

Personal Data

First name: Alex

Age: 27

Country of origin: Romania

Year of emigration: 2005

Country of destination: Italy

Now living in: Rome **Since:** 2005

Interviewed by Stanescu Diana

Date and place: 22.04.2009, Timisoara

Personal History of Emigration

Before leaving

1. *How old were you when you left your country? Moving to another country was your own decision?*

I was 23 years old. It was my own decision.

2. *Did you leave alone, with your family, or with other people you knew? How many relatives did you leave behind?*

I left alone, all my family were in Romania (parents, siblings).

3. *Why did you leave your country? Were you looking for a job? Had you religious or political problems? Did you just wish to know new countries and new people? Other reasons?*

I had some friends in Italy, some people from my town, I tried to get a job and earn some money.

4. *How did you choose your destination? Did you know where to go and what to do? Did you know the language?*

As I said, I had friends who were already there, so it wasn't a difficult choice for me. They helped me a lot. I didn't know the language, but it wasn't very difficult to learn Italian.

5. *Tell me something about the expectations you had when you left your country: did you think to remain in the country of emigration, .or to come back home?*

I never left there for good. I still miss everyone back home and I visit my relatives any time I have the chance. I will return in a few years' time.

Travel

1. *Which means of transport did you use?*

I travelled by car.

2. *How long was your journey?*

It took around 15 hours.

3. *Tell me something about your feelings along the journey.*

I was ready to start work and a new life in Italy, I knew I would be able to manage somehow. I also had regrets for leaving my family.

First Impact

1. *Tell me something about the first impact with the new country. What first happened when you got to your destination?*

I tried to get accustomed to a new lifestyle and new requirements. Things are quite different here, work is work and leisure is leisure. I was very happy when I arrived there. People were friendly to me.

2. *How much time did you need to find a house?*

A few weeks.

3. *How much time did you need to find a job?*

I changed several jobs at the beginning until I started working at my present working place.

4. *Which were the main difficulties you encountered within the first period? What did you mainly miss (home, friends, language, food, tradition, other issues)? Were there any countryman of yours waiting for you?*

Though I started making friends, I still missed the others back home. Language learning wasn't very difficult, and I was a quick learner.

5. *Did you feel "different"? What did you think about that people? What did they think about you?*

I didn't feel very different, maybe because Italians are a friendly people and we are much alike in many respects. Nobody of my acquaintances considered me dangerous, so I didn't feel hated because of what other Romanians did there.

After some time (6 months/one year)

1. *What have you done in order to try and integrate in the new country?*

I worked and tried to get into contact with many people, I tried to make friends.

2. *Did anybody (institutions, associations, single people, native or guest) help you to integrate into the community?*

Yes, several people, both natives (at work) and some Romanian friends I knew from the country who had been there before I arrived.

3. *Did you feel that the help you received was enough? What could have been done and was not to help your integration.*

I learned Italian and tried to make some new friends.

4. *What did you feel was the most effective help you received?*

My friends offered me a shelter and helped me find my first job.

Now

1. *Is the country in which you actually live the one you reached first? did you achieved citizenship? or have you moved again? And why?*

Yes, it is. I achieved citizenship not so long ago. I don't intend to go to another country.

2. *[only for people still living abroad] What do you think now about the country you actually live? does it agree with the imagine you had before coming here?*

I love living here and given the possibility to continue my work, I will not leave, not yet anyway.

3. *Is there any unpleasant event (racism, indifference, cold, etc.) you went through, or you witnessed?*

I haven't experienced any personally but you know about the racism wave that the Romanians experience at the moment in Italy.

4. *Do you think that the differences between this country and your motherhood have increased or decreased by the time? or did they remain the same?*

I can't tell any difference in particular

5. *How do you look back to your experience?*

a. *Is there anything you "learned" from your new fellow citizens (job, culture, food, lifestyle, social or political institutions, etc.)?*

Food is great, I am now working in a nice environment so I like my job, Italians are ok.

b. *Is there anything you think they "learned" from you?*

I don't know, I am a happy person, so maybe they like my sense of humour.

c. *Is there anything you think they could "learn" from you, if only they knew you better?*

I don't know, really.

d. *Which actually are your feelings? Have you any regrets? If you could go back in your life, would you come in the same place? or would you go elsewhere? or would you stay home?*

I sometimes feel lonely and think about all the others back home, but I know I have to continue. I try not to think about home very much.

Finally: what do you think about your future? are you going to stay in your new country? or to go elsewhere? or to go back home?

I will probably return if I see things go in the wrong direction. As long as I still have a decent job and I can save money, I don't intend to return.