



## **Romanian migration in Greece: A first appraisal after Romania's accession at the European Union**

*Daria Lazarescu*

**Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP)  
Athens,  
June 2009**

e-mail: [daria.lazarescu@gmail.com](mailto:daria.lazarescu@gmail.com)

Working Paper prepared under the auspices of the IDEA project.

## Contents

<u>1. Introduction</u> .....	3
<u>2. Research methodology</u> .....	5
<u>3. Greece as destination country</u> .....	6
<u>Table 3.1: Romanian population in Greece</u> .....	8
<u>Table 3.2: The Occupational status of Romanian immigrants, 2007</u> .....	9
<u>Table 3.3a: Romanians insured at IKA (years 2003, 2004)</u> .....	10
<u>Table 3.3b: Romanians insured at IKA (years 2005, 2006)</u> .....	10
<u>4. The stages of migration from the country of origin and the legalization procedures</u> ...	11
<u>5. Entry and employment paths of Romanian immigrants</u> .....	13
<u>6. Greek migration policy and the Romanian citizens</u> .....	15
<u>6.1 From third country nationals to EU citizens</u> .....	17
<u>6.2 The practices of the state</u> .....	18
<u>6.3 Romanian nationals' strategies in response to legislation and state practices</u> .....	19
<u>6.4 The period of normalization</u> .....	21
<u>7. The role of the migration industry agents in Greece</u> .....	22
<u>7.1 The role of ethnic enterprises</u> <u>before and after Romania's accession to the European Union</u> .....	22
<u>7.2 The role of ethnic organizations (belonging to the ethnic community)</u> <u>before and after Romania's accession to the European Union</u> .....	24
<u>8. Conclusions</u> .....	26
<u>Bibliography</u> .....	28
<u>ANNEXES</u> .....	32
<u>Annex 1: Tables</u> .....	32
<u>Table 5.1 Demographic characteristics</u> .....	32
<u>Table 5.2. Social characteristics</u> .....	33
<u>Annex 2: List of interviews</u> .....	34
<u>Annex 3: Interview guide</u> .....	35

## 1. Introduction

*“I went yesterday to that office to see what can be done about my stay permit. I was told they would help me get one if I paid 500 euros. I asked her why the fee is so costly, and she told me that it has become more and more difficult lately to get a bank account.”*<sup>1</sup>

This is an excerpt from a conversation between two Romanian citizens, taking place on a morning train to the port of Piraeus. One of the interlocutors, a Romanian girl, was explaining to her friend that she found herself in a dilemma, after a visit to a legal consultancy office which belonged to another Romanian, in an attempt to legalise her stay in Greece.<sup>2</sup>

To what extent do Romanians appeal to this kind of services and why is it necessary to resort to the so called *migration industry*?<sup>3</sup> What is the relation of such practices with the present legislation regarding foreigners in Greece, and especially European citizens? Furthermore, what is the relation with the law enforcement in Greece?

The questions above are part of a broader research framework regarding the status of Romanian immigrants in Greece. The present study attempts to provide a first response to these questions.

Both Romania and Bulgaria are members of the EU as of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2007. But the Greek state applied labour market restrictions for Romanian and Bulgarian nationals, for a period of two years. In the meantime, many Romanians have

---

<sup>1</sup> It has recently become necessary for an alien or EU citizen to be holder of a bank account in order to be able to apply for a stay permit.

<sup>2</sup> These juridical consultancy offices provide services to the citizens of Romania and Bulgaria who have recently entered Greece and have to legalise their stay.

<sup>3</sup> The issue concerning migration industry as well as informal migration networks has been elaborated by several scholars like Cohen (1997), King, R. et. al. (2000), Kofman et. al., (2000). The migration industry comprises activities such as labour recruitment, trafficking, and the provision of legal services for immigrants as well as transportation, communication and remittance services. More so, according to Robin Cohen, “...despite the rigorous official control of immigration, there has been an extensive and rapid development of a ‘migration industry’ comprising private lawyers, travel agents, recruiters, organizers, fixers and brokers who sustain links with origin and destination countries” (Cohen 1997: 163). For a detailed reference to the term *migration industry* see Garapich (2008).

continued to work illegally or to resort to the services of various offices which provided them through *certain practices*, papers that allowed them to work legally.

The choice of this ethnic group for the present research has to do with various reasons which render the case of Romanians at least intriguing. First of all, Romanian nationals represent a category which has not been studied almost at all in Greece, although they are one of the largest immigrant groups here.<sup>4</sup>

Second, despite the fact that Romania is a member of European Union, its nationals for a two-year transitional period were not entitled to work legally in Greece. As a result, during this period, Romanian nationals continued to work illegally or to make use of various practices which enabled them to work “legally”. This is an issue that deserves special attention as it may show how migration networks and indeed an entire “migration industry” could be shaped by the conditions of access to the labour market for specific migrant groups.

Third, due to the communist legacy it is important for one to analyse the way this category behaves and evolves in the new host country. Particularly, it appears that the communist state in the attempt to create “the socialist man” (the new man), proceeded to taking measures that sought to change the identity associated with the previous regime. The major imperative of the communist regime, and in line with modernization was the social intrusion of the state into individual life (Szelenyi, 1978). Breaking rurality, commuting population in urban centres, the shortages of food, the diminution of time that was associated with them had assaulted many people’s self-image. The erosion of sociability meant more than the decline of a certain social order, marked by social observance of particular ritual occasions that reproduced solidarity among friends and family. It meant the erosion of their very conception of themselves as human beings (Verdery, 1996). To what extent this also continues to influence Romanian migrants’ collective association and the level of trust in different kinds of networks represents a very interesting issue to be analysed.

*What this paper aims to analyse is if and to what extent the role of migration industry agents as a mediator between Romanian immigrants and the Greek state and society evolved after Romania’s accession to the European Union.*

---

<sup>4</sup> The only research that targets Romanians is a pilot study which focuses on the main characteristics of a new European migration wave, from East towards South and from a certain economic system – the socialist one- towards a free market. For more details, see Savulescu-Voudouri (2007).

Following a short description of the research methodology in chapter 2, this essay provides a short chronological overview of migration from Romania to Greece as well as a general description of the basic features of this ethnic group in Greece in chapter 3. Chapter 4 identifies the stages of migration from the country of origin and how these are connected to legalization procedures. Chapter 5 tries to describe specific entry and employment pathways of Romanian immigrants in Greece. In chapter 6, some elaborations are made concerning the Greek migration policy towards Romanian immigrants in particular so as to be able to comprehend the legal framework in which they find themselves operating after Romania's accession to the European Union. Chapter 7 attempts to explain the role and the impact of Romanian migration industry agents in Greece before and after Romania's accession to the European Union. Finally, chapter 8 is dedicated to the presentation of the most important conclusions that were drawn from the research.

## **2. Research methodology**

The research was conducted from February 2008 till June 2008 and it adopted a qualitative research methodology. During the process eleven Romanian immigrants (seven women and four men) were interviewed. The interviews were conducted in the Romanian language. Interviewees were identified after a period of fieldwork preparation at the end of 2007, during which the author registered all Romanian community associations, including their community leaders and prominent members (professionals, people involved in politics, business owners).

According to the data recorded, eight members of the Romanian "migration industry" were thus requested for interview. In addition, three more interviews were carried out with Romanian nationals who have worked in the main occupational sectors for immigrants in Greece with a view to cross-checking the accounts that the earlier eight interviewees gave on the size and scale of migration networks and a nascent migration industry within the Romanian community in Greece<sup>5</sup>. The interviewees belong to different age groups, from 21 to 50 years old, while they all have lived in Greece for a period of at least four years.

---

<sup>5</sup> According to the results of numerous studies it appears that immigrants perform mainly jobs related to low status professions or providing services which do not enjoy a high social status, more

Interviews followed a semi-structured interview structure (see Appendix for the complete interview guide) organized in three main thematic units and one additional unit dedicated to the interviews held with agents of the “migration industry”.

Thus, the first unit focuses on questions related to the personal experience of immigrants regarding the immigration process, the reasons why Greece was chosen as a destination, the perception of the social environment in the destination country, as well as the future plans of the interviewee.

The second unit concentrates questions in relation to the educational background, the occupational status and the manner in which the interviewee searched for a job.

The third unit consists of the questions related to the process the interviewee had to undergo in order to legalise their stay in Greece, as well as to the changes that were brought on by Romania’s accession to the EU.

The fourth unit includes specific questions concerning the role of each subject within the Romanian community in Greece. These questions differ according to the type of activity performed by each of the interviewees.

### **3. Greece as destination country**

The scientific literature on recent Romanian emigration<sup>6</sup> suggests that Greece is not among the main destination countries for Romanian immigrants. During the first three years after the fall of the communist regime, 170.000 Romanian citizens left the country legally.

The exodus reached its peak in 1990 when 96.929 Romanians left the country to live abroad<sup>7</sup>. The mass departure was not only the result of the freedom to move to another country, but also of the political and economical chaos that reigned at the time in Romania. Among the migrant categories of the time the minorities (especially the German and Hungarian ethnics) represented the largest category in the process of legal migration. For instance, 60.000 persons from the total of 97.000 that left the country in 1990 were of German origin. In the case of German

---

specifically, men are employed in constructions, while women provide housekeeping services or adult entertainment.

<sup>6</sup> Sandu et. al (2004), Sandu (Ed.) (2006), Diminescu (2006), Serban& Stoica (2006).

<sup>7</sup> Horváth (2007).

ethnics, the exodus was encouraged by the aid offered by the Federal Republic of Germany. Therefore, the main reasons for migration were economic. At the beginning of the 90s, there were mainly young people with a high educational background, who were migrating legally and with a perspective of a long term stay towards various European countries, and to the US and Canada as well. From then on, more and more low skilled workers originating from rural Romania have started to emigrate, usually temporarily. During the processes of transition and restructuring that Romanian economy had to undergo after the fall of the regime, the number of the employed population decreased by 44%.<sup>8</sup> More than 3.5 million people lost their jobs. The industrial sector, where a 50% job loss was recorded, had been particularly affected. In this context, a large number of Romanians left the country looking for work opportunities abroad.

During the previous 18 years, the main destination countries for Romanian immigrants in search of a job abroad have changed significantly. Despite this trend, the process of migration from Romania after the fall of communism can be classified into three main stages with respect to the destination countries:

- During the first stage (approximately the period between 1990 and 1995), when the access to the Western European countries was rigorously restricted, Romanian workers had as main destination countries such as Israel, Turkey, Hungary and Germany.
- During the second stage (1996-2002) Western Europe prevailed as a destination and a large number of Romanians left to Italy, while more and more Romanians were leaving to Spain.
- The third stage of this labour movement was symbolically inaugurated on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2002, when members states of the *Schengen Agreement* suspended the demand of an entry visa for Romanian nationals. Thus, a valid passport became a satisfactory requirement to enter the *Schengen* states. The main destinations during the third stage were Italy, Spain, Portugal and the UK. It was estimated that 3,4 million Romanians were working abroad in 2007, from which 1,2 million were legally employed (Tudorica& Lucian, 2007).

---

<sup>8</sup> Especially from 1990 to 2002.

Although Greece does not appear to be a main destination country, the number of Romanians who choose to migrate to Greece is relatively large. Thus, according to official statistical data<sup>9</sup>, Romanian nationals occupy the fourth place in Greece among the immigrant groups, following the Albanian, Bulgarian and Georgian nationals. More specifically, in line with a recent report by the Greek Ministry of Interior and Regional Affairs, the number of valid stay permits awarded to Romanian nationals in Greece is 19.349, representing 2.88% of the total immigrant population (table 3.1)<sup>10</sup>. As far as the geographical distribution is concerned, according to the 2001 Census, approximately 40% of the Romanian immigrant population was concentrated in the Athens metropolitan Area, while nearly 20% in the region of Peloponnesus and 10% on the island of Crete.

**Table 3.1: Romanian population in Greece**

Country origin	Census 2001		Valid stay permits October 2007	Valid stay permits April 2008		EU citizens Valid stay permits April 2008		Total number of foreigners in Greece April 2008	
	Number	%	Number	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Romania	21.994	2,88%	15.884	10.574	2,44%	8.775	16,28%	19.349	2.88%
<b>Total</b>	<b>761.813</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>481.501</b>	<b>432.022</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>53.900</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>670.922</b>	<b>100,0%</b>

Source: Triandafyllidou A. & Marouf M. (2008)

The composition of the Romanian immigrant population appears to be in a relative balance concerning the male - female criterion. Particularly, in accordance with the data provided by the Ministry of Interior and Regional Affairs, regarding the number of valid stay permits awarded to Romanian nationals in Greece, it appears that there are 4.369 male and 6.205 female residents. In contrast to other ethnic groups<sup>11</sup>,

<sup>9</sup> According to the 2001 census, the number of Romanian immigrants reached 21.994, that is 2, 88% of the total immigrant population in Greece.

<sup>10</sup> Besides the data reporting on the number of legal immigrants in Greece, it is worth looking at evaluations related to the number of illegal immigrants. According to a series of studies, the number of foreigners who reside without papers in Greece reaches 200.000- 300.000 persons (Maroukis, 2008). As far as the irregular Romanian immigrants are concerned, their number reaches several thousands, according to the estimation of the Romanian counselor in Greece. Our interviewees estimate the number of Romanians living in Greece to be more than 100.000 persons (interviews 1, 6).

<sup>11</sup> Plenty of studies show that in the case of specific ethnic groups (Bulgarian, Ukrainian), there were mostly female interviewees who migrated to Greece in order to support their households in the country

in the case of Romanian immigrants, there doesn't seem to exist any imbalance between the gender categories, neither in relation to the total Romanian immigrant population, nor to their presence on the labour market.

Likewise, as far as the immigration plan is concerned, gender difference does not play a decisive role in the choice of the destination country or in the order in which the family members migrated. Essentially, in the case of Romanian migrants, the fact that most of them decided to leave at a young age was the decisive factor, and as a result, the majority of the interviewees formed their own families in Greece. Additionally, from the interviews it occurs that the roles of the two sexes within the family framework are in a balance. Both parents work, while women do not appear to have taken a leading role in the family, men being present and providing correspondently<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore, the process of migration to Greece does not lead to a phenomenon of gender empowerment. This issue might be related to the pattern in the country of origin. In an ex communist state such as Romania, women are active actors both in the labour market and society.

As to their occupational status, it is extremely difficult for one to accurately estimate the number of Romanians who work in Greece, especially because of the informal nature of the jobs where they are employed. In accordance with the data provided by the National Institute of Statistics, 65% out of the total number of Romanian immigrants are employed, while only 4, 75% are without work (Table 3.2). In line with the 2008 Annual Report by the Institute of Labour of the General Labours Union Confederation of Greece and the Civil Servants Union (GSEE& ADEDY), which is based on the statistical data provided by the *Labour Force Survey* for the second trimester of 2007, more than ¾ of the immigrants employed work in four sectors of the Greek economy (constructions, secondary industry, private households, tourism and restaurants), while 13, 5% work in two other sectors (agriculture and trade). As a result 9 out of 10 employed immigrants work in one of the above six economical sectors. Romanians do not differ with regard to the above.

**Table 3.2: The occupational status of Romanian immigrants, 2007**

Country	Population	Population aged 15 and above	Active population	Employed	Not employed	Inactive
---------	------------	------------------------------	-------------------	----------	--------------	----------

of origin. In contrast, immigrant groups from other countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh are almost exclusively made up of male individuals.

<sup>12</sup> For more information on the role of the immigrant woman in the family see Triandafyllidou (2006).

<b>Romania</b>	22,982	20,354	15,93	14,844	1,086	<b>4,424</b>
<b>Total</b>	580,709	463,638	330,65	304,167	26,487	<b>132,984</b>
<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>5,40</b>	<b>5,04</b>	<b>6,72</b>	<b>6,73</b>	<b>6,65</b>	<b>3,10</b>

Source: National Statistical Service of Greece, Labour Force Survey 2007 (2<sup>nd</sup> trimester)

The number of Romanian nationals insured in the largest social security organization in Greece, IKA (Social Insurance Institute) proves that Romanians are among the main immigrant groups in Greece, population wise<sup>13</sup>. (Table 3.3a, 3.3b)

**Table 3.3a: Romanians insured at IKA (years 2003, 2004)**

2003							2004					
Citizenship	Insured for work in Construction and Technical sectors			Insured for work in Common Enterprises			Insured for work in Construction and Technical sectors			Insured for work in Common Enterprises		
	Male	Women	Total	Male	Women	Total	Male	Women	Total	Male	Women	Total
Romanians	6,346	147	6,493	5,751	5,074	10,825	5,964	117	6,081	5,554	5,150	10,704
<b>Total number of insured</b>	<b>309,183</b>	<b>5,106</b>	<b>341,289</b>	<b>1,161,788</b>	<b>989,446</b>	<b>2,151,234</b>	<b>300,577</b>	<b>5,111</b>	<b>305,688</b>	<b>1,182,891</b>	<b>1,028,408</b>	<b>2,211,299</b>

Source: IKA 2003, 2004.

**Table 3.3b: Romanians insured at IKA (years 2005, 2006)**

2005							2006					
Υπηκοότητα	Insured for work in Construction and Technical sectors			Insured for work in Common Enterprises			Insured for work in Construction and Technical sectors			Insured for work in Common Enterprises		
	Male	Women	Total	Male	Women	Total	Male	Women	Total	Male	Women	Total
Romanians	6,079	123	6,202	5,300	5,163	10,463	6,697	157	6,854	6,000	6,739	12,739
<b>Total number of insured</b>	<b>292,100</b>	<b>5,343</b>	<b>297,443</b>	<b>1,173,249</b>	<b>1,046,055</b>	<b>2,219,304</b>	<b>306,777</b>	<b>5,922</b>	<b>312,699</b>	<b>1,204,227</b>	<b>1,099,169</b>	<b>2,303,396</b>

Source: IKA 2005, 2006.

In short, it is very difficult to estimate the numbers of Romanian immigrants living and working in Greece, both because some are employed in sectors of the informal economy and work without appropriate authorizations and because, as EU citizens they may not register to obtain a stay permit for EU citizens. While registration for all EU citizens is in theory compulsory, in practice there are no sanctions if an EU citizen does not register. A stay permit for EU citizens is necessary

<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that these numbers represent only a part of the total Romanian population living in Greece if it is to consider that a large part of them are employed in the informal economy, without any kind of insurance.

only for certain transactions with public authorities or financial or legal institutions but generally EU citizens can go about their daily lives also without it. The reluctance of Romanians to register has to do (as we discuss below) with several factors including *red tape* in Greek public administration, the difficulty to find a regular job in the Greek labour market but also with Romanian immigrants' experiences and perceptions stemming from their experiences both in their home country and in Greece.

#### **4. The stages of the migration process from the country of origin and the legalization procedures**

Historically, as it results from the interviews, one may distinguish four<sup>14</sup> different stages in the migration process from Romania to Greece.

The *first* period refers to the migration from Romania before the fall of the communist regime. More specifically, as confessed by the president of the Romanian community when referring to the Romanian nationals who left the country during communism: *“there is a large category of people who live here and who originate from marriages with Greek political refugees. Another large category includes those who arrived to Greece through marriages with Greek students. You will not find here political refugees, as it happened with those who applied for asylum in France, Germany or other countries. So, in the first place, those who left Romania for Greece had done it for, let's put it this way, a glass of milk to put on the table the next day.”*<sup>15</sup>

Within this first period one cannot refer to any illegal immigrants since the Romanians who entered Greece at that time were either the spouses or the children of Greek refugees or the children of Greeks who studied in Romanian universities and who had formed families in Romania.

The *second* stage refers to the period 1990- 2001. It can be estimated that the largest part of Romanian migrants entered Greece during this period. One of the interviewees summarizes very well with regard to that period: *“from 1990 and 1995 on, when the transformations in Romania started, a large mass of Romanians left the*

---

<sup>14</sup> It is worth noting that from the interviews it appears that the Romanians residing in Greece can be classified into three categories. In other words, there is demarcation among the immigrants that entered Greece after 2002.

<sup>15</sup> Many Romanians of Greek origin left the country for Greece during the 1980s notably for political reasons but also as living conditions were becoming increasingly difficult.

*country in search for a better life. At the time, Greece was in a deep need (and it continues to be so up to this day) for low skilled labour. More specifically, workers are needed in constructions, in agriculture for collecting olives and oranges, as well as in restaurants. In other words, it needs low skilled people.”* (interview 6)

The interviews reveal that the immigrants who came to Greece before 1998 legitimized their stay owing to either the presidential decrees 358/1997 and 359/1997 which inaugurated the first regularization programme, or within the framework of the second regularization programme, under law 2910/2001. It appears that the initiative of “*doing their papers*” belonged to the immigrants and that there were instances in which the employed immigrants were supported by their employers with the necessary procedures.

The *third* stage refers to the Romanians that came to Greece after 2002. The year 2002 marks the suspension of the entry visa for the Romanian nationals who were to travel within the Schengen space. Thus, Romanian citizens enjoyed the right to stay on the territory of any Schengen space member state for a period of up to three months as tourists.

Of course, this decision provided the opportunity of stay and informal employment to many Romanians who intended to migrate even temporarily to any of the countries of the Schengen space. During this period, immigrants came to Greece legally and subsequently, staying longer than 90 days and taking up work, abused of their stay till, in the best case, they were given the chance to apply for a stay permit.

The *fourth* stage refers to the period following the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2007, when Romania became a full member of the European Union and as a consequence, its citizens have started enjoying the freedom of movement within the EU. All our interviewees estimate that, after Romania’s accession to the EU, the number of the Romanian nationals who came to Greece increased. The chief editor of a newspaper pinpoints: “*I remember the interviews we used to take at the travel agent offices. The number of buses coming from Romania was increasing significantly, while the buses were full of people who had bought a one way ticket, in search of the chimera of economic prosperity.*” (interview 2)

Due to the new status in force from the beginning of 2007, some Romanians who lived in Greece without papers before the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, applied for a stay permit as EU citizens, while others continued to reside without a permit. In particular, many of those who entered the country after the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2007 turned for help to the

various juridical consultancy offices, in an attempt to obtain a stay permit and then to find a job. The result was that in many cases, the obtained stay permit does not correspond to their real situation on the market. On the other hand, in cases where the immigrants work without papers, and the employers refuse to hire them lawfully, it appears that the possession or not of a stay permit is a worthless “*detail*”.

As to the nature of the migration of Romanian nationals to Greece, the bibliography mentions that those who immigrated for economic reasons saw it as a temporary and instant solution to their problems. This *recent type of migration* during the 1990s, from Romania towards most of the European Union countries, including Greece, is seen as an *incomplete type of migration of a circular nature* (Sandu et.al, 2004)<sup>16</sup>.

Nonetheless, it is a fact that these immigrants continue to live and work in Greece for at least 15 years since their arrival. Thus, as it is mentioned in some studies, this type of migration acquires a more stable character<sup>17</sup>. Our own fieldwork findings show that, the overwhelming majority of the interviewees do not intend to reestablish themselves in their country of origin in the future. On the contrary, their plans have to do with their lives and jobs in Greece.

## **5. Entry and employment paths of Romanian immigrants**

Without any doubt, immigrants from Romania have had all sorts of reasons for migrating. Some were ethnic nationals returning to their homeland, others may have migrated as spouses of Greek nationals or were escaping from economic and social injustices. Others may have migrated due to circumstances that have not yet been accounted for<sup>18</sup>.

Since this study was meant to explore the changing role of the agents of the migration industry after Romania’s accession to the European Union, the migration

---

<sup>16</sup> According to Sandu et. al (2004), within the framework of this type of migration, people develop a type of strategy that maintains the connection with the sending country but also aims to fulfil some purposes, especially financial, in the receiving country.

<sup>17</sup> According to Baldwin-Edwards, this happens because of the migration policy led by the Greek state, partially responsible for trapping the immigrants from third countries in Greece. The present migration policy forces the immigrants to prolong their stay in Greece, a fact which contributes to the formation of a stable migration (permanent migrants) class, since migrants find themselves in the impossibility to return to their countries (Baldwin-Edwards, 2004). In the case of Romanians, it is worth noticing that, although they are European Union citizens and enjoying the freedom of movement, therefore having the possibility to return to their country of origin, they do not appear to follow such a tendency.

<sup>18</sup> For a detailed discussion of these issues see Psimmenos I. (2008).

pathways that could be identified cover only a limited segment of the Romanian population living and working in Greece<sup>19</sup>. Consequently there could be identified two central migration pathways of Romanian migrants to Greece. The *first* migration pathway is the one followed by *ethnic nationals and the spouses of Greeks* while the *second* one represents more of a “drift” of young Romanians who migrated individually or with their family, with the aim of ensuring a “better future” for them and their families back home. As one of the interviewees notes: “... *We left alone, adventurers, with air in our head, hoping that we could have fun and that later on we could afford motobikes and cars...*” (interview 11).

For immigrants belonging to both categories, the path to Greece doesn't seem very complex. First of all, the majority “chose” Greece mainly because it was known to them as a country and also, for the second group, because the migration to Greece was, when compared to other countries, easier to be attained.

*Entry pathways* are rather different. If for the first case, entering Greece was a simple formality since they came as repatriates (interview 6) or with a visa as a Greek's spouse (interview 2, 5), for those belonging to the second migration path, entering the country is a long journey that tests one's ability to be invisible (Psimmenos and Kassimati, 2002). One of the migrants pinpoints: “...*we got here illegally. It was my husband who came first, then me and after that, we thought we should go and bring our daughter too. And so we did... crossing the mountains. We came through Former Yugoslavia, FYROM and then Greece... it took us six days of walking on a single path. Our daughter was two years old. We put her in a bag and we carried her. This was it.*” (interview 7). Another interesting case is that of a migrant who used a guide to be brought here. He describes that he came through former Yugoslavia and FYROM and then, he entered Greece through the Promachonas border. He paid 200 Deutsch marks and he was in a group with other 5 persons plus two guides. He explains: “*We went by train through Yugoslavia to Macedonia (FYROM). We got off the train 5 or 6 stops before the customs point. It was quite far from the border, the closer one got to it, the more frequent the control was. We crossed the border in Macedonia and then we took a taxi to the Greek borderline. The taxi drivers were very nice and they showed us how to go from there.*”

---

<sup>19</sup> For details on demographic and social characteristics of interviewees see annex 1.

*Anyway, we had a guide who knew the way. We crossed the fields where they had cultivated greens. We walked for about 100 km.” (interview 11)*

As to their *employment* in Greece, most of the interviewees are self employed. This is explained, as mentioned above, by the fact that the choice of population to be analysed targeted the agents of Romanian “migration industry”. Consequently, the interviewees selected are Romanian immigrants, business owners in various occupational sectors.

If in the case of ethnic nationals and the spouses of Greeks finding a job followed more of a “*natural course*” since they found employment in Greece, more or less in the same sectors they worked in Romania, for those immigrants that followed the second pathway, the situation was rather different. Most of them changed at least twice their jobs. As one shop owner explains: “... *I have changed many jobs. I used to hand out leaflets, I worked in a gas station, I also worked in a snack bar, so I’ve tried a lot of things.*” (interview 7). Self-employment seems to be one of the few possibilities for people who settled more than ten years before in Greece to achieve a better position in the Greek job market. More specifically, as one of the interviewees explains, “... *when the specialization level is rather low one may say that the image held is not positive. Up to now there are no Romanians who came to Greece after 1990 and who made it to a higher status level in the social hierarchy. Those who work for the public sector or for a research institute come from the old Romanians (here the subject refers to the Romanians who belong to the pre-1989 migration wave). I believe that there is a social stratification also among the Romanians who have arrived to Greece recently. For instance, besides the owners of shops and restaurants, there are individuals who passed the stage of a constructions’ wageworker and now have their own team made of other Romanians and they contract work by themselves. This is a proof that there are enough opportunities in Greece. But, of course, at a lesser degree comparing to other countries.*” (interview 6).

## **6. The migration policy of the Greek state and the Romanian citizens**

The legal framework for the control and management of migrant flows to Greece started taking shape during the 1990s. The mass inflow of economic immigrants entering Greece without papers during this decade led to the first regularization programme which was enacted in 1997 and implemented in 1998. More than 370.000

persons took part in this first legalization wave. However the first significant immigration law was enacted in 2001 (Law 2910/2001) and had two main targets: the long term regularization (including border control, working and stay permit issuing and renewal, as well as naturalization of alien residents) and the enforcement of a new regularization programme. A number of 360.000 individuals were regularised during this new programme. In 2005 a new law (Law 3386/2005) was passed by the Greek Parliament. This new law simplified the process of stay permit issuing and renewal (while work permits were abolished) and introduced a third legalization program (for around 200.000 candidates). The new law envisaged the adoption by the national legislation, of the European directives concerning family reunification and the long term resident status. Finally, given the serious deficiencies in the general implementation of the previous law, in February 2007 a modification which aimed to simplify the whole procedure was endorsed (Law 3536/2007).

Nonetheless, as shown by the research, ten years after the implementation of the first immigration law, migrants are “trapped” in Greece due to the complicated procedures of obtaining and renewing their stay permits, and to the immediate association between their stay and their employment in the host country.<sup>20</sup> Before 2007, Romanian immigrants, as third country nationals, fell under the same legal dispositions, so their status did not differ much from that of the rest of the migrants who lived and worked in Greece. As it appears from the interviews, Romanian nationals had a hard time trying to obtain a stay permit. One of the interviewees explains: “...I became legal in 1998. Later that year I went to register my child on my stay permit but the result was that we became again illegal because they hid a paper from our file and told us that the application was incomplete and that the certificate was to be invalidated. We went to the Minister of Labour, but this situation kept on for months.” (interview 7)

Regarding the present leverages of the migration policy on the Romanian nationals, it should be mentioned that since Romania is a member of the European Union as of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2007, Romanians fall under a regime different from that of the third country citizens. The movement and stay of Romanian nationals and their families within the territory of the Greek state are regulated by Presidential Decree

---

<sup>20</sup> For a detailed discussion of these issues, see Triandafyllidou A.& Marouf M. (2008)

106/2007.<sup>21</sup> Nonetheless, the Greek state imposed a two year restriction for the Romanian and Bulgarian nationals with regard to their access to the local labour market. However, Romanians migrated to Greece from the beginning of the 90s mainly through informal channels. Moreover, the rigid regulations of the labour market have been proved to create even more opportunities for informal employment. Indeed, an extremely restrictive and rigid policy creates motivations and space for semi-compliant practices (e.g. legal stay, but informal employment) and to the proliferation of quasi-legal and illegal recruitment offices, as well as of lawyers who assist the immigrants, offering “*solutions*” to the problem of irregular stay<sup>22</sup>.

### **6.1. From third country nationals to EU citizens**

The present study does not intend in any case to analyse the applicability of legality with regard to all aspects of a citizen’s life. It will limit itself to what appears to be a trend in the context of Greece. It is the case of a phenomenon identifiable, both in the way the Greek state mechanism deals with the immigrants, and in the practices used by the migrants themselves in relation to the Greek state. One notices a sort of ignorance and confusion present on both sides.

The opinion of a Greek Police official responsible for the issuing of stay permits to European Union members is illustrative for the first case. When asked what the consequences of an EU citizen not holding a valid stay permit, the official gave a rather unusual answer: “...*there is no consequence at all. Normally, when an EU national stays for more than three months, he has to apply for a stay permit, but in fact, since he is an EU national, one cannot check when he entered the country nor can he be expelled. That is the provision of free mobility within the EU borders.*” Moreover, when asked about the possible consequences of an EU national living and working permanently in Greece, the official answered: “...*I think there are no particular consequences. The stay permit is probably needed for more complicated transactions.*”<sup>23</sup>

There are two contrary opinions among Romanian migrants with regard to their status as EU nationals. On one hand, there are those who believe that since

---

<sup>21</sup> The document regulates the legal status of all the European Union citizens and their families residing in Greece.

<sup>22</sup> Markova E. (2008), Triandafyllidou A. & Gropas R. (2007).

<sup>23</sup> Phone conversation with the command post of the Greek Police, Division for Foreigners, 1<sup>st</sup> Department, which has taken place on Thursday, the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2008, and 09.30 hrs.

Romania is a member of the European Union, the Romanian nationals who reside in any of the EU countries do not need a stay permit anymore. On the other, there are those aware that, although they are European citizens, in case they reside for more than three months on the territory of another state, they have to apply for a permit of stay. The perspective offered by an owner of a juridical consultancy office for migrants is relevant to the issue: “...*The majority of the Romanian migrants think that since their country is a member of the European Union they do not need to apply for a stay permit. Nevertheless, such a permit is needed because without one your hands are practically tied. First of all you cannot apply for a tax registration number. Without a tax registration number one cannot perform any kind of transaction.*” (interview 1)

Probably, the ignorance of the Romanian migrants towards their responsibility to attain a legal status is derived from their occupational status. Those who work illegally might have never been confronted with a situation in which they had to know what their responsibilities and rights were. As it appears from the interviews, adequate information on the duties of the EU citizens residing in Greece is lacking even in the court of justice. One of the interviewees explains: “...*it is so strange that in the courts of law none knows that, if a Romanian national stay exceeds three months on the territory of the Greek state, he has the duty to inform the authorities, to refer to the Alien Department and to apply for a stay permit. And the strangest thing is that I have never heard a judge say: ‘Prove that you are here for less than three months’. The legalization of the Romanian migrants generates such a chaos. That is probably why they choose not to apply for a stay permit.*” (interview 1)

## **6.2. The practices of the state**

As shown by a series of studies<sup>24</sup>, civil servants make use of the ability to have a personal or organizational interpretation in the implementation of the law, according to their interest, to their cultural values or to the group’s perception. There is as well a certain distance between the law, the bureaucrats and the final law enforcement (Psimmenos& Kassimati, 2003, Psimmenos& Skamnakis, 2008).

---

<sup>24</sup> For an analysis of the concepts *discretionary practices* and *implementation* see Jordan, Strath and Triandafyllidou (2003), while for *discretionary practices* and *discretionary treatment* of immigrant population in Greece see Psimmenos& Kasimati (2003), Psimmenos& Skamnakis (2008).

This is valid for the case of the Romanian migrants in Greece, as our fieldwork also shows. For instance, the Romanian nationals who entered Greece after the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2007 and had not obtained a legal status before this date, have to be eligible in order to apply for a stay permit. Among the eligibility criteria to be met, in conformity with the presidential decree 106/ 2007, one must ensure: “...*that they possess enough financial means to support themselves and the members of their family, in accordance with paragraph 3, article 8 of the present document, so as not to burden the national welfare system, as well as full medical insurance.*” (Article 7, Presidential Decree 106/ 2007). Thus applicants, along with the necessary documents, when applying for a stay permit, they have to bring extra evidence to prove they are financially able to support themselves, without burdening the local welfare system. However, the amount of money that one should have in a bank account varies from one Alien Department to another. One of the interviewees explains: “...*in order to apply for a permit of stay as a EU national, one has to hold a bank account at a Greek bank. The amount varies from a department to another. The lowest amount is 4.000 euros, at the Petrou Ralli Alien Department. The amount to be required to be deposited at the account is at their discretion.*” (interview 1)

Another practice uncovered by another subject interviewed supports the claim according to which, in Greece there are no rights, but civil servants who do “you a favor”: “... *I went to submit the necessary documents and I was told I have to apply on behalf of the company. I refused saying that I want a social insurance (IKA). She urged me to apply on behalf of the company. (The subject means to apply as a freelancer). Finally she did not ask me again and submitted my documentation as a self-employed.*” (interview 7)

### **6.3. Romanian nationals’ tactics in response to legislation and state practices**

The tactics of the immigrants to ensure the legitimization of their status vary: the easiest way for a Romanian immigrant to obtain a stay permit is to prove that he/she possesses enough financial means in order to reside in Greece. As a result, Romanians legalise their stay and then go to the Social Insurance Institute (IKA) and register as self-employed. Thus they “*obtain all the rights, but the type of stay permit they hold does not correspond to their real status. Many are employed by*

*somebody else and pay for their own insurance as if they were self employed.”* (interview 1) During the first months after Romania’s accession “*in the disarray created by the new status implementation, the civil servants did not have an idea what kind of stay permits they were issuing, and Romanians who held a permit that did not give labour rights, had the possibility to insure themselves as self-employed, for instance as house cleaners. The status was that of a self employed insured in the IKA (National Social Insurance Institute) or TEBE- OAE (Welfare Fund of Self-Employed Professionals) systems. Many have done so and then returned to the Alien Department where they changed their permits into one who entitled them to work. That kind of a permit gave them immediate access to the labour market.*” (interview 1)

The ethnic <sup>25</sup> networks play an important role in the materialization of the above mentioned practices. Some turn for help to friends, others to lawyers or to representatives of the “migration industry”, while some others to more than just one source.

The account of one of the interviewees is illustrative for the case of those using both ethnic networks and the help of a lawyer. This person, although having an incomplete application file, managed to obtain a legal status in 2001: “*...my passport had expired. But with the help of a lawyer I managed to translate the document and submit my application. Thus, I obtained a certificate and afterwards, using this certificate from the municipality, I changed my passport. Of course, I was helped by some acquaintances I had at the municipality. One cannot manage it without help.*” (interview 9) Furthermore, since the immigrants are customers of different shops owned by their co nationals, they ask for the help of the “migration industry” and as a result, kinship networks interconnect with ethnic networks. The owner of such a shop confesses: “*...the shop is my whole life, I did not sell sausages and wine anymore, but I was offering information and assistance with how to obtain a new passport, how to get here and there, how to send money to Romania and so on.*” (interview 7)

On the whole, it appears that the Romanian immigrants rely upon various network types in order to obtain the service they need. Thus, according to what is

---

<sup>25</sup> Apart from ensuring a legal residence status, the ethnic networks seem to play an important role in the pursuit of a job. The majority of the interviewees appealed to friends and acquaintances and were successful in finding their first jobs in Greece.

needed at a certain moment, they appeal to the entity that seems more appropriate for an efficient service. In this case as well, the individualism and the lack of trust towards a single source of help prevail in the practices of the Romanian migrants. In some cases, the practices of the Romanian immigrants appear to be inconsistent. For instance, the same person can support on one hand, the idea that in order to obtain a legal status one needs to appeal to the services of a counseling office, and on the other hand, to believe that the safest way to find a job is to use the network of friends and acquaintances, because the employment offices are not to be trusted by migrants. If this is related exclusively to trust or money, is an issue that needs further research.

#### **6.4. The period of normalization**

The period of normalization refers on one hand to the manner in which the Greek state and social environment sees and behaves towards the Romanian nationals. On the other hand, it has to do with the perception of the migrants themselves about the changes brought by the country's accession to the European Union, with whatever rights and duties are implied by it.

It appears that during the first months after the country's accession, the local population, civil servants included, were unaware of the change in the status of the Romanian immigrants. The result was that Romanian nationals were confronted with unpleasant situations<sup>26</sup>. In this sense, the case of a Romanian business man is illustrative: at the beginning of 2007, he went to renew his stay permit and he was taken into custody by the authorities and was forced to pay a 7000 euros in order to avoid imprisonment. The reason was that in the past, the business man appealed to the services of a lawyer who produced a false criminal record without his client to be aware of it (Chihaia, 2007). Furthermore, as supported by the president of the Romanian community: *"... starting with the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2007, the Romanians who live here have not understood what it means to be a European citizen. Somehow they feel marginalized. The Greek social environment does play a role as well, especially the way the civil servants who have not yet understood that Romania and Bulgaria are members of the European Union, treat the*

---

<sup>26</sup> During the first days after Romania's accession to the European Union, minor incidents were recorded at the customs point to Greece. Custom officers did not allow Romanian citizens to enter Greece.

*immigrants. In the first place, last year there were many problems regarding the identification papers control which continued and so on. I believe this problem will be gradually solved.”*

There are different opinions regarding the transformations brought into the life of the Romanian immigrants by the country's accession to the European Union. Some think that at an individual level there are no changes whatsoever, that they have not benefited in any way. But at a symbolic, ideological level, the interviewees underline the fact that there is a significant change. As explained by the chief editor of a Romanian newspaper: “... *there is rather an emotional dimension to this change. I am of course glad that we officially belong now to the European family, although the course proved to be long and continues to be difficult.*” (interview 2) Although most of the interviewed do not feel they benefited directly from the country's accession to the EU, they do feel more secure in their relation to the Greek authorities. In addition, they are aware of the privileges held as European citizens and consequently of the procedures for the issuing of a stay permit. As mentioned in one of the interviews: “...*the behaviour of the Greeks has changed to the better after the country's accession and they started to look at us as if we were equal now.*” (interview 5)

## **7. The role of the migration industry agents in Greece**

### **7.1. The role of the ethnic enterprises before and after Romania's accession to the European Union**

From the interviews carried out it appears that the ethnic business enterprises continue to play an important role for the members of the Romanian immigrant community in Greece and in particular for their relation to the Greek state. The juridical counseling and translation offices for immigrants seem to focus on providing assistance with the issuing of formal documents by the Romanian authorities and the Romanian embassy in Greece, as well as by the Greek state. The discretionary practices of civil servants in their transactions with the immigrants (especially the demand to present extra documents for the issuing of the stay permit) lead more and more Romanian nationals to appeal at the services of their co nationals' counseling firms, in search of a solution to legalise their stay. The case of an owner of such a counseling office is illustrative: “... *Most of the requests are related to the opening of*

*a bank account. One cannot open a bank account without being the holder of a social insurance reg. number. Practically all the doors to banks are closed now. I found a solution though. We bring a bank account, a credit card or a certificate of stable income from Romania.”*

There are no significant differences between the period before and after the accession. In an interview carried out with the owner of a counseling office, it is mentioned that “... *the number of applications for passport renewal has decreased considerably since Romanians can reside just with their identity card. The number of translations of working permits has diminished as well. Previously, such a translation was necessary for the passport renewal.*” (interview 5). There is though an increasing tendency in the requests for various documents necessary for the initiation of business activities from Romanian entrepreneurs. This trend is explained by the bureaucratic relaxation, especially in relation with the financial requirements, which are less severe comparing to those for the third country citizens.

More so, it seems that with Romania’s accession to the European Union new opportunities for the development of ethnic enterprises’ activities appeared. One of these opportunities is linked with Moldavian<sup>27</sup> citizens who reside on the territory of the European Union, Greece included. Given the fact that Romania as a EU member state has introduced the requirement of an entry visa for non EU nationals, and due to the new privileges enjoyed by the Romanians as EU citizens, one may notice a significant increase in the number of applications for Romanian citizenship submitted by nationals of the Republic of Moldavia. According to the latest research, 500.000 applications from Moldavians (the total number is 800.000 persons, spouses and children included) have been submitted from the beginning of 2007. This number is rather significant considering the fact that the population of the Moldova Republic is just 3, 8 million approximately (Ciobanu, 2007). Although there are no exact records for the number of applications for naturalization received by the Romanian diplomatic mission in Greece, as one of the counseling office owners observes: “... *there are numerous applications for Romanian citizenship from citizens of the Republic of*

---

<sup>27</sup> The Republic of Moldavia was part of the territories of Romania during two stages: from 1856 to 1878, and from 1918 to 1940. Many of its citizens identify themselves with the Romanians. Although the Romanian state does not have any territorial claims from the Republic of Moldavia, the Romanian authorities favor the Moldavians in relation to the other foreigners who reside in Romania and seek to obtain Romanian citizenship. Romania as EU member state has introduced the requirement of an entry visa for the citizens of the Republic of Moldavia.

*Moldavia who reside legally in Greece. I am attending in two cases right now.”*  
(interview 5)

The role of the ethnic food stores, the recreational centers and restaurants appears to be that of a channel offering solutions to the problems of their customers, usually related to employment search or to obtaining specific formal documents. As reported by the owner of an ethnic shop: “...*I try to help, I help them to find a job or to find cheaper insurance, even with an advice.*” (interview 3).

Romanian newspapers seem to play an important role in informing their readers. As explained by the chief editor of a Romanian newspaper: “...*the thematic of the publication can be classified into three categories which correspond to the categories of Romanians who live here. There is the category of readers belonging to the first wave of migration which is interested in the political current situation but from a rather detached point of view, since they have no intention to return. But they are still interested in the political developments. There is as well a category of readers from the new migration wave which will go back, but there are as well readers who wish to remain in Greece. We are trying to offer information for each of the above categories through the articles we publish.*” (interview 2). The editor of another newspaper pinpoints with regard to the changes in the structure of publications: “...*before the accession, the main purpose of the newspaper was the legalization procedure, because the immigrants were confronted with numerous and various problems in the attempt to obtain a stay permit.*” (interview 8)

On the whole, the activities of Romanian enterprises play a significant role in the lives of Romanian immigrants in Greece. Additionally, even if it is possible that some of the activities have ceased, at the same time, new needs were created, and, as a result, the owners assessed Romania’s accession as a positive factor for the development of their enterprises.

## **7.2. The role of ethnic organizations (belonging to the ethnic community) before and after Romania’s accession to the European Union**

The main ethnic Romanian association in Greece is rather weak and its activity is limited to cultural events. From its foundation in 1992, the community is almost exclusively made of Romanians who live in Athens and had a legal status for years, in other words, they had no particular problems either with the issuing of their stay permit or with their everyday life in the Greek society. The number of registered

members is 592, but according to president of the community, only 60 or 70 of the members are actually active and they belong to the migration wave of the previous 15 years. This should not be of great surprise if one is to take into consideration previous research on immigrant associations that has been carried out in Greece since the early 1990s. As the study of Kassimati et. al (1992) shows, the role of immigrant associations is limited to providing information and some economic help to their members. At the same time, it seems that people who establish these associations tend to take advantage of their co-nationals. For this reason, immigrants in Greece were very suspicious and tended not to participate into ethnic associations.

The president of the central association of Romanians in Greece, the Romanian community “Stephan the Great” pinpoints: “...*the main problem is that Romanians refuse to register, to participate because they do not feel the need yet or they do not see any benefits out of it.*” In the same spirit, the chief editor of a Romanian newspaper explains: “...*people do not get organized easily because of the regime under which they grew up. That is why we are extremely suspicious and most of the times we are afraid even of our own shadow.*” (interview 2)

As a number of studies point out work plays an important role in keeping immigrant workers away from collective action<sup>28</sup>. Besides work, in the case of Romanian migrants, it seems that the legacy of the communist regime, where the distrust and isolation evolved as necessary protective practices of the citizens, continues to influence, at a significant degree, the daily lives of the Romanian immigrants. It appears that the compulsory registration and participation to the activities of the communist party in the past, to some extent contribute to their refusal to associate.

After Romania’s accession to the European Union, the unification degree of immigrants in Greece towards a more active Romanian community does not seem to have changed. Nonetheless, the representatives of the Romanian community appear more optimistic about a stronger future organization of migrants, mostly in regard to the second generation of immigrants. As underlined by the president of the Romanian community: “...*there are issues who will gradually bring together the Romanian*

---

<sup>28</sup> The findings of Fouskas’ micro-sociological research (2007) show that precarious work and employment conditions distantiate immigrant workers from the rise of forms of collective action and organization. Employment in low status, low skilled jobs leads directly to the complete loss of “community” bonds generating a lack of confidence and reliance towards formal collective organisations and to the adoption of individualistic practices concerning work problems and claims.

*migrants. For instance, the issue of a Romanian school. We can already talk about a second generation of Romanians in Greece who do not have any knowledge about Romania.”*

Another particularity of the Romanian community is the lack of interest in building relations with other migrant organizations. The community members believe that it is not necessary to have a connection with the rest of the organizations and unions which are involved politically or whose objective is the protection of illegal immigrants. They explain such a stand by the fact that “... *now, Romanians have a different status, they are European citizens.*” (interview 6)

## **8. Conclusions**

The purpose of this paper was to contribute with a brief description, to the study of the Romanian migrant population residing in Greece. The analysis focused mainly on the developments during the period after their country’s accession to the European Union as it results from the interviews carried out with Romanian immigrants. The study aimed, above all, to investigate if and to what extent the role of the migration industry agents as a mediator between Romanian immigrants and the Greek state and society evolved after Romania’s accession to the European Union.

In that sense, the conclusions of the analysis are as follows. The process of migration from Romania can be classified into four main stages in relation to the political and economical developments in the country of origin and to the legislative framework regarding immigrants in the host country. The results of the research indicate that the migration from Romania has acquired a stable character. The interviewees do not present any interest in reestablishing themselves back in the country of origin.

As to the country’s accession to the European Union, it is seen as a positive fact by the migrants, but at the same time it creates confusion regarding their rights and duties. On one hand, there are Romanians who believe that the European citizen status means they do not need a stay permit anymore. On the other, there are nationals who are aware of the fact that, although they are European citizens, in case they reside for more than three months on the territory of another EU state, they have to apply for a stay permit.

More so, local authorities and generally, Greek civil servants contribute to a large extent to the deficient information procedures regarding the duties and rights of an EU citizen. Furthermore, state practices are characterized by a high level of discretion since civil servants have the ability to hold an interpretation of the law which is personal, organizational or pertaining to one's duties, and in conformity with the interests, the cultural values or the collective perceptions.

The role of the migration industry agents (especially of the ethnic entrepreneurs) remains significant for the members of the Romanian community in Greece, particularly with regard to their transactions with the Greek state. When they are in a search for employment opportunities, Romanians rely upon both kinship and ethnic networks, while the latter seem significantly useful for obtaining a stay permit. The community does not play an important role in the transactions with the Greek state. On the contrary, the role of the community is limited to activities of cultural nature.

In brief, from the interviews it occurs that Romania's accession to the European Union does not trigger any important changes in the type of networks Romanians use either to legalise their stay, or in any kind of daily transactions with the Greek state. Additionally, it seems that new opportunities appeared for the migration industry to serve Romanian nationals in their exchange with the Greek state. It appears that Romanians pay for the services provided by both Greeks and their co nationals, but there are many situations in which they count on the free of charge assistance offered by their relatives. As to which of the two practices prevails, this is an issue that needs further research.

The results of the present research confirm at a high degree the conclusions of previous studies with regard to the fact that in Greece the policies of restricted access to the labour market end in the formation of further opportunities for informal employment. The policy of restriction appears to lead to the creation and proliferation of semi compliance practices (e.g. legal stay, but irregular employment status). Moreover, these restrictions, in combination with the discretionary practices in the law implementation contribute to the development of the services performed by the employment and juridical counseling offices, which "*help*" the immigrants to enter in the possession of official documents and also offer them a "*solution*" to various legality issues.

## **Bibliography**

Baldwin-Edwards, M. (2004) "Mediterranean Migration: Regionalisms versus Globalization", *Finisterra*, XXXIX, 77, σελ. 9-20.

Campani (2000), "Immigrant Women in Southern Europe: Social Exclusion, Domestic Work and Prostitution in Italy" in King R. (ed) *Eldorado or Fortress? Migration in Southern Europe*, London: Macmillan.

Chihaiia M, (2007), "Several years in jail or a significant caution", *Curierul Atenei*, no 264, pp. 2, 6th of April, (in Romanian).

Ciobanu, C. (2007), "One million Moldavians want the Romanian citizenship", *Cotidianul*, 5th of February, Bucharest, (in Romanian).

Cohen, R. (1987) *The New Helots: Migrants in the International Division of Labour*. Oxford: Oxford Publishing Services.

Cohen, R. (1997) *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, London: University College London Press.

Curierul Atenei, (2007), "Romanian beggars persecuted in Italy, found shelter in Greece", 303, pp. 4, (in Romanian).

Diminescu, D. (2006), "Farmers traveling abroad, a new model of migration", *Revista de Cercetări Sociale*, 2, pp.16-32, (in Romanian).

Fouskas, Th. (2008) "Labour Representation and Trade Unionism of Immigrant Workers: The Cases of Five Immigrant Labour Communities in Athens", paper presented at the *European Population Conference (EPC) 2008*, 9-12 July, Barcelona, <http://epc2008.princeton.edu/abstractViewer.aspx?submissionId=80447>.

Garapich M., (2008), "Migration industry and civil society. Polish immigrants in the United Kingdom before and after the EU enlargement", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 34, Issue 5, pp. 735 – 752.

Horváth I., (2007), "Romania. Country Profile", *Focus Migration*, no. 9, Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWI).

King R. et al. (2000), *Eldorado or Fortress? Migration in Southern Europe*, London: Macmillan.

Kofman, E., Phizcklea, A., Raghuram, P., Sales, R., (2000), *Gender and International Migration in Europe*, Routledge, London.

Institute of Labour of the General Labours Union Confederation of Greece and the Civil Servants Union/GSEE& ADEDY (2008), *Greek economy and employment, Annual Report 2008*, available at:  
<http://www.inegsee.gr/ekthesi2008/ekthesi2008.htm> (last visited on: 7/10/2008).

Social Insurance Institute (IKA)/ General Dept. For Technical-Economic Services, Dept. of Actuary Studies and Statistics(2003), *Monthly Data on Employment, IKA-ETAM*, December.

Social Insurance Institute (IKA)/ General Dept. For Technical-Economic Services, Dept. of Actuary Studies and Statistics(2004), *Monthly Data on Employment, IKA-ETAM*, December.

Social Insurance Institute (IKA)/ General Dept. For Technical-Economic Services, Dept. of Actuary Studies and Statistics(2005), *Monthly Data on Employment, IKA-ETAM*, December.

Social Insurance Institute (IKA)/ General Dept. For Technical-Economic Services, Dept. of Actuary Studies and Statistics(2006), *Monthly Data on Employment, IKA-ETAM*, December.

INS (2006), *Anuarul demografic al României* (National Statistical Service: Romania's Demographic Annual Report).

Jordan B., Strath B., Triandafyllidou A., (2003) (eds.) "From Guardians to Managers: Immigration Policy Implementation in Europe", Special Issue, *Journal of Ethnicity and Migration Studies*, 29, 2, spring.

Kanellopoulos K. et al. (2006), *Irregular migrants in Greece: policies, characteristics and social position*, ΚΕΠΕ, Athens, (in Greek).

Kassimati K. et al. (1992), *Pontian Immigrants from the former Soviet Union: Social and Economic Integration*, Athens: Panteion University and General Secretariat for Greek Diaspora, (in Greek).

Research Centre for Equality (2007), *Female Migration in Greece: Results from National Research of KETHI*, Athens, June 2007, (in Greek).

Lăzăroiu, S. (2004), "Romania: More 'Out' than 'In' at the Crossroads between Europe and the Balkans", *Migration Trends in Selected EU Applicant Countries*, Vol. 4. IOM Austria, Vienna.

Markova E. (2001), "The presence of Bulgarian immigrants on the Greek labour market and in the Greek society", pp. 247-276, in Marvakis A., D. Parsanoglou, M. Pavlou (eds.) *Immigrants in Greece*, Athens: Greek Letters (in Greek).

Markova E. (2008), "Labour emigration: what can be expected?", *The Bridge*, [http://www.bridgemag.com/magazine/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=150&Itemid=42](http://www.bridgemag.com/magazine/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=150&Itemid=42)

Pimmenos, I., (1995) *Migration from the Balkans*, Athens: Glorybook – Papazisis (in Greek).

Psimmenos, I. & Kasimati, K. (2002), *Albanian and Polish Workers Life-Stories: Migration Paths, Tactics and Identities in Greece*, IAPASIS project, Florence.

Psimmenos, I. & Kasimati, K. (2003), "Immigration control pathways: organisational culture and work values of Greek welfare officers", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 29 (2), pp. 337-372.

Psimmenos, I. and Ch. Skamnakis (2008), *Domestic Work of Immigrants and Social Protection. The case of Women from Albania and Ukraine*, Athens, Papazisis. (in Greek)

Psimmenos I., (2008) "Immigrant populations: Social Relations and Life Conditions" in K. Tsimbos (ed.) *Introduction to Geography of Populations*, pp. 213- 259, Stamoulis, Athens.

Salt, J. (1989): "A Comparative Overview of International Trends and Types, 1950-80", *International Migration Review*, 3, pp. 444-445.

Sandu, D.; Radu, C.; Constantinescu, M.; Ciobanu O., (2004), *A Country Report on Romanian Migration Abroad: Stocks and Flows After 1989*, Praga, Multicultural Centre Prague.

Sandu, D. (Ed.) (2006), *Temporary stay abroad. Romanians' economic migration 1990-2006*, Open Society Foundation, Bucharest (in Romanian).

Săvulescu-Voudouri M., (2007), *Romanian Migration in a "Runaway World", Emigration, Immigration and Return-migration of Romanians in a Few EU Countries*, Efes.

Șerban M. & Stoica M. (2007), *Policies and institutions in international migration: work emigration from Romania: 1996-2006*, Open Society Foundation, Bucharest (in Romanian).

SOPEMI (1994), *Trends in International Migration. Continuous Reporting System on Migration Annual Report 1993*. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris.

- Stola, D. (1992), "Forced Migration in Central European History", *International Migration Review*, 26: 324-341.
- Szelenyi, I., (1978) "Social Inequalities in State Socialist Redistributive Economies", *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 1-2, pp. 63-87.
- Triandafyllidou, A. (2003), *Does Implementation Matter? Informal Administration Practices and Shifting Immigrant Strategies in Four Member States*, Final Report, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, printed in 2005, EUR 21703.
- Triandafyllidou, A. (2006), "Polish Female Migration in Europe: A Gender Approach", in Triandafyllidou A. (ed.), *Contemporary Polish Migration in Europe. Complex Patterns of Movement and Settlement*, Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press.
- Triandafyllidou A. & Gropas R. (2007), *European Immigration: A Sourcebook*, Ashgate.
- Triandafyllidou A. & Marouf M. (2008), *Immigration towards Greece at the Eve of the 21st Century. A Critical Assessment*, Report prepared for the IDEA project, June (unpublished).
- Triantafyllidou A. (2005), *Greek Immigration Policy: Problems and Directions*, ELIAMEP, Policy Papers, 6 (in Greek).
- Tudorică, I. and Lucian, D. (2007), "Three millions Romanians work abroad", *Cotidianul*, 18<sup>th</sup> of June (in Romanian).
- Verdery K. (1996), *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

## **ANNEXES**

### **Annex 1: Tables**

**Table 5.1: Demographic characteristics**

<b>Interview code</b>	<b>Citizenship</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Familial situation</b>	<b>No. of children</b>	<b>Labour activity in the country of origin</b>	<b>Educational level</b>
<b>01</b>	Romanian	Romanian	37	F	Married	2	-	University degree – School of Law
<b>02</b>	Romanian Greek	Romanian	40	F	Married	1	Teacher	University degree – Philosophy School
<b>03</b>	Romanian	Romanian	33	M	Married	-	-	High-school diploma
<b>04</b>	Romanian	Romanian	36	M	Divorced	2	-	High-school diploma
<b>05</b>	Romanian	Romanian	36	F	Married	1	Journalist	University degree – School of Law
<b>06</b>	Romanian Greek	Romanian	50	M	Married	2	-	University degree – Metsovio Technical University
<b>07</b>	Romanian	Romanian	30	F	Married	2	-	High-school diploma
<b>08</b>	Romanian	Romanian	31	F	Married	1	Teacher	University degree – School of Theology
<b>09</b>	Romanian	Romanian	32	F	Unmarried	-	Dancer (traditional dances)	High-school diploma
<b>10</b>	Romanian	Romanian	22	F	Unmarried	-	Club Waitress	High-school diploma
<b>11</b>	Romanian	Romanian	36	M	Married	2	Worker	High-school diploma

**Table 5.2: Social characteristics**

Code	Way of migration	Way of entry	Reasons for emigrating	Type of employment	Length of stay in the host country	Year of regularization	Profession	Civic activity
01	Individual non-organized –	Tourist visa	Adventure and self-materialization	Self employed	11 years	1997	Lawyer	The Community
02	Individual non-organized –	Visa	Familial	Undetermined	16 years		Chief editor of newspaper	The Journal
03	Individual non-organized –	Illegal	Better future	Self employed	12 years	1998	Restaurant owner	Contribution to social activities
04	Individual non-organized –	Illegal	Realization abroad	Self employed and Undetermined	16 years		Businessman and construction contractor	-
05	Individual non-organized –	Visa	Family reunification	Self employed	10 years		Business advisor	-
06	Group – non-organized	Visa	Repatriation	Undetermined	32 years		Mechanic Topographer	The Community
07	Group – non-organized	Illegal	Economic	Self employed	11 years	1997	Entrepreneur	The Community
08	Individual non-organized –	Student visa	Studies	Paid hourly	6 ½ years		Chief editor of newspaper	The Community
09	Group organized –	Illegal	Economic	Self employed	13 years	2001	Waitress	-
10	Individual non-organized –	Tourist	Self-materialization	Paid hourly	3 years		Consummation in night bar	-
11	Group organized –	Illegal	Economic	Undetermined	12 years	1998	Painter	-

## **Annex 2: List of interviews**

- Interview 1** Woman, owner of a translation centre and office that provides legal support, in her office, Athens, 20<sup>th</sup> of February and 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2008.
- Interview 2** Woman, chief editor of a Romanian journal, in her office, Athens, 29<sup>th</sup> of February 2008.
- Interview 3** Man, owner of a Romanian restaurant, at the restaurant, 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2008.
- Interview 4** Man, owner of a Romanian discotheque, Athens, 6<sup>th</sup> of March 2008.
- Interview 5** Woman, owner of an office that provides legal support, in her office, Athens, 5<sup>th</sup> of March 2008.
- Interview 6** Man, president of the Romanian community in Athens, at the headquarters of the community, Athens, 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2008.
- Interview 7** Woman, owner of a Romanian market, at the headquarters of the community, Athens, 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2008.
- Interview 8** Woman, chief editor of a Romanian journal, Athens, 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2008.
- Interview 9** Woman, waitress, at her home, Athens, 6<sup>th</sup> of May 2008.
- Interview 10** Woman, consummation in a night bar, at her home, Athens, 6<sup>th</sup> of May 2008.
- Interview 11** Man, painter, at his home, Athens, 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2008.
- Interview 12** Phone conversation with the command post of the Greek Police, Division for Foreigners, 1<sup>st</sup> Department, Thursday, the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2008, 9.30 a.m.

### **Annex 3: Interview guide**

*Name of interviewer*

*Date of interview*

*City and country where interview was conducted*

*Language in which the interview was conducted*

*Name of interviewee*

*Nationality*

*Gender*

*Age*

*Civic status*

*Nationality of partner/spouse*

*Children*

*Education*

*Profession*

*Current work status*

*Length of stay in the host country*

*Reasons for emigrating*

*Most important civic activity*

*Place and way interview was taken:*

*Introductory note:*

*Hello, my name is XX and I am researcher at ELIAMEP involved in a project about the immigration policy of Greece.*

*The first part of the interview focuses on more personal issues concerning your arrival and stay in Greece. The second part mainly explores your professional situation, while the last questions are related to the process of legalization here in Greece.*

#### **PART A**

##### **Personal questions**

When did you come to Greece?

Are you here with your family (parents, husband/wife, and children)?

Why did you choose Greece and not another country?

How did your life change after you migrated here?

Now that you reside in Greece, do you think of going back to your homeland or do you intend to stay? OR do you think of going somewhere else?

Does your decision have anything to do with Romania's integration in the European Union?

How did your everyday life change after your country's integration in the European Union? (as to civic participation, communication with your relatives, your social status here)

Do you feel more secure after your country's integration in the European Union? (related to police, transactions with public services)

What contributed to that?

Do you think that Greeks' behaviour towards your compatriots has it changed at all during your stay here? (Compared to when you first arrived)

Why do you think this is so?

From your personal experience and from what you may have noticed around you, do you believe that, after Romania's integration in the European Union, the number of people from your country that are coming to Greece has been growing lately?

Do you participate in any association and since when?

Would you be interested in having the right to vote in local/municipal elections? Do you consider this right to be important for your stay here?

## **PART B**

### **Work**

What was your profession before coming to Greece? And/or your educational level?

What was your first job in Greece and how did you find it?

How long have you been employed in your present job?

Have you changed professions since you came here?

What did you learn from your experience: which is the safest/most efficient way to find work in Greece as a foreigner: through employment offices, through friends, through newspapers, accidentally?

Is there any difference in your employer's behaviour after your country's integration in the European Union – papers, insurance, etc?

## **PART C**

### **Stay permit**

Did you enter the process of legalization and if so, when?

Was it your own initiative or your employer's?

Did you ask for help from some specialized offices/individual lawyer for that?

Do your papers correspond to your real situation?

If not or if the person is not legal: Why? Is it more convenient for you this way?

After your country's integration in the European Union, did you change your stay permit?

Is there any change in the way you submit your papers for the issue/renewal of the stay permit?

Is there any difference as far as the attitude of civil servants – are they more willing to serve you or not?

And why do you think is it so?

What are your future plans in Greece?

## **PART D**

### **Questions for newspapers**

When and for what reasons did you decide to start the publication of this newspaper?  
Who/what audience is it addressing?  
How do your readers learn about its existence?  
What are the main topics/themes of the newspaper?  
Which issues do you cover that the Greek press doesn't?  
Of what nationality is your personnel?  
Do you encounter any problems in your work? If yes, what kind of problems?  
Did Romania's integration in the European Union influence at all the course of your newspaper? If so, in what respect?  
Has there been any variation (increase/decrease) in the number or the composition of your readers lately?  
Have you changed the issues/content of your newspaper?  
Do your readers ask for your help concerning certain issues that aren't immediately related to the newspaper?

### **Questions for Travel Agencies**

When did your company/office/agency begin its operation?  
When and why did you think of creating this agency?  
How do your customers learn about your existence?  
Of what nationality is your personnel?  
Of what nationality is your clientele? Are there any particularities in terms of sex or age?  
Do you encounter any problems throughout your daily activities? Has there been change after your country's integration in the European Union?  
Has there been Romania's integration in the European Union something positive for your business?  
Has there been any change in the content of your work?  
Has there been any increase in the number of your clientele lately?  
Has there been any change in the composition of your clientele?  
Do your customers ask for your help concerning certain issues that aren't immediately related to your business?

### **Questions for organizations/communities and advisory offices**

When and how did your association start functioning? When did you open your office?  
And for what reasons did you decide to start such a thing?  
What are the main issues for which members/ people concerned ask you for your help/mediation?  
How often does this happen?  
How do your members / people concerned find out about your existence?  
What age/nationality do your members/customers have? Are there any particularities in terms of sex or age?  
Do you encounter any problems in your daily activity? If so, what kind of problems?  
Was there any change after your country's integration in the European Union?  
Has there been any change in your activities?  
Has there been Romania's integration in the European Union something positive for the course of your organization?

Has there been any variation (increase/decrease) in the number or the composition of your members/customers lately?

Has there been any change in the composition of your members / people concerned

**More questions for associations**

How many members does the association have? And how many participate actively and regularly in its activities?

What about the financing? (It is financially supported by proper funds / monthly or other contributions of members / sponsoring, etc?)

How often do you have meetings?

Which are the most important initiatives that you have taken up until now?

Do you collaborate with other organizations? (Greek trade unions, other immigrant organizations, etc)

Do you have contacts with local and government officials? What are the main issues that you discuss with them? Are you satisfied with their feedback? Is it essential / helpful?

Did you actively participate in any political or civic organization/association in your country of origin?

**Questionnaire for Greek Agencies**

When did your company/office/agency begin its operation?

When and why did you think of creating this agency?

Where do you get your essential information from? Information that is useful for the operation of your agency? (From lawyers, accountants, community organizations,...)

Did you face any difficulties in your effort to open the business? And what kind of problems do you encounter in your transactions with the Greek state?(If there is any personnel) what nationalities do they belong to?

Of which nationalities is your clientele? Are there any particularities in terms of sex or age?

Is it a family business?

Would you like to tell us some details about the development of your business, from the beginning until today, and if, by any chance, there were any changes as a result of certain processes (i.e. EU enlargement) that affected your course of action?