



... So Long From EUROPE !

On Romanian Labor Force Migration To The EU



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UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ

... SO LONG FROM EUROPE!

**ON ROMANIAN LABOR FORCE MIGRATION
TO THE EU**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The present study is a comprehensive analysis of Romanian citizens' information practices and information needs concerning their rights and responsibilities on the European labor market. The study is part of the project "Workers in the EU – Informing the Romanian Migrants about their Rights and Responsibilities on the European Labor Market", implemented by the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (NACAB).

Temporary labor migration in a foreign country is an interesting social phenomenon regardless of the perspective from which it is tackled. How could you not be curious to find out who are those that leave, or where they come from, or where they want to go? The motivation for choosing a job abroad is probably the most important element of the migration process, becoming an essential issue for the entire Romanian public space. The resources used to get to the destination (social relations, skills, competences, qualifications, information) are main contributors to the success or to the failure of the person looking for a job abroad. The migrant worker, like any other explorer, needs information and finding it implies personal dedication and search for solutions, including institutional ones.

The target group of the present study is the migrant and potential migrant population of Romania. It is important to note that those keenest on leaving Romania to work in a foreign EU country are mostly young people, with a level of education that is above the average, and with income above the average as well. Women represent a significant segment of this population. In addition, many of the people who choose to work abroad are rather engaged in formal activities, meaning that they are legally active on the Romanian labor market under a contract, being freelancers or owning a business. Their favorite destinations are Italy, Spain and United Kingdom.

With respect to the profile of the studied population, one can say that those who choose United Kingdom are younger, more educated and with greater income than those who choose the other two countries. The former ones are more qualified in their field of activity and withhold more resources pertaining to social capital than those migrating to Spain and Italy. United Kingdom's position among the first three European countries preferred is a new phenomenon that probably creates a new type of migrant for Romania.

Choosing a specific destination for working abroad is mostly a historically regional infused process. Thus, most people from Muntenia (South) go to Spain and people from Moldova (East) usually go to Italy. The individuals leaving for United Kingdom in order to find a job are rather from the Northeastern part of the country (i.e. Regional Development Agency North-East).

Many people make use of "informal networks" in their quest to find a job abroad, meaning that they seek the help of their relatives, friends and acquaintances that already live there. They have the same source of information for the procedures they have to follow for their departure and for the working conditions in the host country. This indicates that a great number of those entering the European Union labor market start by working illegally and then try to obtain the status of a legal immigrant.

The experiences of those who have already worked in EU countries raise problematic issues with regards to immigration. Lack in qualifications, inability to speak the language of the host country, inability to adapt and integrate in host country's cultural environment, remoteness from the rest of the family, all of these are obstacles in achieving success and main determinants for their failure.

Comparing preferences for different sources of information, grouped in the institutional - non institutional divide, exhibit the fact that the second choice after the informal network is a specific type of institutional channel such as the Internet (websites of the institutions) and media channels (TV, newspapers, radio). Those who access specialized institutions ask for rather specific information (job faires, application procedures, wage level, accommodation opportunities in the host country, legislation pertaining to working conditions, information about the employers in the host country) are already familiar with the general aspects of their departure and are more advanced in the process of emigrating.

In fact, the entire analysis drafts a profile of Romanian workers wanting to get a job in an EU country, placing them in complex social intertwining and identifies their needs of information with regards to finding a job (detaching also possible institutional solutions to come across to those issues).

On the structure of the study:

The study is organized in eight chapters. Following the introduction, there is a chapter about data collection and methodology; chapter two presents some destinations chosen by Romanian workers, coupled with their places of residing. Chapter four stresses the social profile of the Romanian migrant, be it a potential or real. Part five explains how Romanians get to work abroad and chapter six describes the reasons for which they choose to immigrate and the obstacles in achieving this goal. Chapter seven presents a series of aspects regarding to the way immigrants are perceived by the others and the way they perceive the group they are part of. Part eight concentrates on the need of information and on finding the institutional solutions to tackle it. Finally, the conclusions of this analysis pinpoint the main aspects of an informative campaign for prospective immigrants in an EU country.

2. DATA COLLECTION

The analysis is based on quantitative data, as well as on qualitative data. The mix between the two techniques insures the construction of an accurate profile of both the prospective and real migrants to the EU, generating a clear blueprint on these people's needs of information and on potential institutional solutions to respond to those needs.

Qualitative Data

The data comes from a sociological survey carried out during March and April 2007, on a group of 715 individuals from 35 cities where CABs function (Citizens Advice Bureaux of NACAB). It has been chosen the method of group selection for this population.

Due to the fact that the target group of the present survey (people that have migrated and people that intend to migrate) cannot be identified in statistics, hence not allowing for national representation of the group, two different methods for selection have been chosen for insuring a high level of representation for the collected data:

- **The “snowball method” (MBz)** – it presupposes the operator to identify a person from the target group and from that one to find another person that either worked abroad or intends to do so; this way, it is possible to keep track of the subjects with similar experiences and to attain the number of subjects divided into each and every selection unit

And

- **Institutional method of selection (MInst)** – it presupposes applying the questionnaire to people coming in contact with institutions in charge with the matter of migration; the subject is statistically chosen according to the estimated number of beneficiaries during a given period of time that coincides with the period in which the survey is carried out.

In the case of the present survey, the **MBz** selection has been made by the personnel from the CABs from the 35 locations that took part in the research and the questionnaire has been applied to the subjects from these locations. The group of subjects selected by this method counts 530 individuals.

The **MInst** selection required identifying the types of institutions that interact with people from the target group and five such institutions have been chosen: County Agency for Labor Force Inclusion (Romanian: AJOFM); Labor Force Migration Office (Romanian: OMFM); Public Service for Issuing Passports; agencies for recruitment and placement of personnel; international transport company. In order to ensure a hastened filling out of the questionnaire in this case, several items had to be taken out of the forms. General questions have been given up and certain items from the initial questionnaire that had pre-codified answers were replaced with fill in type of questions. However, a consistent theoretical correspondence between the two questionnaires has been kept in order to

create a unique database. The group of subjects selected through the means of the second method gathers 185 individuals.

Table 1.1 shows the covering area of the research, the number of selected subjects thorough the means of the two methods, spanned on the 35 locations of the survey.

Table 1.1 Covering Areas for Quantitative Data

County	City	Urban/ rural	Pop.*	MBz	MInst	Tip Inst
AB	Alba Iulia Berghin Cugir	urban	71168	20	5	recruitment and placement agency
		rural	2260	7		
		urban	31877	12		
AR	Arad	urban	190114	19	5	recruitment and placement agency
AG	Pitești	urban	13169	19	4	AJOFM
BC	Bacău	urban	205029	20	5	Public Service for Issuing Passports
BH	Oradea	urban	222741	20	5	AJOFM
BT	Botoșani	urban	126145	20	5	Public Service for Issuing Passports
BV	Brașov	urban	323736	20	5	recruitment and placement agency
BR	Brăila	urban	234110	20	5	AJOFM
BZ	Buzău Nehoiu	urban	148087	17		
		urban	12664	10		
CJ	Cluj Câmpia Turzii Margau	urban	328602	19	5	Public Service for Issuing Passports
		urban	29307	12		
		rural	2112	7		
CV	Sfântu Gheorghe	urban	68359	20	5	recruitment and placement agency
DB	Târgoviște	urban	98117	20	5	Public Service for Issuing Passports
HG	Gheorgheni Odorheiu Secuiesc	urban	21433	12		
		urban	39959	12		
HD	Simeria	urban	14311	12		
MH	Turnu Severin	urban	115259	20	5	international transport company
NȚ	Piatra Neamț Târgu Neamț	urban	123360	20	5	Public Service for Issuing Passports
		urban	22282	12		
PH	Ploiești	urban	252715	20	5	AJOFM
SM	Satu Mare Negrești Oaș	urban	131987	20	5	AJOFM
		urban	16648	12		
SB	Copșa Mică	urban	5332	12		
TL	Țigănești	rural	5944	7		
TM	Timișoara	urban	334115	20	5	Public Service for Issuing Passports

	Jimbolia	urban	11830	11		
VR	Focșani	urban	101335	20	5	international transport company
B	Sect. 6**	urban	-	18	96(76+20)	OMFM+ Public Service for Issuing Passports
CL	Călărași	urban	76952	20	5	AJOFM
Total				530	185	

*NIS (National Institute for Statistics), June 2006 (urban – including the population of surrounding areas; rural – population of small towns).

** Population data unavailable.

Given the fact that the sociological survey was primarily target-group-oriented (Romanian migrants in quest for job in one of the EU countries) and information-needs-focused (the target group's needs of information), we acknowledge that the achieved coverage is optimal to identify that particular nucleus of information which can render a comprehensive image over the features of the target group.

Qualitative Data

Qualitative data collection is the product a research carried out during April and May 2007 by a team formed of a testimonial coordinator, a research assistant and a sociologist.

The research was carried out in 9 counties (see Table 1.2) and relied on 24 interviews with people that either work or intend to do so in one of the EU countries. The selected counties comprise 12 cities with a high rate of migration potential, together with Bucharest.

Table 1.2 Covering Areas for Qualitative Data

County	City	Number of interviews	Number of immigrants	Number of prospective immigrants
AR	Arad	2	2	
BC	Bacău	2	2	
CV	Sfântu Gheorghe	2	2	
HR	Odorheiu Secuiesc	2	2	
MM	Baia Mare	3	2	1
NT	Piatra Neamț	1		1
	Târgu Neamț	2	2	
SM	Satu Mare	3	1	2
TM	Timisoara	2	1	1
	Jimbolia	2	2	
VR	Focșani	2		2
	Bucharest	1	1	
		24	17	7

Qualitative research has been structured on six main topics according to the profile of the subjects, to their experiences, and to their intentionality; these topics pursue the general logic of the project so that the obtained information should augment the one gathered by quantitative means.

The 6 topics of the qualitative research are:

- 1) Abroad working record;
- 2) Motivation for leaving and choosing a certain country;
- 3) Problems encountered in the process of wanting to get a job abroad;
- 4) Experiences in working abroad: the good and the bad;
- 5) Necessary information in order to obtain a job abroad;
- 6) Institutions related to immigration.

3. MIGRATION: WHERE FROM? WHERE TO?

During the first years after the Revolution in Romania (1990 – 1995) the preferred destinations for Romanians were countries such as Israel, Turkey, Italy, Hungary and Germany; between 1996 and 2001 Spain and Canada were included in that category and after the year of 2002, the immigration flow concentrates towards Spain and Italy¹.

The first column of Table 3.1 shows the hierarchy of the countries that Romanian workers tend to prefer (NACAB survey in 2005); the second column shows the hierarchy of the countries representing the main destination for Romanians. In broad terms, the analysis of the two hierarchies indicates that Italy and Spain still hold the top two places in Romanian's preferences.

Interestingly enough, the survey reveals that Great Britain is the third in the list, replacing Germany, which occupied this position in the survey carried out by NACAB in 2005.

Table 3.1 5 EU countries in Romanians' Preferences² (2005 and 2007)

	EU countries where most Romanians immigrate*	First-preferred country for working abroad **
Spain	22,4	20,2
Italy	29,5	23,2
Germany	13,6	12,0
Great Britain	4,6	18,7
France	5,5	8,0

* NACAB, December 2005³

** Present survey, March-April 2007

Chart 3.1 presents a comparison between the 2005 and 2007 top 3 EU countries where the subjects would like to work. If we refer to the data of the recently completed survey, we can notice that Italy is at the top of all three options expressed by the correspondents (see in chart; option 1 in 2007, option 2 in 2007 and option 3 in 2007). Italy was the preferred destination in the 2005 survey as well, occupying the first place in the first two options (option 1 in 2005 and option 2 in 2005).

The data from 2007 show that Spain is the second preferred destination; in the 2005 data, Spain shared this place with Germany.

The third place as first option in the 2007 data is taken by Great Britain, after being on the fifth place in the 2005 data (as first option).

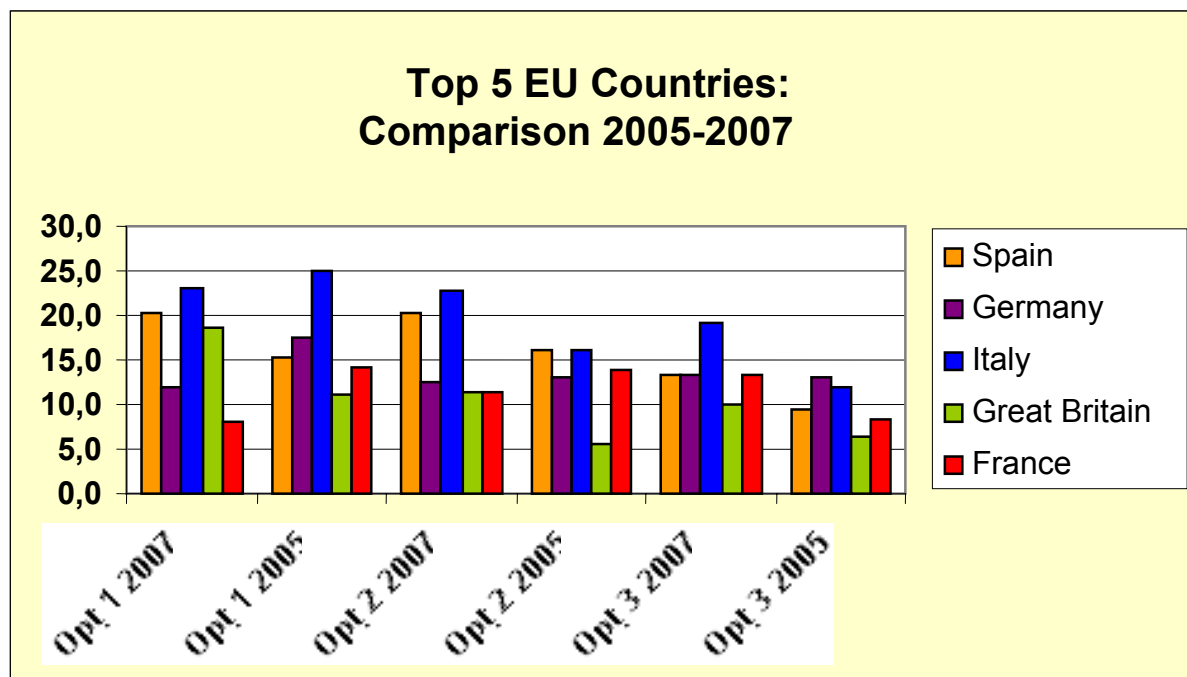
¹ Consult the survey „Temporarily living abroad. Romanians' Economic Migration between 1990 and 2006” coordinated by Dumitru Sandu. Opens Society Fundation – November 2006, page 19. Or „.pdf” version at www.osf.ro.

² Example of how to read the columns: 22,4 percent of the total number of departures have Spain as destination and 20,2 percent of the subjects that wish to work abroad have Spain as the first option.

³ Consult the survey „Romanians and Labor Force Migration in the EU”, http://www.robcc.ro/studii_bcc/571956278125000_ro.pdf.

In conclusion, the data of the two mentioned surveys do not display significant differences in what concerns the first two preferred countries; however, there is a change in 2007 in the third position of the list – Great Britain takes the place of Germany. This preference for Great Britain is manifest despite the restrictions imposed by the British authorities in what concerns migrants from the new EU member states.

Chart 3.1 Main Destinations for Working Abroad 2005*- 2007



* NACAB, December 2005⁴

Choosing a certain destination for work has a strong regional and historical influence. Between 1996 and 2001, the number of departures from Romania's 3 biggest regions Moldova, Muntenia and Transylvania were relatively equal. During 2002-2006, Moldova became the biggest exporter of temporary labor force abroad, followed by Muntenia and Transylvania.⁵

Table 3.2 represents the manner in which the population of potential migrants is concentrated in the three historical regions. Those that leave from Muntenia mainly target Spain, whereas those from Moldova prefer Italy.

⁴ Idem 3.

⁵ Ibidem 1 page 29 the rate of temporary immigration abroad by historical regions and periods.

Table 3.2 First Choice with Respect to 3 of the Romanian Historical Regions

	Muntenia	Transylvania	Moldova
Spain	30,1	21,1	12,8
Italy	19,9	15,1	38,5
Great Britain	20,5	19,5	24,8
France	11,4	5,9	3,4
Germany	8,5	13,5	6,8
Hungary		13,0	

Although most migrants prefer to leave for Great Britain, the group of those with this preference is not clustered around a historical region. However, if we take into consideration the Romanian Regional Development Agencies (see Table 3.3), those individuals that prefer Great Britain as their destination come from Regional Development Agency North-East and the thesis according to which Romanian Southerners prefer Spain is confirmed.

Table 3.3 First Choice with Respect to the Romanian Regional Development Agencies

	Entire group	Italy	Spain	Great Britain
Centre	19,0	13,6	17,7	19,2
North-East	12,3	16,0	8,5	19,2
North-West	14,1	12,3	14,9	13,8
South	17,9	14,8	31,2	16,2
South-East	12,3	18,5	7,8	13,1
South-West	4,5	4,9	5,0	3,1
West	10,6	12,3	7,1	7,7
Bucharest and Ilfov County	9,2	7,4	7,8	7,7

4. POPULATION IN NUMBERS

Methodological cogency is meant to insure the high quality of the data collected and to secure a solid base for constructing a blueprint, in terms of social intertwining, of the studied population.

In order to have a clear grasp with regards to the needs of information of the studied population, a social profile of the studied group was compiled based on a series of social and demographic variables (sex, age, marital status, education, social capital, occupation, housing, housing revenue and per capita revenue, historical region of origin).

Three criteria of grouping the population were factored in:

- Leaving for temporary work abroad after 1989
- The 3 major destinations for work in the EU the respondents opted for
- Method of selection

At the crossroads of the mix between the above-mentioned 3 criteria, 7 subgroups of migrant (or future-to-be migrant) populations emerged:

1. those experienced in working abroad after 1989
2. those that have not left but plan to do so
3. those that target Spain as their destination
4. those that target Italy
5. those that target Great Britain
6. those selected through **MBz**
7. those selected through **Minst**

The percentage of men that have worked abroad after 1989 (62%) is higher than the percentage of women, and the percentage of those that have not worked yet but wish to do so in the future is higher among women (52%).

Those that have worked abroad are aged between 31 and 40 years of age (38%) and those that wish to leave are aged up until 40.

From significant statistic correlations we can see that those that wish to leave are mostly young persons (18%), unmarried (40%) with a higher level of education than those that left for work in the aftermath of 1989. In addition, many of these individuals are students. Moreover, both groups (migrants and prospective migrants) are rather engaged in formal activities, meaning that they are legally active on the Romanian labor market under a contract, being freelancers or owning a business.

The prospective migrants have a higher household income. In fact, in February, the average household income (with wage as the main source) for the entire studied population is double (1899,63 RON) the average income conveyed by the National Institute for Statistics for the same period (941 RON).

From a historical region provenance standpoint, those that have left abroad mainly come from Transylvania (31%), and the number of those that wish to leave is relatively equal between the three regions Muntenia, Transylvania and Moldova although a high

percentage is made up of people from Bucharest (12%).

In term of historical regioning, those that have left have a better knowledge of foreign languages but surprisingly, many of those that wish to leave, admit they do not speak a foreign language at the level of entertaining a simple conversation. With respect to preferred destinations, this group of individuals prefer Great Britain, being mainly women (55%). For the other main destinations (Spain, Italy), the overall distribution is respected with no significant difference according to gender.

The three countries are mostly preferred by individuals aged between 23 and 40, with peculiar differences for the case of Great Britain, which attracts even younger people (23-30 years - 44 %). Those over 50 prefer Italy in proportion of 10%.

Overall, most of those that wish to leave have a legal employment status within their home country but data shows that Italy is chosen by many as a destination for obtaining a declared unemployment status (15%) or household keeper (9%) status.

According to the average household income, for those that leave for Italy and Spain, their income is slightly lower than the overall average of the studied population, and in particular than of those choosing Great Britain. One explanation for this would be the inferior level of education of those that migrate/wish to migrate to Italy and Spain.

The number of household members is higher among those that wish to migrate to Italy and Spain (the average is 3.39 members in both cases) and the probability that there are children under the age of 16 is higher as well.

Graduates of professional courses pursued outside their workplace are those that target Italy (15%) and Great Britain (32%). In addition, all those that wish to migrate acknowledge the importance of speaking at least one foreign language.

Those that are interested in Spain mostly come from Muntenia (38%) and those that wish to leave for Italy come from Moldova (28%).

The last criterion considered, the method of selecting the individuals, offers more insights on the population's intention to migrate with respect to accessing institutional information services related to the matter.

Thus, these institutions are visited mostly by men (59%), high school graduates (48%) and vocational school graduates (15 %). Those individuals selected by the snowball method have a much higher level of education, 29% of which are college graduates and postgraduates. These people are rather involved in formal activities - 69% (i.e. they are legally active on the Romanian labor market under a contract, being freelancers or owning a business). The latter group (snowball-selected individuals) intersect to some extent with the variable of accessing an institution to get information, a significant percentage of this group being unemployed (11%).

Those that frequently access the institutions appear to be part of a larger household (average of 3,42 members per household) with a smaller number of children under 16 in the household. It is likely that they are youngsters living with their parents.

With respect to the ability to communicate in a foreign language, those that employ the

institutions are more likely to speak a foreign language (62%) than the others and among those selected using the snowball method there is a large percentage of people that admit they do not speak any foreign language (35%).

5. MIGRATION NETWORKS AND INFORMATION CHANNELS

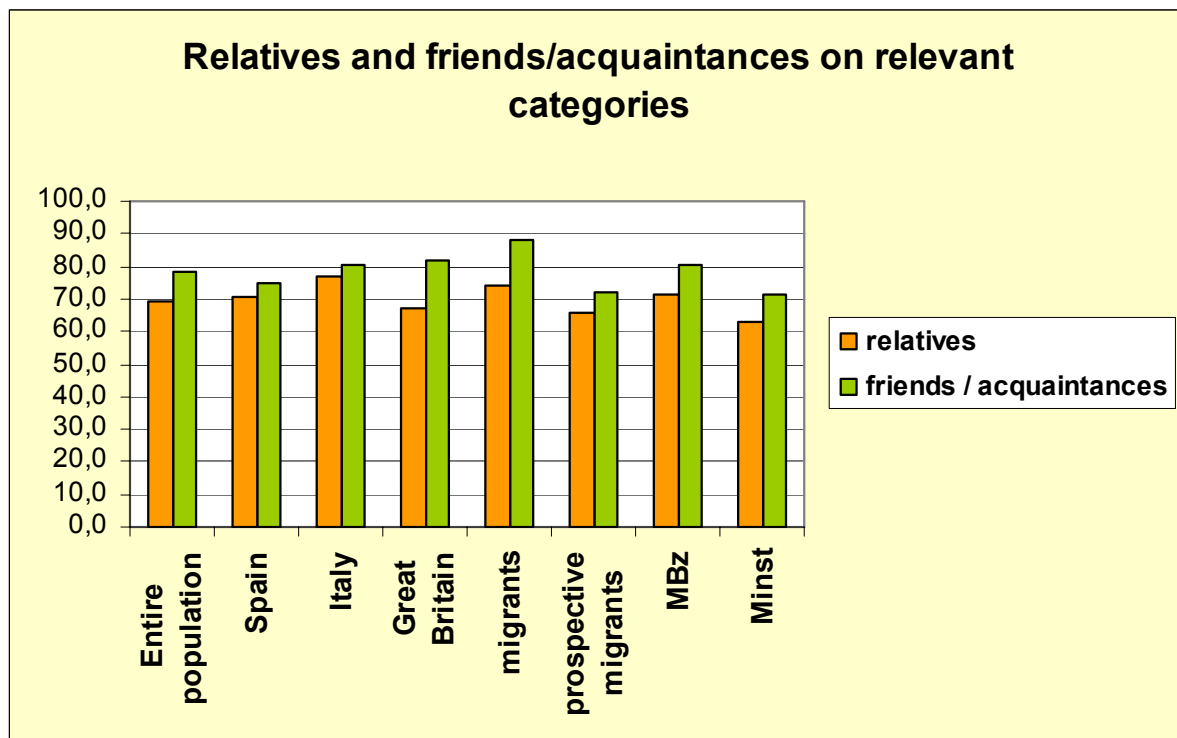
When one decides to head for a foreign country and work, he/she faces two types of options regarding the way of leaving: either they can make use of the relationships they have with relatives or friends who have already got to that country, or they can contact the institutions in charge with labor force migration. Nevertheless, beyond this decision of leaving or staying, what is important is whether Romanians get informed about the labor conditions in the country they want to work and, if this is the case, the channels of information they use.

Overall, 69,1% of the respondents have relatives living abroad and 78,2% have friends and relatives (see Chart 5.1)

The considerable number of relatives and acquaintances living in countries that can make for places where the respondents could work gives some insights with respect to the means through which people try to immigrate for working abroad. Therefore, there is a great probability that all these individuals use these informal contacts to get to the preferred country, depending on the support they can get from the ones they know.

The presence of these people they know in the country that they want to get to is valued as an important resource for the future immigrant.

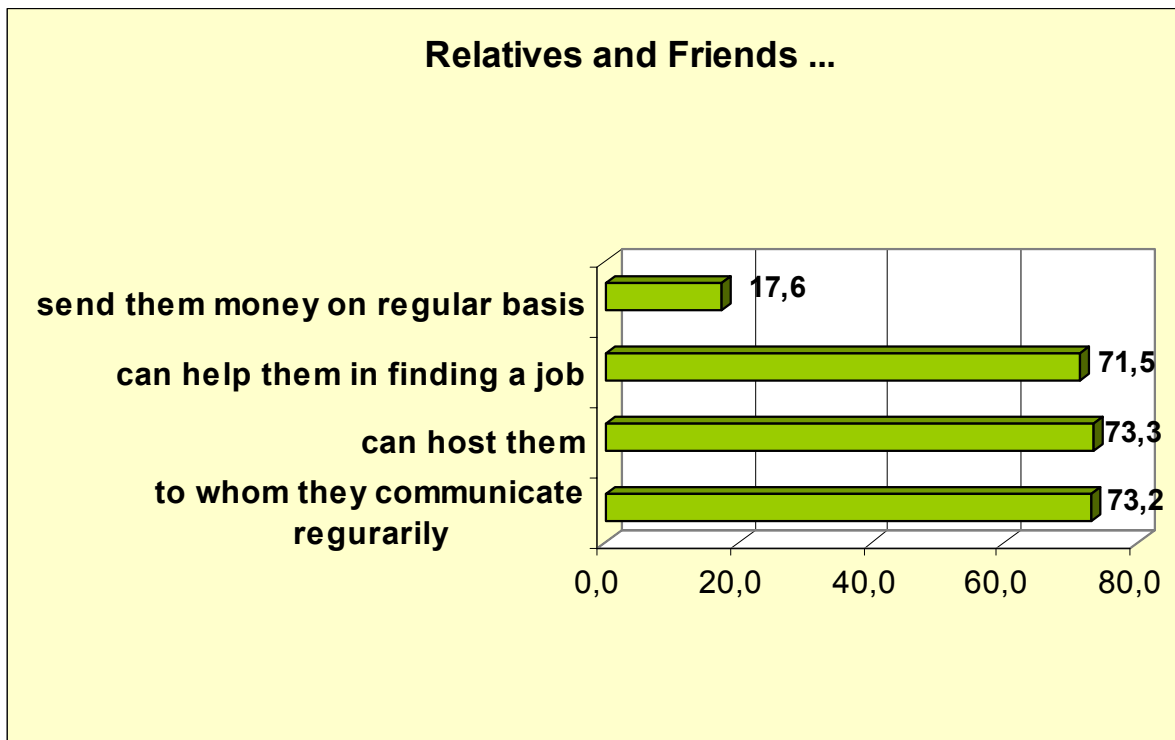
Chart 5.1 Presences of Relatives and Friends/Acquaintances Abroad



Considering the relevant sub-groups, fairly equal and high proportions can be noticed in relation with the presence of relatives and friends of the ones who want to go abroad. What is relevant from a statistic viewpoint is the percentage of the ones who target Italy and claim that have relatives who went abroad for work (77,2%). Furthermore, those who have worked abroad after 1989 have more relatives (73,9%), friends and acquaintances (88,3%) that went abroad for work.

Moreover, friends and acquaintances are more likely to help these individuals in finding a place to work (71,5%) or in hosting them (73,3%) (See Chart 5.2).

Chart 5.2 Help from Friends and Acquaintances



Note: The question was addressed only to people selected through “snowball” method (No= 530 cases).

The qualitative research brings more insights regarding this issue. Most of the people that have been interviewed have left or intend to do so through the intermediate of informal contacts, which are relatives, friends, acquaintances, neighbors, etc. The option for these channels is opposed to the formal one, the institutions in charge with labor force migration.

The main reason is represented by the high level of confidence that people have in these informal networks (“I, for one, would have never left had it not been for my cousin, who was already abroad” – woman, approx. 25 years old, high-school graduate, married in Italy). Another reason is the help one can use when arriving to the foreign country until he/she can manage on his/her own (“if a person who’s already living there helps you, it is much easier for you to progress, so to say, to begin working, to have a starting point, a

place to rest, where to come back, to be relaxed and to adapt to situations – man, 25 years old, student, former worked in Spain”)

Leaving abroad by using informal networks represents an argument for most of the ones who decide to leave have illegal jobs, only after this stage receiving the legal immigrant status.

Apparently, this particular aspect of leaving (i.e. ensuring a minimum of effort when arriving: place for living, information about the labor conditions from trusted sources, help in finding a job) represents the most important aspect for a person who wants to go abroad. All the other problems, especially linked to legal issues, seem to become much easier once they get there.

When asked about the ways in which they get informed about working abroad and about labor conditions from the foreign countries, most of the respondents have chosen the informal channels, which goes back to relatives, friends, acquaintances, neighbors, people who have already been there (See Table 5).

77,4% of the overall respondents chose at least one informal informational channel when it comes to going abroad. 40,8% chose at least one institution in charge with labor force migration, be it either AJOFM/AMOFM/ANOFM (County/City/National Agency for Labor Force Inclusion) or OMF (Labor Force Migration Office, Bucharest) or recruitment and HR agencies. Institutions of the civil society in Romania or in the country where people want to get to are accessed by 21,5% of the respondents. Moreover, when it comes to the administrative institutions of the state, they access the service of the City Hall or Embassies, at the international level – 8, 9% and 18, 8% of the respondents. The most important sources, apart from informal channels, are mass media and internet.

Therefore, if we compare the formal-informal channels to be accessed, it is obvious that citizens choose informal channels and the explanation may reside on the fact that they trust these channels more. Going even further with the argument, one can notice that people prefer a certain type of institutional channels such as internet websites of institutions and mass-communication channels – TV, newspapers, radio. People avoid accessing services of institutions per-se due either to a lack in information or to a clear avoidance of bureaucracy associated with their services.

If we consider the three subgroups represented by those who intend to leave for Italy, Spain or Great Britain, we can notice that the tendency is the same as it is the case with the entire studied population, with peculiar differences however.

For those who wish to work in Italy, the informational channels greatly satisfy the need for information (83,8%). Those who go to Spain use the same model but also access information from the institutions in charge with the matter, especially for information about labor conditions abroad (37,6%).

Table 5 The distribution of population according to accessed informational channels used for working abroad and for working conditions abroad

	General		Spain		Italy		Great Britain	
	departure	conditions	departure	conditions	departure	conditions	departure	conditions
Informal Network	77,4	76,9	76,6	77,3	83,8	82,1	74,4	80,0
Relatives	49,2	44,9	51,8	44,9	62,3	53,5	43,4	44,5
Friends, acquaintances	58,7	58,4	58,3	57,4	66,3	69,0	58,6	59,1
Neighbors	18,5	22,9	22,1	21,3	23,9	29,9	10,1	20,0
Individuals that live there (i.e. preferred country)	45,4	45,2	40,4	46,4	46,5	42,9	45,7	42,2
Local Administration	8,9	15,2	10,1	11,9	7,9	18,8	8,8	15,4
City Hall	8,9	15,2	10,1	11,9	7,9	18,8	8,8	15,4
International	18,8	15,4	15,6	17,1	19,6	15,6	20,3	16,3
Embassies, Consulates	18,8	15,4	15,6	17,1	19,6	15,6	20,3	16,3
Civil Society	21,5	22,4	19,9	22,0	21,0	21,6	26,2	21,5
Foundations, NGOs from Romania	18,0	16,2	16,8	17,9	17,0	14,1	20,3	13,6
Foundations, NGOs from abroad	11,0	15,0	11,8	10,5	11,5	13,6	11,9	16,1
Church	4,5	9,8	3,0	10,8	5,9	11,3	4,8	10,0
Institutions	40,8	30,5	44,7	37,6	35,2	27,2	40,8	29,2
AJOFM, AMOFM, ANOFM	22,1	17,1	25,2	24,4	18,8	17,0	16,7	12,1
OMFM	12,3	8,1	13,7	9,7	8,8	4,5	14,7	12,0
Recruitment, HR agencies	23,4	19,6	21,3	21,8	20,9	18,2	26,4	19,8
Mass media	38,2	33,5	43,2	34,6	39,6	30,1	35,2	38,6
Internet	44,1	35,4	38,6	32,1	39,0	29,5	50,0	42,5

Note.: on column, the sum exceeds 100% due to the fact that individuals make use of more than one channel of information
 How to read: 77,4% of the population chooses at least one informal channel of communication for matters pertaining to their departure.

6. MIGRATION: TO GO OR NOT TO GO?

It is obvious that Romanians want to work abroad but there are still questions regarding their decision on leaving. What is their motivation? Why do they choose specific destinations in the EU? What prevents Romanians from leaving the country or, more specific, what are the main problems in Romania and in the other EU countries that make them reconsider leaving abroad?

Why leaving Romania?

When asking people about the reason for their departure abroad, we have identified three main explanations that sustain their decision of leaving at a particular moment.

Firstly, people refer to their families' needs. In this category we can include both people with family, children. Their financial hardships, the wish to offer their family/children a better future makes them wanting to go for work in another country. Young people, without family of their own try to settle the base for a better living or to help their parents and relatives (see Box 6.1).

Box 6.1

"Generally, this is why people leave the country. To earn money to build a house, to buy a car, so these are basically the goals of those who go there..." (Man, approx 60 years old, retired).

"I left because I had a financial problem, I didn't know how to manage the fact that they (her daughters) would study in another city, I couldn't handle it, I had been paid very low here (...) well, and in two years' time my eldest daughter goes to college, where should I get these money from? I can't manage it, I tried to work, I did this and that (...) What on earth can I do with 100 Euro when only in Cluj the rent is 50 Euro or something like that" (woman, approx 40 years old, high school graduate).

"I'm thinking of helping my parents... I only have my mother and my sister and I'm thinking of helping them, too, not only myself (...) We have partially redecorated our house, I mainly work for improvements in house (...) after I finish investing, I'm going to start thinking about my own future" (woman, 22 years old, high school graduate).

"The wage was very small, I was working in commerce, I was earning the minimum wage per economy while I was also a student" (man, 25 years old, student).

The second type of explanations, which appears quite often in respondents' reasoning, is more general and refers to the economic problems that Romania faces. The causes of the migration of population abroad are systemic ones; therefore, they are more difficult to be solved in a short time. (See Box 6.2).

What is relevant is that a part of the people who talk about the system-related issues in Romania are either people who are already settled in a foreign country, or people who do not want to come back to Romania, once they have left.

Box 6.2

“Shutting down the stable working places (...) so, we shut down Comtim from Timisoara only to let our neighbors from Sighet create one, for in Sighet a big factory for processing meat exists and in Timisoara it couldn't. It is about regional politic, as well (man, approx 60 years old, retired).

“They are unemployed (...) there are people such as the ones in Moldova, where factories have been shut down, or Valea Jiului, let's say, or from industrial areas... the situation is no longer optimistic for the above-mentioned people, for many factories have been shut down as well, and lots of people are searching for a job... they have problems, families to support and duties” (man, approx 40 years old, high school graduate).

“In Romania, there are lots of shortcomings. I like living in Romania, I am a Romanian but this makes us all leave the country when we are young” (woman, 25 years old, high school graduate, married in Italy).

All young people leave from Romania, they have no future here, if you want to earn some money here, you have no options (...) most of them leave to earn money... because in Romania they can't afford to buy a flat and live a decent life provided they get help or they get born in a rich family” (woman, 22 years old, high school, wants to stay in Italy where her boyfriend is).

The third type of motivation for working abroad refers to the need to try new things, to get to know another environment or live in another system of values that dominates Western societies. In broad terms, young people are inclined towards having an adventure or desiring to be appreciated, both professionally and from the human viewpoint, compared to the appreciation in their home country (See Box 6.3).

Box 6.3

“I want to try something new; I want to prove that I can make it both in Romania and abroad” (woman, 18 years old, last year of her high school studies).

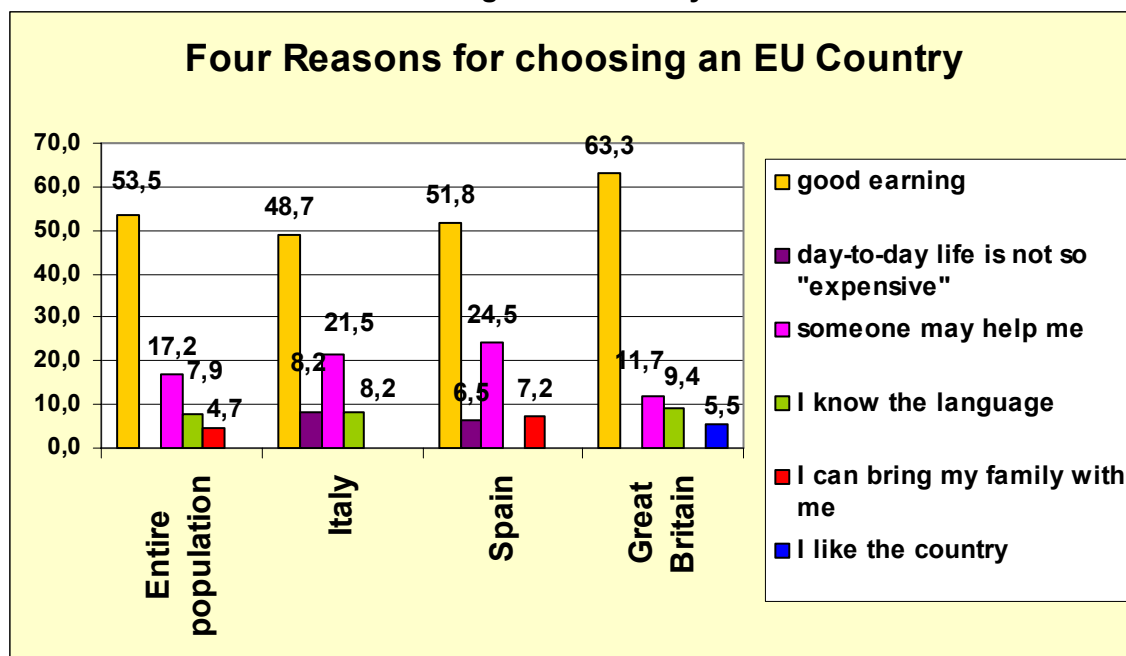
“I want to get some experience to be noticed afterwards, I say, going abroad makes you more open-minded and as one sees more has a better comprehension of life” (man, 25 years old, student).

“I love foreign countries mostly because you can see new lifestyles; life appears to be different...” (woman, 22 years old, medium studies).

Why choosing other country?

Analyzing the data, one can see that people chose to work abroad mainly for financially related reasons. In the countries chosen by Romanians for work, jobs are perceived to be much better paid than in Romania.

Chart 6.1 Motivations for choosing an EU country to work



As one can notice from Chart 6.1, well-paid work is the most important motivation that determines the option for a workplace, regardless of country. 53,5% of the respondents consider that they will be better paid in the country where they want to go to. The help they have from friends/acquaintances that live there is the second reason that supports the decision to leave (17,2 % of the respondents). This is more likely to be the case for people wanting to go to Spain (24,5 %) and Italy (21,5%), where there are already communities of Romanians where newcomers can integrate and be supported.

Aspects such as knowing the language of the target country, the possibility of bringing the family there or issues related to the actual living conditions abroad are less important for the respondents. Moreover, no aspects related to legal migration procedures or finding a workplace have been mentioned, for, like it is mentioned above, solving issues related to obtaining a workplace and a legal status implies a process that starts when reaching the foreign country and that is conditioned by the particular aspects encountered there.

From the experiences described in the interviews conducted with people who have experience in migration, one can also note some positive aspects, which make for new reasons that determine Romanians to temporarily work abroad.

Knowing the language of the foreign country naturally brings another type of treatment, different from that applied to the typical Romanian worker nowadays ("It's kind of like the same in all the countries. If you speak their language, you'll manage and they regard you differently... just like any person, if you know how to speak his/her language, he/she will treat you better. So, you get along better with them,

they respect you if you know the language. Good for me that I knew to speak the language, it helped, you can't manage in a foreign country if you can't speak the language" – man, approx 30 years old, medium studies).

Honesty and trustworthiness at the workplace are considered major qualities appreciated by the recruiters in Europe, and possessing these ones contributes to the professional success of the employee (See Box 6.4).

Box 6.4

"If you want to develop, professionally speaking, you have to be a person that can be trusted. It is very very important, because this is how I got to work as a shop-assistant; they trusted me for not being a thief..." (woman, 25 years old, student).

"It is simple to make money if you are hard-working, get to work in time, don't show up at 10 tired and making up excuses. Its is a fact of... of the way you appear in their eyes and this is mostly because Italians care a lot about being elegant, about external appearance and stuff like that. They see it immediately, they can spot what shoes or purse you wear. They can already see if you bought them with 10 or 100 Euro" (woman, approx. 40 years old, medium studies).

In addition, superior studies, qualification for a certain job determine, obviously, appreciation and success at the workplace. "If you hold a superior-studies diploma and they need that profile of worker, you have chances to become successful..." (man, approx 40 years old, medium studies).

A part of those who have the experience of working abroad consider that in Western countries, the worker is much more appreciated and respected at the workplace and in the society. (See Box 6.5)

Box 6.5

"The wage is not so important, what matters the most is that you are well treated, you know what counts for you. Because I felt this here in England, while I was working at that hotel, but I have never been treated well while I was working in proprieties industry" (woman, 25 years old, student).

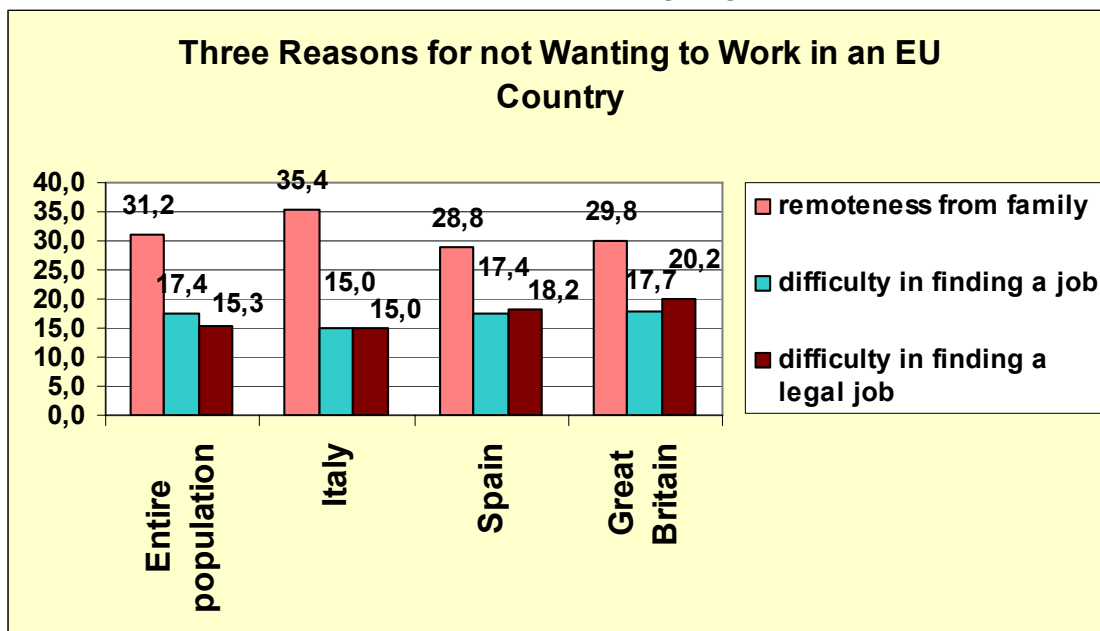
"There is a great difference between the factories here in Romania, the way they work, and the factory where I was working. The boss used to work along with us, too" (woman, 22 years old, medium studies).

"If you mind your own business, nobody supervises you and nobody notices if you're at work and they treat you as if you were one of them..." (man, 37 years old, superior studies).

Why not leaving Romania?

There are several reasons for which people do not leave the country to work abroad. The main reasons highlighted by the research are remoteness from family and the difficulty in finding a job there in general and a legal one, in particular.

Chart 6.2 Reasons that deter Romanians from going



As one can notice from Chart 6.2, regardless of destination, leaving the family is, for many people, the first obstacle when going abroad for work. Those who target Italy seem to be the most affected ones (35,4%). And those who want to go to Great Britain are more affected by the fact that it is difficult to find a legal job, generally speaking (20,2%).

When asked about the problems that those who go abroad for working face, the respondents who participated at the qualitative research have highlighted some negative aspects of the immigrant status. The lack of qualification for those who leave but also the type of existing jobs available for immigrants, mostly illegal ones, are restraining these in accepting those workplaces which are not usually accepted by the citizens of that particular country.

Box 6.6

“And this is because all Romanians who went there got an under qualified workplaces, for this is what they needed. Either char, or in constructions industry” (woman, approx 50 years old, superior studies).

“Those who go abroad and have as a motivation... those who, poor them, have to work in constructions industry, they are despaired. That's the workforce... I mean they are well paid, but it is a low-status job” (man, approx 50 years old, superior studies).

“Some types of jobs are good because you get the official documents as well... those underpaid jobs (...) worker in agriculture... coltivatore agricolo” (woman, approx 40 years old, medium studies).

“... we get to be considered the beggars of Europe” (man, approx 60 years old, retired).

“English people are more relaxed, they only want to work in offices, they don't want to be waiters” (woman, 25 years old, student).

“If you work in a highly considered industry, you are less likely to be accepted especially in countries such as Germany, Austria, Switzerland, this would be an obstacle” (man, 27 years old, superior studies, manager).

“I, as a cameraman, haven't been accepted because I didn't study in Germany for it is a very well paid job there and they don't want to let foreigners penetrate so easily the... I'm a stranger there, too” (man, 37 years old, superior studies).

In fact, the Romanian migrant is exposed to a risk, which is occupying a job that is associated with a low status in that certain country (See Box 6.6). This risk can diminish only by reducing the illegal migration for work; therefore, it can be reduced through a better control of qualifications presented by those who want to work abroad.

The illegal immigrant who works is very insecure in terms of access to social services (“if you want to see a doctor, you have to pay for everything, whereas if you have the soggiorno permit, you also obtain the health permit. From the taxes that you pay to the state, the health-related costs are free or at least minimal and if you have no legal documents you have to pay for everything” - woman, 25 years old, high school graduate), maintaining the job he/she is hired for (“every day I used to stay to myself... like I would lose my job or not to get paid” – man, 25 years old, student).

Insecurity reflects even in finding accommodation (“this means not being able to make a rent contract. You have to have all the time, to depend on someone, to beg someone (...) to make a contract on his/her name. This means you live illegally, you can't even walk on the streets officially. They ask for your IDs. What do you do then? You are...you risk being thrown out of the country immediately” – woman, approx 40 years old, high school graduate) and the person is followed by authorities constantly, being threatened by the possibility of getting thrown out of the country.

Just like the research data have shown, remoteness from family is an important reason for not wanting to go (“well, it would be very difficult, as I have told you, to go abroad now and leave my babies at home, I would miss them. I can't stay... I even think about them when I'm at work” – man, approx 30 years old, superior studies).

The major consequences of the migration phenomenon, when it comes to working abroad, are hinging upon disturbed family relationships and even family separations, which has considerable psychological effects upon children (“I have lots of pupils whose parents are working abroad and what happens with them is a real drama. You see the child's evolution, which is all right up to a certain point when everything goes down (...) I know a pupil who has been frowning ever since his mother left and only when he gets to relax is he a beautiful child”- woman, 50 years old, superior studies).

For lots of children, parents who work abroad are models they try to follow. They appreciate the material success that the parents have and are willing to give up studies in favor of money that appear to them as being easy to earn in a foreign country. The decision of leaving and interrupting school seems to be the best as long as they can see no future perspectives in Romania, not even graduating with superior studies. (*"Some say I will abandon high school for the moment, I'll go to Italy, work, make a future there and all the rest, and then I come back and when I get back to Romanian, well... there are so many private schools... I can pay for a diploma!"* – woman, 18 years old, last year in her high school studies).

Those who leave as well, feel alienated. The full integration in the new society is not possible at all levels, reveals the conversations with the respondents (*"I'd feel a stranger, we are seen as those from East and we, women get here only to seduce their men, or something... so I can't feel at home when they have such a perception about me"* (woman, 40 years old, medium studies).

Regarding this last aspect, more problems have been mentioned - regarding the double effort the immigrant worker has to make in order for his work to be as appreciated as that of the native. (*"and this could be the case for Romanians, just like a black person in the United States has to work two times more in order to be appreciated"* – woman, 50 years old, superior studies).

We have noticed from the research data that there is no special interest in knowing the language of the country where you get to, this being another obstacle in the way of social integration of the immigrant (*"in my case it was pretty bad. Why? Because I had no friends and I did not know the language and for me it was... how to put this... the prisoner of four walls. I had not been socially active, I had no contact with people because I could not understand what was going on around me until I started to learn (...) if one knows the language, it would be... 90 % of the problems would get solved. If he/she doesn't know the language, he/she cannot get out of the house... only people who want to do something else in a community, Germany for instance... small communities of people working in constructions industry, and lots of Romanians go there, working in the same place"* – man, 37 years old, superior studies).

7. EUROPEANS ON ROMANIANS AND ROMANIANS AMONG EUROPEANS

The portrait of the Romanian migrant can be comprised either through the traits in terms of which the latter is defined by his fellow countrymen or of the representations generated in the minds of the EU citizens regarding the prototype of the Romanian worker.

Following the discussions held with the subjects who participated in the qualitative research, one could notice two appropriate manners in which one can approach the development of the aforementioned portrait. On one hand, one means consists of the impressions of migrants or prospective migrants in relation to the manner in which they are perceived by the citizens of the host countries. On the other hand, the second approach entails the self-image or the mode in which the average Romanian citizen usually relates to the migrant fellow citizen.

According to the statements of the subjects who participated in the study, Romanians are, to a certain extent, regarded as industrious, competent and conscientious people in terms of the tasks they perform (*“those abroad, the employer... take pleasure in working with emigrant workers such as Romanians”* - male, 30 years old, secondary education). Despite these representations of a positive nature, a sense of alienation manifests itself and a distant attitude towards foreigners seems to be developed in many of the EU states in which Romanians work (See Box 7.1)

Box 7.1 Romanian Worker, Foreign Worker

“Nevertheless they regard you as inferior due to your lack of belonging to their country. Thus, a wall is erected between us, so to say, and they behave differently before they get to know you. Until that moment, there is that wall which separates us, so to speak” (male, 30 years old, secondary education).

“Walking with my mother and the elderly lady placed in my mother’s care, everyone was looking in a repulsive manner at us and if my mother walks on one side of the street and I on the other, one can notice the difference (...) as it doesn’t matter your status or your traits because you are nothing else but a foreigner” (female, 18 years old, senior).

“...as they regard the Turks and the Italians in Germany, due the presence of disparities which one can notice as well in terms of payment in relation to the same type of job...” (male, approximately 60 years old, retired).

However, the average Romanian, which fits the mould of a potential emigrant, manifests a highly critical attitude towards the group to which the latter belongs. According to a common opinion, a significant percentage of the countrymen who leave Romania are motivated not by the desire to earn an honest living but by the goal of engaging in illegal activities. (*they go abroad, work for a day or two, and are able to support themselves for a longer period of time with the money they earn... and it’s easier to provide for yourself. It is this the reason for which they go abroad and not due to their ambitions, dreams or other such things... It is people like these who create such an image to Romania abroad. They are perceived as such... Everywhere I went, I would hear them discussing about stealing, about the manner in which one can rob that shop and things like that; I heard it in person and not by word of mouth...* – male, 27 years old, entrepreneur, college education).

The lack of education characterizing many of the Romanian emigrants represents an explanation for these behaviors and for the negative image projected on the Romanians who work abroad. Many choose to leave the country in order to work abroad but it is those who fail to adjust to the social order of their countries of destination that are singled out (See Box 7.2).

Box 7.2 Poverty and Lack of Education as the Traits of Romanian Migrants

“Indeed, they lack education to a great extent... Many of the Romanians who left the country have never experienced a decent life standard (...) I maintain constant contact with Romanians and I see that they are peasants, peasants you know, they are not used to decent living conditions (...) Can you gain an insight into the type of people working there, into the fact that they are poor people who lack the capacity to ask what they desire? It’s one thing that they don’t speak the language and another that they are slow on the uptake (...)” (female, 40 years old, secondary education).

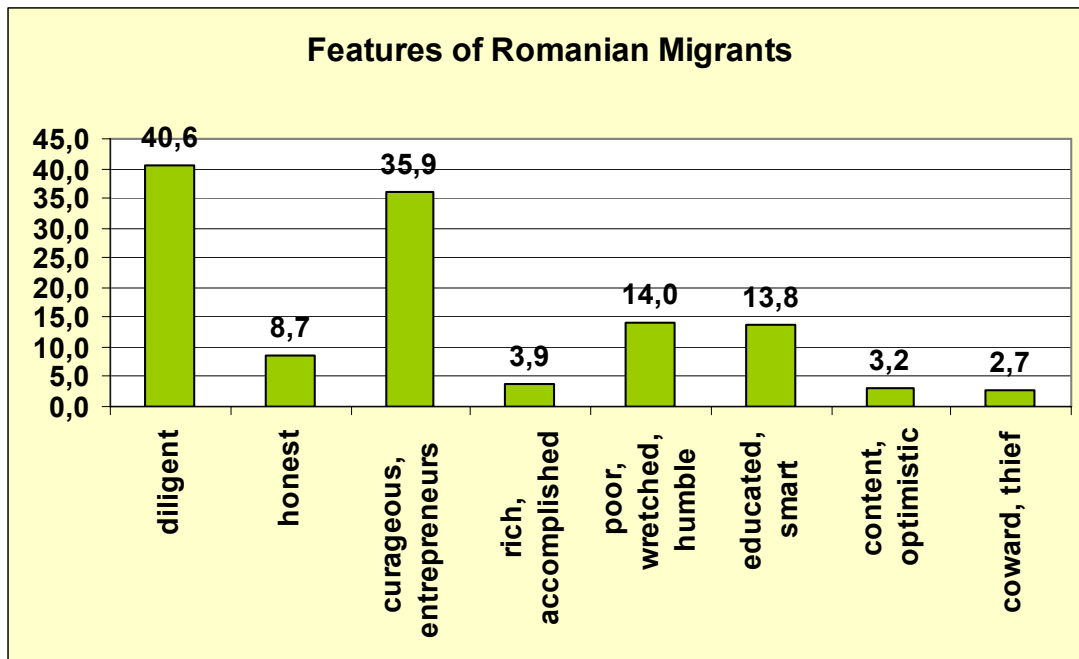
“Upon looking on the street, Romanians are the only ones who drink in front of the shop; the others buy alcohol, as they are not angels, but drink it at home. The Romanian would sit on the sidewalk in front of the shop and drink. In the subway, Romanians swear at Italians, so a positive image is not to be expected” (female, 55 years old, college education).

“Not many, approximately half or even less of the Romanian migrants originate from the countryside; thus, their level of education is not high and, as soon as their situation improves slightly, they think that everything is their due and they start to steal, they engage in ...” (male, 27 years old, entrepreneur).

Several interlocutors highlighted the issue of the difficulties that Romanians face in terms of establishing good relationships among themselves in their adoptive countries. One notices the absence of a group unity that should manifest itself within the members of a minority. *(Romanians fail to provide help for one another abroad, they help each other in Romania but not outside its borders. There, if given the opportunity, they diddle you, as we say in Romania, that is they hoodwink you, they lie and things like that. They do it because they fear losing their job, being ripped off themselves or witnessing somebody else’s success - male, 37 years old, college education).*

The information that resulted subsequent to the research depicts a positive portrait of the Romanian emigrant in terms of its character. Those who work abroad are more likely to be perceived as diligent (40,6 % of the subjects gave answers containing at least one mention of this attribute); courageous, with managerial skills, canny, resourceful/versatile (35,9 %), intelligent, educated, competent (13,8%) and less likely to be characterized by use of negative features. 14 % of those who participated in the study regard Romanians who work abroad as poor, wretched, humble, sacrificed people (See Chart 7.1).

Chart 7.1 Romanian Migrant is ...



The gathering of the data is limited to those selected through the “snowball” method of selection (N=533) and the sum of percentages exceeds 100% due to the fact that numerous features were mentioned - in the chart, the main attributes are displayed.

In conclusion, the depiction of the Romanian migrant consists of both positive and negative traits; with regard to the latter, one notices a tendency to be expressed with prominence during the informal discussions in which the participants in the qualitative study engaged.

8. GETTING INFORMED AND BEING INFORMED

One can take the decision to explore an unknown region, as in the case of the individual who leaves his home country in order to work in a country with regard to which the latter has no or limited information, on the basis of certain resources which one carries inwardly. These can consist of relationships, whose intensity ranges from fragile to strong, established with people who can help one once outside the borders of one's country, of skills or qualifications that enable one's access to a job or of useful information gathered through different channels.

One casts no doubt upon the need for information experienced by those who intend to work abroad and for several topics that may be of interest depending on the destinations and jobs which potential emigrants are in search of. Nevertheless, equally important are the means in which the information is received, the manner in which it presents itself to the public and the institutions in whose purview the dissemination of the information should be.

What to look for?

The need for information on the side of prospective migrants is of a diverse nature and relates to a sundry of fields. (See Table 8.1).

Table 8.1 Types of Information Necessary in order to Migrate

	Entire Population		MBZ		MInst	
	Opt 1	Opt 2	Opt 1	Opt 2	Opt 1	Opt 2
The countries in which the access is allowed	18,9	2,6	23,8	2,9	2,0	0,9
Contracts and contracting procedures	16,4	17,3	17,3	17,2	13,2	17,4
Work permit	13,7	10,4	16,9	11,8	2,6	3,7
Application procedures for a job	5,2	2,7	2,1	1,9	15,8	6,4
Positions in high demand	6,1	7,3	6,5	8,1	4,6	3,7
Conditions for starting a business	2,8	2,4	3,7	2,9		
The recognition of diplomas	2,7	5,9	3,1	6,6	1,3	2,8
Labor legislation	4,3	3,8	3,5	4,3	7,2	1,8
Social rights	7,3	19,3	9,4	21,7		8,3
The possibility to bring one's family abroad	1,8	6,1	2,3	6,6		3,7
Practical information	5,8	9,4	4,6	6,8	9,9	22,0
Authorized institutions	6,1	8,6	6,7	9,3	3,9	5,5
Job fairs	4,5	1,0			19,7	5,5
Salary	3,3	2,1			14,5	11,9
Regarding potential employers	1,0	0,6			4,6	3,7
Regarding the country's culture and customs	0,1	0,3			0,7	1,8
Attitudes towards Romanians		0,2				0,9

We came to the realization that the choice of a certain item of information was influenced by an issue of a methodological nature - the manner of selection to which the participants in the research were subjected. Those who were chosen upon

leaving an institution responded in a spontaneous manner to the questions related to the information that should be offered by a public service authorized to provide facts/data.

The subjects selected through the "snowball" method provided answers to the questions subsequent to having been presented with a list that contained types of information. One must mention the fact that the latter were given the opportunity to contribute to the completion of the list by adding other spontaneously uttered items of information. Thus, the difference between the two groups consisted of the absence or presence of a stimulus (the list containing the pieces of information).

One reaches the conclusion that those who were chosen upon leaving an institution put an emphasis on the need of more practical and precise pieces of information, regarding job fairs, the application procedures for a job (the necessary documents, resume and so forth), the salary, practical items of information (accommodation, means of transportation, costs), the labor legislation in the country of destination and the local employers.

Pieces of information of a more general nature, regarding the countries in which Romanian emigrants are accepted, the work permit and social rights, were chosen mostly by those who were selected through the "snowball" method. One can explain these preferences in terms of the gained knowledge about general pieces of information of those belonging to the first group and in relation to their need of more precise items of information, as they have already taken numerous steps in order to emigrate.

The qualitative research suggests the existence of an identical typology in terms of the information searched by both the subjects questioned as part of the investigation and those chosen upon leaving an institution. The main items of information make reference to the vacancies on the labor market of the country of destination, to the required qualifications and the related wage levels, as well as to the possibility of signing an employment contract (*"a labor contract there in order for me to gain the necessary protection in case of an accident or if, subsequent to having worked for three months, the employer fails to pay me and leaves me high and dry- male, 50 years old, college education*).

Highly important are the pieces of information regarding the social insurances from which one benefits due to the employment contract (*"in case of an illness, information relating to the social service, the institutions one can address, the steps one can take and whether costs are entailed or not ... - female, 25 years old, student*).

The subjects often invoked an item of information of a practical nature related to the accommodation alternatives to which one has access in the country of destination (*the necessary procedure one must follow in order to rent an apartment there, as benefiting from accommodation is highly important (...) the location of real estate agencies or things like that ...*" - male, 30 years old, secondary education).

Box 8.1 Lack of Information

“Many, the majority of them, have no precise pieces of information. They know that they saw Costel , who came last week into town and had a watch, jewellery and a car after having worked for two years in Spain. I’m leaving too, if Costel made it, so will I – (male, 50 years old, early retirement).

“I witnessed in Italy as well the poor living conditions of the emigrants whose job consisted of reaping tomatoes and whom, it is my firm belief, had no prior knowledge of what was in store for them“ (female, 25 years old, civil servant).

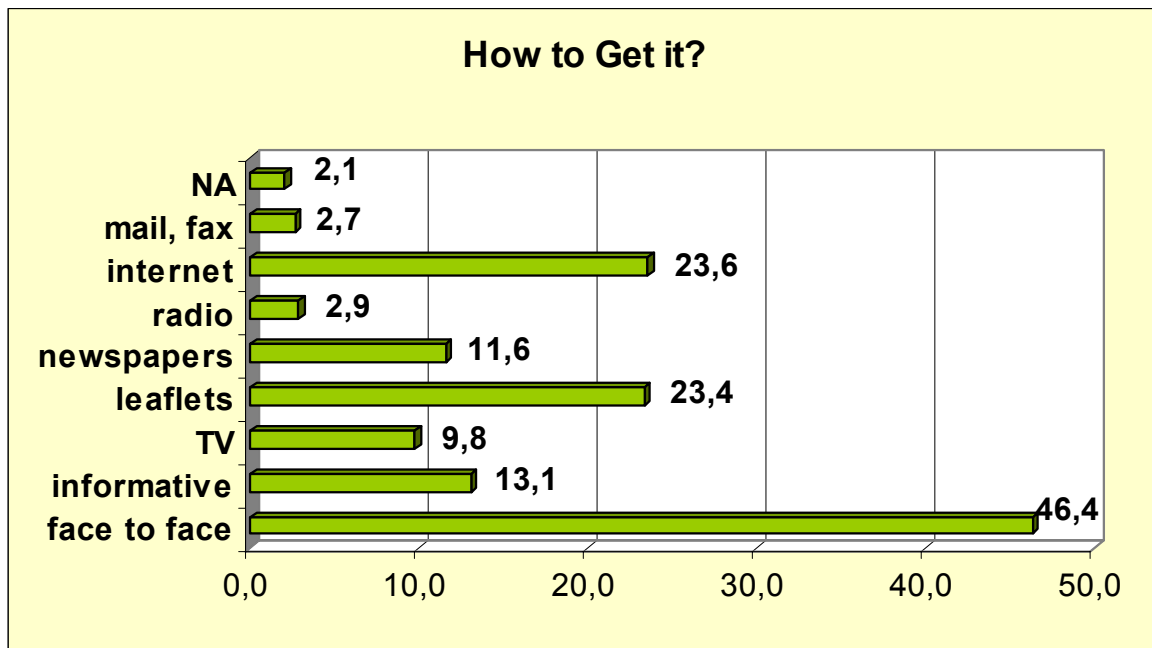
The account given by one of the questioned subjects and presented in Box 8.1 serves as a warning regarding the lack of information. It refers to the extreme yet common situation of those who view the emigration with the purpose of working abroad as an adventure and seek no pieces of information with regard to their destination.

How to get it?

The preference manifested towards certain means of disseminating the useful items of information to the public is exhibited in the Chart 8.1. One notices the existence of three main channels: direct, face to face, oral communication (46,4 % of the subjects manifested, on at least one occasion, their preference for gaining information regarding working abroad through direct communication). The other two channels, almost equal in terms of choices, consist of use of internet (23,6%) in order to promote the information and of disseminating means through brochures or leaflets (23, 4%).

The aforementioned options reflect Romanians’ general preference for the information campaigns based on oral communication, irrespective of the education level of the target group.

Chart 8.1 Channeled Information



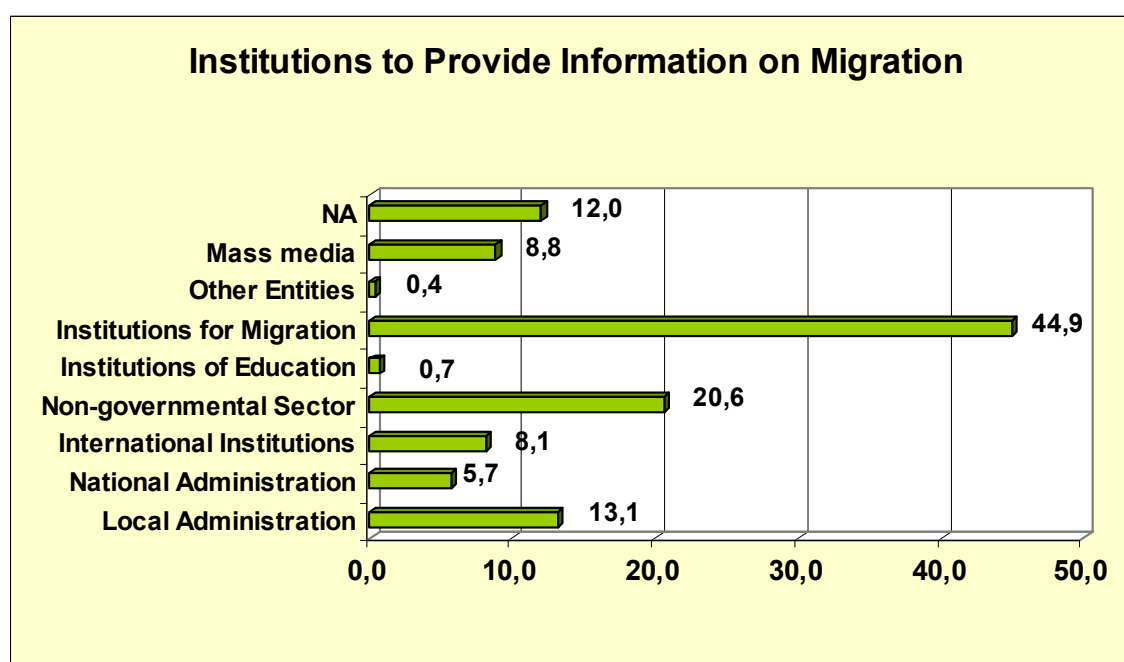
Note: The sum of the percentages exceeds 100% as one was allowed to simultaneously select multiple choices.

Institutional Solutions

Subsequent to having reviewed the need of useful items of information to a migrant and the channels which should be used in order to disseminate such knowledge, one must learn the institutions associated with this need of information and identify the institutional necessity in that respect. One's intentions refer not to the creation of new institutions but to the discovery of existent and authorized ones to provide such items of information and deal with the needs of those interested in the migration process.

In Chart 8.2, there are displayed several types of institutions⁶ that people regard as obliged to get involved in a campaign whose purpose is the information of the public. In that respect, the institutions in charge with this matters (**AJOFM, OMF**, recruitment and HR agencies) are regarded as the most warrantable (such an institution was mentioned at least once by 44,9 % of the participants in the study). The second position makes reference to the institutions that represent the civil society (20,6%), such as: foundations, NGOs, among which one identifies the Citizens Advice Bureaux⁷). In terms of the third position, one notices the local administrative institutions (City Hall, Prefecture, and Public Service for Issuing Passports); 13,1 % of the subjects chose the aforementioned institutions.

Chart 8.2 Institutions



Note: The sum of the percentages exceeds 100% as one was allowed to simultaneously select multiple institutions.

⁶ Definitions of the types of institutions displayed in the 8.1 image **Local administration** = City Hall, Department of Social Service, Prefecture, Public Service for Issuing Passports, **Central administration** = Government and Ministries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of European Integration, Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity), **International institutions** = Embassies and Consulates, **Non-governmental Sector** = foundations, associations, NGOs, CAB, OIM, Youth Information Centers, churches **Educational establishments** = universities, schools, **Institutions for dealing with the migration process** = **AJOFM/ANOFM, OMF**, recruitment and job placement companies, **Other companies** = international transportation companies, tourism agencies.

⁷ 8 % of the subjects regarded the Citizens Advice Bureau as a warrantable institution in terms of providing information to prospective migrants.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned results, one reaches the following conclusion: despite the fact that the institutions in charge with the matter of migration are regarded as entitled to provide information in that respect, the accounts of the participants in the qualitative research suggest that some of them – the recruitment and job placement companies – are regarded as controversial by migrants and prospective migrants.

The aforementioned agencies are not regarded as highly trustworthy as a result of the negative press campaigns and the experiences recounted by our interlocutors and their acquaintances (See Box 8.2).

Box 8.2 Mistrust towards Job Placement Companies

“There were some agencies which provided one with a job abroad but there were not reliable. I had a friend who migrated with the help of such agency and returned after a month. He couldn’t live there, the living conditions were dreadful so it’s a question of luck as far as such agencies are concerned.” (male, 30 years old, secondary education).

“There are recruitment agencies but I don’t trust them because they are as described in the newspapers I read and in the television shows... one would pay an amount of money, a representative of the company would come and tell one about the total cost with transportation included, as it was stated on the passport in the past, and one would found oneself sold abroad, deprived of one’s passport and sold to another company which... It was a sort of slave trade” (male, approximately 40 years old, secondary school).

Institutions such as **AJOFM**, **OMFM** and recruitment and job placement agencies are mentioned to a lesser extent as a source of reliable information, due to the widespread mistrust towards the administrative institutions of the state rather than of the lack of awareness regarding their existence (*because I distrust such institutions, there are many Romanians who migrated with the help of the **OMFM**, with contracts and other such things, but were abandoned after having reached the country of destination ...*” - male, 32 years old, secondary school).

Some potential migrants tend to avoid establishing contact with institutions and gain pieces of information from their friends and acquaintances instead, due to the large number of Romanian migrants and the creation of those informal channels of communication and solidarity. (*I obtained information straight from the people who live abroad as I regard them as more reliable in providing information than other indirect sources* – male, 27 years old, entrepreneur).

Some of the subjects considered Embassies and Consulates to be trustworthy alternatives (*It is highly important that the embassy’s web page provide one with a lot of information. As one who travels to another country must first consult the embassy’s web page* “- female, 25 years old, student).

One regards as important the fact that the local and mainstream media, the television and the internet are mentioned in all the accounts of the subjects as sources of information. It is thought that the television and newspapers can easily provide support to those lacking in experience in establishing contact with the institutions (*“I make reference to those living in poverty and in socially deprived areas. I cannot mention a certain national region but I refer to the small towns, even communes, I don’t know. Well, the television should have a very important role in that respect as it is pervasive enough, even as far as villages are concerned”* – male, 50 years old, college education).

As it was reflected by the research data, the idea of disseminating the information through the educational establishments arose. The majority did not regard such a suggestion as a solution; except for the youngsters who maintain contact with the educational system through high schools or universities and whose arguments tend to favor the aforementioned idea as an efficient alternative.

Box 8.3 Information in Educational Environment

“I would provide youngsters with an educational class, with something like that... in order to talk to them about working abroad, as many emigrate under the sway of illusions. I don't know, those working abroad give them illusions and when they migrate, they face great difficulties. But youths trust their friends more than their parents or their teachers (...) one must pay attention to whom one addresses because if one talks about all these in a classroom and says “pay attention, abroad is like this and like that”, everyone would want to emigrate, as we resemble a flock (...) but if one were to provide them with cases and real life stories, if youngsters were to share their experiences or do something in that respect, something that would familiarize the youths more with living abroad, maybe they wouldn't seriously consider migrating. Or perhaps they would cast doubt and asks themselves whether abroad is all it is said to be and whether it is all milk and honey” (female, 18 years old, senior.)

“I don't know what to say. Perhaps in secondary school, high schools, vocational schools... in that area, because in a few years time they will ask themselves “well, what do I do now? Do I migrate or do I stay in Romania?” (male, 21 years old, student).

It is obvious that such campaigns run in schools should be initiated by those in possession of the necessary pieces of information, state institutions as well as representatives of the civil society.

9. CONCLUSIONS

Migrating with the purpose of working abroad has become a widespread social phenomenon in terms of the mobility of the Romanian labor force. The admission of Romania to the European Union will modulate many of the facets of the emigration process in terms of a much stricter settlement of the different aspects of working in the EU countries.

Such a context requires an in-depth insight into the phenomenon – an attempt to create a comprehensive portrait of the migrant as a social actor – and an understanding of the needs and issues with which the latter deals in his pursuit of a job abroad.

Studies, the present one included, reveal the fact that emigrants in pursuit of a job abroad are young people, with a high level of education, an income per household that exceeds the national average and, highly important, involved in formal activities (employees with an employment contract, or freelancers – workers on a freelance basis, family businesses or entrepreneurs). Therefore, the aforementioned people play an active role on the Romanian labor force but choose to search for a job abroad.

As opposed to the period between 1999-2001, when one noticed a wide variety in terms of the countries of destination, lately the options have decanted, the channels of migration have known some stability and 5 important destinations of choice have been outlined: Italy, Spain, UK, Germany and France.

The presence of Great Britain among the first three European states in order of preference represents an element of novelty and perhaps outlines a new prototype of the Romanian emigrant. It refers to young, educated and financially stable people, mostly women, who conspicuously manifest their desire to emigrate in Great Britain. Those who choose Italy and Spain have considerably lower incomes in comparison to the ones of those interviewed and even in relation to those willing to migrate to the UK.

The latter seem to be better qualified and more culturally aware in comparison to those intending to migrate to Spain and Italy, who have a lower standard of education and, thus, inferior competences. Consequently, the two groups are characterized by a difference in their status.

The level of motivation that determines the potential migrants to find a job abroad is highly important in terms of their subsequent actions. The issue of providing for oneself and of ensuring a decent life style represents the most important argument in favor of the emigration. Furthermore, the lack of stability affecting the Romanian economy and the negative perspective on a potential better future constitutes reasons that determine Romanians to temporarily leave their country or even to establish themselves permanently in EU member states.

Youngsters, whom are not yet fettered by the burden of providing for a family but are aware of the financial struggles that await them in the future were they to remain in Romania, are tempted to migrate stimulated by the desire to discover a new environment, in which their qualities will be highly valued.

The utterance of one's intention to work abroad is influenced by the intensity of one's motivation and constitutes only a first stage of the migration process. The latter entails the search of useful information as well as the identification of concrete

means of traveling to the country of destination. As, according to the majority of the potential migrants, they have relatives, friends and acquaintances abroad, it is highly probable that they use the aforementioned relationships in order to obtain the necessary information and actually travel abroad.

The comparison between the informal and formal channels of disseminating information reveals the preference towards the informal level, due to the trust placed on interpersonal relationships. If we base our comparison on the institutional-non institutional divide, one notices that institutions are not subjected to a complete exclusion from the individual's strategy of information, they are committed to a specific type of institutional channels, namely: the internet (the institutions' web pages) and the mass media (television, radio, newspapers). Few refer to the authorized institutions in terms of the labor force migration, a fact generated either by the minor importance given to information provided by the official channels, either by the attempt to avoid the institutional bureaucracy or by the widespread mistrust in the state institutions.

The process of migration through the informal channels suggests that an important percentage of those who leave the country perform illegal jobs on the labor force market of the country of destination. The resolution of the issues related to obtaining a legal job is dealt with in the country of destination, depending on the particular circumstances.

The labor market of the EU states proves to be capable of greatly absorbing the work force from the new member states; however, it must adjust its policy in relation to the issues of the national economy and to those generated by the wave of migrants.

The lack of qualifications and the jobs to which immigrants in the EU member states have access to oblige the Romanian migrant to accept the positions declined by the citizens of the country of destination. In that respect, one can make reference to the considerable risks entailed by a widespread identification of the Romanian workers with the blue collar jobs. One can reduce the aforementioned risk by measures taken in order to diminish the illegal migration as well as by exerting a better control on the qualifications of the emigrants.

An insight into the job market of the country of destination represents a valuable resource for the future migrant. The topics of interest for the latter vary significantly in terms of its experience with the institution that deals with the process of emigration with the purpose of work.

The subjects who intend to migrate but lack the institutional experience were more likely to regard as important items of information related to the EU member states that allow the access of Romanians, the work permit, and the social rights from which they could benefit. Those who were chosen upon leaving an authorized institution expressed their need of more practical and concrete information related to job fairs, to the application procedures for a job (the necessary documents, the resume and so forth), to the salary, the employment legislation in the country of destination, the local employers and to the practical issues (accommodation, transportation, costs and so forth).

Such a situation arises as a result of the fact that they have already gained an insight into the general information and seek more practical knowledge, as they have already taken numerous steps in order to migrate.

Highly important is the choice in terms of the channels of disseminating the information in order to create an information campaign that will reach the target public. Three main channels should be used to provide the potential emigrants with knowledge: firstly- direct, face to face communication, secondly- posting different advertisements on the internet, on the institutions' web pages and forums and thirdly – through brochures and leaflets.

The aforementioned options reflect Romanians' general preference for the information campaigns based on oral communication, irrespective of the education level of the target public. Besides the manner of disseminating the information, the institutional solution in order to satisfy the citizen's need of information is equally important. This request for knowledge can be responded to by both state institutions and representatives of the civil society. What is significant is the manner in which the aforementioned entities address the denizen's need of information.

By using a methodology that allowed the direct contact with the target group, the present study represents a comprehensive analysis on the emigrants and on those who aspire to such a status. One gives prominence to issues related to the social portrait of the above mentioned people, the manners in which they establish contact with the countries of destination, the means of information, the inducement to leave, the potential difficulties which might determine them to vacillate and, last but not least, to the need of information with regard to finding a job abroad.

This knowledge could constitute the basis of an information campaign whose purpose is to increase awareness in relation to the main issues with which Romanians seeking a job in the EU face and to provide citizens with an insight into the rights and responsibilities they have after having started to work in their country of destination.

Workers in the EU – Informing the Romanian Migrants about their Rights and Responsibilities on the European Labor Market.

National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (NACAB). Bucharest, July 2007.

The content of this material does not necessarily represent the official position of the European Union.