



MILMET

Migrants' Integration into the Labour Market and Ecological Transition

Project No. 2021-1-FR01-KA220-ADU-000026130

Result 1. Handbook

Migration in Romania

Migration in Romania

After the Romanian Revolution (December 1989), the country presented an increase in immigration, mostly of medical students and business entrepreneurs from countries such as Jordan, Iran, Egypt, and China. However, after Romania joined the EU in 2007, the migration trend reversed. Nowadays, according to the *International Organization for Migration (IOM)*¹, with more than 4 million Romanians living outside the country, Romania ranks 17th among countries of origin of migration worldwide. The ratio between the Romanian population that migrated outside the country and that of another nationality that migrated to Romania is approximately 6 to 1, the number of Romanian emigrants being 6 times higher than the number of foreign immigrants who were in the country at the end of 2020.

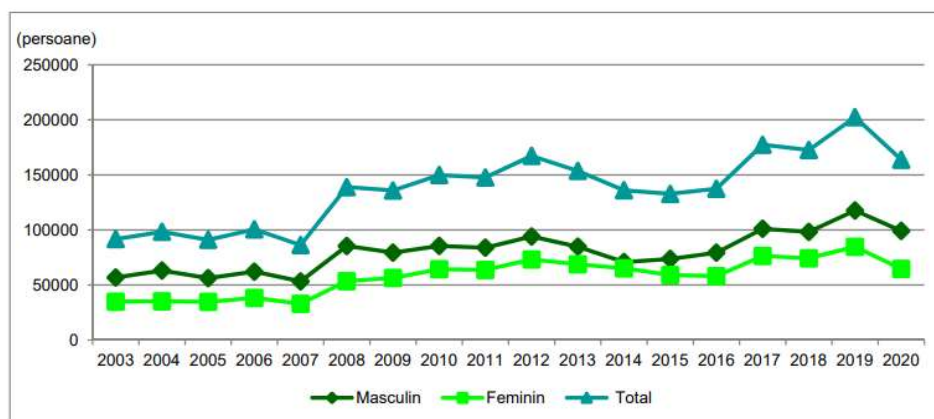


Fig 1. Migrants flow in the period 2003-2020²

¹ Romania among the top 20 countries in the world with the highest emigration, <https://romania.iom.int/news/romania-among-top-20-countries-world-highest-emigration-romanian>

² Institutul Național de Statistică (2021), *Tendințe Sociale*, https://insse.ro/cms/sites/default/files/field/publicatii/tendinte_sociale_2.pdf



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The *General Inspectorate for Immigration (GII) report*³ states that, in 2021, over **148,000 immigrants were registered in Romania**, of which **over 96,000 were from third countries**, most of them from **Moldova, Turkey, China, Syria, Nepal** and **over 52,000 are citizens of the European Union / EEA / CH**, most of them being from **Italy, Germany and France**. The main purposes for which foreigners have established their residence on the territory of Romania are **employment, secondment to work, family reunification, studies, beneficiaries of a form of international protection** and establishment of domicile on the territory of Romania. More than one third of the foreign citizens have established their temporary residence or domicile in Bucharest and Ilfov County, and over **5000** have chosen the counties of Constanta, Timiș, and Cluj.

The number of asylum applications also rose in 2021, **standing at 9,591** (out of 148,000 immigrants) by the end of the year. This was a 36% increase in comparison with 2020. The majority of these asylum seekers were from **Afghanistan (4,260), Syria (1,243) and Bangladesh (875)**. During the same reference period, 1,120 asylum seekers received **international protection**⁴. The report also shares that **1,625 beneficiaries of international protection** were newly enrolled in Romania's **Integration Program**⁵ in 2021, and **738 completed it**.

In contrast with the situation in most other EU member states, Romania currently has a negative net migration rate, meaning more people are emigrating than immigrating.

Immigrants on the labour market in Romania

The labour market attracted, especially foreigners from countries on the Asian continent, most of the applications coming from citizens of **Nepal (10,448), Bangladesh (8,662), Sri Lanka (6,799), Turkey (7,163), and Pakistan (5,731)**.

According to a **sociological study from 2022**⁶, the majority of the employees from South Asia and South East Asia are **young people – 60% between 26 and 35 y/o, 37% between 18 and 25 y/o, only 2% between 36 and 45 y/o and 1% over 45 y/o**. The average age is 27 years. Also, the study showed that 3 out of 4 non-EU workers in Romania are **men (76.8%) and only 23.2% are women**. Majority of them are workers with secondary education, and only a few of them is qualified. The majority works in construction (39%), followed by services (14%) and transport, logistics, housekeeping, etc.

³ *2021 Retrospective on migration in Romania*, <https://igi.mai.gov.ro/repere-din-activitatea-politistilor-inspectoratului-general-pentru-imigrari-in-anul-2021/>

⁴ *Applying for asylum*, <https://help.unhcr.org/romania/applying-for-asylum/>

⁵ *Integration Program*, <https://igi.mai.gov.ro/en/integration-program/>

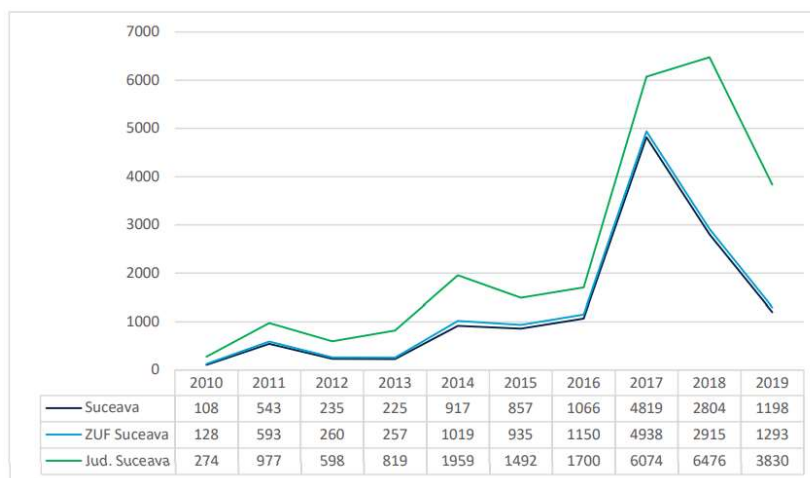
⁶ *Sociological study "Workers from Asia - solution for the labour shortage in Romania"* (2022), by the EWL Migration Platform, Foundation for the Support of Migrants on the Labour Market 'EWL' and the Centre for East European Studies at the University of Warsaw, https://ewl.com.pl/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/EWL_WORKERS_FROM_ASIA_IN_ROMANIA_EN_FINAL.pdf



- **Local situation (Suceava, Romania)**

The number of immigrants who settled permanently in the municipality of Suceava has increased considerably during the last decade, especially in 2017, when there was an increase of over 3000 immigrants compared to the previous year. The latest data from 2019 show that 1198 immigrants settled in the municipality of Suceava, decreasing by approximately 57% compared to 2018 (2804 immigrants).

Figure 5. The evolution of the settled immigrants during 2010-2019⁷



The National Strategy for Immigration for 2021 – 2025

On the 2nd of September 2021, the Romanian Government has published the National Strategy for Immigration⁸, which will have effect between 2021 – 2025 and will be monitored by **CDMiR - The Coalition for the Rights of Migrants and Refugees in Romania**.

Coming as a late measure, considering the fact the last strategy had expired in 2018, the new document emphasizes a series of objectives, mechanisms, priorities and policies, to efficiently manage the migration phenomenon in the country.

However, before pointing out these aspects, it is important to take a look at the general context. In doing so, It has been discovered that each year, Romanian authorities **set a fixed number of foreign workers that can be included on the labour market**, which is often extended at the employers' request.

⁷ *Strategia Integrată de dezvoltare urbană a zonei urbane Suceava 2021-2030, 2.1. Profil socio-demografic*, pp. 1-49, www.primariasv.ro

⁸ Guvernul României, 2021, *STRATEGIA NAȚIONALĂ din 19 august 2021 privind imigrația pentru perioada 2021-2024*, <https://shorturl.at/qDIY2>



In an effort to solve the insufficient workforce issue, around **30.000 migrants** have been welcomed to work here in 2020, compared to 5.500 in 2016. Also in 2020, as a consequence of the SARS – CoV – 2 pandemic, **only 22.307 work permits have been issued as part of the actions to reach the contingent** (which was 30.000 foreign workers), meaning a 74,5% completion rate. Due to travel restrictions, the countries of origin have shifted from Vietnam, Nepal and India in 2019, to Turkey, Nepal and Sri Lanka in 2020.

The 4 general objectives of the strategy are:

- Effective management of the migration phenomenon;
- Strengthening the national asylum system and ensuring compliance with European and international standards;
- Strengthening the response capacity of the Romanian state, regarding the influx of immigrants at border of the national territory;
- Sustained capabilities, necessary to implement policies in the field of migration, asylum and integration of foreigners.

They include actions such as ease of access for foreigners wanting to work in Romania, fighting illegal migration, processing asylum applications efficiently and according to standards, gaining access to non-reimbursable external funds, and many more.

Report of the fact-finding mission to Romania

In December 2022, Ms. Leyla Kayacik - Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees, has visited Romania on a fact-finding mission, to assess the situation of Ukrainian refugees who've fled war in their country.

Her report⁹ shows that at the time, more than 100.800 persons had already come to Romania as a consequence of the war, 89% being represented by women with children. The emergency ordinance adopted the same year states that ukrainian citizens are eligible to benefit from temporary protection (up to one year), independent from their time of arrival.

Even though a refugee status is different from the migrant, it still counts as a movement from one country to another.

Talking about employment, it has been decided that Ukrainian refugees can work in Romania for a maximum of 90 days, without needing a work visa. In December 2022, there were over 5.000 work contracts involving Ukrainian professionals.

⁹Ms. Leyla Kayacik - Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees, 2022, Report of the fact-finding mission to Romania, <https://shorturl.at/cfmpR>



New employment conditions for migrants

By the end of last year, new conditions¹⁰ for the employment of migrants have been added to the No. 25 Ordinance from the 26th of August 2014.

New rules impose that within their first year of employment in the country, migrants need to obtain some sort of written consent from their first employer, if they get another job offer.

Resources:

- *Romania among the top 20 countries in the world with the highest emigration*, <https://romania.iom.int/news/romania-among-top-20-countries-world-highest-emigration-romanian>
- Institutul Național de Statistică (2021), *Tendințe Sociale*, https://insse.ro/cms/sites/default/files/field/publicatii/tendinte_sociale_2.pdf
- *2021 Retrospective on migration in Romania*, <https://igi.mai.gov.ro/repere-din-activitatea-politistilor-inspectoratului-general-pentru-imigrari-in-anul-2021/>
- *Applying for asylum*, <https://help.unhcr.org/romania/applying-for-asylum/>
- *Integration Program*, <https://igi.mai.gov.ro/en/integration-program/>
- *Sociological study "Workers from Asia - solution for the labour shortage in Romania"* (2022), by the EWL Migration Platform, Foundation for the Support of Migrants on the Labour Market 'EWL' and the Centre for East European Studies at the University of Warsaw, https://ewl.com.pl/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/EWL_WORKERS_FROM_ASIA_IN_ROMANIA_EN_FINAL.pdf
- *Strategia Integrată de dezvoltare urbană a zonei urbane Succeava 2021-2030, 2.1. Profil socio-demografic*, pp. 1-49, www.primariasv.ro
- Guvernul României, 2021, *STRATEGIA NAȚIONALĂ din 19 august 2021 privind imigrația pentru perioada 2021-2024*, <https://shorturl.at/qDIY2>
- Ms. Leyla Kayacik - Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees, 2022, Report of the fact-finding mission to Romania, <https://shorturl.at/cfmpR>

¹⁰ European Commission, 2022, *Changes to employment conditions for labour migrants in Romania*, <https://shorturl.at/glORO>