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Statutory Declaration

„I hereby declare to have written this master thesis entitled *Migration and Labor Market Integration of Romanians in Austria* on my own, without having used other references and resources than the ones quoted. Thoughts from other resources having been integrated directly or indirectly into this thesis have been indicated as such. This thesis or parts of it have not yet been published or used in academic assessments.”

Evelyn-Susanne Hahn

Vienna, September 2020

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1. Introduction

The present master thesis deals with the migration and labor market integration of Romanians in Austria. To be more precise, the researcher wants to find out which factors influence the integration of Romanian immigrants into the Austrian labor market. The next paragraphs highlight the importance of the current topic, namely the migration and labor market integration of Romanians in Austria. Furthermore, the aim and structure of the work will be presented.

The Romanian emigration has a comprehensive history, but this master thesis will concentrate on the recent migration, mostly on the one starting with the year 2007 when Romania entered the European Union. Despite the restrictions regarding the free mobility, which could be felt until the year 2014, Romanians have progressively migrated to different countries that are members of the European Union. Because of this phenomenon, the Romanian population has fallen from 22.4 million in the year 2000 to 19.2 million at the start of the year 2020. More than 75% of this decline took place because of the emigration (OECD, 2019, p. 26). A forecast carried out by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations shows that the Romanian population will continue to decrease. By the year 2050, the population in Romania is expected to reach 16.2 million citizens (Worldometer, 2019).

As the emigration from Romania shows large numbers, it is essential to mention which are the leading destinations for Romanians. The most recent data shows that during the years 2015/2016, around 90% of the Romanian emigrants aged 15 and above chose the countries in Europe to be their destination. Italy represented the main host country for Romanian migrants, followed by Germany and Spain. The forth-favorite country was the United Kingdom, followed by the United States, Hungary, and France. Austria represented the eighth main destinations in the top 10 countries of Romanian migrants during 2015/2016 (OECD, 2019, p. 38).

If the situation is observed from Austria's point of view, it is clear that the Romanian immigrants chose very often Austria to be their host country. At the start of the year 2020, the Romanians were representing the second-largest immigrant's community in Austria, after the German community. On 01.01.2020, Austria was hosting 123.461 Romanians, spread in all cities of the country. Currently, the Romanian community in Austria continues to be the fastest-growing group of foreign nationals (Statistik Austria, 2020).

Figure 1 outlines the number of Romanian citizens in Austria between 2007 and 2020 and helps to understand the development of Romanian immigrants in their host country. The line chart shows that the total number of Romanian immigrants increased continuously during the past years, especially after 2014, when Romanians had access to full mobility inside Austria. Overall, it can be observed a clear upward trend in the number of Romanian immigrants in Austria, especially between 2014 and 2020 (Statistik Austria, 2020).

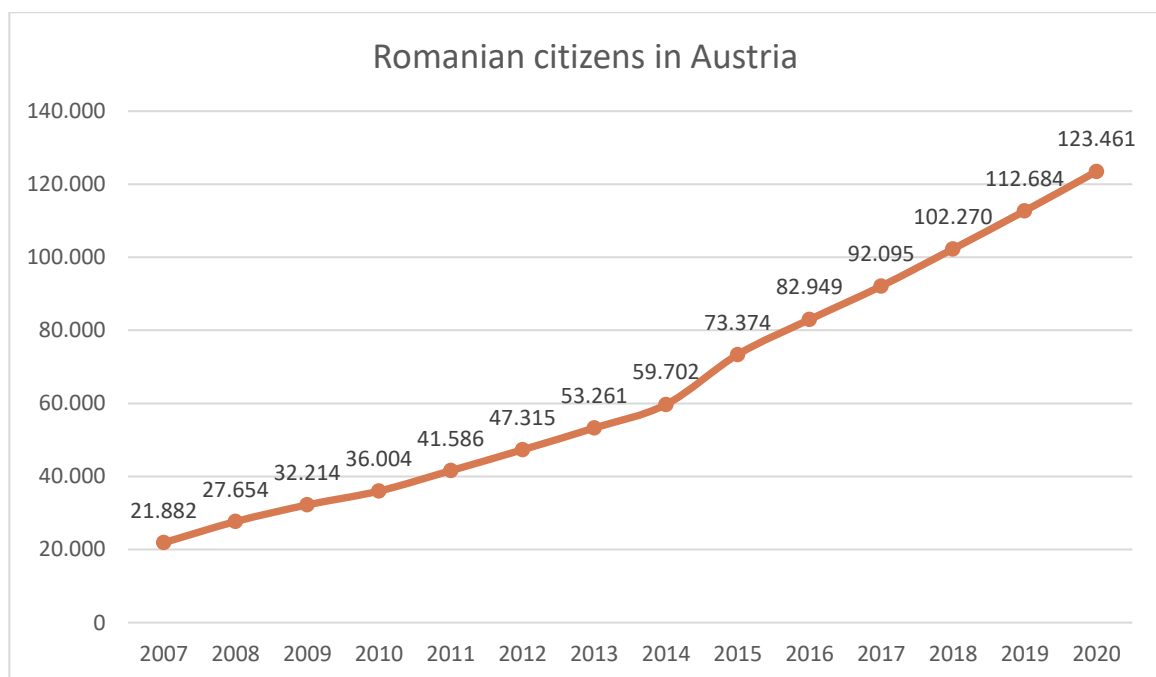


Figure 1: Romanian citizens in Austria between 2007 – 2020, own illustration based on (Statistik Austria, 2020)

As showed in Figure 1, it is clear that more and more immigrants coming from Romania are moving every year to Austria. Romanian citizens who moved to Austria in the last past few years have decided to have a long-term living in the host country (Hunya & Iara, 2006, p. 25). According to L. M. Vosicky, the Secretary General of the Austrian-Romanian Association, the Romanian immigrants do not have only material reasons for choosing Austria as their host country and establishing here. Many considerations are playing an important role, for example the career, occupation as well as family planning. It can be that some Romanian immigrants do not feel bounded to their country of origin. As stated by L. M. Vosicky, there are simply more opportunities in Austria (Reibenwein, 2018).

It is certain that every year, a significant number of Romanian immigrants is choosing Austria to be their host country, their second home. In order to have a positive outcome of the immigration, it is indispensable to have an effective labor market integration. The home countries, the host countries and the immigrants themselves will benefit from a rewarding labor market integration (The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); The International Labour Organization (ILO); World Bank; The International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2016, p. 3).

These thoughts initiated the starting point of the master thesis. Every year, more and more Romanian immigrants are choosing Austria to be their second home. However, the Romanian nationals living in Austria have to integrate into the labor market, as this integration could bring several benefits. Therefore, it means that a high number of Romanians in Austria have integrated or are trying to integrate into the labor market, but this process can represent an obstacle for some of the immigrants. Therefore, the purpose of this master thesis is to find out what factors influence the integration of the Romanian immigrants into the Austrian labor market.

Despite much theorizing about the approaches on migration and integration, little is known empirically about the Austrian labor market integration of the Romanian citizens. To the researcher's knowledge, there are plenty of reports regarding the labor market integration of immigrants in Austria; however, the focus does not lie on the integration process of the Romanian immigrants. The *Système d'observation permanente des migrations (SOPEMI) Report on Labour Migration Austria 2017-18* published in January 2019 describes the migration and labor integration in Austria.

It represents a good example where also Romania is mentioned a few times. However, most of the information about Romania is numerical data from the past few years.

Most of the reports consider the labor market integration of the non-EU nationals as they have stricter regulations compared to the EU nationals. In most of the cases, the right to work in a European Union country depends on the country of origin. For this reason, most of the reports are considering the labor market integration of non-EU citizens. The years 2015 and 2016 marked a critical period when this subject was of high importance, as around 130.625 non-EU citizens immigrated to Austria, without having a job. However, also the EU rules do not cover essential areas, including simplified entry procedures and worker rights (European Commission - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion, n.d.).

Even if both countries, Romania and Austria, are members of the European Union and the integration of Romanians is simpler compared to the integration of non-EU citizens, this subject should not be neglected. Austria is still a foreign country for Romanian citizens. Even if the legal conditions could favor the Romanian immigrants, the labor market process could still have some obstacles or factors that could be the key to successful integration into the Austrian labor market.

1.1 Aim of the master thesis

The master thesis aims to find out which factors influence the integration of Romanian immigrants into the Austrian labor market. To be more precise, the researcher's purpose is to test if the Romanian migrants possessing host country-specific social and human capital can find easier a job suited to their qualification than Romanian migrants that possess home country-specific social and human capital. The researcher determined several connections between the chapters of the master thesis in order to find an answer to the research question. This happened based on theoretical approaches to migration and integration, followed by the empirical analysis using a structured interview and qualitative content analysis.

1.2 Structure of the master thesis

The following master thesis is composed of eight main chapters. Chapter 1 includes a succinct overview of themes discussed in the master thesis, and it also explains the aim and structure of the work.

Chapter 2 lays the theoretical foundations for the topic, namely, the explanation of the main terms and the theoretical approaches to migration and integration. The researcher will present in this chapter also the regulations on the free movement of Romanian nationals in the European Union.

Chapter 3 presents the research question, the general hypothesis, and the three sub-hypotheses.

Chapter 4 describes in detail the target group, the data collection method, and the method of how the interviews are analyzed.

Chapter 5 represents one of the most significant parts of the master thesis, as here, the answers given by the interview partners are analyzed.

Chapter 6 presents the interpretation of the results of the analysis from the previous chapter. For the interpretation, the researcher connects the theoretical background, the research question with the general hypothesis and sub-hypotheses, and the results.

Chapter 7 summarizes all chapters of the master thesis by having the scope to answer the research question.

Chapter 8 presents the conclusion of the master thesis by discussing further research opportunities regarding the labor market integration of Romanian migrants in Austria.

2. Migration and integration

Migration and integration are socioeconomic phenomena that take many forms and are influenced by various economic, political, legal, cultural, and religious factors. The following chapters are presenting the definitions of terms used in this work, as well as the essential theories of migration and integration.

2.1 Definition of terms

In the following part, the most relevant terms for this master thesis will be defined. The focus is on the following terms: migrants, migration, integration, and labor market integration.

2.1.1 The terms „migrant” and „migration”

A general definition used for the term „migrant” is the understanding of a person who decides to move away from his or her place of residence, for a temporary or permanent period, within the country or across the borders (International Organization for Migration, 2019, p. 130). The root of the term „migration” is the Latin verb „migrare”, which means to move from one place to another country, community or place, and settling there (Fishkin & Godin, 2010, p. 257). According to Fischer/ Straubhaar, the migration process is a relatively permanent voluntary change of the principal place of residence from one political area (municipality, district, state) to another one (Fischer & Straubhaar, 1994, p. 75).

As stated by Bauböck, there are two forms of migration. The first form is understood as *„a territorial movement which does not lead to any change in ties of social membership and remains therefore largely inconsequential both for the individual and for the society at the points of origin and destination”* (Bauböck, 1995, p. 5). The second form is defined as a *„relocation in which the individuals or the group concerned are purely passive objects rather than active agents of the movement”* (Bauböck, 1995, p. 5).

Currently, there is no clear definition of the term immigration within the European Union. Taking into account the latest Eurostat data for the European Member States, the European Union considers the process of migration as *„the change of usual residence to another country for a period of at least 12 months”* (Triandafyllidou, 2015, p. 4).

Because this master thesis is connected with the economic aspect of migration in Austria, the most relevant definitions for the term „migration” are the ones from Fischer/ Straubhaar and the European Union. The focus lies on the migrants that are coming from a European Union country, namely Romania, and that are employed in Austria.

2.1.2 The terms „integration” and „labor market integration”

The root of the term „integration” is the Latin word „integratus”, which means to make a whole, to put together elements and to build an entire (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2020). From a sociological point of view, integration is perceived as the connection of a multitude of individuals or groups to a social or cultural unit (Scholze-Stubenrecht, et al., 1999, p. 1959).

According to Reinprecht/ Weiss, the integration from an object perspective is presented as the equal right of every person to participate in the subsystems of the society (labor market, education, social security, law, and politics). The involvement of migrants in the labor market of the host country is seen as a central integration mechanism. Criteria for successful social integration are the disappearance of discrimination, the flattening of social inequalities, the enabling of upward social mobility, and the avoidance of exclusion. The integration into the host society is victorious if the immigrant is successfully integrated into professional and social life. At the same time, the culture, contacts, and traditions of the home country are not seen as obstacles to integrate into the host country (Fassmann & Dahlvik, 2012, p. 23).

As stated by Volf, integration into the labor market of the host country is seen as creating the same opportunities for local and foreign employees. A prerequisite for successful labor market integration is not only admission to the labor market but also the creation of legal conditions, anti-discrimination when searching for a job, the same working conditions for local and foreign employees, and the right to access the social security system of the host country (Muttonen, 2008, p. 30).

Given the research topic of this master thesis, integration is seen as a process and as a goal, with a focus on the labor market integration of Romanian immigrants in Austria.

2.2 Theoretical approaches to migration

In the following part, the focus will be set on the theoretical approaches to migration and partly integration. The most relevant approaches for this master thesis will be discussed and analyzed.

2.2.1 The „Push-Pull” model

The „Push-Pull” model is used to research the circumstances that may promote or impede the migration process. On the one hand, the push factors, such as a high unemployment rate that triggers migration, have a repulsive effect on migration. These factors assume that indirect pressure formation motivates people to change their place of residence or to migrate to another country. On the other hand, pull factors such as a high employment rate, or high wage levels have a pleasing effect on the willingness to migrate. The labor market situation is simultaneously presented as a push and pull factor. According to the „Push-Pull” model, the probability of migration increases if there are several available employment opportunities and advantageous income in the potential host country compared to the home country (Haug, 2000, p. 23).

The „Push-Pull” model offers a plausible explanation for the formation and intensity of the migration process. However, it is criticized because of its limitation in terms of migration factors and because of its ahistorical and statistical character. Another drawback of this model is that the migration process is analyzed through individual decisions. These cannot be summarized because of different and complex factors that are affecting personal behavior. Besides, those willing to migrate are not always acting completely rationally (Husa & Abou Chabaké, 2000, p. 45).

2.2.2 The neoclassical approach to migration

The neoclassical approach to migration represents the oldest approach to explaining migration and is associated with the name of Ernest George Ravenstein, who formulated the first migration concept. This approach explains the willingness to migrate due to the existence of inequalities between supply and demand and the resulting inequalities between labor markets. The cause of the migratory movements is the difference in wages between the home and host countries, and this means that there is a low equilibrium wage.

Therefore, „*the wage differential causes a migration flow from low wage to high wage regions*” (Vandererf & Heering, 1994, p. 96). The theory says that the more significant the wage gap between the states, the more intense the migration movements are (Golder, 1999, p. 58). According to this approach, the migratory movements persist until the wage differences between the country of origin and the host country disappear (Haug, 2000, p. 23).

As stated in the migration model by Sjaastad, the migration movements are explained by wage differentials, which lead to an equalization of the labor potential in the emigration and immigration area. Michael P. Todaro built up this model. According to Todaro, not only the income differences are decisive reasons for migration, but also the comparison between the expected profits from migration respectively expected income purchases. Migration risks such as unemployment, short-term employment, or lower wages corresponding to professional qualifications should also be taken into account. Given the choice of the host country, the following characteristics influence the decision on migration: financial options, expected income, age, profession, political attitudes, integration policies and the family (Husa & Abou Chabaké, 2000, p. 27). The fundamental disadvantage of this approach is the incompleteness of the explanation and the weak predictive power of the behavior of the economic actors willing to emigrate.

As this theory is explicitly based on economic characteristics, such as inequalities or differences between labor markets, the action-theoretical factors for the migration decision have been neglected (Haug, 2000, p. 33).

2.2.3 Dual labor market theory

The „Dual Labor Market Theory” explains that the reason for the labor migration is the segmentation of the labor market in two parts. The labor market is split into a primary high-wage and secondary low-wage sector. The immigrants are mostly employed in the secondary work segment, which is associated with worse working conditions, lower wages, instability, few opportunities for advancement, and less social prestige. This sector consists of different companies that generally pay low wages and are primarily in the retail trade and service and wholesale sectors.

These firms are distinctive because they employ minority workers or teenagers and provide little specific training and relatively small opportunities for career advancement. As a consequence, the worker's incentive to keep his job or to have exceptional results is reduced. The wage of the secondary sector employees is not much different from the opportunity wage, and it is unlikely to be improved by promotions (Wachter, 1974, p. 651).

According to this theory, if a permanent establishment takes place in the host country, the immigrants' work requirements and their demands regarding the social status and occupational safety increase. From a certain point, this leads to high competition for the job with better working conditions in the primary and secondary sector (Husa & Abou Chabaké, 2000, p. 28).

It is challenging to implement or to prove the approach of the dual labor market empirically. Because of the relatively arbitrary distinctions between the labor market segments, and the role of the recruitment process, the explanatory power of this migration theory is questioned (Haug, 2000, p. 32).

In the context of the following sections, this approach is not decisive either because the Austrian labor market has no such structure, and the interview partners are employed in the various labor market sectors.

2.2.4 The theory of „The New Economics of Labor Migration”

In the majority of the migration models, migration decisions are carried out by individuals and determined by the expected or known income differences between the home and the host country (Taylor, 2002, p. 66). The theory of „The New Economics of Labor Migration” does not focus on the migratory economic object, but on his family. This approach sees the cause of migration in malfunctioning capital markets, where migration is presented as the striving of the household to maximize income.

According to this approach, migration is less likely if the number of family members is high and if they are employed in their country of origin. Income differences are not seen as the main drivers of migration, but they can represent strong incentives to migrate.

As important migration factors must be taken into account the uncertainty, relative poverty, more reduced income opportunities and risk avoidance (Husa & Abou Chabaké, 2000, p. 31).

In contrast to the explanatory approaches outlined above, according to this theory, migration continues after the disappearance of the differences in wage rates. The regulation of the labor markets, the insurance markets, the capital markets, and the introduction of various measures by the government of the host country can influence the migration movements. The economic development and the increase in income in the receiving country can further accelerate the migration process (Haug, 2000, p. 28).

2.2.5 Networks in the migration process

There are three fundamental types of migrant networks that can be differentiated: family and personal networks, labor networks, and illegal migrant networks. Shortly, *„migrant networks are sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, non-migrants and former migrants in webs of kinship, friendship and shared origin”* (King, 2012, p. 21).

This theory includes the assumption that the networks can increase the probability for international migration. The reason is that the networks can provide information, which lowers the risk and costs of migration (King, 2012, p. 21). By providing information and contacts, the people willing to migrate, receive help regarding accommodation, the process of finding a job, financial assistance, and further kinds of support. Therefore, migrant networks tend to perpetuate migration and to have a multiplier effect.

Weak ties that have the basis in common ethnicities, cultures or even temporary friendships between migrants in sensitive situations can develop mutual trust or empathy. As a result, bonds are being formed. In this way, help is being given in the process of migration (King, 2012, p. 22). The structural position of the actors in a social network is essential because it influences their perceptions, actions, and attitudes (Holzer, 2006, p. 75).

Social networks enable an acceleration effect in the integration process of migrants in the target country. Supporting the decision to migrate through social networks (family, relatives, and friends) from the country of origin can further increase the probability of migration (Haug, 2000, p. 39).

According to network theory, the decision to emigrate is often not only associated with a change of attitude, but rather with relationships with people who have already migrated (Holzer, 2006, p. 76). Those networks that have been formed by relatives, family members, or friends in the target country influence the migration willingness. These groups have previous experience and have acquired country-specific cultural, social, and professional experiences (Thao, 2005, p. 21).

The network approach explains that migration profits and risks can be increased, respectively, reduced through social networks. These cannot only reduce the financial costs of migration, but also psychosocial and time cost (Husa & Abou Chabaké, 2000, p. 37). In this case, it is assumed that network connections can determine the number of new or potential immigrants. The intensity of migration movements in comparison to other theories is not heavily dependent on income differences, labor market equilibrium, or unemployment rate, but on falling costs and risks due to migration networks (Haug, 2000, p. 39).

The social networks in the host country play an essential role in the integration process of newly arrived immigrants, especially in the first months of their stay. These provide information about vacancies, job opportunities, political and legal frameworks of immigration policy, access to the services of the legal systems, better accommodation options, higher-income opportunities, or reducing the costs and risks of immigrants. This information is of particular importance for the integration process because it is familiar and safe. Trust in migration networks is explained by social capital, which is seen as the fundamental integration resource.

2.3 Theoretical approaches to labor market integration

In the following part, the focus will be set on the theoretical approaches to labor market integration. Social and human capital are playing essential roles for the labor market integration, and therefore, the most relevant theories on the two forms of capital will be discussed.

2.3.1 The social capital as a resource in the context of migration and integration

There is no standardized definition of the term „social capital“, as different authors have examined it, and therefore various content-related aspects are taken into account. The social capital is viewed in general as *„an attribute of individuals and of their relationships that enhance their ability to solve collective-action problems“* (Svendsen & Svendsen, 2009, p. 20).

It is assumed that social capital has an immediate influence on the relationships, actions, values, and socioeconomic processes between individuals. Coleman researched the term on the resource and collective aspect. According to Coleman, social capital is developed in the social networks in the form of trust, personal expectations, and the reliability of the network structures. The information bridges and the support of the actors belonging to the network represent another form of social capital (Haug, 1997, p. 10). According to Portes, a distinction is made between different types of social capital - values, solidarity, representativeness, and trust (Lüdicke & Diewald, 2007, p. 97).

Social networks are also viewed as social capital through people's access to specific resources or contacts. Social capital in social networks favors the integration process, especially when looking for a job, which is simplified by ties. Besides, the next employment is characterized by a higher income and prestige. Granovetter assumes that weak ties enable the exchange of information, respectively, bridges to other networks outside the social network.

The following factors are researched from a micro perspective concerning the integration process: the interaction of the relationship networks, the trust that has arisen in the network, and the effect of trust and commitment on the social action.

From a macro perspective, the social capital of the whole society is considered. The level of trust and the created collective property of the society are referred to as social capital (Haug, 1997, p. 46).

Figure 2 attempts to illustrate the connection between social networks, social capital, and migrant integration.

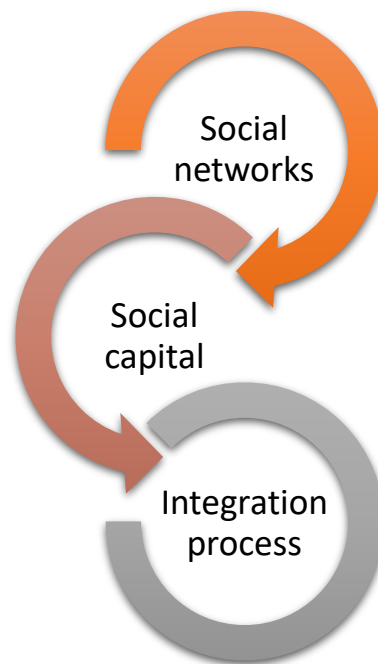


Figure 2: The connection between social networks and social capital in the process of migrant integration, own illustration based on (Haug, 2000, p. 40)

The connection between the migration networks and social capital plays an essential role in the integration process of migrants into the host country. Massey Douglas has presented positive social capital interactions for the immigrants, such as communicated information about better housing opportunities or financial help. Other positive effects for speeding up the integration process include the self-strengthening effect, the reduction of costs, and the reduction of the risk of migration (Haug, 2000, p. 40).

Generally, growing diversity as a consequence of immigration brings into question the integration of migrants, their participation on the political level, and their participation in the economic and cultural life of the host country. Frequently, this is debated in terms of „social capital“.

Crowley affirms that just as the immigrants have to acquire host country-specific human capital, they also might have to acquire host country-specific social capital. If the immigrants do not possess forms of host country-specific social capital, their integration can be challenging due to the diversity (Crowley, 2008, p. 1222).

2.3.2 Bonding and bridging social capital

As prior discussed, the social capital plays a crucial role in the integration process of migrants into the host country. In the next paragraphs, the types of social capital will be presented, and their influence on the labor market integration. It can be differentiated between bonding and bridging social capital.

Bonding social capital involves solid ties and dense trust. This means that in a network, all members have ties between themselves, and this highlights the network closure principle. The family represents the clearest example of a network with a high degree of closure, and therefore the family is central to the integration process in the labor market. The family represents the primary basis of collective action and trust because between the family members, social capital is shared and effectively used (Lancee, 2012, p. 24).

On the one hand, the family networks are of high importance for the immigrants in several models. However, on the other hand, it is argued whether the family network is the central aspect of the labor market integration of the immigrants. There are different perceptions of the word „family”, depending on the society. In the Western nations, the mother, father, and children represent the family; this means that the nuclear family is pointed out. However, in the majority of the nations, more extensive relations of kinship are considered family, for example, maternal and paternal grandparents, cousins, aunts, and uncle. This means that the family can be perceived different from country to country.

Not only the family contributes to a network with a high degree of closure, it seems that the ethnic community is also an essential source of social capital for the immigrants. The ethnic solidarity manifests as feedback to a real or perceived threat of a group and generates opportunities. However, there is a limit of the solidarity positioned on ethnic ties because it can be challenging to enforce.

For example, when the opportunities are outside of the ethnic community, the ethnic resources are not of high importance anymore. Therefore, the mechanism that keeps the bounded solidarity and trust is weaker (Lancee, 2012, p. 26).

Some evidence is showing that the primary source of information regarding jobs is through relatives and friends belonging to the same ethnic origin. Therefore, it can be said that the family and the co-ethnic ties are forming the bonding social capital and are helping the immigrants with the labor market integration process.

Bridging social capital is characterized by weak trust and ties that span structural holes. According to Lancee, the bridging social capital *„refers on the individual level to the collection of resources owned by the members of an individual's wide social network, which may become available to the individual as a result of the history of these relationships”* (Lancee, 2012, p. 27). The collective bridging social capital approaches the resources which do not belong to the ethnic community or its individual members, and that may become accessible to every member of the community.

According to Wuthnow, two types of bridging ties can be distinguished: identity and status (Wuthnow, 2002, p. 669). The identity bridging points out the ties that span differences defined by the culture, for example, the national origin or the ethnic identity. The most important way of identity bridging is to connect immigrants to native residents. The interethnic ties are essential for the immigrants because they bring them out of the ethnic community, and therefore a more extensive network is created. This network brings in valuable resources or job opportunities (Heath & Yu, 2005, p. 187).

The status bridging points out those ties concerning power, prestige, and wealth. This suggests that individuals with less influence can acquire resources and influence with the help of their connections with individuals that possess a higher status. This means that having status bridging ties may be favorable for receiving a job or having economic development. Therefore, the status bridging is likely to affect the labor market integration of immigrants.

Generally, immigrants tend to have a lower status compared to the natives. Therefore it is probable that interethnic ties influence the status bridging and, for this reason, also on the labor market integration of the immigrants (Lancee, 2012, p. 29).

To sum up, it can be said that two forms of social capital exist: bonding and bridging social capital. The binding social capital indicates the resources possessed by the close members of an individual and the dense social network. The dense social network can be a result of the relationships of the individual with his community. The bridging social capital indicates the resources owned by the distant members of an individual and a wide social network. Both forms of social capital, bonding, and bridging can be helpful for the integration process of immigrants due to their job opportunities and resources.

2.3.3 Human capital

Human capital represents one of the fundamental factors in the integration process in the area of individual social integration into the labor market. The concept of human capital is based on human capital theory (Becker, 1993). The amount of human capital describes the individual performance potential as well as the employee orientation and career orientation of individuals. This makes it clear that building up individual human capital is an important step in the direction of labor market integration. If individuals opt for additional educational measures, they can also be compared to the expected educational income in the decision-making process.

According to Herwig, it can be differentiated between home country-specific human capital and host country-specific human (Herwig, 2007, p. 22). Immigrants usually already have human capital upon arrival in the host country, but this is not in demand on the host country's labor market. This is referred to as home country-specific human capital. Earlier studies have demonstrated that immigrants that did their education and acquired work experience in the home country do not fulfill the needs of the host country labor market. This happens because education and work experience acquired in the country of origin tend to have lower quality, and as a result, it is challenging to transfer them. Professions practiced in the home country may appear to be very similar to the job market in the host country. However, in practice, they may represent completely different jobs (Schlotb ller, 2003, p. 40).

Furthermore, it might be problematic for the employers to assess the education and work experience of the immigrants and that is why they often hesitate to grant the full recognition (Kanas, Tubergen, & Lippe, 2009, p. 182).

Because home country-specific human capital is not entirely transferable, the labor market outcomes will decrease immediately after the migration. Over time, the labor market outcomes will increase because the migrants tend to acquire host country-specific human capital like getting to know the labor market or learning the host country language (Zwysen, 2018, p. 4).

In contrast, when acquired host country-specific human capital, like the education or work experience, the chances to fulfill the needs of the employers and of the host country labor market are higher. This also happens because the employers are better prepared to evaluate the country-specific human capital, namely the education and work experience gained in the host country. Besides, the knowledge and skills acquired while working in the host country are usually transferable and compatible with the necessities of the labor market in the host country.

The host country working experience has a positive effect not only on the employers but also on the employees. This is essential because they can gain knowledge and receive information about institutions or working permits (Kanas, Tubergen, & Lippe, 2009, p. 186). There are many possibilities to acquire host country-specific human capital, for example, learning the language, obtaining qualifications, doing pieces of training, or taking up the host country's nationality. They might have a positive impact on the labor market integration, but acquiring them requires valuable time, effort, and sometimes money. Furthermore, the legal and financial constraints could be an obstacle to the process of acquiring host country-specific human capital (Zwysen, 2018, p. 5).

This chapter summarizes the two forms of the human capital, namely the home country-specific human capital and the host country-specific human capital. The two forms are playing an essential role in the integration process of the immigrants in the labor market; however, in different ways. While the host country-specific human capital usually has a positive effect on the integration into the labor market, the home country-specific human capital does not affect the integration in a significant way.

2.4 Free movement of Romanian citizens in the European Union

The labor market integration in another country is affected by politics, and the limitations are playing an essential role. In the following part of the master thesis, it will be described what rules were applied for the Romanian citizens in terms of integration in other countries of the European Union.

The 21st century changed the Romanian emigration pattern radically, and the turning point was represented by the accession of Romania to the European Union in 2007. The free movement of workers is defined in the Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union as follows: EU citizens are allowed to *„look for a job in another EU country, work there without needing a work permit, reside there for that purpose, stay there even after employment has finished, and enjoy equal treatment with nationals in access to employment, working conditions and all other social and tax advantages”* (European Commission - Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, n.d.).

However, the Romanian residents did not instantly have access to full mobility inside the European Union. Numerous EU Members enforced transitional arrangements in order to restrict the Romanian immigration in their labor markets. The transitional period consisted of three phases. During the first two years, the national law of the was allowed to control the access to the labor market, and during the next three years, the restrictions could be extended. The last two years represented the period when the Member States could apply for the last time the resections, but only if they presented proof of severe disturbances in their labor markets. A safeguard clause permitted EU Members to re-impose limitations if their labor markets were disturbed after they lifted the national measures (European Commission, 2011).

These limitations regarding the labor market access were different from country to country concerning the Romanian immigrants, with some opening their labor markets in 2007 and some applying specific procedures like not demanding work permits in order to work in some sectors. Ten EU Members opened their labor markets at the time of accession, and five EU Member States decided to remove the restrictions when the first phase of transitional arrangements ended.

The remaining ten EU countries, including Austria, applied restrictions that typically required Romanian migrants to have a work permit. However, the transitional arrangements did not affect the right of the EU citizens, hence the right of Romanians to travel and reside freely within the European Union. Additionally, the restrictions applied only to workers, but not to self-employed workers (European Commission, 2011).

This chapter summarizes the movement possibilities of Romanian citizens in the European Union. The integration of Romanian citizens in the Austrian labor market changed after the accession of Romania to the European Union in 2007. For this reason, only the Romanians employed in Austria after 2007 were kindly asked to take part in the interviews.

3. Research question and hypotheses

As already discussed, the starting point of the master thesis was the following thought: every year more and more Romanian immigrants have to integrate into the Austrian labor market. This idea contributed to the formulation of the following research question:

Which factors influence the integration of Romanian immigrants into the Austrian labor market?

In other words, the focus of the master thesis lies on the Romanian immigrants that are trying to integrate into the Austrian labor market, and the goal is to find out what factors do influence their integration.

Based on the literature review, the researcher developed a general hypothesis that guides and gives direction to scientific research, namely:

General hypothesis: Romanian immigrants possessing host country-specific social and human capital can find easier a job suited to their qualification than immigrants that possess home country-specific social and human capital.

The general hypothesis branches into three other specific sub-hypotheses in order to address different aspects of the general hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1a: Romanian immigrants that receive help from their Austrian network can easier find a job suited to their qualification than Romanian immigrants that receive help from their Romanian network.

Hypothesis 1b: Romanian immigrants with advanced German language knowledge can easier find a job suited to their qualifications than Romanian immigrants with basic German language knowledge.

Hypothesis 1c: Romanian immigrants who obtained a degree in Austria can easier find a job suited to their qualifications than Romanian immigrants who obtained a degree in Romania.

The general hypothesis and the three sub-hypotheses serve as the basis for the collection of data using the structured interview. For the evaluation of the data, the Qualitative Content Analysis developed by Philipp Mayring will be used. The description and implementation of this method will follow in the next chapters.

4. Empirical approach

The previous chapter described in detail the research question, the general hypothesis, and the three sub-hypotheses. This chapter focuses on the empirical approach, which is used to answer the research question and to test the hypotheses. The chapter begins by discussing the target group (4.1), followed by the data collection method and data transcription (4.2). The chapter is closed with the description of the Qualitative Content Analysis method developed by Philipp Mayring (4.3).

4.1 Target group

It was essential to select the right manner of obtaining the necessary data for the master thesis. The purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling (Etikan, Abubakar, & Sunusi, 2016, p. 2), is a non-random technique where it is not necessary to set a specific number of participants or to highlight theories. The researcher has the right to decide what needs to be known and to find people who can and are willing to satisfy all requirements. The participants in the research should provide information on knowledge or experience for the area of interest. Besides, the willingness to participate, the availability and communication skills are playing an important role (Etikan, Abubakar, & Sunusi, 2016, p. 2).

Following this theory, the researcher chose eight interview partners by using the purposive sampling technique. In order to be an eligible participant, the interview partners had to fulfill the following requirements. The first condition was to have Romanian citizenship because the focus of the master thesis relies on the labor market integration of Romanians in Austria. It was essential not just to have Romanian citizenship, but also to have lived, studied, or worked in Romania. The second condition was to be employed in Austria, no matter if full-time or part-time. Only the answers of the interview partners that started working in Austria after the year 2007 were taken into consideration because 2007 was the year when Romania entered the European Union.

In order to have results independent of the gender, five women and three men were interviewed. The interviews were conducted in English, as some of the interview partners were lacking German language skills. To be more precise, one interview partner had a low level of the German language, four interviewees had upper-intermediate German language knowledge and three interview partners had advanced German skills. The researcher decided that the English language suits better, as some interview partners were more confident when speaking English as when speaking German.

In the following paragraphs is a brief presentation of the eight interviews taken in May 2020.

- **Interview partner 1:**

He is 25 years old, and at the time of the interview, he had been living in Austria for two years. His highest obtained degree is the bachelor's degree in Romania, and at the moment, he is doing his master studies at the University of Applied Sciences Technikum Wien. He learned German back in Romania and is working 30 hours per week as a Junior System Engineer at a company in Vienna.

- **Interview partner 2:**

She is 22 years old and represents the youngest participant in the interviews. She had been living in Austria since 2016 and had several jobs in Vienna during the four past years. At the moment of the interview, she was working fulltime as a residential supervisor and studying in parallel.

- **Interview partner 3:**

He is 27 years old and had been living in Vienna for six years. At the moment of the interview, his highest obtained degree was the master's degree at the University of Applied Sciences Technikum Wien. He is working at an Austrian Startup as the Head of Software Development and IT Administration. However, during the interview, he stated that he is the only one working in this department.

- **Interview partner 4:**

She is 26 years old and completed a bachelor's program at the Vienna University of Economics and Business. Her level of German language knowledge is C1, and at the moment of the interview, she was attending a Graduate Program in Sales Strategy and Planning at an international company.

- **Interview partner 5:**

She is 25 years old and completed a master's program in English at the Vienna University of Economics and Business. She is working as a Sales Advisor in the fashion industry and does not have other working experience in Austria.

- **Interview partner 6:**

He is 29 years old and working as a bartender at an international restaurant in Innsbruck. At the moment of the interview, his highest obtained degree was the high school degree in Romania. His level of German language knowledge is A1, and he is trying to learn the language better. He moved from Romania to Innsbruck in 2019.

- **Interview partner 7:**

She is 34 years old and moved to Austria in 2013. Her last obtained degree is a master's degree at an Italian university. At the moment of the interview, she had three different jobs: piano teacher, babysitter, and dormitory representative. Simultaneously, she is studying Romance languages at the University of Vienna.

- **Interview partner 8:**

She is 38 years old, representing the oldest interview partner and had been living in Vienna for eight years. At the moment of the interview, she was working as a Sales Administrator at an international company in Vienna. Her last obtained degree is at the University of Vienna, where she studied Political Science.

Table 1 summarizes the characteristics of the interview partners in order to have a better overview.

Per-son	Gen-der	Age	Last obtained degree	Country of last obtained degree	In Austria since	German level	Workplace location	Job title
IP1	M	25	Bachelor	Romania	2018	B2	Vienna	Junior System Engineer
IP2	F	22	High school	Romania	2016	C1	Vienna	Residential Supervisor
IP3	M	27	Master	Austria	2014	C1	Vienna	Head of Software Development and IT Administration
IP4	F	26	Bachelor	Austria	2013	C1	Vienna	Graduate Program in Sales Strategy and Planning
IP5	F	25	Master	Austria	2017	B2	Vienna	Sales Advisor
IP6	M	29	High school	Romania	2019	A1	Innsbruck	Bartender
IP7	F	34	Master	Italy	2013	B2	Vienna	- Piano Teacher - Babysitter - Dormitory representative
IP8	F	38	Master	Austria	2012	B2	Vienna	Sales Administrator

Table 1: Overview of interview partners

4.2 Data collection method and data transcription

The data collection or the process of gathering the information from the eight interview partners was possible by using a structured interview. This means that standardized and in advance prepared questions were asked, and the researcher stuck to an interview schedule. Small exceptions were made in order to understand the answer better or to obtain more details if necessary. The researcher used a structured interview because similar types of information could be collected. The researcher could evaluate the interview partners' responses more readily. At the same time, all candidates were in the same situation and had equal chances to demonstrate their qualifications (Pettersen & Durivage, 2008, p. 10).

The researcher added to the structured interview a short questionnaire, which collected the socio-demographic data of the respondents (see Appendix 1). The interview was structured in four dimensions (1) description and details about the current job, (2) network, (3) language skills, and (4) educational background.

Every dimension contains questions that require specific answers that will be useful in answering the hypotheses and research question. The first (1) dimension contains questions that can be attributed to hypothesis H1a, H1b, or H1c, depending on the answer. Dimension (2) corresponds to the hypothesis H1a, dimension (3) is assigned to the hypothesis H1b and dimension (4) helps to answer the hypothesis H1c.

The interviews were conducted between 21.05.2020 and 28.05.2020 by the author of the present work and lasted an average of 27 minutes. The interviews took place in different locations selected by the participants. Before starting the interview, the partners were advised that their answers would be recorded by using two mobile phones and that the researcher will not personally identify the participants in the study.

Every audio file was transcribed in order to be able to use a computer-aided analysis of the content. The researcher transcribed the interviews using standard orthography of the English spelling. Terminations, repetitions, and filler words were also transcribed, as these were extremely helpful for interpretation due to the different language levels of the interview partners. Some interview partners provided information, which sometimes could not be clearly understood.

In the transcripts, the form of the abbreviation „IP” was given to „interview partner” numbered from 1 to 8. The interviewee herself had the abbreviation „I” in the transcripts. Besides, the researcher used the following transcription conventions:

- (...) pause
- (... ...) longer pause
- (laughing) laughter
- (inaudible) indicates inaudible speech

4.3 Qualitative Content Analysis by Philipp Mayring

For the analysis of the interviews, the researcher will use the Qualitative Content Analysis by Philipp Mayring. The purpose of this method is to gain a deep understanding and draw conclusions about certain aspects of communication. Specific points have to be considered (Mayring, 2015, p. 50):

- a) The material is consistently understood in its communication context. The researcher must indicate from which part of the material analysis he wants to draw his conclusions.
- b) The analysis was carried out according to predetermined and systematic rules, i.e., following the general content-analytical procedural model (see Figure 3) and rule-based adaptation of the instrument to the examination material (see Figure 5).
- c) The category system represents the main point in quantitative content analysis, which translates the research interest into specific categories. According to Krippendorff *„how categories are defined ... is an art. Little is written about it“* (Krippendorff, 1980, p. 76).
- d) Qualitative content analysis processes should not be only techniques that can be used in any way. The connection to the concrete subject of the analysis is a particularly important concern.
- e) A review of the category system is essential, either in pilot studies or by cyclical refinement during the analysis. No pilot study could be carried out within the restricted scope of the present master thesis. However, the category system was refined with each coded interview, subsequently applied to data that has already been coded.
- f) Furthermore, a connection was established between the state of research and theory. Previous research results, models, and theories on the state of research were also used in the formation of categories.
- g) Where relevant and where possible, quantitative aspects were included (similarities and differences between individual cases).

- h) Finally, quality criteria like objectivity, authenticity, and validity were taken into account so far as possible.

The analysis followed the general content-analytical procedural model, according to Mayring. The necessary steps of this process model are shown in Figure 3:

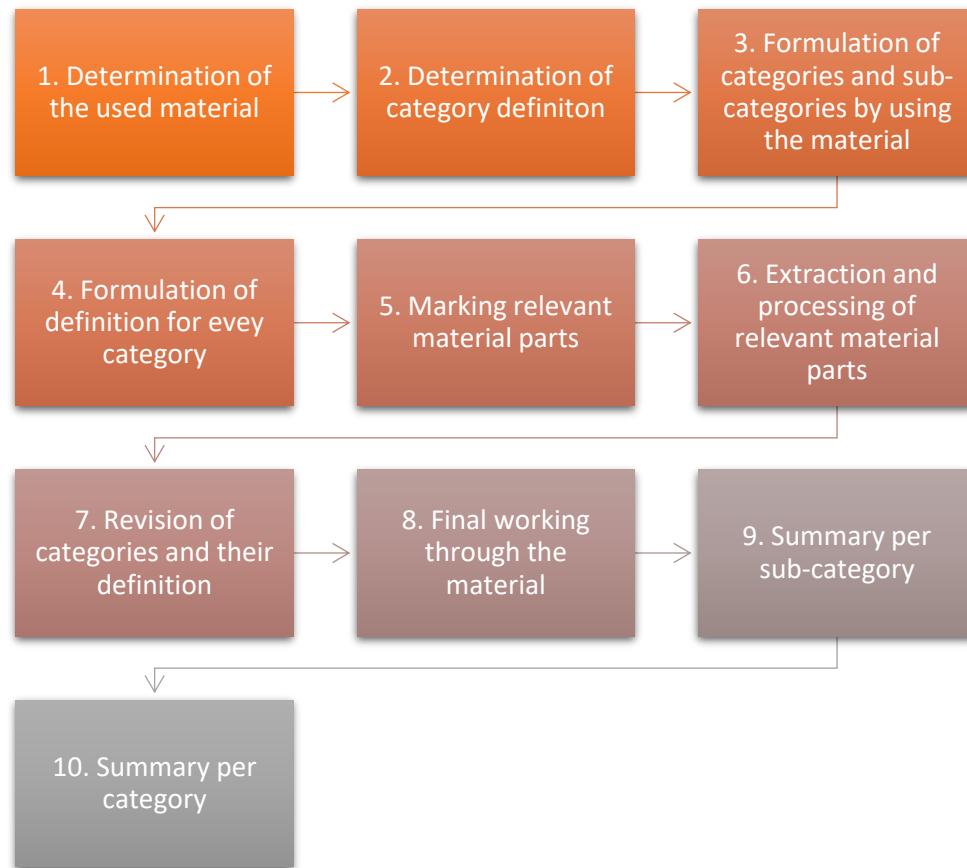


Figure 3: General Content-Analytical Procedural Model according to Mayring, own illustration based on (Mayring, 2015)

The coding of the collected data was carried out using the MAXQDA software (Version 2020). The categories and sub-categories were developed inductively after the screening of the material collected through the interviews. After that, the codes were reviewed, specified, and newly applied.

Figure 4 presents the coding results according to the categories and sub-categories for every interview partner. In total, the researcher collected 197 codes from all eight interview partners.










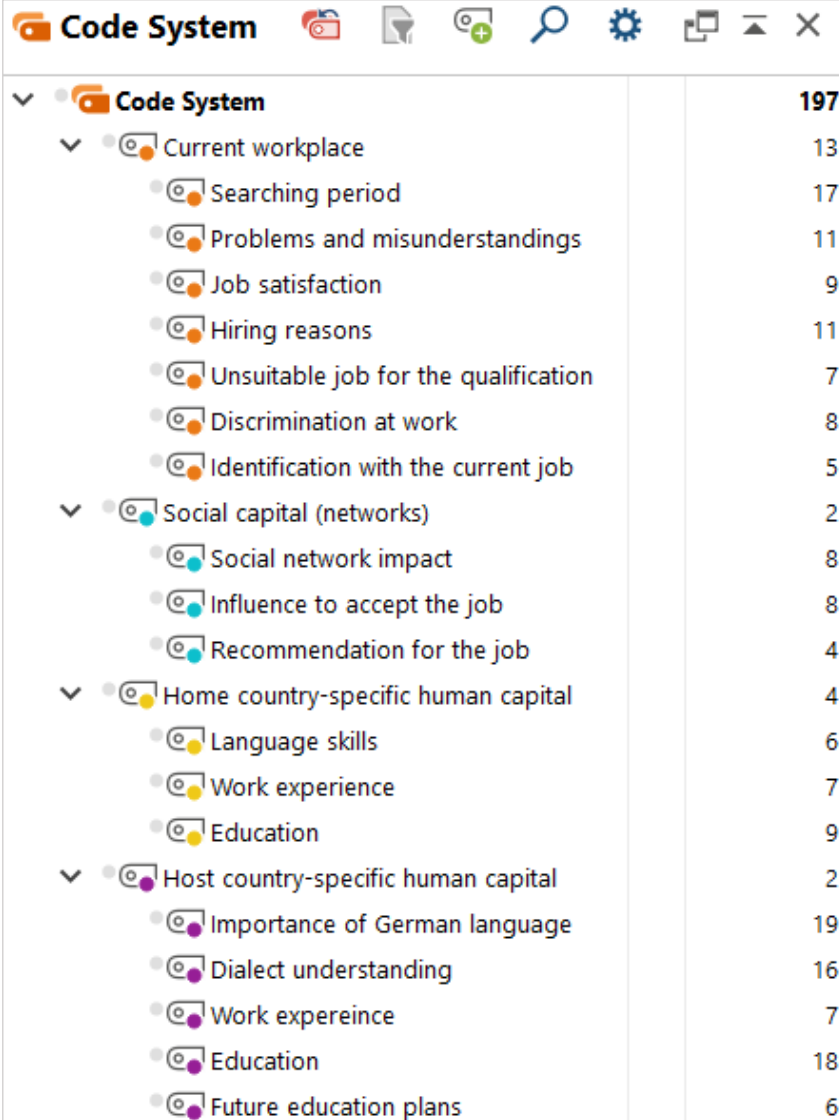
 Documents		197
 Transcript - Interview Partner 1		28
 Transcript - Interview Partner 2		25
 Transcript - Interview Partner 3		18
 Transcript - Interview Partner 4		23
 Transcript - Interview Partner 5		25
 Transcript - Interview Partner 6		19
 Transcript - Interview Partner 7		22
 Transcript - Interview Partner 8		37

Figure 4: Coded transcripts of the eight interview partners (MAXQDA 2020)

In Figure 5, the code system can be observed. Based on the theory-led research questions and hypotheses, four categories for coding the collected data were developed. The coding scheme serves as the connection between the theoretical background, structured interviews, and qualitative analysis. In addition to the categories, the code system consisted of many sub-categories that made it possible to evaluate the content more precisely.



Code System	Frequency
Code System	197
Current workplace	13
Searching period	17
Problems and misunderstandings	11
Job satisfaction	9
Hiring reasons	11
Unsuitable job for the qualification	7
Discrimination at work	8
Identification with the current job	5
Social capital (networks)	2
Social network impact	8
Influence to accept the job	8
Recommendation for the job	4
Home country-specific human capital	4
Language skills	6
Work experience	7
Education	9
Host country-specific human capital	2
Importance of German language	19
Dialect understanding	16
Work experience	7
Education	18
Future education plans	6

Figure 5: Code System in MAXQDA 2020

In the following part, all categories and their respective sub-categories are described and explained in more detail. For every sub-category, the researcher chose the most relevant answers of the interview partners in order to be analyzed.

Current workplace

The first category, namely the „Current workplace”, includes all content-related aspects that relate to the current work of the interview partners. Every detail of the current job was taken into consideration, for instance, the searching period, problems or misunderstandings at work, job satisfaction, hiring reasons, the identification with the job, and the discrimination at work.

Social capital (networks)

The scope of the category „Social capital” was to find out if the interview partners received any kind of help or influence in order to find their current job. The researcher asked if any network member recommended them for their current position, and if so, what relationship did they have to this person. This category analyses the importance of the social network in the labor market integration of every interview partner. It compares the impact of the Austrian social capital to the impact of the Romanian social capital.

Home-country specific human capital

The purpose of the category „Home-country specific human capital” was to find out in what way the home-country specific human capital affects the labor market integration of Romanians in Austria. The researcher asked how home-country education, work experience, and language skills influenced the process of finding a job in Austria.

Host-country specific human capital

The purpose of the category „Host-country specific human capital” was to find out in what way the host-country specific human capital affects the labor market integration of Romanians in Austria. The researcher asked how the education, work experience, or language skills acquired in Austria influenced Romanians in the process of finding.

5. Analysis

The following chapters present the results of the research. The researcher divided the study into four categories, which are explained in more detail in the following sections. The analysis is carried out using the Qualitative Content Analysis by Philipp Mayring.

5.1 Current workplace

The first category, namely „Current workplace“, includes all content-related aspects that relate to the current work of the interview partners, and it is divided into seven thematic areas. These are the searching period, problems and misunderstandings at work, job satisfaction, hiring reasons, assets for the job, unsuitable job for the qualification, discrimination at work, and identification with the current job.

In the next paragraphs, the researcher will analyze every sub-category of the category „Current workplace“, by taking the most relevant opinions of the interview partners and discussing them briefly.

5.1.1 Searching period

The interview partners described different experiences during the searching period for a job in Austria. While IP6 searched for one week to find the job as a bartender in Innsbruck, IP5 searched unsuccessfully two years in order to find a job suited to her qualification. IP1, IP3, and IP4 searched on average, three months to find their current job. After IP8 ended the contract with her ex-company, the Public Employment Service Austria helped her to find a new job.

IP8: After I finished with my ex-company, you know that you have to go to AMS and do all the procedures that they are doing for people that do not have jobs. The first job that they already had was haunted by them and it took two weeks for them to offer me the job. They wanted somebody with experience and with SAP system knowledge, so it was around two weeks or three weeks let's say like that. (IP8: 145 – 149)

The interview partners experienced different emotions and feelings while searching for a new job. On the one hand, men were confident, had a positive attitude, and were not feeling disappointed while searching for a job, because of the studies they had and the career field in demand. On the other hand, for the majority of the women, the process of looking for a new job was filled with constant emotional lows. They felt disappointed and sad when they were getting rejection emails and had self-doubts regarding their level of German knowledge.

IP4: I just finished my studies [...] and it was hard because I was nervous that I wouldn't get one job [...]. I also had thoughts about me being Romanian that would be a problem because the job market in Austria, in Vienna, is very saturated. It's really hard to find a job and especially as a young person just finishing the university. [...] it was not such a good experience because you never know if you're doing something right or not, you never know, if your CV is good enough, if your German is good enough, when you write the cover letter. (IP4: 98 – 109)

5.1.2 Problems and misunderstandings

When asked about the problems or misunderstandings that exist at the current job, a trend was developed in the answers of the interview partners. Six out of eight interviewees mentioned the German language as being a problem and creating difficulties in successfully expressing their ideas. Besides, also the issue of the Viennese dialect is a big one because some interview partners have difficulties in understanding their co-workers because of the dialect.

A work-related problem presented by IP8 is that communicating with other countries via email and telephone is not that simple at all. The same interview partner also mentioned the fact that sometimes she or other colleagues can have a bad day, and this can create short-term problems or misunderstandings.

IP7 said that she has the following problem at one of her jobs, namely the one as a dormitory representative:

IP7: I have a little problem with the manager, but I won't say it's very personal. However, I still think that he has a little bit of (...) I don't know how to call it, not racism but he is a little bit unfriendly with people coming from Eastern Europe. (IP7: 21 – 23)

On the one hand, no interview partner seemed to have pressing problems or misunderstandings that are influencing their careers. On the other hand, language skills or nationality could create some difficulties or misunderstandings at work.

5.1.3 Job satisfaction

„Do you like, or are you satisfied with your current job?“ (see Appendix 1). This was the question answered by the interview partners in order to find out how satisfied they are with their working place. Seven out of eight interviewees stated the fact that they are satisfied with their current job. The reasons were the high salaries, the fact that their job is related to their studies, because they like the tasks of their job or because they enjoy working with their team and colleagues.

However, IP5 said that she is not satisfied with her current job:

IP5: I'm not satisfied with my current job because I studied my whole life, I had a high school, I did a bachelor, I did my master here in Vienna. I studied my whole life and I was always a good student or at least in Romania I was a very good student, one of the top students. I was going to competitions, I struggled, I was learning every day, I was taking private lessons. Now, if I'm working in a store for H&M, of course I'm not satisfied with my current situation. With the studies that I have until now, I thought that I would have a way better job, that I will work in a company, and that I will be advanced, that in two years I'll become a manager and so on. (IP5: 81 – 91)

5.1.4 Hiring reasons

When asked about the reasons why the interview partners were accepted for their current position, they mentioned several motives. In most of the cases, the reasons were job-related, or the soft skills played an essential role in the hiring process. The interview partners most often mentioned the following factors why they received their current job: the language skills, their personality, and the suited studies for the job.

IP1 answered the question, „*What do you think that are the factors for what you got this job?*” (see Appendix 1) by explaining that he impressed the recruiters at the interviews. He had in total three interviews and the Human Resources department, but also the employees from his department appreciated him from the first interview when he had to solve a problem and present the solution. He also mentioned the fact that during the second and third interviews, he met some of his managers and co-workers, and they got along with each other.

IP2 said that the most important reasons why she received the job were the fact that she speaks Romanian and due to her past voluntarily experiences.

IP2: Our clients come from mostly all the countries in Europe and not only. Some of them are refugees. Some of them are just people who had a life like everyone else and then suddenly lost their home. But lots of them come from Romania, and in my job it's always good to speak other languages. Maybe the biggest argument for me to be employed was that I speak Romanian. [...] Also to have an experience in social work in my past, and I've done a lot of voluntarily projects and this is why I think my boss employed me. (IP2: 69 – 76)

For IP3, the master's program in Medical and Rehabilitation Engineering at the University of Applied Sciences Technikum Wien had a positive impact on finding his current job, but also his startup mentality.

IP3: I think it's first of all the study that I was doing, because I was doing Medical Engineering and the device will be a medical device. And I think the startup mentality or the thing that I wish to work somewhere where no one actually really knows 100% what they're doing, everyone is learning. (IP3: 38 - 41)

IP4 mentioned her studies at the Vienna University of Economics and Business, her past working experience in Vienna, the interview experience, and her personality that matched well with the team as being the factors for what she received her current job.

IP5, IP6, and IP7 had similar reasons for being hired. This may also be due to similar jobs, meaning that all three interviewees are having direct contact with their clients. Being patient and respectful, mastering practical communication skills, having energy, and a positive attitude are some of the reasons mentioned by the three interview partners. Besides, studies and language skills played an important role for them.

A mixture of soft skills hard skills made IP8 successful in finding the current job.

IP8: Most important I think, probably, I knew Romanian and it was an asset and the second asset important for them was that they needed somebody that was professional in SAP. [...] The third reason was the fact that I know English because they said, they also had problems with people that wrote in their CVs that they know perfect English and when they were to the interview, they barely could speak English. (IP8: 83 – 90)

5.1.5 Unsuitable job for the qualification

When asked if the job is suited to the qualification of the interview partners, four out of eight interviewees said that the job is not suited. This means that their studies or past working experience did not help them in the process of finding a job in their field. The interview partners mentioned several reasons as being barriers to finding a suitable job. Some obstacles are the lack of German language knowledge, high competition in a particular industry, few available jobs, or the lack of Austrian citizenship and network.

IP5 said that she is overqualified for her job and that she is not using her knowledge gained at the Vienna University of Economics and Business or the Bucharest University of Economic Studies.

IP5: I'm overqualified for this job, but at the same time, I didn't have the experience of working in a store. I didn't have that practical experience, but at the same time, all my studies do not fit to this job because I don't need any of my economic studies for this field. I don't work with the computer, I don't have even an email address from work. (IP5: 207 – 210)

IP6 mentioned the fact that he is having a break from his bachelor studies in Romania, where he is studying Geography and Tourism. He stated that the main reason for not finding a job in the geography or tourism field was the lack of German language knowledge.

IP6: I think that for me it is very hard to find a job suited to my qualification or future qualification because I'm not a German speaker. I could have had more options, but I had just a few because of the lack of German. Being a bartender is somehow related to tourism, but it is definitely not the job that I want. (IP6: 79 – 84)

IP7 affirmed that one job out of three is suited to her qualification, namely being a piano teacher for children. She mentioned the fact that there is high competition in the music industry and that not many jobs are available. That is why she is working part-time as a piano teacher, and in parallel, she has two other jobs in order to be able to get additional compensation.

IP8 stated that she was forced to change her domain when she came to Austria. IP8 studied Political Science in Vienna, but now she is working as a Sales Assistant. The two main obstacles that prevented her from finding a job suited to her qualification were the lack of Austrian citizenship and the lack of a network.

IP8: I'm coming from a political domain and now I'm doing economy (laughing). I had to work in politics and this was impossible considering that I did not know anybody working in politics. I could not even enter in this world. I could not get into a party, because I wasn't Austrian [...]. So, I was prepared from the beginning that I would not continue on the political line. (IP8: 240 – 246)

5.1.6 Discrimination at work

„*Did you ever feel discriminated at work?*” (see Appendix 1). This was the question answered by the interview partners in order to find out if they ever felt discriminated at work. In most of the cases, the interviewees did not feel a high level of discrimination, but they sometimes had unpleasant experiences due to their nationality. In some other cases, they could observe a difference in the attitude of their managers towards them and their Austrian co-workers.

IP1 said that he does not feel being discriminated at work, but he has to work harder in order to prove his abilities and to receive positive feedback from his manager.

IP1: No, I did not feel discriminated, but sometimes I feel that I have to work harder compared to other Austrian colleagues in order for my managers to like me or to give me some positive feedback on my work. Otherwise, I did not feel discriminated. (IP1: 54 – 56)

IP2 is working as a residential supervisor for an international humanitarian movement. A significant part of her clients is represented by Romanian citizens who are lacking adequate housing and are addicted to alcohol and drugs. IP2 mentioned the fact that she sometimes has the impression that she is associated with her clients due to the same origin country.

IP2: I learned to distance myself a bit from a situation where I have the impression that I'm being judged and looked at in a certain way just 'cause I'm Romanian, and because our clients, which are Romanian, are homeless, alcoholic men [...]. (IP2: 86 – 89)

IP3 said that he does not feel discriminated at all at work, and IP4 mentioned that she felt discriminated during her studies by the other students for coming from Romania, but at work, not anymore. IP5 stated that her co-workers or managers do not discriminate her, but she felt discriminated by her clients for her German knowledge level. It sometimes happened that she did not understand well the clients talking to her, and when she was replying, the customers noticed that she is not Austrian and were looking at her in a certain way.

IP7 told that her previous employer took advantage of the fact that she was a foreigner. The employer assumed that IP7 was not aware of her human rights in the workplace and that the German language represented a barrier for her. Therefore, he refused to pay the salary during her last working months.

IP7: [...]. In the previous job, where I was teaching in a school, I felt discriminated. I think it was discrimination because they were not paying my salary in time. I think that they were taking a lot of advantage from the fact that I was a foreigner. They thought that I don't know very well the laws and very well the language and therefore they used this, or they tried to use it to not pay or anyway not to be correct. (IP7: 46 – 50)

IP8 felt discriminated by her colleagues and managers during the last job. She explained that one of her co-workers was speaking in dialect, even though IP8 asked her nicely not to speak in dialect anymore because she had severe difficulties in understanding her. Furthermore, her ex-manager refused to give her a bonus because she was a Romanian citizen.

5.1.7 Identification with the current job

When asked if they identify themselves with the current job, the opinions of the interview partners were divided. IP3 affirmed that he is identifying himself with his current position as the Head of Software Development and IT Administration because his job is related to his bachelor and master studies, which he did at the University of Applied Sciences Technikum Wien.

IP3: Yeah, I identify myself with the job pretty much, because it's a medical device and because my studies were going in the same direction, especially that now we're building the prototype so it's pretty much try and failure and doing research, which was most of the time at university. (IP3: 102 – 104)

IP4 stated that she identifies herself with the current position because she studied business administration, and her job is in the business sector as she is a team member of the Strategy Planning department. IP4 said that she is partly using the knowledge that she gained during her studies. In most of the cases, she uses the gained soft skills in order to be organized.

Contrary to the other interview partners, IP5 does not identify herself with the current job, and consequently, she is trying to change it. After the first working month, she found out that the tasks at the current job are not similar to what she was expecting.

IP5: I'm planning to change it and I'm trying to. After the first month I got there, I knew that I won't be able to become my department manager for maybe the next year. I also don't want to anymore, because just by working there I understood that it's hard for a department manager. Also a department manager wouldn't have a work-life balance and the schedule will be still bad. I'm not satisfied with my job, I'm planning to change it, and I'm applying to other jobs. (IP5: 93 – 97)

5.2 Social capital

The category „Social capital” analyzed whether the interview partners received any help from their networks in the process of finding a job and integration into the Austrian labor market. This topic also raises the question: what relationship did the interviewee have with the person from which he/her received help, which recommended him/her for a job or influenced him/her to accept the job? Therefore, this category aims to analyze the importance of the social network of every interview partner.

5.2.1 Social network impact

This category aims to find out if the social network members of the interview partners had any impact during the process of finding a job. When asked about this, most of the interviewees stated that a network member influenced them to accept the current job or recommended them for a position. Other interview partners knew a person working at their current company, and this had an impact on their decision to apply for a job or to accept the job.

IP1 stated that a close Romanian friend working in Vienna recommended him for his current position. Members of IP2's and IP8's networks influenced them to apply for their job or to accept a particular job offer. IP3 said that he knew the Austrian CEO of the company where he is working, and he thinks that this had an impact on him receiving the job. The CEO was a member of the social network of IP3, but only on a professional level.

IP3: The CEO of the company where I'm working, had some discussions with one of the laboratory mates from our university regarding some measurements that could be done at the university. And the fact is, that I got to know him personally during the studies. So it's just somehow related, but I don't think that was the main reason to them getting me the job. (IP3: 96 – 100)

IP4 stated that she had no help or influence from any member of her network regarding her current workplace. The situation of IP5 is similar to the situation of IP4, she did not receive any help from her social network in finding a job. However, she collaborated with a worker from her current company for her bachelor thesis. This means that IP5 knew the company and the marketing way of getting new customers. IP6 found his job as a bartender in Innsbruck without receiving any help from his social network.

IP7 had a vast network of clients from her previous job as a piano teacher, and this fact helped her working privately as a piano teacher.

IP7: Yes, with some of the children and parents I had a very good relationship. Therefore, in the moment when I left the school, some parents decided to follow me privately. (IP7: 58 – 59)

IP8 stated that from her point of view, it is easier to find a job in Romania and to integrate into the labor market compared to Austria.

IP8: I think it was easier to find a job in Romania because growing there, having contacts and having my network helped a lot. [...] Here, I didn't know that and for me [...] it was really a step back because I did not even have an idea where I should go on internet to look, to find the information, because nobody tells you these things. (IP8: 253 – 263)

5.2.2 Influence to accept the job

When asked about the searching period of the current job, a trend could be observed, namely that two of the interview partners were influenced to apply or accept the job that they are having now. In both cases, the influencing people were coming from Austria and represented a family member or a friend of the interview partners.

IP2 stated that in her past job, a colleague told her that at the company where she is working at the moment, there is a higher level of security for the employees compared to the other similar companies, from where IP2 had several job offers. As the level of security is an important criterion when working as a residential supervisor, the affirmation of the colleague influenced IP2 to accept the job.

IP8 mentioned the fact that her husband saw online the job description of her current position and told her that the job suits her very well. At that moment, she already signed a contract with another company. However, her husband influenced her to apply for the company where she is working now. IP8 applied for that job, and even though she did not have experience in the Sales department, she was successful in getting the job.

5.2.3 Recommendation for the job

The topic „Recommendation for the job” describes if any of the interview partners was recommended by a member of her or his network for the current job. This was the case of one interview partner, namely IP1. He affirmed that during the searching period, he told everyone in his group of Romanian friends from Vienna that he was searching for a job. After a short period, a friend told him about an open position at his company, and he also explained to him what are the benefits of the company and how is the working atmosphere. Therefore, IP1 applied for the open position, and his friend recommended him for the respective job.

IP1: I started searching for jobs since it was in Romania, then I came here, and I continued to search and apply for jobs. [...] After some time, I got in touch with a friend from Romania that was also working here. We were studying at the same high school in Romania [...]. He told me that they have a position for an intern and I applied for it. (IP1: 59 – 63)

The other interview partners declared that no network member recommended them for their current job.

5.3 Home country-specific human capital

The purpose of the category „Home-country specific human capital” was to find out how the home-country specific human capital affects the labor market integration of Romanians in Austria. The home-country specific human capital refers to the Romanian language skills, but also to the education and work experience gained in Romania.

5.3.1 Language skills

On the one hand, the interview partners, excepting one, did not mention the Romanian language as being an advantage for them and helping them in finding a job in Austria and integrating into the Austrian labor market. On the other hand, the interviewees did not mention the Romanian language as being a drawback when searching for a job and trying to integrate.

There was an exception; namely, IP8 said that the Romanian language had a positive impact on her getting the current job.

IP8: I'm doing for the moment sales administration for Bulgaria and Romania, which was one of the advantage why I got this job, because I speak Romanian, German, English and I cover all the areas like that. (IP8: 10 – 12)

The Romanian language skills did not help IP8 only in the process of receiving a job, but also in the integration process.

IP8: You tend to use your native language, to be able to express yourself in a better way, so that your colleagues understand everything. (IP8: 199 – 200)

5.3.2 Work experience

The category „Work experience” demonstrates how vital the work experience in the home country is and what impact it has on the integration process of Romanians in the Austrian labor market. Out of eight interview partners, three had also working experience in Romania and were able to share their opinion about how valuable this experience was for the integration process.

IP1 stated that during his bachelor studies, he did a part-time internship in Romania. He was working part-time in an IT company, and he mentioned the fact that the internship helped him with the process of finding a job in Austria.

Contrary to IP1, IP5 said that her working experience in Romania did not help her to find a job suited to her qualification in Austria. She worked as an intern in the digital marketing field and had a permanent job in the same field in Romania. Her opinion is that it is essential to have working experience in Austria, not in Romania, in order to be able to find a suitable job.

IP5: My lack of professional experience in Vienna, the lack of internships here had a negative impact. I feel that if you have more internships or at least one internship here in Vienna, you have more chances for a recruiter to see you. I had an internship in digital marketing in Romania and another one, a permanent job for one year in Romania, but not here, so I think this was not important. (IP5: 212 – 215)

IP8 shares the opinion on IP5, meaning that she believed that the lack of working experience in Austria had a negative impact when searching for a suitable job, even though she had significant working experience in Romania.

IP8: I started with a really low job compared to where I was in Romania at the time when I came here. But I accepted this position because it was a first step to integrate myself on their job market, even though, it was really low compared to what they left behind. (IP8: 265 – 269)

5.3.3 Education

The purpose of this category was to find out how education in Romania affected the integration into the Austrian labor market of the interview partners. Three out of eight interviewees obtained their last degree in Romania and were asked in what way this influenced their job search and integration process.

IP1 obtained his last degree in Romania, namely a bachelor's degree after studying Computer Science for four years. He stated that the fact that he graduated in Romania had a bad influence on him while searching for a job. However, after getting accepted to his current company, the situation changed, and his technical knowledge was appreciated.

IP1: I think that the degree that I got in Romania had a bad influence on me while searching for a job because probably a lot of companies rejected me because they did not trust the universities in Romania. They were thinking that the people that get out of university, have much lower knowledge level. But after starting working, my managers were happy with my technical knowledge. Some day one colleague said that there is no difference between me and another university graduate here, in Austria, but he said that my way of thinking is better than the thinking that a student of the University of Applied Sciences has. (IP1: 139 – 145)

The last degree of IP2 is the high school degree obtained in Romania. Her studies helped her with the integration process, because one requirement of her current job was to have an advanced German level, and she acquired high German skills during the high school years.

IP6 stated that his previous education in Romania did not influence in any way the integration process. He is currently working as a bartender at an international restaurant in Innsbruck and doing his bachelor studies in Geography and Tourism in Romania.

5.4 Host country-specific human capital

The purpose of the category „Host-country specific human capital” was to find out how the host-country specific human capital affects the labor market integration of Romanians in Austria. The host-country specific human capital refers to the German language skills, but also to the education and work experience gained in Austria.

5.4.1 Importance of German language

The purpose of this category was to find out the level of German knowledge of the interview partners, but also their opinion about the relevance of the German language skills for the integration into the Austrian labor market. One interviewee had a low level (A1 level) of the German language, four interviewees had an upper-intermediate (B2 level) German language knowledge, and three interviewees advanced German skills (C1 level).

It is necessary to specify that the researcher tried to find more interview partners with lower German language knowledge, but it was challenging. Most of the employed Romanians in Austria had at least upper-intermediate German skills.

When asked about the relevance of the German language, all interviewees agreed that the German language knowledge is essential for the integration into the Austrian labor market. They described more reasons why the German language is crucial for the labor market integration.

IP1 said that the German skills are making communication with co-workers easier. IP2 mentioned that the better somebody knows German, the better are the chances to be employed. IP3 believes that all companies, including the international ones, prefer German-speaking candidates to non-German speaking candidates. IP4 said that the German language skills are the most crucial for the integration.

IP4: Yes, I think it's actually the most important factor 'cause you can have whatever studies or qualifications you may have, but if you don't know German, I think you don't really have a chance [...]. And not just B1, B2, I think C1 or even more. (IP4: 171 – 179)

IP5 mentioned that the German language has high importance because the Austrian citizens would like to preserve the German language, and for this reason, almost every company requires German language knowledge. IP8 thinks that German skills are necessary for every kind of job done in Vienna, independent of the salary.

5.4.2 Dialect understanding

The purpose of the category „Dialect understanding” was to find out if the Romanian immigrants have difficulties in understanding the Austrian dialect. If yes, the researcher also tried to find out what solutions the immigrants found for this problem. When required to answer the question, „*Do you understand the dialect of your colleagues without having any difficulties?*” (see Appendix 1), all interview partners denied the answer. Every interviewed person stated that they have difficulties in understanding their Austrian or German co-workers due to the dialect.

IP2 stated that her co-workers expected her to speak fluent German and that the dialect was an obstacle between her and her co-workers.

IP2: The colleagues, which were from Austria or Germany, were of course expecting me to speak perfect and fluent German and that's ok, because I get along good with my German, but I don't speak dialect and I can't understand dialect. [...] And that was difficult at the beginning, because I really had to insist on them speaking *Hochdeutsch*, because some of the things were critical for me to know and to understand and to be sure that I understood them correctly in order to do my work. (IP2: 29 – 37)

IP3 said that when he has problems in understanding his co-workers, he kindly asks them to explain to him the unknown words, and they are happy to help.

IP3: Sometimes I still have trouble understanding them, but I'm usually asking them what that means or something. They find it funny and are usually friendly and just explaining it. (IP3: 84 – 85)

IP1, IP4, and IP8 mentioned that they were surprised to hear the Austrian dialect and that this represented an obstacle at their current job. In Romania, the students are learning the standard German, which is different from the Austrian dialect.

IP4: [...] I got the shock of my life in Austria when I heard the dialect (laughing). Because we learned the *Hochdeutsch*, the normal German and I didn't know that there could be so many dialects to it. (IP4: 127 – 128)

5.4.3 Work experience

The category „Work experience” demonstrates how essential the work experience in the host country is and what impact it has on the integration process of Romanians into the Austrian labor market. Out of eight interview partners, three had also working experience in Austria and were able to share their opinion about how valuable this experience was for the integration process.

IP2 stated that her working experience in Austria helped her in getting the current job as a residential supervisor, even if her previous working experience is not in the same domain as her current job. She thinks that the fact that other Viennese employers thought that she is suitable for other jobs influenced her current employer to hire her.

IP2: I think I wouldn't have been accepted for my current job if I was younger and if I wouldn't have had the experience I have. [...] I think it was good for my job to see that I have at least something in my past where employees from Vienna thought I was right to do certain tasks, which of course were easy, but at least I think my small history of other jobs helped me. (IP2: 207 – 213)

IP4 had a six-month experience at an international company, which has a subsidiary located in Vienna. She stated that her experience had a positive effect on her in getting the current job. IP7 is currently working as a private piano teacher. In her previous job, she was working as a piano teacher, but in a school. She told that her current clients were learning in the school where she previously was a teacher and that they followed her also for taking private piano lessons. The network and her past job experience had a positive effect on the current job as a private piano teacher.

IP8 said that her past working experience in Vienna did not directly influence the integration process into the Austrian labor market. However, the past working experience had a positive impact on her. She learned how to interact in a job, how the co-workers interact between themselves, or with their managers, and she observed the Austrian way of thinking. She looked for some patterns that could help her to integrate into the Austrian labor market.

5.4.4 Education

The purpose of this category was to find out how education in Austria affected the integration into the labor market of the interview partners. Four out of eight interviewees obtained their last degree in Austria and were asked in what way this influenced their job search and integration process.

IP3 obtained his last degree in Medical and Rehabilitation Engineering at the University of Applied Sciences Technikum Wien. On the one hand, he thinks that his studies helped him to integrate into the Austrian labor market because he is using his gained knowledge at his current job, where he is developing a medical device. On the other hand, he did not specifically mention that the Austrian university had a positive effect on the integration.

IP4 was asked if she thinks that her last obtained degree had any influence on her current job. She affirmed that the Vienna University of Economics and Business and the bachelor's degree had a positive effect on her finding the current job.

IP4: Yes, sure, I think it helped me, also with past jobs and the current job because WU is pretty well known in Austria. And also the fact that although I'm Romanian, the fact that I studied here my bachelors proved something to the recruiters, that I know German, that I was able to finish the university, that I integrated myself in Austria, that I don't want to move right away and so on. So they had this security and I think that it helped me a lot to find a job. (IP4: 172 – 176)

IP5 obtained her master's degree at the Vienna University of Economics and Business in the marketing field. She thinks that her last degree had a positive effect when she applied because her current company invited her for an interview. Otherwise, she thinks that her last degree does not have any influence on her current job.

IP8 obtained her bachelor's degree at the University of Vienna, where she studied Political Science. At the moment of the interview, she was working as a Sales Advisor for an international company and stated that her last obtained degree did not influence her integration into the Austrian labor market. It is essential to know that IP8 was supposed to change her domain, namely, to go from the political area to the economic area. She said that for her, it was nearly impossible to be part of the Austrian government and to put her knowledge into practice.

5.4.5 Future education plans

The researcher decided to ask the Romanian immigrants about their education plans in order to find out if they would like to gain more knowledge in the long term. Four interview partners affirmed that they have future education plans, even though they were not sure about them.

IP1 said that he would like to study photography or videography after he graduates the ongoing master's program. When asking IP3 if he has any plans regarding his education, he said that it depends on his job.

IP3: Not exactly, no, not really, but it really depends on how the position or the job that I'm doing right now will evolve. If the company somehow needs me to get some certain specialization or to do some certain courses, probably I will.
(IP3: 106 – 108)

IP4 affirmed that she is thinking about starting a master study in Vienna, while she is also working. IP5 stated that she would like to develop her computer skills, and that is why she took a course for InDesign, SEO, and WordPress during the past few months. She thinks that more advanced computer skills could help her in getting hired in her domain, namely in digital marketing.

This chapter dedicated to the analysis of the results was divided into four sections and evaluated the most valuable responses of the eight interview partners. In the next chapter, is presented the discussion of the results based on the three sub-hypotheses.

6. Interpretation

This master thesis aimed to find out which factors influence the integration of Romanian immigrants into the Austrian labor market. The immigrants need to know what kind of education, work experience, soft skills, or hard skills are expected and wanted. By having this knowledge, the immigrants will not only be admitted to the Austrian labor market, but legal conditions will be created for them. Furthermore, they will not be discriminated when looking for a job and will have the right to access the Austrian social security system. To be more precise, the working conditions of the Austrian employees will also be created for Romanian immigrants.

Based on the previous chapters, the results of the analysis are interpreted in the next section. For the interpretation, the literature, the research question with the general and sub-hypotheses, and the results are connected.

The researcher developed a general hypothesis that guides and gives direction to scientific research, namely:

Romanian immigrants possessing host country-specific social and human capital can find easier a job suited to their qualification than immigrants that possess home country-specific social and human capital.

The general hypothesis branches into three other specific sub-hypotheses in order to address different aspects of the general hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1a: Romanian immigrants that receive help from their Austrian network can easier find a job suited to their qualification than Romanian immigrants that receive help from their Romanian network.

Hypothesis 1b: Romanian immigrants with advanced German language knowledge can easier find a job suited to their qualifications than Romanian immigrants with basic German language knowledge.

Hypothesis 1c: Romanian immigrants who obtained a degree in Austria can easier find a job suited to their qualifications than Romanian immigrants who obtained a degree in Romania.

In the next paragraphs, every sub-hypothesis and the respective literature are connected with the analysis.

6.1 Interpretation of the first sub-hypothesis

The first sub-hypothesis investigates whether the Romanian immigrants that receive help from their Austrian network can easier find a job suited to their qualification than Romanian immigrants that receive help from their Romanian network. As Russell King stated (King, 2012, p. 21) a network can be beneficial for the integration process because its members can provide valuable information, which lowers the costs and the risk of the migration. This means that the network could simplify the process of finding a job or accommodation, and therefore, the migration process is perpetuated.

Information about the time and psychological costs, country-specific cultural, social, and professional experience could also increase the migration chances. The network has an essential role, especially for newly arrived immigrants. The network members can provide safe and trustable information about vacancies, job opportunities, or higher-income options. For this reason, the first sub-hypothesis is related to the network of the Romanian migrants and their labor market integration.

However, not only the network is essential, but also the ties between the network members. According to Wuthnow (Wuthnow, 2002, p. 669), interethnic ties are essential for immigrants. The explanation for it is that this kind of ties bring the immigrants out of their ethnic community, and therefore, a more comprehensive network is created, which creates valuable job opportunities.

On the one hand, when living and working in a foreign country, the opportunities often come from outside of the ethnic community, and the ethnic resources are not of high importance anymore. On the other hand, it is shown that the primary source of information regarding jobs is through relatives and friends belonging to the same ethnic origin. For this reason, the researcher wanted to test from which network the Romanian immigrants in Austria receive help in order to integrate into the Austrian labor market.

In most of the cases, both the Romanian and the Austrian network influenced the labor market integration of the interviewees. However, in only one case, an interview partner was recommended for a particular position and was also accepted for it. This means that in most of the cases, the social network had an impact on the Romanian immigrants.

The next paragraphs describe in what way the Romanian and Austrian networks helped the Romanian immigrants to integrate into the Austrian labor market. In only one case, the interview partner was recommended for a vacant position by a Romanian friend, who was working at the company with an unoccupied job. In this case, a member of the Romanian network helped an interviewee to integrate into the Austrian labor market.

The second interview partner was influenced by an Austrian friend to accept the job, where she is currently working. The third interview partner personally knew his future Austrian CEO due to a meeting that took place at his university. This was not the main reason why he received the job, but it had a significant influence. The seventh interview partner helped herself in getting a private piano teacher, followed by the Austrian parents and children from the school where she was previously teaching. The eighth interview partner was influenced by her Austrian husband to apply for her current position.

To sum up the first sub-hypothesis, it can be said that all interviewees, except one, found their jobs on their own. In this case, the Romanian network was of high importance. However, for the rest of the seven interview partners, the Austrian network influenced the decision to apply for a job or accepting a job. In two out of the seven cases, the Austrian network had a direct influence as the interview partners knew personally their future CEO, respectively, their clients. In conclusion, the results partly support the first sub-hypothesis. In most of the cases, the Austrian network had an indirect influence on the current job of the interview partners, while the Romanian network helped just one interview partner to find his current position.

6.2 Interpretation of the second sub-hypothesis

The second sub-hypothesis investigates whether the Romanian immigrants with advanced German language knowledge can easier find a job suited to their qualification than Romanian migrants with basic German language knowledge. As Becker said (Becker, 1993), the amount of human capital describes the individual performance potential, and therefore, building up human capital is an essential step in the direction of labor market integration.

According to Herwig (Herwig, 2007, p. 22), when immigrants arrive in the host country, they already have human capital, but home country-specific human capital, not host country-specific human capital. The language skills represent a vital host country-specific human capital, but acquiring them requires valuable time, effort, and sometimes financial support. The second sub-hypothesis shows how important German skills are for the labor market integration of Romanian immigrants in Austria.

It was interesting to find out that all eight interview partners said that German language skills represent one of the most critical factors for the labor market integration in Austria. The researcher tried to select interviewees with different German language knowledge, from basic to advanced levels. This was important because the researcher wanted to find out the opinion of the interview partners with different levels of German skills in order to correctly evaluate the importance of German in the process of finding a suitable job.

However, even though the interview partners had different German knowledge skills, the majority had upper-intermediate or advanced skills. It is essential to mention that the researcher tried to find more Romanians that are working in Austria and that have low levels of German knowledge, but it was difficult. In most of the cases, the Romanians with basic German skills were either taking German courses or were unemployed. This fact underlines how vital is German knowledge for the labor market integration of Romanians.

The opinion of the interview partners also sustained this affirmation. They affirmed that German knowledge skills represent the most crucial factor in the process of finding a job in Austria. However, to have basic German skills is not enough, advanced German knowledge is usually required. One interview partner stated that it is needed to have level C1 according to the official Common European Framework of Reference for Languages guidelines in order to be able to get hired and to integrate in Austria. Another interview partner mentioned that the better the German skills are, the higher are the chances to get hired and to find a suitable job. She explained that the Austrian community would like to preserve the German language, and that is why even in international companies, high German language skills are preferred over low German knowledge.

Most of the Romanians stated that it is not only essential to speak German fluently in order to integrate into the Austrian labor market, but it is essential to understand the Austrian dialect. Almost all interview partners were surprised to hear the dialect when they moved to Austria because it was very different from the German that they learned.

To sum up the second sub-hypothesis, it can be said that all interviewees think that the German language helped or could help them to find a job suited to their qualifications and to integrate into the Austrian labor market. The better are the German skills, the higher are the chances to integrate into the labor market in Austria and to have the same working conditions as the Austrian citizens. For this reason, the results support the second sub-hypothesis.

6.3 Interpretation of the third sub-hypothesis

The third sub-hypothesis investigates whether the Romanian immigrants who obtained a degree in Austria can easier find a job suited to their qualifications than Romanian immigrants who obtained a degree in Romania. Some studies have shown that immigrants that did their education in their home country do not fulfill the requirements and needs of the host country labor market. This happens because the education acquired in the home country tends to have lower quality, and as a result, it is more difficult to transfer it.

Furthermore, according to Kanas, Tubergen and Lippe (Kanas, Tubergen, & Lippe, 2009, p. 186), the employers could be doubtful when assessing the education of the immigrants. In contrast to the education acquired in the home country, the education gained in the host country can better fulfill the needs of the employers. The explanation for this is that the employers are better prepared to evaluate the human capital, including education gained in the host country. The third sub-hypothesis tests how important is education acquired in Austria for the Romanian migrants, but also what impact has the education gained in Romania on the labor market integration.

The researcher interviewed partners with different educational backgrounds; four of them gained their last degree in Austria, three participants graduated in Romania, and one participant had her last degree in Italy. The participants had different degrees, the lowest was represented by the high school degree, and the highest was the master's degree.

It could be observed that in the cases where the Romanian immigrants had their last obtained degree outside of Austria, the labor market integration process sometimes had obstacles. The reason is for it is that the companies in Austria do not trust the universities in Romania. As the interview partners stated, the employers in Austria evaluate the knowledge gained in Romania as being low, and for this reason, some Romanian immigrants have difficulties in the integration process. However, education in Romania does not always have drawbacks; sometimes, it is neutral for the employers. This means that in some cases, education in Romania does not have any positive or negative effect on the labor market integration of Romanians in Austria.

Some of the Romanian immigrants that obtained their last degree in Austria mentioned that the educational background had a positive influence on finding a job suited to the qualification. The reason for it is that the universities in Austria represent a proof that the interview partners have an excellent German language level, that they are ambitious, and always working hard. The employers do trust the Austrian universities, and therefore the Austrian degrees are transferable and trustworthy compared to the Romanian degrees. However, in some cases, the Austrian degree did not have any effect, neither positive nor negative, on the labor market integration of Romanians in Austria.

Four out of eight interview partners affirmed that they would like to gain more knowledge in the long term by attending a master's program or additional courses. They mentioned that additional knowledge could help them to get a job or to get promoted at work.

To sum up the third sub-hypothesis, it can be said that the Romanian immigrants who obtained their last degree in Austria could integrate better into the Austrian labor market compared to the immigrants who obtained their last degree in Romania. For this reason, the results sustain the third sub-hypothesis.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the general hypothesis branches into the three already discussed specific sub-hypotheses. As the results partly support the first sub-hypothesis and fully sustain the second and third sub-hypotheses, it can be affirmed that the results support the general hypothesis.

This means that Romanian immigrants possessing host country-specific social and human capital can find easier a job suited to their qualification than immigrants that possess home country-specific social and human capital.

The Austrian employers prefer the Austrian-specific social and human capital to the Romanian-specific social and human capital. For this reason, the Romanian immigrants have higher chances to integrate into the Austrian labor market if they possess Austrian-specific social and human capital.

7. Summary

This section is dedicated to the summary of all chapters of the master thesis, where the researcher gives an overview of the main points. This master thesis with the topic „Migration and Labor Market Integration of Romanians in Austria” consists of eight main chapters. In the next part, the main findings of every chapter will be discussed.

The first chapter, namely the „Introduction”, gives an overview of the immigration of Romanians in Austria. During the past few years, especially after the accession of Romania to the European Union in 2007, the number of Romanian immigrants in Austria increased yearly. At the beginning of 2020, Austria was hosting 123.461 Romanians, spread in all cities of the country.

In order to have a positive outcome of the immigration, it is indispensable to have an effective labor market integration. This thought represented the starting point of the master thesis. The purpose of the work was to find out which factors influence the integration of Romanian immigrants into the Austrian labor market. The researcher followed several steps in order to be able to answer the research question.

The second chapter represented one crucial step, where theoretical approaches to migration and labor market integration were discussed. The existence of home- and host-country specific social and human capital represented the basis of the general hypothesis. The general hypothesis suggests that Romanian immigrants possessing host country-specific social and human capital can find easier a job suited to their qualification than immigrants that possess home country-specific social and human capital.

In order to test the hypothesis and to answer the research question, a qualitative research was conducted. The researcher used a structured interview to collect the data from eight Romanian immigrants, who were working in Austria at the time of the interview. The researcher tried to choose interview partners with different skills, educational background, and work experience in order to find out which factors influence their integration on the labor market.

The interviews lasted an average of 27 minutes and were conducted between 21.05.2020 and 28.05.2020 by the author of the present work. Every interview was transcribed using certain transcription conventions, and the affirmations of the interviewees were analyzed and interpreted.

For the analysis of the interviews, the researcher used the Qualitative Content Analysis method by Philipp Mayring and is presented in chapter five. The researcher coded the transcribed interviews and built four categories and several sub-categories by using the MAXQDA software (Version 2020). The categories, namely „current workplace“, „social capital“, „home-country specific human capital“, „host-country specific human capital“, and the respective sub-categories were developed inductively after the screening of the material collected through the interviews.

Due to the high number of the interviewees and the extended interview transcripts, only the most relevant answers of the interview partners could be analyzed. For every sub-category, the most significant statements were presented and discussed considering the general hypothesis, the three sub-hypotheses, and the research question.

The researcher found out that the results support the general hypothesis. This means that Romanian immigrants possessing host country-specific social and human capital can find easier a job suited to their qualification than immigrants that possess home country-specific social and human capital. In other words, this study demonstrates that Romanian immigrants have higher chances to integrate into the Austrian labor market if they completed their education in Austria, have working experience in Austria, have German language skills, and have living experience in Austria. Another advantage for a successful integration into the labor market is to have a network consisting of citizens of the host country, in this case, Austria.

The following chapter will present the conclusion of the master thesis. The researcher will briefly describe several recommendations on further research possibilities on this topic.

8. Conclusion

This chapter presents further research needs and possibilities on the topic of the Austrian labor market integration of Romanians.

Despite the limited generalizability, the results show that there is still further research need to be done regarding the labor market integration of Romanians in Austria. One topic that could be taken into consideration would be what factors influence the Austrian labor market integration of Romanian entrepreneurs. In this master thesis, the researcher interviewed partners that are working in a company, in a restaurant, or in a dormitory. All interview partners were salary employed at the time of the interview by receiving constant compensation from their employer in a fixed interval. For this type of employment, the researcher demonstrated that the host-country specific social and human capital usually have a positive impact on the labor market integration. However, an interesting further research topic would be to test the role of the home- and host-country specific social and human capital on the Austrian labor market integration of the self-employed Romanian immigrants.

The age of a pandemic, namely the pandemic of Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), could develop new research topics. One idea would be to find out the impact of COVID-19 on the jobs of Romanian citizens working in Austria. A consequence of the pandemic is that dependent on the sector, some jobs will be lost, and some new jobs will be created (Kelly, 2020). To the researcher's knowledge, quite a high number of new jobs were created for nurses coming from Romania with the scope to care for the elderly in Austria during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Until May 2020, several 24-hours Romanian nurses decided to move to Austria and to take care of older adults from Austria (Scherndl, 2020). However, on the one hand, this is just a positive example where new jobs were created, but on the other hand, several Romanians working in Austria lost their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic. A research idea would be to do a qualitative analysis and to find out the impact of COVID-19 on the jobs of Romanian citizens working in Austria.

Moreover, it could be that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the required characteristics of the Romanian immigrants in Austria changed. It may be that the Austrian specific social and human capital is not playing a critical role anymore and that the Romanian specific social and human capital gained importance. As new jobs were created, the Austrian employees could be interested in different characteristics of the Romanian immigrants than the ones discovered in this master thesis.

To sum up, there are still several research possibilities that could be developed in further paper works concerning the topic „Migration and Labor Market Integration of Romanians in Austria”. Both the characteristics of the Romanian and the needs of the Austrian employees should be surveyed in more detail in further interviews. Besides, other data collection methods, such as observation, group discussions, and questionnaires, should also be used to confirm the presented results. In conclusion, the researcher hopes that this master thesis will initiate further research projects to improve the integration process of the Romanian immigrants into the Austrian labor market and their quality of life.

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Appendix I: Structured Interview Questions

1. Please tell me about your current job. Since when are you working there?

What exactly are your tasks, and how is the working atmosphere?

How are your co-workers and managers? Do you feel any cultural differences between you and your co-workers?

How would you describe the working environment?

Did/do you have any problems/misunderstandings at your current job? If yes, please give more details.

Do you like/are you satisfied with your current job and with your salary?

What do you think are the factors for what you got this job?

Are you planning to keep this job? If not, what are the reasons for changing the current position?

Did you ever feel discriminated at work?

Do you usually spend your free time at work (breaks) with international or local co-workers?

2. How did you find your current job?

How long did you search for this job?

How did you apply for this job (via LinkedIn, Xing, or with the help of the family, friends, etc.)?

Who recommended you for this position?

What relationship do you have with the person that recommended you for this job?

Is it easier or harder to find a job in Austria compared to Romania?

How did you feel during the searching period?

3. Please tell me about your German skills.

- If they have German knowledge:

What level of German language do you have?

Did you learn German in Austria or Romania?

Do you think that the German skills are essential in the process of finding a job?

Does the German language make communication easier between you and your co-workers?

Do you understand the dialect of your colleagues without having any difficulties?

Can you imagine living and working in Austria without speaking German?

- If they do NOT have German knowledge:

Do you think that the German skills are essential in the process of finding a job? If yes, why?

How do you get along with Romanian/English skills in Austria?

4. Please tell me more about your educational background.

What is your last degree, and where did you get it?

Did the fact that you got your last degree in Romania/Austria have any influence on the current job?

Is your current job suited to your calcification? If not, why?

What were the factors, which prevented you from finding a job in your field?

Do you have any plans regarding education?

5. Thank you; this was my last question. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

6. Socio-demographic data:

- gender
- age
- since when in Austria

Appendix II: Abstract (English)

The present master thesis deals with the migration and labor market integration of Romanians in Austria. During the past few years, especially after the accession of Romania to the European Union, the number of Romanians in Austria increased yearly. At the beginning of 2020, Austria was hosting 123.461 Romanians. To have a positive outcome of the immigration, it is indispensable to have an effective labor market integration. This thought represented the starting point of the master thesis.

Within this master thesis, the researcher tried to find out which factors influence the integration of Romanian immigrants into the Austrian labor market. The focus was set on the integration of Romanian immigrants possessing host country-specific social and human capital versus the integration of immigrants possessing home country-specific social and human capital.

In order to test the hypothesis and to answer the research question, a qualitative research was conducted. The researcher used a structured interview to collect the data from eight Romanian immigrants. Afterward, the Qualitative Content Analysis method by Philipp Mayring was used for the analysis of the interviews.

The results prove that Romanian immigrants possessing host country-specific social and human capital can find easier a job suited to their qualification than immigrants that possess home country-specific social and human capital. In other words, this study demonstrates that Romanian immigrants have higher chances to integrate into the Austrian labor market if they completed their education and have working experience in Austria, provide advanced German language skills, and have living experience in Austria.

Appendix III: Abstract (German)

Die vorliegende Masterarbeit befasst sich mit der Migration und Arbeitsmarktintegration von Rumänen in Österreich. In den letzten Jahren, insbesondere nach dem Beitritt Rumäniens zur Europäischen Union im Jahr 2007, stieg die Anzahl der rumänischen Einwanderer in Österreich jährlich an. Zu Beginn des Jahres 2020 waren in Österreich 123.461 Rumänen untergebracht, die in allen Städten des Landes verteilt waren. Um ein positives Ergebnis der Einwanderung zu erzielen, ist eine wirksame Arbeitsmarktintegration unabdingbar. Dieser Gedanke war der Ausgangspunkt der Masterarbeit.

In dieser Masterarbeit versuchte die Forscherin herauszufinden, welche Faktoren die Integration rumänischer Einwanderer in den österreichischen Arbeitsmarkt beeinflussen. Der Schwerpunkt lag auf die Integration rumänischer Einwanderer mit gastlandspezifischem Sozial- und Humankapital im Vergleich zur Integration von Einwanderern mit heimatlandspezifischem Sozial- und Humankapital.

Um die Hypothese zu testen und die Forschungsfrage zu beantworten, wurde eine qualitative Untersuchung durchgeführt. Die Forscherin verwendete ein strukturiertes Interview, um die Daten von acht rumänischen Einwanderern zu sammeln, die zum Zeitpunkt des Interviews in Österreich arbeiteten. Anschließend wurde für die Analyse der Interviews die Methode der qualitativen Inhaltsanalyse von Philipp Mayring verwendet.

Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass rumänische Einwanderer mit gastlandspezifischem Sozial- und Humankapital einen für ihre Qualifikation geeigneten Arbeitsplatz leichter finden können als Einwanderer mit länderspezifischem Sozial- und Humankapital. Mit anderen Worten, zeigt diese Studie, dass rumänische Einwanderer höhere Chancen haben, sich in dem österreichischen Arbeitsmarkt zu integrieren, wenn sie ihre Ausbildung in Österreich abgeschlossen haben, Berufserfahrung in Österreich erworben haben, fortgeschrittene Deutschkenntnisse beweisen und in Österreich leben.