We discuss control out of impersonal passives in Romanian. The data constitute a prima facie problem for Schäfer & Pitteroff’s (2017) generalization that implicit control in passive configurations is possible cross-linguistically, at least with attitude verbs. In Romanian, as copular passives generally disallow clausal subjects, the generalization can only be tested with se-passives, which cannot, however, take active infinitive complements (Dobrovie-Sorin 1998):

(1) *S-a {promis/început} a merge la cumpărături
   SE-has promised/begun to go to shopping

Such examples become acceptable if se is replicated on the embedded verb:

(2) S-a {promis/început} a se construi mai multe școli
   SE-has promised/begun to SE build more schools

In (2) control must be at stake: aspectuals like începe ‘begin’ disallow disjoined subjects, and a raising analysis is ruled out by the absence of agreement with the theme. (2) cannot be an instance of voice restructuring (Wurmbrand & Shimamura 2017): this would predict that personal double passives are allowed, contrary to fact. Analyzing (2) as involving a subject clause (and no control) does not explain the strong preference for se-passives in this configuration (a corpus search revealed that copular passives in the embedded clause are extremely rare).

Our proposal is that se-passives differ from copular passives by projecting an (arbitrary) null external argument in SpecvP, a proposal already made for independent reasons: restrictions on possible themes, due to intervention of the null external argument in case licensing (Giurgea 2016), allowance of definite inalienable possessees, which rely on subject control (MacDonald & Maddox 2018). We propose that the control relation in (2) obtains between the PRO external arguments of the matrix and embedded verbs, via Agree (cf. Landau 2015). Therefore, the {+human +ARB} feature of matrix PRO must also occur on the embedded PRO, requiring the use of the se-Voice.