

## ROMANIAN DIASPORA IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION IN LIGHT OF THE 2010 AND 2020 POPULATION CENSUSES

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### ABSTRACT

*Among the 27 member states of the European Union, Romania has the second largest kin-minority in the Russian Federation. Between the 2010 and 2020 censuses, the Romanian diaspora in Russia recorded the largest quantitative decrease after World War II, making it increasingly difficult to organize it and preserve its cultural-linguistic identity, given the absence of any important support from the Romanian kin-state. Hardly known in their ethnic homeland, Romanians in Russia do not have national institutions (schools teaching in Romanian, churches, press), being subjected to an intense process of acculturation and denationalization, gradually melting into the Russian mass or preferring to emigrate abroad.*

**Keywords:** Russia, Romanian diaspora, demography, Romanian language, assimilation.

### HISTORICAL ASPECTS

The Romanian diaspora within the current Russian Federation was formed between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries from successive waves including nobles and courtiers, politicians, clergy and scientists, Cossacks, soldiers (hussars and pandors), settlers, deportees and economic migrants.

This diaspora has its beginnings in 1483, when the daughter of the Prince of Moldavia Stephen the Great, Elena (1464–1505)<sup>22</sup>, accompanied by a large retinue of courtiers, arrives in Moscow to marry Prince Ivan the Younger, the heir son of the great Prince of Moscow Ivan III. Elena's suite, surnamed Voloshanka [the Romanian], also included her supposed half-brother, Ioan Vecinul/Sused [the Neighbour], who had two sons, Ioan Voloh [the Romanian] and Vasili Rahman [the Gentle One], from whom descended, as the famous composer Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943) constantly claimed<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Евгений Владимирович Пчелов, *Российские дворяне молдавского происхождения*, Москва, Гербовед, 2006, с. 147 [Eugeny Vladimirovich Pchelov, *Russian nobles of Moldavian origin*, Moscow, Gerboved, 2006, p. 147].

<sup>23</sup> Василенко Николай Прокофьевич, *Исторические сведения о роде дворян Рахманиновых (С прил. герба и родослов. табл.)*, Киев, тип. Г. Т. Корчак-Новицкого, 1895 [Vasilenko Nikolai Prokofievich, *Historical information about the noble race Rachmaninoff (With coat of arms and genealogical tables in annex)*, Kiev, Korchak-Novitsky Publishing House, 1895].

A personality of Romanian origin, settled in Russia in 1671, pioneer in Russian culture and diplomacy, was Nicolae Milescu-Spatar (1636–1708)<sup>24</sup>, Romanian scholar, translator, traveler and geographer, former representative of the Principality of Moldavia in the Ottoman Empire (1660–1664), envoy of Moldavia in Berlin and Stockholm, but also the first ambassador of Russia to China and educator and adviser to Tsar Peter I Romanov<sup>25</sup>. One of Nicolae Milescu-Spatar's descendants was Ilya Mechnikov, name translated into Russian after Spatar (1845–1916), Russian microbiologist and immunologist with Romanian roots, winner of the Nobel Prize in Medicine (1908):

“On his paternal line, I. I. Mechnikov is a nobleman, more precisely a Romanian boyar. The founder of his nation, like the founders of many other nations in Russia, was a foreigner. Among the Mecinikovs this was the Romanian Nicolae Spataru (1635/36–1708/09), who was born in Milesti (on the territory of present-day Romania) and studied in Padua (Italy)”<sup>26</sup>.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, several thousand Romanians from the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia and even from Transylvania and Banat settled in Russia, joining the Zaporozhian Cossack army, in which they often formed Romanian companies (called *rota*)<sup>27</sup>. Many of them held high leadership positions, of which the most famous is Danila Apostol (1654–1734)<sup>28</sup>, hetman of Ukraine (1727–1734), descendant of the Romanian noble families Apostol from Moldova and Catargiu from Wallachia. An important Romanian ethnic spread occurred between the Dniester and Dnieper, especially under the rule of the Moldavian Prince:

“Following the death of Jure Khmelnytskyi, the Ukrainian Hetmanate under suzerainty of the Sublime Porte, largely inhabited by Romanians; is entrusted to Duca Vodă, Prince of Moldavia, in 1681. The border of Moldavia moved from the Dniester to the Dnieper, Moldavians crossed the Dniester unhindered, and Duca Vodă is awarded the title ‘Gospodar zemli Moldavskoy i zemli Ukrainskoy’ (The Lord of the Land of Moldavia and Ukraine)”<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Евгений Владимирович Пчелов [Eugeny Vladimirovich Pchelov], *quoted work*, p. 148.

<sup>25</sup> Ion Neculce, *O samă de cuvinte. Letopisețul Țării Moldovei [A set of words. Chronicle of Moldova]*, Bucharest, 1986, pp. 31–33.

<sup>26</sup> «По отцовской линии И.И. Мечников – дворянин, а точнее, румынский боярин. Основателем его рода, как и многих других дворянских родов России, был иностранец. В роду Мечниковых это был румын Николай Спафарий (1635/36–1708/09), родившийся в г. Милешты, (территория современной Румынии) и получивший образование в Падуе (Италия)», in Российская академия наук, Российские нобелевские лауреаты: Илья Ильич Мечников, Москва, Архивы Российской академии наук, с. 4 [Russian Academy of Sciences, *Russian Nobel Laureates: Ilya Ilyich Mechnikov*, Moscow, Archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences, n. d., p. 4].

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 84.

<sup>28</sup> Nichita P. Smochină, *Danila Apostol-hetman of Ukraine [Dănilă Apostol-hatmanul Ucrainei]*, Bucharest, Romanian Book Publishing House, 1929, p. 18.

<sup>29</sup> „După moartea lui Jure Hmelnițki, hătmănia Ucrainei de sub suzeranitatea Turciei, locuită în mare parte de români, este încredințată Domnului Moldovei Duca Vidă, la 1681. Granița Moldovei este strămutată de la Nistru la Nipru; moldovenii circulau de pe un mal pe altul al Nistrului fără dificultăți, iar Duca Vodă primește noua titulatură de «Gospodar zemli Moldavskoi i zemli Ukainskoi» (Domnul Țării Moldovei și al Ucrainei)”, in Anton Golopenția, *Români de la Est de Bug [Romanians East of the Bug River]*, Vol. II, Bucharest, Encyclopedic Publishing House, 2006, p. 573.

An important wave of Romanians in Russia was recorded in 1711, when the Prince of Moldavia Dimitrie Cantemir (1673–1723), great Romanian scholar, encyclopedist, ethnographer, geographer, philosopher, historian, linguist, musicologist, composer and polyglot, member of the Berlin Academy of Sciences, retired to Russia, initially to Kharkov, and then near Moscow, on an estate that would be called Dimitrievka. Prince Dimitrie Cantemir was accompanied to Russia by “over 4.000 male and female souls” by

“Romanian people who today for the Christian faith are forced to leave their homeland and come to the Russian kingdom”<sup>30</sup>.

as Prince Dimitrie Cantemir himself writes in a report to Tsar Peter the Great on July 27, 1711. Among the over 4.000 Romanians who left for Russia were 448 boyars<sup>31</sup> and officials<sup>32</sup>.

The military campaign of Tsar Peter I Romanov in 1711 in Moldavia was also attended by 6 Romanian regiments from Russia, called *Horongva Voloha* [Wallachian flags], reorganized in 1707 and placed under the command of colonel Filip Apostol-Chigheci, successor of the Romanian hetman Danila Apostol. These military units made up of Romanian fighters continued the tradition of the older Romanian regiments from the army of Rzeczpospolita, whose existence is documented in the seventeenth century. These would later form the basis for the famous regiments of Romanian hussars and pandors (called *Volochs*) of the Russian army. For example, in 1738, the Moldo-Wallachian Hussar Regiment of 800 cavalymen was established within the Russian army, headed by Constantin Cantemir<sup>33</sup>, son of Prince Antioh Cantemir. In the eighteenth century, Romanian hussar regiments from the Russian army participated in the Russian-Turkish (1735–1739) and Russian-Swedish (1741–1743) wars, in the raid on Berlin (1760), as well as in military raids in Crimea.

The Romanian element was colonized in Russia with the abolition of serfdom (1861) and after the Circassian genocide (1864). Thus, in the first half of the nineteenth century, several thousand Romanian settlers from Bessarabia were displaced to the southern governorate of Chernomorskaya and the Kuban region (today in Krasnodar Krai) in the North Caucasus, where they founded several localities: Moldovanskoe, Mekerstuk, Solonets, Thamaha, Shabanovskoe, Moldovanovka, Subsân, Moldovka, Bujor (today a suburb of Sochi) and others<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> Ștefan Ciobanu, *Dimitrie Cantemir în Rusia [Dimitrie Cantemir in Russia]*, Bucharest, Romanian Academy-Memoirs of the Literary Section, Ser. III, Vol. II, Mem. 5, 1924, p. 86.

<sup>31</sup> Among the well-known boyar families that left traces in Russian history were: Abaza, Aga, Bănaru, Bantâș, Banul, Bragă, Buhuș, Cămăraș, Caraiman-Culicovschi, Cârțan, Ciutea, Codreanu, Dubaș, Gafencu, Hâncu, Hrisescul, Merescu, Mogâldea, Moțoc, Mutul, Neguriță, Nour, Pascalii, Rameliș, Rugină, Nacul, Scherlet, Spătarul, Sulger, Ursuliță, Vătav, Zărul etc.

<sup>32</sup> Ștefan Ciobanu, *quoted work*, p. 86.

<sup>33</sup> Christoff Herman Mannstein, *Beytrag zur Geschichte Russlands vom Jahr 1727 bis 1744 [Contribution to the history of Russia from 1727 to 1744]*, Hamburg and Bremen, 1771, p. 350.

<sup>34</sup> Владимир Фёдорович Шишмарёв, *Романские поселения на юге России*, Ленинград, Наука, 1975, с. 91 [Vladimir Fyodorovich Shishmariov, *Romanesque settlements in southern Russia [Roman settlements in southern Russia]*, Leningrad, Nauka Publishing House, 1975, p. 91].

Another wave of Romanian colonization in Russia took place after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, in which Romanians from Bessarabia had a massive participation<sup>35</sup>. Thus, between 1906 and 1913, in the Primorsky Krai of the Far East, Romanians founded near Vladivostok localities such as: Moldovanovka, Aur, Chișinău (Kishiniovka), Logănești, Orheevka, Vălcineț, Dunărea (Dunaievka), Zâmbreni, Logăneștii Noi, Novo-Bessarabka, Moldovan-derevnia, Furmanovo, Olga and others<sup>36</sup>. Only in 1907 in Primorye county were colonized over 1.000 Romanian families from Bessarabia. During the same period, other groups of Romanians (150 + 60 families) founded the villages of Kutuzovka and Larga in Omsk Governorate in Siberia<sup>37</sup>.

Between 1921 and 1940 a significant number of Romanians from the Dniester-Bug interfluvium, known as Transnistria, were deported on political and ideological grounds to the GULAG in Siberia and other remote places. The deportations of Romanians to Siberia continued in 1940 and after 1944 from the territories of Romania occupied by the USSR (Bessarabia, Herta County and Northern Bukovina).

Directed migration was an important element of the Soviet policy aimed at the mixing of nations and the formation of the *new man* and the *Soviet people*. Only in August of the first year of the Soviet occupation, the **General Directorate of Labor Reserves of the Moldavian SSR**<sup>38</sup> recruited 36.356 people for work in the Eastern regions of the USSR<sup>39</sup>. After the Second World War and until the collapse of the USSR, tens of thousands of Romanians from the Moldavian SSR and Ukrainian SSR were lured to well-paid work in remote areas of the Urals, the Far North, Siberia, and the Far East. In the period 1948–1954, the **General Office of the Moldavian Republic for the organized recruitment of workers**<sup>40</sup> sent 66.000 people to the remote regions of the USSR, to which were added about 10.000 families (about 40.000 people), and in the period 1954–1966, the **General Directorate for Displacement and organized Recruitment of workforce under the Soviet of Ministers of the Moldavian SSR**<sup>41</sup> sent to the remote soviet regions another 62.000 people and 13.000 families (about 50.000 people)<sup>42</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> Anatol Leșcu, *Românii basarabeni în istoria militară a Rusiei de la războaiele din Caucaz la Războiul Civil [Bessarabian Romanians in the military history of Russia from the Caucasus wars to the Civil War]*, Bucharest, Military Publishing House, 2009, p. 59.

<sup>36</sup> Rubin Udler, „Unele totaluri ale expediției dialectologice în ținutul Primorsk și regiunea Omsk din R.S.F.S.R., R.S.S. Kirghiză și R.S.S. Kazahă” [“Some totals of the dialectological expedition in Primorsk Krai and Omsk region of the SFSR, Kyrgyz SSR and Kazakh SSR”], in *Limba și literatura moldovenească*, Chișinău, No. 1/1964, pp. 64–68.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>38</sup> In russian: Главное управление трудовых резервов Молдавской ССР.

<sup>39</sup> Elena Șișcanu, *Regimul totalitar-bolșevic în RSS Moldovenească (1940–1952) [The totalitarian-bolshevik regime in the Moldavian SSR (1940–1952)]*, Chișinău, Civitas Publishing House, 1997.

<sup>40</sup> In russian: Молдавская Республиканская контора по организованному набору рабочих.

<sup>41</sup> In russian: Главное управление по переселению и организованному набору рабочих при Совете Министров МССР.

<sup>42</sup> National Archive of the Republic of Moldova, d. 102, f. 93; d. 131, ff. 124–125.

The flow of Romanian economic migrants from Moldova and Ukraine continued after 1991, reaching its peak in 2016, when, besides Russian citizens of Romanian origin (about 160.000), according to Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin:

“700.000 Moldovans work as economic migrants here, in the Russian Federation”<sup>43</sup>.

In recent years, the number of economic migrants from the Republic of Moldova to Russia has registered a negative trend. Between 2014 and 2022, this number decreased 7.3 times and was, according to data provided by Federal Migration Service and General Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation<sup>44</sup>, as follows:

Date	04.05. 2014	01.05. 2016	01.05. 2018	01.05. 2019	01.05. 2020	01.05. 2021	01.05. 2022 <sup>45</sup>
Migrants from RM	562.939	489.694	376.079	320.115	270.082	132.875	76.645
Percentage difference		– 13%	– 23%	– 14.88%	– 15.62%	– 50.8%	– 42.3%

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSISTANCE TO KIN-MINORITIES

The bilateral legal framework between Romania and the Russian Federation on minorities is defined by: a) *the Treaty on friendly relations and cooperation between Romania and the Russian Federation*<sup>46</sup>, signed in Moscow on July 4, 2003, and b) *the Agreement between the Government of Romania and the Government of the Russian Federation on cooperation in the field of culture, science and education*<sup>47</sup>, signed in Moscow, on September 27, 1993.

The 2003 Treaty provides that the signatory parties respect, ensure and protect, under conditions of full equality before the law, without any discrimination, the ethnic,

<sup>43</sup> Дмитрий Рогозин, «700 тысяч молдаван работают в России, а Молдавия подписывает соглашение с Евросоюзом», 2 февраля 2017 г., в Правда, Доступно по адресу: <http://www.pravda.ru/news/world/formerussr/moldova/03-07-2014/1214642moldavia0/>, Доступно 31 апреля 2024 года [Dmitry Rogozin, “700 thousand Moldovans work in Russia, while Moldova signs an agreement with the European Union”, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, in *Pravda*, Available at: <http://www.pravda.ru/news/world/formerussr/moldova/03072014/1214642moldavia0/>, Accessed on: April 31, 2024].

<sup>44</sup> Юлия Флоринская и Никита Мкртчян, «Миграция: основные тенденции в январе-феврале 2021 года», в *Мониторинге экономических перспектив России. Тенденции и вызовы социально – экономического развития*, Москва, № 10/2021, сс. 1–13 [Yulia Florinskaya and Nikita Mkrтчyan, “Migration: main trends in January–February 2021”, in *Monitoring of Russia’s Economic Outlook. Trends and Challenges of Socio-Economic Development*, Moscow, No. 10/2021, pp. 13–16].

<sup>45</sup> Павел Трунин и др., «Мониторинг перспектив развития экономики России. Тенденции и вызовы социально-экономического развития», в *Мониторинг перспектив развития экономики России. Тенденции и вызовы социально-экономического развития*, Москва, № 7/2022, с. 23 [Pavel Trunin et al., “Monitoring of Russia’s Economic Outlook. Trends and Challenges of Socio-economic Development”, in *Monitoring of Russia’s Economic Outlook. Trends and Challenges of Socio-Economic Development*, Moscow, No. 7/2022, p. 23].

<sup>46</sup> \*\*\* *Official Monitor of Romania*, No. 194 of March 4, 2004.

<sup>47</sup> \*\*\* *Official Monitor of Romania*, No. 364 of December 29, 1994.

cultural, linguistic and religious identity of persons living in Romania who consider themselves, according to their origin, to belong to the Russian minority and, respectively, **to persons living in the Russian Federation who consider themselves, according to their origin, as belonging to the Romanian minority, irrespective of the appellation used in respect of them in society and of the regions in which they live** in the territory of each Contracting Party. The contracting parties also undertook to apply UN, OSCE and Council of Europe norms and standards in the field of rights belonging to national minorities<sup>48</sup>.

The Romanian-Russian Intergovernmental Agreement of 1993 stipulates, inter alia, that each of the parties will make efforts to popularize the cultural and art values of the other side, that they will hold talks on opening, on a reciprocal basis, cultural centers<sup>49</sup> and that they will encourage the **study and dissemination of the Romanian language in Russia**<sup>50</sup> and Russian language in Romania. The parties also pledged to support the creation of favorable conditions for the preservation of their mother tongue, culture and national traditions by citizens of Romanian and Russian origin, respectively, permanently residing on their territory.

The internal legal framework of the Russian Federation in the field of minorities is defined in particular by the *Federal Law on National Cultural Autonomy*, an extremely permissive law favorable to the preservation and development of national, linguistic and cultural identity of Russian citizens of various ethnicities. Unfortunately, so far, no Romanian national-cultural autonomy has been organized and registered in the Russian Federation using its own ethnonym, that of Romanians. This is reparable and should be the subject of constant concern of the Romanian authorities.

## QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF POPULATION CENSUS RESULTS

In all general censuses of the Soviet population in the postwar period, Romanians were included in the category of “most numerous nationalities”. They were registered with various names, especially with the Romanian infranym *Moldoveni*, but also with the ethnonym *Romanians*, as well as with various crimes and exonyms. This is not an exception, given that in the Russian Federation the practice of subordinating various ethnic names (infranym, exonyms, glossonyms) to an ethnonym considered basic is valid. This practice is also valid in the case of the majority ethnicity, whose representatives were registered under various names<sup>51</sup>, subordinated to the ethnonym Russians.

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<sup>48</sup> Article 11 of the Treaty.

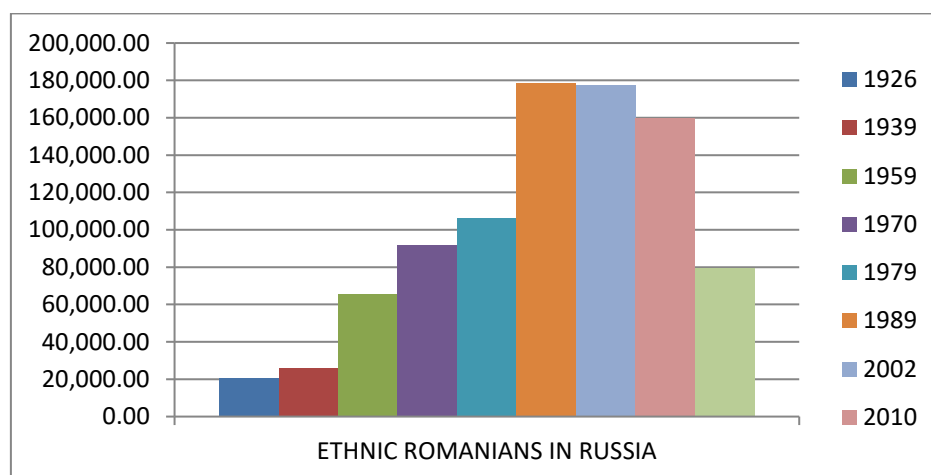
<sup>49</sup> Article 9 of the Agreement.

<sup>50</sup> Article 18 of the Agreement.

<sup>51</sup> Russians, burtasy, vedrussians, velikorussians, goryuns, gorens, gurans, doukhobors, dyrniks, tundra peasants, indigirs, karyms, kerzhaks, kolymchans, krasnovers, khulugurs, lipovans, molokans, nuucha, old inhabitants of the Obi, Russian-Ustians, family, Siberians, skobars, smolyaks, starovers,

The dynamics of the Romanian diaspora in the Russian Federation, according to census data in the last century, was as follows:

Year	1926	1939	1959	1970	1979	1989	2002	2010	2020
Romanians	20.525	26.139	65.614	91.631	105.979	178.667	177.683	159.601	79.379



In the 2020 population census of the Russian Federation, 79,379 ethnic Romanians were certified<sup>52</sup>. They were registered with both the ethnonym *Romanians* (1,850) and the Romanian infranym *Moldovans* (77,419), *Moldavians* (4), *Basarabi* (48), *Bessarabians* (38), as well as with the exonyms *Vlachs* (13) and *Volofi* (7). The gender structure of the Romanian diaspora in Russia was as follows in 2020: 43,232 men (representing 54.59%) and 36,036 women (representing 45.4%)<sup>53</sup>. Depending on the living environment, the distribution was in 2020: urban 53,022 people (representing

tyutnars, choldons, cheldons, yakuts, cossacks, pomors, ust'-tsil'mans. In Russian: русские, бургасы, ведрусы, великороссы, горюны, горяне, гураны, духоборы, дырники, затундренные крестьяне, индигирцы, карымы, кержаки, колымчане, красноверцы, кулугуры, липоване, молукане, нуукча, обские старожилы, русско-устыинцы, семейские, сибиряки, скобари, смоляки, старoverы, тютняры, чалдоны, челдоны, якутяне, казаки, поморы, усть-цилемы.

<sup>52</sup> Федеральной службе государственной статистики (Росстат), «Национальный состав и знание языков. Таблица 1. Национальный состав населения», в *Итоги Всероссийской переписи населения-2020*, том 5, Доступно по адресу: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Том5\\_Nacionalnyj\\_sostav\\_i\\_vladienie\\_yazykami](https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Том5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladienie_yazykami), Доступно апреля 31 2024 года [Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), "National composition and knowledge of languages. Table 1. National composition of the population", in *All-Russian population census totals-2020*, Vol. 5, Available at: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Том5\\_Nacionalnyj\\_sostav\\_i\\_vladienie\\_yazykami](https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Том5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladienie_yazykami), Accessed on: April 31, 2024].

<sup>53</sup> *Ibidem*.

66.81%) and rural 26.337 people (representing 33.18%)<sup>54</sup>. Rosstat does not provide data on gender or living environment for 20 people (13 Vlachs and 7 Volofs).

Having an appreciable age and being dispersed in a huge space, the Romanian diaspora population in the Russian Federation was in a continuous and drastic decline (– 50.27%) compared to the 2010 census, when 159.601 Romanians were registered.

The decrease in the number of ethnic Romanians in the Russian Federation occurred in the context of the spectacular increase, on the occasion of the last two censuses, of the number of people whose questionnaire forms did not indicate nationality. Thus, the 2002 census did not indicate the nationality of 1.460.751 persons, compared with 5.629.429 persons in 2010 and 16.594.759 persons in the 2020 census. This calls into question the accuracy of the results of the latest census in Russia. The population census of the Russian Federation, round 2020, was actually held in October – November 2021, in the middle of the pandemic, and had a number of differences from the censuses of 2002 and 2010. For at least the 6th citizen, the data was obtained from administrative sources.

However, the Romanian national minority in Russia was and maintained itself numerically in second place among those related to a Member State of the European Union.

No.	EU member state	Size of kin-minority 2010	Size of kin-minority 2020
1	Germany	394.138	195.256
2	Romania	159.601	79.379
3	Greece	85.640	53.972
4	Poland	47.125	22.024
5	Lithuania	31.377	13.230
6	Bulgaria	24.038	11.851
7	Latvia	18.979	8.516
8	Estonia	17.875	7.859
9	Finland	20.267	7.778
10	Italy	1.370	1.460
11	Hungary	2.781	1.460
12	France	1.475	1.457
13	Czech Republic	1.898	1.214
14	Spain	1.162	1.175
15	Slovakia	324	193
16	Croatia	304	177
17	Slovenia	1.008	108
18–27	Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Sweden	0	0

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*.



## TERRITORIAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE ROMANIAN DIASPORA POPULATION IN RUSSIA<sup>55</sup> AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

The Romanian national minority in the Russian Federation is unevenly distributed, with the top five largest concentrations in: a) the city of Moscow and the bordering regions of Moscow and Kaluga; b) Tyumen Oblast (Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug and Khanty-Mansi-Yugra Autonomous Okrug); c) the city of Saint Petersburg and the adjacent region of Leningrad; d) Rostov region; e) Krasnodar Krai.

Between the last two population censuses of the Russian Federation, the Romanian national minority decreased drastically in all territorial-administrative units of level III (national republics, counties (including autonomous national counties), regions (including autonomous national regions), with one exception – Kaluga region of the Central Federal District, where the number of ethnic Romanians increased between the last two censuses from 2.542 to 4.061 people. This was an increase of 60.66%.

We present below a table with data by region provided by the Federal State Service for Statistics Rosstat with reference to members of the Romanian minority:

No.	Federal subject	Federal District	Romanians 2010	Romanians 2020	Percentage difference
1	City of Moscow	Center	21.965	8.264	– 62.37%
2	Moscow region	Center	19.771	12.957	– 34.46%
3	Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug-Yugra, reg. Tyumen	Ural	9.608	5.365	– 44.16%
4	City of Saint Petersburg	Northwestern	7.296	2.976	– 59.21%
5	Rostov region	South	6.912	2.117	– 69.37%
6	Krasnodar Krai	South	5.351	2.135	– 60.10%
7	Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, reg. Tyumen	Ural	4.760	2.264	– 52.43%
8	Volgograd region	South	3.205	729	– 77.25%
9	Saratov region	Volga	3.076	1.410	– 54.16%
10	Krasnoyarsk Krai	Siberia	2.798	1.032	– 63.11%
11	Leningrad region	Northwestern	2.733	1.490	– 45.48%
12	Kaluga region	Center	2.542	4.061	+ 60.66%
13	Sverdlovsk region	Ural	2.429	1.117	– 54.01%

<sup>55</sup> Cumulative data by Федеральной службе государственной статистики (Росстат), «Национальный состав и владение языками, гражданство», в *Томах официального опубликования итогов Всероссийской переписи населения 2010 года*, том 4, Доступно по адресу: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/perepis2010/croc/perepis\\_itogi1612-tom4.htm](https://rosstat.gov.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/croc/perepis_itogi1612-tom4.htm), Доступно 20 марта 2024 года [Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), “National composition and language proficiency, citizenship”, in *Volumes of the official publication of the results of the All-Russian Population Census 2010*, Vol. 4, Available at: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/perepis2010/croc/perepis\\_itogi1612-tom4.htm](https://rosstat.gov.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/croc/perepis_itogi1612-tom4.htm), Accessed on: March 20, 2024].

(Continued table)

14	Komi Republic	Northwestern	2.383	1.021	- 57.15%
15	Voronezh region	Center	2.320	986	- 57.50%
16	Vladimir region	Center	2.315	912	- 60.60%
17	Tula region	Center	2.155	1.532	- 28.90%
18	Belgorod region	Center	2.081	1.057	- 49.20%
19	Tver region	Center	1.940	1.047	- 46.03%
20	Nizhny Novgorod region	Volga	1.934	790	- 59.15%
21	Samara Region	Volga	1.932	861	- 55.43%
22	Stavropol Krai	South	1.865	758	- 59.35%
23	Ryazan region	Center	1.716	1.082	- 36.94%
24	Tyumen Oblast without autonomous districts	Ural	1.675	1.053	- 37.13%
25	Chelyabinsk region	Ural	1.672	605	- 63.81%
26	Republic of Sakha-Yakutia	Far East	1.671	773	- 53.74%
27	Irkutsk region	Siberia	1.515	579	- 61.78%
28	Primorsky Krai	Far East	1.493	425	- 71.53%
29	Bryansk region	Center	1.462	826	- 43.50%
30	Perm Krai	Volga	1.459	600	- 58.87%
31	Murmansk region	Northwestern	1.328	661	- 50.22%
32	Kemerov-Kuzbass region	Siberia	1.276	448	- 64.89%
33	Omsk region	Siberia	1.273	540	- 57.58%
34	Lipetsk region	Center	1.265	815	- 35.57%
35	Altai Krai	Siberia	1.236	414	- 66.50%
36	Orenburg region	Volga	1.229	572	- 53.45%
37	Ivanovo region	Center	1.205	500	- 58.50%
38	Smolensk region	Center	1.195	717	- 40.00%
39	Kursk region	Center	1.143	682	- 40.33%
40	Kirov region	Volga	1.079	548	- 49.21%
41	Kaliningrad region	Northwestern	1.069	467	- 56.31%
42	Novosibirsk region	Siberia	1.047	400	- 62.79%
43	Tomsk Region	Siberia	1.042	414	- 60.26%
44	Tatarstan Republic	Volga	981	538	- 45.15%
45	Vologda region	Northwestern	958	420	- 56.15%
46	Khabarovsk Krai	Far East	944	337	- 64.30%
47	Arkhangelsk region without autonomous district	Northwestern	932	419	- 55.04%
48	Yaroslavl region	Center	923	526	- 43.01%
49	Bashkortostan Republic	Volga	917	489	- 46.67%
50	Ulyanovsk region	Volga	889	295	- 66.81%
51	Orlov region	Center	878	504	- 42.59%
52	Kostroma region	Center	864	450	- 47.91%
53	Udmurt Republic	Volga	842	391	- 53.56%
54	Kurgan region	Ural	842	300	- 64.37%
55	Novgorod region	Northwestern	818	271	- 66.87%
56	Amur region	Far East	757	283	- 62.61%
57	Pskov region	Northwestern	736	441	- 40.08%
58	Tambov region	Center	680	321	- 52.79%
59	Transbaikals Krai	Siberia	617	217	- 64.82%

*(Continued table)*

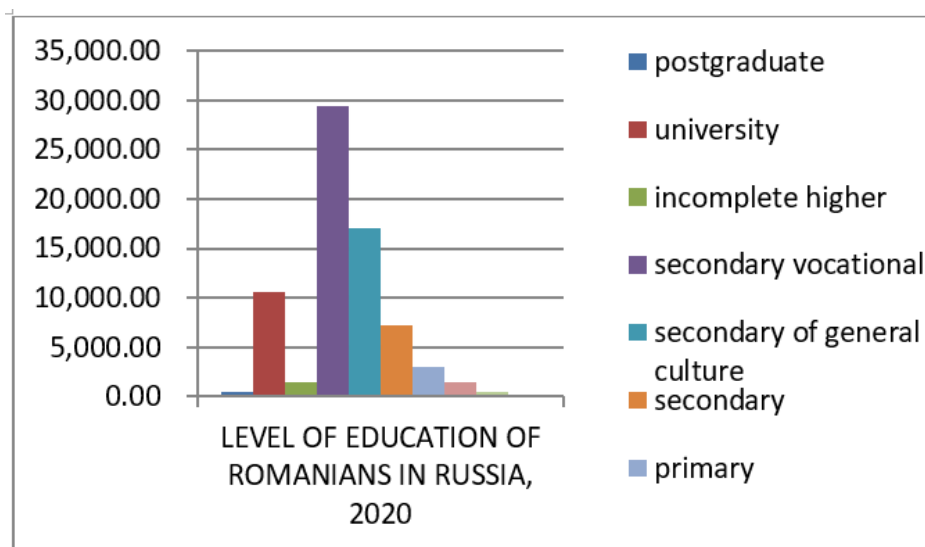
60	Penza region	Volga	587	370	- 36.96%
61	Sakhalin region	Far East	587	186	- 68.31%
62	Astrakhan region	South	534	289	- 45.88%
63	Karelia Republic	Northwestern	510	293	- 42.54%
64	Kamchatka Krai	Far East	495	205	- 58.58%
65	Chuvash Republic	Volga	471	226	- 52.01%
66	Jewish Autonomous region	Far East	454	289	- 36.34%
67	Khakassia Republic	Siberia	383	110	- 71.27%
68	Magadan region	Far East	373	133	- 64.34%
69	Republic of Buryatia	Siberia	317	157	- 50.47%
70	Mari-El Republic	Volga	295	181	- 38.64%
71	Republic of Adygea	South	288	178	- 38.19%
72	Mordovian Republic	Volga	283	195	- 31.09%
73	Kabardino-Balkarian Republic	North Caucasus	235	92	- 60.85%
74	Altai Republic	Siberia	150	98	- 34.66%
75	Republic of North Ossetia - Alania	North Caucasus	141	67	- 52.48%
76	Dagestan Republic	North Caucasus	139	93	- 33.09%
77	Kalmykia Republic	South	137	62	- 54.74%
78	Karachay-Cherkess Republic	North Caucasus	103	42	- 59.22%
79	Chukotka Autonomous Okrug	Far East	91	57	- 37.36%
80	Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Arkhangelsk region	Northwestern	50	23	- 54.00%
81	Ingushetia Republic	North Caucasus	36	2	- 94.44%
82	Chechen Republic	North Caucasus	34	25	- 26.47%
83	Tuva Republic	Siberia	29	9	- 68.96%
84	TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN 2014		Romanians 2014	Romanians 2020	
85	Republic of Crimea	Occupied territory	2573	1550	- 39.75%
86	City of Sevastopol	Occupied territory	836	349	- 58.25%

Cumulating these data, the distribution of ethnic Romanians in Russia by federal districts in the 2010 and 2020 censuses was as follows:

Federal district	Far East	Siberia	Ural	Northwest	Center	Volga	South	North Caucasus
Romanians 2010	6.865	11.367	20.968	18.813	66.420	15.066	18.292	688
Romanians 2020	2.844	4.261	10.702	8.482	37.239	7.466	6.268	321
Percentage difference	- 58.57%	- 62.51%	- 48.96 %	- 54.91%	- 43.93%	- 50.4%	- 65.7%	- 53.34%

With reference to the territories occupied by the Russian Federation in 2014 and 2022, we note that the cumulative sum of the number of Romanians hypothetically represents 20.859 people, including the data of the last census of Ukraine’s population. This number is presumed to have diminished by negative natural growth as well as massive emigration due to the war. Thus, the latest official data showed the following number of Romanians: Crimea and Sevastopol – 1.899, Donetsk region – 7.543, Luhansk region – 3.252, Kherson region – 4.179 and Zaporizhzhia region – 2.476.

Regarding the age structure of ethnic Romanians registered in the 2020 Russian census with the Romanian infraction Moldovans, considered to belong to “the most numerous nationalities”, the picture is as follows: 5.575 (0–15 years), 2.448 (15–19 years), 7.264 (20–29 years), 13.809 (30–39 years), 15 795 (40–49 years), 7.545 (50–54 years), 7.899 (55–59 years), 7.571 (60–64 years), 4.724 (65–69 years), 4.878 (70+ years)<sup>56</sup>. Thus, 53.381 people are of working age and 18.142 people have reached or exceeded retirement age. Rosstat, the Federal Service for State Statistics, has not made public data on ethnic Romanians registered with the ethnonym Romanians, who are classified as “other nationalities”.



<sup>56</sup> Федеральной службе государственной статистики (Росстат), «Национальный состав и знание языков. Таблица 8. Население наиболее многочисленных национальностей по возрастным группам и полу», в *Всероссийских итогах переписи населения 2020*, том 5, Доступно на: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5\\_Nacionalnyj\\_sostav\\_i\\_vladienie\\_yazykami](https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladienie_yazykami), Доступно 31 апреля, 2024 года [Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), “National composition and knowledge of languages. Table 8. The population of the most numerous nationalities by age groups and sex”, in *All-Russian population census totals-2020*, Vol. 5, Available at: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5\\_Nacionalnyj\\_sostav\\_i\\_vladienie\\_yazykami](https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladienie_yazykami), Accessed on: April 31, 2024].

In terms of the degree of education, for the sample registered with the Romanian offender “Moldovans” in the 2020 census, Rosstat presents the following situation: 71.348 people indicated the level of education, and 4.388 people refused to indicate it<sup>57</sup>. Of those who indicated the level of education, 524 people have postgraduate education (high qualification), 10.620 – university education, 1.458 – incomplete higher education, 29.428 – secondary vocational education, 15.051 – secondary education of general culture, 7.278 – secondary education, 3.014 – primary education, 1.447 – pre-school education (of which 1.165 aged 6–9 years), 527 are without education (of which 317 are aged 6–9 years), and 52 people are illiterate.

### KNOWLEDGE OF ROMANIAN LANGUAGE

As for the language Romanian in the language picture of the Russian Federation, the reviewers were guided by a “*Nomenclature of Russian languages*”<sup>58</sup> developed by the Institute of Linguistics of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The nomenclature distinguishes between Romanian, included in category “**B. Other languages**”, and the so-called “Moldovan language”, included in category “**A1. The Living Languages of Russia**”<sup>59</sup>. The Romanian language and its taxonomic doublet “Moldovan” are among the 155 living languages of the Russian Federation, along with two other “dormant” languages and 13 extinct languages.

“The Romance languages of Russia are represented by the Moldovan language (Romanian). Linguistically, ‘Moldovan’ and ‘Romanian’ are names of one and the same language, although Romanian is listed in Romanian legislation as a state language, and in the Moldovan constitution-Moldovan. Part of Moldovan carriers and Moldovan originators call their language Moldovan, and another part-Romanian. The

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<sup>57</sup> Федеральной службе государственной статистики (Росстат), «Национальный состав и знание языков. Таблица 10. Население наиболее многочисленных национальностей по возрастным категориям, полу и уровню образования», в *Всероссийских итогах переписи населения 2020*, том 5, Доступно на: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5\\_Nacionalnyj\\_sostav\\_i\\_vladienie\\_yazykami](https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladienie_yazykami), Доступно 31 апреля, 2024 года [Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), “National composition and knowledge of languages. Table 10. The population of the most numerous nationalities by age categories, sex and educational attainment”, in *All Russian population census totals 2020*, Vol. 5, Available at: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5\\_Nacionalnyj\\_sostav\\_i\\_vladienieyazykami](https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladienieyazykami), Accessed on: April 31, 2024].

<sup>58</sup> Ю Коряков и др., *Список языков России и статусы их витальности. Монография-препринт*, Москва, Институт языкознания РАН, 2022, с. 80 [Yu Koryakov *et al.*, *Nomenclature of Russian languages and their degree of vitality. Preprint monograph*, Moscow, Institute of Linguistics of ASR, 2022, p. 80].

<sup>59</sup> Юрий Борисович Коряков и Евгения Ивановна Давидюк, «Список языков России в итогах Всероссийской переписи населения», в *Федеральной службе государственной статистики (Росстат)*, Доступно на: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/storage/mediabank/Tom5\\_Spisok\\_yazykov.doc](https://rosstat.gov.ru/storage/mediabank/Tom5_Spisok_yazykov.doc), Доступно 31 марта 2024 года [Yuri Borisovich Koryakov and Yevgeniya Ivanovna Davidiyuk, “List of languages of Russia in All-Russian population census totals”, in *Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat)*, Available at: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/storage/mediabank/Tom5\\_Spisok\\_yazykov.doc](https://rosstat.gov.ru/storage/mediabank/Tom5_Spisok_yazykov.doc), Accessed on: March 31, 2024].

2010 census distinguished between these languages: 96.061 persons indicated knowledge of the ‘Moldovan’ language (90.034 persons indicated it as their mother tongue and 156.400 persons registered as Moldovans), and 21.201 persons indicated knowledge of ‘Romanian’ (2.641 persons indicated it as mother tongue and the number of Romanians was 3.201 persons). However, 35% of Romanian-speakers registered as Moldovans and only 6% as Romanians”<sup>60</sup>.

Overall, in 2020, a number of 49.341 people indicated Romanian as their mother tongue, of which 45.233 opted for the infraglossonym “Moldovan” and 4.108 for the glossonym “Romanian”. Of all persons with Romanian mother tongue, 33.630 live in urban areas and 15.981 in rural areas.

Corroborating the number of persons belonging to the Romanian national minority with that of persons who indicated Romanian as their mother tongue, regardless of glossonym, we find that a number of 30.038 ethnic Romanians (or 37.84% of the entire Romanian minority) indicated another mother tongue, usually Russian. The ratio between these figures shows the advanced degree of acculturation of ethnic Romanians in the Russian Federation.

Regardless of the glossonym used, 54.401 people indicated Romanian as the language they know and speak. In 2020, the knowledge of Romanian language by age categories is as follows: 260 (0–4 years), 541 (5–9 years), 760 (10–14 years), 1.282 (15–19 years), 1.998 (20–24 years), 2.768 (25–29 years), 4.584 (30–34 years), 5.854 (35–39 years), 5.824 (40–44 years), 5.585 (45–49 years), 5.455 (50–54 years), 5.852 (55–59 years), 5.743 (60–64 years), 3.774 (65–69 years), 2.346 (70–74 years), 814 (75–79 years), 659 (80–84 years), 243 (85–89 years), 61 (90–94 years), 17 (95–99 years), 1 (100+ years)<sup>61</sup>.

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<sup>60</sup> «Романские языки в России представлены молдавским (румынским) языком. С лингвистической точки зрения «молдавский» и «румынский» являются названиями одного и того же языка, хотя в законодательстве Румынии в качестве государственного языка фигурирует румынский, а в Молдавии – молдавский. В переписи 2010 года эти языки различались, поэтому мы знаем, что на владение «молдавским» языком указало 96 061 чел. (а родным его назвало 90 034 чел., 156 400 чел. записалось молдованами), а на владение «румынским» – 21.201 чел. (родным-2641 чел., румынов было 3201 чел.). При этом, 35% румыноговорящих записались молдаванами и лишь 6%-румынами», in Институт языков Российской академии наук, «Индоевропейские языки: Романские языки», 10 мая 2022 года, в проекте «Языки России», Доступно на: <https://jazykirf.ilingran.ru/groups/Romance.shtml>, Доступно 28 марта 2024 года [Institute of Languages of the Russian Academy of Sciences, “Indo-European languages: Romance languages”, May 10, 2022, in *Languages of Russia Project*, Available at: <https://jazykirf.ilingran.ru/groups/Romance.shtml>, Accessed on: March 28, 2024].

<sup>61</sup> Федеральной службе государственной статистики (Росстат), «Национальный состав и владение языками. Таблица 12. Владение языками населением разных возрастных групп», в *Итоги Всероссийской переписи населения-2020*, том 5, Доступно по адресу: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5\\_Nacionalnyj\\_sostav\\_i\\_vladenie\\_yazykami](https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladenie_yazykami), Доступно 31 апреля 2024 года [Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), “National composition and knowledge of languages. Table 12. Knowledge of languages by the population of different age groups”, in *All-Russian population census totals-2020*, Vol. 5, Available at: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5\\_Nacionalnyj\\_sostav\\_i\\_vladenie\\_yazykami](https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladenie_yazykami), Accessed on: April 31, 2024].

Among the people who were registered with the Romanian infronym “*Moldoveni*” [*Moldavians*], 2.043 did not indicate their mother tongue in the 2020 census. The others indicated the following mother tongues: Romanian (40.049, of which 1.317 with the glossonym “Romanian” and 38.732 with the infraglossonym “Moldavian”), Russian (34.858), Gagauz (138), Gypsy (138), Ukrainian (119), Mordvin (37), Bulgarian (27), Tatar (13), Kazakh (10), Chuvash (9), Yakut (8), Bashkir (4), Tajik (4), Ossetian (3), Udmurt (3), Komi (3), Kalmyk (3), German (2), Avar (2), English (2), Armenian (2), Moksha-Mordvina (2), Uzbek (2), Belarusian (2), Latin (2), Abkhaz (1), Darghinian (1), Hebrew (1), Ingush (1), Karaciaevo-Balkara (1), Karelian (1), Lithuanian (1), Mari (1), Russian sign (mimic-gestural) language (1), Turkish (1) and languages other than those included in the Nomenclator (13)<sup>62</sup>.

It is interesting to note that in 2020 not all Romanian language connoisseurs and speakers are ethnic Romanians. Connoisseurs of Romanian are distributed according to their declared nationalities: 14.234 Russians, 6 Cossacks, 73 Tatars, 2 Chechens, 18 Bashkirs, 23 Chuvash, 3 Avars, 40 Armenians, 1 778 Ukrainians, 9 Dargins, 16 Kazakhs, 12 Kumychs, 3 Kabardins, 9 Lezgins, 9 Ossetians, 183 Mordvins, 17 Mordvins-Erzia, 5 Yakuts-Saha, 15 Azeris, 3 Buryats (Buryath-Mongols), 4 Greeks, 20 Udmurts, 8 Tajiks, 13 Uzbeks, 2 Tuvins, 4 Crimea Tatars, 40 Belarusians, 21 Germans, 219 Gypsies, 9 Komi, 3 Kyrgyz, 2 Turks, 4 Circassians, 7 Georgians, 3 Adyghe people, 1 Nogai, 2 Koreans, 51 Jews, 33.388 “Moldovans” and “Romanians”, 1 Hakas, 1 Komi-Permiak, 24 Greeks, 4 Turkmens, 2 Ruthuls, 1 Karelians, 2.644 “other nationalities” and 1.490 non-nationalities<sup>63</sup>.

Thusly, out of the 117.262 Russian citizens recorded as Romanian-speaking in 2010, 21.201 have said that they speak Romanian, and 96.061-the “Moldovan language”. In this case, Rosstat did not specify how many of the Romanian-speaking citizens are Romanians, having presented data only for the most numerous ethnicities

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<sup>62</sup> Федеральной службе государственной статистики (Росстат), «Национальный состав и владение языками. Таблица 7. Население наиболее многочисленных национальностей по родному языку», в *Итоги Всероссийской переписи населения 2020*, том 5, Доступно по адресу: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5\\_Nacionalnyj\\_sostav\\_i\\_vladenie\\_yazykami](https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladenie_yazykami), Доступно 31 апреля 2024 года [Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), “National composition and language proficiency. Table 7: Population of the most numerous nationalities by mother tongue”, in *All Russian population census totals 2020* Vol. 5, Available at: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5\\_Nacionalnyj\\_sostav\\_i\\_vladenie\\_yazykami](https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladenie_yazykami), Accessed on: April 31, 2024].

<sup>63</sup> Федеральной службе государственной статистики (Росстат), «Национальный состав и владение языками. Таблица 4. Владение языками и использование языков населением», в *Итоги Всероссийской переписи населения-2020*, том 5, Доступно по адресу: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5\\_Nacionalnyj\\_sostav\\_i\\_vladenie\\_yazykami](https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladenie_yazykami), Доступно 31 апреля 2024 года [Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), “National composition and language proficiency. Table 4. Language proficiency and language use by population”, in *All-Russian population census totals 2020*, Vol. 5, Available at: [https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5\\_Nacionalnyj\\_sostav\\_i\\_vladenie\\_yazykami](https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn/2020/Tom5_Nacionalnyj_sostav_i_vladenie_yazykami), Accessed on: April 31, 2024].

in the country. In 2010, they recorded that among Romanian-speakers are: 8.757 Russians, 8.146 “Moldovans”, 71 Tatars, 1.473 Ukrainians, 8 Bashkirs, 11 Chuvash, 13 Chechens, 80 Armenians, 6 Avars, 17 Mordvins, 4 Kazakhs, 17 Azerbaijanis, 1 Dargin, 3 Udmurts, 5 Mari, 11 Ossetians, 30 Belarusians. At the same time, those counted as “Moldovan language” speakers were: 18.354 Russians, 142 Tatars, 5.405 Ukrainians, 29 Bashkirs, 43 Chuvash, 4 Chechens, 84 Armenians, 3 Avars, 442 Mordvins, 19 Kazakhs, 53 Azerbaijani, 34 Udmurts, 22 Mari, 19 Ossetians and 101 Belarusians.

The general Russian Federation census of 2010 has shown that 117.262 Russian citizens, regardless of ethnicity, knew Romanian. Rosstat has presented separate data for the Romanian language<sup>64</sup> and the “Moldovan language”<sup>65</sup>, analogous to how they presented nationalities. Thusly, out of the 117.262 Russian citizens recorded as Romanian-speaking in 2010, 21.201 have said that they speak Romanian, and 96.061-the “Moldovan language”. In this case, Rosstat did not specify how many of the Romanian-speaking citizens are Romanians, having presented data only for the most numerous ethnicities in the country. In 2010, they recorded that among Romanian-speakers are: 8.757 Russians, 8.146 “Moldovans”, 71 Tatars, 1.473 Ukrainians, 8 Bashkirs, 11 Chuvash, 13 Chechens, 80 Armenians, 6 Avars, 17 Mordvins, 4 Kazakhs, 17 Azerbaijanis, 1 Dargin, 3 Udmurts, 5 Mari, 11 Ossetians, 30 Belarusians. At the same time, those counted as “Moldovan language” speakers were: 18.354 Russians, 142 Tatars, 5.405 Ukrainians, 29 Bashkirs, 43 Chuvash, 4 Chechens, 84 Armenians, 3 Avars, 442 Mordvins, 19 Kazakhs, 53 Azerbaijani, 34 Udmurts, 22 Mari, 19 Ossetians and 101 Belarusians.

We must also note that in 2002, Rosstat indicated that 22.663 Russian citizens spoke Romanian, and 147.035 – the “Moldovan language”. Altogether, these numbers, close to those related to ethnic Romanians in the Russian Federation, have shown that this country, as of 2002, had 169.698 people who knew Romanian<sup>66</sup>.

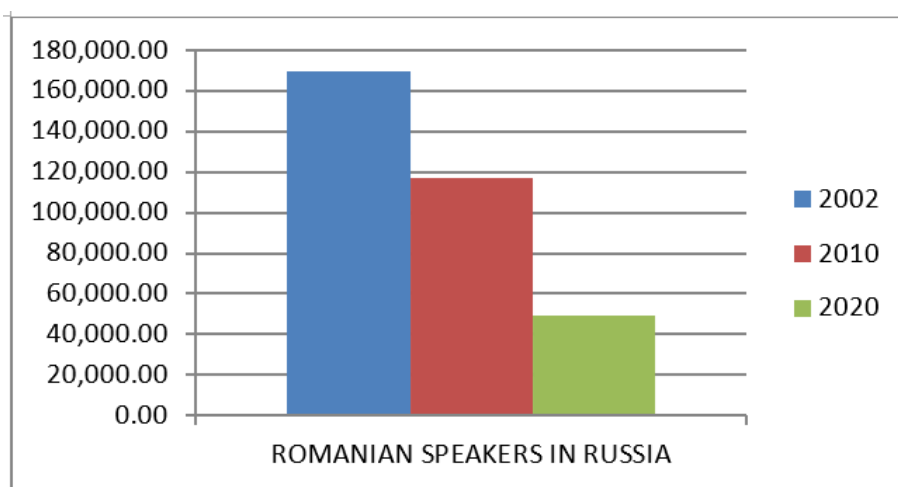
Year	2002	2010	2020
Ethnic Romanians	177.683	159.601	79.379
Romanian speakers	169.698	117.262	49.341

<sup>64</sup> At position 109.

<sup>65</sup> At position 92.

<sup>66</sup> Федеральная служба государственной статистики (Росстат), «Национальный состав и владение языками, гражданство Распространенность владения языками (кроме русского)», в *Всеобщая перепись населения России 2002 года*, том 4, Доступно на: <http://www.perepis2002.ru>, Доступно 31 марта 2024 года [Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), “*National composition and language proficiency, citizenship. Prevalence of language proficiency (except Russian)*”, in *The general census of the population of Russia in 2002*, Vol. 4, Available at: <http://www.perepis2002.ru>, Accessed on: March 31, 2024].





Whereas the share of Romanian-speaking Russian citizens who declared their ethnic belonging to be Russian (14.234 in 2020 compared to 27.108 in 2010) or Ukrainian (1.778 in 2020 compared to 6.878 in 2010) is significant, constituting a cumulative 16.012 persons in 2020 compared to 33.986 in 2010. We can admit that they represent, for the most part, ethnic Romanians from mixed marriages who have assumed in documents the ethnic belonging of their spouse or one of their parents. It is possible, however, that they are in reality ethnic Romanians who, deliberately confusing citizenship with nationality, declared themselves Russians or Ukrainians (in the case of natives from present-day Ukraine).

The fact that at the 2010 population census they declared that they speak “Romanian language”, and not “Moldovan language”, a number of 33.986 people (or 26.13% of all speakers) attested to the emergence of a process of ethnic renewal of the Romanian diaspora community in Russia, but also a process of recovery of national consciousness. Unfortunately, in the 2020 population census, the percentage of those who declared that they spoke “Romanian”, and not “Moldovan”, dropped to 14.5% (or 7.901 people out of 54.401). This could also be explained by the emigration of a significant number of young and educated Romanians. Among those who declared “Romanian” and not “Moldovan” as their mother tongue, the proportion is even lower- 8.32% (or 4.108 people out of 49.341).

### **THE ROMANIAN ASSOCIATIVE ENVIRONMENT IN RUSSIA**

After the collapse of the USSR, 39 associations, cultural centers, foundations, societies and “Moldovan national-cultural autonomies” were launched and active in the Russian Federation, grouping at local or regional level ethnic Romanians, in most cases being used in the name of the legal entity the Romanian infranym

“Moldovan”<sup>67</sup>. The exception is: 1. Romanian Cultural Society of Moscow region, 2. Russian-Romanian Cultural Society, based in Moscow, 3. Regional civic organization Romanian Cultural Center “Casa Mare”, based in Tomsk. Also, in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, annexed by the Russian Federation, operates the Moldovan-Romanian Society of Crimea, based in Simferopol.

Paradoxically, the Romanian Embassy in Moscow announces on its official website in Romanian language the absence of any Romanian associative form in the Russian Federation<sup>68</sup>, and the Russian version refers to such associations<sup>69</sup>.

### EUROPEAN EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE ON SUPPORT FOR KIN-MINORITIES

EU Member States with kin-minorities in the Russian Federation provide examples of good practice in supporting their kin-minorities. Thus, in addition to the diplomatic missions and consular offices of Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, Italy and France, there are kindergartens, schools and lyceums<sup>70</sup> with full teaching in the languages of these countries and financed by the Ministries of Education of the respective states.

Also, in the Russian Federation there are state schools teaching in Latvian, Lithuanian, Hebrew, Azerbaijani, Georgian, Ukrainian, Armenian, Japanese languages or educational units with national ethno-cultural elements (in-depth study of mother tongue and other subjects related to national specificity).

In Moscow and other major cities there are cultural centers of most culturally important countries<sup>71</sup> or those with diaspora communities in the Russian Federation.

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<sup>67</sup> Government of the Republic of Moldova, “Diaspora – 2024”, in *Diaspora Relations Office*, February 26, 2016, Available at: [https://brd.gov.md/sites/default/files/sn\\_diaspora\\_2025\\_web.pdf](https://brd.gov.md/sites/default/files/sn_diaspora_2025_web.pdf), Accessed on: March 30, 2024.

<sup>68</sup> “The Romanian community in the Russian Federation is not organized in associations, cultural societies or other associative forms” in \*\*\*, “Comunitatea românească” [“Romanian Community”], in *The Embassy of Romania in the Russian Federation*, Available at: <https://moscova.mae.ro/node/772>, Accessed on: March 15, 2024.

<sup>69</sup> \*\*\*, «Юридическая регистрация «Румынского Культурного Общества» Московской области», в *ПОСОЛЬСТВО РУМЫНИИ в Российской Федерации*, Доступно по адресу: <https://moscova.mae.ro/ru/local-news/1271>, Доступно 15 апреля 2024 года [\*\*\*, “Legal Registration of the ‘Romanian Cultural Society’ of the Moscow Region”, in *The Embassy of Romania in the Russian Federation*, Available at: <https://moscova.mae.ro/ru/local-news/1271>, Accessed on: April 15, 2024].

<sup>70</sup> Deutsche Schule Moskau, Deutsche Schule Sankt Petersburg, Szkoła Polska przy Ambasady RP w Moskwie, The Bulgarian School at the Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria, La scuola paritaria italiana “Italo Calvino” presso il Consolato Generale d’Italia a Mosca, Lycée français de Moscou – Alexandre Dumas.

<sup>71</sup> For example, Polish Cultural Center, Lithuanian Cultural Center (in Moscow, Petersburg and Irkutsk), Hellenic Cultural Center, Czech Cultural Center, Bulgarian Cultural Institute, Moscow Hungarian Cultural Center and Moscow Hungarian Library, Georgian Cultural Center, Azerbaijani Cultural Center, Armenian Embassy Cultural Center and Russian-Armenian Cultural Center, Kazakh Language and Culture Center, Kyrgyz Cultural Center, Tajik Cultural Center, Russian-Uzbek Cultural Center, National Cultural Center of Ukraine, Serbian Cultural Center, Belarusian Center for Cultural

Also, a number of national republics of the Russian Federation or national communities<sup>72</sup> of this country also have National Cultural Centers in Moscow.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Romanians in the Russian Federation represent a silent, barely visible, sometimes chameleonic minority, due to the Europid somatic type, good knowledge of the official Russian language, common Orthodox confession with Russians, as well as easy renunciation of peculiarities.

The older part of the Romanian community in the Russian Federation, coming from the periods of tsarist and Soviet occupation of Bessarabia, is in a profound process of acculturation and assimilation, strongly felt in the case of children and young people.

The newer and younger part of the Romanian diaspora in the Russian Federation, coming from the period after the collapse of the USSR, retains relatively well its ethnic peculiarities and Romanian language.

Romania, as a national state, which assumes through the Constitution and legislation, rights and obligations towards ethnic Romanians living abroad, must capitalize on its natural condition of a kin-state in relation to ethnic Romanians in the Russian Federation. In this respect, guided by the bilateral legal framework, by the Russian legislation in the field and by the European and international legal instruments, Romania could first support its kin-minority in the Russian Federation in this effort to establish and effectively organize national-cultural autonomies in distinct federal subjects where there are maximum concentrations of ethnic Romanians: Moscow city, Moscow region, Kaluga region, St. Petersburg city, Leningrad region, Rostov region, Krasnodar Krai, Yamalo-Nenets and Khanty-Mansi-Yugra autonomous okrugs.

Also, Romania could establish the Romanian Cultural Institute in Moscow (the largest city in Europe), according to the bilateral agreement signed with the Russian Federation (2013), Law 356/2003 and GD No. 492/2004 regarding the organization and functioning of Romanian cultural institutes abroad through the reorganization of cultural centers abroad, as well as the establishment of new institutes.

Another element of concrete involvement would be the establishment, in accordance with the provisions of Article 61 of the Law on Pre-University Education,

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Enlightenment, Austrian Cultural Forum and Austrian Library in Moscow, Portuguese Cultural Center, Italian Institute of Culture, Spanish Cultural Center (Cervantes Institute), French Institute, Finnish Institute, Scandinavian Cultural Center, Turkish Cultural Center, Russian-German House, Goethe German Cultural Center, International Union for German Culture, German Academic Exchange Service, British Council, Jewish Cultural Center, Chinese Cultural Center, American Cultural Center, Japanese Foundation and Japanese House Cultural Center, Korean Cultural Center, Iranian Embassy Cultural Center, India Cultural Center, Egyptian Cultural Center, Arab Cultural Center etc.

<sup>72</sup> Tatar Cultural Center, Bashkir National Cultural Center, Chechen Cultural Center, Ingush Cultural Center etc.

of a Romanian school attached to the Embassy of Romania in the Russian Federation, following the model of schools operating under other embassies in the Russian Federation or following the model of the Russian School attached to the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Romania.

This measure could be complementary to the establishment and support on the territory of the Russian Federation, under the aegis of diaspora organizations (national-cultural autonomies or cultural centers), of several Sunday schools for the acquisition and preservation of the Romanian language among children. Obviously, it is necessary to provide these Sunday schools and national cultural centres with textbooks and books in Romanian.

Last but not least, the Romanian authorities should consider establishing and maintaining collaboration relations with diaspora organizations in order to monitor the situation of children of Romanian ethnicity and other categories of Romanians in cultural-identity difficulty.

Romania also needs a *Law on Repatriation*, which can benefit especially both Romanians from the Russian Federation and those from other ex-Soviet states to which they were deported by the Soviet occupation regime.

Without Romania's active and positive intervention in support of its kin-minority in the Russian Federation, this minority is doomed to gradual extinction in the coming decades.

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