



projektkontor  
für bildung und forschung

---

# The experience of Central Eastern European migrants in Germany during the Corona pandemic

---

25 February 2021



## Who is Minor and what do we do?

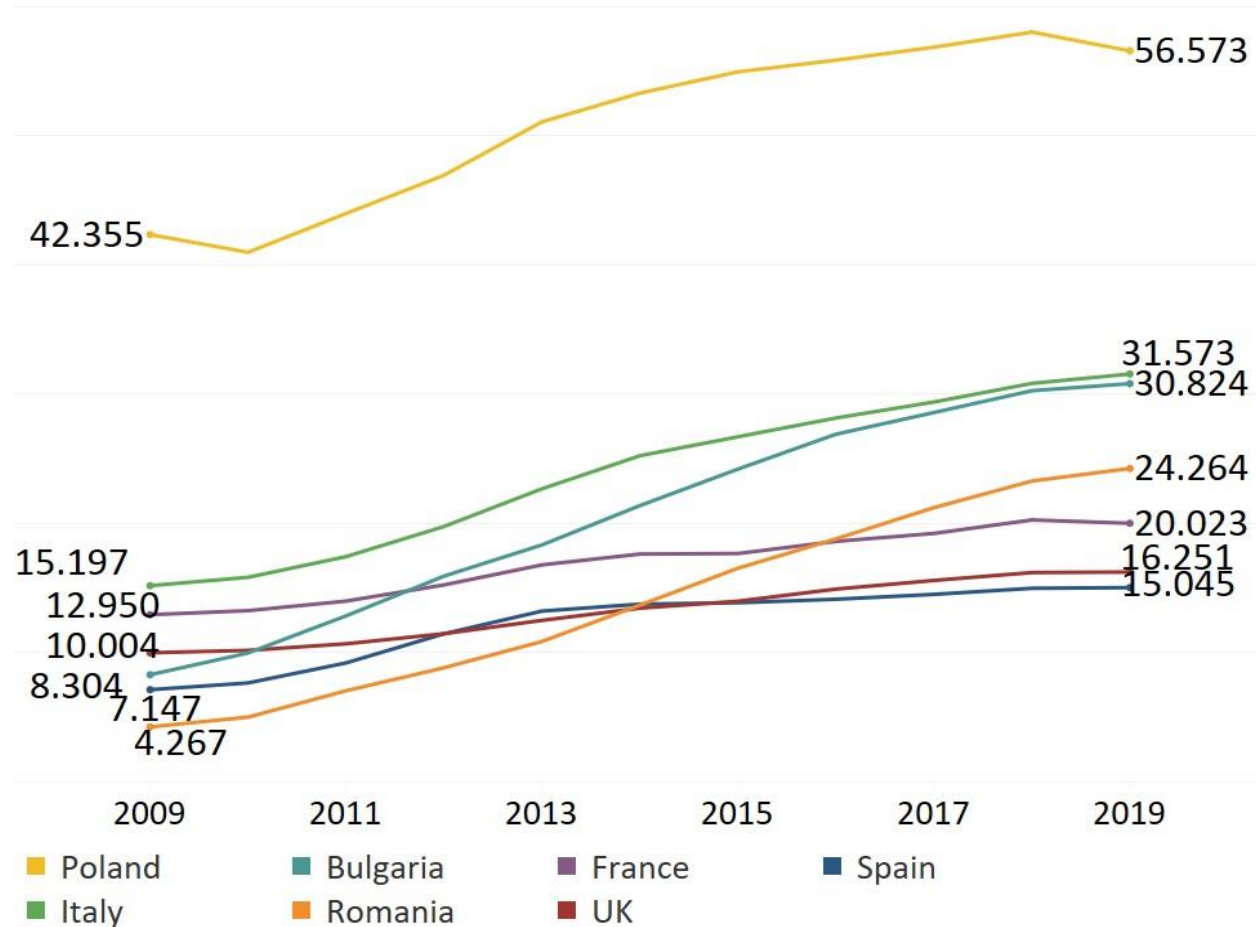
---

- Minor – Projektkontor für Bildung und Forschung gGmbH implements **research and pilot projects** on how **disadvantaged groups** (migrants, young people, women, seniors) can be empowered in their societal participation in Germany and Europe
  - We operate at the **intersection between public sector/civil society institutions and the networks of migrants** and other disadvantaged groups
  - Current areas of work:
    - Researching migrants' experience in the German labor market - [National Competence Center on Immigration](#)
    - “Digital Streetwork” for migrants and refugees - [Migrant Advice 4.0](#) & [Reach out & organize vs. Corona](#)
    - Civic education and political participation - [Democracy, Religion and Diversity](#)
    - Democratic practices and social cohesion in local neighborhoods - [Conflict, Neighborhood, Coexistence](#)
    - Cultural memory and education - [The Course of Histories](#)
  - Our work is funded by German Federal ministries, local authorities and foundations
-

- **Part I** - Insights on the labor market situation of CEE European-migrants during the Corona pandemic in 2020, *Max Behrendt, “European Berlin”*
- **Part II** – “Digital streetwork” to meet information needs and self-organizing networks amongst migrants on social media, *Adina Danes, “Reach out and organize vs. Corona”*

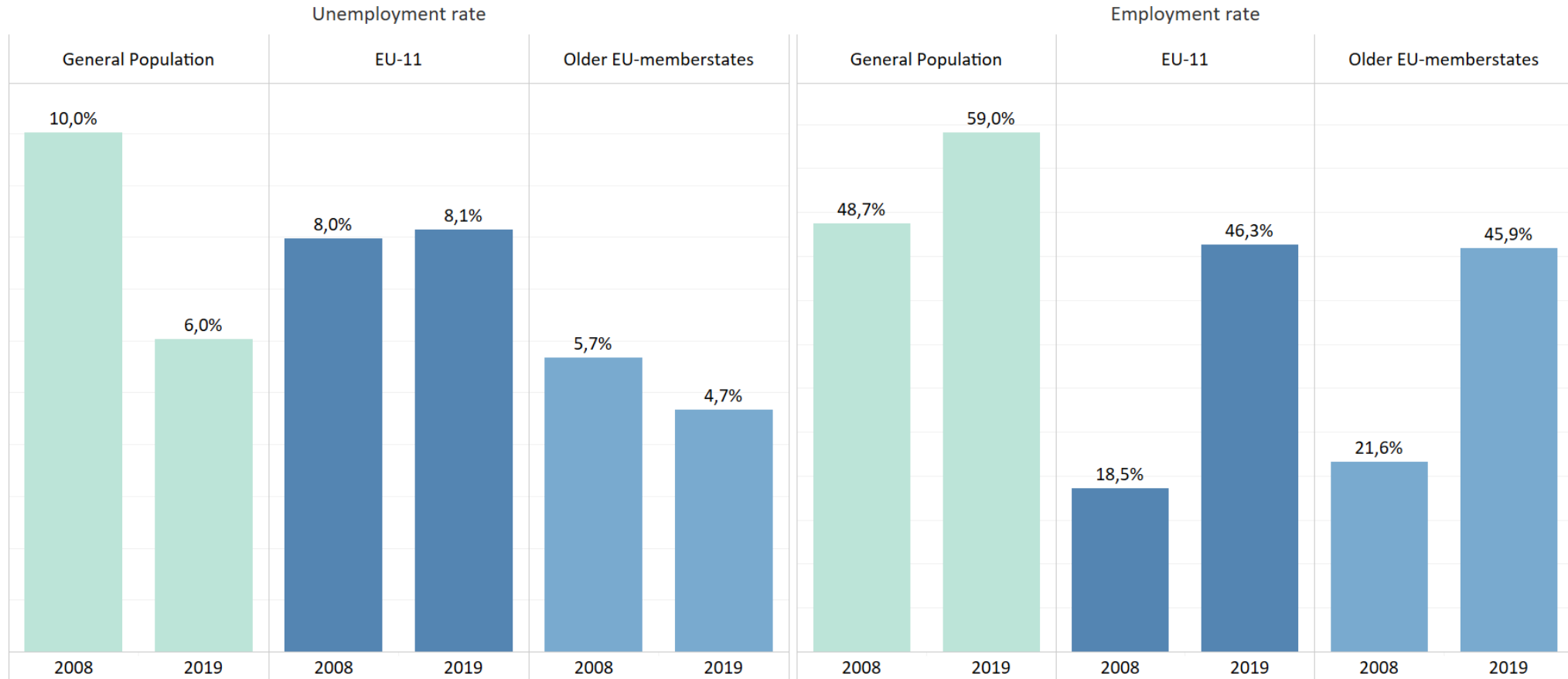
Inputs are based on the work in the following projects:

- **„European Berlin“** investigates the latest migration developments in Berlin to support local policy makers with decision making. The project is funded by the Berlin Senate Department for Integration, Labor and Social Affairs
- **„Reach out and organise vs. Corona“** is testing new ways of providing hard-to-reach Romanian-speaking migrant communities in Germany on social media with Corona-related information. The project is supported by a grant from the Foundation Open Society Institute.

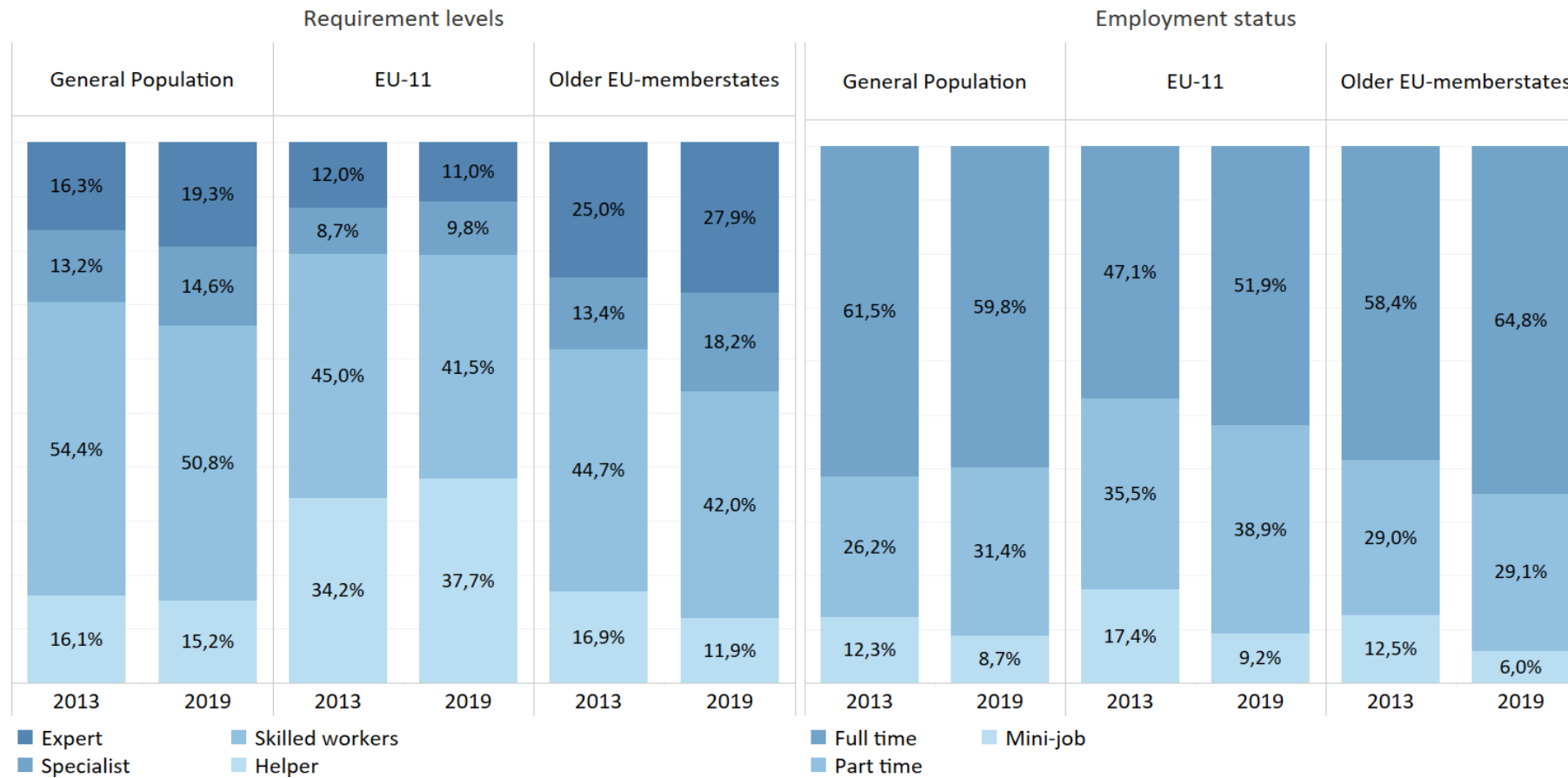


Source: Berlin Statistics Bureau

- Different growth rates for EU-communities
  - > Migration from Bulgaria and Romania has increased substantively
- But: Overall, slower growth of migration between 2018-2019

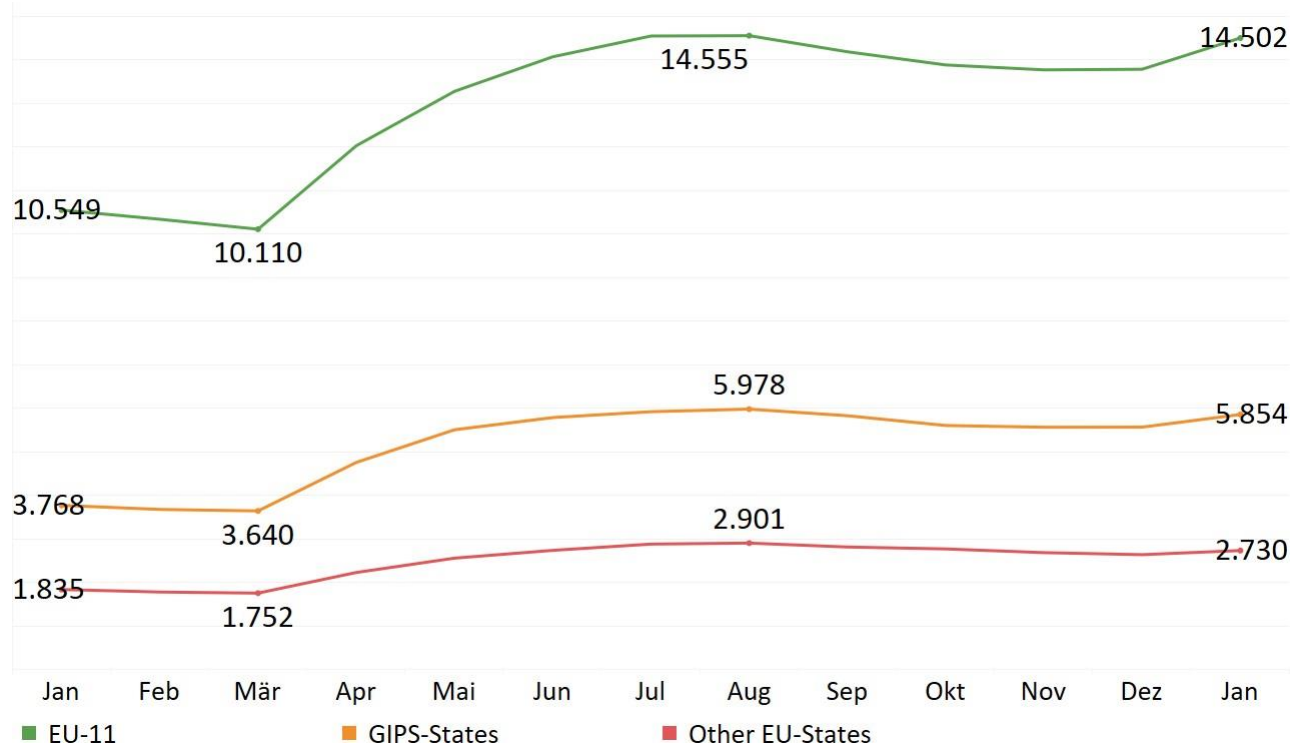


Source: Federal Employment Agency



Source: Federal Employment Agency

## Part I - Development of unemployment numbers amongst EU-migrants in Berlin in 2020 as absolute numbers



- EU-citizens experience increase of unemployment since start of pandemic
- Impact differs within communities
  - > However: Citizens from EU-11 also before pandemic in more precarious employment conditions (+ higher absolute unemployment levels)

Source: Berlin Statistics Bureau

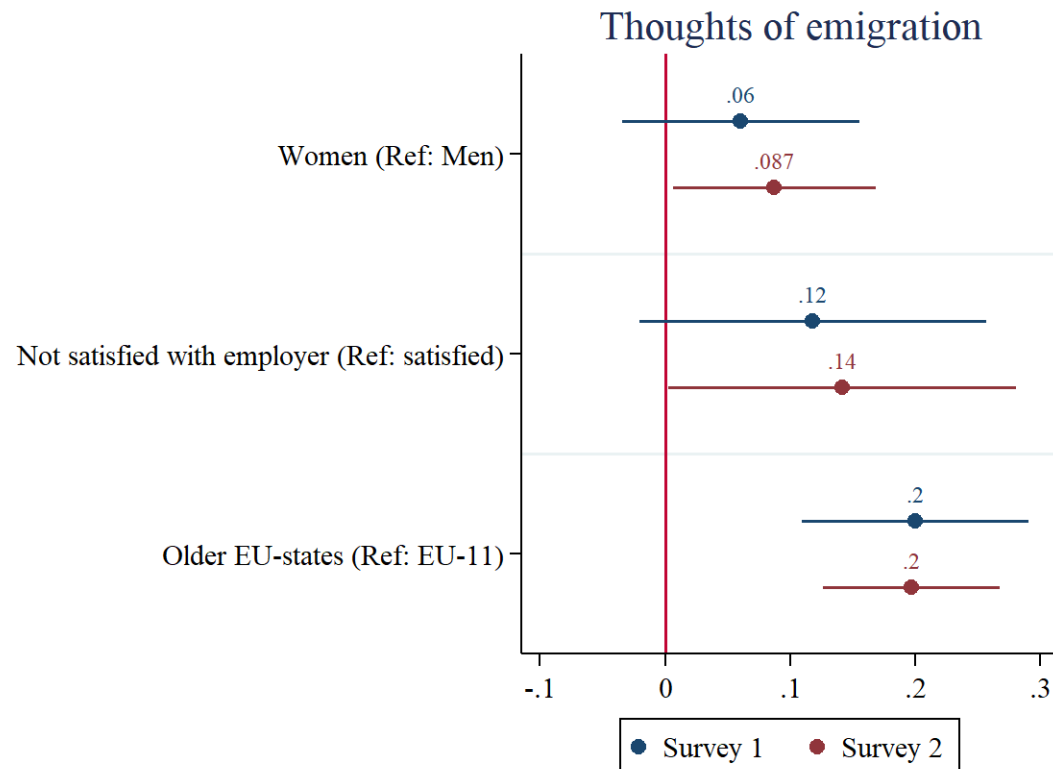
# Part I - Development of unemployment numbers amongst EU-migrants in Berlin in 2020 as percentage change



Source: Berlin Statistics Bureau

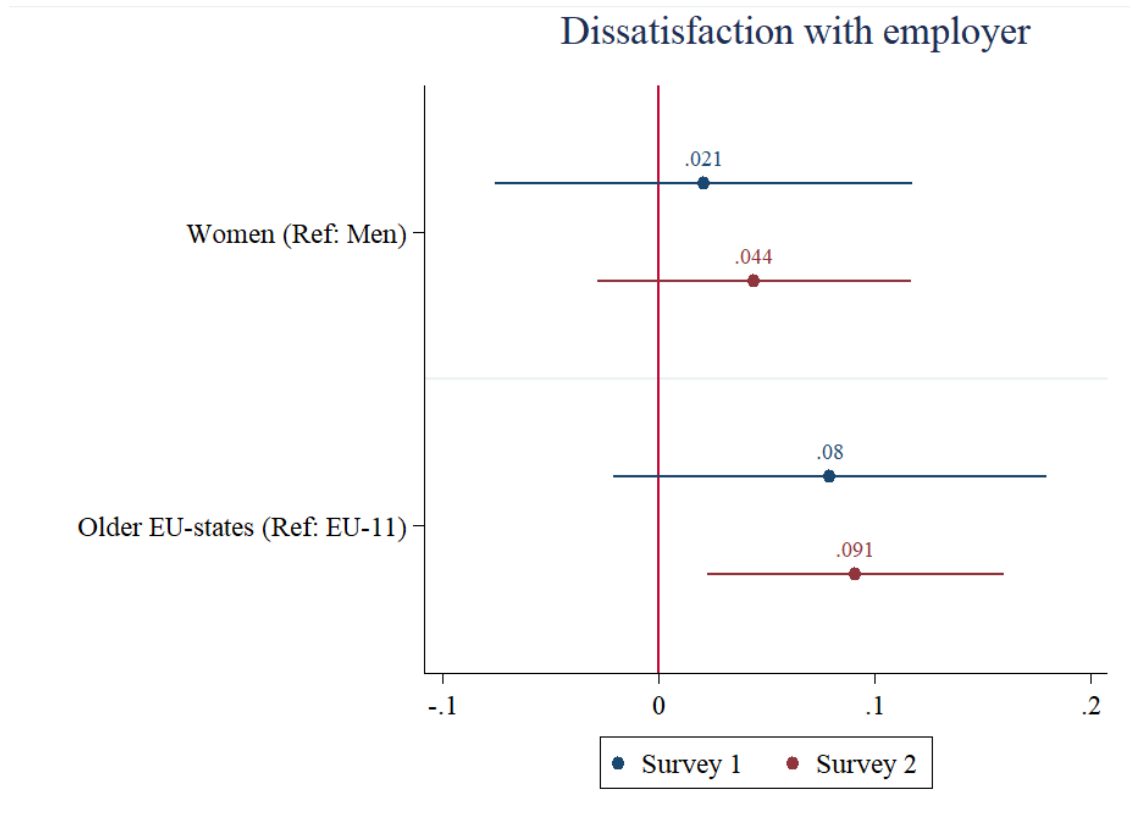


## Part I - Impact of the Corona crisis: migration/settlement perspectives



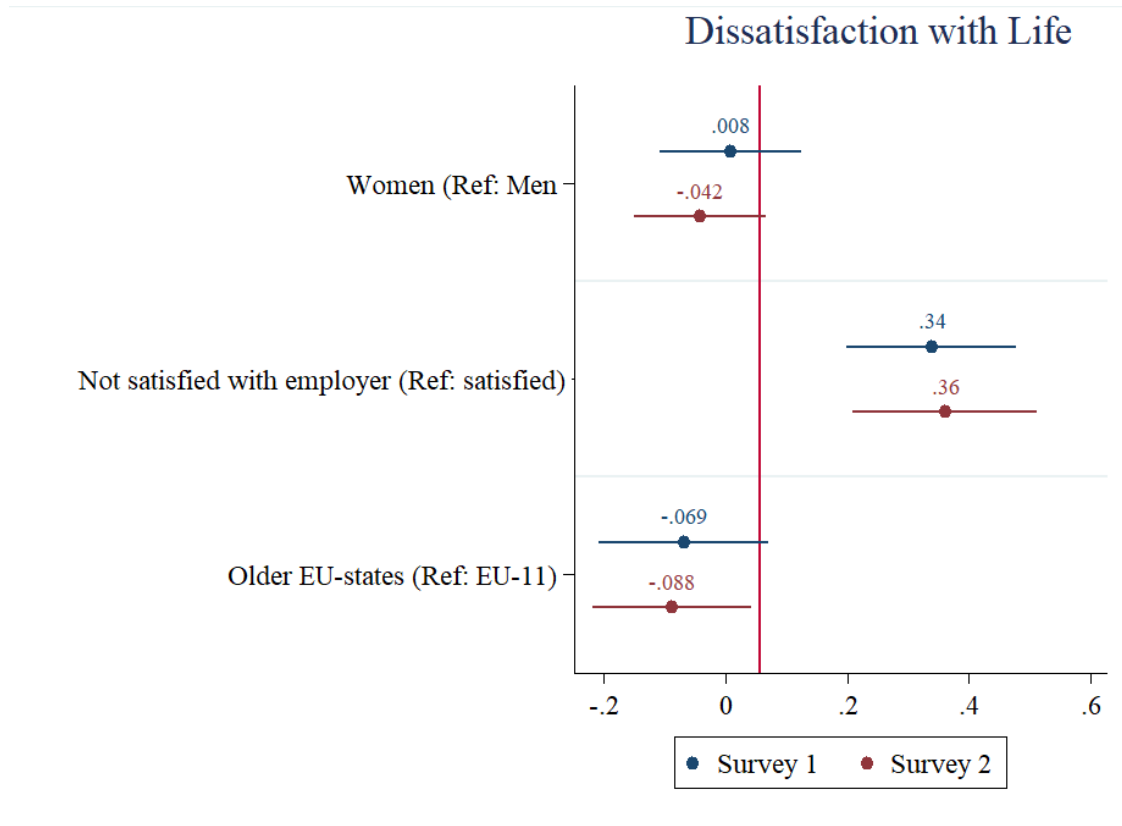
- Women 9% more likely than men to consider leaving Berlin (statistically significant at t2)
- EU-citizens who are not satisfied with employer 14% more likely than satisfied EU-citizens to consider leaving Berlin (statistically significant at t2)
- Citizens of older EU-states (Italy, Spain, France) more likely than citizens of EU-11-states (Bulgaria, Romania, Poland) to consider leaving Berlin (statistically significant at t1 and t2)
  - However: results should be interpreted with care. EU-11 citizens may have fewer mobility options

Source: Minor Survey 2020 - Panel Data Analysis



- By trend, women are less satisfied with their employers (yet, not significant in either survey)
- Citizens of older EU-states (Italy, Spain, France) 9% less satisfied than citizens of EU-11-states (Bulgaria, Romania, Poland) with employer (statistically significant at t2)

Source: Minor Survey 2020 - Panel Data Analysis



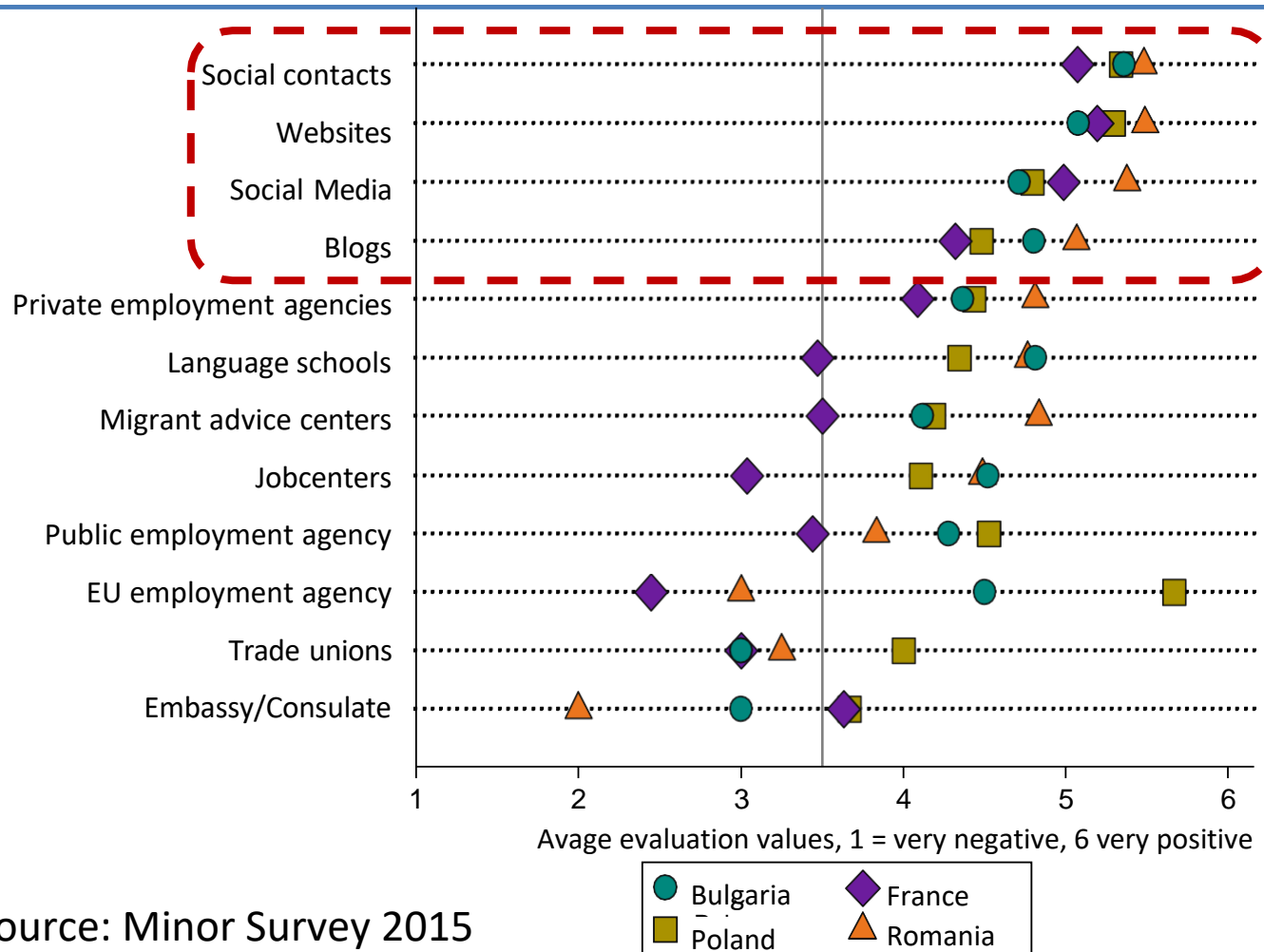
- By trend, women more satisfied with life (yet, not significant in either survey)
- EU-citizens who are not satisfied with employer 34% (t1) and 36% (t2) more likely to be less satisfied with life (statistically significant at t1 and t2)
- By trend, citizens of older EU-states (Italy, Spain, France) more satisfied than citizens of EU-11-states (Bulgaria, Romania, Poland) (yet, not significant in either survey)

Source: Minor Survey 2020 - Panel Data Analysis

### Preliminary results

- Perspectives of EU-citizens on access barriers to Jobcenter services
  - German “bureaucratic” language, rudeness, discrimination, complexity of bureaucratic process, long processing times, lack of empathy by staff
- Perspectives of social workers
  - language barriers on both sides, insufficient preparation before emigration, false information and unrealistic expectations amongst migrants, general suspicion towards migrants (abuse of the welfare system), lack of usage of supportive tools such as translators by Jobcenters
- Minor is currently conducting a follow-up project with four local Jobcenters in Berlin
  - Capturing the perspectives of Jobcenter staff
  - Working paper to be published on the results in May/June 2021

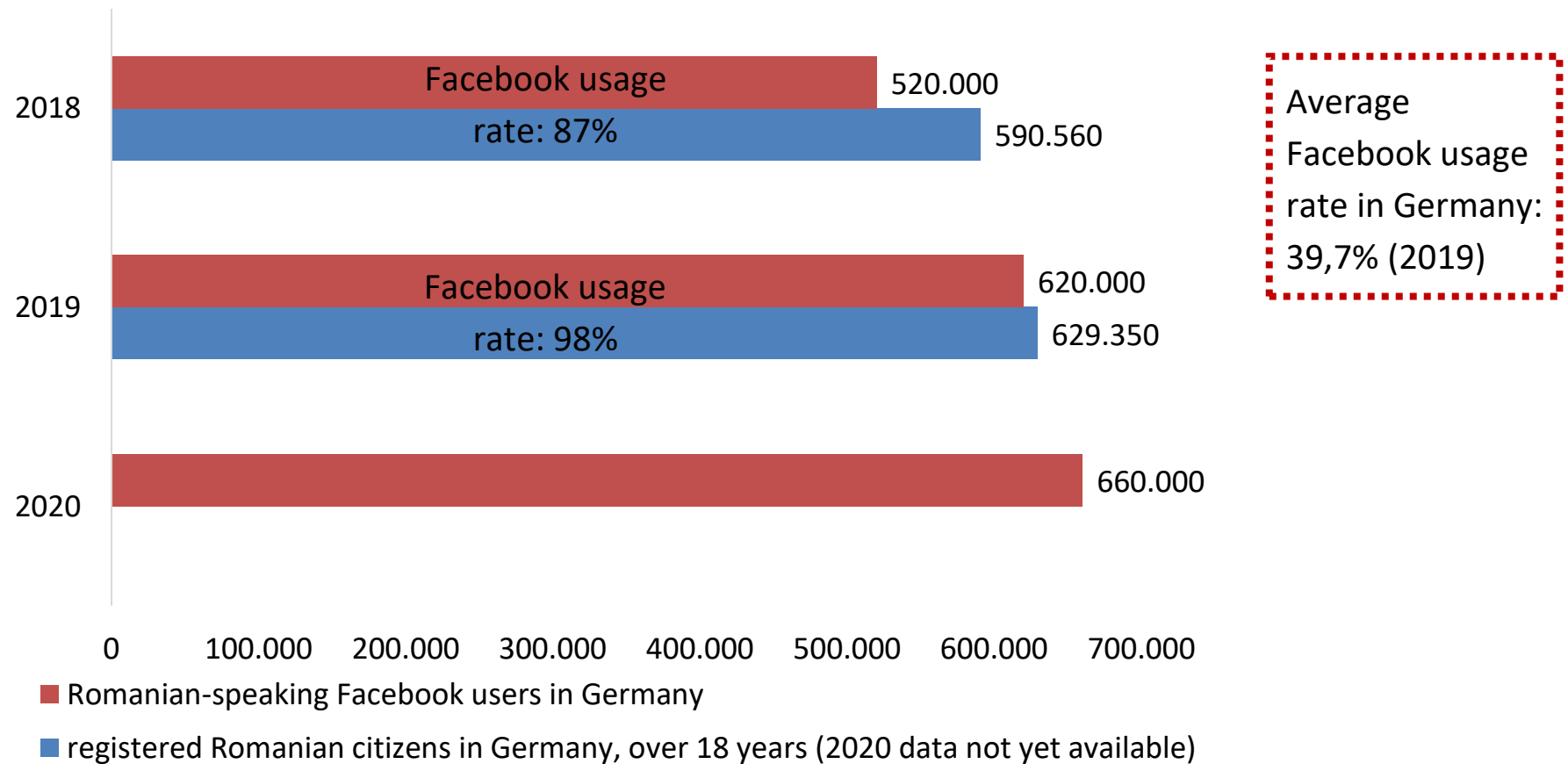
## Part II – Why “digital streetwork” for migrants in Germany?



- Answers to the question “How do you rate the following sources of information and support since your arrival in Berlin?”
- The answers reflect the experiences with different information sources and which ones are most widely known
- Most positively rated sources are social contacts and digital media

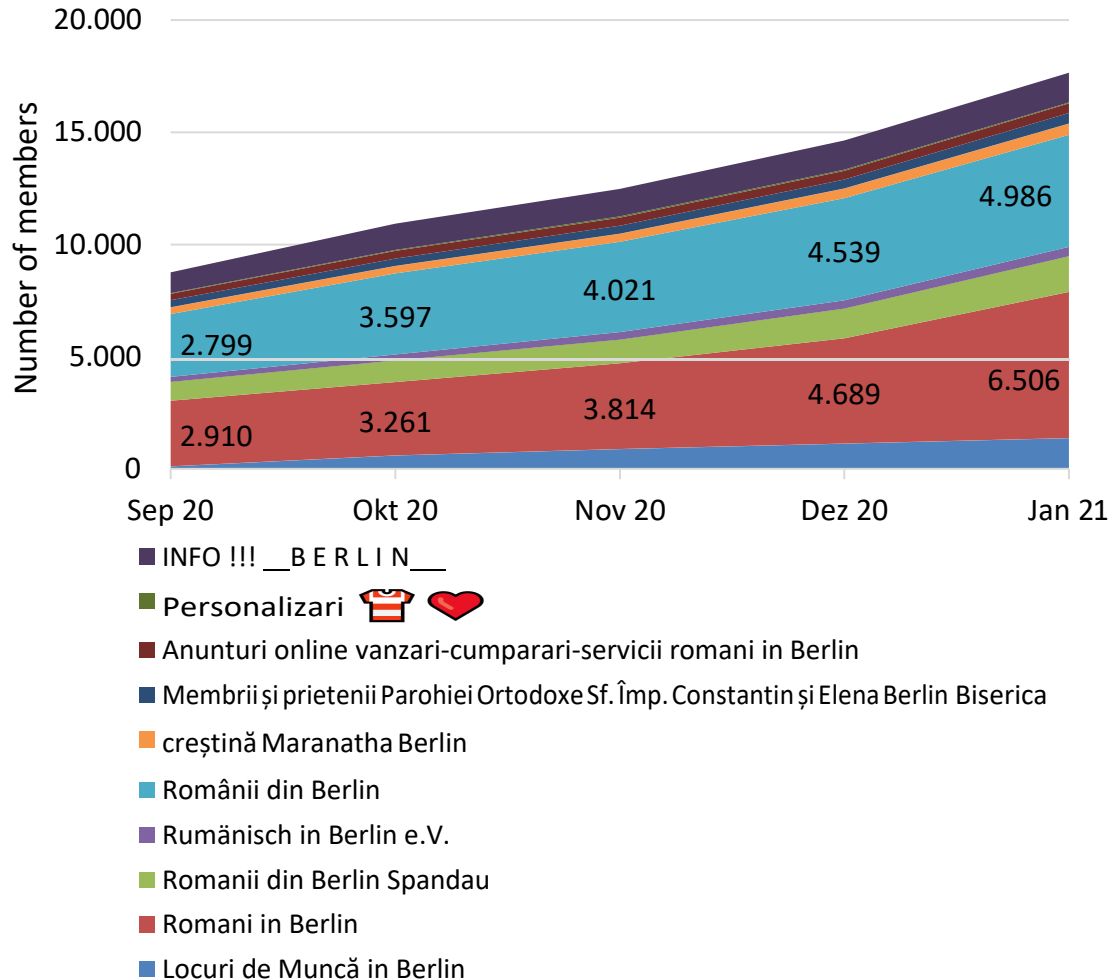
Source: Minor Survey 2015

## Part II – Increased usage rate of Facebook by Romanian speakers in Germany



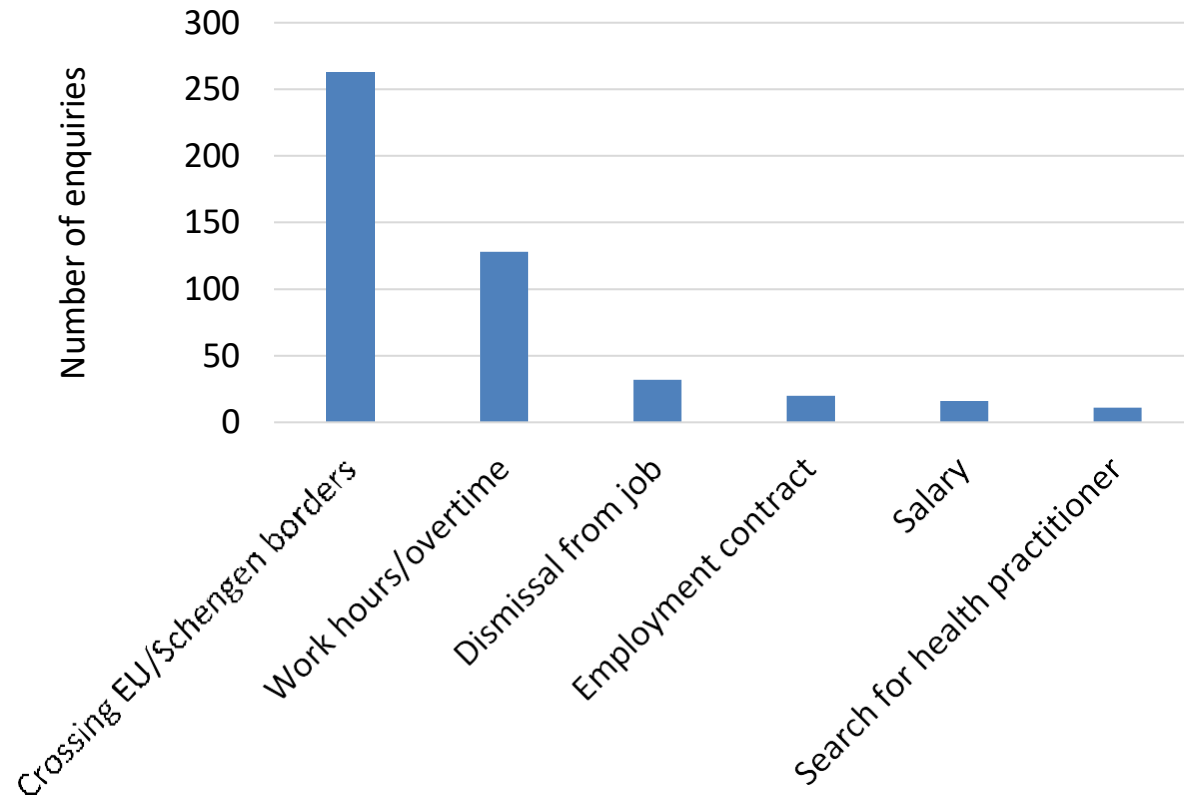
Source: Facebook and Federal Statistics Bureau

## Part II – Self-organised networks in the Romanian-speaking community on social media in Germany



- Most networks/groups set up in the last 5 years
- Varying motives behind groups' initiation
  - some groups promote services like transport, jobs etc.
  - some groups focus on answering questions on social rights/workers' rights - i. e. "Dreptul muncii în Germania de la A la Z"
  - some groups seek to build a community for migrants (around location, nationality or professional identity – i. e. for care workers)
- Spam, false information, intimidation and hate speech are problematic trends in many groups: lack of safe space and need for pro-active facilitation
- Group „Corona Info Germania RO“: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/coronainforo>

## Part II - Topics of Corona-related questions in the Romanian community on social media in Germany



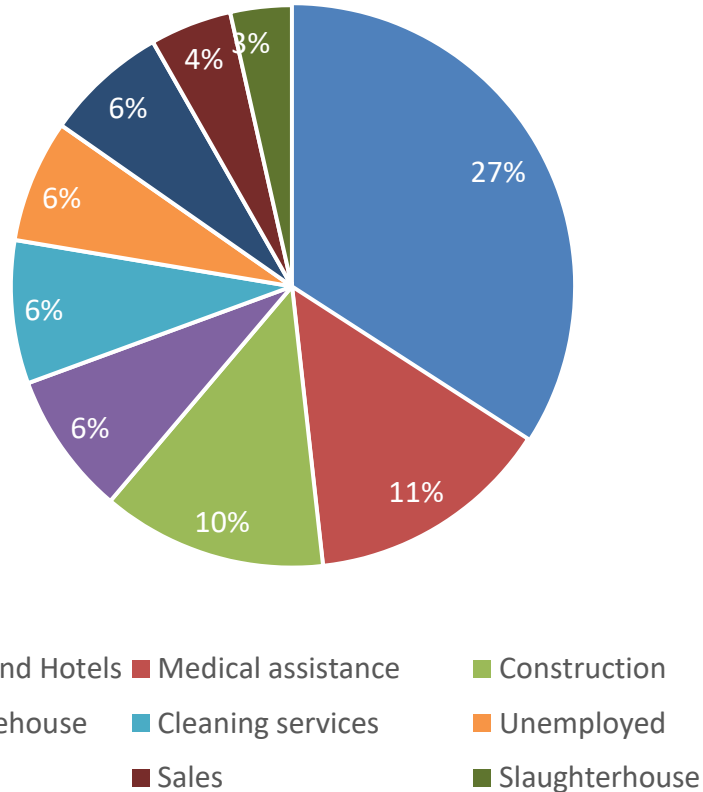
### Most common topics of Corona-related questions

- Rules when entering Germany/Romania
- Lockdown rules in Germany, local rules on quarantine and social contact
- Vaccination programme in Germany
- Employment law
- Financial aid/support measures during Corona-crisis

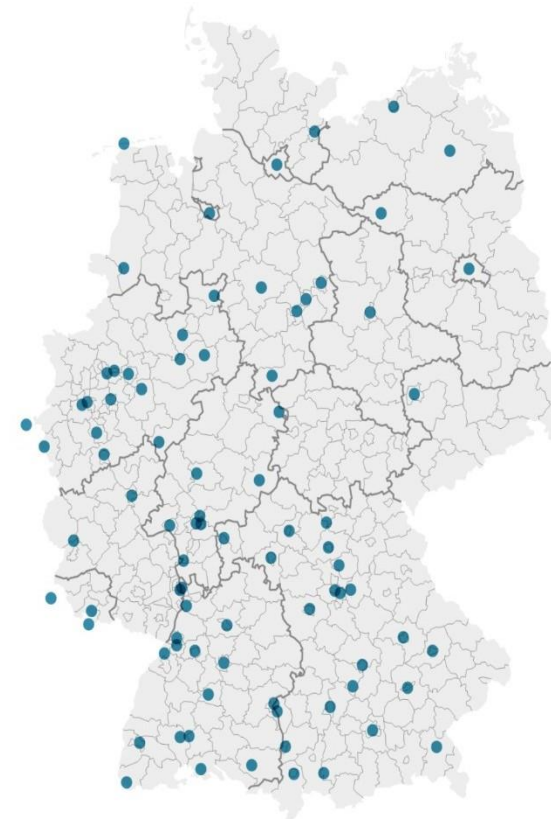
Romanian-language questions with reference to Corona, posted on Facebook  
 bw. March 2020 – February 2021, recorded by the ROOC and MB4.0 projects



# Part II – Professional profiles and locations of the members of the „Corona Info Germania“ Facebook-Group



Self-identified professions of members of the Facebook-Group „Corona Info“, n = 109



Map data: © OSM · Created with Datawrapper

Locations of members of the Facebook-Group „Corona Info“

## Part II – Example questions from the project's own „Corona-Info“ Facebook group

Q: My husband tested positive for SARS COV2 so my son and I had to go into isolation without taking a test. Now I was asked from work to specify how many days and why I stayed at home. I sent them the result of my husband's test, but they told me that I need a result in my name. (...). Do you know what I need to do?

A: You have to write to the public health department and ask for the document certifying that you should be in quarantine because of your husband's Coronavirus infection. You can find your local public health department here: <https://tools.rki.de/plztool/>. Send this document to your employer. The employer must continue to pay your salary if you are unable to work because of a quarantine order. The employer can then claim compensation from the government using the tool "Entschädigungszahlung nach dem Infektionsschutzgesetz".

Q: Is the employer allowed to organize a test for medical staff coming into the country to avoid quarantine? Or can the employee start work if they have a test result not older than 48 hours?

A: In the local regulations there are quarantine exceptions for certain key occupations or for certain situations (i. e. visiting relatives).

Medical staff is often included in the exceptions, but you need to make sure your job is an exception in accordance with the local state regulations. You can find the regulation here.

Another way to confirm the exception is to write an email to the public health department, which you can identify with a postal code here: <https://tools.rki.de/plztool/>



## Questions & Contact

---

Tobias Stapf & Adina Danes

„Neu in Berlin Plus“ & „Reach Out and Organise vs. Corona“

[t.stapf@minor-kontor.de](mailto:t.stapf@minor-kontor.de) & [a.danes@minor-kontor.de](mailto:a.danes@minor-kontor.de)

Max Behrendt

„European Berlin“

[m.behrendt@minor-kontor.de](mailto:m.behrendt@minor-kontor.de)

Further literature on the impact of the Corona-crisis on migrants in Germany (in German)

„EU-Zugewanderte in Berlin und die Coronakrise“

<https://minor-kontor.de/eu-zugewanderte-in-berlin-und-die-coronakrise/>

„Digital Streetwork intimes of Corona“

<https://minor-kontor.de/digital-streetwork-in-zeiten-von-corona/>