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## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS

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**Abstract:** *In the coming decades, international migration remains a real process and may vary, taking into account political and economic changes, innovative technological and social changes, growing demographic imbalances, the effects of climate change and globalization trends. In order to increase the positive effects and minimize the negative effects in the field of labor migration, the following aspects can be identified: stimulating return migration and circular labor migration; creating favorable conditions for the business of returned migrants and the development of SMEs in the regions; adapting national educational policies to the needs of the labor market; more active and effective involvement of the diaspora in development policies (Anghelache et al., 2016). Romania has been and is a country of origin or transit in migration flows. Its entry into the group of EU member states coupled with the increase in revenue will certainly lead to a change in this situation. Taking as an example country like Spain or Italy and more recently Poland, Hungary or Slovakia after joining the EU in 2004, Romania will become both a source and destination country so that the number of emigrants will be exceeded by the number of immigrants (United Nations, 2015a). That is why I consider it appropriate to analyze the demographic structure of emigration and immigration of the population.*

**Keywords:** *Labor force migration, demographic structure of migrations*

**JELClassification:** *J1, J61, C33*

### Introduction

The statistics regarding Romanians leaving the country are unclear and contradictory. It is usually accepted that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) is responsible for keeping track of Romanian citizens abroad and also

responsible for maintaining relations with Romanian communities established around the world. In fact, the MFA speculates on the number of Romanians settled abroad, in one form or another (United Nations, 2015b).

There are two reasons why the Romanian Government cannot officially establish the number of Romanian immigrants. First of all, the Romanian legislation guaranteed to the Romanian citizens the right to free movement. Romanian citizens traveling abroad are not obliged to declare why they are leaving the country, where they are leaving and what the purpose of the trip is. There is a general recommendation for Romanian citizens, especially those who intend to settle abroad for a long time, to register for one of Romania's diplomatic or consular missions. But in reality, this recording is not complete. Secondly, since Romania's accession to the EU, Romanians' travels within the EU are absolutely free.

A Romanian can travel inside the EU even without a passport, as a regular identity card is enough for him to check at the border. Statistics show that the main countries chosen by Romanian immigrants are EU member states, especially Italy and Spain. The explanation is that Italy and Spain have passed the stage of economic growth, offering Romanian workers higher salaries than they could receive in Romania. Also, the cultural similarity between Italy, Spain and Romania (in terms of language, customs, lifestyle, etc.) was perceived as an encouragement. In general, Italians and Spaniards were very tolerant of Romanians, who felt comfortable and did not have to face significant obstacles in their integration intentions (Aceleanu, 2011). It should also be mentioned that Italy and Spain were among the first EU countries to open their labor markets for Romanian citizens. In addition to Spain and Italy, significant communities of Romanian immigrants could be found in Germany, France and the United Kingdom.

Also, Romanian immigrants tended to reach beyond European countries, especially in New Zealand, Australia and Canada. However, the United States remains an important destination country for Romanian immigrants. According to estimates, the number of Romanians who settled abroad varies from 1,5 to 5 million. It is generally estimated that 70-75% of them are in EU countries (Eurostat, 2019). Due to the lack of statistical data, it is difficult to determine the impact of Romania's EU accession on the migration flow. But, without a doubt, the opening of the labor markets for Romanians in Europe was perceived as a great opportunity for many of them. Following EU accession, there are important reasons to consider that the outflow of migration has increased considerably. In October 2017, Mr. Johan Ten Geuzendam, Head of the Labor Monitoring Directorate at the EU Commission, said that about

850,000 Romanians work in the European Union and are largely represented by unskilled workers. In fact, Mr. Geuzendam pointed out that they are even less skilled than the most unskilled workers in the EU (Business Standard, 1 October 2017).

In the World Bank Report, prepared at the end of 2017, Romania ranked 10th among the countries in the world, in terms of money remitted by emigrants: 6.8 billion USD (World Bank, 2019). All the figures, to which is added the general social perception, allow us to conclude that the Romanians took full advantage of the opportunity that was offered to them with the accession to the EU in terms of free movement. Also, according to the social perception, the main social category of those who emigrated for economic reasons in recent years was composed of young people (around 30 years old), with poor skills, coming from rural areas or deprived of citizens' rights. They also did not emigrate forever, as long as they continued to send money back to their communities, build houses and buy real estate.

Also, the fact that Romania has faced a large flow of emigration (World Bank, 2013), illustrated by the many dramatic stories brought by the media about children left under the supervision of relatives by emigrated couples. In this regard, many social problems have arisen in recent years and public opinion urges the Government to develop a social policy for these children. The economic impact of labor migration in Romania has not yet been assessed in appropriate terms (European Institute of Romania, 2004). The only thing that is certain is that the volume of remittances increased continuously until 2016. In 2012, the volume of remittances was estimated at approximately 1.5-2 billion USD, Romania being ranked 23rd in the top of the 30 developing countries with high volume of remittances received during that period. Recent reports have shown that since then the volume of remittances has practically tripled: the National Bank of Romania reported a record amount of EUR 4.8-5.3 billion for 2016. It seems that most of this money is used to improve general living standards of migrant households, and only a small part is invested in entrepreneurial activities ([www.jdre.ase.ro/revista/JDRE3\\_ro\\_2011.pdf](http://www.jdre.ase.ro/revista/JDRE3_ro_2011.pdf)).

Regarding the positive economic aspects for households, the widespread involvement of Romanians in labor migration has several negative consequences at the same time, especially on the lives of affected families. Probably the most complicated issue is the temporary abandonment of minors by their migrant working parents. In the early 1990s, there was a tendency to migrate to a single member of the household, so only one family member (usually the father) was absent (Massey, Arango, Hugo, 2012). It is certain that since then, the number of women involved in labor migration has increased. It

is now common for couples to emigrate, leaving minors without direct parental supervision. These children are not necessarily abandoned; rather, the role of parents is assumed by relatives, neighbors or friends. However, the lack of direct parental supervision has led to an increase in the number of social problems among children and adolescents, and the authorities responsible for child protection have been forced to formulate policies to monitor this situation. At the end of 2016, approximately 60,000 children were identified by the National Authority for the Protection of the Rights of the Child as being at risk because both parents work abroad; In one third of the cases (21,400), the children were deprived of both parents.

At another level, recent political discourses have recognized the problems of emigration. Any big party in Romania discusses this phenomenon based on two main ideas. The first is to complain that Romanians are leaving Romania due to unsatisfactory local conditions. The second is to return them. In fact, we are currently witnessing a real competition between the political leaders regarding the return of the Romanians who left Romania in the last years. It is reasonable to say that in the coming years a considerable number of Romanians will continue to emigrate. It is also reasonable to mention that the main target countries of Romanian immigrants will remain unchanged. On the other hand, Romania's economic growth and recession in some countries preferred by Romanians could blur the process (Massey, Arango, Hugo, 2012). The renowned expert Mr. Rainer Munz, Head of Research and Development with Erste Bank, recently said that for Romanians, emigration to Western Europe will lose its meaning in the future. We may soon find ourselves in a situation where countries such as the Czech Republic, Poland or Slovenia will report more immigration than emigration.

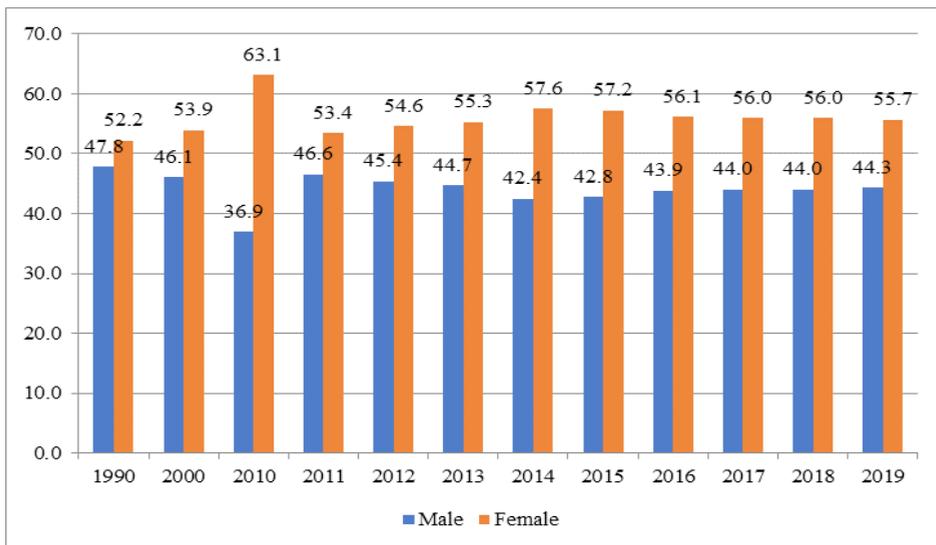
### **Emigrants - by sex, age groups, nationalities**

In 1990, immediately after the free movement of persons was regulated, there was a massive emigration of the population from Romania to abroad. Thus, in 1990, 96929 people chose to emigrate from Romania, respectively 4 people out of 1000 inhabitants decided to change their domicile outside the country. In the next 4 years, the number of emigrants decreases, reaching that in 1994 the number of departed persons is below 18000 and under 1 emigrant per 1000 inhabitants, while in 1995, the number of emigrants from Romania increased to over 25000 respectively to 1,13 emigrants per 1000 inhabitants. It should be noted that the year 1995 remains a milestone in terms of the extent of the emigration phenomenon, as so far this value has not been exceeded. Therefore,

in the last 10 years, as a whole, the number of people who have decided to emigrate to another country is decreasing, oscillating around the value of 10000 people and 0,5 emigrants per 1000 inhabitants ([www.jdre.ase.ro/revista/JDRE3\\_ro\\_2011.pdf](http://www.jdre.ase.ro/revista/JDRE3_ro_2011.pdf)).

The gender distribution of emigrants shows that for the entire analyzed period, the external migration of the female population predominates (with the exception of 1992 and 2001, when only approximately 49% of the emigrants were women). If in the first 10 years after the revolution, the share of women in the total number of emigrants was 52,3%, after 2000, as can be seen in Figure 1, the emigration flow is characterized by a high degree of feminization, their share reaching 63,1% for 2010. It can also be noted that the share of women in the total number of people who decided to emigrate is constantly increasing (compared to 1990).

**Figure 1.** Distribution of Romanian emigrants by sex

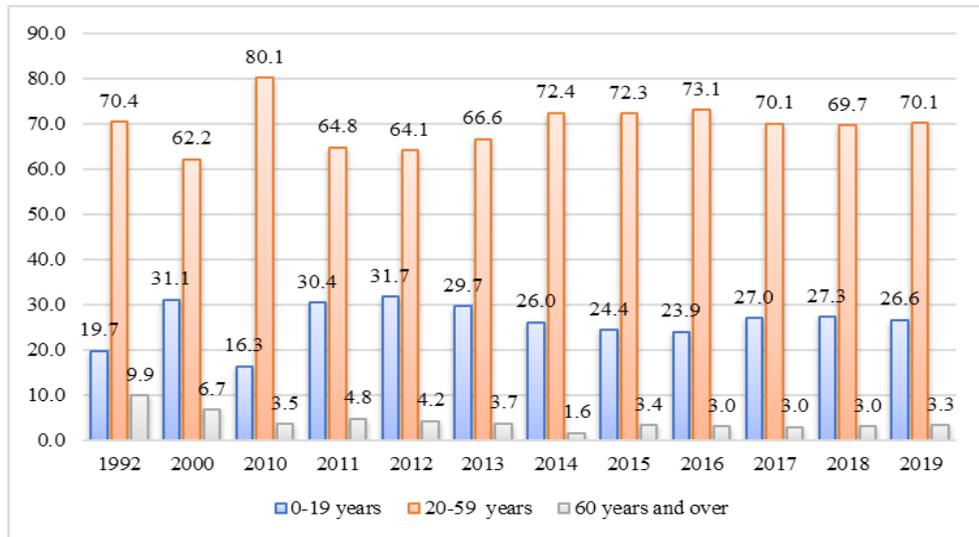


Source: TEMPO online base, <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online>, own calculations

Regarding the distribution by age groups of emigrants, it can be observed that people between 20 and 59 years old are the most active from this point of view, while the share of the population aged 60 and over is much lower (European Institute of Romania, 2004). In the first years after the revolution, the migrant population of working age (20-60 years) represents in fact young families because with them they chose to emigrate in a high proportion, over 60%, and their children who are part of the category

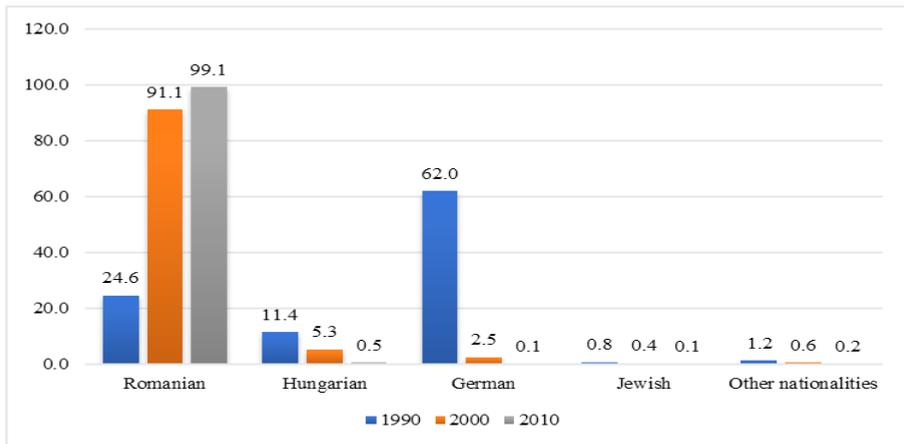
population under 19 years (National Institute of Statistics, 2017). This phenomenon of emigration of the whole family was characteristic only of the period 1990-2000, as after 2000 the share of people under 19 decreased (the lowest value being recorded in 2010 representing 16,3%), after a new increase of the proportion reaching a maximum in 2012 (31,7). In the last 6 years this value oscillates around 25% (Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Distribution of Romanian emigrants by age groups



Source: TEMPO online base, <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online>, own calculations

The distribution of emigrants by nationality reveals that immediately after the regulation of the free movement of persons, the population of other nationalities, especially persons of German nationality, chose to change their domicile, respectively to leave Romania. Thus, if in 1990, out of the approximately 97 thousand registered emigrants, 62.0% were persons of German nationality, and 11.4% of Hungarian nationality, while the population of Romanian nationality represented 24.6%, after 2010, almost all emigrants (over 99%) are of Romanian nationality (Figure 3). In economic, social and cultural terms, the departure of the Germans had an obvious local impact, the social structures of the communities in the Saxon and Swabian localities being strongly transformed. Their homes were purchased by Romanians who came, mostly from Moldova and Maramureș, or by other locals.

**Figure 3.** Distribution of Romanian emigrants by nationalities

Source: TEMPO online base, <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online>, own calculations

### Immigrants - by sex, age groups, country of departure

Immediately after 1990, in Romania, the flow of immigrants was almost non-existent, the number of people who decided to settle legally in Romania oscillating around 1500 people and 0.05 immigrants per 1000 inhabitants (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Evolution of the total number of immigrants settled in Romania

	1991	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total	1602	11024	7059	15538	21684	23897	36644	23093	27863	50199	65678	64479
Male	581	5612	4242	9505	12962	13643	20321	13289	16116	28586	38698	35705
Female	1021	5412	2817	6033	8722	10254	16323	9804	11747	21613	26980	28774

Source: Baza TEMPO on line, <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online>

After 1995, the flow of immigration gradually intensified, reaching in 2001 to exceed the number of over 15000 immigrants, representing about 0,7 people per 1000 inhabitants. In the following period, the evolution of the number of immigrants continues to increase, much faster after 2017, a year in which there was an almost double number compared to the previous year, in 2019 there were a number of 64479 immigrants who settled in Romania.

In the first post-communist decade, Romania had a relatively low level of immigration. Those who immigrated to our country during this period were mostly entrepreneurs, especially from Turkey, Syria, Jordan and China. The economic changes have determined the increase of Romania's attractiveness for foreign entrepreneurs, but also for other categories of less specialized

foreigners. After 2000, the number of work permits increased from 1580 to 3678 in 2005, reaching 7993 at the end of 2016. The situation of foreign citizens who are in Romania with a legal status differs greatly from one year to another (Aceleanu, 2011).

In 2019, 64479 foreign citizens had legal residence permits in Romania, originating from: Republic of Moldova - 38205 people (59,3%), other countries - 16162 people (25,1%) (and among other countries we mention: China 6124 people (9,4%), Syria - 2,505 people (4,37%), Tunisia - 1475 people (2,58%), Lebanon - 1443 people (2,52%)), Ukraine - 6196 people (9,6 %), Italy 1123 people (1,7%) (Table 2). In mid - 2019, 42953 EU citizens resided in Romania. They were originally from: Italy 9546 people (22,22%), Germany 6919 people (16,11%), France 5319 people (12,38%), Hungary 3448 people (8,03%), Austria 2715 people (6,32%), Great Britain 2263 people (5,27%) Bulgaria 2139 people (4,98%), Greece 1904 people (4,43%), Spain 1519 people (3,54%), Poland 1249 people (2,91%), other countries 5932 people (13,81%).

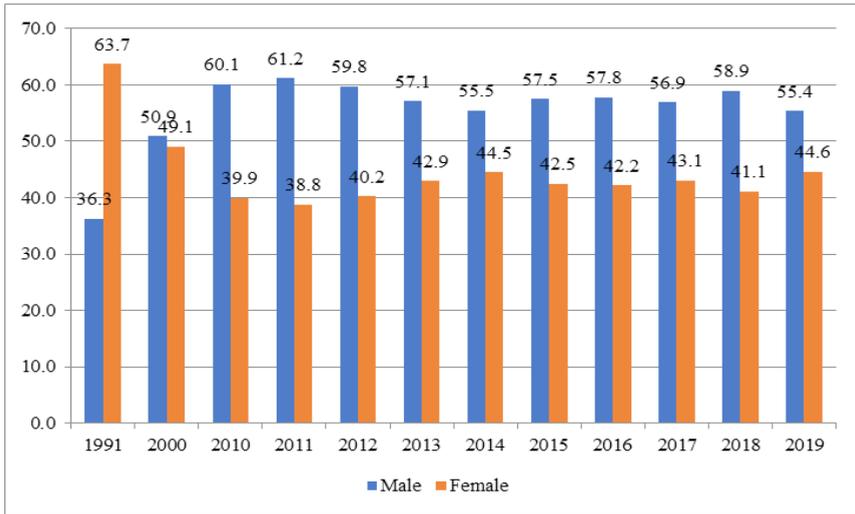
**Table 2.** Distribution of immigrants settled in Romania, by country of origin

	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Austria	0,8	1,6	0,5	0,2	0,3	0,2	0,6	0,5	0,3	0,3	0,3
Canada	0,5	3,3	1,4	0,6	0,6	0,6	1,3	1,1	0,7	0,5	0,6
France	1,0	2,1	0,9	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,9	0,9	0,5	0,4	0,5
Germany	2,1	6,2	2,3	1,3	2,8	0,7	2,0	2,1	1,4	1,2	1,5
Israel	0,5	1,5	0,8	0,3	0,4	0,3	0,6	0,5	0,2	0,2	0,2
Italy	0,6	18,0	4,5	2,2	2,3	2,4	5,7	4,6	2,3	1,6	1,7
Republic of Moldova	83,0	28,0	57,4	78,1	84,0	54,9	62,1	63,6	60,8	56,0	59,3
US	1,5	6,1	3,1	1,4	1,4	1,0	2,1	2,1	1,1	0,9	0,9
Ukraine	5,9	0,6	6,5	2,3	2,9	3,0	5,3	4,2	9,7	13,8	9,6
Hungary	1,6	4,2	1,6	0,8	0,7	0,4	1,0	0,8	0,5	0,3	0,3
Other countries	2,6	28,5	20,9	12,5	4,4	36,1	18,5	19,6	22,6	24,8	25,1

Source: TEMPO online base, <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online>, own calculations

The gender structure of immigrants shows that during the whole period analyzed most of the immigrants are men (with the exception of 1991, when only about 36,3% of immigrants were men). If until 1997, the share of men in the total number of people who decided to settle in Romania was around 60%, in the period 1998-2019, as can be seen in Figure 4, the share of men decreases to about 55,4%.

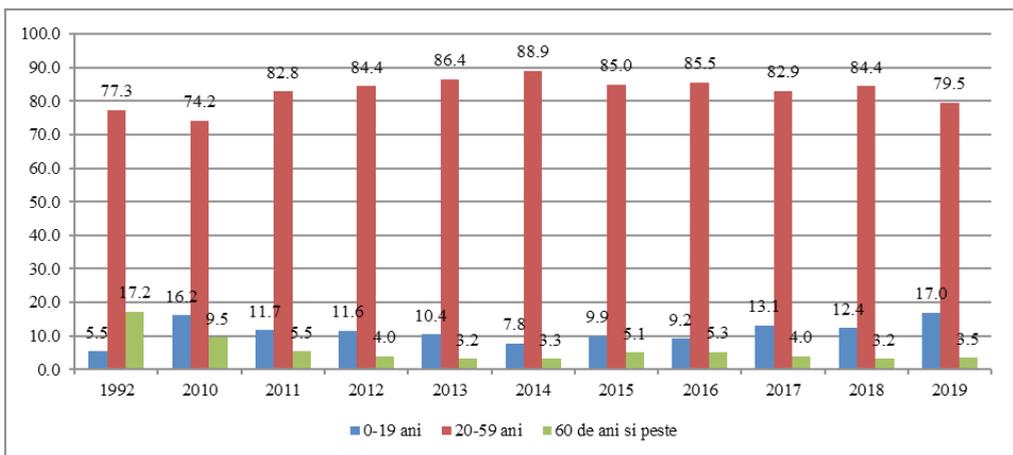
**Figure 4.** Distribution of immigrants from Romania by sex



Source: TEMPO online base, <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online>, own calculations

Regarding the distribution by age groups of immigrants, it can be seen that throughout the period, people between 20-59 years are the most active in this regard, while the share of the elderly population aged 61 and over is almost non-existent. (less than 5%). In 1991, the working age population (20-59 years old) represented, in fact, young families with children, as together with them they chose to settle in Romania in a high proportion, of approximately 80% (this proportion having variations above or slightly below this figure), and their children belonging to the under-19 population category (Figure 5).

**Figure 5.** Distribution of immigrants from Romania by age groups



Source: TEMPO online base, <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online>, own calculations

The balance of external migration by sex confirms that for the entire analyzed period the male population predominates in the immigration flow, as the negative balance of external migration in women is higher compared to that registered in men. If in the first 10 years the balance differences are small (up to 30%), with women registering only a slight advance, after the year 2000 the negative migratory balance increases for females, while for men it has higher values. small being even positive in the last 10 years.

The balance of external migration by age groups reveals that, during the analyzed period, the structure of external migration flows changes. Thus, if in the 1990s, the intensity of the migration flow abroad is high for children under 19 and young people aged between 26 and 40 (the balance of external migration is negative and has high values), and as it progresses In age, the intensity of the flow decreases (in people over 41 the values of the migratory balance are lower and closer in value), in 2019, the tendency to go abroad is present only in the working age population between 26-40 years , since in the other age categories, especially in the population over 41 years old, the number of Romanians who choose to emigrate abroad is lower than the number of foreigners who decide to settle in Romania.

## Conclusions

One of the most visible effects, with a high impact on migration flows, is the evolution of the labor market. Both massive labor migration and the aging process are currently affecting labor supply.

Among the issues highlighted in this chapter were the demographic characteristics of international migrants. It was found that the share of women in the total number of emigrants is over 52%, and after 2000, we find a high degree of feminization, the share of women exceeding 60%.

The overwhelming share of migrants is in the age group of the active population, followed by the population under 18 years. In other words, we are witnessing the phenomenon of emigration of the whole family.

After 2001, Romania became an increasingly attractive country for immigration, especially for immigration for work purposes, with a sharp increase in employment contracts in this category.

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