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The Forgotten Ones: Child Sex Trafficking in Post-Communist Romania

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The Forgotten Ones: Child Sex Trafficking in Post-Communist Romania

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The Forgotten Ones: Child Sex Trafficking in Post-Communist Romania¹

Child sex trafficking is a global issue, and much can be learned about the causes by analyzing the histories of certain countries. The historical analysis of this paper focuses on Romania: the devaluation of children throughout Romanian history led to a situation where Romanian children were easily victimized. I begin by examining the place of children within the haphazard and inadequate educational system in Romania since the mid-19th century and into the 20th century. This neglect continued under communism, when education was more inclusive but it was dominated by ideological indoctrination rather than actual academics. Combined with economic factors, emigration patterns, corruption, and organized crime; these ideological issues increased the level of neglect for Romania's young. Finally, I examine the increase in the supply of child sex workers originating from Romania with the fall of communism in 1989. Trafficking was bound to occur in Romania due to these factors, which created an at-risk environment for its young citizens.

1. History of Childhood in Romania

Romania was formally unified by Alexandru Cuza in 1862, previously consisting of the provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia. Russia for a time competed with the Ottoman Empire over power in Moldavia, whereas the Ottoman Empire exclusively exercised power over Wallachia. The provinces of Transylvania, Bukovina, and Bessarabia did not become a part of Romania until 1918. Formerly they were under the control of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In 1866, Cuza was overthrown by liberal and conservative forces and a provisional government was established with Charles of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen established as prince and eventually King of

¹ As a point of clarification, it must be noted that within this text, Romania will be spelled as Romania. However, in circumstances where various quoted authors use different spellings, such as Roumania or Rumania, those spellings

Romania in 1881, a position he held until 1914.² Charles ruled alongside Prime Minister Bratianu, who took over most of the responsibilities of rule following Charles' death.³ Romania as unified in 1862 initially remained neutral in WWI,⁴ but Bratianu gradually realized that neutrality was no longer viable and decided to "use the war to achieve national unity by acquiring Transylvania and Bukovina from Austria-Hungary."⁵ His decision paid off, and after the war, "as the Austro-Hungarian monarchy disintegrated, first the Rumanians of Bukovina on 28 November [1918] and then those of Transylvania on 1 December [1918] declared for union with the 'motherland.'"⁶ After the First World War, the government was "a parliamentary democracy in form" but the king retained a large amount of power.⁷ In 1939 Romania ceded the provinces of Bukovina and Bessarabia to the Soviet Union.⁸ Partially to regain that territory, and also for economic reasons, Romania sided with Germany in the Second World War.⁹ Eventually, however, Romania was occupied by the Soviet Union, and the Communist Party came to power, to remain in control from 1948 until the overthrow of the second dictator, Nicolae Ceausescu in 1989.¹⁰ These colonial shifts in power throughout the history of Romania served as massive upheavals in the lives of Romanians, especially Romanian children.

The demography of Romania throughout its history is also relevant to this examination. A largely agrarian society; a population increase in Romania "between 1859 and 1914 was due to a high birth rate combined with a modest decrease in the mortality rate. The rural areas were

² Keith Hitchins, *Rumania 1866-1947* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 13.

³ Ibid., 253, 255.

⁴ Ibid., 252.

⁵ Ibid., 261.

⁶ Ibid., 279.

⁷ Ibid., 379.

⁸ Ibid., 445.

⁹ Ibid., 460.

¹⁰ Ibid., 547.

primarily responsible for maintaining the growth of population.”¹¹ As a subsidiary to this population increase was an influx of people urbanizing, especially notable in “the general overpopulation of cities and towns.”¹² “Industries of all kinds were eager to hire women and children because they could be paid lower wages...for the same number of hours as men and presented fewer discipline problems. The availability of women and children tended to keep wages low and hours long.”¹³ A gradual urbanization was changing the labor market prior to WWI, but after 1919 “the population remained overwhelmingly rural, and the percentage of rural over urban inhabitants increased steadily throughout the inter-war period.”¹⁴ Despite these demographic shifts, Romania remained largely rural. Besides having labor market effects, as the population composition changed, it had health repercussions for children. The death rate for children was problematic, “especially for children under 1 year.”¹⁵ Between the wars, on average “120,000 children died every year before they reached their first birthday. The main causes were poor diet and lack of care of the mother, who suffered especially from overwork during pregnancy.”¹⁶ These repercussions affected more than the children under 1 year, with a high death rate for children over 1 year also existing, which arose because of “bronchial ailments, pneumonia, and various gastric illnesses resulting from a poor diet. Health studies of preschool children, aged 3-7, showed that about half were below normal weight and height, a condition attributed mainly to malnutrition.”¹⁷

The position of children was that of undervaluation. They were poorly cared for and their mothers suffered from malnutrition and overwork, and neither of these issues were mitigated by

¹¹ Hitchins, *Rumania 1866-1947*, 156.

¹² *Ibid.*, 164.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 336.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 337.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

the state. Once communism took hold, “Romania suffered through a particularly destructive period.”¹⁸ A movement was made “toward massive industrialization from a primarily agrarian society [which] directly correlated with an artificial urbanization and a reorganization of the rural areas.”¹⁹ With this urbanization came block living, “with a standard profile for the apartments...and with undifferentiated access inside the community to services, such as cold water, warm water (usually just a few hours weekly), heat (under the minimum needed), electricity (generally with a daily program of energy-saving for a few hours) and partial telephone use.”²⁰ The location shifts of population, occurring due to industrialization and urbanization, dramatically affected the position of the child and the structure of families within Romania.

2. Childhood and the Family in Romania

Family life was something over which the State elicited control for quite some time. Beginning “in the Romanian Principalities, the family life was regulated by the Civil Code elaborated by the administration of Alexandru Ioan Cuza in 1865. Cuza’s Civil Code replaced the Calimah Code, effective in Moldavia since 1817 and the Caragea Law, effective in Valachia [Wallachia] since 1818.”²¹ In this era, there existed “two dominant marital models in Romanian society: the extended family and the nuclear family.”²² The extended family, however, was greatly affected by the demographic shifts of population, and with communism, “extended family care was, by and large, eliminated due to the magnitude and impact of the rural-to-urban

¹⁸ Bogdan Nadolu and Ioana Delia Nadolu and Sylvia M. Asay, “Family Strengths in Romania,” *Marriage & Family Review* 41 (2007): 422, doi: 10.1300/J002v41n03_9.

¹⁹ Ibid., 422.

²⁰ Ibid., 430.

²¹ Luminița Dumănescu, “The Romanian Family during the Communist Regime. Legislative Continuity and Change,” *Romanian Journal of Population Studies* 4, no. 2 (2010): 109.

²² Nadolu and Nadolu and Asay, “Family Strengths,” 425.

shift.”²³ With the emphasis on industrialization, “large rural families are dislocated in order to allow their members to occupy the jobs offered by the party.”²⁴ For much of communism, the nuclear family would be the preferred model. This model “was developed as a necessary and valuable marital alternative, especially because of urbanization and industrialization during the communist period.”²⁵ It was seen as valuable because “its decreased size [,] with only two adults and children, assured direct social control and, at the same time, prevented the risk of divergent structures.”²⁶ Thus, prior to communism, extended family models predominated, but with the onset of a communist government, this began to shift in favor of a nuclear family model.

The Civil Code of 1865 remained the primary legal control of family life in Romania until “the 1954 Family Code, the law that was going to regulate the family life of Romanians for the [next] 60 years.”²⁷ This law placed “at the base of the socialist family the principles the communists believed in.”²⁸ Indeed, “the Family Code was based on three main principles: the free agreement of the future spouses [as opposed to required parental consent] regarding the marriage, the principle of full equality of spouses in the rights and obligations in the personal and patrimonial relations and, following the transfer of authority from the individual patriarchy to the state patriarchy...the principle of the care of the state for the marriage and family.”²⁹ Most relevant for this examination is the role of the state in caring for the family, detailed further as “the introduction of economical and social measures with the purpose of assuring the stability and familial cohesion in order to allow the family to fulfill its functions” as defined by the State

²³ Lynn Morrison, “Ceausescu’s Legacy: Family Struggles and Institutionalization of Children in Romania,” *Journal of Family History* 29 (2004): 170, doi: 10.1177/0363199004264899.

²⁴ Dumănescu, “The Romanian Family,” 108.

²⁵ Nadolu and Nadolu and Asay, “Family Strengths,” 428.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Dumănescu, “The Romanian Family,” 110.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 116-7.

as solely reproductive in nature.³⁰ The Family Code of 1954 uniquely valued “the interests of the child as the main principle driving the rights and obligations of the parents towards their under age children.”³¹ Therefore, in contrast to Romanian Law under the 1865 Civil Code, after the 1954 Family Code, the interests of the child were seen as of the utmost importance to the State.

When Ceausescu took power in 1966, he believed that a high fertility rate would lead to higher productive capabilities—that by increasing the amount of people in Romania, the amount of production would also increase. “In this new ideology, a worker was regarded as the fundamental unit of society,”³² and thus it was overwhelmingly necessary to increase their numbers. In “his opening address to the National Conference of Romanian Women in Bucharest, Ceausescu warned his audience that Romania faced dire threats if it did not reverse the decline on its birth rate.”³³ However, with the trend toward block living, “the time spent in the domestic space was significantly decreased, legitimizing the taking over of some fundamental functions of the family by adjacent social institutions.”³⁴ With this issue in mind, “the communist state started out the process of demographic support through coercive measures: the first step was to revise the article 482 of the Penal Code, incriminating the abortion.”³⁵ While abortion was outlawed in 1967, other laws added to this effect, with “taxes and public opprobrium for celibates and couples without children...a very complicated and long procedure for divorce...and a complete interdiction of any methods of birth control.”³⁶ The fertility rate showed near-immediate evidence of the ‘success’ of these policies, most significantly those

³⁰ Ibid., 117.

³¹ Dumănescu, “The Romanian Family,” 119.

³² Lucia Correll, Tim Correll, and Marius Predescu, “USAID and Child Welfare Reform in Romania: Challenges, Successes, and Legacy,” (report, USAID, July 2006): 3, http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/dem_gov/docs/final_romania_legacy_report_090506.pdf.

³³ Thomas J. Keil, *Romania’s Tortured Road Toward Modernity* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 2006), 279.

³⁴ Nadolu and Nadolu and Asay, “Family Strengths,” 429.

³⁵ Dumănescu, “The Romanian Family,” 114.

³⁶ Nadolu and Nadolu and Asay, “Family Strengths,” 429.

outlawing birth control and abortion, increasing dramatically and then only gradually beginning to decline.³⁷

Further, “supports were offered by the state for families with more than three children, including priority for various services. Formal control against marital behavior that was not in conformity with the classical nuclear family model was instituted.”³⁸ In pursuit of productive power, the State harshly monitored its reproductive power. These controls went so far that “in 1985, Ceausescu introduced the so-called ‘demographic command bodies’ which were responsible for ensuring that women underwent periodic gynecological examinations at their workplace in order that pregnancies could be discovered and registered before any attempt could be made by the woman to abort.”³⁹ Unfortunately, despite the widespread policies and regulations regarding the production of children and women’s reproductive capacity, little was done to support the children once they were born.

One law that existed that attempted to regulate the quality of life for children was the existence of the tutelary authority. As a legal institution, “Article 104 stipulates that the tutelary authority may ask a court to entrust the child to be raised in an institution or by another person—with his[/her] agreement—if it considers that the physical, moral or intellectual development of the child is in danger of being affected in the parents’ house.”⁴⁰ The intense regulation of family life and the effect of demographic shifts on family structures led to disillusionment within families at the idea of having children. Couples were given incentives to reproduce, yet struggled to support their children, especially given that both parents were out of the home working and the family care chains of extended family members were disrupted by urbanization and block

³⁷ Keil, *Tortured Road*, 281.

³⁸ Nadolu and Nadolu and Asay, “Family Strengths,” 428-9.

³⁹ David J. Rothman, Sheila M. Rothman, and Holly A. Cartner, “Romania’s Orphans: A Legacy of Repression,” *News from Helsinki Watch* 2 (1990): 2, <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1990/romania1290/romania1290.pdf>.

⁴⁰ Dumănescu, “The Romanian Family,” 120.

living. Traditional family life was beneficial only to the degree that it produced more children. Therefore, “The ‘pro-natalist’ policies resulted in unwanted children, and a new cynical attitude: if the state wants more children, the state can take care of them too.”⁴¹ This attitude led to a reliance of struggling families on institutions, both educational and care-based, to raise their children.

3. Childhood and Education in Romania

Education in Romania as an institution has an important history with regard to the function it serves in the life of a child. Schools supported by the State first arose in the elements of Romania under Habsburg control in the late 18th century. In reaction to a peasant uprising in 1784, King Joseph II “sought to discover its causes and to take measures to prevent new violence in the future. A commission of inquiry in 1785...recommended...the establishment of a system of state-supported schools for Romanians.”⁴² School reform was already in progress in the Habsburg empire when the commission made these recommendations, but it had not yet been extended to Transylvania.⁴³ In 1781, “Joseph extended the provisions of the *Ratio Educationis* to Transylvania,”⁴⁴ which established “a uniform curriculum, but allowed the respective native languages to be used in instruction. None the less, German was to be a special object of study.”⁴⁵

However, much of the education reform in Transylvania at this time was furthered by giving concessions to the Romanian Uniate and Orthodox Churches. Joseph “took steps to organize an elementary school system for Romanian Uniates, and within a decade the number of schools had reached several hundred. Joseph also approved plans in 1786 for a network of

⁴¹ “Half Way Home: Romania’s Abandoned Children Ten Years After the Revolution,” (report, U.S. Embassy in Bucharest, Romania, February 2001): 6, http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pcaab104.pdf.

⁴² Keith Hitchins, *The Romanians, 1774-1866* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 206.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 206.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 207.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 206-7.

Orthodox schools, but here progress was slower, owing to the lack of financial resources available to the Orthodox Church and the absence of adequate facilities for the training of teachers.”⁴⁶ Schools supported by the State in Transylvania for Romanians, thus, were insufficient in curriculum and presence, and although more Church-supported schools existed, the schooling system remained inadequate. In 1848, a bill was passed “granting significant concessions to the Romanians. It formally recognized the Romanian nationality and the autonomy of the Orthodox and the Uniate Churches; allowed the free use of the Romanian language in village affairs, the church, and elementary and secondary schools.”⁴⁷ These two churches were important because, as established, they “operated networks of elementary and secondary schools, which offered Romanian pupils an education in their own language” which was beneficial because “these institutions provided [protection for] young Romanians against state schools, where the curriculum and the language of instruction aimed at furthering Magyar nation-building.”⁴⁸ However, this alternative to propagandized learning was not to last long. In 1867 a new king of Hungary took power, and “declared the legislation of the former [King], including the laws on Romanian nationhood and language, null and void.”⁴⁹ The atrocious condition of education for Romanians within Transylvania under the control of the Austro-Hungarian Empire would continue until Transylvania joined Romania in 1918.

Outside of Transylvania, in Moldavia and Wallachia, by 1830 education “became a regular concern of the state, which provided the administrative framework and modest funding.”⁵⁰ The education system in these two provinces also suffered from lack of state support, as “the system of public education was first introduced only in 1832, when the Organic

⁴⁶ Hitchins, *The Romanians 1774-1866*, 207.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 258.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 270.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 271.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 196.

Regulation (*Regulament organic*), the country's first 'constitution,' was adopted under the guidance of Count Kisseleff, the Russian protector of the Rumanian principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia."⁵¹ However, the system only slowly came into existence. In Wallachia, "The first schools were to be set up by the *boiars* [noblemen]. The result was 29 grammar schools, and between 1838 and 1864, 259 additional schools came into being."⁵² This 1832 imposition of the schooling system occurred in Moldavia as well, but by "1859 only 25 grammar schools had been established in villages and 30 in the cities."⁵³ In Moldavia, Prince Barbu Stirbei (1799-1869) took power. In addition to the goals of Count Kisseleff, coming from the Russian protectorate of both provinces, Stirbei had his own vision for education within Moldavia. He "put great store by education as an instrument of social progress" and with that ideal in mind he "insisted that education not be merely an adornment of the privileged few, and therefore he had plans drafted to establish a network of primary and secondary schools throughout the country with Romanian as the language of instruction and with the curricula fitted to the needs of the general population."⁵⁴ Despite his passion, these plans progressed slowly, and "by 1853 there were only twenty-four primary schools and one gymnasium [secondary school], a number limited by the modest sums available in the state budget for education."⁵⁵ Although the priorities of Stirbei included education, the funding was insufficient to carry through vast reforms of Romanian-oriented schooling.

In 1864, after the unification of Moldavia and Wallachia into Romania in 1862, Alexandru Cuza "proposed to bring public education 'within reach of all classes' and to make

⁵¹ Randolph L. Braham, *Education in the Rumanian People's Republic* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1963), 8.

⁵² Joseph S. Rouček, *Contemporary Roumania and her Problems* (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1971), 373.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 374.

⁵⁴ Hitchins, *The Romanians 1774-1866*, 275.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 276.

certain that it met the true needs of Romanian society.”⁵⁶ He did this by establishing the “comprehensive education law of 1864, which regulated instruction at all levels: it put forward the principle that primary education should be obligatory and free and that every village should have its own school; it mandated the building of secondary schools in urban centres,” and put forth many other goals for education in Romania.⁵⁷ However, Cuza’s ambitions would be restricted by funding issues, as many of the goals of his predecessors had been as well. In the end, “Cuza realized only a small part of his ambitious project. The main obstacle was the lack of funds to provide the teachers, the buildings, and even the books necessary for primary and secondary education.”⁵⁸

When Transylvania was united with Romania in 1918, there were, “according to Professor Sylvius Dragomir, 2,392 Roumanian primary schools for 2,930,120 Roumanians. Not a single one was supported by the Hungarian state. According to the same authority there was one primary school for each 1,229 Roumanians, in contrast to one primary school for each 504 Hungarians, 890 Saxons, and 10,847 Souabians.”⁵⁹ This clear lack of support for Romanians in the schooling system in Transylvania was even worse in the provinces of Bukovina and Bessarabia. “In Bukovina the policy of the government was that of steadily reducing the employment of the Roumanian language. In 1914, 179 Roumanian schools with 35,151 pupils belonged to the Bukovinian school system, which had a total of 541 schools. In Bessarabia the conditions were much worse when the province joined Roumania in 1917. Only private Roumanian schools were allowed and the teaching in this language was limited to the first two

⁵⁶ Ibid., 312.

⁵⁷ Hitchins, *The Romanians 1774-1866*, 312.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Rouček, *Contemporary Roumania*, 374.

years of such schools.”⁶⁰ In this way, not only was Romanian as a language marginalized within the schools, additionally insufficient in numbers, the Romanian people were marginalized as well. Since the schooling system is occupied by children, they bore the brunt of the marginalization.

Schooling for Romanian children in the inter-war period continued to be lacking. In 1921, out of “some 2,500,000 children of school age (7 to 12 inclusive), over one million did not attend school.”⁶¹ Reforms were undertaken to “unify the entire school system” during the regime of the Liberal Government.⁶² The system was reorganized, and “the four-year term of the primary school was lengthened by three years for additional education in civic and practical subjects. However, pupils desiring to attend the higher schools need spend only four years in the primary school. For children of from five to seven years of age kindergartens were introduced.”⁶³

The increasing value placed on education, and therewith, children, was a promising sign from the government. However, for economically disadvantaged families, the system would continue to be a challenge of resource allocation, because “the parents supply their offspring with school books and other things necessary for the children’s training.”⁶⁴ As World War Two neared, supposedly compulsory preprimary education was attended by “only 13.3 percent of all children between the ages of 5 and 7 [in the] public kindergartens and fewer than 1.5 percent [in] the private kindergartens.”⁶⁵ In addition, “the compulsory character of the [7-year] elementary school program was not always enforced. During the 10 years from 1929 to 1938, only 5.4 percent of all children continued their schooling beyond the fourth grade. Moreover, less than 1 percent of the farm youth completed more than 4 years of general education”⁶⁶ although the rural

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Rouček, *Contemporary Roumania*, 374.

⁶² Ibid., 373.

⁶³ Ibid., 375.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 376.

⁶⁵ Braham, *Education in the Rumanian People’s Republic*, 10.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

population remained nearly 80% of Romania's population at this time.⁶⁷ Not only was compulsory education hardly enforced for the vast majority of Romanians, early education was severely lacking and under-attended.

While the reforms did not do much with regard to increasing compulsory education, these inter-war reorganizations of the education system “remained essentially unchanged until 1948.”⁶⁸ When the Communist regime took power, they “introduced significant changes in the administration, structure, and content of education in Romania.”⁶⁹ The focus of education shifted, and it was “organized according to the 1948 Education Law—authorizing only public and secular education... and centralizing the education system.”⁷⁰ The educational system was reformed again in 1956, and then additionally in 1968. Some of the changes were reflected in the changing amounts of compulsory education required by the state. “Before the Communist acquisition of power in late 1947, the combined primary-secondary school period was 12 years...In accordance with the Soviet model, the school period was reduced in 1948 to 11 years and in 1951 to 10 years...In the wake of the 1956 reform, the school period was raised to 11, and under a decree of the Council of State...of 1961 to 12 years.”⁷¹

With the changes from above in Soviet leadership, the 1960s brought more universal education. The reform of 1968 “stated that access to education was guaranteed for all, irrespective of nationality, race, gender, or religion. Education at all levels was established as being public and free. The length of compulsory education, which was set at eight years in 1965,

⁶⁷ Hitchins, *Rumania 1866-1947*, 336.

⁶⁸ Braham, *Education in the Rumanian People's Republic*, 10.

⁶⁹ Elena Sorina Chircu and Mirela Negreanu, “Intercultural Development in the Romanian School System,” *Intercultural Education* 21 (2010): 330, doi: 10.1080/14675986.2010.506024.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Randolph L. Braham, *Education in Romania: A Decade of Change* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1972), 11.

was extended to 10 years.”⁷² These whimsical changes to the amount of education required by the Communist regime had an impact on the stability of students’ lives. However, aside from these changes in the amount of required time spent in school, the academic goals of the educational institution were refocused to serve as an instrument of the state.

With regard to changes in curriculum, the goals of that 1948 Education Law were that the primary and secondary school:

units are intended to function in such a way that they will:

- prepare the graduates required for ‘the construction of socialism’
- instill a spirit of ‘socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism’
- develop a scientific concept of life and society
- foster an atheistic attitude toward unexplained natural phenomena
- develop basic scientific principles and a socialist attitude toward labor and work through polytechnical education
- develop mind and body in a well-rounded manner.

The schools are to carry out their functions in various ways—for example, through teaching each subject in conformity with the prevailing interpretation of Marxist doctrine as favored by the Communist Party.⁷³

In this way, the focus of the educational system is shifted to include a heavy and defined emphasis on propagandistic goals, somewhat like the educational system in Transylvania under the Habsburg Empire, but to a more established and clear degree. This shift speaks to the onset of the repurposing of the educational institution as undertaken by the communist regime. In 1978 the State “officially introduced ideological propaganda in schools” making the already apparent

⁷² Chircu and Negreanu, “Intercultural Development,” 330.

⁷³ Braham, *Education in the Rumanian People’s Republic*, 39.

indoctrination within the schools more established.⁷⁴ The State additionally repurposed secondary education to serve production purposes. “Pupils and students were given production quotas. Even though legislation guaranteed access to education for all, work overload and the high academic level of the syllabi functioned as barriers to access education.”⁷⁵ These distractions from a purely academic education furthered an agenda that refocused schooling as an instrument of the state.

Another manifestation of Romanian communist ideological indoctrination of students was through the Pioneers’ Organization, which was founded in 1949.⁷⁶ In 1966 the organization was restructured so that it operated “within the framework of schools” rather than “under the immediate jurisdiction of the Union of Communist Youth.”⁷⁷ By that time, “Pioneer membership totaled over 1.3 million or about 70 percent of all children between the ages of 9 and 14”⁷⁸ which were the eligible ages to join the Pioneers’ Organization. As an extracurricular, and later curricular, ideological organization controlled by the State, the Pioneers served as “the principal help to the school and family for the moral education of children, for developing in Pioneers those characteristics that distinguish the new Man: courage, honesty, [and] humility.”⁷⁹ The Pioneers additionally serve to undermine the power of the family, seeing as “a great concern of the State, apparently, in this matter of ‘moral education of children’ is the ‘negative influence of the family,’ i.e., the lingering national and religious sentiments.”⁸⁰ In this way, the State sought to use the Pioneers’ Organization as a means to ensure the proper “patriotic” indoctrination of children, especially in cases where the parents were attempting to maintain a “‘conservative’ and

⁷⁴ Chircu and Negreanu, “Intercultural Development,” 330.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Braham, *Education in Romania*, 33.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 34.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Braham, *Education in the Rumanian People’s Republic*, 181.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

‘retrogressive’ attitude in family life.”⁸¹ Not only did the schooling system and the Pioneers’ Organization function as a means to control the population through propaganda, but much like the Pioneers as well, the educational institutions also served as a pseudo replacement for the family.

Beyond furthering ideological goals, the state continually parents children within the educational system. For example, “Misbehaving or delinquent children are punished severely. For one thing, pupils receiving a grade below ‘5’ in conduct cannot be promoted and must repeat the entire year regardless of other grades received.”⁸² By prioritizing behavioral conduct over all other aspects of learning, the educational system positions itself on the side of a parental supplement, or indeed, replacement institution. The curriculum as well, accommodated the growing role of education as an aid to parenting, seeing as “an important part of the educational process is devoted to ‘correct’ character and habit training.”⁸³ While that is something typically left to parents to control, in this context the educational institution was adopting the role. This overtaking of the parental role is especially apparent in the structure of preprimary education.

Kindergartens and other forms of preprimary education were established in 1956. Taking “children between 3 and 7 years of age, primarily those of women employed in industrial and agricultural enterprises or engaged in ‘cultural-political’ activities, [kindergartens are] thus fulfilling a dual function of child care and upbringing.”⁸⁴ Providing a convenience for the parents, “the kindergartens...had nothing to do with the education of the children” and instead served to enable their mothers to work,⁸⁵ with “this upbringing emphasiz[ing] the training of children in

⁸¹ Ibid., 182.

⁸² Braham, *Education in the Rumanian People’s Republic*, 54.

⁸³ Ibid., 35.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 34.

⁸⁵ Dumănescu, “The Romanian Family,” 121.

the service of the new social order”⁸⁶ rather than in anything academic. In some of the kindergartens this care for the children extended even further, as “there [were] also a few such schools organized on a weekly schedule...for children whose parents work in another locality and who have no close relatives to take care of them.”⁸⁷ With these developments in preprimary as well as primary and secondary education, “the formal educational system was given the authority to have care of the children from the third month of life and in exchange, both parents could continue their professional activities without having to depend on other family members, especially grandparents...Thus, the educational functions of the family could be substituted (more or less) by the state.”⁸⁸ Education evolved from a sporadic, hardly compulsory institution that marginalized Romanians, and as the country unified and matured, and eventually was controlled by communism, into an elaborate mechanism for ideological control and parental substitution. Formal education served as one form of subversion of the role of parents, but institutional care itself developed throughout communism to take a more secure position in society as parental subversion by the State.

4. Childhood and Institutional Care

Romania’s family policies and demographic changes meant that families that found themselves in challenging home situations, rather than diverting the care of a child within their own family (e.g. asking a grandparent to care for the child until the parents can support it again), placed the child in institutional care. At the time of the introduction of Ceausescu’s family policies, such as those outlawing abortion and forms of contraception, “Romania was unprepared for the demographic consequences of the combined actions of the increasing fertility rate and the decreasing number of caretakers, such as grandparents, who were also inducted in the labor

⁸⁶ Braham, *Education in the Rumanian People’s Republic*, 34.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Nadolu and Nadolu and Asay, “Family Strengths,” 429.

system.”⁸⁹ The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health shared the duties of monitoring institutional care, with the Ministry of Health supporting the “institutions for children aged 0-3,”⁹⁰ and the Ministry of Education supporting the others. The institutions were classified as either orphanages, where a child would be placed “if the child was ‘normal’ or, if the child was disabled [they would be sent] to a dystrophic center.”⁹¹ According to a World Bank Country Study performed in 1989, the number of orphanages steadily increased after the introduction of Ceausescu’s family policies: In 1960, there were 26 such institutions, by 1970 there were 42, and in 1980 there were 62.⁹²

Many of the children in such institutions were not actually orphans, but their parents were unable to care for them: “Some women who were forced to give birth to unwanted babies abandoned their children immediately. Others took their children home, had little with which to feed or care for them, and ultimately abandoned them.”⁹³ The orphanages tallied by the World Bank were not the only institutions in existence to care for such abandoned children. As a report from the US Embassy of Romania asserts, “[b]y 1989, there were over 700 institutions warehousing children—from infants to young adults age 18—across the country.”⁹⁴

For a country such as Romania, which claimed to value their children above all else, it turned out that the opposite was true—the children to whom the government devoted so many resources towards producing, in fact had little to no resources diverted for their proper care.⁹⁵

⁸⁹ Morrison, “Ceausescu’s Legacy,” 170.

⁹⁰ P. A. Stephenson et al., “The Causes of Children’s Institutionalization in Romania,” *Child: care, health and development* 20 (1994): 77.

⁹¹ Morrison, “Ceausescu’s Legacy,” 171.

⁹² “Romania Country Report,” (report, Better Care Network, January 1, 2001): 226, <http://www.crin.org/docs/Romania%20-%20Country%20Report%20on%20Alternative%20Care.pdf>.

⁹³ Rothman, Rothman, and Cartner, “Romania’s Orphans,” 3.

⁹⁴ “Half Way Home,” 4.

⁹⁵ See “Romania Country Report” above: There were 62 orphanages in 1980, and 64 in 1985 [226]. These comprised 12,275 beds in 1980, and 13,061 in 1985 [226]. These orphanages were allotted a total of 259.3 million lei in 1980, and 337.1 million lei in 1985 [234]. Self-calculated, that means that per bed, 24,124 lei were provided in

Additionally, “women and men were asked to raise large families as a patriotic duty (thus the ban on contraception and abortion), while at the same time, investment in health and social programmes for families decreased.”⁹⁶ Indeed, due to the policies of Ceausescu and the Communist government, “approximately 100,000 children were placed either temporarily or permanently in the orphanage system by their destitute parents.”⁹⁷ Of the children within this “estimated (but uncounted)” figure, “fewer than three percent were orphans; some were room and boarders, whose parents could not or did not care for them; and some were abandoned as infants in the maternity hospital, to be raised by the state.”⁹⁸ For the children who lived in these institutions, they were “removed from society and held in dormitory settings until they were ready to enter the workforce. For some children, such ‘brood factories’ were the only home they ever knew.”⁹⁹

Not only did they stay in the institutions throughout their lives, the interaction that these children had with the outside world was little to none. In fact, “the community had no awareness of the situation of their institutionalized children...once the children entered the institutions, they disappeared from view. Children were hidden in self-contained institutions and educated within the building. There were no fieldtrips where children would be visible even to immediate neighbors.”¹⁰⁰ The separation of these youth from the children able to be supported by their parents is a drastic example of the systemic neglect perpetrated by the institutional system. The

1980 and 25,809 lei in 1985. For reference, that would equate to roughly 1616.89 dollars per bed and 1729.82 dollars per bed in 1980 and 1985, respectively, using an exchange rate of 14.92 lei to 1 dollar, as cited by “After Twenty Years. Romanian Economy in 1989” and self-calculated. An exchange rate from 1989 was used because a rate from 1980 could not be found, and law set the exchange rate from 1970 until 1989.

⁹⁶ Stephenson et al. “Causes of Institutionalization,” 78.

⁹⁷ Morrison, “Ceausescu’s Legacy,” 168-9.

⁹⁸ Lucia Correll, Tim Correll, and Marius Predescu, “USAID and Child Welfare Reform in Romania: Challenges, Successes, and Legacy,” (report, USAID, July 2006): 5, http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/dem_gov/docs/final_romania_legacy_report_090506.pdf.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 1.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 8.

Romanian people, “who are by nature warm and caring for children were unaware of and dissociated from the children in their midst.”¹⁰¹ By separating these youth from others, the communist Romanian government propagated the notion that a child is a number, an entity, a productive element in an industrial framework—not a person with needs to be provided for; in fact, not a valued citizen at all.

5. Conclusion I: The Legacy

The legacy of communism and the effects of the substantial changes in education and family structures in the years prior have a very apparent effect on post-communist Romania. “The distortions generated by the communist government are still felt today, after more than 15 years since the ‘Revolution,’ both at the economic level and mostly at the social level, including social values.”¹⁰² Not only on the economic and social level, but also governmentally, “despite the dismantling of communist ideologies, the bureaucracy and mindset of former communist ministries remain.”¹⁰³ The shifts in priorities with regard to children and potentials for care and education are especially apparent. After 1989, institutionalization of children continued, though with the repeal of Ceausescu’s family policies and addition of other laws,¹⁰⁴ the need lessened. “Prior to the revolution in 1989 there were 17,000 places for children in Ministry of Health institutions...[but] as of June 1991 there were approximately 8000 children in *leagane* [long-term residential care institutions].”¹⁰⁵ However, a visit to one such institution 10 years after the fall of communism provides an especially stark example of the slow-to-change situation:

In May 1999, over 150 children lived in the Gherla, Cluj County Placement Center. They slept in three big rooms, 25 bunk beds in each. There was no other piece of furniture—no

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Nadolu and Nadolu and Asay, “Family Strengths,” 423.

¹⁰³ June Kane, *Sold for Sex* (Brookfield: Ashgate, 1998), 30.

¹⁰⁴ Stephenson et al. “Causes of Institutionalization,” 78.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

lamps, no chairs, and no dressers. Children did not own specific clothes but were handed garments from the central laundry room on the first floor once a week. They did not even have assigned beds.¹⁰⁶

The government kept the institutional structure afloat until 1997, supported by reformers from USAID and other organizations. In 1997, efforts shifted from improving the state of institutions to more heavily attempting to reduce reliance on institutions, but as of 1999, “33,356 children were in residential institutions...in addition...some 25,000 children were living in institutions subordinated to the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the State Secretariat for Handicapped Persons.”¹⁰⁷ Additional troubles in moving away from an institutional care system resulted from a variety of situations. “Throughout central Europe and the former Soviet Union factories were closed and shipping was shut down. Romanian unemployment, unknown in the Ceausescu years, grew to an unofficial 40 percent.”¹⁰⁸ The economic situation for citizens was dismal, and as “many new young parents had themselves been raised by institutions...they knew no other way than to turn their children over to the State.”¹⁰⁹ The economic changes affected the government as well, as “increasing national poverty led to further deterioration of state institutions.”¹¹⁰ Not only did desperate and unsupported families turn to institutions, bureaucratic officials wanted to maintain the decrepit system, because “they knew no alternative. Even worse, they had no motivation to create alternatives because the institutions represented jobs and economic activity in the local community and therefore had constituent support.”¹¹¹ A full ten years after the transition began, the learned habits from communist times were proving difficult to eradicate. By 2001, the Government of Romania had “passed legislation that created

¹⁰⁶ Correll, Correll, and Predescu, “USAID and Child Welfare Reform,” 2.

¹⁰⁷ “Romania Country Report,” 135.

¹⁰⁸ Correll, Correll, and Predescu, “USAID and Child Welfare Reform,” 4.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 5.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., ix.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 7.

the Department of Child Protection and decentralized child welfare” which was a start in improving the position of the child on the institutional and care level, but the “county and local authorities...were unclear about their roles or responsibilities under the decentralized system” of which they were newly a part.¹¹²

As yet another example of the lingering effects of communism, the family structures in Romania are still controlled by, “the Family Code of 1954, [which] with relatively few updates, is still effective today, more than 20 years after the regime has changed.”¹¹³ Post-communist education reforms began shortly after the revolution. “Due to the inadequacy of the Education Law (1978) and the preparatory work for a new education law, the education system was organized on the basis of constitutional provisions adopted in 1991, as well as government decisions provided for each school/academic year.”¹¹⁴ Additionally, the amount of compulsory education shifted once more, being “reduced from 10 to 8 years.”¹¹⁵ Further reforms in 1997 served to decrease school dropout rates, decreasing “from 3 percent in 1996, to 1.06 percent in 2000.”¹¹⁶ The demography of Romania is relevant as well in the transition period, “given that the reforms in Romania began at the top, the diffusion of democratic free market ideas to the local level was still incomplete. This was especially true in rural areas.”¹¹⁷

Overall, despite the work of many organizations and the government itself, the effects of institutionalization, as well as the sporadic educational requirements of children, shifting family structures and demographics, served to construct an increasingly vulnerable status for children in post-communist Romania.

¹¹² Ibid., x.

¹¹³ Dumănescu, “The Romanian Family,” 108.

¹¹⁴ Chircu and Negreanu, “Intercultural Development,” 331.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Andrei Marga, “Reform of Education in Romania in the 1990s: A Retrospective,” *Higher Education in Europe* 27 (2002): 126, doi: 10.1080/0379772022000003279.

¹¹⁷ Correll, Correll, and Predescu, “USAID and Child Welfare Reform,” 3.

II. Childhood and Sex Trafficking as a Major Problem in Romania

In order to examine child trafficking within the realm of post-communist Romania, it is necessary to define both “child” and “trafficking”. According to the United Nations, in the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, child and trafficking are defined in the following way:

‘Child’ shall mean any person under 18 years of age.¹¹⁸

‘Trafficking in persons’ shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat of use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, by fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery, or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.¹¹⁹

The most important part to note about the latter definition, in the case of Romania, is the abuse of a position of vulnerability. These definitions were adopted in 2000, toward the end of the scope of this case study, but are relevant as a lens through which to view the problem of child sex trafficking. Also important to note in the post-communist period is the “UN Convention on the *Rights of the Child* adopted in 1989 and nationally ratified in 1990 [by Romania] was one of the first international instruments to proclaim that all fundamental rights of the child need to be afforded.”¹²⁰ With these definitions and legal sanctions in mind, a fuller examination can be achieved.

¹¹⁸ Kathryn Cullen-DuPont, *Human Trafficking* (New York: Infobase, 2009), 9.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 9.

¹²⁰ Ioana Gențiana Gavril and Ana Maria Tamaș, “Trafficking in Children in Romania: Study on the Recruiting Process,” (study, General Inspectorate of Romanian Police and National Agency against Trafficking in Persons,

1. The Family, Institutions, and Trafficking

The family can serve as a protective network against vulnerability to trafficking, firmly established in a survey-based study¹²¹ and “remains the most important environment for a child’s harmonious development.”¹²² However, the history of family patterns in Romania, with disjointed families scattered across blocks, rural and urban areas, and institutions, did not provide much of a protective environment for children. A largely rural population held the threats of “higher poverty...low family income, and disorganized families [which] encourage children to accept traffickers’ promises of a better life.”¹²³ Family life and organization in Romania insufficiently supported the value of children.

Additionally, lack of sufficient education also places children at risk for being trafficked. The evidence of sporadic requirements and lack of academic value from Romanian educational institutions is representative of low priority being placed on sufficient education for Romanian children. Throughout years of marginalization and under communism with priorities shifting toward ideological indoctrination, this “low priority on education and poor professional training cause[s] children to be more passive and hopeless, making them more susceptible to seduction through material goods or promises of a better life, thus increasing their risk to be recruited.”¹²⁴ In addition some victims of trafficking, and this is especially true in rural areas,¹²⁵ “dropped out of school in order to help their families make more money, hoping that a better financial

Bucharest, 2009): 16, <http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/entity.action?id=6e6f07d7-c5d8-44df-bb8b-3402bab01a2a>, these include: “the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, of abandonment, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abused with a view to guarantee his[her] social, emotional and moral welfare as well as physical and mental health.”

¹²¹ “Family networks appear to play a protective role.” Toman Omar Mahmoud and Christoph Trebesch, “The Economics of Human Trafficking and Labour Migration: Micro-evidence from Eastern Europe,” *Journal of Comparative Economics* 38 (2010): 182, doi: 10.1016/j.jce.2010.02.001.

¹²² Gavril and Tamaş, “Trafficking in Children in Romania,” 51.

¹²³ Ibid., 47.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 49.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 47.

condition would allow them to resume education; on the contrary, they became prone to other job offers made by recruiters.”¹²⁶ In order to alleviate the effects that a poor system of schooling has on children, “encouraging kindergarten and school attendance will likely help to decrease children’s vulnerability to recruitment and exploitation and empower them through skills acquisition and understanding social rules and norms.”¹²⁷ The rates of preprimary and basic education attendance are important to note here, as they fluctuated throughout the transition period, but increasing as Romania stabilized.¹²⁸ These attendance rates are visible in graph form in Appendix A.

The role of institutions outside the educational structure is also relevant to the trafficking vulnerability of Romanian children. It has been found that “children in boarding schools or institutions appear to have a higher risk of being persuaded by recruiters.”¹²⁹ Not only are they removed from the general population, maltreated, unsupported, and separated from any sort of protective family network, they are also lonely. This makes them easier to persuade into trafficking, and they are also “less supported, monitored and cared for than those living with their families.”¹³⁰

The status of institutionalized children, an inadequate educational system, and the fluctuating family structures in Romania led to a severe devaluation of the children. They were valued not as people, but as part of a productive workforce. Commodification follows easily from such devaluation of these children, because when a person is valued less than other people, it is easier to treat them as a commodity. The commoditization of children is dangerous because “in the most extreme cases, the criminals buy and sell...children as if they were mere objects or

¹²⁶ Ibid., 58.

¹²⁷ Gavril and Tamaş, “Trafficking in Children in Romania,” 80.

¹²⁸ “Country Profiles,” Transmonee, accessed March 27, 2012, <http://www.transmonee.org/>.

¹²⁹ Gavril and Tamaş, “Trafficking in Children in Romania,” 48.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 53.

animals.”¹³¹ Children in Ceausescu’s era were classified as future members of a labor market, but given their treatment, it would perhaps be just as easy to classify them as future members of a trafficking market.

2. Economics and Trafficking

Economic hardship is a major push into a trafficking situation, as many in circumstances such as unemployment, poverty, or inequality are desperately seeking a way out. Indeed, “poverty, financial instability and unemployment have a significant contribution to the vulnerability to recruitment.”¹³² Post-communist Romania was converted to a market economy, but “no positive measures [had] been taken to empower the disadvantaged groups—such as women, youngsters, disabled people, and the Gypsy minority.”¹³³ The economic changes in Romania disadvantaged children yet nothing was done to alleviate these disadvantages.

Economic inequality, manifesting itself in many ways as creating low standards of living for much of the population, “make[s] both children and parents more naïve in believing false promises and accepting job offers that seem financially attractive, expecting these will help the family survive.”¹³⁴ Inequality in Romania grew as the market economic policy developed. The Gini coefficient¹³⁵, the economically trusted measure of inequality in a country, rose steadily after 1989. Measured from 0 to 100, with 100 being the most unequal, Romania’s score rose more than 7 points in a span of 12 years, from 23.3 in 1989 to 30.6 in 2001.¹³⁶ These trends are

¹³¹ Gillian Caldwell, Steven Galster, and Nadia Steinzor, “Crime and Servitude: An Expose of the Traffic in Women for Prostitution from the Newly Independent States,” Excerpted in *Trends of Organized Crime* 3 (1998): 10, doi: 10.1007/s12117-998-1039-1.

¹³² Gavril and Tamaş, “Trafficking in Children in Romania,” 46.

¹³³ Rotariu and Popescu 116

¹³⁴ Gavril and Tamaş, “Trafficking in Children in Romania,” 46.

¹³⁵ Defined by the World Bank, the “Gini index measures the extent to which the distribution of income (or, in some cases, consumption expenditure) among individuals or households within an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution.” Source: “Gini Index,” World Bank, accessed March 27, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/Gini_Index/ID/e7497763.

¹³⁶ “Gini Index.”

visible in Appendix B. As an additional measure of inequality, income shares can be examined. Post-transition, the relative income shares of the highest and lowest 20% of the population drastically differed. In 1989, the highest 20% held 33.3% of the income, whereas the lowest 20% held only 9.9% of the income. However, by 2001, these percentages had further polarized, with the lowest 20% then holding only 8.1% of the income while the highest 20% held 38.7%.¹³⁷ These patterns are also visible in Appendix B. From this data it is clear that economic inequality was a serious problem in the post-communist years, and thereby worsened the standard of living for the population, making them more easily exploited by traffickers.

Poverty is an additional factor that significantly contributes to a low standard of living. It is among those factors that create an inherently vulnerable situation. This vulnerability creates an easily exploitable population, and thus leads scholars to conclude that “[p]overty is perhaps the greatest underlying cause of human trafficking from and within countries of origin.”¹³⁸ A precise threat that impoverished families could face with regard to trafficking is if, for example, “a recruiter approaches rural parents living in extreme poverty, extending what appears to be an opportunity for a better life for one or more of the parents’ children...[but] what the girls find at the end of their journeys, however, is a life of prostitution.”¹³⁹ This is one explicit example of the desperate and vulnerable situation that poor families are in when it comes to trafficking. Additionally, it is important to note that “poverty would affect mostly single parent families with a large number of children, families with a low level of education, migrant workers, families in the rural areas, [and] individuals unable to find jobs,”¹⁴⁰ of which there were plenty in Romania. Indeed, the economic transition in Romania not only increased inequality, it also increased

¹³⁷ “Income Share Held by Highest 20%; Income Share Held by Lowest 20%,” World Bank, accessed March 27, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/Income_Shares_Highest_Lowest/ID/e8f1945e.

¹³⁸ Cullen-DuPont, *Human Trafficking*, 23.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Gavril and Tamaş, “Trafficking in Children in Romania,” 46.

poverty rates. While remaining relatively low immediately post-communism in 1990, as measured by a \$2 per day headcount ratio,¹⁴¹ poverty in Romania spiked dramatically in 1993.¹⁴²

Graphical evidence of this and additional measures of poverty are available in Appendix C.

Poverty is also intertwined with unemployment rates. Whereas under communism, employment was universally guaranteed, under a more competitive labor market as espoused by neoliberal capitalism, unemployment rates rose dramatically. In youth, especially, unemployment rates took longer to recover. Youth unemployment rates, more specifically those of youth females, have been found to be correlated with higher rates of trafficking. An economic study conducted by Gergana Danailova-Trainor and Patrick Belser used data from the International Labour Organization to examine a connection between female youth unemployment and higher vulnerability to trafficking. Danailova-Trainor and Belser found that “as more young females are unemployed, they are more susceptible to seeking employment in other countries and are an easy prey for transnational organized crime.”¹⁴³ In this way, the socioeconomic role of youth female unemployment is shown to be significant with regard to trafficking—the more female youths that are unemployed, the more likely they are to be trafficked. This is troubling for youth females in Romania, because according to the available data from the World Bank, youth unemployment¹⁴⁴ for females was higher than male youth unemployment following the economic transition, and remained high even as unemployment for

¹⁴¹ This is “the percentage of the population living on less than \$2.00 a day at 2005 international prices.” Source: “Poverty Headcount Ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP)(% of population); Poverty Headcount Ratio at \$2.00 a day (PPP)(% of population),” World Bank, accessed March 27, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/Poverty_Headcount_Ratio/ID/6c8e7f54.

¹⁴² “Poverty Headcount Ratio at \$2.00 a day.”

¹⁴³ Gergana Danailova-Trainor and Patrick Belser, “Globalization and the Illicit Market for Human Trafficking: an Empirical Analysis of Supply and Demand,” (working paper no. 78, International Labour Organization, Geneva, December, 2006): 14, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/documents/publication/wcms_081759.pdf.

¹⁴⁴ Youth is described as between ages 15-24 by the World Bank. Source: “Unemployment, youth female (% of female labor force ages 15-24); Unemployment, youth male (% of male labor force ages 15-24),” World Bank, accessed March 27, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/Male_and_Female_Youth_Unemployment/ID/57184477.

young men fell. At a rate hovering above 20% for much of the 1990s,¹⁴⁵ even while the unemployment rate for male youth began to decline,¹⁴⁶ female youth in Romania were bearing a significant economic burden. Evidence of this pattern is available in Appendix D.

The economic circumstances of citizens and youth in Romania following the transition made them economically desperate. Given economic desperation, and wishes to change their situations, many youth began to see emigration as an option.

3. West as Ideal

In this manner, the ideal of the West became prominent as a specter of success, and this ideal and desire to emigrate led to increased vulnerability of being trafficked. Indeed, a historical dichotomy existed in the post-Soviet states. While “during the communist times, Western countries were portrayed as evil powers, after the Soviet collapse, the West suddenly became a symbol of luxury and economic prosperity.”¹⁴⁷ Under communism, propaganda espoused the horrors of Western culture, but after the fall of the Soviet Union, and in Romania, the overthrow of Ceausescu, the West became a cherished ideal in the face of an economic downturn, with Romanians possessing a “strong positive sentiment about the United States, France, Britain, and Germany.”¹⁴⁸ The West as an ideal becomes relevant in more than poetic terms when the results of the study by Danailova-Trainor and Belser are again examined. Danailova-Trainor and Belser assert that “as a country closes the income gap relative to richer countries, the motivation for trafficking and the number of TV [Trafficking Victims] goes down.”¹⁴⁹ This implies that an income gap between nearby countries and a country of origin plays a part in trafficking. When

¹⁴⁵ “Female Youth Unemployment.”

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Yuliya V. Tverdova, “Human Trafficking in Russia and Other Post-Soviet States,” *Human Rights Review* 12 (2011): 337, doi: 10.1007/s12142-010-0188-1.

¹⁴⁸ Daniel N. Nelson, “Romanian Security,” in *Romania since 1989: Politics, Economics, and Society*, ed. Henry F. Carey (New York: Lexington, 2004), 470.

¹⁴⁹ Danailova-Trainor and Belser, “Globalization and Human Trafficking,” 14.

one knows about richer countries and the countless economic opportunities available there, one is more likely to want to emigrate, yet when the surrounding countries are about as successful as the country of origin, the desire to emigrate is less.¹⁵⁰ Therefore, by improving the economic situation in a country relative to surrounding countries—in the case of Romania, relative to Western Europe—emigration is likely also reduced. A detailed chart and chronological series of maps, which support the existence of this phenomenon in Romania, are available in Appendix E.

An additional study by two economists, Mahmoud and Trebesch, examined the desire to emigrate in direct relation to vulnerability for trafficking. They argue that “it is first and foremost the wish for a better life abroad that puts millions of people at the risk of ending up in exploitative work conditions.”¹⁵¹ The authors “use a novel and unique survey on human trafficking which covers 5513 randomly selected households from 82 regions in Belarus, Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine”¹⁵² in order to ascertain a possible link between migration flows and trafficking. Although the study was conducted in 2006,¹⁵³ the findings are relevant to human trafficking as a whole, and many findings of the study prove to be specifically relevant to Romania, especially seeing as it was one of the five countries focused on in the study. The results of the study find “migration prevalence to be the key predictor of human trafficking;”¹⁵⁴ therefore the more people leaving a country, the more likely there exists an underground network smuggling people out of the country as well. In addition, “illegality has a particular risk-increasing effect in high-migration areas...traffickers seem to take advantage of larger shadow migration industries and illegal migration patterns.”¹⁵⁵ This is especially relevant

¹⁵⁰ “GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$),” World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

¹⁵¹ Mahmoud and Trebesch, “Economics of Human Trafficking,” 174.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 178.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 180.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 181.

in Romania, because under communism, travel was strictly controlled: “all employees benefit[ted] from a month of vacation yearly, but the opportunities to spend the free time were limited to the Romanian territory.”¹⁵⁶ For this reason it is likely that any citizens wishing to leave for the West during the communist period would have had to resort to criminal or suspect means.

To corroborate the findings of Mahmoud and Trebesch, Romania’s net migration from 1985 through 2000 would seem to support such a large vulnerability to trafficking. In terms of legal migration, measured by the World Bank Development Indicators, it is clear that not only has migration in Romania remained net outflow, after 1989 the amount of people emigrating skyrocketed. In 1990, net migration was -120,971, and by 1995, after 6 years of freer migration opportunities, the net migration was -529,205.¹⁵⁷ By 2000 the outpouring of citizens had slowed, with a net migration of -350,000.¹⁵⁸ These migration trends are visible graphically in Appendix F. However, such an immense change in net migration over only four years was indicative of something—Romanians wanted to leave after 1989, and they did so in large numbers. Prior to 1989, migration was relatively static, as it was heavily regulated by the regime, but remained a net outflow. There is significant evidence that the desire to emigrate, and emigration itself, contributes to increased vulnerability to becoming a victim of trafficking. However, trafficking itself, as an illegal operation, could only exist given certain other factors, one of which is corruption.

¹⁵⁶ Nadolu and Nadolu and Asay, “Family Strengths,” 429.

¹⁵⁷ “Net Migration,” World Bank, accessed March 27, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/Net_Migration/ID/4c9f5cf2.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

4. Corruption and Trafficking

In terms of contributing to vulnerability to being trafficked, the existence of corruption becomes a high risk factor. Corruption itself can be defined in many ways, and as referenced by the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), “The World Bank’s working definition of corruption is ‘the abuse of public power for private benefit’. Transparency International takes a broader approach and understands corruption as ‘the misuse of entrusted power for private gain.’”¹⁵⁹ These two definitions must be relied upon here, since, unlike with “child” and “trafficking”, the UN provides no legal definition of corruption, with the United Nations Convention against Corruption “concluding that any attempt at a comprehensive definition inevitably would fail to address some relevant forms of corrupt behavior.”¹⁶⁰ For this reason, both the World Bank and Transparency International definitions are used here.

Transparency International, a respected organization that collects data about the perception of corruption within governments across the world, began their work in 1995, but Romania was not included on the list until 1997, thus creating a lack of data regarding corruption in Romania. In addition, as the survey sample size for the calculations were small for some time, it is difficult to read too much into the value of the data that does exist. However, according to the Corruption Perceptions Index, with 10 being perceived as the least corrupt and 0 being the most corrupt, in 1997, Romania had a score of 3.44.¹⁶¹ In 1998, the score worsened, to 3.0,¹⁶² but in 1999 improved to almost 1997 levels, with a score of 3.3.¹⁶³ However, the score only

¹⁵⁹ Klara Skrivankova, et al., “The Role of Corruption in Trafficking in Persons,” (issue paper, UNODC, Anti-Slavery International, and Transparency International, Vienna, 2011): 5, http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2011/Issue_Paper_-_The_Role_of_Corruption_in_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ “The Corruptions Perception Index 1997,” Transparency International, accessed September 22, 2011.

¹⁶² “The Corruptions Perception Index 1998,” Transparency International, accessed September 22, 2011.

¹⁶³ “The Corruptions Perception Index 1999,” Transparency International, accessed September 22, 2011.

worsened in 2000 and 2001, with scores of 2.9¹⁶⁴ and 2.8,¹⁶⁵ respectively. Such low scores could be attributable to dissatisfaction with the government and the rule of law in Romania, but it is difficult to explain the pattern, or to read into immediate post-transition data, since it does not exist. However, the UNODC makes a telling observation when it states, “despite the scarcity of specific official data on corruption and trafficking, there are consistent indications that corruption does play an important role in facilitating and fostering the crime of trafficking in persons.”¹⁶⁶ Despite insufficiencies, the data from Transparency International provides at the least, substantiation to the assertion that Romania’s corruption was prominent, recognized, and increasing over time.

An additional instance of perceived corruption, in the public service sector, existed in post-communism Romania surrounding Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). These organizations suffered from perceptions of corruption because “it was widely believed that domestic NGOs sprang up all over Romania to take advantage of the customs tax treatment, which allowed organizations registered as NGOs to receive favorable tax treatment for bringing goods and vehicles into the country...Romanians heard of foreign money flowing into Romania and they saw jobs and cars going to NGOs with marginal impact on their lives.”¹⁶⁷ Perceived corruption existed not only in the governmental sector in Romania, but also in the non-governmental sector.

This recognition of corruption, whether actual or perceived, affects the persistence of trafficking as well. The UNODC comments once more, “For people who live in a country where the level of corruption is quite high (or in a country where the majority of the population believes

¹⁶⁴ “The Corruptions Perception Index 2000,” Transparency International, accessed September 22, 2011.

¹⁶⁵ “The Corruptions Perception Index 2001,” Transparency International, accessed September 22, 2011.

¹⁶⁶ Skrivankova, et al., “The Role of Corruption,” 4.

¹⁶⁷ Correll, Correll, and Predescu, “USAID and Child Welfare Reform,” 5.

that the level of corruption is high) those at risk of being exploited through trafficking may not doubt a trafficker who claims that ‘middle men’ are required to obtain visa, passports, or other travel documents.”¹⁶⁸ In this way, the lack of a strict rule of law and recognition of an underground method of conducting transactions as normal directly aligns with an increased vulnerability to be trafficked. Not only does it increase the vulnerability of a person to be trafficked, especially an unemployed young girl, once the girl is trafficked, corruption greatly impedes her potential rescue. “The hold of recruiters, pimps, and the mafiya over the lives of women becomes stronger when government authorities choose to ignore trafficking or even help to foster it.”¹⁶⁹ The chance of escape from a forcible smuggling situation gets slimmer with each corrupt official aware of the girl’s fate. This is captured especially vividly in a researcher’s account of a young trafficked Romanian girl:

ROMANIA: Maria, age 16, was tricked into traveling to Bucharest to find a job by a childhood friend. Unbeknownst to Maria, the friend had advertised in a Romanian port city that there was a ‘girl for sale.’ Maria was sold to a man who used her as a prostitute, along with an 11-year-old girl. For four months, she was forced to work as a street prostitute under the threat of beatings. She was fined, arrested, and interrogated numerous times by the police; however, her ‘protector’ bribed the police, to release her, thus forcing her to prostitute again.¹⁷⁰

Maria was domestically trafficked into sex slavery, but the vulnerability and danger holds for international trafficking. An especially frustrating aspect of corruption, illustrated by the primary source’s anecdote quite well, is that it “can establish close ties between traffickers and those who

¹⁶⁸ Skrivankova, et al., “The Role of Corruption,” 12.

¹⁶⁹ Caldwell, Galster and Steinzor, “Crime and Servitude,” 15.

¹⁷⁰ Cullen-DuPont, *Human Trafficking*, 189.

are actually charged with bringing them to justice.”¹⁷¹ This makes it nearly impossible to prosecute and apprehend traffickers, thereby making it equally difficult to rescue those that have been trafficked. Put simply, “[c]orruption makes the job of a trafficker much easier and less risky.”¹⁷² Given the corrupt state of Romania following the dissolution of communism, the hopes of rescuing victimized girls and other trafficking victims were tragically low.

5. Organized Crime and Trafficking

However, the organized crime infiltration of trafficking also makes the process much smoother for traffickers and their clients who provide the demand for sex workers. In reference to the organized crime element, scholars note that “during the chaos of massive political, social, and economic change in Russia and the Newly Independent States, criminal elements have been able to establish themselves in the international business of trafficking women.”¹⁷³ The infiltration of organized crime, and additionally the establishment of a trafficking business in Eastern Europe is especially troubling, given that in Romania this was especially viable. As noted by a scholarly article about Poverty in Romania, “the post-communist distributive policies had effects that contradicted the official pro-egalitarian discourse. Those who accumulated wealth, legally or illegally, during the communist and post-communist regimes were provided favorable conditions.”¹⁷⁴ In this way, mafia men who had illegally acquired wealth throughout communist times were given preferential treatment because the ill-gotten nature of their wealth did not count against them when it came to distributing businesses post-communism.

¹⁷¹ “020 Workshop: Corruption and Human Trafficking: The Grease that Facilitates the Crime,” (background paper, The Vienna Forum to fight Human Trafficking, Austria Center Vienna, Austria, February 13-15, 2008): 3, <http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2008/BP020CorruptionandHumanTrafficking.pdf>.

¹⁷² Yuliya V. Tverdova, “Human Trafficking in Russia and Other Post-Soviet States,” *Human Rights Review* 12 (2011): 334, doi: 10.1007/s12142-010-0188-1.

¹⁷³ Caldwell, Galster and Steinzor, “Crime and Servitude,” 10.

¹⁷⁴ Traian Rotariu and Livia Popescu, “Poverty in Romania,” in *Poverty in Transition and Transition in Poverty: Recent Developments in Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Georgia, Russia, Mongolia*, ed. Yogesh Atal (Paris: UNESCO, 1999), 115.

The organized crime connection to trafficking is further asserted in an article published in *Trends in Organized Crime*, in that “[t]rafficking in Russia and throughout the world is organized by criminal groups.”¹⁷⁵ Romania in particular had smugglers, who “also became involved in illegally ‘exporting’ young women to Israel and other parts of the Middle [E]ast, Western Europe, North America, Turkey, and Cyprus, to name just a few of the more important destinations, where they were forced to work in the sex trades.”¹⁷⁶ The existence of organized crime combined with the widespread desire of people, especially women, to work abroad and escape their unfortunate economic circumstances in Romania, created a prime opportunity for trafficking to begin. To return once more to the findings of Mahmoud and Trebesch, “[t]he growing, but unsatisfied demand for legal migration options...created a breeding ground for criminal organisations and exploitative employers, who have learned to make a profit from people’s desire to work abroad.”¹⁷⁷ In this way, organized crime was able to take hold and begin trafficking, especially threatening the most vulnerable population of young girls.

6. West as Receiver

The West held something else for émigrés from Romania: a booming sex market. In countries such as Germany and the Netherlands, where prostitution was legal, often times the demand quickly outstripped the supply of willing prostitutes.¹⁷⁸ In these cases, brothel owners and pimps would turn to the illegal market for prostitutes, supplied by victims of trafficking. The demand for children existed perhaps more strongly than ever, for a variety of reasons. For one, “some clients prefer young prostitutes, because they believe that young people are less likely to

¹⁷⁵ Caldwell, Galster and Steinzor, “Crime and Servitude,” 10.

¹⁷⁶ Keil, *Tortured Road*, 393.

¹⁷⁷ Mahmoud and Trebesch, “Economics of Human Trafficking,” 174.

¹⁷⁸ Morrison Torrey and Sara Dubin, editors, “Demand Dynamics: The Forces of Demand in Global Sex Trafficking,” (conference report, Captive Daughters and the International Human Rights Law Institute of DePaul University College of Law, Chicago, Illinois, October 17-18, 2003): 23.

http://lastradainternational.org/lisidocs/514%20demand_dynamics_oct07.pdf.

be infected by HIV,”¹⁷⁹ the other belief being “that by having sex with a virgin girl, one can rejuvenate oneself.”¹⁸⁰ These rationalizations provide the groundwork for a troubling trend in prostitution demand, leading to “a destructive vortex whereby the market for sex spirals towards younger and younger children.”¹⁸¹ Ironically for customers of Romanian child prostitutes, yet sadly for the children trafficked into sex work, Romania has the largest children’s AIDS prevalence in Europe.¹⁸² An additional problem posed by the legalization of prostitution is that “Governments of most destination countries consistently act, either overtly or covertly, to protect their sex industries,”¹⁸³ since they are legitimate markets once legalized. However, legalization of prostitution is not necessary for a country to become a receiving market of trafficked women and girls, it merely increases the demand.

7. Challenges of a Study on Trafficking

Frustratingly, definitive rates of trafficking, especially child sex trafficking, in Romania during this time period are unknown. In general, “accurate numbers of trafficked humans are hard to ascertain for various reasons”, most notably because “the criminal nature...has consequences for what activities are measured and how.”¹⁸⁴ Specific to Romania, “there is limited knowledge concerning, in general, the new trends of the trafficking in children

¹⁷⁹ Annemieke Wolthius and Mirjam Blaak, editors, “Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes from Eastern Europe to Western Europe,” (exploratory research, ECPAT Europe Law Enforcement Group, Amsterdam, 2001): 7, [http://lastradainternational.org/lisidocs/228%20Exploratory%20research%20\(ECPAT\).pdf](http://lastradainternational.org/lisidocs/228%20Exploratory%20research%20(ECPAT).pdf).

¹⁸⁰ Vitit Muntarbhorn, “Report of the Rapporteur-General,” (report, World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, Stockholm, Sweden, August 27-31, 1996): 5, http://www.csecworldcongress.org/PDF/en/Stockholm/Reports/Stockholm%20Congress%20General%20Rapporteur's%20Final%20Report%201996_EN.pdf.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² “Half Way Home,” 19.

¹⁸³ Donna M. Hughes, “The Corruption of Civil Society: Maintaining the Flow of Women to the Sex Industries” (lecture, presented at the Encuentro Internacional Sobre Trafico De Mujeres Y Explotacion, Andalusian Women’s Institute, Malaga, Spain, September 23, 2002) http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/corruption_civil_society.

¹⁸⁴ Emily I. Troshynski and Jennifer K. Blank, “Sex Trafficking: An Exploratory Study Interviewing Traffickers,” *Trends in Organized Crime* 11 (2008): 31, doi: 10.1007/s12117-007-9015-8.

phenomenon in Romania and specifically internal trafficking.”¹⁸⁵ Usually the only numbers of trafficking victims that are recorded are those that are victimized, rescued, and put into the criminal justice system, either as witnesses against a trafficker, or as prisoners themselves for prostitution.

The illegal nature of trafficking means that it is essentially impossible for reliable data about the number of trafficking victims annually from specific countries to be collected. Later studies have examined the rate of trafficking in Romania as they joined the EU, however no sources that could be discovered examined these rates in the immediate transition period, from 1989 through 2001. Abstractly, the trafficking rate of Romania and Eastern Europe during this time was mentioned as an “increase” by numerous sources, or anecdotally by other sources. The only numerical data found were cited by a single source, which relayed both unverifiable and uncited figures of how many people were trafficked following the fall of communism in Romania, thus the data were less than credible. Due to this lack of conclusive data, the arguments in this paper must be largely speculative about the post-communist period specifically. However, one source provides some sporadic evidence of child sex trafficking in the 1990s:

In 1994 a young Romanian girl was found murdered in a Turkish brothel. Romanian minors have been reported in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, and Holland. Indeed, Romanian boys dominate the trafficking for sex in Europe. Boys between the ages of ten and 14 turn up in Berlin and Amsterdam, often in groups ‘supervised’ by an adult. Estimates in early 1996 suggest that as many as 1000 Romanian boys sell sex on the streets of Berlin, and 200 in Amsterdam. Local boys complain that the ‘cheap imports’ bring down the prices.¹⁸⁶

However, patchy reports, anecdotal evidence, and abstract estimates can only contribute to an image of widespread child sex trafficking in post-communist Romania. Some additional context

¹⁸⁵ Gavril and Tamaş, “Trafficking in Children in Romania,” 11.

¹⁸⁶ Kane, *Sold for Sex*, 31.

can be provided by the United States State Department, with the first issue of their Trafficking in Persons Report. Released in 2001, it included Romania as a Tier 3 country, the worst rating, in terms of effectiveness at combating human trafficking.¹⁸⁷ According to the country report, “The Government of Romania does not meet the minimum standards” and that “Due to a lack of resources and low-level corruption, many local Government officials regard trafficking as a low priority.”¹⁸⁸ As of 2001, trafficking was indeed a problem in Romania, but being largely ignored. Indeed, according to the same report, “Romania has no specific anti-trafficking law”(“Country Narratives”), so there was little to no motivation to combat human trafficking, even the despicable practice of child sex trafficking.

As trafficking in Eastern Europe continued to be more closely examined in the mid-2000s, more data became available. A study conducted in 2004 by “the Save the Children organization in Romania...focus[ed] on sexual exploitation and forced labour of Romanian children in other European countries. The report identified an increase of the *domestic trafficking* phenomenon at a national level, also reflected by the mass media of that time.”¹⁸⁹ Another major organization that tracks trafficking is the International Organization for Migration, which released a report in 2005 on Romania, which “mentions the lack of a centralized analysis, of identification and referral instruments for trafficking victims as well as the lack of statistical data both in the country of origin and in the transit and destination countries; all of these factors contributed to conceal the expansion of the phenomenon among Romanian victims.”¹⁹⁰ Not only was trafficking hardly studied in the immediate post-communist period, more than 15 years later,

¹⁸⁷ “Country Narratives – Tier 3,” U.S. Department of State, accessed September 10, 2011, <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2001/3930.htm>.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Gavril and Tamaş, “Trafficking in Children in Romania,” 26.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

major monitoring of the status of Romanian trafficking victims was still severely lacking. This continued a trend of lack of information about the insidious nature of trafficking in Romania.

However, a study was conducted in 2008 by the General Inspectorate of Romanian Police and the National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons¹⁹¹ to examine the recruiting process of trafficking in Romania.¹⁹² One finding of the study was that “children represent approximately 15% of the victims of trafficking identified each year in Romania. In 2007, 292 children were identified and in 2008, 186 children, most of them (87%) females. Three-quarters of the children [had] been sexually exploited, the most vulnerable age category being between 14 and 17 years (94%).”¹⁹³ With the nature of data collection regarding trafficking victims in mind, it can be assumed that these children are only a small fraction of actual children trafficked, as only children who had been “identified” as being trafficked could be included.¹⁹⁴ Additional findings based on the children examined in this study were that “Half of the children were victims of the domestic trafficking (within the country borders), the other half being trafficked for different forms of exploitation outside the country, foremost to Italy (sexual exploitation) and Spain (for both forced labour and sexual exploitation).”¹⁹⁵ Domestic, as well as international trafficking, was proven to be an issue for children.

The children got involved in trafficking through recruitment, which was “carried out by acquaintances and friends in 50% of the cases and by persons previously unknown to them in 35% of the cases.”¹⁹⁶ The study also reinforced the findings of more general studies done about trafficking, in finding that “113 of the 186 child victims of exploitation came from biparental

¹⁹¹ This agency seems to have been created in 2007, but no information on its website speaks to this, so that year is speculative based on the dates of available publications and information on their website at <http://anitp.mai.gov.ro/en/index.php?pagina=anitp>.

¹⁹² Gavril and Tamaş, “Trafficking in Children in Romania,” title page.

¹⁹³ Gavril and Tamaş, “Trafficking in Children in Romania,” 11.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 42.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 43.

families while 47 others lived in single parent families, 9 did not have a family support, 8 had been institutionalized and 7 others lived with relatives.”¹⁹⁷ In addition to the role of families in trafficking vulnerability, the importance of education was also apparent in this study, as “most of the trafficked minors [had] a low level of education, with 74% having at most secondary school studies. Bearing in mind that 90% of the children were of high-school age, it should be noted that [in many] cases the victims had dropped out of school at the moment of their recruitment or had interrupted studies in this context.”¹⁹⁸ The findings of this 2008 study serve as a strong verification for many of the assertions made about trafficking in the transition period in Romania.

As public awareness and outcry against trafficking grew in the 2000s, and Romania sought to join the EU, steps were taken to outlaw and criminalize trafficking more fully, creating more available data for the phenomenon to be studied. Becoming a signatory on the “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime” on 14 December 2000, and ratifying the protocol on 4 December 2002,¹⁹⁹ began a movement towards recognition of incidences of trafficking in Romania and more concentrated efforts to examine the rates of trafficking. Despite the nonexistence of a neat graph showing an increase in trafficking in post-communist Romania, through examining sources from that time and later, it is clear that child sex trafficking was a serious issue in Romania at that time, and continues to be today.

8. Conclusion II: The Future

This case study of Romania is a valuable one. It showcases a country in which children were distinctively devalued throughout history. Erratic educational policies which marginalized

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 44.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children,” United Nations, accessed March 22, 2012, http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XVIII-12-a&chapter=18&lang=en.

the population for some time, discriminatory family laws and harmful demographic policies, and the growing role of the incompetent State as a substitution for the family all contributed to a significant lack of protection for the rights of the child in Romania. Post-communism, economic hardship in the form of growing inequality, poverty, and persistent unemployment, lent “push” factors for trafficking to an already vulnerable population. The high rate of emigration in combination with prevalent corruption and organized crime in Romania, especially when faced with demand for child prostitutes in the West, created a situation with frighteningly high potential for a flourishing illegal sex trade.

Outside of Romania, as long as these conditions exist, the threat of trafficking remains very real. The conditions in post-communist Romania, while seemingly very specialized, exist in many other places in different contexts. Devaluation of children is a serious issue worldwide. Many of the current efforts to prevent trafficking focus on education and awareness methods, perhaps because they seem most achievable for the NGOs that typically work against the phenomenon. However, some scholars attack this method, arguing, “increased awareness will not eradicate trafficking. It does not combat poverty or limited job opportunities and economic prospects. Nor does it tackle the interests—and profits—that drive trafficking.”²⁰⁰ In this way, it is clear that further action must be taken in order to alleviate the scourge of trafficking worldwide. For the most part, most of those organizations working against trafficking, or in support of children, are Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), with little to no backing from the governments of the countries they work within, such as USAID. However, some scholars go even further and antagonize those who attempt to prevent trafficking: “Anti-trafficking forces perpetuate the commodification of trafficked women by depicting them as passive victims to be

²⁰⁰ Gail Kligman and Stephanie Limoncelli, “Trafficking Women after Socialism: To, Through, and From Eastern Europe,” *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society* 12 (2005): 130, doi: 10.1093/sp/jxi006.

counted, assisted, and managed.”²⁰¹ Efforts to monitor and prevent trafficking make it difficult to help victims of trafficking without also turning the people into figures to be quantified and delivered to international organizations such as the International Organization for Migration.

It is clear that structural changes need to be undertaken by the governments of countries of origin themselves, countries like Romania, to prevent trafficking. Improving the economic situation of its citizens, as well as eradicating the grip that corruption and organized crime have on essential elements of daily life would reduce both the vulnerability of citizens and the potential for exploitation by criminal elements. Adjustments to and a greater valuation of the educational system, as well as the existence of a well-funded and appropriate mechanism for child welfare are also integral to the continued valuation of children within a society. In addition to efforts made by countries of origin, destination countries, or receiving countries, must ensure that sex workers are working voluntarily, especially in markets where prostitution is legal. Above all, improvement of the situations of children, in addition to the situations of their families, is paramount.

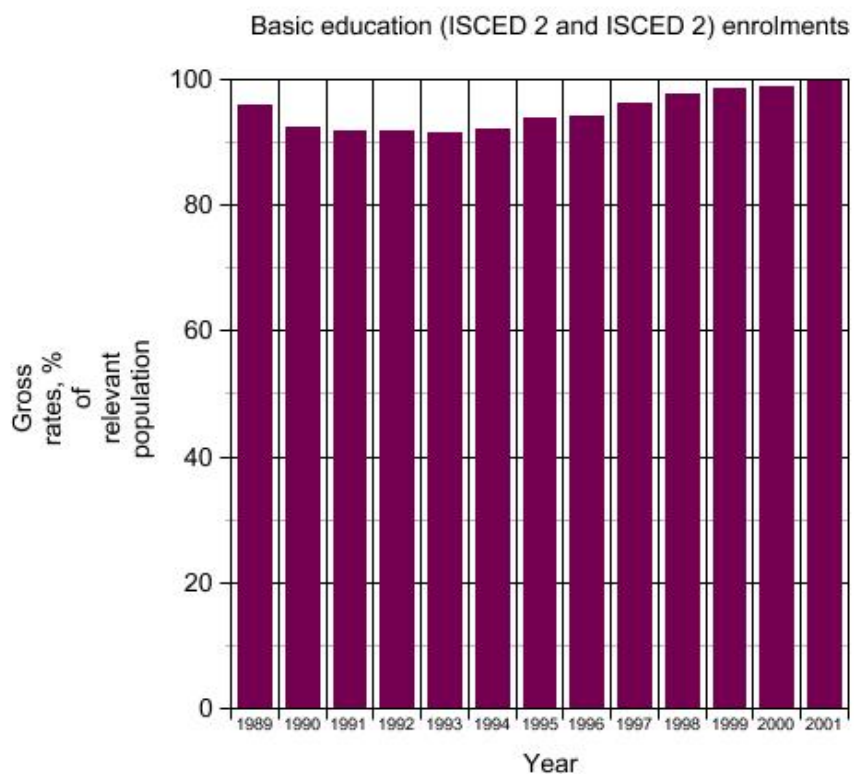
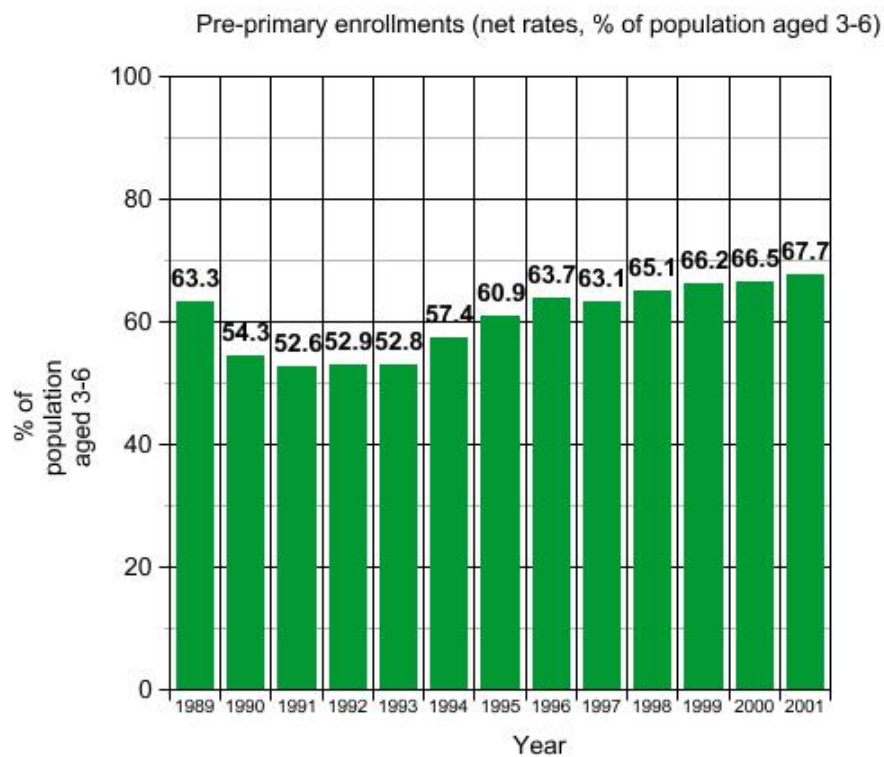
The fact remains that children are vulnerable to trafficking not because of a lack of knowledge about trafficking itself. They are culturally commoditized and economically desperate. With a low status in society and their culture, children are more at risk to be traded like mere objects, and with dire economic situations, they are more at risk to seek out ‘better opportunities’ that result in their being trafficked. Reporting on the Stockholm World Congress Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in 1996, Karen Mahler declares:

²⁰¹ Nicole Lindstrom, “Regional Sex Trafficking in the Balkans: Transnational Networks in an Enlarged Europe,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 51 (2004): 46.

“If the international community is to succeed in protecting the world’s most vulnerable citizens, it must first succeed in valuing them.”²⁰²

²⁰² Karen Mahler, “Global Concern for Children’s Rights: The World Congress Against Sexual Exploitation,” *International Family Planning Perspectives*, 23 (1997): 83-4, <http://jstor.org/stable/2950828>.

Appendix A



Source: "Country Profiles," Transmonee, accessed March 27, 2012, <http://www.transmonee.org/>.

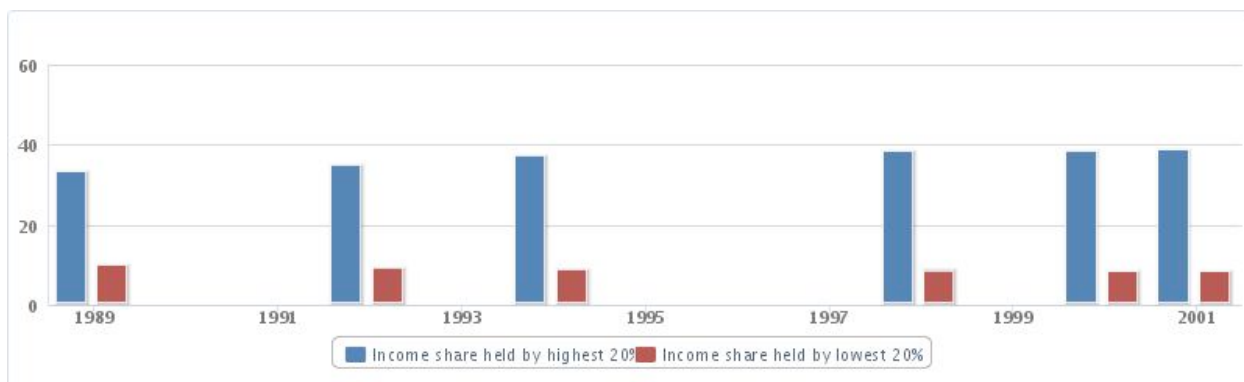
Appendix B

GINI Index



Source: "Gini Index," World Bank, accessed March 27, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/Gini_Index/ID/e7497763.

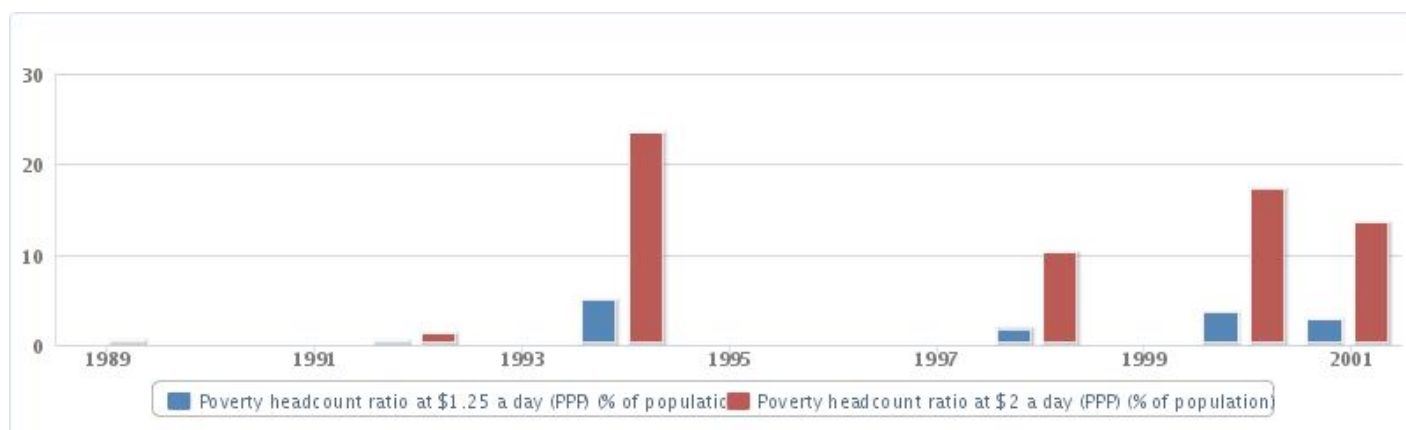
Income Shares in Romania



Source: "Income Share Held by Highest 20%; Income Share Held by Lowest 20%," World Bank, accessed March 27, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/Income_Shares_Highest_Lowest/ID/e8f1945e.

Appendix C

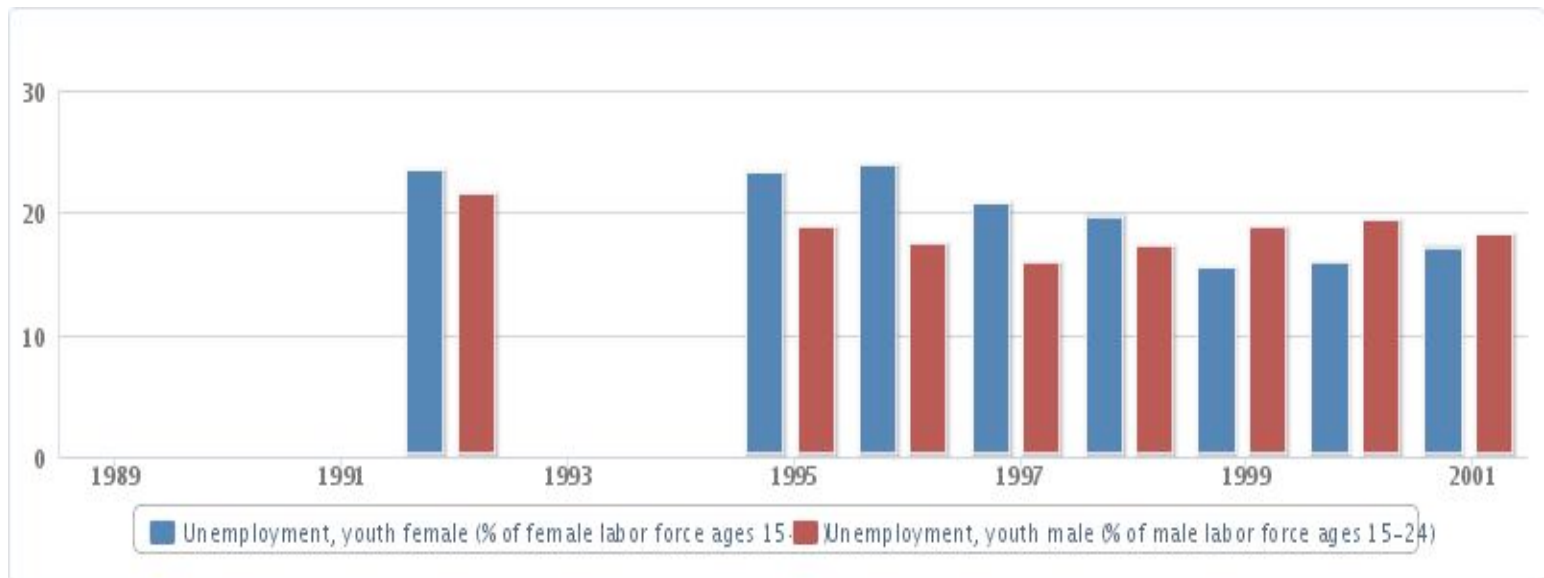
Poverty Headcount Ratio



Source: "Poverty Headcount Ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP)(% of population); Poverty Headcount Ratio at \$2.00 a day (PPP)(% of population)," World Bank, accessed March 27, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/Poverty_Headcount_Ratio/ID/6c8e7f54.

Appendix D

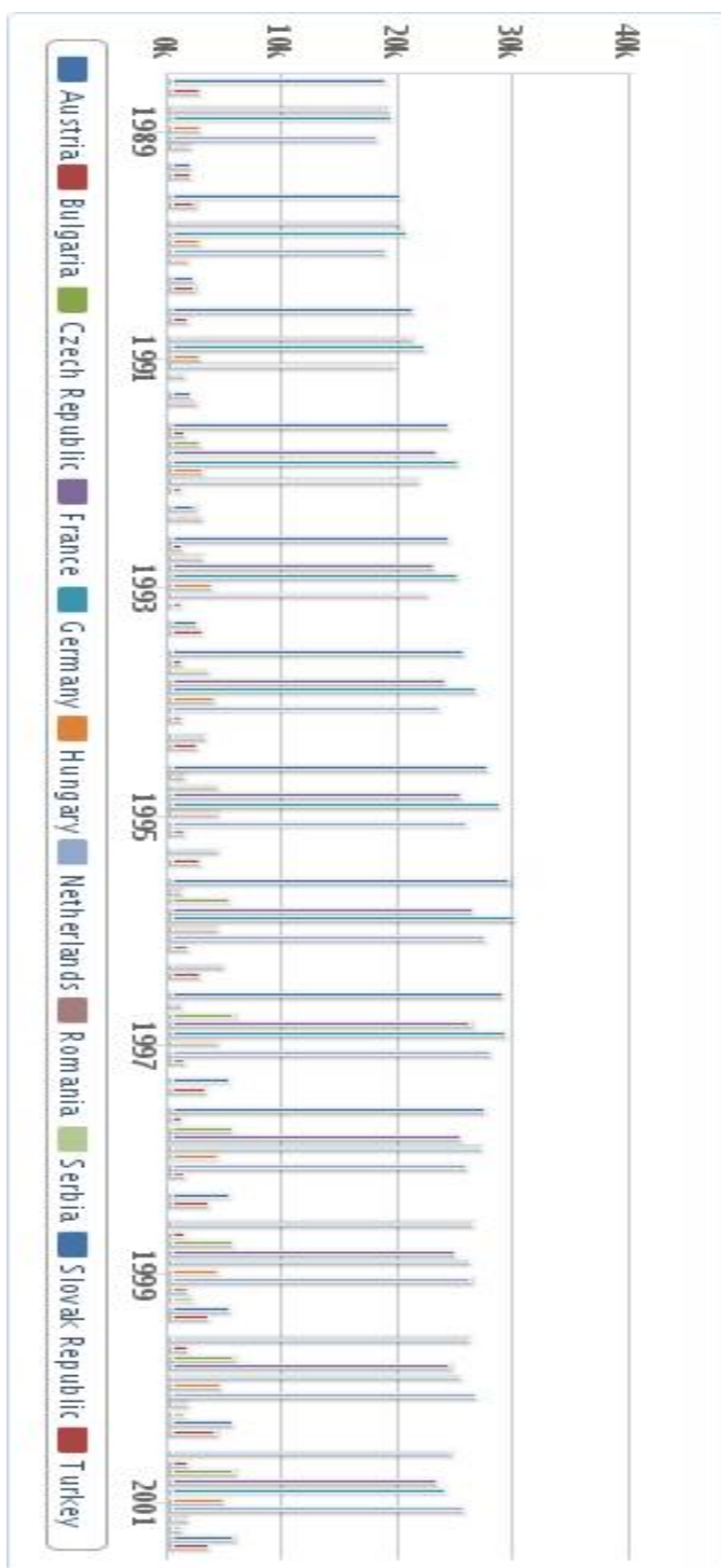
Youth Female Unemployment as compared to Youth Male Unemployment



Source: “Unemployment, youth female (% of female labor force ages 15-24); Unemployment, youth male (% of male labor force ages 15-24),” World Bank, accessed March 27, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/Male_and_Female_Youth_Unemployment/ID/57184477.

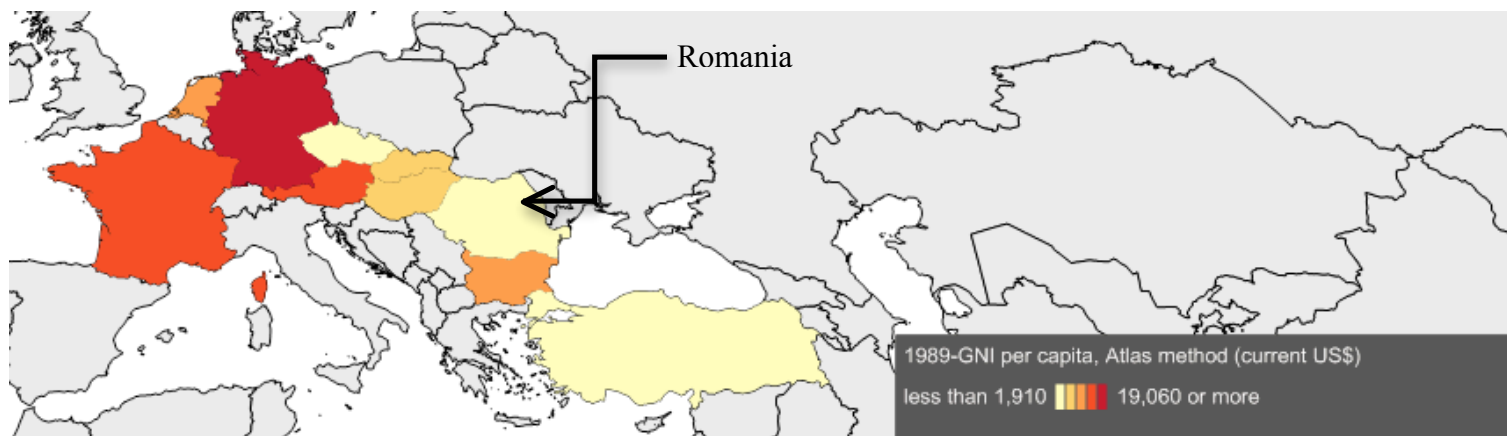
Appendix E:a

GNI [Atlas Method] of Select Countries

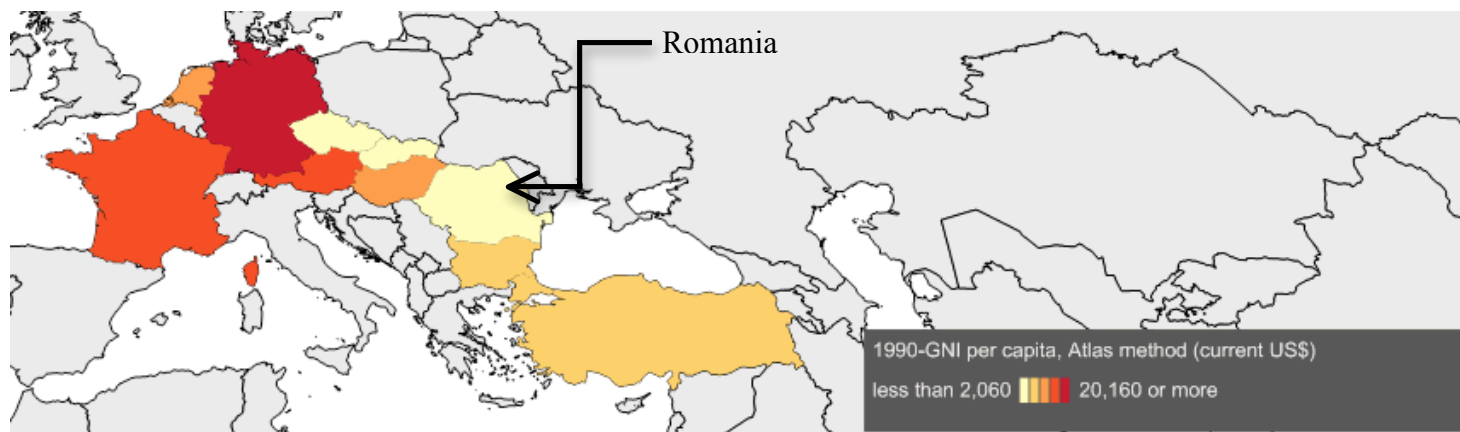


Source: "GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$)," World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

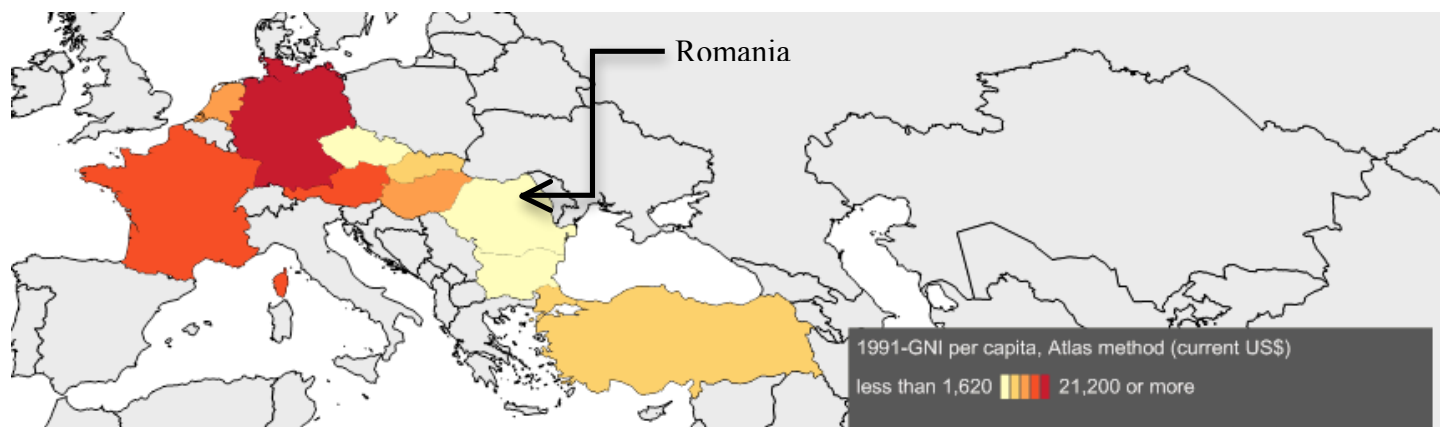
Appendix E:b



Source: "GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$)," World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

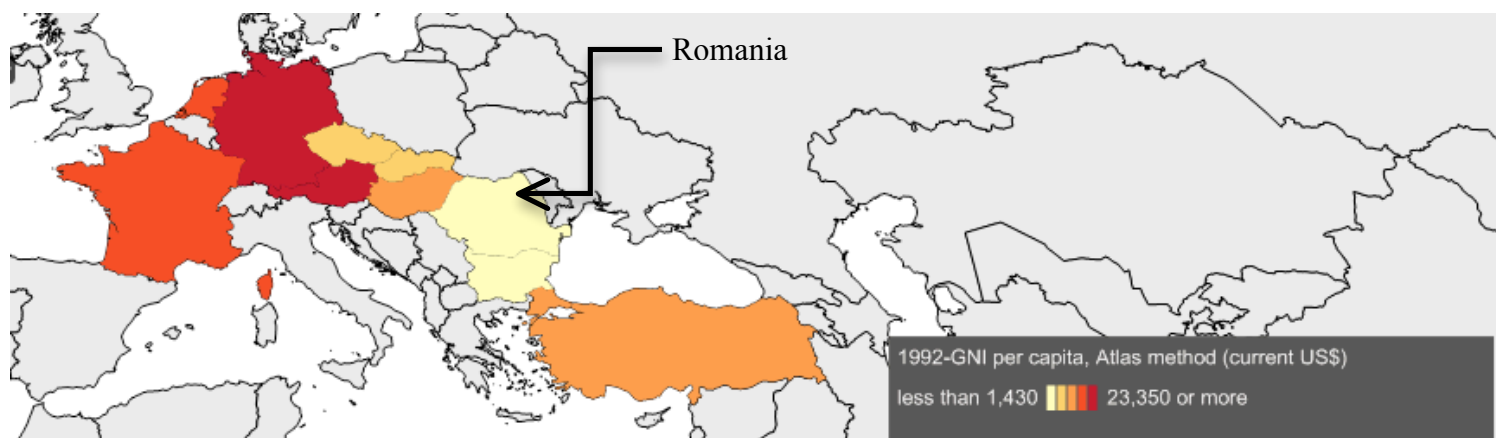


Source: "GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$)," World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

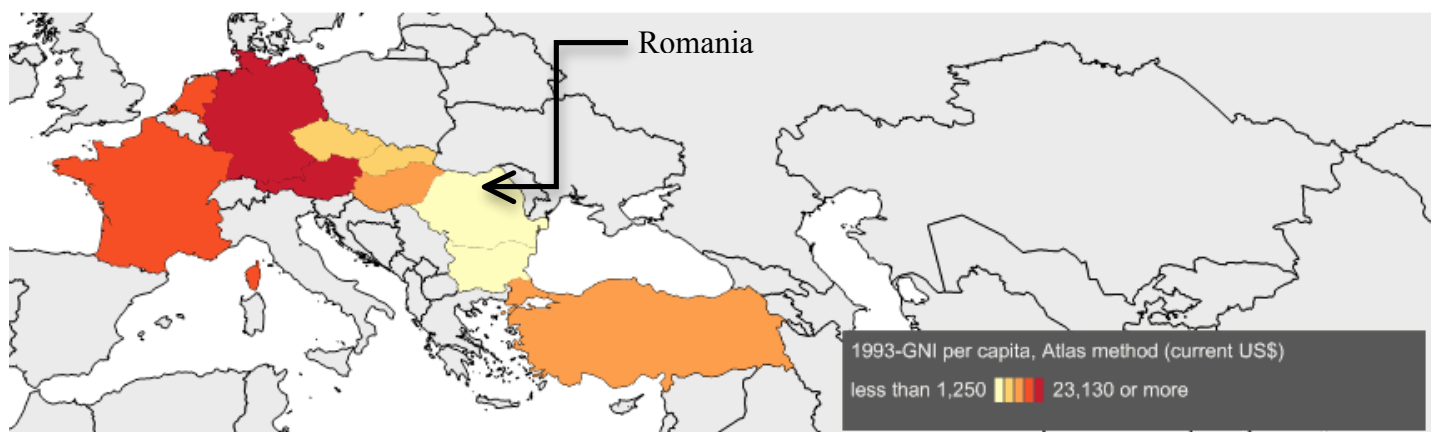


Source: "GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$)," World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

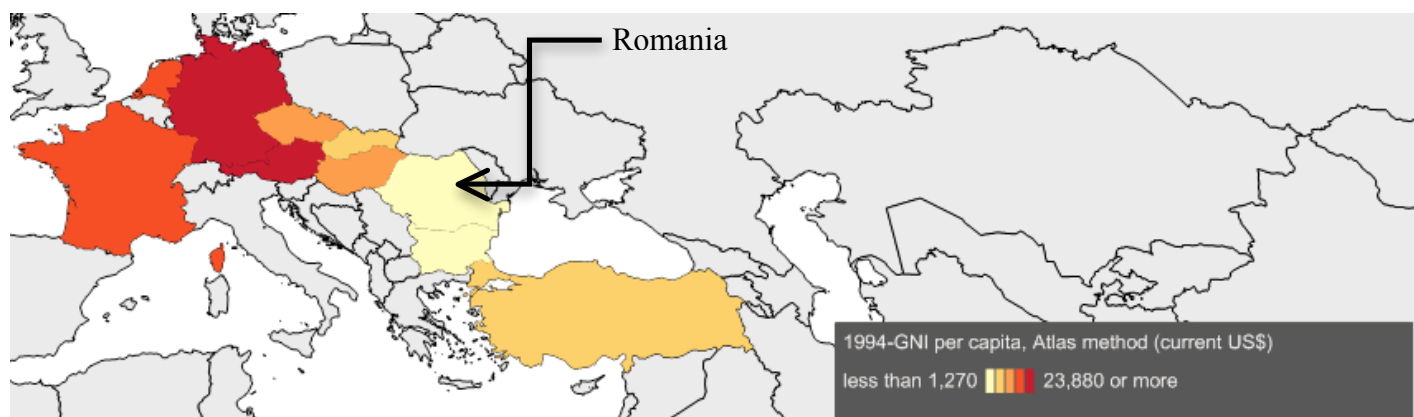
Appendix E:c



Source: “GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$),” World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

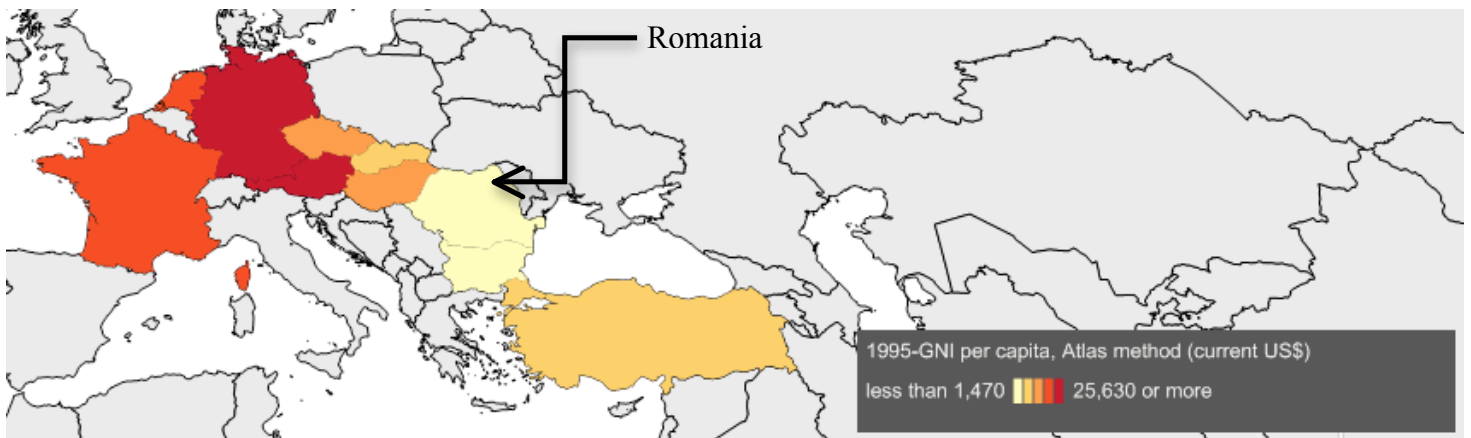


Source: “GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$),” World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

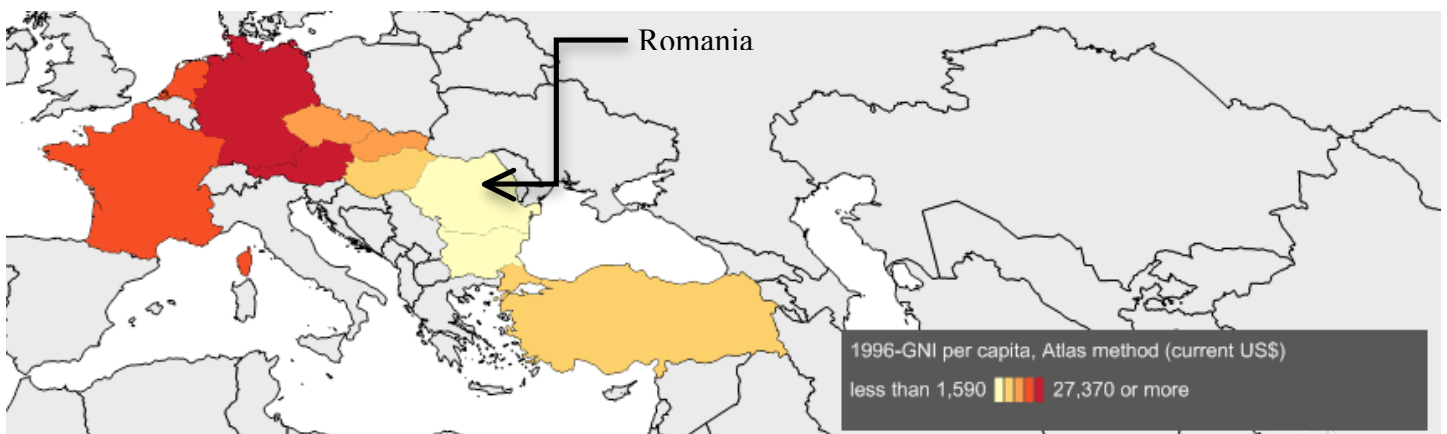


Source: “GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$),” World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

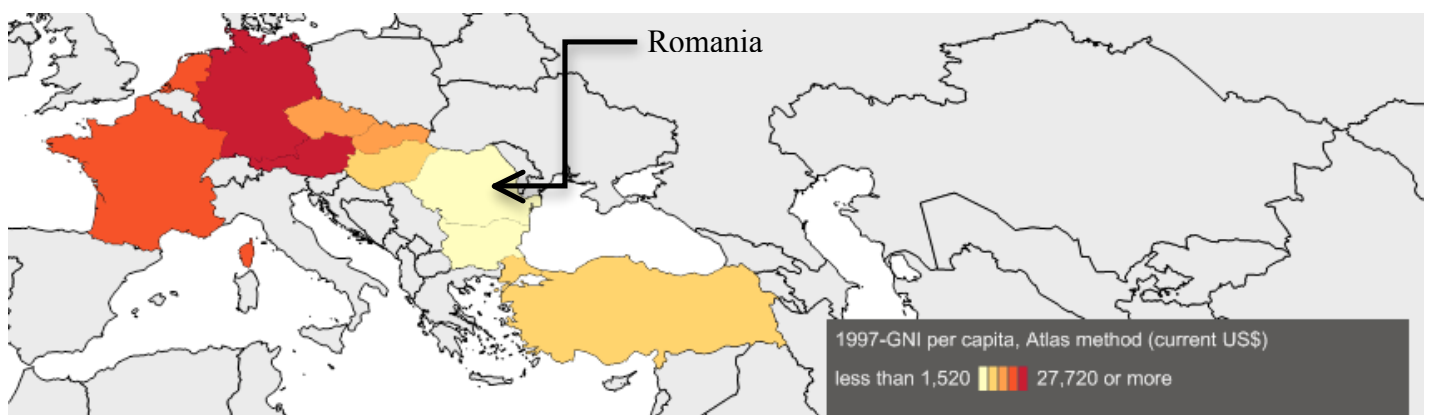
Appendix E:d



Source: “GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$),” World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

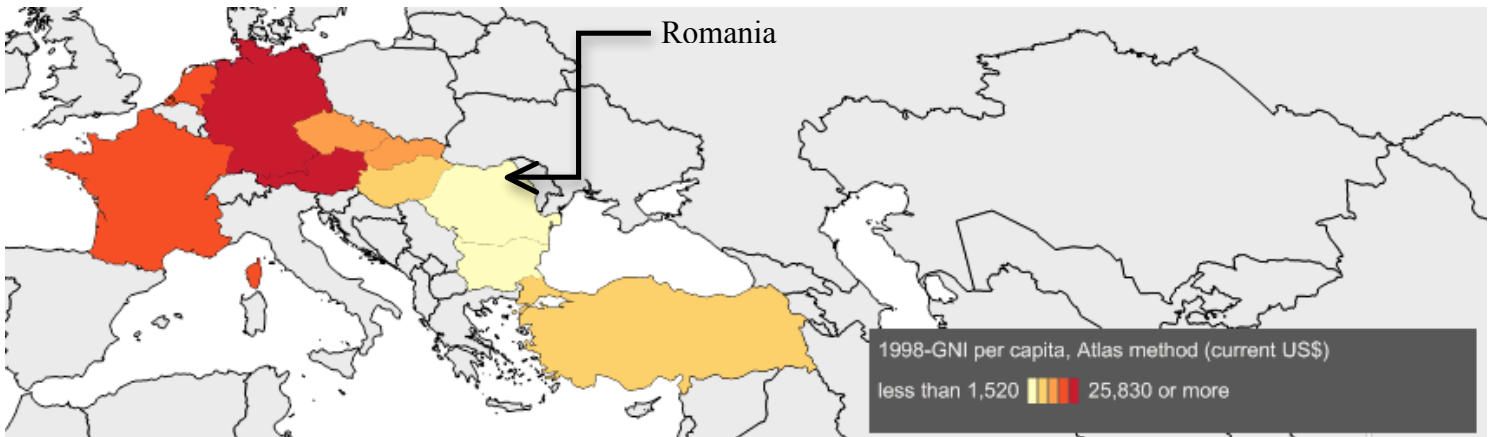


Source: “GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$),” World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

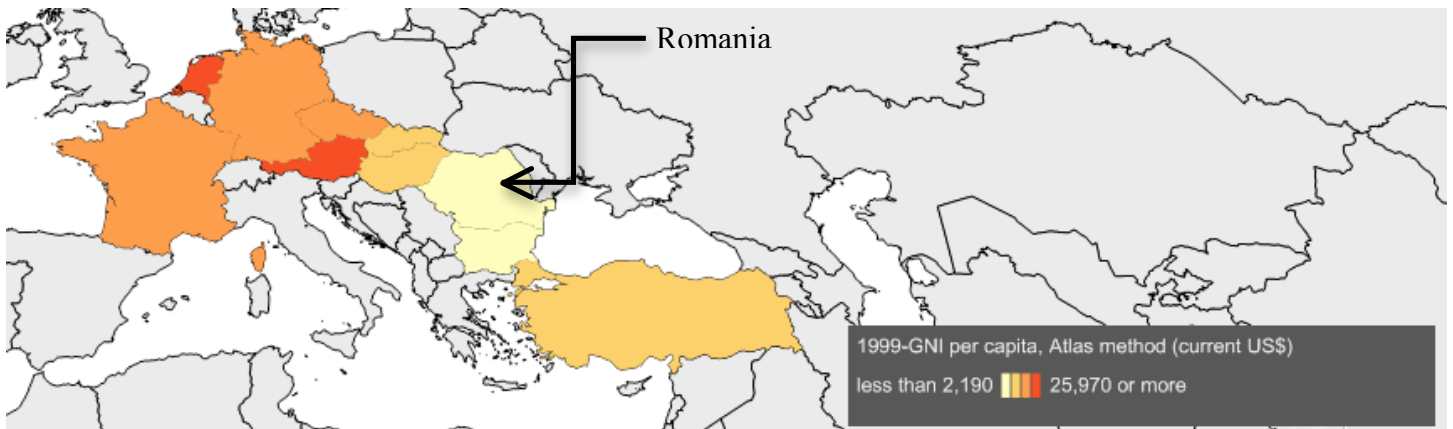


Source: “GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$),” World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

Appendix E:e



Source: “GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$),” World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

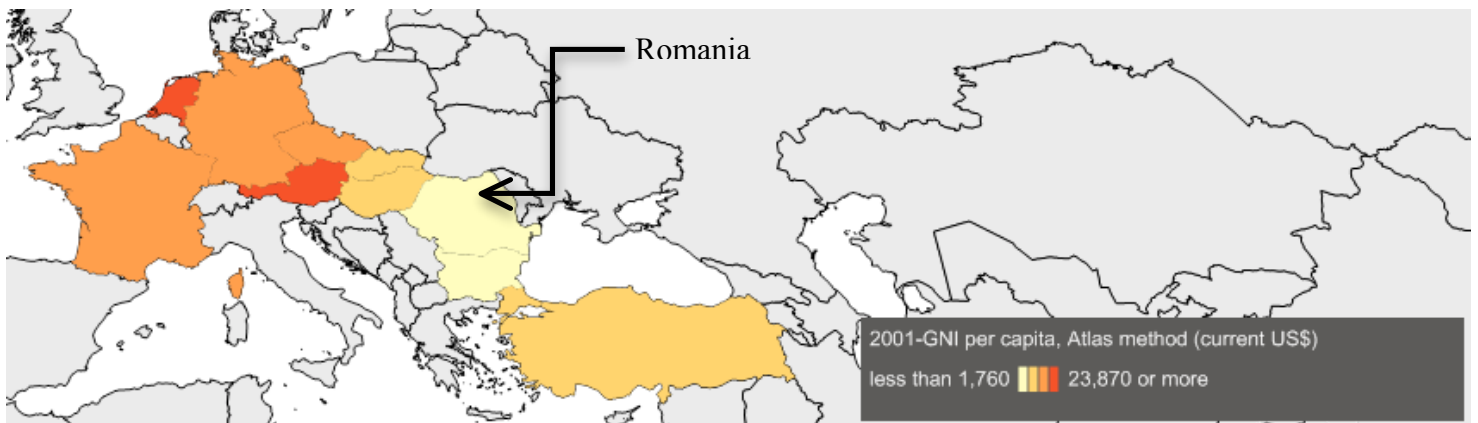


Source: “GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$),” World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.



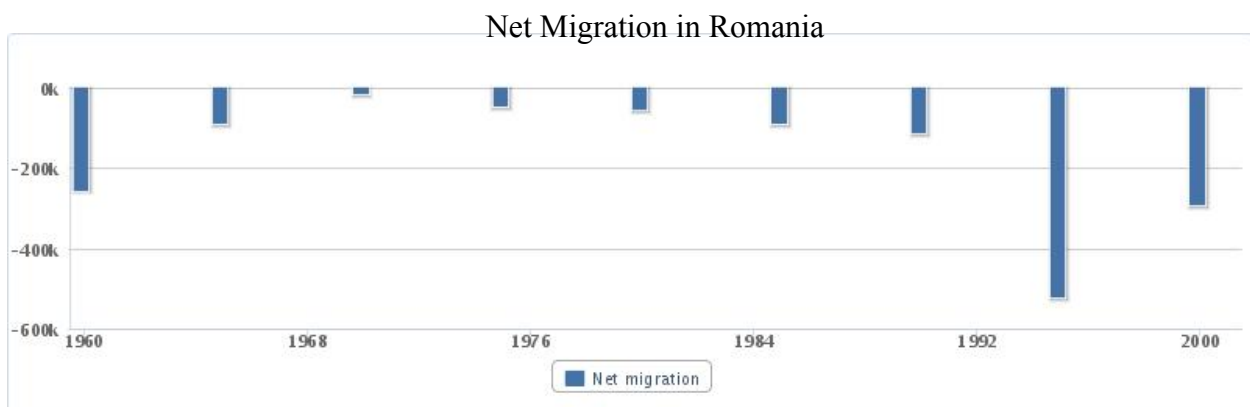
Source: “GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$),” World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

Appendix E:f



Source: “GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$),” World Bank, accessed March 28, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/GNI_Europe/ID/38b9ed8a.

Appendix F



Note: Only measured every 5 years.

Source: "Net Migration," World Bank, accessed March 27, 2012, databank.worldbank.org/Data/Net_Migration/ID/4c9f5cf2.

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