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Turning brain drain into brain gain: the case of Romanian medical doctors

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Context

The emigration of medical doctors accelerated after Romania's accession to the EU, our country becoming one of the main exporters of physicians.

Aim

This study aims to investigate Romania's potential of turning brain drain into brain networking.

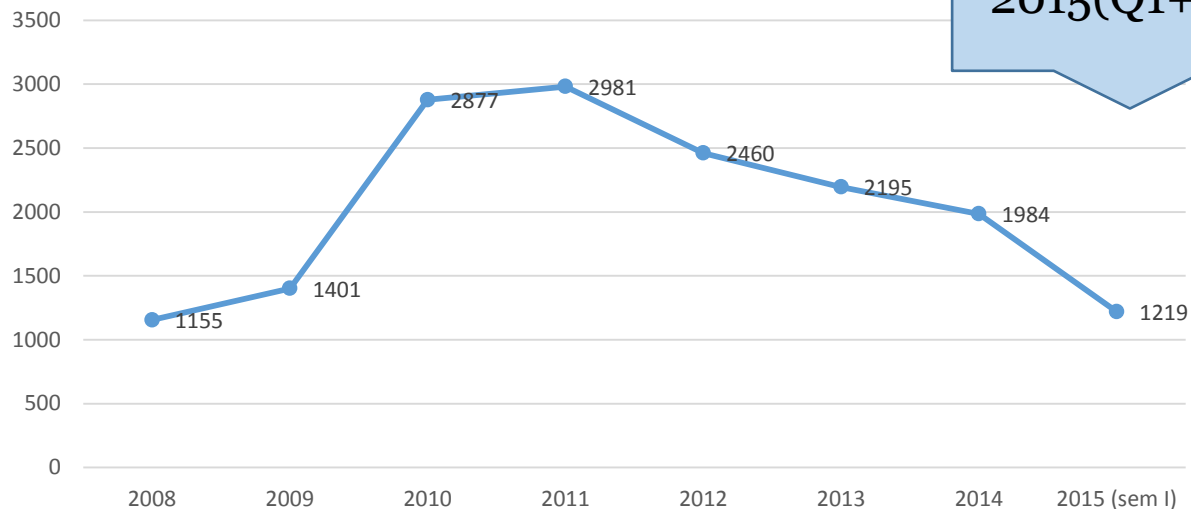
Methods

The research methodology includes a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, conducted among Romanian physicians (trained in Romania) with an international working experience.



How many medical doctors are leaving?

The intention to emigrate



16272 certificates of Good Medical Practice, between 2008-2015(Q1+Q2)

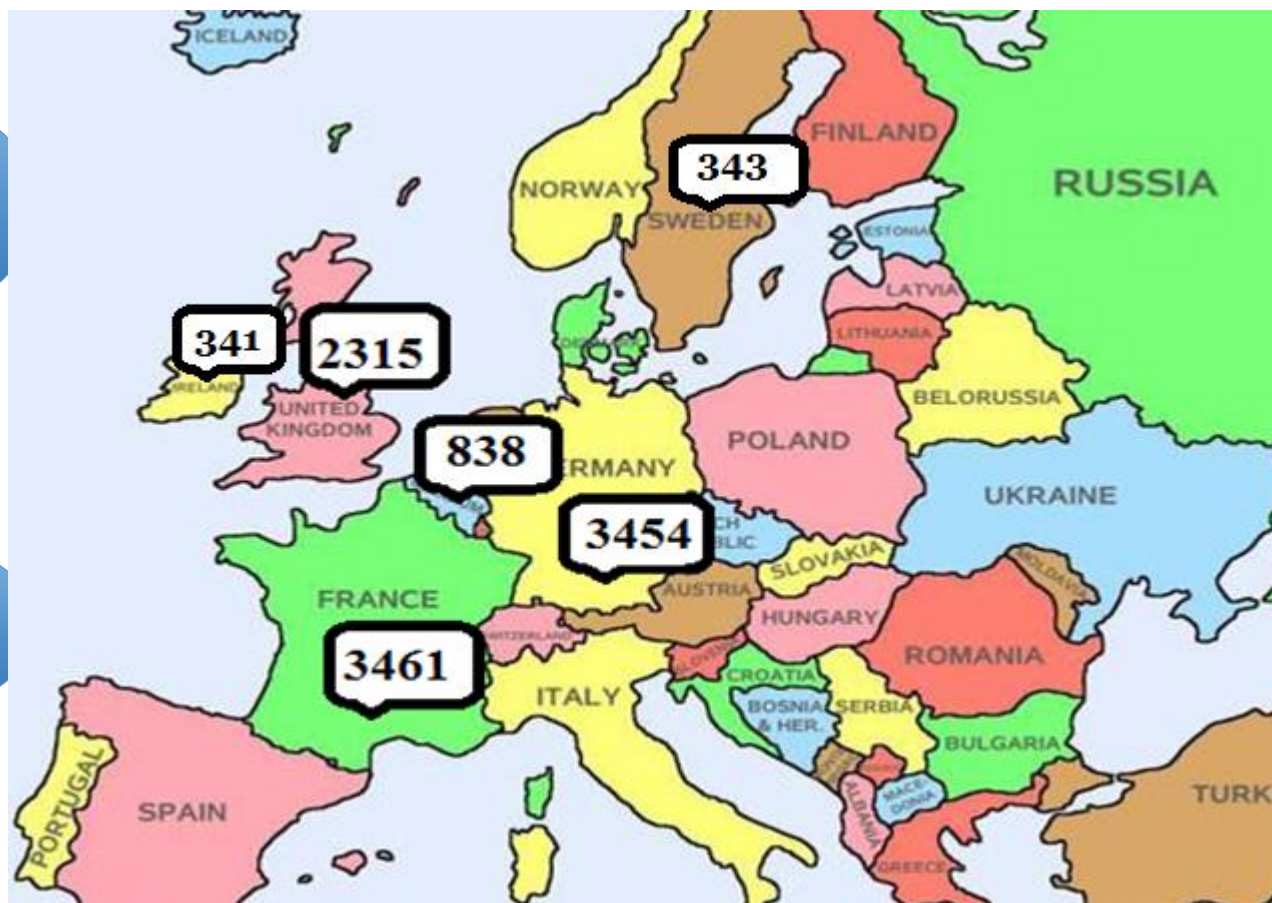
Source: Romanian College of Physicians, www.cmr.ro



How many medical doctors are leaving?

Over
10000
in EU

2457 in
USA





Who are they?

The profile of the Romanian medical doctor who emigrates includes young physicians, at the early state of their career, rather specialists than general practitioners.

A first matter of concern : the young workforce is leaving.

Romania produces the highest number of medical graduates of medicine, but it ranks last in terms of physicians per 1,000 inhabitants, registering serious shortages of doctors in certain specialties.

Aging population:

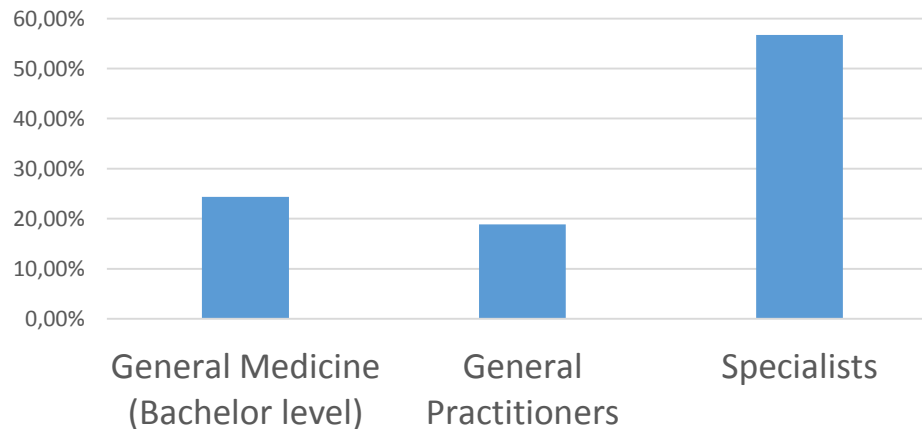
- Increased need for medical services
- 41% of the physicians in hospitals are over 50 years old



Who are they?

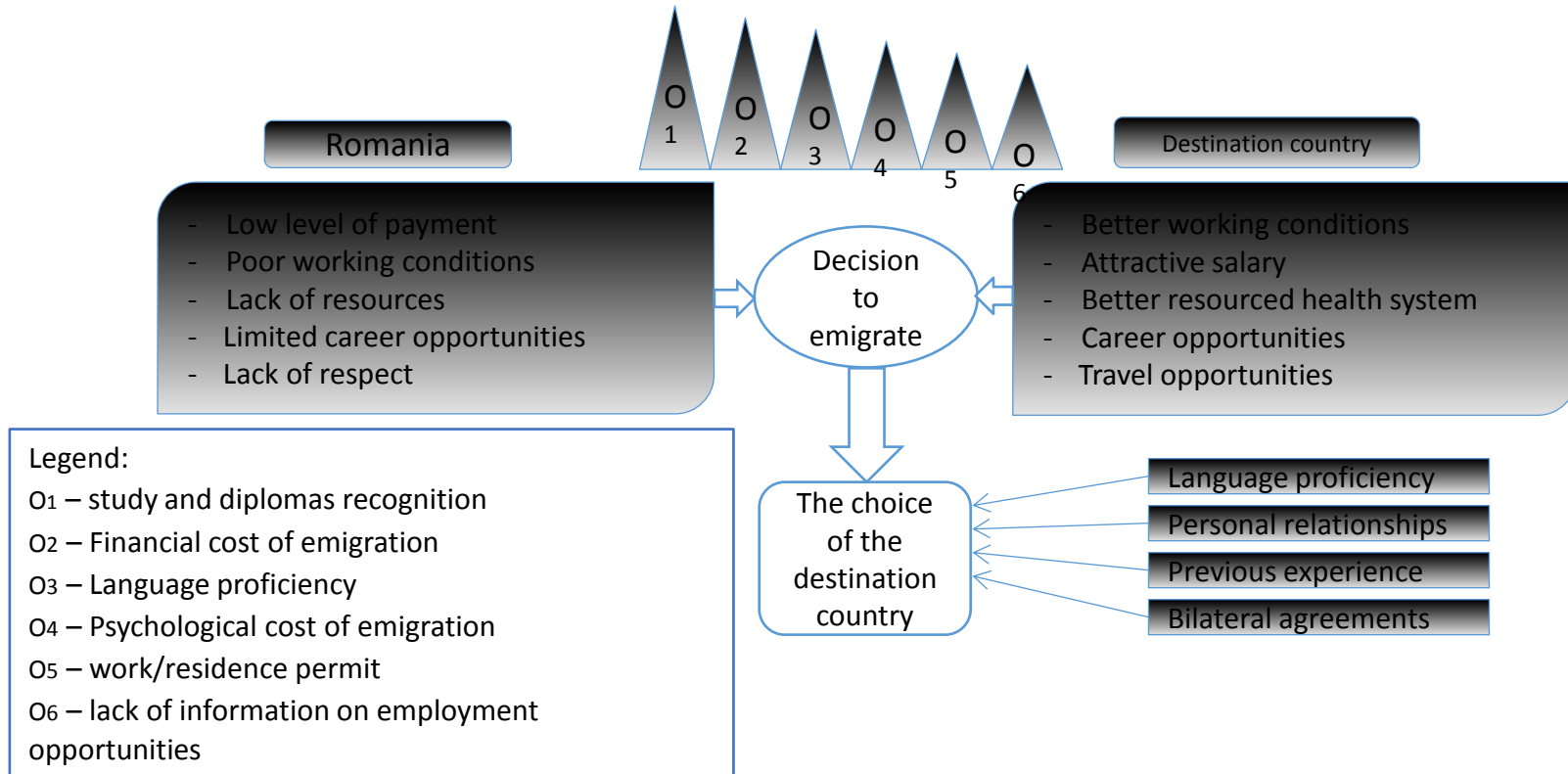
A second matter of concern: the prevalence of specialists in the profile of the Romanian medical doctor who emigrates.

- Higher financial loss
- The specialties the most affected by migration are those involving the longest period of training (11 or 12 years) : surgery, anesthetics, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, cardiology



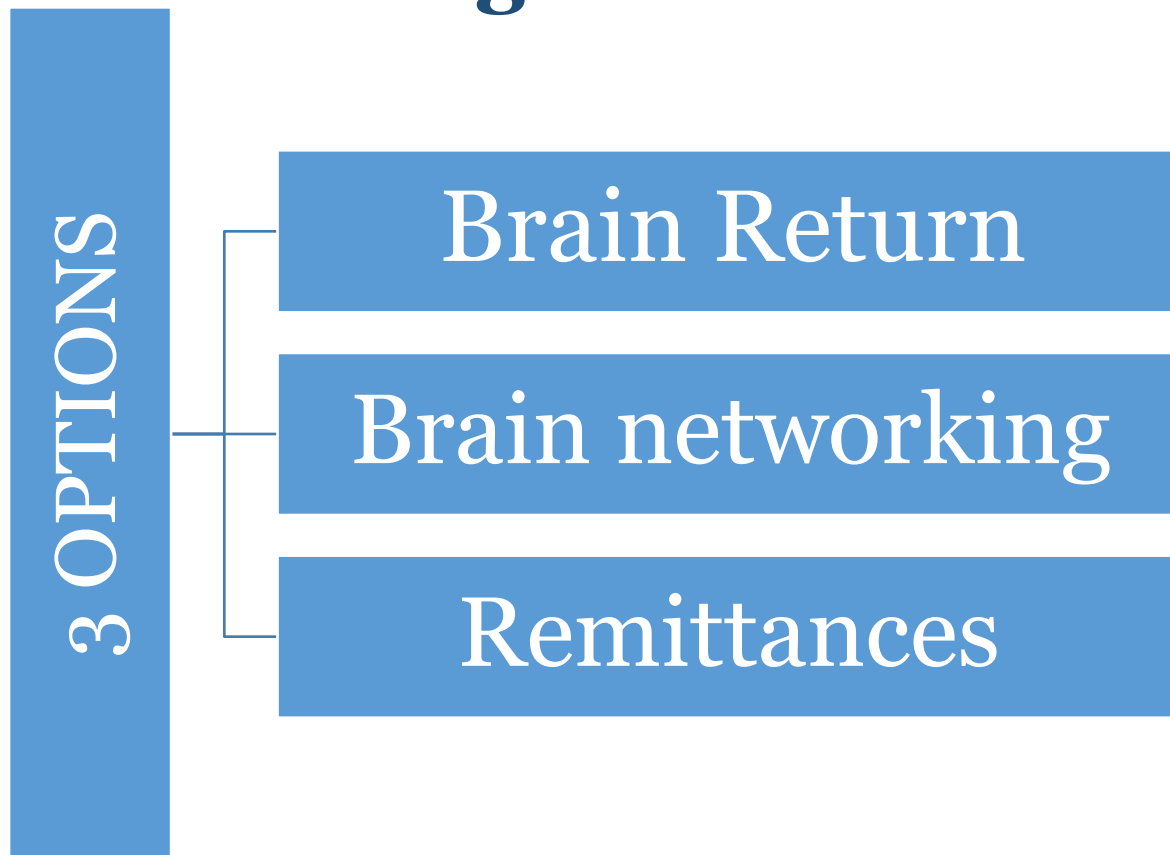


Why do they leave?





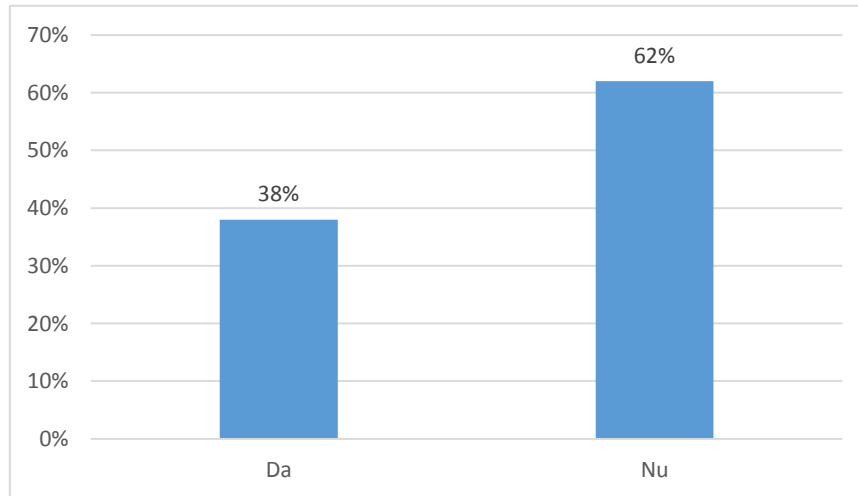
Turning brain drain into brain gain





Turning brain drain into brain networking

Professional involvement (individual or institutional) in projects in the country of origin



Source: Author's calculations

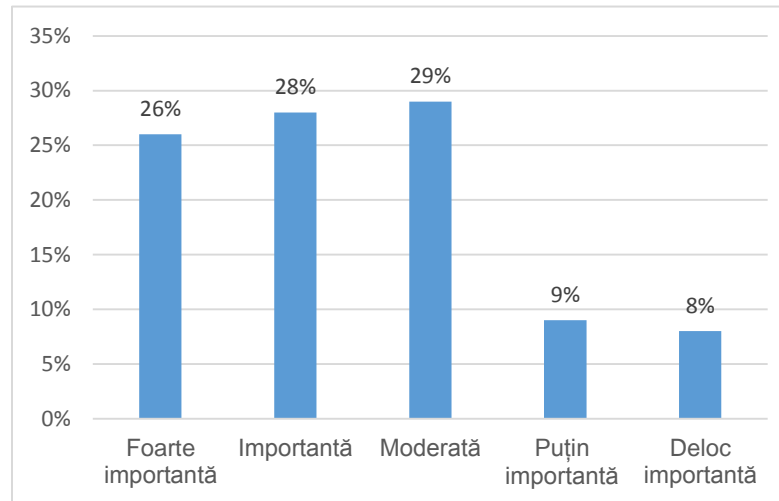
Individual involvement rather than joint projects

Strong prerequisite: the associations of Romanian physicians abroad



Turning brain drain into brain networking

How important is for the country of origin to maintain the scientific cooperation with the medical diaspora?

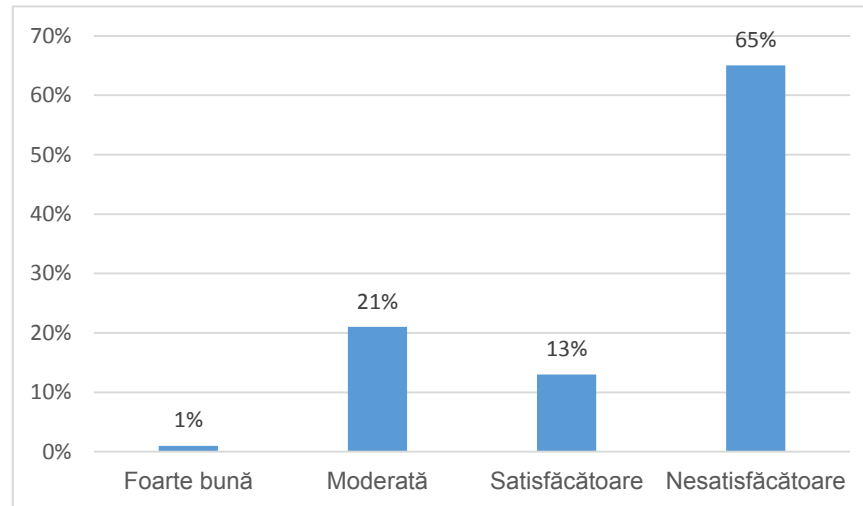


Source: Author's calculations
5-point Likert scale, where 1=very important



Turning brain drain into brain networking

Romania's implication in maintaining scientific cooperation with the medical diaspora



Source: Author's calculations
5-point Likert scale, where 1-very important



Conclusions (I)

- Strong premises:
 - ✓ the willingness to maintain the scientific cooperation with Romania
 - ✓ the associations of Romanian medical doctors abroad
- The cooperation is mainly at individual level, which involves transmission of ideas, proposals, advice.
- Investment projects are in early stages and are limited to the activity of some private clinics or NGOs. The actions are isolated and lack of institutional support hinder their activity.



Conclusions (II)

- Scientific networking is the most accessible way Romania can turn the brain drain into brain gain.
- Diaspora's members can offer valuable information, advice or even financial support from the destination country.
- Turning brain drain into brain networking depends on an active implication at institutional level and policy measures directed towards harnessing the strategic potential of the medical diaspora.



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Thank you!

