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ROMANIAN COORDINATES OF MIGRATION TO THE EU

Introduction

This study aims to offer an analysis of the phenomenon of migration from Romania to European Union Member States from the perspective of comprehensive sociology. As Romania has just become a member of the European Union on the 1st of January 2007, the features we are going to approach in this paper belong, for the most part, to the pre-accession stage. Starting from the presentation of these features, we aim to configure a projection related to the existing migratory trends, on a short and medium term basis, throughout the post-accession period. The analysis we are proposing belongs to the first stage of a research project that has been initiated this year within the International Relations Research Centre of the 'Petre Andrei' University of Iaşi and that is supposed to be finalized during the 2008-2009 academic year. This is why the analysis we are proposing is not meant to be an exhaustive approach of the migration phenomenon. On the contrary, at this stage, we aim to establish a general context of analysis for the migration from Romania to the European Union, to present the main factors that have determined and still determine the existence of this phenomenon, to identify the various types of migration that have characterised Romania throughout the post-communist period and up to the present, to configure 'a portrait' of the Romanian emigrant and to include the main trends observed into the general framework of the migration phenomenon. By taking into account all these elements, this paper intends to offer a comprehensive image of the economic, social and cultural-political coordinates specific for the Romanian migration phenomenon; the hypothesis we are trying to test – at this particular moment and only from a normative point of view because later, throughout the next stages of the project, we are also going to refer to empirical elements – is that Romania is going to pass through a bidirectional migration flow during the post-accession period. On the one hand, the liberalisation of circulation brought by the accession will determine the intensification of the migratory outflow to the European Union. On the other hand, we will notice a trend to return in the country from the part of those who emigrated during the pre-accession era, who reached

certain financial standards by working abroad and who will return to Romania because they did not manage to integrate into the social structure of the receiving country.

General framework of migration from Romania to the EU

Social theory usually offers explanations that highlight the mechanical character of migration phenomena. Such explanations provide a cause-effect type of image related to migration because it is considered that this phenomenon is generated by the existence of some constraints – economic, political or social – in the place of origin that compel the individual to decide to avoid them through mobility. In other words, the structuring of this phenomenon of social mobility is fundamentally caused by the intention of the social atoms or individuals to ‘extract’ themselves from a place that does not fulfil their expectations in order to integrate, later on, into an environment where these expectations can be fulfilled. The same mechanistic logic is also to be found within the framework of the normative views that insist on the comprehension of the migration phenomenon as a phenomenon that is shaped concomitantly by push-and-pull forces. Such a methodological vision is also assumed by a series of analysts of the migration phenomenon in Romania: “Individual transborder migration always has a complex cause: push and pull forces shape it concomitantly. People want to leave their places of birth because they are dissatisfied with the conditions existing there and move towards places that offer incentive perspectives. Conditions may be, of course, strictly economic – the possibility to earn more money, a more promising career – but also political or social – a higher degree of freedom of thought or of citizen freedom, etc. The law usually distinguishes two categories of these people: emigrants/migrants who wish to change residence mainly for economic reasons and political *refugees* who are forced to seek shelter because they are persecuted in their country of origin” (Roth, 2002: 87). The *push-and-pull* type of vision seems to be a theoretical framework for the economists who analyse the complexity of the migration phenomenon from a macroeconomic point of view, related to the consequences of migration both in the sending and receiving countries. Taking into account various factors, including social or political ones, a distinction is made between push factors (to be found in countries that generate migration) and pull factors (localised in the receiving countries). A complete image of the mixture of economic, political and social factors that provide motivation for migration can be seen in the table below:

MOTIVATIONS FOR MIGRATION	PUSH FACTORS	PULL FACTORS
Economic and demographic	Poverty	Prospects of higher wages
	Unemployment	Potential for improved standard of living
	Low wages	Personal or professional development
	High fertility rates	
	Lack of basic health and education	
Political	Conflict, insecurity, violence	Safety and security
	Poor governance	Political freedom
	Corruption Human rights abuses	
Social and cultural	Discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, religion and the like	Family reunification
		Ethnic (diaspora migration) homeland
		Freedom from discrimination

Source: World Bank Staff, quoted in Ali Mansoor, Bryce Quillin (eds.), *Migration and Remittances. Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*, World Bank, Europe and Central Asia Region, 2006, pp. 77-78.

Understanding the migration phenomenon from such a perspective implies taking into account not only the causes that shape the individual's decision to social mobility but also the social effects that those who emigrate must face in the destination countries – they mainly include cultural, value, attitudinal and social status differences. Of course, this theoretical orientation of the studies concerning migration attempts to offer a universally valid image of the phenomenon as such. However, if we accept the fact that the phenomenon of migration is far more complex than the deterministic methodological articulations show it, if only to complete such a perspective, we could take into account the fact that there are specific differentiations at the level of the motivations that generate migration – “understanding the social substance of migration and overcoming the temptations to give a mechanistic interpretation to the phenomenon can be reached, to a great extent, by using approaches centred upon the intentionality of migration actions, through the conjunction of intentions and behaviours in order to understand spatial mobility” (Sandu, 2003: 168).

In this respect, a series of recent developments in the field of the migration from Romania to EU states and to north-American countries bring to light the metaphor of the ‘exploratory tendencies’ of Romanian citizens; from this perspective, the discussion is placed within the framework of *circular migration*. This type of approach allows us to launch a concept necessary for a comprehensive analysis of migration, a concept that attempts to

surpass the interpretation of the phenomenon in mechanistic terms, as mere mobility from one place to another, determined by certain factors – the concept of ‘life strategy’. The concept, developed and made functional by Dumitru Sandu, a distinguished Romanian sociologist, sums up notions such as ‘human capital’, ‘material capital’ and ‘social capital’ and refers to the fact that “a life strategy is not an action per se but a type of perspective on the action. It is the perspective of the durable proportion between assumed objectives and sets of means. (...) *Life strategies are rational structures of action, relatively durable at the level of the agent who embraces them.* Their rationality is provided by the way in which means are adapted to purposes. Rationality is marked by choice and coherence” (Sandu, 2003: 168). In other words, we are dealing with a concept that refers to the choices the individuals make after having assessed the purposes and the means they possess in order to fulfil them and to a series of coherent actions designed to fulfil the purposes. For example, the permanent migration from Romania to states such as Israel and Germany - more intense at the beginning of the 1990s – can be understood from the perspective of choices assumed as life strategies. Nevertheless, the same perspective can also be applied in the case of circular migration, whose figures have increased after 2002 (when visas were no longer required for Romanian citizens), and that is likely to become more intense within the context of Romania’s accession to the European Union, on the 1st of January 2007. The passage from a permanent migration flow to circular migration can also be interpreted as a choice belonging to one’s life strategy. From this point of view, statistical data show that permanent departures “represent less than 2 percent of Romania’s population, with a maximum value of 4 percent in 1990. From 1995, the emigration flow was reduced to a third, from 1.13 percent to 0.4-0.5 percent in 2001-2003” (IER, 2004a: 71). However, the permanent migration flow has been replaced with a circular migration flow; this shows the passage from a type of life strategy that focussed on the assumption of a new identity, based upon the total separation from the country of origin, to a type of strategy that maintains the connection with the sending country but also aims to fulfil some purposes, especially financial, in the receiving country. Obviously, the factors that determine the migration phenomenon are extremely important even within this framework of interpretation but their presence – that takes various or similar shapes from one migration flow to the other – does not impede the modification of the strategy. This is why we can suggest that if *permanent migration* implies a life strategy oriented exclusively towards the receiving country, *circular migration* combines purposes that place the individual somewhere between ‘here’ and ‘there’: “Unlike permanent migration, circular migration supposes an ambivalent judgement, both positive and negative, concerning the same place, of departure or

arrival, of permanent or temporary residence. At the level of the dominant circular migration in Romania, the locality of one's permanent domicile is judged positively from a socio-cultural perspective and negatively from an economic point of view" (Sandu, 2003: 170). Moreover, throughout the 17 years of transition from a totalitarian system, from a closed society – also from the perspective of one's possibility to emigrate – to an open society, the passage from one migration flow to the other is quite visible; even if it is not completely closed, as democracy has not been fully consolidated yet, the process of transition favoured Romania's accession to the EU. In our view, this situation is due, on the one hand, to the modifications that have appeared at the level of the migration determinants that have implied, in their turn, modifications of individual life strategies and, on the other hand, to the modifications of the living conditions offered by the Romanian society. Far from being transformed into a 'society of abundance', Romania has implemented some substantial social and political reforms; however, economic conditions are still a fundamental factor in the shaping of international social mobility.

Determinants of international migration in Romania

The attempt to draw a timeline of the Romanian migration outflows should also take into account the departures registered before the dissolution of communism in 1989; this should help us identify the modifications that developed at the level of migration determinants and, implicitly, of life strategies. Thus, in the case of the individuals who were granted permission to emigrate by the communist regime, the main migratory flow before the 1990s was determined by the political, economic and social conditions that generated life strategies oriented towards the definitive departure from Romania. The internal reports that refer to this flow take into account three coordinates: the progressive increase in the number of those who applied for emigration – of these people, only a small part received the official approval; the attempts to cross the border fraudulently were more and more numerous; people who wanted to leave but were impeded by the police of the regime were increasingly frustrated (IER, 2004a: 71). Over the first half of the 1990s, the third coordinate would prove to be extremely important in the configuration of life strategies for those who emigrated at that time. After 1990, the same reports take into account at least two fundamental mutations that occurred in the sphere of migration determinants; they led to the emergence of other types of migrations. "On the one hand, there was a passage from a type of emigration based upon ethnical criteria to one involving informal networks and illegal migration. On the other hand, there was a

passage from long-term circulation to swing migration in the areas lying near the borders” (IER, 2004b: 27). Thus, we notice the passage from a permanent migration flow, based upon political criteria – developing up to 1990 – to one determined by ethnical and religious factors (Neo-protestants were the first to open the incentive movement of migration for other Romanian citizens) – between 1990 and 1993 – and then to a circular migration flow that started after 1994 and boomed after the 1st of January 2002. The permanent migration flow based upon political criteria that developed after 1990 brought together the life strategies of people living in areas with high ethnical concentrations such as Transylvania – that produced outflows to Germany and Hungary – and also those of repatriated Jews. Later on, ethnical and religious motivations faded and opened the way to circular migration that is particularly influenced by the economic determinant incorporating various elements¹. Over the last 13 years, especially after 2002, the circular migration rate has been increasing; most of those who chose it as a life strategy move to countries from the European Union: “There are three different stages in the recent history of Romanian temporary migration; they occurred during the following time intervals: 1990-1995, 1996-2001 and 2001-. The maximal rates of labour migration were of 3‰ over the first interval, 7‰ over the second and of 28‰ over the interval following 2001. The three stages of Romanian temporary migration are mirrored, with slight differences of interval, by the history of the Romanian residence in Italy: from a maximum of 14 thousand residents over 1990-1996, to a maximum of 34 thousand over the second interval; by the end of 2005 the number of residence permits granted to Romanian citizens in Italy reached 300 thousand” (Sandu, 2006: 24). On the other hand, permanent migration has decreased and those who choose it life strategy usually move to the North-American continent, to the USA or Canada. Considering these tendencies in the development of life strategies related to migration, the analysts of the phenomenon stress the presence of those ‘exploratory tendencies’ that were mentioned in the first part of this paper and that are particularly present within the context of circular migration. The development of these tendencies – that also determine some of the Romanian international migration routes – is

¹ They are identified in a report of the European Institute of Romania – *The free circulation of people and services – outcomes for Romania and the negotiation process*, Bucharest, 2004b, page 31, and they refer to the following elements: modifications of the Romanian border regime; the downsizing or the closure of big factories belonging to the industry of the state; realloiments of the labour force and regional reactions to the shocks specific for the transition period, mainly in regions dominated by singular industries; a significant reduction in internal migration and commuter flows, mainly in peripheral areas, dominated by singular industries that were affected by mass layoffs; over the post-communist transition period, a paradoxical tendency of the internal migration: from urban areas to rural areas; high rates of poverty in rural areas; significant gaps in what concerns the perspectives of regional development and income distribution: relative poverty, marginalisation of some groups, etc.; uneven developments in the field of policies and poor perspectives of integration into the EU (including the free circulation of people) in a reasonable span of time.

particularly influenced by the sending communities that contribute to the establishment of ‘migration networks’, set up as products of social innovation. The sociologists claim that, as any other type of social innovation, these networks, too, pass through a process of diffusion based upon the ‘pioneers’ – those who, after having experienced migration, share its outcomes and offer to the others the information they will need, in their turn, in order to adopt a similar life strategy. This allows us to assert that, in the case of circular migration, within the context of international mobility, the configuration of life strategies depends on the migration networks that develop at the level of the sending community. Sociological studies drawn up in Romania clearly show that, in fact, the communities of origin play an essential part: “If in the case of permanent migration, the individual is the main unit of reference, in the case of temporary or circular migration, the role of local communities and regions of origin is much more significant. They act as a means for the transmission of information, as a support for the organisation of various migration networks and as beneficiaries or a place of impact for departures abroad” (Sandu, 2003: 191). Thus, it becomes clear that the development of migration networks, closely connected with the places of origin – that are subsequently included into a ‘transnational circuit’ –, also influences migration routes. For example, the data gathered by the Community Census of Migration, coordinated in 2001 by a team of sociologists supported by the Romanian Ministry of Public Information and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in 12,300 villages from a total of 12,700 in the country (Sandu, 2003: 191-227), showed that about 200,000 Romanian citizens from rural areas went abroad for various reasons. The migration routes they followed included destinations such as Hungary, Yugoslavia, Germany, Turkey, Italy and Spain. By the end of 2001, when data was being collected for the census, even if visas were still required for Romanian citizens who wanted to enter the Schengen space (they were removed on the 1st of January 2002), many signs showed that countries like Italy and Spain would become the main destinations for the circular migration from Romania to the EU. As a result, sociologists observed at that time that “the routes towards Italy and Spain, where the proportion of people who left is much higher than that of those who returned, seem to be particularly dynamic and tend to attract more and more immigrants from rural areas. The migration policies in the destination countries and, possibly, the linguistic advantages offered to a rural population that speaks no foreign languages are the main factors that facilitate migration to these countries” (Sandu, 2003: 206). These trends were acknowledged after 2002; it is very likely that the two European countries remain the main destinations of temporary migrants from Romania, because within the networks that have already been established the ‘exploration’ converted into a certain ‘stabilisation’ of the

areas of interest, configured as a result of positive experiences. In other words, as sociological analyses show it, from 2002 to 2006, “a massive concentration of temporary labour migration took place. After having tested the life and conditions offered by multiple destinations, most of Romanians are choosing two countries that have Latin-based languages – Italy and Spain. To what extent this decision was influenced by the demand of labour force, by the fact that is easy to pass from Romanian to the language of the destination country and to what extent it was determined by the laws and tolerance of the receiving country remains to be established” (Sandu, 2006: 19). The establishment of migration networks at the level of communities, as a result of the ‘explorations’ made by the ‘pioneers’ of circular migration and their transmission, first within ethnic and religious groups and then within the groups of relatives, neighbours or interests, implied the diffusion and development of some migration strategies that were assumed by an increasing number of people, especially on an economic background, and that imply the negative evaluation of the economic situation of the communities of origin. This state of affairs has already been highlighted by the internal reports that evaluate the migration phenomenon in Romania: “The intention to migrate abroad in order to find a job is more likely to appear in people who belong to communities with high rates of circular migration. In areas where others have left, other people are also going to leave; in places where other migrants were successful and their success is visible, migration will be more intense. This is how migration networks are formed; previous migrants encourage and support family members, friends or connections to migrate. Informal migration networks and establishments represent the innovative response of individuals to the malfunctions of formal institutions such as: the labour market, the capital market, product and price stability, the state and private mediation of labour contracts closed with foreign companies; on the other hand, they represent the adaptive response of the community to new situations that contradict traditional values” (IER, 2004a: 19).

We can assert that a type of circular labour migration has been configured lately and that currently it represents the most representative movement within the framework of the Romanian migration to EU states. Along with determinants pertaining to the community-based characteristic of migration from Romania, there are other factors that were generated by the bilateral regulations initiated by Romanian and other EU authorities; they aim to offer the possibility to work legally, on the basis of a contract, and to protect the rights of those who emigrate, even if temporarily. Official data acknowledge that legal labour migration exists, but they are not relevant and cannot help us draw a comprehensive overview of circular migration; there is no control over those who migrate temporarily in order to work without

legal forms. From this point of view, in order to understand and to visualize future migration trends, based upon the migration determinants, we need to discuss the types of migration from Romania to EU states identified from 1990 to 2007. Thus, we try to render clearer the fact that life strategies related to international migration are subjacent, in what regards the means used to fulfil the purposes, to some types of migration identified after 1990.

Characteristics of migration types

As an intermediary conclusion, we can infer that the most representative form of migration from Romania to EU countries, especially to Italy and Spain, is circular labour migration. The life strategies of those who belong to this migration flow are made out of choices that individuals make on the basis of the experiences shared by those who lay the foundations of the migration networks that are to be found at the level of the communities of origin and that are established according to relative, neighbouring or interest criteria. In fact, they are a type of social innovation, a form of association diffused all over the Romanian social field, especially in rural areas; from a sociological perspective, several typological features of migration can be identified, each with various characteristics. Thus, if we refer to the results of Community Census of Migration (Sandu, 2003: 191-227), we notice that they allowed the analysts to highlight the existence of the following migration types: *transborder migration*, *transnational migration*, *permanent emigration*, and *residual international migration*². They succeeded and coexisted between 1990 and 2001 and their characteristics can be seen in the following table:

Duration of uninterrupted stay at destination	Regularity of movements	Migration motivation	Migration type	Migration subtype
		Work	I. Transborder migration	1. transborder circulation for (occasional) work
				2. occasional, frequent smuggling, for

² Within this context, it is important to notice the difference between *transborder migration* and *transnational migration*, as the quoted author explains it: ‘The most important elements in order to point the difference between transborder and transnational migration are the type of «border» or social space that lies between the sending and receiving country and the duration of uninterrupted stay at the temporary destination. In the former case, temporary international migration is achieved through the short-term transgression of a border or of a highly permeable space (e.g. the Bulgarian space between Romania and Turkey). In the latter, a long-term and effective movement takes place, regardless of the migration intentions and ideologies, as a means of communication between different national societies, as a means of configuring «transnational spaces»’ (Sandu, 2003: 199-200).

Reduced (days or weeks)	With no precise regularity	Other		commerce with more or less near countries (like Hungary – near – or Turkey – not very far)
	With relatively precise regularity (‘commuter’-like)	Work	Mixed, transborder and transnational types	3. transborder commuting for work
		Other		4. transborder migration for seasonal work
				5. petty regular (weekly) smuggling for commerce
High (months/years)	With no precise regularity	Work	II. Transnational migration	6. long-term migration for permanent work
		Other		7. long-term temporary migration with multiple motivations
	With relatively precise regularity	Work		8. seasonal circulation for work
		Other		9. highly- skilled/responsible specialists become commuters within the space of multinational companies or international organisations
Other migration types			III. Permanent emigration	10. permanent emigration
			IV. Residual international migration (other types)	11. circulation of people with two citizenships 12. illegal trafficking of women, guns, drugs, etc.

Source: Dumitru Sandu, *Sociabilitatea în spațiul dezvoltării. Încredere, toleranță și rețele sociale* (Sociability in the environment of development. Trust, tolerance and social networks) Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2003, page 200

The most recent research related to the migration phenomenon in Romania propose another typology that takes into account criteria such as the migration routes and their nature (illegal or legal migration) and the agent that intervenes in order to mediate the relationship between the emigrant and the destination country. Such a view allows the configuration of the following migration types (Șerban, Stoica, 2007: 10-12): 1. *private migration*, that may be legal or illegal and that may be characterized, over recent periods, in connection with the migration networks that favoured the illegal employment of Romanians in Italy and Spain. Also, this type of migration was also used during the first half of the 1990s by migrants who were leaving Romania legally and then sought political asylum in destination countries; while their request was being processed they managed to find work (as it happened, for example, in the case of migration to Germany); 2. *legal migration mediated privately*, based upon a legal labour contract closed with the help of the private resources of the migrant; when the contract

expires, the migrant may continue to work clandestinely in the same destination country or he may follow a different migration route; 3. *legal migration mediated by the state*, based upon the involvement of the state, as a mediator that facilitates the access of Romanian citizens to the labour market abroad. There are several states with whom Romania has concluded bilateral agreements in this respect but lately most of the migrants who have benefited from the mediation of the Romanian state have moved to countries like Germany and Spain; 4. *unmediated legal migration* – in this case, the migrants establish direct contact with the foreign employers, without asking for the mediation of the Romanian state. It is a type of migration that usually appears in the case of highly-skilled migrants and it may represent the first step towards secondary migration (there are clues showing that this course is employed for Spain and Italy).

Clearly enough, this typology of migration does not leave out the importance of migration networks and the strategies concerning social mobility that are associated with them. Otherwise, by taking into account the criterion of the legality or illegality of the work abroad, the typology also suggests that, outside official data, there are still many adepts of circular migration who work abroad temporarily and have no legal forms (according to some estimates presented by the mass-media, we are talking about over 1 million Romanians). However, official data acknowledge that during the last pre-accession stage, a significant number of Romanian workers were temporarily employed in EU countries, with all legal forms – their number is supposed to increase in the future. If we consider the only type of migration that can be subjected to the rigorous control of the Romanian state – *legal migration mediated by the state* – the situation of 2006 can be visualised with the help of the data published by the Office for Labour Force Migration within the Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Opportunities.

Number of workers mediated through the agency of The Office for Labour Force Migration, by development regions and destination countries, in 2006

Development regions	Total	out of which, by countries				
		Germany	Spain	Switzerland	France	Qatar
TOTAL	53.029	38.548	14.273	78	126	4
North-East	8.670	7.519	1.118	3	30	-
South-East	3.102	1.963	1.132	3	2	2
South-Muntenia	9.236	2.234	6.983	-	19	-
Sout-West Oltenia	5.665	2.370	3.279	1	15	-
West	6.958	6.516	433	3	6	-
North-West	6.798	6.618	170	3	7	-

Centre	10.443	9.913	438	64	27	1
Bucharest-Ilfov	2.157	1.415	720	1	20	1

Source: The Department for Labour Abroad – The Office for Labour Force Migration (www.omfm.ro)

Number of workers mediated through the agency of The Office for Labour Force Migration, by age groups and destination countries, in 2006

Age Group	Total	Germany	Spain	Switzerland	France	Qatar
Total, out of which	53.029	38.548	14.273	78	126	4
Women	25.965	17.594	8.311	32	24	4
Men	27.064	20.954	5.962	46	102	-
18-25 years	10.972	8.197	2.714	29	30	2
26-35 years	25.618	18.567	6.905	49	96	1
36-45 years	13.810	9.214	4.595	-	-	1
Over 45 years	2.629	2.570	59	-	-	-

Source: The Department for Labour Abroad – The Office for Labour Force Migration (www.omfm.ro)

The migration types presented in this section are relevant for the fact that what individuals try to realise, within the context of the strategies of international mobility that they assume, represents, in fact, a ‘conversion of the capitals’ possessed in the country of origin. This refers to the carrying out of a choice followed by coherent actions. The substantial modifications that occurred over the last 17 years at the level of the choices made by Romanian citizens who emigrate that also modified the types of actions carried out in this respect illustrate the increased tendency to opt for various types of circular labour migration. This allows those who adopted it as a life strategy to return home and modify both the economic capital and the social capital (owing to the experience of ‘foreignhood’, they are seen as having acquired a different social status when they return home) and the human capital, if we refer to the change of mentalities, to the cultural-political modifications that extend later on from the individual to the community. This situation is a sociological fact because, according to the data presented in the table above – that refers only to the labour migration mediated by the state – the age of those who emigrate in order to work is mainly included into the 18 to 35 age group. Thus, we are dealing with people likely to react in depth when it comes to the changes implied by the influences generated by such life experiences. In order to understand these transformations, we must also refer to the portrait of the Romanian migrant to the EU, as it is configured by the data gathered by recent sociological researches

that offer an image comprising both his characteristics and the changes triggered in him by the ‘experience of foreignhood’

Portrait of the Romanian migrant to the EU

In a report of the Open Society Foundation, published in November 2006, it is shown that a third of the households registered in Romania according to the 2002 Population and Household Census (a total number of 7,320,202 households) comprise at least one person who left abroad – the largest number of labour migrations is registered in households comprising more than 3 people (Sandu, 2006: 17). Also, after 2001, the proportion of those who worked clandestinely out of the country rose to 53% of the total people who experienced migration – they represented 34% from 1990 to 1995. In what concerns the type of labour involving Romanians abroad, the same report shows that it is represented mostly by unskilled labour: “construction work for men (98%), household work for women (88%) and agriculture (72% men and 28% women) are the main occupational fields of the Romanians abroad. The proportion of household activities has tripled within the total of the occupations the Romanians were active in abroad between from 1990 to 1995 and from 2002 to 2006” (Sandu, 2006: 24-25). The correlation of data shows that the most significant features of the Romanian emigrant’s portrait, and implicitly of the one that orients his life strategy towards finding a legal or illegal job, for a certain amount of time, within EU states, are related to the idea that “work abroad attracts more men than women; more young people than adults and old people; more young women from rural areas and more mature women from urban areas” (Sandu, 2006: 18). If we take into account the phenomenon of the Romanian migration to the EU in comparison with the concept of ‘life strategy’, we find that it mainly involves finding a job abroad. The conversion of capitals takes place, as we have previously mentioned, through the modification of the socio-economic status that occurs when the migrant returns and that is doubled by a change of mentality. The latter is diffused from the individual level to that of the community of origin because individuals that have experienced migration give positive meanings to the experiences they have had abroad and show the tendency to diffuse to the others the values internalised during their stay out of the country. Thus, they create, on the one hand, a potential stock of migration, through their relationships with relatives, neighbours or friends in the community of origin and, on the other, they represent ‘vehicles’ for the diffusion of the values specific for European societies. As a result, according to the research

we have mentioned, “over 50% of interviewed people assert that labour migration is good. Social ideology is clearly favourable to finding work abroad. (...) We should also notice migrants themselves appreciate that they became more dynamic, more modern-minded after having experienced migration. (...) Within the series of these changes we should also notice that work, friends, leisure time and politics are more important in the minds of those who worked abroad in comparison with the national average” (Sandu, 2006: 61). People who experienced migration also notice the presence of some advantages and disadvantages. If advantages are related to these changes of mentality, with a predominant inclination towards the interest for work and capitalisation (for 61% of the respondents, in comparison with a 48% national average), disadvantages include problems that might develop within the family mainly related to the bringing up of children. Such an evaluation of the advantages brought by migrating abroad does not depend on variables such as education, ages, financial status or gender: “Regardless of their material situation, gender, age or education, people who worked abroad believe that migration changes men. It is a type of projective evaluation. When talking about migrants and mentalities, the previous migrant projects in his answer convictions about his transformations. However, not any migration experience leads to such convictions. If someone has travelled abroad or wants to leave the country to work, he will have the same opinions as those who have already worked outside the country” (idem: 58).

The Romanian emigrant who opts for circular labour migration implicitly adopts a life strategy within which – along with the material values he seeks and can obtain owing to it – he also assumes values specific for what we may call, using a weberian expression, the ‘spirit of capitalism’. Those who work abroad temporarily and maintain close contact with their communities of origin are highly concerned with the modifications of social status that they see as possible as they invest in buying land or in building houses. On the other hand, there is a tendency especially in young people without family obligations to earn money abroad in order to return home and invest in a business in Romania. Thus, the profile of the Romanian emigrant is constantly changing and the features that have been identified are not definitive yet. However, these orientations must be placed within the larger framework of the general trends the Romanian migration will continue to generate.

Migration potential and trends during the post-accession period

When discussing the trends of the migration phenomenon from Romania to other European countries – within the context of Romania’s accession on the 1st of January 2007 –

we can start from certain observations suggesting that the ageing population of European countries and the fact that more and more citizens of these states orient towards over-qualified jobs will determine an intensification of migration flows. From this perspective, the fact the new Member States provide labour force for ‘old European countries’ is seen as positive. In other words, migration from East to West is viewed as a factor of social change: “With an ageing society and relatively low fertility rates, many commentators believe that economic immigration will be necessary for the European Union to overcome labour shortages in the coming years. One of the challenges facing the European Union will be the need for a dynamic immigration policy in order to address skills gaps in specific areas. In many of the Member States, migration is an important component of population change, which may redress the decline in population levels caused by low fertility rates” (Eurostat, 2006: 54). On the other hand, the recent extensions of the European Union, from 2004 and 2007, brought to light the experiences of previous extensions – occasioned by Greece’s accession in 1981 and Portugal’s and Spain’s in 1986 – and alongside these, the fears related to the fact that the accession of new states, such as Romania, would lead to a decrease in salaries and high unemployment rates in other states and would create significant pressure on the social security systems in the destination countries. Of course, such fears are justified if the analysis is only based upon the idea of *push-and-pull* determinants. However, if we include these determinants into a broader area of understanding – like that offered by the concept of life strategy that implies taking into account the fact that the emigrants’ choices are also made according to the evolution of economic, political and social systems in the countries of origin – we might configure an image that is more close to reality. In spite of serious economic discrepancies, the evolution of the democratisation process and the upward economic and social trends are features that characterise the newly integrated states. We are no longer talking about closed systems but states that have adopted many of the European institutional standards and agreements and that are still compelled to adapt to the requirements of the European Union. As a result, migration flows stemming from these states to the European Union are likely to be controlled if, through collaboration with the Governments of the countries of origin, the institutions of the European Union accelerated the pace of their evolution. Such suggestions are offered as well by recent analysis carried out under the aegis of the World Bank: “Differences in political stability, human rights situations, and the general rule of law may also affect migration, because these factors serve as a proxy for the level of individually perceived insecurity. Thus, it is possible to hypothesize that broad, quality-of-

life considerations drive or even inhibit migration. Though the decision to migrate for more productive and lucrative jobs is certainly related to the search for a higher-quality life, wage and unemployment differentials alone will not explain as much migration as when combined with these broad quality-of-life concerns. Risk-averse individuals and households may be less motivated to exploit spreads in earnings across countries if their day-to-day lifestyle is comfortable and stable. Yet, differentials in the pursuit of security may motivate those who would otherwise stay at home to search for a better and more secure life. This suggests that migration might be kept low even when income differentials are high if growth is rapid or the adoption of better institutions is underway (as with EU candidates adopting the *Acquis Communautaire*), but might increase when change is not occurring” (Mansoor, Quillin, 2006, pp. 78-79).

In what concerns Romania’s situation, we can assert that, according to the analysts – based upon migration experiences that have occurred after 1990 – the simulated rates of this phenomenon fluctuate from 1.3% within a context of reduced labour mobility and up to 6% within a context of free circulation granted to the labour force. At a general level, it is shown that “emigration to EU countries will affect about 3-4% of Romania’s population a decade or two after the Romanian citizens are granted the right to circulate freely. A series of unpredictable factors will establish whether Romania will respect the 3-4% rule or register higher or lower rates of emigration” (IER, 2004b: 38). Yet, we should also take into account the increasing importance of circular migration and the possibility to return home of those who chose temporary work migration as a life strategy before Romania’s accession or even before visas were no longer compulsory for Romanians travelling to the Schengen space. Mainly motivated by the difficulties encountered in the process of social integration into destination countries and also by the connections maintained with the communities of origin, a series of emigrants from the pre-accession period could opt for a definitive return, if they accumulated sufficient capital, if the country registered a certain economic growth and the socio-political climate was stable. This does not mean that the community networks the circular migration is based upon will disappear but that they might experience a bi-directional flow. It is possible that Romania’s accession to the EU shape both the intensity and the dimensions of migration flows, especially within the context of temporary labour migration, through the strict implementation of bilateral agreements and through the directing and limiting of flows to certain destinations (IER, 2004a: 94-96). Also, the factors present in the

process of choosing labour migration as a life strategy still include labour shortages, especially in underdeveloped areas of Romania, the interest in professional acknowledgement, especially in the case of those oriented towards specialisation or the continuation of their studies but also the possibility to gain higher salaries, in agreement with one's professional competence. Of course, it is difficult to predict what will be the next migration rates from Romania to the EU or the future re-migration rates from EU states to Romania – as there are no exact data on the situation of Romanians who work abroad clandestinely. However, some trends are analysed starting from the estimation of the migration potential present in the Romanian social space. Thus, according to the latest research carried out in Romania, 11% of 18 to 59 years old Romanians intend to leave and work abroad in 2007 – they represent 1,400,000 people (Sandu, 2006: 21). Yet, not all of those who make public this intention have configured a plan to leave according to the purpose and the means they possess – ¼ of them have no plan, ¼ have already structured one, and 40% have started to accumulate resources in this respect or have established contacts in order to leave. Of those who expressed the intention to leave, 34% chose Italy as a possible destination and 20% opted for Spain (Sandu, 2006: 24-25). Apart from intentions to leave, the analyses estimate that the intensity and dimensions of migration flows will be affected in the coming years by factors such as the strict implementation of bilateral agreements and the orientation of these flows to certain destinations (IER, 2004a: 96). Also, it is expected that migration intentions be present in the coming years especially in young people. Because many of them aim to improve their professional qualifications, this will reduce the risk of social tension or crime in the communities of Romanian immigrants.

Conclusions

This paper referred to the methods used in the analysis of migration from Romania to EU Member States, the determinants that influenced this phenomenon throughout the post-communist transition period, the identifiable migration types, the profile of the Romanian emigrant and the current migration trends. We consider that, given our theme, we can draw the following conclusions:

1. The limited nature of the push-and-pull explanations concerning migration phenomena offered by mechanicist approaches may be overcome if the analysis is oriented towards the choices the emigrants make according to their purposes and means and

towards the actions they take in order to fulfill their purposes that is by assuming migration as a 'life strategy'.

2. Within this context, if we refer to migration from Romania, we notice that the permanent migration flow is replaced by circular migration – this marks the message from a type of life strategy focused on the assumption of a new identity – based upon the total separation from the country of origin – to a type of strategy that maintains the connection with the sending country. At the same time, emigrants aim to achieve some purposes, especially financial, in the receiving countries.
3. The communities of origin play an important part in the configuration of some international migration routes. They contribute to the establishment of 'migration networks', set up as products of social innovation. As any type of innovation, these networks are submitted to a process of social diffusion. This process is supported by the 'pioneers' – those who, after having experienced migration, share its outcomes and offer to the others the information they will need, in their turn, in order to adopt a similar life strategy. The establishment of migration networks at the level of communities, as a result of the 'explorations' made by the 'pioneers' of circular migration and their transmission, first within ethnic and religious groups and then within the groups of relatives, neighbours or interests, implied the diffusion and development of some migration strategies that were assumed by an increasing number of people, especially on an economic background, and that imply the negative evaluation of the economic situation of the communities of origin.
4. Based on such community networks, a type of circular labour migration has been configured lately and it currently represents the most representative movement within the framework of the Romanian migration to EU states, especially to Italy and Spain. Alongside these determinants pertaining to the community-based characteristic of migration from Romania, there are other factors generated by the bilateral regulations initiated by Romanian and other EU authorities; they aim to offer the possibility to work legally, on the basis of a contract, and to protect the rights of those who emigrate, even if only temporarily.
5. The migration types identified in Romania – that are not exclusively specific for this country - are relevant for the fact that what individuals try to realise, within the context of the strategies of international mobility that they assume, represents, in fact, a 'conversion of the capitals' possessed in the country of origin. This refers to the carrying out of a choice, followed by coherent actions. The conversion of capitals

takes place, as we have previously mentioned, through the modification of the socio-economic status that occurs when the migrant returns and that is doubled by a change of mentality. The latter is diffused from the individual level to that of the community of origin because individuals that have experienced migration give positive meanings to the experiences they have had abroad and show the tendency to diffuse to the others the values internalised during their stay out of the country. Thus, they create, on the one hand, a potential stock of migration, through their relationships with relatives, neighbours or friends in the community of origin and, on the other, they represent ‘vehicles’ for the diffusion of the values specific for European societies.

6. The profile of the Romanian emigrant is still changing and migration trends must be connected with the future socio-economic evolution of Romania as an EU Member State. In the coming years, the proportion of young emigrants with no family obligations who want to fulfil themselves professionally is expected to grow. We should notice two elements: a) the presence of young emigrants, doubled by good knowledge about the laws in the destination country and by European citizenship will reduce the risk of social tensions; b) the risk of crime will diminish within the Romanian immigrant communities from other EU Member States.
7. Yet, we should also take into account the increasing importance of circular migration and the possibility to return home of those who had chosen temporary work migration as a life strategy before Romania’s accession or even before visas were no longer compulsory for Romanians travelling to the Schengen space. Mainly motivated by the difficulties encountered in the process of social integration into destination countries and also by the connections maintained with the communities of origin, a series of emigrants from the pre-accession period could opt for a definitive return, if they accumulated sufficient capital, if the country registered a certain economic growth and the socio-political climate was stable. This does not mean that the community networks the circular migration is based upon will disappear but that they might experience a bi-directional flow. It is possible that Romania’s accession to the EU shape both the intensity and the dimensions of migration flows, especially within the context of temporary labour migration, through the strict implementation of bilateral agreements and through the directing and limiting of flows to certain destinations

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