

Employment and Unemployment in the South-East Region of Romania – Comparative Analysis by Development Regions (2020-2023)

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Abstract

The paper presents the result of the research based on the analysis of official statistical data on employment and unemployment characteristics at the level of the South-East Development Region and the comparison with the other development regions in Romania. The aim is to highlight the level of the development of the South-East Region in the reference period 2020-2023. In order to achieve this goal, an analysis of the demographic and occupational picture, an analysis of the evolution of employment and unemployment and the identification of the sectors of activity that have attracted the labour force were carried out. The conclusions of the study show that the South-East region needs economic and social policies to increase its attractiveness to the population, all the more so as there is an increase in the number of immigrants.

Keywords: *Employment; unemployment; development region; South-East Development Region;*

1. Introduction

Social indicators *employment* and *unemployment* are essential for the analysis of the social and economic life of a geographical area, their importance being recognized in numerous studies (Iacob & Mahărea, 2020, p. 185) but also as public policy through statistical recording, as they can show aspects of society and its progress (Marshall & Scott, 2014, pp. 346-348). Employment reflects the functioning of the economy-social sphere relationship (Mărginean & Precupețu, 2008, p. 211) and unemployment and underemployment are problems to be addressed through employment policies (Mărginean & Precupețu, 2008, pp. 218-220). Variations in these indicators (especially when unemployment increases and when the employed population decreases) require, from an administrative point of view, the application of state social protection measures (intervention) to provide support services for the unemployed and protection against the prospect of poverty, combating which has been a government objective since 2000 (Fitzek, 2020, p. 116).

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These two indicators, which inevitably come to the attention of researchers and those who manage public policies, are constantly monitored to ensure timely intervention by the responsible actors and stakeholders, preventing the onset of crises or reducing the effects of these crises by balancing the relationship between labour demand and labour supply (Bădoi & Preoteasa, 2024, p. 54), especially the social consequences, but also the economic ones.

In Romania, as a social phenomenon, unemployment followed large layoffs after 1990, generating legislative regulations and the development of employment policies (Bădoi & Preoteasa, 2024, p. 52) affecting different categories of the population. After 2010, unemployment affected rather the young population, aged 15-24 years, despite programs for the inclusion of young people in the labour market (Pargaru *et al.*, 2023, p. 681) and men were more affected than women (Pargaru *et al.*, 2023, p. 682). Although in recent years at national level the unemployment rate was stable (3.7%), the phenomenon continues to be watched, as it points to areas of the economy that are experiencing downsizing and, consequently, the shedding of employees, such as sectors that are computerizing and robotizing), or the context of the Covid-19 pandemic generating an increase in unemployment (Anghelache *et al.*, 2020, pp. 7-8). The concern at the European level is mainly to increase employment, develop skills, reduce poverty, combat discrimination, promote access to the labour market for people with disabilities and support refugees from Ukraine in accessing the European labour market (Consiliul..., 2023).

The approach of unemployment and employment from a regional perspective in this study is justified, given the phenomenon of internal and external mobility, changes in the population structure as a result of migration, which influences employment and unemployment rates (Iacob & Măhărea, 2020, p. 202), productive and economic branches (Anghelache *et al.*, 2020, pp. 7-8) and the relationship (mutual determination and stimulation) between the development of the economy and possible progress at the social level – "social progress" (Dinică, 2011, p. 247). The topic is of interest, at least at the level of the South-East region, as questions have been raised in public discussions such as: what opportunities does the South-East region offer to its inhabitants? How dynamic is the region and how could it be made more attractive to the population, so as to reduce the tendency to migrate to other areas? The uneven economic development of regions (Sandu, 2022, p. 5), regional disparities signalled also by other research emphasizing the economic development of country, dynamic emigration, an uneven distribution of European economic benefits in the country (Fina *et al.*, 2021) require new studies in the sphere of employment and unemployment, but these could be correlated with the dependent population, the young inactive, the emigrant population as well as the immigrant population.

In this study I start from the premise that the level of the unemployment rate and, implicitly, of the employment rate, as well as the volume of employment in the sectors of the economy, by type of economic activity, can be indicators that allow analysing the attractiveness of the population (in terms of job opportunities) for a region. The correlation between sectors of the economy and the number of

employees, which is addressed regionally, reflects the capacity of the economic market (production, services, etc.) to meet the need for employment (Iacob & Măhărea, 2020, p. 201).

As a result, the present study aims to present the population structure by region (total population, labour resource and inactive population), the evolution of unemployment and employment indicators in the period 2020-2023, as well as the indicators: labour resource, and the number of employees in social economy activities, deepening the analysis for the South-Eastern region of Romania. The situation presented for the South-Eastern region of Romania will be compared with the situation of the other seven regions, focusing on the indicators: employment rate, unemployment rate and number of employees by sectors of economic activity.

The South-East region is itself characterized by uneven development, with the rural part in the north (Brăila, Galați, Tulcea) marked by socio-economic difficulties, with low human resources engaged in knowledge sectors (in Galați only 4.2%), low internal migration and high population dependency rates – 42.2% in Galați (Fina *et al.*, 2021, pp. 10-14). With a shrinking population and a high share of (growing) elderly population, the South-East region is facing new challenges in developing public policies to address this need (ADR Sud-Est, n.d., pp. 66-67) including in the occupational sphere.

2. Study Methodology

The study undertaken is of a fundamental type, exploring a social reality concerning one of the most important social and economic aspects, namely employment, based on official statistical records. The method used is statistical data analysis (document analysis). With its focus on the evolution in the South-East region of Romania, the study is of interest to specialists and social actors concerned with this part of the country.

The aim of the study is to identify the level of development of the South-East region by drawing a quantitative picture of unemployment and employment and by identifying the sectors of activity that have attracted labour force in the 4 years in the South-East Development Region. The research aims to make cross-regional comparisons of labour market dynamics: employed population, unemployed population, emigrant population, inactive population, volume of employees in sectors of the economy. The comparison with other regions will make it possible to point out the positive and negative elements recorded and possibly to indicate the needs for local and regional policies and action measures to be taken in the South-East region.

The objectives are: (1) Presentation of the demographic and occupational picture by development regions based on statistical indicators, thus highlighting their social problems. The indicators will be tracked: Resident population by development regions, labour resource, employed population, population able to work but included in education programs, ILO unemployment rate, emigrant population and immigrant population; (2) Analysis of the evolution of unemployment and employment in the South-East Region, then comparison with

other regions, based on statistical data; (3) Identification of the sectors that have attracted labour force, as an expression of the economic sectors that are developing in certain regions and comparing the development regions and identifying the occupational profile for the South-East Region.

The reference period is 2020-2023 and, as far as statistical data is available, also year 2024.

3. Data Presentation and Analysis

The regional approach in the study follows the structure officially adopted in Romania, which provides for eight development regions. According to the Romanian legislation, the development regions and the counties that compose them are (see Table 1):

Table 1. Development Regions in Romania

Crt. No.	Development Region	Component countries
1.	North-East Development Region	Bacău, Botoşani, Iaşi, Neamţ, Suceava, Vaslui
2.	South-East Development Region	Brăila, Buzău, Constanţa, Galaţi, Vrancea, Tulcea
3.	South-Muntenia Development Region	Argeş, Călăraşi, Dâmboviţa, Giurgiu, Ialomiţa, Prahova, Teleorman
4.	South-West Oltenia Development Region	Dolj, Gorj, Mehedinţi, Olt, Vâlcea
5.	West Development Region	Arad, Caraş-Severin, Hunedoara, Timiş
6.	North-West Development Region	Bihor, Bistriţa-Năsăud, Cluj, Sălaj, Satu Mare, Maramureş
7.	Centre Development Region	Alba, Braşov, Covasna, Harghita; Mureş, Sibiu
8.	Bucharest-Ilfov Development Region	Bucureşti, Ilfov

Source: table generated on the basis of information taken from Law no. 315 of 28 June 2004, updated – Annex

Figure 1 shows the map of the country with the geographical arrangement of the development regions mentioned above.



Figure 1. Map of the development regions in Romania, with the component counties
(source: <https://www.adrmuntenia.ro/planificare-regionala/static/2>)

3.1. The demographic and occupational picture of the development regions

The total population of Romania, decreasing from year to year, was 19296076 persons in 2020, 19140432 persons in 2021 and 19052694 persons in 2022. The inactive population, whose statistical values are presented in the Tempo online database only at the national level, without a breakdown by regions, show low values. The share of inactive persons who are not looking for work but are available for work recorded the following annual values: 1.6% in 2020, 1.5% in 2021, 1.4% in 2022 and 1.4% in 2023. Within this category, young people aged 15-24 have slightly higher shares. Those looking for work but not available for work have much lower shares, generally 0.1%. Only in 2020 did young people aged 15-24 have a share of 0.3%, with a share of 0.1 in the remaining reference years. (INS, Tempo online).

The demographic and occupational profile of the development regions in Romania, corresponding to the period 2020-2023, is reflected in table 2. It aims to include the population as available for labour (employed, unemployed and those in the process of vocational training – pupils and students) but also the emigrant and immigrant population, which contributes to the dynamics of the labour market.

The labour supply indicator, as defined by the National Institute of Statistics, includes the number of persons able to work (determined by subtracting the number of persons with permanent incapacity for work and the number of working-age pensioners not working from the total working-age population) and the number of persons in employment. We also included in the survey the ILO unemployment rate indicator, i.e. persons aged 15 to 74, unemployed in the reference week, available for work or self-employment and actively seeking paid work, willing to start work within two weeks of the reference week. Included in ILO unemployment are also persons who have found a job but are expected to start work no later than three months after the end of the reference week (INS, Tempo online).

Table 2. Indicators describing employment and unemployment by development region

Year	Indicators								
	Resident population on 1 January (number of persons)	Work resource (thousands of people)	Employment rate of the labour resource	Population able to work, with pupil or student status (number of persons)	ILO Unemployment Rate	Emigrant population (number of persons)		Immigrant population (number of persons)	
						Temporary	Permanent	Temporary	Permanent
North-East Development Region									
2020	3192890	1956.9	58.1	207070	3	30747	8492	23209	14558
2021	3172915	1958.7	49.3	199716	6.8	35691	13342	31043	23258
2022	3221997	1985.1	50.1	193897	6.6	33297	15551	46734	28446
2023	3224213			194627	5.9				15749
2024*					5.8				
South-East Development Region									
2020	2381307	1468.1	64.6	132062	7.4	24014	4467	18856	4940
2021	2356667	1461.5	57.3	128767	6	27875	6280	25220	6384
2022	2361692	1433.9	59.8	126949	7.3	26007	6352	37968	7955
2023	2353162			128148	9.1				2502
2024*					8.7				
South-Muntenia Development Region									
2020	2903211	1793.8	61.3	121828	5.9	29617	3000	22227	824
2021	2871136	1770.7	53.4	117083	7.7	34380	4207	29731	1087
2022	2854893	1721.9	56.5	113963	7.9	32075	3802	44759	1202
2023	2841139			114181	7.8				1397
2024*					7.3				
South-West Oltenia Development Region									
2020	1911414	1194.2	65.3	108222	5	19570	1948	15519	344
2021	1892961	1185.2	55.5	104042	9.2	22717	2518	20757	626
2022	1869602	1139.5	59.3	101451	8.8	21192	2337	31248	752
2023	1861680			100572	8.9				737
2024*					8.6				
West Development Region									
2020	1772820	1140.1	71.9	123748	4.6	17037	3976	13527	751
2021	1760422	1140	65.7	120743	3.5	19778	5560	18093	1302
2022	1669531	1038.3	73.8	119321	3.7	18451	4826	27239	1601
2023	1671460			120715	2.8				1664
2024*					2.8				
North-West Development Region									
2020	2548960	1625.7	73	192796	3.8	24295	3301	19318	886
2021	2538826	1630.5	65.4	187049	3.1	28201	4272	25839	1461
2022	2523601	1586.3	68.9	182002	3.1	26311	3866	38898	1766
2023	2531913			182907	3				1766

	3									
2024*										
	Centre Development Region									
2020	2315816	1448.7	72.4	142239	7.1	22145	3418	17766	881	
2021	2304136	1454.7	66.3	139135	5.1	25706	4450	23763	1443	
2022	2273401	1389.7	71.5	137901	5.4	23980	4144	35774	1636	
2023	2280856			138041	4.6				1926	
2024*					4.4					
	Bucharest-Ilfov Development Region									
2020	2327921	1589.3	89.4	262871	4.7	19393	5739	15097	9066	
2021	2332456	1600.1	88.5	260247	3.5	22513	7809	20196	14208	
2022	2268381	1691.7	86.3	254751	2.7	20998	7734	30404	11481	
2023	2290125			259504	2.8				4089	
2024*					2.2					

Source of statistical data: INS, Tempo online; * - data correspond to the first semester of 2024

Examining the data in Table 2, the decrease in the population is observed at a regional level, following the national trend. The exception is the North-East Development Region, which recorded population growth, from 3192890 people in 2020 to 3224213 people in 2023 (the surplus being 31323 people). This increase can be correlated with the increase in definitive immigration, which reached a number of 28447 people in 2022 (the highest number in the period 2020-2023).

The highest employment rate is recorded in the Bucharest-Ilfov Development Region, reaching 89.4% in 2020. In this region, the employment rate decreases in the following two years, without falling below the national level. As a result, this region offered the most employment opportunities. Complementarily, the unemployment rate has decreasing values (from 4.7% in 2020, to 2.8% in 2023, and 2.2% in 2024 in the first quarter). In the other regions, there is a revival in employment capacity in 2022 compared to the previous year. Moreover, in 2021, in all regions, the employment rate decreases and in 2022 it increases, except in the Bucharest-Ilfov Region. The highest employment growth was recorded in the West Region. The lowest increases in 2022 were recorded in the North-East Region (by 0.8 compared to 2021) and in the South-East Region (by 2.5 compared to 2021) (see Figure 2).

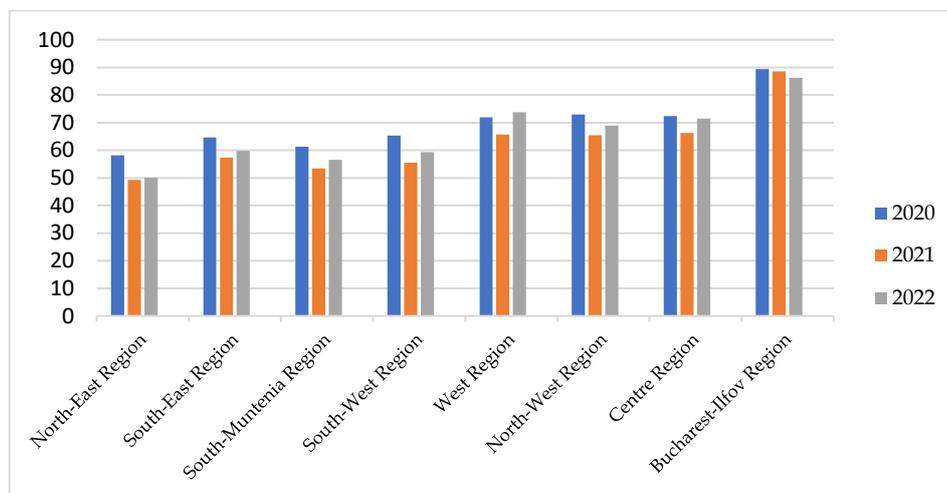


Figure 2. Employment dynamics in development regions (2020-2023)

Analysing the evolution of the unemployment rate it can be observed that it has high values in the South-West Oltenia Region, which from a rate of 5% in 2020 had a strong increase in 2021 up to 9.2% (in fact, the highest rate recorded after 2020 in the country), it decreased very slightly - 8.8% in 2022, 8.9% in year 2023 and 8.6% in year 2024 (first quarter), this in the context of an employment rate falling in year 2021 to 55.5% from 65.3% in year 2020. The South-West Oltenia Region is facing a labour market crisis, which is also followed by a low defined immigration of 2459 persons (the lowest number) which shows low attractiveness. Another region showing signs of a labour market in crisis is the South-East Region with an unemployment rate 9.1% in 2023, and with a history of fairly high unemployment in previous years of over 7% (except in 2021 when it was 6%). These two regions are joined by the South-Muntenia Region, with an unemployment rate of over 7% from 2021 to the present.

The regions that have been attractive for permanent immigrants are the North-East (with a total of 82011 persons immigrating between 2020-2023) and Bucharest-Ilfov (with a total of 38844 persons over the same period). The least targeted by immigrants are the regions of South-West Oltenia (as presented above) and South-Muntenia, with a total of 4510 definite immigrants in the period 2020-2023).

The number of temporary immigrants increased year on year in the period 2020-2022 in all eight regions of the country. The North-East Region being the most attractive (which can be explained by the Russian-Ukrainian armed conflict, which caused emigration), followed by the South-Muntenia Region, where there were 44759 temporary immigrants in 2022 alone (the highest for that region).

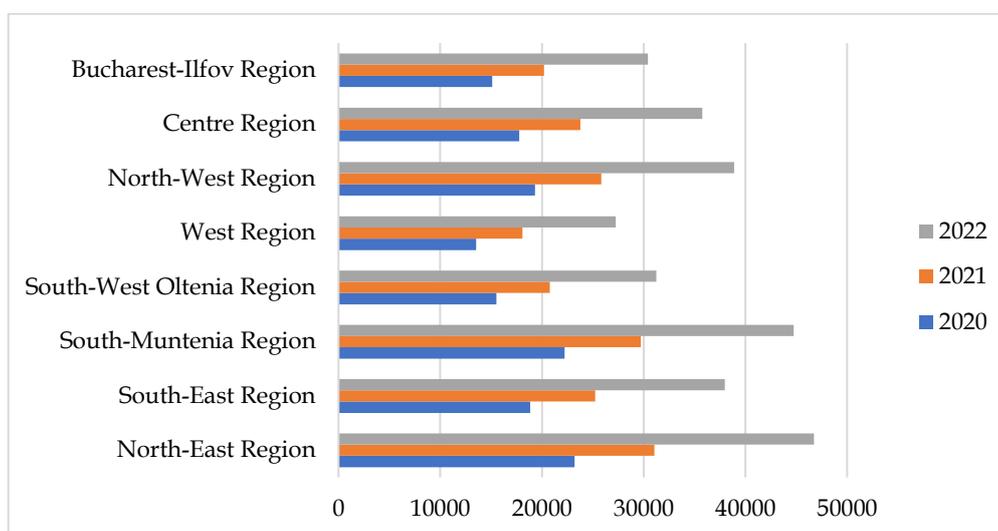


Figure 3. Immigrant population in Romania (2020-2022)

The West region has the lowest number of temporary immigrants. In fact, temporary emigration is also low in this region compared to the other regions, accompanied by one of the lowest unemployment rates (4.6 in 2020 and 2.8 in 2023) and a high employment rate (on average just over 70%).

3.2. Overview of employment and unemployment trends in the South-East Region

In order to analyse employment in the South-East Region, indicators related to age, residence (urban/rural) and gender were used. It can be observed that a smaller share of the young population is employed, which can also be explained by a large proportion of this category of people who are in the process of secondary school or university education. Looking at Table 3, it can be seen that in the period 2020-2023 in the South-East Region an average of 128982 persons in high school and university education was recorded. Compared to the average population of the analysed region in the same period of 2363207 persons, the population in education represents 5.4%, and compared to the labour resource in the period 2020-2022 (which was on average 1454500 persons) it represents 8.8%.

Table 3. Employment rate by age groups and residence averages in the South-East Region (2020-2023)

Age groups	Residence environments	2020 Percent	2021 Percent	2022 Percent	2023 Percent
15 - 24	Total	24.4	25.2	23.3	20.9
	Urban	19.5	22	21	14.2
	Rural	28.7	27.9	25.2	26.5
25 - 34	Total	71	69.6	68.6	64.6
	Urban	75.8	76.4	76.3	76.4

	Rural	65.6	62.2	60.5	54
35 - 54	<i>Total</i>	76.9	73.2	74.2	72.8
	Urban	79.8	79.3	80	80.9
	Rural	73.3	65.6	66.9	64.4
25 - 54	<i>Total</i>	75.4	72.2	72.8	70.8
	Urban	78.8	78.6	79.1	79.8
	Rural	71.2	64.7	65.2	61.6
55 - 64	<i>Total</i>	44.1	40.1	40	43.9
	Urban	40.9	42.5	42.4	48.6
	Rural	48.6	36.8	36.7	37.9
15 - 64	<i>Total</i>	60.5	58.1	58.2	57
	Urban	62	62.9	63.1	62.9
	Rural	58.7	52.6	52.5	50.9
15 and over	<i>Total</i>	47.2	44.4	44.3	43.1
	Urban	48	48.2	48.1	46.7
	Rural	46.3	40.1	39.9	39.3

Source: INS. Tempo online, AMIGO survey

The highest employment rate is among 35-54 year olds in urban areas; a downturn seems to have been experienced by 55-64 year olds, especially in 2020, with the most affected being those in urban areas (corresponding to the period of the Covid-19 pandemic), with the employment rate continuing to fall in the next two years; in 2023 it increases by 3.9 (compared to 2022). The same trend of decreased in years 2021 and 2022 was recorded for the other age groups, with the difference that the decline in the employment rate continued in 2023.

Young people (aged 15-25) in rural areas are more likely to be in employment than in urban areas, but the employment rate in urban areas exceeds that in rural areas as more people over 25 enter the labour market (some of them complete post-secondary or university education and become employed).

With regard to evolution of unemployment (registered unemployed), as shown in Table 4, there is, for the region as a whole, a decrease from 2020 to 2023, a decrease also found in the component counties, except for Tulcea county, where unemployment has increased, with a peak of 4% in 2022.

Table 4. Unemployment rate in the component counties of the South-East Region

<i>Counties in the South- East Region</i>	<i>Unemployment rate (registered unemployed)</i>							
	2020		2021		2022		2023 *	
	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
Brăila	4.5	4.1	3.6	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.4	3
<i>Total</i>	4.3		3.4		3.2		3.2	
Buzău	8.6	7	6	5.3	5.4	5.1	5.6	5.3
<i>Total</i>	7.9		5.7		5.3		5.5	
Constanța	2.1	4	1.6	3.4	1.5	3.3	1.4	3.4
<i>Total</i>	3		2.4		2.3		2.2	

Galați	6.7	6.2	6.4	6.4	6	6.1	5.4	4.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>6.5</i>		<i>6.4</i>		<i>6</i>		<i>5.2</i>	
Tulcea	3	3.1	3	3.3	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>3</i>		<i>3.1</i>		<i>4</i>		<i>3.3</i>	
Vrancea	4.5	3.9	4.9	4.3	4.5	4.1	2.5	2.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>4.2</i>		<i>4.6</i>		<i>4.3</i>		<i>2.5</i>	
<i>South-East</i>	<i>4.8</i>	<i>4.9</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4.4</i>	<i>3.7</i>	<i>4.3</i>	<i>3.4</i>	<i>3.8</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>4.8</i>		<i>4.2</i>		<i>4</i>		<i>3.6</i>	

Source: INS - Tempo online. Note: * - data recorded at the end of December 2023

Buzău and Galați have the highest unemployment rates in the period analysed, and the pace of decline is slower in Galați. The gender distribution of the unemployed shows that men are more affected. The exception counties are Constanța, where women are unemployed in a higher share, and Tulcea where in 2023 the unemployment rate for women was 0.2 higher than for men. To explain this, it is necessary to correlate employment and unemployment with the evolution of the sectors of the economy in each county and with immigration. Constanța has the lowest unemployment rates and, as will be seen below, higher labour absorption capacity.

3.3. Sectors of the economy that have attracted labour

The NSI statistical data on the average number of employees included in activities of the national economy, selected for the South-East Region from the

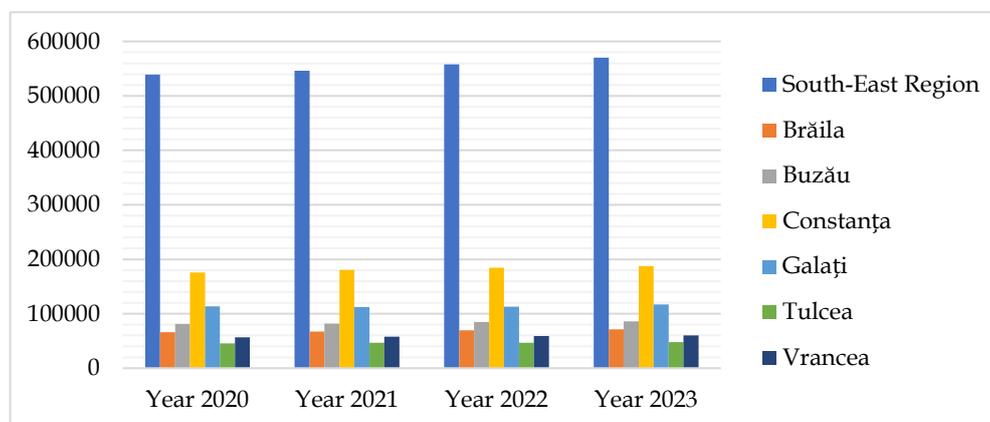


Figure 4. Distribution of employees in the South-East Region (source: Graph generated based on INS statistical data, Tempo online)

Tempo online database are presented in Table 5. A first picture of the distribution of employees in the counties of the South-East Region can be seen in Figure 4. The total number of employees in the South-East Region in 2020 was 5031767 persons, increasing by 2023 to 5364938 persons (an increase of 333171 persons).

This number of employed persons corresponds to an employment rate, by region, of 64.6% in 2020 (see Table 4). Although the number of employed persons increased from 2020 to 2023, the employment rate fell to 57.3% in 2021, and then rose to 59.8% in 2023, but still below the rate in 2020. If we look at the headcount, we see that it increased in 2022 compared to 2021 (see Table 2). In the evolution of the employment rate by county, we notice some particularities. If Brăila, Buzău, Constanța, Tulcea and Galați face the same trend (the employment rate decreases in 2021 and increases in the following year) in Vrancea the employment rate continues to decrease in 2022. The best recovery is in Constanța, which in 2022 has an employment rate of 66.8%, higher than in 2020, which was 66.5%.

Table 5. Employment rates in the counties of the South-East Region (2020-2022)

Counties of the south-east region	Year		
	2020	2021	2022
	<i>Percent</i>		
Brăila	67.6	60.9	64.4
Buzău	64.2	55.1	57.8
Constanța	66.5	61.6	66.8
Galați	56.3	50	52
Tulcea	67.7	59.9	61.2
Vrancea	69.3	57.5	55.2
<i>Total region</i>	<i>64.6</i>	<i>57.3</i>	<i>59.8</i>

Source: INS, Tempo online

After 2020, the labour absorption capacity of the sector of the economy in south-eastern Romania has increased. The sectors of the developed economy with a high capacity to absorb the workforce, in the period 2020-2023, were: manufacturing, trade (wholesale and retail) and construction. Also noteworthy is the high presence of employees in the health and social care sector (see Figure 5 and statistics in Table 6).

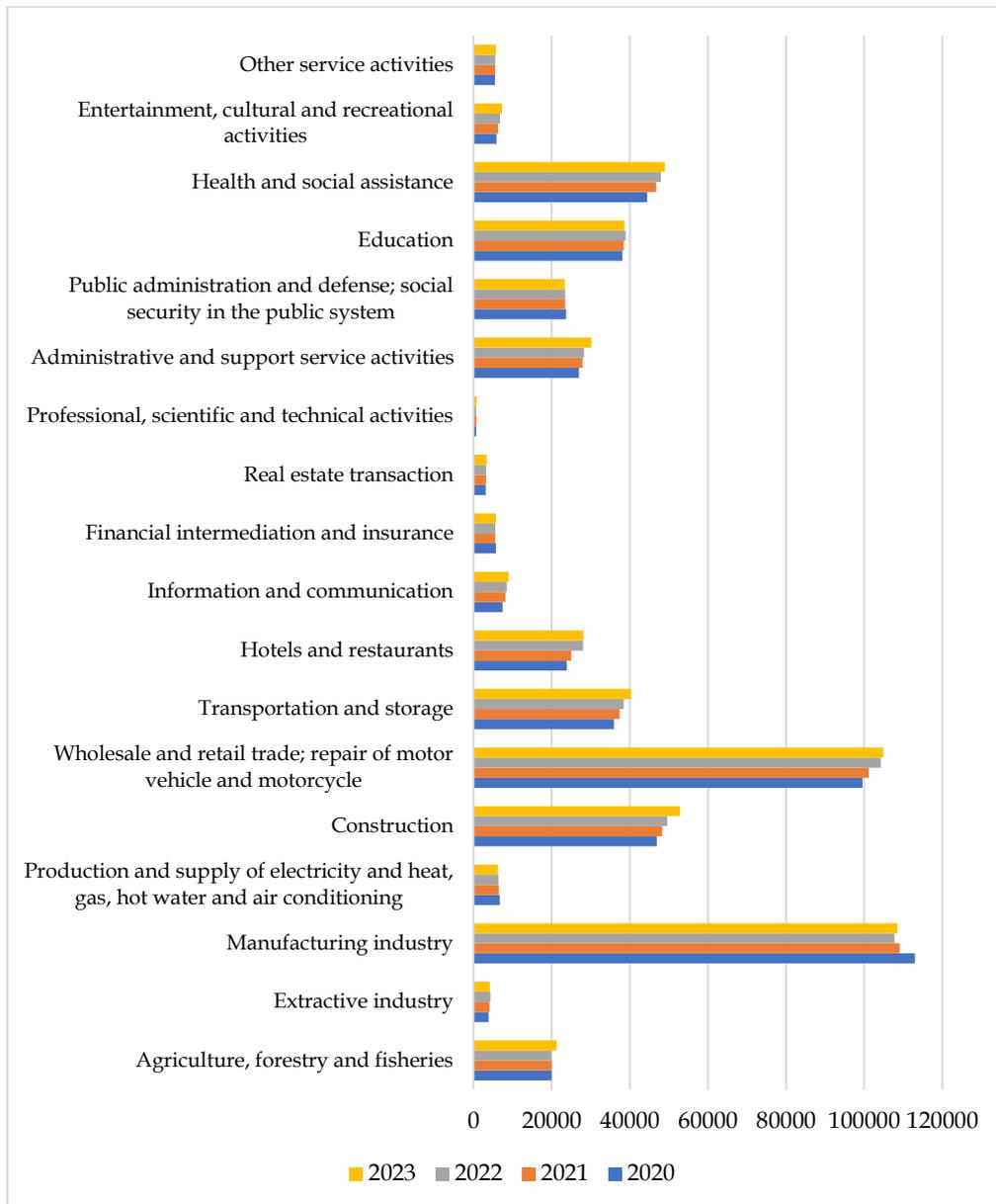


Figure 5. Evolution of the number of employees by activities of the national economy, South-East Region, 2020-2023 (*graph generated based on INS data, Tempo online*)

It can also be observed that while the pace of hiring new employees slowed down in manufacturing from 2020 to 2023, the number of employees in trade and health and social care increased annually. Other industries that have attracted labour over the last four years, as can be seen in Figure 5 but also in Table 6 are: administrative and support services (from 26967 employees in 2020 to 30143 employees in 2023), hotels and restaurants (from 23889 in 2020 to 28106 in 2023), transportation and storage (with an increase of 4449 employees), and

construction is also absorbing labour force in an increasing trend (from 46938 employees to 52845 employees in 2023). In agriculture, forestry and fishing, the number of employees increased from 19982 in 2020 to 21258 in 2023, an increase of 1276 persons. Buzău County has the highest number of employees in this sector, i.e. 4458, followed closely by Brăila County with 4433 employees.

Table 6. Number of employees by sectors of the national economy, South-East Region, 2020-2023

<i>Activities of the national economy (CAEN Rev.2)</i>	<i>Year</i>			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
	<i>Number of employees</i>			
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	19982	20024	19932	21258
Extractive industry	3908	4140	4348	4175
Manufacturing industry	113021	109084	107751	108525
Production and supply of electricity and heat, gas, hot water and air conditioning	6731	6464	6361	6274
Construction	46938	48263	49643	52845
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	99546	101181	104249	104883
Transport and storage	35907	37367	38455	40356
Hotels and restaurants	23889	25030	28052	28106
Information and communications	7424	8202	8480	9019
Financial intermediation and insurance	5742	5611	5623	5711
Real estate transactions	3119	3188	3258	3357
Professional, scientific and technical activities. Research and development	734	755	713	748
Administrative services activities and support services activities	26967	27938	28286	30143
Public Administration and Defense; social security in the public system	23724	23497	23505	23383
Education	38096	38467	38947	38632
Health and social assistance	44459	46729	47990	48924
Entertainment, cultural and recreational activities	5908	6355	6767	7272
Other service activities	5492	5572	5620	5729

Source: INS, Tempo online

	766.8	99.6	83.4	96.6	95.7	85.7	179.4	72	54.4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	1303	172.1	162.6	164.3	143.9	151.7	270.6	106.2	131.6
Transport and storage	505.4	74.6	64	54.9	64.5	70.8	85.3	39.4	51.9
Hotels and restaurants	233.4	31.9	36.3	27.5	29.7	22.8	44.3	18.5	22.4
Information and Communications	265.5	40.9	22.7	25.3	11	10.3	119.5	8.2	27.6
Financial intermediation and insurance	101.7	12.8	7	7.1	6.6	7.3	48.9	5.6	6.4
Real estate transactions	35.2	3.6	5.2	3.5	3.8	4	9.2	2.5	3.4
Professional, scientific and technical activities	232.9	22	22.1	19.3	17.9	21.2	99.7	13.3	17.4
Administrative services activities and support services activities	345.5	33.2	33.9	25.7	30.3	34.9	139.9	22	25.6
Public Administration and Defense; social security in the public system	213.4	22.6	22.3	27.7	24.3	26.7	51.3	20.7	17.8
Education	389.7	56.5	51.8	65	41.3	45	59.1	34.7	36.3
Health and Social assistance	497.2	68.6	65.2	76.3	54.6	55.7	81.6	44.8	50.4
Entertainment, cultural and recreational activities	83.3	9.9	9.4	8.1	7.7	7.7	29.2	5.2	6.1
Other service activities	142.2	19	15.2	17	18.7	13	35	8.6	15.7
Total		North- West	Center	North- East	South- East	South Muntenia	Bucharest - Ilfov	South- West Oltenia	West

thousands of people

Source: INS, Tempo online

It is also noted that in the professional, scientific and technical activities sector, the number of employees is the lowest in the South-East Region in 2022, given that there are two university centres with tradition (Galați and Constanța).

4. Conclusions

The most attractive regions in terms of employment are North-West (Bihar, Bistrița-Năsăud, Cluj, Sălaj, Satu Mare, Maramureș) and Bucharest-Ilfov. From the perspective of the population employed in sectors of economy, the South-East

Region presents the profile of an undeveloped region, which places it in the second half of ranking.

The Bucharest-Ilfov region is the most attractive area, offering employment opportunities, with highest employment rate (over 86% of the labour force) and the lowest unemployment rate. At the opposite pole is the North-East Region, with low employment rates (in 2022 it will be 50.1), an unemployment rate of 6.6% and the most active migration (the highest number of permanent and temporary immigrants as well as permanent and temporary emigrants). The South-East Development Region seems to show sign of revival in 2022 and 2023 in the sphere of employment, but at the same time it also shows an increase in the unemployment rate. This latter aspect leads us to consider the number of temporary and permanent immigrants increasing in 2020-2023, which calls for an analysis of this population, its needs, expectations, lifestyle, etc. and the adoption of social and economic measures.

The analysis of employment in the South-East Region shows a higher percentage of rural employment among the population aged 15-24, which leads us to assume that they do not continue their studies, either as a result of limited material resources or limited training opportunities (few vocational or secondary schools in rural areas); the option of young people to choose employment in order to have their own financial resources at the expense of continuing their education cannot be ignored. The long-term risk is that this section of the population will remain unskilled or low-skilled, which affects their quality of life.

The results of the study show that within the South-East Region the most attractive county is Constanța county, and local policies are needed to revitalize the other counties. Compared to the other development regions in the country, the South-East Region needs regional policies and measures that target not only social protection but especially economic measures (support for entrepreneurship, education and support for accessing European funds, development of alternative services, including private ones, to provide services for the dependent population, given the ageing population, etc.), but also investment in other areas (culture, tourism, research, innovation, etc.) that can contribute to development, as well as support for the creative arts, so as to increase the level of attractiveness for the South-East Development Region.

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