total noncitizens	Low skilled Romanians as % of total low skilled foreign-born population	High skilled Romanians as % of total high skilled foreign-born population	Foreign-born as % of total population	Non-citizens as % of total population
Hungary	49.1	39.4	47.2	41.7	2.9	0.9
Italy	3.9	6.0	2.4	3.0	..	..
Austria	3.9	2.7	3.1	3.9	12.5	8.8
Spain	2.8	3.8	3.1	1.7	5.3	3.8
Czech Rep.	2.7	1.9	4.5	0.7	4.5	1.2
Slovakia	2.7	4.2	4.3	1.3	2.5	0.5
Greece	2.4	3.1	1.9	2.2	10.3	7.0
Ireland	1.5	2.3	1.3	0.8	10.4	5.9
Portugal	..	1.3	..	..	6.3	2.2
Germany	0.9	..	0.6	1.1	12.5	..
Belgium	0.7	..	..	1.3	10.7	8.2
Luxemburg	0.5	0.4	..	0.7	..	..
Poland	0.5	..	0.6	0.4	2.1	0.1

Source: OECD 2004; Dumont, JC & G. Lemaître (forthcoming)

In 2002, the stock of all CEE authorized migrant workers accounted for a small fraction of the labor force in major Western European receiving countries. Documented migrant workers from Eastern European countries and Albania were about 450,000 in Germany, 320,000 in Greece, 200,000 in Switzerland, 160,000 in Austria, and 150,000 in Italy (mainly Albanians, Poles, Romanians, and Ukrainians). In 2002, Spain signed temporary foreign worker agreements with Romania and Poland. However, the annual quota for the admission of all temporary foreign workers set up by Spanish authorities does not exceed 30,000 (Plewa 2007, 20-21).

In 2004, OECD countries received about 750,000 persons from CEE countries and Russia. About 196,000 Romanians have been admitted mainly in Italy and Spain. Romania ranked among the top five sending countries in Austria and Germany, and has sent the most documented temporary workers to Hungary, Italy, and Spain (Okolski 2007, 7). With respect to OECD destinations, in 2006, Romania

was considered the leader on the list of top world sending countries, surpassing China and Mexico (OECD 2006).

National survey data and qualitative research conducted in six Romanian communities from Italy, Spain, and Serbia showed that from 1990 to 2006, approximately 10% of the Romanian adult population worked abroad and 1/3 of the Romanian households have at least one person who is/was living in a foreign country. If from 1990 to 1995, the annual emigration rate was 5 per 1000 inhabitants and did not significantly increase until 2001 (i.e. the emigration rate was 6 per 1000 inhabitants from 1996 to 2001), starting with 2002, when Romanians gained free access to the Schengen space, annual temporary emigration rate constantly increased from 10 to 28 persons per 1000 residents (Sandu 2006).

In 1999, Borjas predicted fairly small post-enlargement migration flows from CEE countries to EU15 countries. Relatively small income differentials between the two blocs, cultural differences, and convergent economies as a result of increased amounts of capital, goods, and services CEE countries would receive after accession would explain in Borjas' view low population movements. The author also noted that it would be useful to identify the main characteristics of the potential migrants and in particular the skill composition of the potential foreign-labor because the skill content of the economic migrant population can have important consequences for both sending and receiving countries (Borjas 1999). The following analysis will identify the individual characteristics of Romanian potential temporary migrants and will also explore the socioeconomic macro-level factors more likely to induce out-migration.

3. Data and Methods

The source of the data is a survey carried out between December 2006 and January 2007 by the Institute for Public Policy in Bucharest, Romania. A three-stage probability sample comprising 1,014 individuals was designed to ensure maximum representativeness for the 18+ year old population of Romania along the following dimensions: gender, age, education, ethnic origin, urban-rural distribution, and historical region. The sample has been validated by 1992 and 2002 Census data. The margin of error is $\pm 3.1\%$.

It is the general thesis that the levels of external temporary migration from Romania are likely to be a function of conditions at the point of origin and a

function of conditions at the point of destination. The focus in this study is on individual and macro-level factors at the point of origin. In general, we expect that the pattern among potential temporary migrants in Romania will be consistent with the pattern already exhibited by Romanians in the 1990s.

In particular, we hypothesize that external temporary labor migration from Romania will be more prevalent among people who have a direct and indirect (through family ties) migratory experience. Also it is expected a negative relationship between age and labor migration tendencies. Although some studies (Sassen 1988; Boyd 1990) showed that migrant women tend to relocate abroad to reunite with their families rather than to become temporary workers and even if in the 1990s the proportion of Romanian male potential temporary migrants was significantly higher than the proportion of women who expressed an intention to work in a foreign country, based on recent research (Sandu 2006) that noted an increase in the female migrant population, we hypothesize that gender will not be a significant predictor of migratory flows in Romania.

The migrant profile outlined by surveys and studies of the 1990s revealed a high degree of potential mobility of the urban, the highly skilled, professionals, and young people (Majava and Penttinen 1991; Muus 1991; Okolski 1991; Salt 1992). Pacini (1992) also observed that temporary or permanent emigration seems to be induced primarily by push factors related to economic conditions, specifically by unemployment. The Romanian potential migrant of the past decade was not different from the "typical" international migrant (e.g., a young male, economically active, resident of an urban area). Among the individual level variables, three predictors (age, gender, and working class occupation) were consistently found significant predictors of migratory tendencies in Romania in a 1994 research analysis. The study also found that persons satisfied with their occupation and housing were less likely to intend to migrate (Andreescu 1995). A national survey conducted in Romania in 1993 for the International Organization for Migration, also described the typical Romanian potential migrant as a young male, usually urban, with an above-average education, professionally successful or unemployed, and residing in the southeast or in the northwest regions of the country (IOM 1994).

According to a recent study (see Sandu 2006), the Romanian potential migrants were described as predominantly males, married, with ages below 40, with a high-school or vocational school education. The study found that 40% of those who worked abroad wanted to repeat the experience. Approximately 20% of

the households had at least one family member who worked in a foreign country. Although significant differences regarding migration intentions were not found when rural and urban residents were compared, within particular historical regions of the country rural-urban differences in potential migratory behavior were identified. The research also noted a significant increase from the 1990s to 2006 in the labor migration rate in three regions of the country (Moldova, Muntenia, and Transylvania) and very small increases in migration rates in Bucharest and Dobrogea regions.

The present research anticipates that education, employment status, marital status, religious denomination, and the self-assessed level of well-being will have an impact in structuring one's decisions regarding temporary relocation abroad. Also, it is expected that migratory tendencies will vary as a function of one's region of residence. In particular, it is expected that residents of counties/regions that had a higher degree of urbanization and were more successful in socioeconomic terms (i.e., higher GDP per capita, higher proportion of active population in the labor force, higher percentage of people employed in the service sector, lower unemployment rates, positive internal migration outcome, and higher direct foreign investment) will be less likely to look for jobs in a foreign country.

Data for this study were analyzed by means of binary logistic regression. Table 2 presents the description and summary statistics for the variables used in multivariate analyses as possible predictors of potential labor migration in Romania.

Table 2. Variables Included in the Analysis: Definitions and Summary Statistics

Variable	Definition	Mean (N=1014)	Std. Deviation
Potential labor migration	Coded 1 for respondents indicating their willingness to work abroad in 2007, zero otherwise.	.2022	.4018
Migration experience (personal)	Coded 1 if the responded worked abroad during the past 12 months, zero otherwise.	.1000	.2971
Migration experience	Coded 1 if a family member currently works abroad, zero	.1193	.3243

(family member)	otherwise.		
Age	Categorical variable coded 1 for respondents age 18-29; 2 for respondents age 30-39; 3 for respondents age 40-49; 4 for respondents age 50-59; 5 for respondents age 60 and older.	3.0878	1.4999
Gender	Coded 1 for males, zero for females.	.4704	.4993
Education 1 (Vocational school)	Coded 1 if vocational school graduate, zero otherwise.	.2101	.4075
Education 2 (High-School)	Coded 1 if high-school graduate, zero otherwise.	.2515	.4340
Education 3 (Post High-School)	Coded 1 for respondents with more than high-school education, zero otherwise.	.1972	.3981
Employment status	Coded 1 for respondents with non- regular jobs, unemployed, or housewives, and zero otherwise.	.1785	.3831
Family income	Self-assessed household income, coded 1 if insufficient, zero otherwise.	.2959	.4566
Marital status 1 (Single)	Coded 1 for respondents single or divorced, zero otherwise.	.2357	.4246
Marital status 2 (Married with children)	Coded 1 for respondents married who have children, zero otherwise.	.5740	.4947
Religion (Non Christian Orthodox)	Coded 1 for those who do not belong to the Christian Orthodox denomination, zero otherwise.	.1183	.3231
Life dissatisfaction	Coded 1 for those (very) dissatisfied with their life in general, zero otherwise.	.2465	.4312
Job	Coded 1 for those (very)	.1805	.3847

dissatisfaction	dissatisfied with their job, zero otherwise.		
Dissatisfaction with friends	Coded 1 for those (very) dissatisfied with their friends, zero otherwise.	.0828	.2757
Satisfaction with health	Coded 1 for those (very) satisfied with their health, zero otherwise.	.7170	.4507
Development region (Bucharest)	Coded 1 for residents of Bucharest and Ilfov, zero otherwise.	.0917	.2887
Local Economic Growth	This continuous variable is a composite measure created using PCA (one component extracted with Eigenvalue = 5.674; variance explained = 81.06%; Standardized Cronbach's Alpha = .833); it includes seven 2005 county-level indicators (% urban, % labor force, % occupied in tertiary sector, GDP per capita, 2005 unemployment rate, migration outcome, and direct foreign investment in euros)*.	.0000	1.000

Data source: Ministry of Development, Public Works, and Housing, 2007.

4. Empirical Analysis

Recent migratory experience

The majority of Romanians (56%) did not travel abroad in 2006. If 65% of rural residents did not cross the border, the proportion of urban residents who did not have any recent migratory experience is lower (49%). One third of the families (33%) had at least one member who worked in a foreign country, 12% of the respondents had a family member who was working abroad at the time of the interview, and 10% of the respondents declared they worked in another country themselves during the twelve-month period preceding the survey. In 2006, a

relatively low percentage of the population went to a foreign country for tourism and less than 3% of the population migrated temporarily to study, for business, or health-related reasons.

Potential migration

The migratory prospects of the population appear to remain unchanged in 2007 compared to 2006. More than half of the population (55%) did not express any intention to leave the country in the near future. If the number of potential migrants is slightly higher in urban areas than the actual migration in 2006, in rural areas over 65% of the residents did not manifest any migratory intention. A closer examination of the results shows that the proportion of those who intend to work abroad in 2007 (20.2%) is twice higher than the 2006 labor migration. Also, the number of those who intend to travel abroad for other reasons than work is two (e.g. 24% for tourism) and three (e.g. 3% to study) times higher than the corresponding figures for 2006 migration. However, this increase in migratory tendencies is relative. The percentage of those who do not express any intention to relocate abroad, temporarily or permanently, remains unchanged. Approximately 29% of those who did not travel abroad in 2006 intend to do so in 2007, but 35% of those who left the country temporarily in 2006 do not intend to cross the border in 2007. Only 4.1% of the respondents who expressed a clear opinion declared themselves potential permanent migrants.

Asked in what country they would rather live, if they would have a choice, a large majority of Romanians (81%) declared they would prefer to live in Romania. Although men and women appear to have similar attitudes regarding their "country of choice," other variables such as residential area, education, age, and migratory experience had an impact on opinions. Those who would definitely choose to live in Romania if they would have alternative options are preponderantly residents of rural areas (85.1%), people over 60 years old (91.4%), persons who did not travel abroad recently or at all (85.5%), and persons with no more than a high-school education (82%). Based on the frequency of selection, the countries where some Romanians would prefer to live are Italy, Spain, Canada, Germany, and France.

Further analyses (Table 3) were conducted to determine which variables are more likely to predict membership to the potential labor-migrant group.

Results show that personal migratory experience appears to be the strongest predictor of potential labor migration for the overall sample (Models 1 and 2) and also for the male and female subsamples (Models 3 and 4). Persons from families with workers abroad are also more willing to work in a foreign country than those who do not have close relatives currently working in other country.

As hypothesized, there is a significant decrease in the desire to migrate as age increases. Although the proportion of men willing to work abroad is higher than the proportion of female potential migrants, gender is not a significant predictor of migration tendencies. In the overall sample, those more likely to migrate are vocational school graduates. Also, persons with no religious affiliation and those belonging to religious denominations other than Christian-Orthodoxy manifest a significantly higher propensity to move than the Christian-Orthodox residents. While persons who are single are more likely to want to migrate and those who are married and have children are less likely to want to migrate when compared to people who are married but do not have children, marital status does not appear to influence migration intentions. Additional analyses (not included) found no significant differences between urban and rural residents in terms of their intention to look for work in another country. In general, the proportion of potential labor migrants was higher in smaller urban areas and in peripheral villages, places with reduced job opportunities.

Significant positive relationships were identified for the overall sample between life dissatisfaction, job dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction with friends, satisfaction with one's health and potential labor migration.

Residents of Bucharest are significantly less likely to want to work in a foreign country than people in other regions of the country. A separate model (Model 2)¹ shows a direct negative relationship between the county's economic growth and one's willingness to work abroad. When controlling for the other variables in the model, additional analyses (not included) showed no significant differences among people's willingness to work in another country when their region of residence was taken into account.²

¹ Variable "Region (Bucharest)" was highly correlated with variable "Economic growth" (Pearson's $R = .84$) and the two variables were introduced in separate models.

² The propensity to move was the highest (28.6%) in the North-Eastern region of the country (North Moldova) and was also higher (23.1%) in the Central region (Transylvania). The other development regions of the country, except Bucharest (9.4%), had potential temporary migration rates with little variation (e.g. 17.6% in South-Oltenia; 17.8% in South-East region; 17.9% in Western region; 19.0% in South- Muntenia; 19.6% in North-Western region). Comparisons were made using the eight

Models 3 & 4 illustrate the potential migration correlates separately for men and women. For both subsamples one's age and migratory experience (direct and indirect) are significant predictors of potential labor migration. Also, measures of well-being have a similar effect on potential migration in both subsamples. The profile of the Romanian female migrant is however somewhat different from the profile of the Romanian male migrant. Romanian women who intend to work in another country are more likely to be vocational school graduates, who live in families with insufficient income. Also, they are preponderantly members of other denominations than the Christian-Orthodox church. The Romanian man who intends to relocate abroad is more likely to be a person who does not have a regular employment status (i.e. unemployed, jobless, or has irregular jobs). For men, the socioeconomic performance of their county of residence appears to be a more important decisional factor than it is for women.

Table 3. Logit Estimates for Labor Migration Predictors in Romania

	Model 1 (N=1014)	Model 2 (N=1014)	Model 3 (n₁=477) (Males)	Model 4 (n₂=537) (Females)
Migratory experience				
Personal	2.476*** [.286]	2.408*** [.289]	2.077*** [.356]	3.070*** [.531]
Family member	.785*** [.203]	.769*** [.204]	.673*** [.278]	.944** [.318]
Socioeconomic & demographic				
Age	-.527*** [094]	-.524*** [094]	-.419*** [123]	-.668*** [153]
Gender (Male)	.321 [.204]	.319 [.203]		
Education 1 (Vocational school)	.795** [.288]	.730** [.292]	.515 [.396]	1.127** [.444]
Education 2 (High-school)	.429 [.294]	.465 [.296]	.561 [.417]	.187 [.448]
Education 3 (Post-High-	.055	.052	.325	-.632

development regions in the country as described by the Romanian Ministry of Development, Public Works, and Housing.

school)	[.356]	[.355]	[.459]	[.604]
Employment status (Jobless)	.329 [.251]	.356 [.253]	.754* [.378]	-.097 [.381]
Family income (Very Low)	.509 [.244]	.457 [.247]	.129 [.351]	.734* [.371]
Marital status 1 (Single)	.274 [.354]	.219 [.354]	.320 [.488]	.103 [.545]
Marital status 2 (Married with children)	-.077 [.313]	-.097 [.314]	-.149 [.445]	.023 [.475]
Religion (Non-Christian- Orthodox)	.606* [.283]	.662** [.280]	.349 [.409]	.911* [.412]
Subjective well-being				
Life dissatisfaction	.651** [.252]	.672** [.253]	.780* [.354]	.608* [.380]
Job dissatisfaction	1.030*** [.229]	1.030*** [.230]	.768** [.329]	1.390*** [.342]
Dissatisfaction with friends	.739* [.350]	.737* [.349]	.868 [.501]	.374 [.507]
Health satisfaction	.926** [.295]	.914** [.297]	1.199*** [.466]	.785* [.407]
Macro-level indicators				
Region (Bucharest)	-.862* [.430]			
Economic growth (county level index)		-.271** [.116]	-.283* [.146]	-.312 [.204]
Constant	-2.492*** [.562]	-2.686*** [.568]	-2.706*** [.829]	-2.706*** [.829]
Model Summary & Classification results				
% Correct predictions	85.6	86.2	83.2	87.7
Log likelihood	680.531	677.147	361.988	300.518
Cox & Snell R ²	.285	.288	.292	.291
Nagelkerke R ²	.449	.453	.437	.490

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001 (2-tail tests)

5. Conclusion

Although the current out-migration phenomenon in Romania shares a number of general traits with the migratory processes of the past decade, its intensity is notably higher. This research analysis showed that conventional individual variables continue to explain migratory tendencies in Romania. Variables such as education, occupation, income, satisfaction with life, job satisfaction, etc., should be, however, perceived as mediating factors of human mobility. Macro-level conditions appear to strongly influence migration tendencies in the country. Results show that economic growth, such as the one experienced by Bucharest's residents, can successfully act as a deterrence to labor out-migration. In the 1990s, propensity to temporarily move abroad was significantly higher in Bucharest compared to other regions in the country and now it is the lowest.

To some extent, the levels of out-migration and potential migration in a country tend to be considered a reflection of the inner nature of the society, an indicator of how successfully political and socioeconomic problems have been solved. However, the higher propensity toward temporary emigration recently manifested by an increasing number of Romanians should not be exclusively regarded as a manifestation of the public's discontent toward Romania's uneven economic performances, political unsteadiness, deterioration of the safety net, or as an expression of Romanians' skepticism about the country's future.

Romanians' propensity to move and work in another country should also be perceived as a result of the reorganization of the European economy in general, and in particular, as one of EU accession consequences. Specifically, Romanians' higher mobility is undoubtedly influenced by the relatively recent formation of a transnational European space within which the circulation of workers is becoming as natural as the circulation of capital, goods, services, and information.

Romanians have only recently started to become users of the European transitional space and several studies have already documented the beneficial effects of the new form of immigration. Based on recent research (Grigoras 2006, 43), 7% of Romanian households were in 2006 the recipients of private transfers from abroad. Although over the past decade Romanians seemed to be more concerned with spending their money, remittances included, on housing renovation or acquisition of long-term goods and less with investments (e.g. purchasing a house/land or opening a business), Romanian transmigrants are

becoming more and more potential sources of positive social change and development at both family and community levels (Bobîrsc 2006, 83).

It is probably true that “a mobile work force can act as a safety valve for economies that are out of sync with their neighbors (OECD 2007, 11).” By combining the potential knowledge and skills of transnational and returning migrants with institutional and government backing, migrants can positively influence the development of the country, at both social and economic levels. But unplanned and excessive out-migration can negatively affect the structure of the work force in the sending country. With relatively low birth-rates, a steady population decrease, and low employment rates of the active-age population, Romania is in a particularly vulnerable position that policy makers in the country should carefully consider.

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