CAUSES OF MIGRATION IN ROMANIA
Romania
There is symbolic as well as actual beauty in the migration of the birds... There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature – the assurance that anything has its own place...

Rachel Carson
The beginning of the 20th Century

***During the 20th Century the migration process developed significantly. In this period, Romania was predominantly a country of emigration and still is. A large number of people decided to head for the United States, mostly the population of Transylvania, who was now again part of Romania. This major political change determined the Hungarian population in this area to emigrate back to their country. In spite of the large number of Hungarians who leaved (approx. 200000 ethnics) they remained the most important minority in Romania.
World War II

***During the Second World War, the bulk of the Jewish population living on Romania’s present territory was deported; the Holocaust reduced Romania’s Jewish population of 780,000 people by half. Following the Second World War, approximately 70,000 ethnic Germans were deported to the Soviet Union, and many more were forcibly relocated within Romanian territory.
The Communist Era

In 1947, Romania became a communist country. As a result, the migration diminished because of the very restrictive exit policies that the government applied. Passports were held by the police, and prior approval from the authorities was required in order to obtain the travel document. Those applying as emigrants to various embassies in Romania had social and economic rights revoked and were harassed by authorities. Under this repressive regime, those who wanted to leave the country were forced to cross the boarders illegally or to be politically exiled.
Focus on people

During the communism, a large number of books were censored. Writers were forced to remove entire chapters from their books in order to be allowed to publish them. As a result, some of them decided to leave the country.
Herta Müller, the Nobel Prize-winning novelist, was one of them. She grew up during the repressive communist regime finding difficulties in publishing her books. After she was forced to quit publishing in Romania, she emigrated to Germany in order to continue her career.

In 2009 she got the Nobel Prize for literature.
The post-communist period

High expectances of a better life after the ’89 Revolution were not confirmed and disappointment contributed to the structuring of migration decisions. To cope with an unstable social and economic environment, individuals chose different strategies. Migration was an innovative life strategy at the beginning of the ‘90s, when migration policies were still restrictive, favoring the emergence of informal mobility networks.
Migrants came from unstable environments and tried to avoid the negative impact of the transition process by resorting to atypical, risky solutions. Decisions to migrate were generally reached at gradually after several failed attempts to make a living in the home country, such as job or occupation changes or internal migration. The following fragment is illustrative for the gradual structuring of the migration intention.
Focus on people

„I participated twice at the examination organized by the Romanian Conservatoire but I failed. Then, I embraced other occupations. I was a driver, a house painter, and a sales man. I tried everything just to make some money. […] I have a family, but in Romania, at present, it is impossible to make a living. Actually it has been like this for a long time, and hard as I tried to make a living I could not. Maybe I was not good enough, or I could not manage as others did. That’s why I chose Italy. […] After the Revolution, everybody promised so many things. We all hoped for the best but nothing happened. […] Youths have no future here if they do not have helpful connections (28 years, migrant Italy, constructions).”

Source: SNSPA, 2004
The deficiencies of the economic environment in Romania could represent the primary push factor for migration. The lack of occupational opportunities lay at the basis for the acceptance of inferior occupations abroad.
Focus on people

A Romanian resident doctor earns about 450€ a month, while in the Western European countries the monthly income is exceeds 3000€. This is the reason why most of the young doctors choose to leave our country. The phenomenon creates problems to the national medical system.
Focus on people

This is the situation of a young woman with high education affected by status inconsistency. After graduating, she tried to find a job that would correspond to her educational abilities. She failed, and decided to leave abroad where she accepted a job as a scrubwoman. She justified her migration strategy comparing herself with other migrants who, just as she did, accepted to perform most inferior jobs. These jobs were part of the everyday life in Italy, and as long as everybody did it, there was no reason to feel ashamed.

"After I graduated, I waited. The only job that I could find was that of a secretary with 600 Lei a month. I would not work under these conditions. Here in Italy, everybody performs inferior jobs. Many people work without papers. I work in a pizza restaurant. I do the cleaning... Everybody does this here... I am not sure what I will do in the future. I do not have papers, so maybe I will try to get a working permit. I will not go back home for the moment. Maybe after 10 years... There is nothing for me there and I do not want to sacrifice myself there. (migrant Italy, high education)"
The beginning of the 21st century marked a spectacular ascent in the number of international students at worldwide level. In 2004, at least 2,5 million students of tertiary level studied outside their country of origin, compared with 1,75 million that did it in 1999, which represents an increase of 41%. In 2004, 132 million students were registered anywhere in the world in superior education; value that is very over 68 million that did it in 1991.
The same situation can be distinguished in Romania. More and more students decide to begin their studies abroad, the main destinations being the UK, France, Germany or the USA. After graduating, some of them decide to find a job and settle down in the destination country and some decide to return to Romania.
Focus on people

Popa Cristina is one of the internationally awarded students. She won international Physics contests during her period in the “Constantin Carabella” highschool and, after graduating, she obtained a scholarship for the University of Princeton, USA. Every year, students from our highschool decide to study abroad.
Some of them are:

- Florentina Dragulescu – Physics, USA
- Dorian Bivolaru – Physics, Germany
- Teodora Pantu – International Political Studies, UK
- Andrei Dragomir – Nano-technology, UK
- Aris Olteanu – Business, UK
- Vlad Mancila – Management, UK
Focus on people

We should mention the “elite Romanian migrants”, those who managed to achieve performance abroad in the most difficult fields of activity.

Romania has a large team of IT, physics or mathematics experts who work now for Microsoft, NASA, MIT, Google etc.

The reason of their choice is the lack of opportunities in our country.
Conclusions

Emigration causes

-During World War II, half of the Jewish population of Romania and 70,000 Germans were deported back to their countries.

-In the Communist Era, the few emigrants that left the country were those who had social and economic rights revoked and were harassed by authorities.

-During the Communism, lots of writers decided to leave the country because of the censorship applied to their novels.

-After 1990, people started to leave for other countries in order to cope with an unstable social and economic environment.

-Starting with the 21st Century, more and more students decide to begin their studies abroad because of better chances to find a job and a higher quality of life.
Even now, Romania is an emigration country. The main causes are political and economical.

The immigration rate is low, in spite of the high opportunities of investment.