

# The Dynamics of Recruitment in the Romanian Public Sector: The Role of Digital Platforms Within the Institutions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs



Arabela Briciu , Victor-Alexandru Briciu , Denisa Gabor,  
and Mihai Duguleană 

**Abstract** Social media has become a vital recruitment channel for both the public and private sectors. This chapter examines the digital modernization of public sector recruitment in Romania, with a focus on the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MAI). It analyzes the digital strategies employed by the MAI's primary employers—the Romanian Police, the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (IGSU), and the Romanian Gendarmerie—to advertise job openings. These institutions were selected due to their continuous, high-volume recruitment demands. The research aims to understand how these key state institutions adapt to the digital age and engage a new generation of candidates who use social media as their primary source for employment opportunities. The methodology consists of a content analysis of recruitment posts published on the official Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok pages of the three institutions studied over a one-year period (2024). This paper offers valuable insights into the digitization of Human Resources (HR) processes within state institutions and evaluates the effectiveness of digital communication strategies in attracting talent. By examining the digitalization of recruitment, HR management, and the differences between public and private sector approaches, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of contemporary HR practices in a governmental context.

---

A. Briciu · V.-A. Briciu (✉) · D. Gabor · M. Duguleană  
Transilvania University of Brasov, Brasov, Romania  
e-mail: [victor.briciu@unitbv.ro](mailto:victor.briciu@unitbv.ro)

## 1 Introduction

Nowadays, a simple observation of how people spend their time reveals that many are connected to their mobile phones and social networks [1], which have become a central element of daily activities. Within this diversity of content, recruitment announcements can also be found, playing a role in attracting candidates. These announcements are also present on the social media pages of Romanian state institutions [2], as part of a digitalization process specific to the era in which we live. In terms of HR sciences, we can consider the research topic to be relevant because it includes a series of elements specific to this field, such as the digitalization of recruitment, traditional recruitment strategies, HR management, and recruitment in the private or public sector. The topic is current, as it involves researching a situation specific to the contemporary context, characterized by digitalization, in which public institutions are aligning with global recruitment trends with the help of social media [3]. To move the discussion forward to the theoretical framework established in the literature to the practical analysis, this research will investigate how the three institutions within the MAI (the Romanian Police, the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations, and the Romanian Gendarmerie) have promoted their vacant positions through social media platforms.

## 2 Literature Review

In the current digital age, which is shaped by the internet and rapid technological change, all organizations must adapt to a new competitive environment in order to survive. Digital transformation has redefined the way organizations operate, thus becoming an essential part of corporate-level strategic planning [4]. This major change has generated new standards in consumer behaviour, in the way products and services are perceived and evaluated, and in their expectations. Faced with new market demands, companies have realized how crucial it is to transform their business models. This adjustment has generated a series of benefits, such as the chance to consolidate a competitive position and the ability to adapt to the rapid pace of change in the digital environment. In an economic context increasingly dependent on technology, digital transformation has become a determining factor for organizational success and relevance [5].

A reason to focus our attention on this social media phenomenon is not only its speed but also the time spent by users on social networks. In this regard, a recent international study indicates that in 2023, a person used social media for an average of 151 min per day, which is about 18 h per week, thus highlighting how important communication via the internet has become [6]. Currently, Facebook is the platform with the most users worldwide, registering over 3 billion users in the last quarter of 2023 [7]. Meanwhile, Instagram reached 2 billion active users in 2021 [8]. Knowing these figures, it is natural for social media to become an essential communication channel between people, as well

as an opportunity through which an entity can reach its target audience much more easily, being a fast and efficient method, considering that, as we have observed, a significant number of users are active on these platforms. We can thus deduce that this type of communication is very important, but we must also mention a crucial aspect that has accelerated the entire process of digitalization, namely the pandemic. Given the limitation of interactions during the pandemic period, social networks became the main way to interact for those who wanted to stay connected [9]. For this reason, we have observed a strong digitalization over the past years, as well as an increased emphasis on communication through these platforms [10].

Social media platforms have evolved from channels for personal connection into valuable environments for marketing and sales. As a result, they have also become essential tools for HR, offering access to a large potential candidate database. According to one definition, recruitment through social media is the process of identifying candidates by using social platforms as means of promotion by employers [11]. A more general definition would be that of online recruitment, according to which this process is the practice of using modern technology, especially internet-based resources, for the tasks involved in finding, attracting, evaluating, interviewing, and hiring new people [12]. Both definitions emphasize that recruitment is carried out through digital channels, being part of a trend of digitalizing HR activities.

The benefits of using social networks as a social media tool are multiple [13]. They can accelerate the hiring process, make it more efficient, and allow employers to target and hire qualified candidates. Social networks also represent a valuable source of information about possible employment opportunities. They allow for a more efficient use of resources, such as time, money, costs, and labor, and provide employers worldwide with a vast base of candidates. The integration of social media into HR management offers dual benefits: employers gain access to information at reduced costs, while candidates can better identify suitable positions and understand company policies [14].

Although social media recruitment is beneficial, it has notable disadvantages. These include skewed representativeness toward younger users, difficulty verifying applicant identity, and limited accessibility. For populations without internet access, traditional methods like newspaper or radio advertising are more effective [15]. In conclusion, both traditional and online methods have benefits and disadvantages, and the key to success lies in combining them. Thus, traditional methods should not be completely replaced by electronic ones but should complement modern processes to achieve the most optimal result [16].

### **3 Research Methodology**

While the first part of the paper explored the specialized literature and discovered the significant influence that social networks have had on recruitment methods, the second part will focus on a practical approach, offering a perspective on how these theoretical concepts are reflected.

Thus, this research employs content analysis to quantitatively evaluate how the main institutions within the MAI use social media to promote vacant positions, thereby providing a detailed perspective on their digital recruitment strategies.

Regarding the sample chosen for the research, it is formed by the representative institutions of the MAI: the General Inspectorate of Police, IGSU, and the Romanian Gendarmerie. The paper focuses on the main institutions because they have more intense activity and a more visible presence on social media platforms. The exclusion of other smaller institutions or those with reduced activity was determined by the desire to focus the research on the most relevant examples. The tool used for content analysis is the analysis grid, which will help us in collecting and classifying data in a structured way. By using the analysis grid, we will be able to identify trends in the recruitment process.

In the research, we analyzed the posts of the institutions within the MAI on the social media platforms Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. These platforms were selected due to their popularity and diversity among the public [17]. They allow for a variety of content forms: from images and text posts on Facebook, to videos and stories on Instagram and TikTok. Each platform has different characteristics that influence how posts are perceived, as well as how social networks contribute to attracting candidates for vacant positions. The research period for the content was conducted over the course of 1 year (2024), to ensure extensive coverage during different months of the year, thus giving us the opportunity to observe whether recruitment strategies vary according to seasonality. By analyzing the content over a year, we can determine recurring trends and changes in the typology of posts.

## 4 Results

Content analysis is a quantitative-qualitative research method through which an objective and systematic description of symbolic behaviour is carried out [18]. For the present research, content analysis represents an optimal option to determine how the main institutions of the MAI have chosen to promote their job openings through social media platforms. These recruitment announcements were analyzed on each institution's social media page with the help of an analysis grid specially developed for this research. This grid was designed to collect relevant data about the posts made by the Romanian Police, IGSU, and the Romanian Gendarmerie on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.

The analysis grid includes the following main indicators: date of post, type of post (images, videos, reels), number of likes/reactions, number of comments, number of shares, number of views, and video saves. The content on the platforms of the Romanian Police, the Romanian Gendarmerie, and IGSU was analyzed for the period first of January—31st of December 2024. This research focused exclusively on the analysis of posts from the official accounts of the institutions that refer to job openings and that serve as recruitment announcements.

The first dimension analyzed is the frequency of posts. On the Facebook platform, the frequency of posts is higher in August for the Romanian Police, with 7 posts dedicated to recruitment in that month. For the Romanian Police, the summer season is when most posts are published on Facebook; out of a total of 19 announcements, 13 are made between June and August. These data suggest a concentrated approach during seasonal recruitment campaigns. Regarding IGSU, posts referring to job openings are limited. With only 4 recruitment posts per year, IGSU has a low frequency which indicates a specific, point-based strategy. In contrast, the Romanian Gendarmerie has an approach similar to that of the Romanian Police in terms of post frequency. The Romanian Gendarmerie ranks first with 24 posts on Facebook, followed by the Romanian Police with 19 posts, and in last place is IGSU with 4 posts dedicated to recruitment. The Gendarmerie's data shows a more intense activity in June, with 7 posts, and the posts from this month are made at a short interval from each other, being published multiple times each day between third of June—eighth of June 2024, indicating an active and intense recruitment campaign. On Instagram, the Romanian Police was more active than the other institutions, with 19 posts continuously during the year. The number of posts on Facebook corresponds with that on Instagram, but the periods in which the posts were made are not identical, suggesting a different strategy. Most of the Romanian Police's posts were concentrated in March (15 posts), followed by June (3 posts) and August (4 posts) because the high concentration of posts in March corresponded directly to the intensive recruitment campaign for admission to MAI educational institutions (police academies and schools for non-commissioned officers). The Instagram account of IGSU registered a total of 5 posts, largely coinciding with its Facebook activity. The Romanian Gendarmerie used a similar strategy on Instagram as on Facebook, accumulating a total of 22 posts, again being the most active institution of the three. Most of these posts were in June (13 posts between June 3 and 12), reflecting the same type of intense activity as on Facebook. Regarding the TikTok platform, only IGSU used it for promoting job openings, posting a single video on fifth of May 2024. The lack of use of TikTok by the Romanian Police and the Romanian Gendarmerie may suggest an underestimation of the platform's potential for attracting young people. In total, the Romanian Gendarmerie is the most active institution with 47 posts, the Romanian Police ranks second with 38 posts, and IGSU has the least activity with 9 posts.

The next aspect analyzed is related to post interactions and platform impact. On Facebook, the 19 posts by the Romanian Police accumulated a significant number of interactions, with 15,056 reactions, 2296 comments, and 2014 shares. Its activity on Instagram brought 11,388 likes and only 62 comments. The significant discrepancy in the number of comments, which is about 97% lower on Instagram, may indicate that Instagram users are more passive. For IGSU, the number of interactions is much lower; its four posts accumulated 677 reactions and 22 comments, but a video from eighth of May 2024, obtained 15,000 views. In contrast, its Instagram posts generated 2578 likes, much more than on Facebook, though only a single comment was recorded. The Romanian Gendarmerie generated 5218 reactions and 1234 comments on its Facebook profile, and a video from October 1, 2024, obtained

156,000 views. On Instagram, the institution accumulated 8945 likes and 106 comments, with a reel from first of October obtaining the most interactions (1770 likes and 81 comments). Overall, the Romanian Police leads in total interactions, while Facebook remains the dominant platform for comments and shares for all institutions, and video content consistently gathers the most reactions.

Regarding the type of post, the Romanian Police utilized a considerable diversification of content, using static images, reels, and videos on Facebook, but predominantly images on Instagram. The Romanian Gendarmerie is by far the institution that focused on images on both platforms; of its 25 posts on Facebook, 23 are images. This indicates a preference for static content to transmit information directly. While all three institutions integrated some video content, the most used type of content was images. The Romanian Police is the leader in content diversification, showing an understanding of adapting content to each platform. The Gendarmerie's strategy is more conservative, prioritizing direct recruitment messages, while IGSU innovates by using TikTok, which could be a competitive advantage.

During the analysis, a trend of replicating content across platforms was identified. In the case of the Romanian Gendarmerie, all 22 posts from Instagram are also found on Facebook in the same format and with the same message. Of the 4 posts on Facebook by IGSU, 3 are also found on Instagram. The Romanian Police attempted greater diversification, as only 7 of its 19 posts from Facebook are also found on Instagram. An interesting aspect is related to the style of the posts. Of the 25 posts by the Gendarmerie on Facebook, 19 have the same style, representing visual posts with text elements superimposed on the image. This style allows the message to be transmitted very easily, offering clarity and accessibility. The same technique is used by IGSU, where 3 of its 4 posts use the same style. At the opposite pole is the Romanian Police, which does not use this posting style and focuses on stand-alone images, often depicting the institution's personnel. This style transmits a different message, emphasizing the humanization of the institution and creating a more personal connection with the audience.

Through this method, a large amount of information was accumulated regarding the strategies used by public institutions to promote vacant positions, identifying which institution is most active, the impact of their posts, and which platforms are used most often.

## 5 Discussion and Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, the main topic addressed has been the promotion of vacant positions of the main institutions within the MAI through social media. The conclusions resulting from the application of the research method revealed differences in promotion strategies and in the use of digital channels. These findings reflect the preferences of the public, as well as the priorities of the institutions regarding the promotion of vacant positions and engagement in the online environment.

A first conclusion resulting from the research indicates that Facebook is the dominant platform for all three institutions when analyzing audience sizes. The Romanian Police attracts the largest audience, with 1,100,000 followers, reflecting the institution's notoriety and a well-consolidated promotion strategy. The Romanian Gendarmerie and IGSU, each with 253,000 followers on Facebook, maintain a stable public interest. The Romanian Police and the Romanian Gendarmerie are present on Instagram but absent on TikTok. This absence suggests a more conservative use of social networks, unlike IGSU, which has used TikTok and attracted a significant number of followers and likes (68,600 followers and 898,400 likes). From the application of the research, the answer to the first research question, "Which of the three institutions uses social media platforms most frequently to promote vacant positions?", was obtained. With a total of 47 posts referring to available jobs, the Romanian Gendarmerie is the institution that uses social media the most for this type of promotion. The ranking continues with the Romanian Police, which registered 38 posts, and at the bottom of the ranking is IGSU, with only 9 posts. The frequency of posts allows us to observe the periods in which the promotional activity for vacant positions was concentrated. Thus, a seasonal concentration of activity was discovered, especially in the summer months, indicating a correlation with the recruitment campaigns carried out during that period. This finding answers the research question: "What is the period with the most intense activity on social media for promoting vacant positions by the institutions?". The Romanian Police and the Romanian Gendarmerie have intense activity in the summer months, while IGSU maintains a lower frequency of posts. Another interesting aspect refers to the discrepancies in the use of platforms. The Romanian Police prioritizes the use of Facebook and Instagram, where it frequently promotes diversified content, while IGSU innovates by integrating TikTok, but with reduced activity on the other platforms. The Romanian Gendarmerie, even though it records the most activity, adopts a conservative strategy, based more on images. The next research question is: "Which institution generates the highest number of interactions on social networks?". From the analysis grid analysis, it was discovered that the Romanian Police leads in terms of the number of total interactions, on both Facebook and Instagram. These interactions highlight audience preferences and the effectiveness of strategies. In the case of the three institutions, Facebook generates the most comments and shares. This type of interaction indicates an active audience that participates directly in various actions. On the other hand, Instagram gathers more likes, having a more passive audience. Then, the type of content of the posts was the subject of the research question: "Which institution has diversified the types of content used the most (image, videoclip, reel)?" Therefore, the Romanian Police stands out through a well-defined mix of content, diversifying the types of content the most. On the other hand, the Romanian Gendarmerie and IGSU focus more on images and static content, limiting the diversity of their messages.

During the interpretation of data from the research methods, certain limitations of the paper were identified. First, the high variability of results, specific to the online environment, may make the observations valid only for the analyzed period. The data collected in this research reflect a specific moment in time; thus, the results

are influenced by the conditions of the period analyzed. Due to the high dynamism of social media platforms, changes in communication strategies or user preferences can lead to major variations in conclusions if the analysis were carried out at another time. In addition, the research focuses on three institutions within the MAI, without including other organizations that could bring complementary perspectives. Moreover, extending the research to include other organizations, both from the public and private sectors, would allow for a broader understanding of the phenomenon. A future research perspective could include an analysis that highlights the evolution of communication strategies over an extended period, to identify trends and recurring patterns. A comparative approach at another point in time, considering other institutions or organizations, would offer a broader and more representative perspective. Moreover, the analysis could be extended to include newer platforms, or other future social networks. This research concludes that an effective public sector recruitment strategy requires adapting content and posting frequency to the specifics of each social media platform. Although Facebook remains the primary channel due to its substantial user base, public institutions must actively integrate Instagram and TikTok to reach a wider audience. The Romanian Police's diversified strategy serves as a valuable model, demonstrating that optimal online recruitment results come from being active and adaptive across all key platforms.

## References

1. Tu W, Cao J, Yue Y, Shaw SL, Zhou M, Wang Z, Chang X, Xu Y, Li Q (2017) Coupling mobile phone and social media data: a new approach to understanding urban functions and diurnal patterns. *Int J Geogr Inf Sci* 31:2331–2358. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13658816.2017.1356464>
2. Briciu VA, Stempel CG, Briciu A (2025) Digital transformation and the Romanian public sector: evaluating engagement strategies on Facebook. In: Sevinç Çubuk E (ed) *Digital competency development for public officials: adapting new technologies in public services*. IGI Global, Hershey, pp 385–418. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-6547-2.ch015>
3. Mergel I (2012) *Social media in the public sector: a guide to participation, collaboration and transparency in the networked world*. John Wiley & Sons
4. Halid H, Yusoff YM, Somu H (2020) The relationship between digital human resource management and organizational performance. In: *First ASEAN business, environment, and technology symposium (ABEATS 2019)*. Atlantis Press, pp 96–99. <https://doi.org/10.2991/aebmr.k.200514.022>
5. Zhang J, Chen Z (2024) Exploring human resource management digital transformation in the digital age. *J Knowl Econ* 15:1482–1498. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-023-01214-y>
6. Statista (2025) Daily time spent on social networking by internet users worldwide from 2012 to 2025. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/433871/daily-social-media-usage-worldwide/>
7. Statista (2025) Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of 4th quarter 2023. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/264810/number-of-monthly-active-facebook-users-worldwide/>
8. Statista (2025) Number of monthly active Instagram users from January 2013 to December 2021. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/253577/number-of-monthly-active-instagram-users/>
9. Pennington N (2021) Communication outside of the home through social media during COVID-19. *Comput Hum Behav Rep* 4:100118. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2021.100118>

10. Strempelel CG, Briciu VA (2024) Characteristics of communication through online social networks in central public institutions in Romania. In: Nastase CA, Monda A, Dias R (eds) International scientific conference—EMAN 2024, vol 8. Association of Economists and Managers of the Balkans, pp 373–382. <https://doi.org/10.31410/EMAN.2024.373>
11. Siddik ASA, Soewignyo T, Mandagi DW (2024) Click, connect, recruit: a systematic review of the role of social media in employee recruitment. *Jurnal Informatika Ekonomi Bisnis* 6(2):344–349. <https://doi.org/10.37034/infek.v6i2.869>
12. Balasubramanian P, Vishnu P, Sidharth S (2016) Social media as a recruitment tool. *International Journal of Industrial Engineering and Management Science* 6:108–110. <https://doi.org/10.9756/BIJIEMS.7468>
13. Briciu VA, Briciu A (2021) Social media and organizational communication. In: Khosrow-Pour DBAM (ed) *Encyclopedia of organizational knowledge, administration, and technology*. IGI Global, Hershey, pp 2609–2624. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-3473-1.ch180>
14. Wowor MC, Mandagi DW, Lule B, Ambalao SS (2022) The role of social Media in Employee Recruitment: a systematic literature review. *Jurnal Multidisiplin Madani* 2:4118–4125. <https://doi.org/10.55927/mudima.v2i12.1957>
15. Oudat Q, Bakas T (2023) Merits and pitfalls of social media as a platform for recruitment of study participants. *J Med Internet Res* 25:e47705. <https://doi.org/10.2196/47705>
16. Biea EA, Dinu E, Bunica A, Jerdea L (2024) Recruitment in SMEs: the role of managerial practices, technology and innovation. *Eur Bus Rev* 36:361–391. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-05-2023-0162>
17. Pourazad N, Stocchi L, Narsey S (2023) A comparison of social media influencers' KPI patterns across platforms: exploring differences in followers and engagement on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and twitter. *J Advert Res* 63:139–159. <https://doi.org/10.2501/JAR-2023-008>
18. Chelcea S (2001) *Metodologia cercetării sociologice*. Economic Publishing House, Bucharest

**Open Access** This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

